

Title: **No apologies from 3 Rec Commission board members**
 Author: BY JOHN MONK jmonk@thestate.com
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'SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT'

No apologies from 3 Rec Commission board members

Members targeted by Gov. Haley defend themselves, say news media's false reports have made things worse

BY JOHN MONK
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The three Richland County Recreation Commission members who chose not to resign but to fight Gov. Nikki Haley's decision to fire them had no apologies when they showed up Wednesday at a hearing called by the governor to give them a chance to say why they shouldn't be fired for gross mismanagement and neglect of duty.

During an almost three-hour session at the House of Representatives' Blatt Building, the three board members – chair J. Marie Green, vice-chair Barbara Mickens and Thomas Clark – offered spirited defenses and no excuses.

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Haley asked them to listen to the commissioners and make a recommendation about whether the three should be removed from office.

Green, Mickens and Clark each gave an opening statement and then were questioned by the hearing officers.

"I'm here today to try to set the record straight

And they said news media reports about their commission were false, inflammatory and made matters worse.

In recent days, four board members – Weston Furgess Jr., Wilbert Lewis, George Martin and Joseph Weeks – chose to resign rather than to contest Haley's decision to remove them from office.

The hearing was conducted by three Haley-appointed lawyers with experience in labor and business law: Tommy Lydon, Derrick Williams, both of Columbia, and Ashley Cuttino of Greenville.

SEE REC, 6A

based on facts and not on a narrative being advanced to attack my good name," Green said. She told the hearing officers a conspiracy was being

promulgated by former commission employees who are suing the commission.

At 90 minutes, Green, who has been on the board since 2002, spoke



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longest and answered numerous questions from the hearing officers and told them how race played into controversies that enveloped the recreation commission.

"They did not like me as a person, and they did not like African-Americans," she said, describing one attempt by political opponents to oust her as commission chair.

Mickens, who has been on the commission since 2008, told the hearing officers she was saddened by false allegations, adding, "I'm here to clear my good name."

Charges against the commissioners involve numerous allegations of mismanagement, ignoring nepotism and employee complaints about sexual harassment at the commission that led to a hos-

tile work environment for many of its employees, according to allegations in legal documents.

Earlier this year, the commissioners' longtime executive director, James A. Brown III, was indicted by a Richland County grand jury on charges of misconduct in office. The indictment alleged a pattern of sexual harassment of employees who worked for him.

One complaint against the commissioners was that they had given Brown a huge raise, making his salary \$151,800, at a time when they knew about but chose to ignore that he was the subject of numerous sexual harassment complaints.

Hearing officer Williams asked Green about another complaint - that numerous family mem-

bers of top people at the commission worked there. Telling Green that Brown had a son, a brother and four nieces working at the Recreation Commission, he asked, "Did anyone see any problem with that?"

"No one," replied Green. "No one even suggested anything about it."

Green also said there was nothing wrong about her having four members of her family employed at the commission. "They had the right to work, just like anybody else has the right to work."

Under state law, lawmakers who represent Richland County at the State House recommend appointments to the Recreation Commission board, and the governor makes the formal appointment. A majority of the

Richland legislative delegation in October asked Haley to remove all but Lewis and Clark from office.

Clark, appointed to the board in February, said he respected the governor's authority to fire the entire board, but asked her to note that he is a recent appointee and was not involved in nearly all the controversies. With his long background in youth sports and activities, he said, he has a lot to offer as a board member.

After Wednesday's session, Haley's hearing officers said they will make recommendations to the governor, who will make the final decision on whether the remaining board members should stay or go.

They had no timetable for a decision.

Title: **ETV president to step down**
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ETV president to step down

■ **The president of SC ETV and SC Public Radio is stepping down after seven years on the job. Linda O'Bryon will leave her post next fall.**

From Staff and Wire Reports

The president and CEO of S.C. ETV and SC Public Radio announced plans to step down after seven years on the job.

Linda O'Bryon told the S.C. ETV Commission she will leave her post next fall, according to a Wednesday news release.

"It has been my great honor to serve the citizens of South Carolina through heading up one of the nation's leading state networks," O'Bryon said in a statement. "I am leaving at a time when ETV has re-ignited production of local and national programming with support from donors and underwriters. At the same time, we have seen renewed support from the General Assem-

bly to shore up an infrastructure that is a huge and important backbone for digital education in the schools, emergency communications and transparency."

O'Bryon started her career as a news reporter, and she has worked at all levels of broadcasting for 45 years, with 40 of those in public media.

Her tenure at ETV included a 2011 move to state-of-the-art facilities in the ETV Telecommunications Center, near Williams-Brice Stadium, as well as the launch of a number of national and local program series/specials. But there also were budget cuts, as well as changes in the way the organization is funded under

Gov. Nikki Haley.

A Washington, D.C., native, O'Bryon graduated from the University of Miami with a major in journalism and minor in economics. She was the founding executive editor of Nightly Business Report. The show debuted in 1979, when the country was stricken by oil shortages and long gas lines and the network anchor told viewers whether the stock market was up or down. The economy was on most people's minds, much as it is today.

"There was no other business news at that time," she previously

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O'BRYON

said. "There was no CNBC. There was no daily business news." O'Bryon co-anchored the program daily for more than a decade.

In 2010, she came to ETV from San Francisco, where the then-61-year-old was a chief content officer at KQED/Northern California Public Broadcasting.

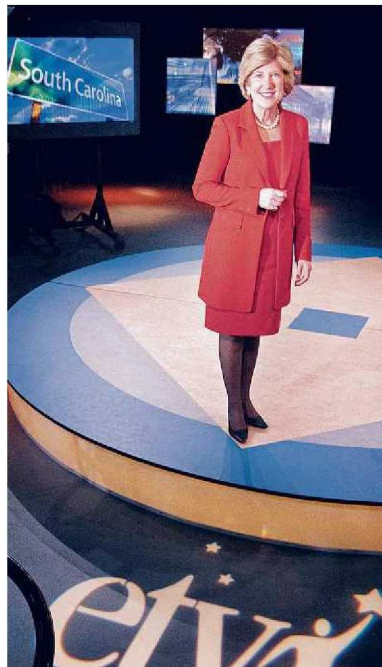
"Linda O'Bryon came to

ETV when the agency was most in need of the strong, steady leadership she immediately provided," said Brent Nelsen, who chairs the ETV Commission. "Over the last six years she has succeeded in making the organization a more nimble, entrepreneurial and customer-oriented organization. Ms. O'Bryon has left a

deep and lasting mark on ETV to the benefit of all South Carolinians."

A committee of ETV commissioners and ETV Endowment Board members will oversee a search process for a successor, Nelsen said, adding O'Bryon will help with the process to ensure a smooth transition.

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GERRY MELENDEZ Gerry Melendez

Linda O'Bryon took over as president of ETV when the state-funded company suffered from budget and personnel cuts.

Title: **Haley: \$64 million for Matthew damage**

Author:

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**Haley: \$64 million for Matthew damage**

Gov. Nikki Haley plans to seek about \$64 million in next year's budget to cover damage from Hurricane Matthew not covered by federal emergency aid. The governor's office released estimates Wednesday that found the state has to pay about \$33.5 million for items such as debris removal, damage to public buildings and infrastructure, as well as evacuations along the coast. The estimates find the state is also on the hook for \$30.4 million to cover damage to roads not covered by federal aid.

— AP

Title: **On Democrats – and playing the Nazi card**
 Author: LARRY ELDER COLUMNIST
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On Democrats – and playing the Nazi card

LARRY ELDER

COLUMNIST

Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., the odds-on favorite to become the Democratic National Committee's chairman, had a long association with the anti-Semitic Nation of Islam. He compared then-President George W. Bush and 9/11 to Adolf Hitler and the destruction of the Reichstag, the German parliament building: "9/11 is the juggernaut in American history and it allows ... it's almost like, you know, the Reichstag fire," Ellison said. "After the Reichstag was burned, they blamed the Communists for it, and it put the leader of that country (Hitler) in a position where he could basically have authority to do whatever he wanted."

Comparing Republicans to Nazis has long been a national pastime of the Democratic Party.

During the 1964 Goldwater/Johnson presidential race, Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater accepted an invitation to visit an American military installation located in Bavaria, Germany. On "CBS Evening News," hosted by Walter Cronkite, correspondent Daniel Schorr said: "It is now clear that Sen. Goldwater's interview with Der Spiegel, with its hard line appealing to right-wing elements in Germany, was only the start of a move to link up with his opposite numbers in Germany." The reaction shot — when the cameras returned to Cronkite — showed the "most trusted man in America" gravely shaking his head. When Goldwater accepted the Republican nomination, Democratic California Gov. Pat Brown said, "The stench of fascism is in the air."

About Ronald Reagan, Steven F. Hayward, author of "The Age Of Reagan" wrote: "Liberals hated Reagan in the 1980s. Pure and simple. They used language that would make the most fervid anti-Obama rhetoric of the Tea

Party seem like, well, a tea party. Democratic Rep. William Clay of Missouri charged that Reagan was 'trying to replace the Bill of Rights with fascist precepts lifted verbatim from Mein Kampf.'"

After Republicans took control of the House in the mid-'90s, Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., compared the newly conservative-controlled House to "the Duma and the Reichstag," referring to the legislature set up by Czar Nicholas II of Russia and the parliament of the German Weimar Republic that brought Hitler to power.

About President George W. Bush, billionaire Democratic contributor George Soros said, "(He displays the) supremacist ideology of Nazi Germany," and that his administration used rhetoric that echoes his childhood in occupied Hungary. "When I hear Bush

say, 'You're either with us or against us,' " Soros said, "it reminds me of the Germans." He also said: "The (George W.) Bush administration and the Nazi and communist regimes all engaged in the politics of fear. ... Indeed, the Bush administration has been able to improve on the techniques used by the Nazi and communist propaganda machines."

Former Vice President Al Gore said: "(George W. Bush's) executive branch has made it a practice to try and control and intimidate news organizations, from PBS to CBS to Newsweek. ... And every day, they unleash squadrons of digital brown shirts to harass and hector any journalist who is critical of the President."

Actor/singer and activist Harry Belafonte, who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., called Bush a racist. When asked whether the number and prominence of blacks in the Bush administration perhaps suggested a

lack of racism, Belafonte said, "Hitler had a lot of Jews high up in the hierarchy of the Third Reich."

NAACP Chairman Julian Bond played the Nazi card several times. Speaking at historically black Fayetteville State University in North Carolina in 2006, Bond said, "The Republican Party would have the American flag and the swastika flying side by side."

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, who dared to rein in excessive public employee compensation packages, received the full Nazi treatment. The hard-left blog Libcom.org posted in 2011: "Scott Walker is a fascist, perhaps not in the classical sense since he doesn't operate in the streets, but a fascist nonetheless. ... He is a fascist, for his program takes immediate and direct aim at (a sector of) the working class."

After the 2012 Republican National Convention, California Democratic Party Chairman John Burton said, "(Republicans) lie, and they don't care if people think they lie. As long as you lie, (Nazi propaganda minister) Joseph Goebbels — the big lie — you keep repeating it."

The chairman of the South Carolina Democratic Party, Dick Harpootlian, in 2012, compared the state's Republican governor to Hitler's mistress. When told that the Republicans were holding a competing press conference at a NASCAR Hall of Fame basement studio, Harpootlian told the South Carolina delegation: "(Gov. Nikki Haley) was down in the bunker, a la Eva Braun."

If not the Nazi card, it's the race card or the sexist card or the homophobic card. This "I'm right; you're evil" brand of politics has a lot to do with why voters elected Donald Trump, rather than Hillary "basket of deplorables" Clinton, to serve as our next president.

Title: **Horry, Georgetown legislators full speed ahead on gas tax**
 Author: BY CHLOE JOHNSON cjohnson@thesunnews.com
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Horry, Georgetown legislators full speed ahead on gas tax

BY CHLOE JOHNSON

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State legislators representing Horry and Georgetown counties signaled road and bridge work as their top priorities in a panel Tuesday.

State senators and representatives at the event, organized by the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, indicated support for a gas tax to permanently fund transportation infrastructure improvements. South Carolina has the second-lowest gas tax in the country.

State Rep. Alan Clemmons, R-Myrtle Beach, said he had supported an effort in the last legislative session, which was unsuccessful, to enact a rise in the tax.

"I will likely vote for it again," Clemmons said. "I believe we need to have a sustainable mechanism by

which we can support our roads and bridges."

All the attending lawmakers signaled support for the measure, including S.C. Sens. Luke Rankin, R, Ronnie Saab, D, and Stephen Goldfinch, R; and S.C. Reps. Greg Duckworth, R, Lee Hewitt, R, Jeff Johnson, R and Russell Fry, R.

Johnson said he was in favor of a credit to state residents to reduce the burden of the tax, and Duckworth said he could be in favor of some of the proceeds supporting mass transit.

Some also bemoaned recent environmentalist backlash to projects like International Drive.

"I really, really, really am perturbed with what's going on lately with, let's call them 'environmental zealousness,' stopping very necessary infrastructure projects," Goldfinch said. "There's no reason why one person can write a letter, essentially, pay their filing fee and stop a \$100 million road project. It's just not right."

Clemmons said he hopes active environmental groups would be cooperative as new projects, like Interstate 73, come online. That roadway would run from Interstate 95 to Myrtle Beach.

Clemmons was optimistic about the interstate however, and said lawmakers are pushing for federal funding. Legislators also said new leadership at the top of state government, with Republican Gov. Nikki Haley leaving for a spot in the administration of President-Elect Donald Trump, could mean

some legislation would encounter less resistance in Columbia.

Haley vetoed multiple bills last legislative session, including one that would have required moped drivers to wear helmets and reflective vests, one that granted \$40 million in aid to farmers and another that allowed municipalities like Myrtle Beach to extend a sales tax slated for tourism advertising without a referendum. State lawmakers later overrode the farm aid cuts and the sales tax veto.

Rankin, who has clashed with the state's top elected official several times, said, "I am looking most forward to Gov. Haley becoming UN Ambassador."

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Title: **McMaster gets added security detail at his home**
 Author: BY BRISTOW MARCHANT bmarchant@thestate.com
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McMaster gets added security detail at his home

■ In a sign of his impending elevation to governor, a Bureau of Protective Services team has set up in his front yard.

BY BRISTOW MARCHANT
bmarchant@thestate.com

Henry McMaster has not yet made any public comment on his move into the Governor's Mansion, but part of the mansion already has come to him.

The lieutenant governor's private residence now has a security detail from the state Bureau of Protective Services, the agency that normally provides security for the governor.

An emergency communications trailer has been set up in

the median of Columbia's Senate Street, outside McMaster's home. A Protective Services car could be seen parked nearby Tuesday.

McMaster will assume the state's highest office if Gov. Nikki Haley is confirmed as the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, following her nomination by President-elect Donald Trump.

McMaster and Haley met last week to plan the transition between their two offices, according to a news release Tuesday from the lieutenant governor's office.

McMaster also has named two Columbia-area businessmen, Ed McMullen and Bill Stern, to lead his transition.

McMullen is a former executive at the conservative Heritage Foundation and the S.C.

Policy Council who recently chaired Trump's S.C. presidential campaign. Stern, a developer, is chairman emeritus and a current board member of the S.C. Ports Authority.

While the transition could be months away, the state's security agencies already are treating South Carolina's second-in-command as an incoming chief

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MCMASTER

executive.

"This would be the same protocol that we use for the governor-elect during the transition following an election," said Sherri Iacobelli, communications director for the S.C. Department of Public Safety, which includes the Bureau of Protective Services.

Protective Services will provide security for the next governor's home before McMaster moves into the Governor's Mansion. McMaster also has been provided with a State Law Enforcement Division-led security detail, which also includes officers from Public Safety and the Department of Natural Resources, for his personal security.

There are other signs McMaster is moving into the governor's role.

McMaster will fill in for Haley as the chair of Friday's meeting of the S.C. Military Base Task Force, which brings together the governor with the commanding officers of the state's military bases.

Public Safety officials did not provide a cost associated with the extra security Tuesday, although Iacobelli said it

was "within the normal scope of our duties and would be done with any transfer of power."

"The cost would be absorbed into our day-to-day budget and operating expenses," she said.

SLED spokesman Thom Berry declined to cite a cost difference between the protection McMaster would receive as an incoming governor and the security service he already receives as lieutenant

governor. He cited the agency's policy of not disclosing any specifics pertaining to security operations.

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As Lt. Gov.
Henry
McMaster
prepares
to move
into the
governor's
office,
Protective
Services
has set up
a post in
front of his
home.

Title: **AmbassadorHaley? Whatajoke**

Author:

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**Ambassador Haley?
What a joke**

After trashing everyone and everything, in the most disgusting terms, for the past

year, Donald Trump has suddenly turned into a sweetheart who loves everything and everyone, including several people who are unqualified for major positions in his administration. Nikki Haley would be one of those.

I'd suggest that the Marine Band forget about "Hail to the Chief," and start working on "Send in the Clowns."

*- David Sennema
West Columbia*

Title: **Hoping for many 'great days' as Haley heads to U.N.**

Author:

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In our view

Hoping for many 'great days' as Haley heads to U.N.

United States president-elect Donald Trump's appointment of South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley as ambassador to the United Nations was, in spite of all the speculation leading up to the announcement, a shock to many. The Republican governor has, after all, been a very outspoken critic of the president-elect, dating all the way back to the state's presidential primary elections when she backed former candidate Marco Rubio. Whether this is an attempt by the future president to heal rifts in his own political party or, as some speculate, a more concerted effort to keep a political enemy close, we can't say and, in the end, it will not matter. We wish Gov. Haley luck because she is going to need it and our nation, in turn, needs for her to succeed.

No doubt, part of the reservations people have with the appointment – apart from the obvious political history between the proposed new ambassador and her new boss – is Haley's lack of experience as a diplomat. It should not be overlooked because, let's face facts, representing the United States in the United Nations is a far cry from serving in the State House and being a

governor. We simply don't know what knowledge Gov. Haley has of global geopolitics and how it will serve her in her new role. But we also should not dismiss outright her background as the daughter of immigrants, as the wife of a soldier who has served overseas and as a governor who has traveled abroad numerous times to negotiate business opportunities for South Carolina. How well those experiences will help her as U.N. ambassador is anyone's guess but it is something to work with at least.

There are also going to be critics of the governor who suppose that she is only accepting the ambassador's position to further her own political ambitions. Well, how is that different from any other political figure being considered for a cabinet position in any administration? It is irrelevant. Our focus instead should be on whether she is the right person for the job and is able to represent our country's interests on the global stage.

For now, we will give Gov. Haley the benefit of a doubt and hope she has an amazing career in diplomacy and international statesmanship. That would be a great day in the United States.

Title: **U.N. post a natural for Gov. Haley step**
 Author: BY ROBERT COSTA The Washington Post
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ANALYSIS

U.N. post a natural step for Gov. Haley

BY ROBERT COSTA

The Washington Post

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley's journey to the United Nations has struck members of both parties as unlikely: the appointment of a Republican with limited foreign policy experience to a Cabinet-level post.

But through the prism of a career bursting with political diplomacy and ambition, it is a natural next step.

Haley, 44, whom President-elect Donald Trump announced last week as his nominee for U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has long shuttled between her party's mainstream and its conservative base, maintaining ties to each wing even as she resists being labeled as "tea party" or "establishment."

And the daughter of Indian immigrants has consistently asserted herself as a voice for both the Republican future and its past traditions.

These contradictory signals and blended alliances have made her an ascendant force as well as occasionally in-

scrutable. She is at once a favorite of the business elite and Mitt Romney and a populist-sounding, Sarah Palin-endorsed Southern executive.

Haley's ability to translate those relationship skills and savvy to the U.N. will almost certainly be crucial in her success – or failure – in navigating the swirling spheres of influence at Turtle Bay.

Not only will she need to explain Trump and his brash foreign policy to the world, but she will be tasked with keeping her place within the president-elect's at times chaotic orbit and within a Republican Party that has cracks across it.

Such a job demands studied knowledge of global politics and statecraft. It also demands nuance and steadiness amid tumult and criticism, which is where Haley's experience is telling.

Her political profile so far is defined more by her steady responses to crisis and competing

pressures than by a particular ideology.

After the killing of nine black churchgoers in Charleston last year, Haley made headlines for her calm and poise in the

following days and spoke out against hate and racism. She called for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the grounds of the state capitol and said that such symbols cause "hurt and pain" even if historic.

On race, Haley said in a subsequent remarks at the National Press Club that "black lives do matter" called her own party "shameful" in its outreach to minority groups.

Before and after that tragedy, she was championed by party officials as a welcome and diverse face.

Yet she rarely if ever challenges the deeply conservative policy doctrines that have dominated the GOP for decades.

Her relationship with Trump is an example of how she can shrug off lingering conflicts and calmly assert a new reality when necessary.

SEE HALEY, 2C

FROM PAGE 1C

HALEY

Earlier this year, as Haley delivered the Republican response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union, she warned viewers against the "siren call of the angriest voices," which was widely

seen as an indirect shot at Trump, and she later endorsed a Trump rival, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla.

Trump called her "weak" on immigration. "I feel very strong about illegal immigration," he

told Fox News at the time. "She doesn't."

To have all of these paths lead to the U.N. seems both odd and oddly understandable.

Having already been elected twice as governor,

serving alongside Trump offers Haley an opportunity to gain credibility as a global leader without being cast as a "globalist" or establishment Republican since she will be linked with Trump, who was



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elevated by the GOP's grass-roots activists.

Haley is also positioned for a future run for national office or an elevation to secretary of state or another Cabinet position in the

coming years, should there be a shake-up.

When Trump roiled the GOP primaries, Haley was trusted by party leaders and encouraged to speak out against his style of

politics but she did so while rarely mentioning his name. It was a messy jumble of gestures, mostly subtle and confusing.

"Some people think that you have to be the loudest voice in the room to make

a difference," Haley said. "That is just not true.

Often, the best thing we can do is turn down the volume."

You might call it diplomatic.



Haley

Title: **Senate leader: 'No ambition' to become lieutenant governor**
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S.C. STATE SENATE

Senate leader: 'No ambition' to become lieutenant governor

BY CASSIE COPE

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State Senate leader Hugh Leatherman has no interest in becoming lieutenant governor, he said in a statement Monday.

If Gov. Nikki Haley is confirmed by the U.S. Senate to become U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster will rise to the governor's office. That would leave vacant the lieutenant governor's seat. Historically, vacancies in that post been filled by the Senate president pro tempore, a position now held by Leatherman.

But a 2014 constitutional amendment has some saying that a Gov. McMaster could appoint another South Carolinian to the lieutenant governor's post.

For now, who would replace McMaster is unclear.

Leatherman, who chairs

the Senate's budget-writing panel and as president pro tempore makes several significant appointments to state boards and commissions, said Monday he does not want to become lieutenant governor, a figurehead position that holds little power.

"I would like to make it very clear that I have no ambition for statewide office," Leatherman said.

He added: "I owe it to the people I represent to continue my service in the Senate and to make the best possible decisions to improve the life for all the people of South Carolina. My constituents re-elected me for that purpose. I am honored to fulfill that pledge. Therefore, I will remain in the Senate."

In 2014, then-Lt. Gov. Glenn McConnell resigned to become president of the College of Charleston. Then-Senate leader John Courson,

R-Richland, was next in line to become lieutenant governor, but he resigned as president pro tem to avoid losing his Senate seat.

That triggered uncertainty over who would become the state's next second-in-command until then-state Sen. Yancey McGill volunteered.

Leatherman then secured enough Senate votes to become president pro tempore.

McGill was the fourth S.C. Senate president pro tempore to become lieutenant governor since 1870, according to state records.

But the office has gone vacant at least six times in its history, after lieutenant governors succeeded governors. The last vacancy was in 1965, when Lt.

Gov. Robert McNair became governor but then-

Senate President Pro Tempore Edgar Brown declined to become lieutenant governor.

“

I OWE IT TO THE PEOPLE I REPRESENT TO CONTINUE MY SERVICE IN THE SENATE AND TO MAKE THE BEST POSSIBLE DECISIONS TO IMPROVE THE LIFE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

*State Senate leader
Hugh Leatherman*

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MATT WALSH

South Carolina Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman said Monday he does not want to become lieutenant governor, a figurehead position that holds little power, if Gov. Nikki Haley is confirmed by the U.S. Senate to become U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.