

Title: **Public engagement key for road improvements**

Author:

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Public engagement key for road improvements

Despite some recent road improvements in Horry County, I remain very concerned about deplorable road conditions in our state. Both the S.C. House and Senate have proposed bills to address the issues with various plans to raise money to fund the needed repairs, but looming is the threat from Gov. Haley that if her plan, which includes an income tax reduction, is not adopted, she will veto it.

Quite simply, we cannot and must not continue this bickering where nothing meaningful gets done and our roads continue to crumble. It's time for all to come

together and fix our infrastructure correctly once and for all.

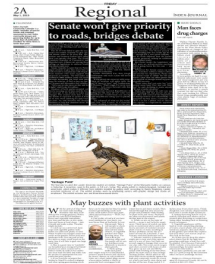
I cannot stress strongly enough that we all, the citizens of South Carolina, must express our concerns to all our elected officials, from local town council members to Haley and everyone in between.

This is something I've been doing regularly but a lone voice frequently falls on deaf ears.

It is equally important that we also express our concerns publicly by writing op-eds, as I've done here, and attending local town meetings, which I do whenever the opportunity presents itself.

PETER EISENBERG
Pawleys Island

Title: **Senate won't give priority to roads, bridges debate**
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Senate won't give priority to roads, bridges debate

COLUMBIA — The South Carolina Senate refused Thursday to give priority status to a bill funding road and bridge construction.

The 26-19 vote failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority to give special debate status to an issue that lawmakers and business leaders have called their top priority this year. The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and Manufacturers Alliance are among those calling on legislators to address South Carolina's roads now.

Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler urged senators to give him more time to work toward a compromise with Republican senators who won't support the proposal as written. The bill raises an additional \$800 million yearly for roads through increasing gas taxes and sales taxes on vehicles, as well as fees on drivers' licenses and alternative-fuel vehicles.

"We've got to take time on this and do it right," said Peeler, R-Gaffney.

Senators of both parties pointed out they're running out of time, and the Senate must get to the debate to make any changes. The session ends June 4, and the Senate is expected to spend at least all of next week debating its state budget plan. An anti-abortion bill already threatens to bog that chamber down for the remaining weeks.



AT THE STATEHOUSE
Associated Press

"All we're asking now is to put it in position so when you come up with your supernatural compromise that will make everyone happy, we'll at least be in a position to move," said Sen. Darrell Jackson, D-Columbia.

Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman said such a plan will never materialize.

"If this group can come up with something all senators will agree with, the end of times is here," said Leatherman, R-Florence. "That's magic I've never seen before. ... Let's move forward with this most crucial thing."

Democrats accused Republicans of killing the bill, since all "no" votes were Republicans. Leatherman was among eight Republicans voting "yes" to priority status.

"I'm ashamed of what we did today," said Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Columbia. "We're sending a message to the peo-

ple of South Carolina we're not serious about fixing the roads problem. This is an indictment on the entire process."

Even if the Senate passes a plan, much work remains. The House passed its road-funding plan two weeks ago 87-20 — enough for a veto-proof majority — but it's vastly different than the Senate's current proposal, raising an additional \$400 million yearly.

But Peeler insists the Legislature can still pass an infrastructure package before going home for the year — just not as is.

Whatever the Senate comes up with must somehow address Haley's reform and income-tax stipulations, Peeler said. He doesn't want to debate the bill until there's a plan that can either garner Haley's support or enough Senate support to override her veto.

Those votes don't yet exist, but "we've moved some hard 'Nos' into soft 'Maybes,'" he said, declining to name anyone. "It's just a tender situation."

Haley has insisted she will veto any road-funding bill that doesn't also give her office full control of the Department of Transportation and substantially cut personal income taxes. Currently, the DOT is in her Cabinet, but its director also reports to a legislatively appointed commission.

Title: **Wasting \$42 million because some see orange**

Author:

Size: 9.61 square inch

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GOVERNMENT

Wasting \$42 million because some see orange

So, the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles is planning to spend \$42 million on changing our license plates because some people think they see Clemson's colors on the plate. I don't see any purple on the plate.

Having moved here from Virginia, I see orange and blue, which are the colors for the University of Virginia.

Actually, you can see whatever you want in anything. As for the lettering being hard to read, if you can't read the large black lettering, you need a eye doctor.

To spend this amount of money to abolish this iconic license plate because of this trivial reason is absurd.

Gov. Haley, please stop the DMV from spending this money needlessly. If we have an extra \$42 million in taxpayer money, I recommend that it be spent on roadway repairs.

SLOAN SMITH
Surfside Beach