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Subject: From Gov. Haley's State of the State message

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"I briefly mentioned education earlier, but a conversation about the role of state government would be incomplete without talking more about the state's responsibility to educate our children.

"It is perhaps the most important duty of our state to give South Carolina's children the preparation they need to be successful contributors to our society. Not only for their sake, but for ours.

"Our children are our future workforce, our future business owners, our future legislators, and even our future governors. The quality we give them now is the quality they will return back to South Carolina, the quality that will define our state long after we're gone.

"Last year, the people gave our children a tremendous champion when they elected Mick Zais as our State Superintendent of Education. And standing together, General Zais and I will reform the Department of Education.

"We'll start with the funding formula. As we said during the campaign, we need to educate our children not based on where they happen to be born and raised, but on the fact that they deserve a good, quality education, and they are our future workforce.

"We must also privatize our school bus system. We are one of the last states in the nation to do so, and our government just doesn't need to be in the school bus maintenance business.

"Making this change would deliver our state a check for our old buses. It would deliver our children a new fleet of buses. It would keep our school bus drivers employed while transferring our mechanics to the private sector. And it would put the focus of our Education Department where it needs to be: teaching our kids."

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