

Title: **Haley encourages booting GOP lawmakers**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
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Haley encourages booting GOP lawmakers

Governor criticizes own party

By ANDREW SHAIN
 ashain@thestate.com

COLUMBIA | Five 2016 presidential prospects were supposed to highlight the S.C. Republican Convention on Saturday, but Gov. Nikki Haley grabbed the spotlight to showcase her heated fight against lawmakers in her own party. Haley asked state party delegates to vote out S.C. legislators if they back a bond bill and a roads funding plan that did not include an income tax cut.

See **HALEY** | Page **4C**

HALEY

From Page 1C

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ence of Republican activists gathered in Columbia.

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though South Carolina, how can WE hold our head up when all year I have been fighting my own Republicans?” Haley asked. “These are the people that are supposed to be with me. ... Where’s my army?”

House President Pro Tempore Tommy Pope, a York Republican who was not among the GOP lawmakers on Haley’s list of those backing all of her agenda, said Haley chose the best venue to air her grievances against legislators with a convention filled with Republican activists.

“I wish we could find ways to come together to work for the

good of the people,” Pope said.

With five White House hopefuls speaking at the S.C. Republican convention on Saturday, Haley’s speech highlighting her willingness to fight within her party could be perceived as an audition for a job in a Republican administration.

She also will get national attention when CBS’ morning show plans to air an interview with the governor later this week.

Haley has said repeatedly that she has no plans to leave Columbia before her term ends in January 2019.

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What the presidential hopefuls said

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Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush: "Restoring security means we need to be engaging the world in an appropriate way. By the way, to do that, you shouldn't have any experience in the Obama administration. You shouldn't be riding shotgun with the guy who pulled us back. So I guess that (Democratic front-runner) Hillary Clinton is not going to be the proper person to bring us back to a stable world. ... She has her fingerprint on all these foreign policy disasters."

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz: "We need a president who doesn't serve as an apologist for radical Islamic terrorists. We need a president who says ISIS is the face of evil. ... The single greatest threat to our national security is the threat of the nation of Iran with nuclear weapons. ... Let me give you the very simplest principle of history: If somebody tells you that they want to kill you, believe them."

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham: "I see a country that's going to come back stronger; a country with a military that can take on anybody anywhere and crush them; a country that understands that Israel is not the problem, Israel is the solution; a country where a poor kid in Baltimore has a school worth going to, finally." (Graham also announced that he will retire from the Air Force next month after 33 years of active and reserve service.)

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Former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum: "We understand we need a vision that's inclusive of those Americans without college degrees that they have the opportunity to rise. ... You've got great jobs here in South Carolina manufacturing. ... Those job that are family jobs. Those are jobs of small-town America so we can create the vibrant society we need. ... But what about putting vocational education back in our high schools to get our kids the training they need? That's common sense."



FILE PHOTO BY CHARLES SLATE cslate@thesunnews.com
Gov. Nikki Haley speaks in Conway in 2014.

Title: **Clinton cites Scott shooting in justice reform speech**
 Author:
 Size: 52.39 square inch
 Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



Clinton cites Scott shooting in justice reform speech

The fatal shooting of **Walter Scott** by a North Charleston police officer was one of several examples cited by Democratic presidential front-runner **Hillary Clinton** during a speech last week on criminal justice reform.

Speaking at Columbia University's **David N. Dinkins** Leadership & Public Policy Forum in New York, Clinton called for an end to the era of mass incarceration before she listed several tragic instances of black men being killed by white officers in America.

"From Ferguson to Staten Island to Baltimore, the patterns have become unmistakable and undeniable," she said. "Walter Scott shot in the back in **Charleston, South Carolina**. Unarmed. In debt. And terrified of spending more time in jail for child support payments he couldn't afford."

Clinton, who is just a few weeks into her campaign, added, "We have allowed our criminal justice system to get out of balance. And these recent tragedies should galvanize us to come together as a nation to find our balance again."

Scott was shot April 4 by North Charleston police officer **Michael Slager**, who fired multiple times at Scott's back as he fled from a traffic stop. Scott died at the scene. Slager has been charged with murder.

Clinton is **expected to visit** South Carolina this month, including Charleston.

Catherine Templeton says 'no' to NLRB seat

Former S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control Director **Catherine Templeton** has turned down the idea of sitting on the National Labor Relations Board. But she's still looking at pursuing Charleston's seat in Congress.

Templeton cited multiple reasons last week for opting against being considered for one of the Republican appointments. Among them was that it's a five-year posting. Also, she didn't

want to go through the personal conflict of having to hear and rule on union-related cases.

"There's not a lot of me that's unbiased about unions," she said, adding, "I didn't want to be **Sisyphus** (the Greek figure of fruitless labors) and I didn't want to be a hypocrite."

Templeton, of Mount Pleasant, served for three years as head of DHEC. Before that she was Gov. Nikki Haley's director of the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. At both state agencies, Templeton earned a reputation for saving money and reducing staff.

Templeton has been mentioned as a possible candidate for the **1st Congressional District** seat currently held by Republican U.S. Rep. **Mark Sanford**. That door is still open. "I need to decide in the next couple of months," she said.

The return of Rocky D

Conservative radio talk show host **Rocky D** is making a comeback.

Three months after he was

let go from WQSC-AM 1340, the outspoken **Rocky Disabato** has an afternoon program on the Internet, Monday through Friday, at rockyd.com.

The show is broadcast out of a studio in West Ashley and he admits he still has some kinks to work out. "I miss my 6,000 sound effects," he said.

The radio showman was replaced at WQSC this winter by **Todd Schnitt**, who has a nationally syndicated conservative-themed program in the afternoon. The station said it chose to go another direction.

Disabato has been a sometimes controversial figure, including during the 10 years prior to joining WQSC when he was at WTMA-AM 1250. He supports the Confederacy's point of view when discussing

South Carolina history and uses the term "**hoodrats**" in referring to street criminals. But things are looking up, he said, with several stations looking at taking some of his feed.

Haley and AOL's Case

Gov. **Nikki Haley** will be with **America Online** co-founder **Steve Case** this week in Mount Pleasant.

Haley will join Case during his "**Rise of the Rest Road Trip**" stop on the Yorktown on Wednesday from 2-3 p.m. The discussion will center on entrepreneurship in the state.

"Rise of the Rest" is a road trip campaign meant to celebrate up and coming business projects. In each city it stops in, organizers will have a business "pitch"

competition, with the winner earning a **\$100,000** investment from Case. Eight startups are reportedly in line to vie for the \$100,000 prize during the Monday stop in North Carolina, the day before here.

There is no cost to attend but people are asked to register in advance by visiting riseofrest.com.

GOP gathering in Greenville next weekend

Citizens United and U.S. Rep. **Jeff Duncan**, R-S.C., are hosting national conservative leaders at the **South Carolina Freedom Summit** next Saturday in Greenville.

"The Summit will be a launch point for conservative ideas as we head toward 2016," the press materials say.

Confirmed speakers with presidential interests include: **Wis. Gov. Scott Walker**; **Sen. Ted Cruz**, R-Texas; **Dr. Ben Carson**; **Carly Fiorina**; **Donald Trump**; **La. Gov. Bobby Jindal**; former Texas Gov. **Rick Perry**; **Sen. Marco Rubio**, R-Fla.; former Sen. **Rick Santorum**, R-Pa.; former N.Y. Gov. **George Pataki** and Ambassador **John Bolton**.

The site is the **Peace Center in Greenville**.

—Palmetto Politics is assembled by political reporter **Schuyler Kropf**

* Palmetto Politics

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Title: **Approve higher ed bonds**

Author:

Size: 53.94 square inch

Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



Editorial

Approve higher ed bonds

The Senate's pending \$236 million bond bill for college construction projects and repairs to state armories is a practical and pain-free way to address mounting problems.

Despite Gov. Nikki Haley's threats to veto it — or any borrowing plan — the bond bill deserves full support as the Senate takes up the issue this week. Then the House should sign on.

Members also should be prepared to overturn the governor's veto if she doesn't snap out of her misguided opposition.

The state has cut spending on higher education to the extent that colleges are unable to keep up with building needs and maintenance.

Indeed, on Page B3 today, Trident Technical College President Mary Thornley makes a compelling case for bond money to build a new aeronautical training center.

And last week, College of Charleston President Glenn McConnell, former president pro tempore of the S.C. Senate, noted that buildings are deteriorating, "and the more they deteriorate without being repaired, the more expensive they ultimately become."

A bond bill would meet some of those needs without putting a pinch on taxpayers. The last S.C. bond bill was 15 years ago, so old bonds are being retired. And the interest rates for new ones would be rock-bottom.

The bill includes more than \$91 million for technical and comprehensive educa-



AMANDA KERR/FILE

Capers Hall at The Citadel.

ment across South Carolina. Trident Technical College, for example, would receive \$17.5 million for the aeronautical training center, which would prepare people for jobs at Boeing and other related companies.

Four-year colleges would receive about \$130 million, including \$6 million for The Citadel, mostly to build a new Capers Hall. Seven million would go to the College of Charleston for building repairs and renovations to the Stern Center and the Simons Center for the Arts. The Medical University of South Carolina would receive \$20 million toward a new children's hospital.

The bill, along with a \$7 billion budget plan, has passed the Senate Finance Committee.

While the budget plan vote was unanimous, the bond vote was 16-5. Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, voted against the bill because it doesn't address the state's road needs. Sen. Majority Leader Harvey Peeler, R-Pickens, opposed it as "biting off more than we can chew on the floor of the Senate." Two-thirds of the Senate will have to support the bond bill for it to move to the House.

Certainly, the General Assembly will have to come up with a plan to fund road repairs throughout the state. But that must not take away from higher education.

Both Sens. John Courson, R-Columbia, and Joel Lourie, D-Columbia, applauded the bill's focus on higher education. Sen. Lourie noted that the alternative to the bond bill would be for colleges to increase tuition.

It is unclear how the House would respond to the Senate's bill. The House initially proposed \$500 million in bonds, but withdrew it after Gov. Haley voiced strident opposition. The proposed budget includes money to fund some of the projects that would have been included in the \$500 million in bonds.

Mrs. Haley said that projects in the House bill could have been handled within the operating budget with about \$400 million in new state revenue.

She said bond bills should be reserved for "big infrastructure needs, big economic development infrastructure, big road infrastructure."

Certainly a new hospital at MUSC and an aeronautical training center at TTC should be considered big projects.

And Sen. Lourie pointed out that the \$15 million for repairing armories would be matched by the federal government.

Failing to support the bond bill that directs money to much-needed projects, mostly in higher education, would be short-sighted and would cost the state in the long run.

Title: **'Good ol' girls'**
 Author:
 Size: 11.93 square inch
 Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



'Good ol' girls'

I did not vote for Gov. Nikki Haley in the last election. This was only the second time that I did not vote for a Republican in my 64 years on this planet.

When Gov. Haley first ran for governor, I was excited to maybe have a conservative female to break up the good ol' boys network in Columbia. But it seems that her administration has become the good ol' girls network, and things are even worse than before.

Columbia has said that experienced people need to be appointed to the S.C. State University Board of Trustees to clean up its present mess. I agree.

I wish the governor would run this state with the attitude she uses for S.C. State University. It seems that the only job qualifications the state requires for agency directors are to be a friend of hers and a lawyer.

What qualified Catherine Templeton to run the Department of Health and Environmental Control other than knowing the governor?

Ms. Templeton was not appointed by the governor, but was given a ringing endorsement. DHEC is not a play toy. I know that politics is politics, but I was really hoping that Gov. Haley would be better than that.

The citizens of South Carolina deserve a competent, experienced director for one of the largest agencies in this state.

MARK R. DeMAY
Longview Road
Mount Pleasant

Title: **Haley blasts GOP legislators**
 Author: By BILL BARROW The Associated Press
 Size: 20.77 square inch
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



Haley blasts GOP legislators

By **BILL BARROW**
 The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley has launched a new offensive against state lawmakers, using the podium at the South Carolina Republican Party Convention to blast GOP lawmakers as insufficiently conservative on taxes, debt and other issues.

Her specific complaints were last year's failed proposal for a legislative pay raise and this year's pitch for a \$500 million bond issue for public projects, along with pending proposals to raise gas taxes to pay for road construction. Haley said all three pursuits violate Republican principles.

"At a time when presidential candidates are going to be coming through South Carolina, how do we hold our head up

when all year, I've been fighting with my own Republicans," she said. "I've been fighting my own people. These are the people who are supposed to be with me. These are the people who are supposed to be moving South Carolina forward, and every day I've been fighting my own Republicans."

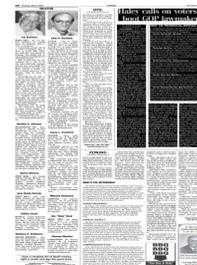
Delegates cheered her address, but some lawmakers in attendance were visibly perturbed during the speech.

Afterward, one Republican House leader said he didn't want to respond in kind. "The mudslinging is not who I am, so it's better for me not to say anything that adds to the divide," said Assistant Majority Whip Samuel Rivers Jr., who represents parts of Berkeley and Charleston counties.

State GOP Chairman Matt Moore disputed that the relationship between the governor and lawmakers is something negative for the party. "I think the governor very clearly laid down some markers," he said. "I don't think it's personal, as some people want to make it."

Haley, who cruised to a second term last year, has feuded with the legislature before, much like her predecessor, Mark Sanford. But her speech Saturday marked a new level of aggressiveness in trying to use her public profile to pressure lawmakers, and it stood out at a party convention that otherwise had a rollicking atmosphere as Republicans celebrated their total takeover of state government and heard from multiple 2016 presidential hopefuls.

Title: **Haleycalls on voters to bootGOPlawmakers**
 Author: By AndrewShain ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 47.89 square inch
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Haley calls on voters to boot GOP lawmakers

By ANDREW SHAIN
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Haley asked state party delegates to vote out S.C. legislators if they back a bond bill and a roads funding plan that did not include an income tax cut.

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She also will get national attention when CBS' morning show plans to air an interview with the governor

later this week.

Haley has said repeatedly that she has no plans to leave Columbia before her term ends in January 2019. She has not endorsed a 2016 presidential candidate, though she has close ties to early front-runners Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

Bush addressed the S.C. GOP convention with other four other presidential hopefuls – Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, former Texas Gov. Rick Perry and former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum.

Also Saturday, state Republicans re-elected Matt Moore as party chairman for a two-year term. Moore was appointed chairman in 2013 when Chad Connelly resigned to take a post with the Republican National Committee.

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Title: **Fix our state's crumbling roads**
 Author:
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THE GREENVILLE NEWS EDITORIAL

Fix our state's crumbling roads

South Carolina state senators on a 26-19 vote Thursday blocked an admittedly ambitious bill that would have guaranteed that almost all of this state's infrastructure needs could be addressed in a timely manner. The procedural move may confuse many state residents because it involves some of the complex rules of the Legislature's upper chamber.

The upshot is a roads-funding bill will be tougher to get out of the Senate this year. And even if it does, it's so late in the game that it will be difficult to work through a compromise with the state House of Representatives to smooth over differences and get the legislation approved.

This is unacceptable. State residents, businesses and anyone else who cares about South Carolina should make sure that their state senator hears one message over the next week: Get serious about our state's roads and bridges. Fix them. Do your jobs. And don't come home empty-handed this legislative year.

One thing is certain over the next few weeks: State senators owe it to people who are driving over crumbling roads and dangerous bridges to approve a bill that adequately addresses the deteriorating status of South Carolina's roads and bridges. Whatever the Senate does needs to win by a two-thirds majority to allow it to withstand Gov. Nikki Haley's promised veto. The governor essentially has taken herself out of the debate with her plan that really was an income tax cut hidden behind the skirts of a half-serious effort to improve the state's failing infrastructure.

The Senate failed to give the necessary two-thirds majority

needed to give special priority (or debate) status to a roads-funding bill that over time ensures the state has most, if not all, of the roads and bridges are fixed. The Senate has a process for setting priorities, and this becomes exceptionally important in the last month of the legislative year as various bills, some of them highly controversial, are fighting for a spot to ensure debate before the clock winds down. Even being set for special order, however, does not ensure senators will do their jobs and act on the legislation.

A roads-funding bill was set for special order last year in the Senate, but the year ended without the Senate acting on the legislation. Sen. Ray Cleary, a Georgetown County Republican, recently told *Greenville News* reporter Tim Smith that "I think it is déjà vu and it does worry me because we don't have a lot of time." His sentence takes on added meaning given the Senate must approve a state budget this month, and it is possible for individual senators to effectively kill legislation through expert use of outdated rules.

Last month the House of Representatives passed a roads-funding bill after listening to taxpayers tired of dodging potholes and businesses concerned about possible job losses. The bill was far from perfect, and at minimum it should have been the starting point for the Senate

debate. The most notable part of what the House did is that it passed its bill on an 87-20 vote. That meant that if representatives held true to their beliefs and didn't melt under pressure from the governor, the House's bill could withstand a veto from the House.

The bill would raise the state's deplorably low gas tax of 16.75 cents per gallon that is about the lowest in the country by what effectively would be 10 cents per gallon. The existing gas tax simply cannot fund the infrastructure needs of our state. The bill also contained a small cut in the income tax, one so small that the average taxpayer would see a cut of about \$48 a year.

Other smaller tax increases were in the House bill, too, as well as a restructuring of the state Department of Transportation. The House bill certainly needs work, but it should not be tossed out the door.

The favored plan in the Senate has the virtues of being cleaner, more ambitious in terms of funding infrastructure needs, and noticeably missing an income tax cut that in a perfect world would not even be on the table.

The House plan, which is the bare minimum needed, would raise more than \$400 million a year in new money for roads and bridges. The Senate plan would raise about \$800 million. A pie-in-the-sky estimate is the state needs \$1.5 billion a year more for infrastructure, but a number of people knowledgeable about infrastructure needs believe that number is inflated and includes too many wishes instead of needs.

The Legislature's top priority this year should be approving a realistic plan to repair and improve roads that no longer adequately serve state residents. There is room for compromise, but there should not be any room for inaction this month. Pass a roads-funding package that will improve our state's infrastructure and withstand the governor's veto.

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Author:

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KEN OSBURN

The Senate on Thursday defeated a move to schedule a roads-funding bill for debate with weeks left before adjournment.

Title: **More bus riders needed: You go first**

Author:

Size: 49.44 square inch

Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



More bus riders needed: You go first

Watch and learn: See that near-empty bus as you're stuck in traffic?

More of you motorists getting in my roadway should get into those available CARTA seats.

Yes, this aging Toyota Corolla driver wants thee, not me, to ride the bus. Like so many other folks, motivation is lacking for me to get out from behind the wheel and get on with an overdue personal shift into mass-transit gear. But as the ranks of Charleston drivers keep escalating, bumper-to-bumper aggravation also rises.

For instance, my morning commute shortcut on Mathis Ferry Road took much longer than usual on Friday.

And last Sunday, my excursion to and from the Isle of Palms also was severely slowed by an ominously high traffic level for the times of day and year (3-5 p.m., late April).

A Tuesday letter to the editor even reported that on that same day, "beachbound traffic [to Sullivan's Island] was at a standstill all the way to Shem Creek, preventing some residents from leaving their neighborhoods."

Hey, our local human herd has considerably swelled over the last few decades — in part because lots of our species members like being so close to the Atlantic Ocean.

Still, when an excess of our kind think life's a beach, traf-

fic can be a, er, problem — and not just while going back and forth from sandy shores.

Like moths to flames

Can we handle more motor vehicles with more lanes?

Well, sure — for a while.

Then again, with apologies to "Field of Dreams" script writer Phil Alden Robinson and that overrated 1989 film's fans: If you build more roads, more motor vehicles will come.

And if we don't raise the state gas tax, now among the nation's lowest after more than a quarter century without a boost, how can we build more roads — or even just fix the ones we already have?

The S.C. Senate voted Thursday, by a 26-19 margin, against giving desperately needed road and bridge funding priority budget status.

Meanwhile, Gov. Nikki Haley still insists that she won't go for a gas-tax hike without an

accompanying state income tax cut from the current 7 percent to 5 percent. And the Legislature won't go for that.

Never mind that, as business titans warn, South Carolina's ability to attract — and keep — major manufacturers is undermined by the extended neglect of our highway system.

Sure, we right-wingers are rightly wary of pitches for higher taxes for any purpose.

Yet what's conservative about letting road quality degenerate to the point that it

threatens not just timely arrivals and lives but free-market prosperity?

You don't have to be a tax-and-spend liberal to know that government must serve some indispensable functions — including building (and maintaining) infrastructure for safe, efficient transportation.

Public education is another crucial government duty.

No, we shouldn't reflexively accept the commercial property tax increase being considered by the Charleston County School District.

However, we shouldn't reject it on a knee-jerk basis, either. Anyway, owner-occupied homes in this state are exempt (but should they be?) from school-operating taxes.

And we shouldn't buy this selfish, stale, stupid argument:

"My children are grown. Why should I have to pay school taxes?"

Here's why: We live in the same community with local public school kids.

That makes them, in not just a moral but a practical sense, *our* kids, too.

On the roads again:

An informal Friday survey in a Charleston workplace (business and names withheld to protect both innocent and guilty) revealed that hardly any of its employees ride the bus.

Yet a growing number of them bike to their jobs — and elsewhere. And while people-powered two-wheelers can

present irritating obstacles on already-crowded local byways, they take up less room than motor vehicles.

So as the vicious traffic cycle driven by rising population persists, try not to have a vicious attitude about bicyclists.

All hands on deck

Finally, ponder this watch-and-learn lesson of my own.

Two forays downtown (one on March 31, the other on April 3) in amateur tour guide guise revealed a new, improved way of getting there. Though traffic congestion frustration didn't totally spoil the first outing to show visiting friends local sights, it did detract from the below-Market ambiance.

Three days later, my first cruise on the Charleston Water Taxi, from the Harbor Resort and Marina in Mount Pleasant to the Waterfront Park, was a much more relaxing ride to the Holy City's street-strolling charms. The Water Taxi also stops and starts at Patriots Point and the Aquarium Wharf/Maritime Center.

See, life's not just a beach.

It's also a boat.

And if you can't go by sea, please, get out of my car's way by getting on a bus.

Frank Wooten is assistant editor of The Post and Courier. His email is wooten@postandcourier.com.



FRANK WOOTEN

Title: **British invasion**
 Author: By KIM KIM FOSTER-TOBIN and AARON RANSELL The (Columbia) State
 Size: 86.18 square inch
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



British invasion

Sir Paul McCartney to perform in Columbia on June 25

By KIM KIM FOSTER-TOBIN
 and AARON RANSELL
 The (Columbia) State

COLUMBIA — The build-up to the announcement had Columbia guessing as to which huge act would visit the Capital City next.

Big names such as the Rolling Stones, U2 and The Who were being thrown around, but official word was kept quiet up until Gov. Nikki Haley took the stage on the Colonial Life Arena floor Tuesday in a news conference flanked with British flags.

“It is my pleasure to announce that ... ‘Maybe I’m a Amazed’ that we got him ... but we did get him,” Haley said to build suspense. “Sir Paul McCartney will be coming as part of his ‘Out There’ Tour on June 25 of this year to Colonial Life Arena.”

Though it will be McCartney’s first visit to the Colonial Life Arena, it won’t be his first visit to Columbia. McCartney played

in Williams-Brice Stadium on May 7, 1993, as part of his “The New World Tour 1993.”

So what did it take to get the legendary McCartney to come back?

Honestly, luck.

“He’s playing a festival in Dover, Del., and somewhere along the line someone decided to add some more shows,” Allen Corbett, vice president of AEG Live said. “The building was available, and you have to be a certain proximity from city A and city B.”

Corbett, whose father was also a promoter, said drawing such a big star to Columbia was special.

“To have someone of this caliber coming to what I consider my hometown, I got a few goosebumps. It’s always great to walk around a sold-out show and see people just having a great night all night long.”

The capacity for the Colonial Life Arena is about 18,000, but Corbett estimates that when taking into account seating and sight-lines, around 12,000 tickets will be sold for the McCartney concert.

It is currently McCartney’s only planned stop in the Southeast.

Tickets will go on sale at 10 a.m. Monday at the arena’s box office and through LMC-tix.com.

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Allen Corbett, vice president of AEG Live

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Gov. Nikki Haley gets her photograph taken with a cutout of Paul McCartney during the announcement Tuesday that the former Beatle will be performing at Colonial Life Arena in Columbia on June 25.

Title: **Haley uses Facebook to cheer roads vote**
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Haley uses Facebook to cheer roads vote

Lack of Senate debate on bill has governor happy, others irate

By **Tim Smith**

Staff Writer

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COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley is cheering the failure of the Senate to set a road-funding bill for debate, but some motorists and business leaders aren't so happy.

The day after the Senate voted 26-19 on a motion to set a Senate road-funding plan for debate with weeks left before adjournment, people expressed their joy and frustration.



Gov. Nikki Haley

"I'm as Republican as they come, but SC's roads are a disgrace!" Kenny Johns posted

on Haley's Facebook page. "It is time to take action! Put your soapbox up on this one, Madam Governor."

Terry Simmons said in a post on

The Greenville News Facebook page that he was "sick and tired" of delays on action to fix the state's roads.

"At least pass something," he posted. "If the governor vetoes it, we'll deal with her later."

Bill Ross, executive director of the South Carolina Alliance To Fix Our Roads, said the Senate's defeat of the move to set the roads issue for debate is "inexcusable."

"It blows me away when I look at these guys and they're not willing to do what's right," he said. "It's appalling. I think the message that we're getting is they care more about the politics of it."

Ted Pitts, president and CEO of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, said he was disappointed at the Senate vote.

"The business community is dis-

appointed that the vote to set infrastructure for debate failed this week, but there is still time for senators to display some leadership and sit down to work out their differences," he said. "We can't wait another year."

Haley, who has threatened to veto both the House and Senate road plans, took to Facebook to praise the senators who voted Thursday against scheduling the Senate road bill for debate with weeks to go before adjournment.

"Those who voted 'Yay' think the only way to fix our roads is to raise your taxes," she posted. "Those who voted 'Nay' stood strong."

The governor said the debate is not over and pointed out the Senate

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bill has no reform of the state Department of Transportation and "no income tax relief for you."

She urged Facebook followers to support those who voted against setting the road bill for debate and to remind those who voted in favor of the debate "who they work for."

In Greenville County, only Sen. Karl Allen voted to set the issue for debate.

Sen. Tom Corbin of Travelers Rest, Sen. Mike Fair of Greenville, and Sen. Ross Turner of Greenville all voted no, as did Sen. Danny Verdin of Laurens,

Sen. Lee Bright and Sen. Shane Massey of Spartanburg County, all of whom represent parts of Greenville County.

The action doesn't prevent the Senate from voting again in the weeks ahead to set the issue for debate, but road-funding supporters said time is running out this year with two other contentious issues already scheduled for debate and the budget yet to be heard. The Senate last year scheduled road funding for debate in April but adjourned without voting on the bill.

Legislative leaders and the governor have said since January that fixing the state's crumbling infrastructure is a

top priority, and the House passed a plan earlier this month. But the Senate has yet to debate the issue on the floor.

Most of those posting on the issue on Haley's Facebook page agreed with the governor.

"Let the ones who voted YAY pay the taxes if they want it so bad," posted Linda Bond.

Many posting on the governor's page said they were opposed to any increase in taxes.

Lynda Simpson said the state could save money on roads by bringing back chain gangs. Jamie Hatton suggested getting those who receive food stamps

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to repay taxpayers by working on the roads. Several posters suggested finding money for roads by cutting waste in government.

“You can then cut taxes and still have plenty of money to fix the roads,” Dennis Carpenter posted.

But others said they are tired of the arguments and want something done.

“I’m sorry, but have you drove on 85 between Spartanburg and Greenville lately?” posted Jason Keefer. “Might as well be gravel.”

Betty Jean Cook suggested the state send all vehicle owners a check “to get our front-end alignment done.”

“They come by and fill the holes with crap,” she posted. “And 2 weeks later they’re back only bigger. And you dodge 1 hole and hit another one. It’s pathetic the shape our roads are in.”

Frank Elliott posted that the state has one of the lowest gas taxes in the nation and some of the worst roads. “I

think a gas tax increase is the best answer.”

Rick Todd, the president and CEO of the South Carolina Trucking Association, said he was disappointed in the Senate’s action Thursday.

“I don’t think it’s gloom and doom,” Todd said. “But it certainly is a manifestation of how complicated this thing is and how tensions have been flaring lately.”

The governor in January proposed raising the gas tax by 10 cents per gallon but only if lawmakers agreed to lower the top income tax rate from 7 percent to 5 percent and change how state highway commissioners are selected.

The Senate Finance Committee this week replaced a House-passed roads plan with a Senate plan that would raise \$800 million annually for added road and bridge funding but does not include any DOT restructuring or tax relief.

The House plan would raise more than \$400 million, allow the governor to

pick highway commissioners instead of lawmakers as is done now and would offer an income tax cut that would average about \$48 a year.

Senate Rules Committee Chairman Ronnie Cromer, a Newberry County Republican, proposed setting the bill for debate Thursday, arguing that even though he opposes the Senate plan, he wants to give senators a chance to debate what to do before the Legislature adjourns for the year in early June.

Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler argued against scheduling debate yet, saying a group of senators is working on a compromise and they need more time.

Democrats said they were not being included in such talks and did not understand why debate could not at least be scheduled, since there are already two contentious issues set for debate ahead of it as well as the budget and only weeks to go before adjournment.