

Title: **SC senators send Georgia gun bill to Haley**
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SC senators send Georgia gun bill to Haley

Associated Press

COLUMBIA - A bill aimed at making it easier for South Carolinians with concealed weapon permits to travel back and forth to Georgia received final approval Wednesday after senators ended a filibuster.

The Senate's 35-3 vote came after Sen. Marlon Kimpson agreed to pull roughly 80 amendments he had proposed to block the bill, which passed the House in April 2015.

Kimpson, D-Charleston, was protesting legislators not taking up measures designed to close a background check loophole that allowed Dylann Roof to buy the gun police say he used to kill nine parishioners at a historic black church in Charleston a year ago.

In exchange for allowing the vote, Kimpson has been guaranteed a hearing about the loophole this summer in Charleston, where he'll play a central role as a panelist, and at least one in Columbia next year on the re-introduced bill.

"We consider today a win," he said. "The goal is to play chess."

Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry



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HALEY**

about previously denying Kimpson's request for a hearing.

The reciprocity bill was being pushed mainly by residents in Aiken County, who travel daily into Augusta, Georgia.

South Carolina recognizes concealed weapon permits from 22 states, including most in the Southeast. Advocates argue that not having reciprocity with the state's western neighbor is a real inconvenience.

"For those of us who live along the Georgia border, this has become a very big issue. ... There are lots of folks over there multiple times per day," Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey said about the Augusta area.

South Carolina's concealed weapon law requires states given reciprocity to have at least the same requirements to carry a concealed gun as South Carolina. But Georgia doesn't require training for a permit, so opponents of the exception, including Kimpson, argued that allowing Georgians with

Martin said he's giving no promises on the bill's chances next year, except to pledge he'll go to the hearing "with an open mind."

"I get it that I was probably too negative," Martin, R-Pickens, said

permits to bring their guns into South Carolina would be unsafe.

"Georgia's not the Wild West," said Massey, R-Edgefield.

Martin said it's a frequent request from constituents.

"People ask, 'Why can't you fix that?' It is the most sought-after change in our law for CWP (concealed weapon permit) holders," he said.

Kimpson has opposed the measure since senators voted three weeks ago to give it priority debate status.

He was fighting for legislation that would extend the time allowed for reviewing criminal records before approving a gun purchase.

Roof's drug arrest in February 2015 should have prevented him from buying a gun, but data entry errors meant a background check didn't produce the pertinent details in time. Federal law gives the FBI three business days to tell a gun dealer if someone can't legally buy a firearm. Once that window expires, as in Roof's case, the sale can proceed by default.

Kimpson said he recognizes the loophole legislation will face plenty of opposition next year.

"I have proven my ability to stop legislation. If we do a song and dance, I'll go back to work to stop every gun bill that expands rights," he said. "My goal is to craft something people can live with."

Title: **On road to repair**
 Author: By SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
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On road to repair

Compromise bill heads to Haley's desk

By SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Legislators gave final approval Wednesday to legislation designed to jump-start improvements to South Carolina's deteriorating roads.

The House's 109-2 vote sent the compromise to Gov. Nikki Haley. Her office has not yet said whether she'll sign it.

Assistant Majority Leader Gary Sim-

rill encouraged his colleagues to accept what senators passed late Tuesday, saying it comes down to not allowing another session to end without a roads bill.

"What I want to do is get something done," said Simrill, R-Rock Hill, who's led the House's road-funding efforts since fall 2014. "It sets about the process of making

sure South Carolina's roadways will not be the laughingstock, the embarrassment," known for tire-busting potholes.

The measure allows for \$2.2 billion in borrowing over 10 years for infrastructure, funded with \$200 million annually in

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ROAD

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existing fees and vehicle sales taxes. Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has said that frees up other money the agency can use to replace bridges and pave roads, allowing more than \$4 billion worth of total work.

Hall said that work includes replacing about 400 bridges statewide — eliminating the entire list of load-restricted bridges as well as 51 structurally deficient bridges on interstates and major highways.

The chambers agreed to the borrowing plan after senators had blocked proposals for the past two years that increased gas taxes.

Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman calls it a

step in addressing South Carolina's crumbling highways — not a fix. The DOT has said it needs \$1.5 billion annually over several decades to bring the nation's fourth-largest highway system to good condition.

Opponents of hiking the gas tax — unchanged at 16 cents since 1987 — insisted on first restructuring the DOT to give the governor's office more oversight before sending the agency more money. They argued politics, not priorities, dictated which projects got funded.

With just one day left in the legislative session, the remaining dispute between the House and Senate had been the appointing process

for DOT commissioners.

Neither chamber wanted to eliminate the commission, as Haley does. Currently, Hall answers to both Haley and the commission, where legislators appoint seven of its eight members.

The final compromise gives the governor input in selecting all eight commissioners, though legislators still must approve them through a multistep process. Commissioners would again hire the DOT secretary. The governor has appointed the secretary since legislators last restructured the agency in 2007.

The measure also specifies that the secretary reports to the commission, which reports to the governor. Simrill said that solves confusion

about who's responsible for what, as cited in a recent audit of the agency.

"Although this bill is not perfect, the House and Senate have worked together, made tough decisions and followed through with our promise to fix South Carolina's roads," said House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Hartsville.

He called on Haley to sign the bill as soon as it reaches her. The request comes a day after he took the podium to bash senators for their inaction and Haley for not demanding a vote.

"The people of South Carolina should not have to wait any longer for their dangerous roads and bridges to be repaired," Lucas said.

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**AT THE STATEHOUSE**

Title: **S.C. roads bill awaits Haley's signature**
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S.C. LEGISLATURE

S.C. roads bill awaits Haley's signature

BY SEANNA ADCOX
 Associated Press
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Title: **Haley endorses challenger Climer**
 Author: BY BRISTOW MARCHANT bmarchant@heraldonline.com
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DISTRICT 15 S.C. SENATE RACE

Haley endorses challenger Climer

**Governor will campaign
for GOP primary
challenger next week**

**Hayes is one of several
senior state senators
Haley has targeted**

**Haley-affiliated PAC airing
ads for Climer**

BY BRISTOW MARCHANT
bmarchant@heraldonline.com
 ROCK HILL

With less than two weeks to go until South Carolina's GOP primary election, Senate candidate Wes Climer has picked up the endorsement of Republican Gov. Nikki Haley in his bid to unseat Wes Hayes, who is seeking a seventh full term repre-

senting
Senate
District 15.
Haley will
visit Rock
Hill next
Thursday,
June 9, for a

barbecue fundraiser at the Climer family home.

"Wes Climer is a conservative businessman who is leading the fight for term limits, lower taxes and good government reform," Haley said in a news release announcing the endorsement. "If we are going to change the way the Senate works, we are going to have to change Senators."

In picking up the endorsement, Climer joins with other Republican

candidates who have received the governor's backing against longtime GOP incumbents, with hopes from Haley and her supporters to place more allies into the Legislature for the 2017-18 session.

Climer welcomed Haley's endorsement on Wednesday.

"I have been running on fixing the Senate, on making sure government works better and solves problems," he said. "So there's a lot of commonality there."

Climer has received support from a campaign group tied to Haley. TV ads backing Climer are on the air, produced by A Great Day SC, a 527 politi-

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MORE INSIDE

State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman endorses Sen. Wes Hayes, page **6A**.

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HALEY

cal advocacy group.

Hayes said he wasn't surprised Haley got involved in the race behind Climer, since "she's basically been paying for his TV for the past week."

Hayes said he was "disappointed," since he said he's worked to support the governor's priorities this year on funding a roads plan without a tax increase, restructuring the Department of Transportation and reforming

ethics and education.

'TRYING TO ERASE THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP'

Climer is only the latest candidate to get the governor's endorsement.

Haley is also backing former Florence County GOP chairman Richard Skipper in his challenge to Sen. Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, the Senate's president pro tempore and one of the most powerful members of the Legisla-

ture; and Myrtle Beach businessman Scott Pyle in his bid to unseat Sen. Luke Rankin, chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee.

Leatherman and Haley have often clashed on the governor's legislative agenda, and Haley has criticized Rankin for opposing her preferred track on ethics reform. Haley is also doing fundraisers for both Pyle and Skipper this week.

In Georgetown, Haley is endorsing attorney Reese

Boyd in an open GOP contest against current state Rep. Stephen Goldfinch, who voted to raise the gas tax without lowering state income taxes as Haley wanted.

Anyone hoping to attend the Haley fundraiser in Rock Hill at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 9, can RSVP online at bit.ly/1r2TIRu.

Bristow Marchant:
 803-329-4062,
 @BristowatHome

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Haley



Climer



Hayes

Title: **Pro-life groups need to do more**
 Author: JORDAN MORALES
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Pro-life groups need to do more

JORDAN MORALES

Gov. Haley has signed the S.C. Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, a law that will limit abortions past 19 weeks (before, they were limited past 24 weeks). This pro-life victory is largely symbolic. Fewer than 1.5 percent of women have abortions after 19 weeks. In South Carolina, there are generally fewer than 40 such abortions each year (according to the Department of Health and Environmental Control). That's a drop in the bucket when compared to the over 6,500 abortions performed in the state in 2011. However, we need to take small victories where we can get them on this issue, with the daunting *Roe v. Wade* case against us.

Obviously, Planned Parenthood South Carolina is not happy about the law. Their spokeswoman, Alyssa Miller said, "These bills and bans put women's health and lives in jeopardy." Ms. Miller has a job to do, but it should be noted that this not true. The bill specifically has exceptions for the life of the mother as well as for if the baby has an anomaly that will cause it to die. Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg, said the bill was passed because there were so few women in the Legislature. This is also not true, since many other states have passed similar laws with much higher women to men ratios in their legislatures. It's also

somewhat ironic since the bill was signed into law by our first female governor.

While those statements are easy to swat away, another critic's words gave me pause to think. Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg, said, "It is important for us to be able to tell policy makers how they ought to connect the dots, they love the fetus and the uterus. But once it is born, the love seems to disappear."

Those of us who are pro-life know that isn't really true. But there is cause for us to consider that incorrect perception and what we can do to change it. Are we producing conservative solutions to the expenses of daycare? What about maternity/paternity leave? What about prenatal care? What about skills training for single mothers? Most of us know from experience how hard it is to have to take 4-6 weeks off of work unpaid after a child is born, if it is even financially feasible for us. Then after that you have to pay hundreds of dollars a week in daycare, making it impossible for those most likely to get an abortion to be financially secure. I remember having our second child shortly after I got out of the military. My wife had gotten her job less than a year before she gave birth and thus was not eligible

for FMLA. She was able to take four weeks of unpaid leave and then we had to put the kids in daycare. I remember being shocked at the cost, I was used to subsidized daycare in the Air Force and was not prepared for how expensive it was. It is easy to see how prohibitive it is to upward mobility.

It seems to me that the left has a monopoly on the discussion of these issues. It's easy for them to sell their ideas of mandatory paid family leave, free daycare and free prenatal care because there don't seem to be any conservative ideas competing with it for support. To be sure, conservatives must always affirm that a baby in the womb is indeed a life. But it may take a less than pure free-market, dog-eat-dog world mentality to address the periphery issues that surround child rearing. Finding conservative solutions to these problems and pairing them with the abortion restrictions would be the best way to sell the pro-life movement. If we as citizens have ideas, we ought to submit them to our representatives for consideration. What better way to promote the general welfare (words of the Constitution) of this country and state, than to have this conversation and for us to start producing solid conservative ideas to address these specific issues?

Title: **Suit settled eight years after mentally ill inmate dies**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
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Suit settled eight years after mentally ill inmate dies

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - Eight years after a mentally ill inmate being held naked and cold for 11 days died in a South Carolina prison cell, state prison officials and mental health advocates have settled a landmark lawsuit.

If approved by a judge, the agreement would end a class-action lawsuit on behalf of inmates by Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. against the South Carolina Department of Corrections and create an independent process to monitor implementation of the plan to "transform the culture and performance" of prison personnel who deal with inmates with serious mental illnesses.

"This is possibly an historic day for justice, one we have been seeking for a decade," said Gloria Prevost, executive director of Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc.

In 2014, then Judge Michael Baxley found the prison system had violated the constitutional rights of approximately 3,500 inmates with serious mental illness, including Jerome Laudman, who died in 2008 after being held in solitary confinement. The state eventually paid Laudman's estate \$1.2 million to settle a lawsuit.

"The evidence in this case has proved that inmates have died in

the South Carolina Department of Corrections for lack of basic mental health care, and hundreds more remain substantially at risk for serious injury, mental decompensation and profound, permanent mental illness," Baxley wrote after the trial in 2012.

Baxley said at the time it was the most troubling case he had dealt with in 14 years on the bench.

He ordered the prison system to develop a plan of action to improve the handling of inmates with serious mental inmates.

Bryan Stirling, newly appointed then as the director of the prisons, worked to implement changes.

One hundred officers have been trained in crisis intervention, inmates can no longer be sent to solitary confinement for more than 60 days as punishment, and a pilot program has allowed some of those long held in solitary to transition back into the main prison population, Stirling told *The Greenville News* last year.

New inmates are screened more thoroughly for mental health issues, mental health workers are getting proper certifications, and the agency has contracted with a group to follow released prisoners to help them re-

ceive mental health treatment in the community, he said.

The state also has hired a bevy of mental health workers to help inmates.

"This settlement marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another with changes in culture, policy and procedure at SCDC," Stirling said Wednesday. "We will continue the movement towards rehabilitation and comprehensive care for a safer South Carolina."

Prevost credited Stirling for the changes.

"For years we met with stone cold resistance to anything resembling fairness and justice," she said. "It was only after Gov. Haley appointed Bryan Stirling SCDC director that progress was made. Our many discussions convinced us that the new leadership genuinely desired to do the right thing."

The agreement creates milestones with strict timetables, overseen by a panel of independent national experts.

The prison system must achieve and maintain compliance with each component of the plan for at least 18 months to satisfy the agreement, both sides said in a press release.

The state will have four years to implement the remedial guidelines.

Title: **\$4 billion spending plan for roads heads to Haley**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
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LEGISLATURE

\$4 billion spending plan for roads heads to Haley

Nearly 400 bridges would be replaced

Money is roughly 10 percent of the amount needed, Transportation Department says

Governor would have more control of state agency

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

COLUMBIA

A \$4 billion spending plan, sent Wednesday to Gov. Nikki Haley, is a start — but not a fix — to repairing South Carolina's crumbling roads, road-repair advocates said.

The plan includes repairing the interchange of Interstates 20 and 26 known as Malfunction Junction in Columbia, replacing nearly 400 bridges and giving the governor more control of the state Transportation Department. It raises roughly 10 percent of the money needed for road repairs.

The proposal approves using about \$200 million a year to borrow, via bonds, for Transportation Department projects through the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank.

The money would come from diverting revenue from some fees collected by the state Department of Motor Vehicles and the amount raised by the state's sales taxes on vehicles, capped at \$300.

With other Transportation Department money, the bill would yield \$4 billion for road and bridge repairs. Roughly \$40 billion is needed to get the

state's transportation system in excellent condition, the Transportation Department and others say.

"We've got so many crumbling roads and bridges in our state," said Bill Ross, executive director of the S.C. Alliance to Fix Our Roads. Some roads and bridges have deteriorated to the point that they have to be replaced completely, which costs more, Ross said.

The road-repair plan is "a great start," said Rep. Gary Simrill, R-York, who sponsored a gas-tax increase to pay for road repairs that passed the S.C. House in 2015. A higher "gasoline tax is really the only long-term solution" that is not subject to the ups and downs of the state budget, Simrill said Wednesday.

S.C. Chamber of Commerce president Ted Pitts applauded lawmakers for "allocating resources to begin to bring South Carolina's roads out of the disrepair that has hindered commerce and jeopardized the safety of our citizens for too long."

Still, Pitts, a former chief of staff of Gov. Haley, said his business-

advocacy group "will continue the work with our state's leaders to find the long-term solution South Carolinians deserve."

S.C. House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Darlington, urged Haley to sign the roads proposal. "The people of South Carolina should not have to wait any longer for their dangerous roads and bridges to be repaired," said Lucas, who lashed out Tuesday at the Senate and Haley over the then-stalled roads bill.

In a statement, Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, said the roads bill is "a tremendous starting step toward fixing

deficient roads and bridges throughout South Carolina."

The added money could not be used to build any new roads, including building Interstate 73 to Myrtle Beach.

Under the plan, the governor would appoint all eight members of the commission that oversees the Transportation Department. Those appointees would have to be approved by legislators, who now appoint seven of the eight commissioners.

Title: **Haley veto kills bill to keep evaluations of teachers private**
 Author: By SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
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Haley veto kills bill to keep evaluations of teachers private

By **SEANNA ADCOX**
 Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley's veto has killed legislation exempting teacher evaluations from public disclosure,



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HALEY**

but the Republican governor said she will support a better-written bill next year.

Haley said she recognizes the bill's intent is to promote a more candid evaluation process, but she said it is too broad.

The one-sentence measure exempts educator evaluations with "personally identifiable information" from the state's Freedom of Information Act.

Haley said that allows school districts to withhold

any record related to an evaluation, including information on teacher misconduct that should be publicly available, she wrote in her veto message signed Friday.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Kenny Bingham, said he supports the veto, as he didn't intend to create a potential loophole.

"We're working on language now to fix it," he said.

The House voted unanimously Tuesday to sustain Haley's veto, after Bingham took the podium to make the rare request that they do so. It marked Haley's first successful veto this year.

Bingham, R-Cayce, said he introduced the bill as a precaution after the state Department of Education introduced a new evaluation process.

The House passed the bill unanimously last year. The Senate passed it 35-1 two weeks ago.

Title: **Roads bill causes rift at Statehouse**
 Author: Associated Press
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Roads bill causes rift at Statehouse

House speaker faults Senate, governor on issue

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — House Speaker Jay Lucas said Tuesday that Gov. Nikki Haley and the Senate will be to blame if legislation intended to start fixing South Carolina's crumbling roads dies this session.

Senators need to pass a bill, and Haley should be demanding it, he said.

Lucas, R-Hartsville, said he tried unsuccessfully to meet earlier Tuesday with the Republican governor. Haley is traveling the state this week endorsing challengers to several Republican legislators.

"It is obvious she believes her time is better spent endorsing opponents of sitting General Assembly members rather than

demand the senators across the hall do their job," he said in a speech that brought applause and standing ovations. "Gov. Haley has actively used her bully pulpit to her advantage throughout this process. But in the eleventh hour, when we should be minutes away from reaching a compromise, her silence proves that she lacks concern for good public policy."

Haley spokeswoman Chaney Adams said legislative leaders know her position.

Two separate measures could allow for \$2 billion in borrowing over 10 years for highway construction, using \$200 million annually in existing fees and vehicle taxes. They could also make governance changes at the Department of Transportation.



JAY
LUCAS