

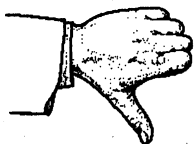
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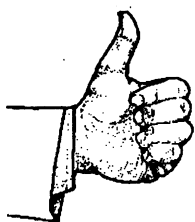
Ethics reform not worthy of celebration

Thumbs down to the S.C. General Assembly for passing ethics reform bills this week that fell far short of what we want and need. The headlines looked and sounded good: "Legislators adopt ethics bills." Action late Wednesday surprisingly seemed to please Gov. Nikki Haley: "Tonight, after four years of hard work, the people of South Carolina have a real reason to celebrate," she said in a statement. "Income disclosure and independent investigations will help restore the people's trust in state government by making it more accountable to those it serves. We thank

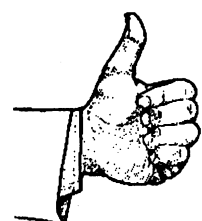


the House and Senate for keeping their promise and helping us bring this home." But legislators only have to disclose the private sources of income, not the amounts. If an independent investigation determines there is probable cause for a complaint, the matter would be sent back to House and Senate ethics committees to determine guilt and any penalty. "This is the babies of baby steps toward what people are asking for, and that is transparency," Sen. Brad Hutto, an Orangeburg Democrat, told The Greenville News. We agree completely.

Thumbs up to the fact that outside money – big, big money – didn't get buy big results Tuesday in primary elections. Haley and others, from out of state, spent big bucks to try to oust some state senators that she doesn't favor, including Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. Florence's powerful lawmaker survived his challenge, as did Horry County's Luke Rankin, although Wes Hayes of York County lost his bid for re-election. Wouldn't it be nice if all of that money could have gone toward roads, education or health care?



Thumbs up to Robert Louis Stevens. You might have known him as Bob Stevens, one of the original 10 members of the Morning



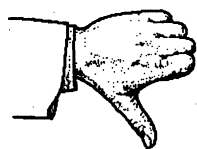
News' Citizen Columnist Corps. He died Tuesday at his home in Timmonsville after an eight-month battle with brain cancer. He was 82. He was special. He will be missed. The one-paragraph bio that ran at the bottom of his columns noted that "he tried being both a Baptist and a Presbyterian preacher early in his life. Neither worked out, so he became a counselor in, and supervisor of, clinics that treated addiction." For the last 22 years of his career, he was the director of the Palmetto Center in Florence, an inpatient addiction treatment center operated by the S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Department. As noted in his obituary, "He was known to write many letters to the editor, some of which were angry (intentionally so), and most of which were funny (intentionally so). Since 2013, he wrote columns for the Florence Morning News as a member of the Citizen Columnist Corps, as



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the editor had stopped answering his mail." This gentle man was witty and compassionate. He stopped writing his column last fall when he became ill, but he was well enough in March to contribute an excellent column that we were pleased to publish, and we hoped it wouldn't be his last, but it was. A service will be held at 2 p.m. today at Indiantown Presbyterian Church, 4865 Hemingway Highway, Hemingway. Another telling excerpt from his obit: "Another opportunity for visitation will be held after the service at the church, and fun and laughter is allowed, even at church, even after a funeral." Memorials may be made to Lucky Dog Animal Rescue, 5159 Lee Highway, Arlington, Virginia, or to Indiantown Presbyterian Church. Rest in peace, Bob.

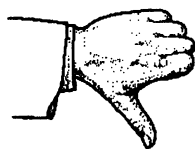
Thumbs down to the Morning News for neglecting to mention on Monday that it was the 72nd anniversary of D-Day. The Rev.



Joseph Heck of Darlington wrote to scold us. "In the Florence Morning News, there is a called "Today in History." On June 6, 2016, nothing was said about what happened on June 6, 1944 – D-Day, when Allied troops invaded Normandy. This helped turn the tide of World War 2. On

that day, it is estimated that 29 thousand men were killed. Most were 18, 19 or 20 years old. In the Morning News, the only thing that mentioned the invasion was in the comic strip 'Peanuts.' Shame on the newspaper." Yes. Shame on us.

Thumbs down to the news media for not scolding South Carolina's senators. That comes from reader Don Fulton, who wrote,



"As the newspaper headlines about the Orlando shooting die down, may I suggest a new headline? Senators Lindsay Graham and Tim Scott voted to allow those on Terror Watch List to buy guns. Newspapers and television news stations should be blowing up our legislators' phones,

severely questioning them about these votes. Please spare us stories about the Garden Club, or the man who wears funny clothes, or the lady who collects spoons. We need a courageous (useful) news media. It's time to start putting these guys on the spot."

Thumbs up, thumbs down is a regular feature of the Morning News and appears each Saturday on our Opinion page. We seek nominations for both good and bad deeds from our readers. Send nominations to us by email at letters@florencenews.com. Be sure use the word "thumb" in the subject and include a contact number. Thumbs can also be mailed to us c/o The Morning News, 310 S. Dargan St., Florence, S.C., 29506.

148 Remembrance

Mourners recall Charleston church victims at service

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON — South Carolina's governor somberly held up programs from the funerals of the victims of the Charleston church shootings, saying Friday during a memorial service that the faith of those victims showed how to heal in the aftermath of still another mass shooting.

"As for me, I will forever know that there are angels on earth," said Gov. Nikki Haley during a three-hour service that was alternately somber and then punctuated by joyous singing.

Friday was the anniversary of the shooting deaths of nine black parishioners during a Bible study at Emanuel AME Church. A white man, Dylann Roof, faces charges in both state and federal courts and prosecutors in each are seeking the death penalty.

MORE INSIDE

► One year after church shooting, much is the same in Charleston. 4A

Haley, who attended the funerals of all the victims, said she got to know the families of both those who were killed and the three survivors in the days and weeks following the shootings.

"There hasn't been a day since June 17, 2015 that I haven't thought about the 12," she said.

She recalled each victim, sometimes with gentle humor, as she showed the funeral programs she says she keeps as reminders.

The Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor "had the voice of an angel," she said.

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Flowers and notes were left in front of Emanuel AME Church in Charleston as memorials to victims of the shooting. Friday was the first anniversary of the killing of nine black parishioners during Bible study at the church.

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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman reads the program for a memorial service honoring those killed in last year's shooting at Emanuel AME Church.





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Memorial

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Haley recalled state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, the Emanuel pastor who was slain, as “a gentle giant” and a man “who never talked about what he was against. He always spoke about what he was for.”

Haley said that in the wake of the shootings — after which many family members of the victims said they forgave Roof, the suspect charged in the deaths — the people of South Carolina “didn’t have protests, they had vigils. They didn’t have riots, they had hugs.”

The College of Charleston’s TD Arena, where the service was held, sits about 5,000 people and was about half full. The stage was lined with the pictures of the nine people killed. Above each were the words “Still Speaking from Eternity.”

It’s the same venue where President Barack Obama gave a rousing eulogy during the funeral for Pinckney that included a rendition of the hymn “Amazing Grace” for the packed audience at the TD Arena. The

Obamas were accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill; nearly 6,000 people attended the funeral. Some 5,000 would-be mourners were turned away, apparently for lack of seating.

On Friday, a presidential aide read a message to the congregation from Obama and the first lady in which they said “as a nation we are deeply moved by your boundless love and your unshakeable resilience.”

In the wake of the shootings, officials and businesses nationwide have taken steps to distance themselves from Confederate symbols and name. The suspect, Roof, had appeared in photos with the Confederate flag.

In Texas, the Austin school board voted to rename Robert E. Lee Elementary. The Houston school board voted to rename seven schools named for Confederate leaders. Ohio State Fair officials banned vendors from selling Confederate flag merchandise. In New Jersey, the nation’s oldest and largest flag manufacturer decided a week after the shootings to stop making and selling the Confederate flag.



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¹⁴⁸Cloud of probationary accreditation lifted from SC State

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The probationary cloud over South Carolina State University was lifted Thursday, ending worries that its accreditation could be revoked and the school could be forced to close.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Colleges decided to fully restore SC State's membership, two years after putting South Carolina's only public historically black university on probation for leadership and financial woes.

"We were very, very pleased," said board Chairman Charles Way, who traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, with school officials Wednesday to make their case. The accreditation issue "was just

hanging over our heads. A lot of parents don't want to send their children to a school if it's on probation."

S.C. State's status was put on warning in 2013. Continuing probation a third year wasn't an option. The commission's only other choice, revoking accreditation, would have meant students could no longer qualify for federal financial aid.

Thursday's decision follows drastic actions by legislators to keep the school open.

Last year, they fired the entire governing board and tasked temporary members with making the school solvent. As of December, the board had cut \$19 million from the budget and eliminated about 200 jobs.

"We're getting this ox out of the ditch, but we've got a long way

to go," Way told The Associated Press on Thursday. "We're taking it step by step. We're trying to not only have S.C. State survive. We'd like to take it back to its glory days of many years ago."

Earlier this month, Gov. Nikki Haley signed a bill forgiving S.C. State of \$12 million in state loans over three years and approving a 16-year repayment schedule for a separate, \$6 million loan.

Lawmakers hoped erasing the debt would boost the college's chances before the commission.

In arguing for the loan forgiveness, legislative leaders noted state taxpayers would be on the hook for S.C. State's entire debt, including all outstanding bonds, if the college didn't survive. Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, has estimated that to be more than

\$100 million.

"This is a big accomplishment for South Carolina State University," said Leatherman, who appointed Way, a former state Commerce secretary. "It's important that this university, which holds great historical value in our state, stay open, keep its accreditation and thrive in the coming years."

The state's financial board, which includes Leatherman, approved both state bailouts in 2014 so the school could pay outstanding bills, but that debt instead continued to climb. The entire board was replaced as legislators learned S.C. State's debt was expected to soon reach \$23.5 million.

The school has made great strides since.

About 2,800 students attended S.C. State last fall. That's 170 more than S.C. State depended on in its 2015-16 budget.

The university should end the fiscal year June 30 with a \$1 million positive balance, Way said.

SC State's fiscal woes stemmed from years of declining enrollment — down from nearly 5,000 in 2007 — coupled with school officials' unwillingness to cut spending. Many students who did attend weren't paying, according to a report by an accounting firm the state hired to review S.C. State's finances.

Contributing to the losses were federal changes in eligibility for Pell grants and PLUS loans since 2009, making it harder for students and their parents to qualify. The changes have hit historically black colleges particularly hard.



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148 names of donors to tax-exempt organizations.

"Every scenario" not covered under income disclosure bill

June 15, 2016 by Jessica Cross @carolinalegger @thecarolinalegger

Lawmakers have reached an agreement on how to disclose who pays them, though a long-hoped-for, comprehensive income disclosure bill won't clear the General Assembly this year.

Aimed at expanding income disclosure among public officials, the bill would require them to disclose some of their private sources of income.

A House-Senate committee met Wednesday to work out each chambers' differences on the bill.

The committee nixed a House provision that would have required disclosure of types and sources of income tied to lobbyists and their employers.

Instead, officials would be required to disclose income listed on tax forms; household income; interest earned from a certificate of deposit, but not capital gains; and dividends from stocks excluding those earned from brokerage accounts.

"The real disclosure is from whom the income comes originally," said Rep. Kirkman Finlay, R-Columbia. Finlay thinks excepting the House provision creates a loophole for officials.

But Sen. Campsen wants a part time legislature. The Charleston Republican thinks requiring legislators to spend massive amounts of time filling out statements of economic interest would hinder them. "Do we really want to saddle someone," he said.

Income disclosure's "bright line"

House members wanted a "bright line" defining income sources. Senators questioned whether the updated version would do much to advance income disclosure, but didn't want to nitpick over the

sources.

Small-government activists criticized the bill as it progressed this year.

Officials would be required to disclose income listed on their tax returns. But a loophole would let them skirt disclosing income from subcontracts, activists have said.

"You can't possibly get every scenario," said Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens. Martin, who heads the Judiciary Committee, propelled the bill through the Senate. "You can't account for it that far down the food chain," he said.

Martin delivered a report on the bill before the Senate on Wednesday. Martin called it a "good beginning," indicating he expects future moves to expand income disclosure.

"This is not ethics reform," said Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg. "This codifies what we do now by listing our occupation in our legislative manual."

The Senate approved the report unanimously.

The House approved it 99 to 10.

Lawmakers had previously stricken from the bill a provision to require private political groups to disclose donors. They feared it would kill the bill.

The bill makes the improper filing of an income report a misdemeanor.

Lawmakers also say they plan to look for a way to prevent finding guilty of a misdemeanor an official who is accidentally commits a minor violation.

The bill now heads to Republican Gov. Nikki Haley's desk. Haley for months has leaned on lawmakers to disclose their sources of income

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148 -- **Letters and Opinion** --

Haley vetoes \$41 M in "pork" in \$7.5 B state budget

Gov. Nikki Haley has vetoed \$41 million in what she called pork projects and earmarks tucked away in the General Assembly's \$7.5 billion budget.

"Earmarks are starting to get a little out of control again," she said.

The Republican governor, who issued 51 vetoes, also cited funding hikes at agencies like the Attorney General's Office, where new positions had been rolled into categories she couldn't touch.

Notable increases in the budget for the Attorney General's Office include a bump in funding for classified positions to \$5.5 million from \$4.2 million the previous fiscal year, which will end this summer. Lawmakers also appropriated \$2.5 million to other operating expenses, up from \$77,000 in fiscal year 2016.

"What we are finding is more and more things are being rolled up into other items that we can't get to," Haley said.

Some of Haley's vetoes included areas where funding had been duplicated, she said.

Haley praised strides in funding to education, 144 new prosecutors added in response to domestic violence, and cuts to the state's annual debt payments as reserves doubled to \$348 million. She emphasized as a priority having a safety net for taxpayers in the event of unexpected state expenses.

Famed for using her veto pen as a scalpel, rather than a machete, Haley has been criticized in the past by small government activists for vetoing too little of the state budget. She said the earmarks have been increasingly rolled up into areas that include funding to areas too important to veto.

Vetoes of \$1 million or more include—

—\$2.3 million to the Department of Archives and History for architectural heritage preservation

—\$1.6 million to the Department of Natural Resources for outreach education

—\$7 million to the State Aviation Fund

—\$1.6 million to the Department of Natural Resources for waterfowl project maintenance and repair

—\$5 million to the Parks and Recreation Development Fund

—\$3 million for the Medal of Honor Museum

—\$1 million for the Children's Museum of the Upstate

—\$2.5 million to the Agriculture Department for agribusiness development

—\$2 million to the Commerce Department for the Office of Innovation

—\$1 million to Clemson University for a conference center

—\$6.3 million to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism for revitalization

The House and Senate will return mid-June to take up Haley's vetoes.

She urged lawmakers to finish their work on two ethics bills aimed at ending self-policing among lawmakers and at requiring lawmakers to disclose private sources of income.

On the last day of the session, a committee failed to reach an agreement on the anti-self-policing measure. But House and Senate leaders said they plan to continue working toward resolution this year, despite the snag.



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Jessica Cross, Carolina Ledger

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Positive Budget Projections Could Lead to Favorable Outcome for South Carolina State University

ORANGEBURG, S.C. — Projections for SC State University's budget for fiscal year 2017 will position the university for a promising future, university officials stated while presenting the budget during a called Board of Trustees meeting Tuesday. For its second consecutive year, the board unanimously passed a balanced budget.

South Carolina State anticipates by next fiscal year, its budget will result in a positive indicator by which the university's accrediting agency measures financial stability, both long and short term. If the university meets its expectation, it will be an achievement the institution has not realized in recent years. Officials hope the accomplishment could lead to a favorable outcome with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

"If the train does not run off the track," said Board Chairman Charles S. Way Jr., "SC State is poised to be in the best financial health it has seen in years."

In June 2014, the association placed SC State University on probation, citing the university for non-compliance to five standards, all of which centered on the university's finances. The university, however, maintains its SACSCOC accreditation.

Key university administrators, along with select members of the SC State University Board of Trustees, will appear before the SACSCOC board to present a report that will show SC State meets the agency's standards.

"We cannot, of course, determine the SACSCOC board's ruling as it pertains to our membership with the accrediting agency. We are certainly confident that SC State University has a compelling story, in which we will try and demonstrate that SC State complies with SACSCOC requirements," said Interim President Dr. W. Franklin Evans.

Among its assessment of SC State's report, SACSCOC will review the university's progress to produce a net positive change of its UNAEP, which stands for unrestricted net assets exclusive of plant and plant-related debt. This indicator determines a university's financial stability by the



Ed Patrick

level of assets available to meet day-to-day obligations.

At the end of FY15, SC State's UNAEP concluded with a negative \$25.1 million. The university's Office of Finance, projects the UNAEP for FY16 will end with in a negative \$18.2 million balance, a \$6.9 million reduction in one year. With its balanced budget and several revenue enhancements, totaling \$19.2 million, the university anticipates a positive \$1 million in UNAEP by June 2017.

"We anticipate SC State University will have positive unrestricted net assets when it closes its year-end books for FY17," said Vice President for Finance Ed Patrick. "While much more remains to progress the university financially, it certainly is an impressive swift, positive turnaround for the university. We are indeed headed in the right direction," Patrick continued.

The joint resolution passed by the South Carolina Senate and House and the bill signed by Gov. Nikki Haley, which forgives a \$12 million loan, an appropriation of \$4.6 million, along with other revenue enhancements including contributions from the SC State University Foundation and the STATE Club, will make it possible for the university to reach a positive UNAEP.

The SACSCOC hearing will take place on June 15 in Memphis, Tennessee during the association's annual meeting.

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Bring Mexican political ethics to South Carolina

Now the most reasonable response to this headline is "Are you nuts? Isn't Mexican politics riddled with corruption? What could we possibly learn from them?"

The answers to these three questions are — "no," "yes" and "a lot."

I suppose that there are some who would argue that the answer to the first question is "yes," but I haven't been locked up yet, so give me the benefit of the doubt on this one and let's skip to the more important questions.

Yes, Mexican politics is shot through with corruption at most every level. The ethical history of politics in this country is not something that the League of Women Voters would want us to emulate but it has only been with the recent flood of drug money that politics has gone from shady to utterly corrupt.

How bad is it? Really bad.

There is a popular saying that most folks take as an article of faith that says: "He who doesn't cheat does not get ahead." (I've heard the same sentiment expressed around the Statehouse in Columbia.)

What has happened in Mexico is that the corruption in government has now spilled over into violence and dirty tricks that would make even

George Wallace and Richard Nixon recoil. The whole political system is in the process of breaking down.

So, you might ask, what does this have to do with South Carolina and why would we possibly want to import any of this to our state?

Well, the answer is that

we would certainly not want to import any of this political disease, but we might want to consider importing some of the political cure that is starting to bubble up from the grass roots.

Let me explain. In the midst of all this corruption, something happened — the people began to take matters into their own hands. Mexican law requires that if enough citizens sign on to a legislative petition, the National Congress has to take up the measure. The law requires 120,000 signatures and to date over 630,000 citizens have signed on to a measure that would make lawmakers report their personal finances.

The initiative is called '3 out of 3' and it requires government officials to 1) reveal all of their financial assets, 2) report any conflicts of interest and 3) prove they are paying their taxes.

As would be expected in a system as adverse to ethics reform as is Mexico the legislation is stalled and going no place. (Sound familiar?)

But, as a result of this citizens' initiative something has happened in Mexico that would go a long way toward providing ethics reform in South Carolina — some Mexican politicians have begun to voluntarily divulge their financial information even before any legislation is passed requiring them to do so.

Thus far, 560 public servants have disclosed this information including 13 percent of the national Senate and 21 percent of the Chamber of Deputies (like our House

of Representatives), 12 state governors and one member of the President's cabinet.

So now let's get back to ethics reform in South Carolina.

For the third year in a row, the legislature has refused to pass any meaningful ethics reform. (And even the measures they are considering are really 'Swiss cheese reform' — more holes than cheese.)

We have seen lots of self-righteous posturing and speeches by Governor Haley and some statehouse politicians about the need for ethics reform — they always blame someone else for the failure of reform efforts to pass.

So, I'd say to these S.C. politicians, follow the Mexican example and voluntarily disclose — 1) your income and assets — how much and from whom, 2) conflicts of interest — what deals are you and your family in, and 3) release your state and federal income taxes — for all the years you are in office.

By percentage, if our Legislature were as ethical as Mexico's, then six S.C. Senators, 25 members of the House and one member of Gov. Haley's cabinet would have disclosed this information.

The people of South Carolina should say to the Statehouse politicians: don't talk about ethics reform — just do it.

The politicians talk the talk, but won't walk the walk. There is a one word description for this — hypocrite.

A growing number of Mexican politicians have passed the test. To date, best I know, the current number of S.C. politicians who have voluntarily disclosed such complete information is zero.

Yes indeed, let's bring Mexican political ethics to South Carolina.

Phil Noble is a businessman in Charleston and President of the S.C. New Democrats, an independent reform group started by former Gov. Richard Riley to bring change and reform. He can be reached at phil@philnoble.com.

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¹⁴⁸ Roper elected to family court seat

COUNTY — Karen Sanchez Roper, attorney and founding partner of Roper Law Firm in Pickens, has been elected to the 13th Judicial Circuit Family Court's Pickens County Seat 4.

She will succeed the Honorable Alvin D. Johnson, who will retire on June 30 after 20 years of service on the bench. Roper is the first woman to be appointed by the General Assembly as a resident judge for Pickens County.

Upon assuming her duties on the bench, Roper will cease to be a member of the firm and leave the practice of law. As judge, Roper will preside over cases primarily in the 13th Judicial Circuit, covering Pickens and Greenville counties, but will also hear cases throughout the state as assigned by South Carolina court administration.

The family court has exclusive jurisdiction over all matters involving domestic relationships and decides cases concerning marriage, divorce, separation, custody, visitation rights, termination of parental rights, adoption, support, alimony, division of marital property, name changes and juvenile matters.



KAREN SANCHEZ ROPER

Judicial candidates are screened through the Judicial Merit Selection Commission and undergo a law examination, interviews with the South Carolina Bar and the Upstate Citizen's Committee, and a public hearing before the commission. After qualification and nomination, judges are elected by members of the South Carolina General Assembly.

A native of Valdosta, Ga., Roper received her undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and her law degree from the University of South Carolina.

She established Roper Law Firm in 1997, with a focus on family law litigation. Her husband, attorney Ken Roper, joined the firm in 2001. In addition to her legal work, Roper has served in various leadership roles with numerous civic organizations in the Pickens community, including the Cannon Memorial Foundation Board, Leadership Pickens County, First Steps, Prevent Child Abuse and the Pickens Women's Association. In 2014, Gov. Nikki Haley appointed Roper to the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Board.

Karen and Ken Roper are the parents of two sons, Carson and Hampton, who attend Pickens High School. She and her family are members of Pickens Presbyterian Church, where she is an elder and trustee.

"I am delighted to have this opportunity to serve my community," said Roper. "I am humbled by the trust placed in me by the General Assembly, particularly the members of our local delegation, and will work diligently to ensure the family court continues to support and encourage our families."



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Gov. Haley announces website and county challenge for domestic violence

Governor Nikki Haley began the Statewide Domestic Violence Summit by announcing a new website aimed at providing information and resources to domestic violence survivors, loved ones, and offenders as well as to professional groups in the workplace. The Summit ended with the governor announcing Safe Place County Certifications as a challenge to counties to lead local efforts against domestic violence.

"When you go to this website, not only does it ask you what town and zip code you live in, it also gives you all of the resources available to you within your community," Governor Haley said. "But it goes a step further - it tells someone who is being abused what they can do to get help, it tells someone who thinks they know someone who's being abused how to go about approaching the situation, and it tells someone who is an offender what they can do to get the help they need."

The website features a 24-hour crisis hotline, a statewide directory of resources searchable by location, safety checklists and tips for victims and loved ones, and an exit button for victim safety. Citizens are also encouraged by the website to learn the phrase, "Share. Care. Be There," as a three-step process for how loved ones should approach a friend or family member suspected to be a victim of domestic violence. SafePlaceSC.sc.gov is a result of the work done by the S.C. Domestic Violence Task Force to provide South Carolinians with a single resource for domestic violence information.

"When we talk about 'Share. Care. Be There,' that really comes

down to a couple of things," Governor Haley said. "If you know of someone or suspect that someone is being abused, share your concerns with them. Care, but don't judge. We can't judge someone who is being abused because they already feel badly about themselves and our job is to lift them up, and get them help. And finally, it's just to be there because this is a patient situation."

The Safe Place County Certification Challenge includes four components for counties to achieve by the end of 2016 to be certified as a Safe Place County for domestic violence awareness:

1. Sheriffs must pledge to implement the Law Enforcement Toolkit Year One Initiatives, which was completed by all 46 Sheriffs as of April 2016;

2. Solicitors must hold a meeting of the Community Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and organize the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee;

3. Counties must adopt a human resources policy for domestic violence, modeled after the policy the governor implemented in her cabinet agencies earlier this year; and

4. Counties must partner with local nonprofits to hold a community awareness event for domestic violence.

The county initiative is a result of recommendations proposed by the S.C. Domestic Violence Task Force to unite the entire state against domestic violence, beginning at the local level.

For video of the governor's closing remarks, visit the governor's YouTube page.

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148 House sends ethics bill to state Senate

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

Ethics reform legislation is not dead in the South Carolina General Assembly after the House of Representatives approved a conference report on a bill requiring income disclosure by General Assembly members.

The House voted 99-10 to send the measure to the Senate, which requires disclosure of any income that would normally be reported to the Internal Revenue Service.



SMITH

"This is a compromise we have worked out with the Senate," said Rep. Murrell Smith, R-Sumter, who was a member of the conference committee.

Smith said the legislation

would include income by anyone living in the household, including spouses and children who are living in the home and are listed as dependents.

Income that needs to be disclosed on a candidate's statement of personal interest would not include court-ordered income, bank accounts, mutual funds and mutual fund investments, Smith said.

Smith said defining income as anything of value used on an IRS form would give clarity of what to disclose, Smith said.

"This is not the perfect bill," Smith said, "but it is in the best interests of the state," he said.

Several members questioned the need to disclose the income of minor children who work outside the home; but, in the end, the committee report was adopted and sent the Senate, which meets today.

Earlier, the House failed to override Gov. Nikki Haley's veto of a bill requiring licenses to operate mopeds on public streets. The 65-47 vote Wednesday fell short of the necessary two-thirds needed.

The Republican governor said requiring reflective vests for nighttime driving and helmets for drivers under 21 represents government overreach.

The bill's supporters contend moped drivers are dying because people can't

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see them, especially at night, and the requirements would save lives.

The House did override Haley's veto of maintaining a bus shop at current staffing levels in Lee County.

Rep. Grady Brown asked the House to override the veto.

"Gov. Haley has vetoed this every year for six years," Brown said.

He said children could be waiting well after dark if a backup school bus must come from Kershaw County.

"Please send me out of here with a win," Brown pleaded.

Brown got his request as the House overrode the veto 77 to 26, sending the question to the S.C. Senate.