

Title: **Haley names Hall roads chief**  
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com  
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 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



# Haley names Hall roads chief

BY ANDREW SHAIN  
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Christy Hall, in the midst of her second interim stint as the state's transportation secretary, was given the job permanently Wednesday by Gov. Nikki Haley.

Hall, 44, took over the 5,000-employee agency in July — a month after Janet Oakley, a former lobbyist for the trade

group of state transportation departments, announced her resignation after a little more than a year on the job.

Hall, a two-decade veteran of the agency, has been a central

figure in the Transportation Department's response to the historic rainstorm this month that damaged and washed away hundreds of bridges and roads, from Columbia to Charleston.

The agency's former deputy secretary for engi-

**SEE HALL, 6A**

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## HALL

neering, Hall provided public updates, and coordinated debris cleanup and repairs, including underwater work needed to a 13-mile stretch of Interstate 95 after bridges in Clarendon County were damaged. While that interstate has reopened, some repairs could take months to complete.

Typically, Haley said, she likes to hire managers from outside state government to run agencies, ensuring she gets a new, different perspective. But the Republican governor said she and Hall think alike about increasing productivity while maintaining quality.

Haley also praised Hall for working to keep up pre-storm road maintenance

schedules while the Transportation Department also was doing storm recovery work.

How to pay for road repairs was a hot topic in the S.C. Legislature months before the storm, but lawmakers and Haley could not reach an agreement.

Before the storm's damage, the agency had estimated it needs an added \$1.5 billion a year through 2040 to expand, maintain and preserve the state's highways, bridges and transit systems. Others, however, have put the amount needed to repair the state's road system at \$400 million a year.

Asked how the storm damage would affect talks about paying for road repairs, Hall said she was not

prepared to discuss that, adding that the transportation agency is still in recovery mode.

The Transportation Department is funded mostly by the state's 16.75-cent-a-gallon gas tax and federal 18.4-cent-a-gallon gas tax. Some lawmakers would like to raise the state gas tax to pay for road repairs.

Hall will earn \$139,167 a year as transportation secretary. Her appointment must be approved by the state Senate.

Hall was the acting secretary for three months before Oakley was appointed in 2014. During that time, Hall dealt with another large weather event — a snow and ice storm that blanketed much of the Midlands and Upstate.

## Christy Hall

*The new S.C. Department of Transportation secretary*

**Age:** 44

**Resides:** Saluda County

**Education:** Clemson University, bachelor's degree in civil engineering

**Experience:** Has worked at the Transportation Department for two decades, including serving as deputy secretary for engineering, deputy secretary for finance and procurement, program manager, and district construction engineer and administrator



Hall

Title: **DSS says it needs an extra \$32.6 million, 157 more workers**  
 Author: BY JAMIESELF jself@thestate.com  
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## PROTECTIVE SERVICES

# DSS says it needs an extra \$32.6 million, 157 more workers

BY JAMIE SELF

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South Carolina's welfare agency will ask for about \$32.6 million in new funding next year, in part to hire more workers to help the embattled agency protect children and vulnerable adults.

The agency wants 157 new full-time positions, S.C. Department of Social Services Director Susan Alford told a panel of Senate budget writers Wednesday.

The request for more money and workers comes

SEE DSS, 5A

## Federal food aid in disaster areas

Some residents of S.C. counties declared federal disaster areas soon will have help buying food.

Starting next week, residents of counties hit hardest by this month's flooding will be able to apply for SNAP – or food stamp – benefits

specifically for disaster victims, Social Services Director Susan Alford said.

A family of three would receive about \$511 in aid.

## DSS

as Social Services struggles to lower persistently high caseloads among its workers, endangering children who are in the agency's care.

The General Assembly approved more than 250 new staff positions for the agency in this year's budget, including 177 new caseworkers. The agency has filled 120 of those positions. But the new workers take time to train and get in the field, Alford said. In the past three weeks, 71 newly hired caseworkers completed basic training.

The agency also has hired 28 of the 67 new caseworker assistants legislators authorized to ease caseworkers' administrative duties.

Last year, Alford succeeded Lillian Koller, who resigned as director amid a furor over overworked child welfare workers and children dying while in the agency's care. Rising caseloads contributed to high turnover among workers and low employee morale, two challenges Alford says she has worked to fix.

However, high caseloads persist, Alford said. The agency has 142 child welfare caseworkers with more than 50 cases each to manage, including three staffers with more than 100 cases each.

In Richland and Spartanburg, two high-population counties, the number of caseworkers with more than 50 cases apiece to manage has gone up since the beginning of the year.

Alford, in her ninth month leading the agency, said she expects heavy caseloads to drop in January, when new caseworkers are ready to take on cases.

But the agency also expects its cases to continue increasing. Additional regional call centers have opened, fielding reports of abuse and neglect.

The rollout of four regional call centers since January has led to a spike in cases. Alford has postponed opening other regional call centers, unable to address the rise in cases.

State Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland, said the agency's budget request should be a top priority when lawmakers return to work in January, when more money for roads, educa-

tion and assisting with the state's flood recovery will all be "No. 1s" with budget writers.

"To me, nothing could be more important than protecting vulnerable adults and children," Lourie said.

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**NOTHING COULD BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN.”**

**State Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland**

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File photograph

DSS Director Susan Alford, left, and Gov. Nikki Haley

Title: **Haley nominates Hall to lead SCDOT**  
 Author: BY GAVIN JACKSON [gjackson@postandcourier.com](mailto:gjackson@postandcourier.com)  
 Size: 41.38 square inch  
 Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



# Haley nominates Hall to lead SCDOT

BY GAVIN JACKSON  
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COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley on Wednesday nominated Christy Hall, the state Department of Transportation's interim chief, to lead the cash-strapped agency.

Hall, 44, has been filling in for former Secretary Janet Oakley since July, after Oakley announced her resignation in June.

Hall's appointment was postponed due to the floods, Haley said during a news conference. Hall will still need to be confirmed by the Senate.

"We saw the work that she was doing. She had not only handled the winter storm well, we knew that she knew the agency better than anyone else," Haley said. "We knew that she had not only the knowledge of the agency but the knowledge of the people, which is always very

important to be a good leader in an agency."

Haley said Hall's work to re-open roads and bridges damaged by the historic flooding reinforced her decision to appoint her. "You saw what it looks like to see this partnership at work,"

Haley said.

Charleston Republican Sen. Larry Grooms, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, applauded the decision.

"Even the harshest critics of the SCDOT were blown away by their phenomenal response to the unprecedented damage to our state's highway network," Grooms said in a statement. "Christy Hall has certainly earned the top spot at SCDOT, and I congratulate Governor Haley on selecting her to be the next S.C. Secretary of Transportation."

Hall has served the agency as deputy secretary for engineering since May 2014. Filling that spot will be one of her "first orders of business" she said. Before that, she was deputy secretary of finance and procurement from 2011 to 2014.

"I believe my experience is going to lend quite well to this position," Hall said at a Statehouse press conference. "Obviously, I understand the organization very well and have a lot of great relationships that I've built over the years, and I will certainly use those to help move the agency forward."

Hall has more than two decades of service at the S.C. Department of Transportation. She began her career in road design and has held numerous management positions.

Hall's most recent salary with

the agency was approximately \$139,000. Records show former director Oakley earned a \$156,000 salary.

Hall is a Clemson University graduate with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. She is a registered professional engineer in the state of South Carolina.

She lives in Saluda County.

## Palmetto Politics

To stay up-to-date on South Carolina politics, go to [palmettopolitics.com](http://palmettopolitics.com) or download the Palmetto Politics app for iOS or Android.



## Video

To see a video of the news conference, go to [postandcourier.com/videos](http://postandcourier.com/videos).

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GAVIN JACKSON/STAFF

**Gov. Nikki Haley (left) announced the nomination of Christy Hall to be the state's Transportation Secretary during a news conference Wednesday in Columbia.**





Title: **Seeking progress, plaintiffs in adequate education suit ask court to waive deadlines**

Author: BY CYNTHIA ROLDAN [croldan@postandcourier.com](mailto:croldan@postandcourier.com)

Size: 21.85 square inch

Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289

# Seeking progress, plaintiffs in adequate education suit ask court to waive deadlines

BY CYNTHIA ROLDAN  
[croldan@postandcourier.com](mailto:croldan@postandcourier.com)

COLUMBIA — The plaintiffs in the adequate-education lawsuit have asked the S.C. Supreme Court to waive interim deadlines imposed on the General Assembly.

Carl Epps, attorney for the plaintiffs in the 22-year-old case of Abbeville County School District vs. South Carolina, said the filing made Wednesday aims to do "our best to eliminate any dispute that we have with the state."

Epps offered to amend the order to eliminate the expert panel and allow the court to

appoint a court expert.

The response also requests the Supreme Court eliminate several interim target dates, as long as the Legislature produces a plan to improve education in rural and poor districts by the end of the 2016 legislative session.

Plaintiffs sided with the court, however, against the state's leaders' argument that the court is violating the separation of powers doctrine.

On Monday, Gov. Nikki Haley and other Republican leaders asked the state

Supreme Court to throw out the Sept. 24 order that requires the Legislature produce that plan by Feb. 1.

The order came with several target dates, including an Oct. 15 deadline calling for the creation of a panel of experts that would review the plan to improve the schools and prepare a written report for the court.

In a statement Wednesday, House Speaker Jay Lucas said the plaintiffs' petition validated the state's leadership's argu-

ment and confirms that the plaintiffs believe the House's panel that's been working since earlier this year to find a solution is making progress.

"The court's arbitrary deadlines and improper super-panel will not help the House and the plaintiffs reach our common objective of reforming South Carolina's education system," Lucas said.

Reach **Cynthia Roldan** at (843) 577-7111.

Title: **Dorchester on FEMA list**  
 Author: Staff and wire reports  
 Size: 8.37 square inch  
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## Dorchester on FEMA list

*Staff and wire reports*

Gov. Nikki Haley announced six more South Carolina counties, including Dorchester, are now eligible for help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to recover from this month's severe flooding. County, Haley's office said that Lee, Clarendon, Horry, Orangeburg and Sumter counties can now receive help in all categories in which FEMA provides public aid.

This assistance allows state agencies, local governments and some nonprofits to recoup the costs of storm response, debris removal and damage to infrastructure. FEMA storm aid is now available for individuals in 22 counties affected by the storm, including in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties.

In addition to Dorchester County, a new FEMA disaster recovery center has opened in Summerville at the Seacoast Church, 301 E. 5th North St. It is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

Title: Deal with S.C. dam dangers

Author:

Size: 32.55 square inch

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## Editorials

# *Deal with S.C. dam dangers*

Of course it was the rain. Seventeen inches fell on Richland County in a 24-hour period. There's not much people can do about Mother Nature on a rampage.

But as the Midlands sorts out what happened to cause such severe flooding, property damage and deaths, the finger points to dams. South Carolina has about 50,400 of them. Thirty-six of them were breached because of the rain.

Unfortunately, the state also has one of the most poorly funded dam inspection departments in the country — and plenty of old dams that could use close attention and even rehabilitation. Most of the dams are earthen and privately owned. Many were built to make lakes and ponds for subdivisions.

It is impossible to say whether better inspection and maintenance of dams in the state would have mitigated the hazard. But clearly, having seen the stunning damage that resulted from their being compromised, the state should re-examine its dam protocol, improve it where necessary and fund it adequately.

Gov. Nikki Haley has said the state is “reconfiguring the way we do dams.”

Much of the devastation in Columbia and the Midlands was a product of a chain of events. Rising waters breached one dam, releasing rushing water that breached the next one down the line and then the next. And water swept over the top of some that didn't break.

Some experts say South Carolina has been fortunate that more dams have not broken before this because of their number and their age, and because of insufficient funding for DHEC.

In the wake of the 1,000-year flood, DHEC is inspecting dams across the state and ordering that actions be taken as quickly as possible at those where damage could eventually threaten public safety. While DHEC insists that there is “no immediate threat to public safety at this time,” the agency has hired an outside engineering firm to examine a number of dams in the Gills Creek watershed, where flooding was the worst.

Gov. Haley has assured the public that all regulated dams will be inspected by Oct. 25.

DHEC said last week that 390 dams had been assessed and 63 have been ordered to address problems. Dam owners are responsible for maintaining the structural integrity of their dams. They could be ordered to lower the water level or empty the reservoir. If an owner decides to repair or replace a dam, his plans will have to win approval from DHEC.

In light of the spate of broken dams, DHEC should hold owners to account for repairing or replacing them using updated methods and materials that are structurally able to withstand historic weather conditions.

And it should establish a schedule to inspect all the dams under its governance as often as national standards deem wise.



Title: **Interim S.C. DOT leader Hall gets job full time**  
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press  
 Size: 34.1 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



## S.C. RAINSTORM

# Interim S.C. DOT leader Hall gets job full time

BY JEFFREY COLLINS  
 Associated Press

**Haley to ask Senate to make  
Christy Hall the state roads  
agency's permanent director**

**Hall will be agency's third  
director in two years**

### COLUMBIA

The interim director of the S.C. Department of Transportation did such a good job helping rebuild South Carolina roads after this month's massive floods that Gov. Nikki Haley decided to ignore her typical practice of looking for an outsider to run state agencies.

Haley announced Wednesday she will ask the state Senate to make 20-year DOT engineer

Christy Hall the permanent director of the state's roads agency.

The governor said she offered Hall the job on Sept. 30, but couldn't make the announcement before the massive floods from Oct. 3 to Oct. 5 crippled the road network. Nearly 600 roads and bridges were washed out or damaged. Crews have fixed all but about 150 of them.

"Now I don't have to give you a list of credentials because you saw her in action," Haley said.

But Hall will also face challenges that affected the DOT

long before the waters started to rise. The state's roads have been crumbling for years, with some estimates saying DOT needs \$500 million extra a year for decades just to get roads to fair condition.

The DOT also still has a board, with seven of eight members picked by the Legislature. That leaves the agency director to balance the sometimes competing wishes of the governor and lawmakers.

Hall is the third director at DOT in less than two years.

"The last two DOT secretaries have been disasters mainly because they did not have the

**SEE DOT, 6A**

## FROM PAGE 3A

# DOT

intuitional knowledge of the agency," said Sen. Larry Grooms, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee.

Grooms said Hall has worked countless hours since the floods and shown leadership right down to the local level of

her agency.

"She has been nothing short of phenomenal," the Charleston Republican said. "When a leader was needed, a leader stepped up."

Hall said all she will deal with the ongoing problems of poor road

maintenance once this crisis has passed.

"We're still very much focused on recovery efforts. That has taken a lot of my time," Hall said.

Hall has an engineering degree from Clemson and also worked in road design

and financing in her 20-plus years with the agency.

This is the second time Hall has been interim director. During the three months she temporarily had the role in 2014, a February ice storm forced crews to work around the

Title: **Interim S.C. DOT leader Hall gets job full time**  
Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press  
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clock trying to keep roads passable, then removing trees that blocked highways. Hall, who praised DOT employees for working as hard as she does, said she is ready to show leadership outside of a crisis.

“I’m grateful there are no volcanoes in South Carolina,” she said. “It seems like I end up being in the leadership position whenever we have natural disasters.”



Hall

Title: **Interim DOT leader gets job full time**  
Author: JEFFREY COLLINS ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Size: 9.3 square inch  
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## Interim DOT leader gets job full time

JEFFREY COLLINS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley is giving interim South Carolina Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall the job permanently.

Haley announced her latest cabinet appointment Wednesday, after Hall has spent weeks directing repairs to nearly 600 roads and bridges washed out or damaged in this month's massive floods. Crews have fixed all but about 150 of those roads.

Hall is receiving high marks for her work after the flood.

But South Carolina's road network was crumbling long before the waters rose. Some estimates say roads need \$500 million extra a year for decades just to get to fair condition.

The DOT also still has a board, with seven of eight members picked by the Legislature. That leaves the agency director to balance the sometimes competing wishes of the governor and lawmakers.

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Title: **More state counties added to FEMA list**

Author:

Size: 4.80 square inch

Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

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### **More state counties added to FEMA list**

Gov. Nikki Haley said six more South Carolina counties are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency aid to recover from this month's flooding. This allows state agencies, local governments and some non-profits to recoup the costs of storm response, debris removal and damage to infrastructure. Haley's office says Clarendon, Dorchester, Horry, Lee, Orangeburg and Sumter counties can now receive help. FEMA storm aid is also now available for individuals in 22 counties. — AP

Title: **SBA leader urges flooded SC businesses to ask for help**  
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
 Size: 50.06 square inch  
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# SBA leader urges flooded SC businesses to ask for help

**TIM SMITH**

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COLUMBIA - The administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration is urging South Carolina businesses and homeowners damaged by flooding earlier this month to contact her agency for help, after touring areas in Columbia damaged by the water.

The federal agency offers low-interest business loans of up to \$2 million, homeowner loans of up to \$200,000 to repair or replace damaged primary residences, as well as loans of up to \$40,000 to replace damaged personal property and loans for "economic injury" to a business.

"I've been through disasters," Maria Contreras-Sweet, the SBA administrator, said standing behind a title-loan building destroyed by flooding. "I know what it's like to be desperate, to try and preserve your business. This is not the time to have too much pride. This is the time to pick up the phone and call those who are ready and want to help you."

She said thus far her agency has received 1,600 loan applications in the state and 110 have been approved for a total of \$2.5 million.

The loan payback periods are long and the interest rates charged are below-market, Contreras-Sweet said.

Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin encouraged residents to use the services. "This is probably the cheapest capital you are going to find out there for small businesses."

Contreras-Sweet met with Gov. Nikki Haley on Wednesday morning, then toured some of the damaged areas of Columbia.

"What I've always been impressed by when I

come out to these disasters is that this brings out the best in Americans," she said. "And I see here that it has brought out the best in the communities of South Carolina."

Neither Benjamin nor Contreras-Sweet said they had any figures for how many businesses had been damaged by the flood.

They urged those that were, whether by physical damage or by stopped or reduced business, to contact the Small Business Administration before application deadlines in December.

The agency also announced Wednesday it is offering loans for damages sustained by private non-profit agencies that do not provide government services. Such agencies include schools, colleges, community centers, homeless shelters, food kitchens, museums and libraries.

Eligible non-profits can apply for loans of up to \$2 million, with interest rates of 2.6 percent and payback periods of up to 30 years, according to the agency.

Those interested in an SBA loan, or any service offered by the agency, can call the agency's customer service center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing) or by sending an email to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).

Applicants may apply online using the electronic loan application via the SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

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TIM SMITH

The administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration, Maria Contreras-Sweet, left, came to Columbia Wednesday.