

Title: **Seafood market's future cloudy**

Author: By STEPHEN FASTENAU sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com 843-706-8182

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## IN PORT ROYAL

# Seafood market's future cloudy

Town envisions new facility with \$1.8M windfall, but legal questions linger

By STEPHEN FASTENAU

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Just before Christmas, Port Royal finance manager Chris Canaday walked into Town Hall with a check made out to the town for \$1.8 million.

The insurance settlement from the seafood market fire had finally arrived, but the windfall brought questions about who controls the money and about plans to rebuild. The property is owned by the S.C.

Ports Authority, but the town was required to hold insurance on the buildings through a licensing agreement.

The town is seeking answers about what it might be entitled to for costs incurred to establish a temporary seafood operation in an adjacent building. The money — a check from the state Insurance Reserve Fund for damage to the mar-

ket and an adjacent warehouse — is now in an escrow account.

Town manager Van Willis said it's likely the money will eventually be turned over to the Ports Authority.

The question would then turn to plans to rebuild.

According to a development

**Please see MARKET on 4A**

## MARKET

Continued from 3A

agreement between the town and Ports Authority, the town will receive the seafood market in a property swap when the port property sells.

Willis said he has asked the town's attorney for advice on Port Royal's leverage in the matter.

Ports Authority spokeswoman Erin Dhand passed questions from The Beaufort Gazette/The Island Packet about the proceeds and buildings to agency attorneys, who did not immediately respond late Wednesday afternoon.

After a decade of failed dealings, sale of the port property was recently turned over to

the Department of Administration's General Services division for auction.

The town wants answers as to which entity to talk to about the seafood market.

The large settlement and clean slate is a chance for the town to build a state-of-the-art seafood processing facility, Willis said.

Port Royal has leased the docks and market operation from the Ports Authority. Operating the docks has been a financial drain for the town much of that time, a burden town officials say is necessary to maintain an iconic part of Port Royal's character and history.

"There is an opportunity there to create something special," Willis said.

### EFFECT ON THE SALE

The most recent potential buyers said not knowing the amount of the insurance settlement played a part in not closing the deal.

Palmetto Alliance, the development group that made a \$15.42 million bid on the property last summer, terminated its contract with the S.C. Ports Authority on Dec. 11, the deadline to complete due diligence.

At the time, Ports Authority attorney Neil Robinson said the sellers didn't know the settlement amount and would have turned over the rights to the money at closing.

The Ports Authority allowed the potential buyers to cut from the deal a resi-

dential area viewed as overpriced. That, along with the \$1.8 million in insurance proceeds, would have made closing a breeze, said Whit Suber, who worked as a consultant to the potential buyers on the deal. He said the group was within \$300,000 of closing.

"It would be disingenuous for me to say if (the settlement) was 300 grand, we would have closed," Suber said. "But I can assure you, at \$1.8 million, it would have no longer been a head-scratcher."

### MOVING FORWARD

Willis said Wednesday

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that Gov. Nikki Haley's office has been responsive on the issue of the port sale, that the impending auction is on the radar and the process is moving forward.

The town has asked to ensure the law is followed regarding a required new appraisal, that the appraiser have knowledge of closed industrial sites and the process

account for environmental and structural concerns.

State law does not include a timetable for conducting the appraisal.

A lawsuit against the Ports Authority and town of Port Royal related to a former railroad line right-of-way could affect the schedule. Willis told town council he expects the town will be removed

from the suit, that it doesn't own the property and has not signed any agreements related to the property.

When the topic of the port was raised Wednesday at a luncheon for the local legislative delegation and later during a town council workshop, the consensus was relief that the process was out of Ports Authority hands.

But when someone asked council whether the Ports Authority still had a hand in the sale, no one affirmed that.

"Nothing would surprise us," councilwoman Mary Beth Gray-Heyward said.

Follow reporter Stephen Fastenau at [twitter.com/IPBG\\_Stephen](https://twitter.com/IPBG_Stephen).

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Title: **Governor speaks on domestic violence**  
Author: The Associated Press  
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# Governor speaks on domestic violence

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Progress is being made in South Carolina's fight against domestic violence, but more time is needed to study the problem and come up with ways to combat it, Gov. Nikki Haley said Thursday.

At a Statehouse news conference, Haley told reporters she has signed three new executive orders pertaining to the issue, which was a major topic during last year's legislative session. One would give the S.C. Domestic Violence Task Force more time to continue finding ways to fight the problem.

Another order would direct Cabinet agencies to change human resources policies to provide more guidance on how to handle employees who may be affected by abuse, such as providing them with leave and available resources.

The third order requires Cabinet agencies that regularly screen people for benefits and other assistance to look for domestic violence signs.

Title: **Gov. Haley: Changes being made to help fight domestic violence**  
 Author: MEG KINNARD ASSOCIATED PRESS  
 Size: 20.77 square inch  
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



# Gov. Haley: Changes being made to help fight domestic violence

**MEG KINNARD**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA - Progress is being made in South Carolina's fight against domestic violence, but more time is needed to study the problem and come up with ways to combat it, Gov. Nikki Haley said Thursday.

At a Statehouse news conference, Haley told reporters she has signed three new executive orders pertaining to the issue, which was a major topic during last year's legislative session. One would give the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force more time to continue finding ways to fight the

problem. Nationwide, South Carolina consistently ranks among the worst states per capita in women killed by men. A year ago, Haley created the task force to come up with systemic, cultural changes to combat the problem.

In August, the panel issued dozens of recommendations, including training more 911 operators, improving documentation of the crime scene and increasing the number of shelters statewide.

Another order would direct Cabinet agencies to change human resources policies to provide more guidance on how to handle employees who may be affected by abuse, such as providing them with leave

and available resources.

The third order requires Cabinet agencies that regularly screen people for benefits and other assistance to look for domestic violence signs.

In the session that ended last summer, legislators passed a law that increased penalties for domestic violence convictions and gave prosecutors more options for punishment. Thursday, flanked by prosecutors from across the state and other members of the task force, Haley said the panel is "going too good to stop" and needs more time past the Dec. 31, 2015, deadline originally set up in her order that created it.

Title: **Sen. Billy O'Dell of Ware Shoals dies**  
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
 Size: 41.54 square inch  
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# Sen. Billy O'Dell of Ware Shoals dies

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - Sen. Billy O'dell of Ware Shoals, one of the longest serving state senators from the Upstate, has died.

The 77-year-old GOP businessman apparently passed away in his sleep, senators said.

Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler of Gaffney announced O'Dell's death Thursday morning at a workshop of the South Carolina Press Association and said afterward he was in shock.

"When I think of Billy O'Dell I think of his support for the Citadel and his great love of South Carolina," Peeler said. "He brought a calmness to the Senate. He was very reasoned. He didn't talk a lot but when he did

talk, you listened to him."

Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman described O'Dell as a close friend and an "exceptional man."

"I am deeply saddened to learn of his passing and feel honored to have served our state alongside him," Leatherman said. "I greatly valued my friendship with him, and all that

he meant to the Senate and our state since he began serving in 1989. He was a consensus builder and reached across party lines to help move our state forward. The Senate will sorely miss his voice and his leadership. We send our condolences and prayers to his wife, his family, his loved ones and all who knew him."

House Speaker Jay Lucas called O'Dell a friend and a "statesman."

"Days like this are hard on all

of us in the Legislature," he said.

Gov. Nikki Haley said O'Dell "worked tirelessly for the people of his district and the state

and we are forever grateful for his service."

"He made South Carolina a better place," she said.

O'Dell served as chairman of the Senate General Committee and served on other committees, including the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee.

A graduate of the Citadel, O'Dell also served on the Citadel's Board of Visitors. He was CEO of the O'Dell Corporation, which manufactured mops and brooms.

Senate Judiciary Chairman

**See O'DELL, Page 5A**

## O'Dell

Continued from Page 3A

Larry Martin of Pickens said he first met O'Dell when Martin was in the House and O'Dell was running for a seat on the Citadel board.

"He was a very well-respected business person with solid character," Martin said. "He had a good grasp of finance and just had a lot of good, common sense. He wanted to cut to the chase. He didn't suffer some of the very long, laborious debates we go through down here very well. He was all business. He was just a good

guy, and we're going to miss him."

Sen. Thomas Alexander, a Walhalla Republican, said O'Dell was a good man with a dry wit who provided a "steady course" in the Senate.

"He was a true Southern gentleman, a great public servant who cared deeply about the people he represented," he said. "He did it with distinction and care. He didn't do it with fanfare. He did it with the determination of getting results that were necessary."

Alexander said O'Dell usually wore the Citadel

blue or had it close by. Martin joked that all in the Senate knew that if a bill impacted the Citadel, they had to go to O'Dell first.

O'Dell also was a past leader of the state Chamber of Commerce, president of the Ware Shoals Chamber of Commerce, and served on the Greenwood School District 51 board.

He represented the counties of Abbeville, Anderson and Greenwood in the Senate.

On Thursday, flags in Anderson County were lowered to half staff to

honor O'Dell.

"It is with great sadness that we bid farewell to Sen. O'Dell," said County Council Chairman Tommy Dunn. "He was a true Southern gentleman. He has meant so much to me as well as to Anderson County. He will be missed."

Following Peeler's announcement at the Press Association workshop, attendees stood in a moment of silence.

He is survived by his wife, Gail Tisdale, and two children, William B. and Patricia Michelle O'Dell.

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Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
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**S.C. Sen. Billy  
O'Dell**

Title: **Haley's response to Obama not 1st time on national stage**  
 Author: Associated Press  
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# Haley's response to Obama not 1st time on national stage

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — After a year when a church massacre and catastrophic flooding put her in the spotlight, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley will get further national exposure when she gives the Republican response to the State of the Union address. Haley has “demonstrated how bringing people together can bring real results,” McConnell said in a statement on her selection. “Gov. Haley knows the American dream and wants to see every American share in it.”

But she's not new to the national stage. In 2012, she spoke at the Republican National Convention and campaigned for past GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney. She also promoted her 2012 memoir with a national book tour. Haley, governor of a state that holds the first presidential primary in the South, becomes the first South Carolinian and third Republican woman ever to give the response. It's a role typically reserved for a member of Congress. Last year, Sen. Joni Ernst of Iowa gave the response. In 2013, it was Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, who's now among a crowded Republican field running for president.

The South Carolina-born daughter of Indian immigrants is the state's first female and first minority governor. Haley, who will turn 44 a week after the address, is also the country's youngest governor. The selection will likely fuel speculation that Haley would join a potential Republican administration in 2017, though she has repeatedly dismissed such questions.

done his 2016 presidential bid, was widely panned for what critics said was a less-than-spectacular speech in 2009. Haley drew wide praise for her leadership after the June 17 slaying of nine black parishioners of historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, as she conveyed the state's grief and successfully led calls to bring down a Confederate flag that had flown on Statehouse grounds for 54 years.

The nine killed included the church's pastor, state Sen. Clementa Pinckney. The white man charged with killing them could be seen in photos brandishing the rebel flag.



Title: **Haley's response to Obama not 1st time on national stage**  
Author: Associated Press  
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ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Gov. Nikki R. Haley speaks about race relations on at the National Press Club in Washington.



Title: **America shouldn't ditch its values when elections come**  
 Author:  
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# America shouldn't ditch its values when elections come

Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Martin O'Malley are all qualified to be president. Their values are America's values. On the Republican side, however, we see candidates expressing views that are out of the mainstream of American politics.

Donald Trump, the frontrunner in polls for the GOP presidential nomination, wants to build a wall to keep Mexicans out of the U.S., wants to send 11 million undocumented people back to their native lands, and wants to ban Muslims from coming to the U.S. and monitoring those who are here, including their mosques.

Ted Cruz, the runner-up in polling, agrees with or has remained silent on virtually all of Trump's proposals. He has pledged to repudiate the internationally approved effort to deal with climate change, to oppose any gun safety measures, to reverse laws allowing same-sex marriage, and, of course, to reverse the Affordable Care Act.

Immigration, freedom of religion, care for our planet, gun safety in the face of gun-related massacres, respect for individuals'

right to love and marry whom they wish, and health care for all are values which have made and are making our country great.

Enough has been said and written about each of these hallmarks, but what needs to be stressed is how the Republican Party has been hijacked by Trump and Cruz, who are taking this once great national political party out of the mainstream.

No, our country has not changed; some who align themselves with Republicans hate our president and, by transfer, those issues he espouses.

No, government has not failed us; government led by Democrats, under difficult and divided circumstances, has put our economy back on track after a Republican administration nearly bankrupted America.

Government has enacted and affirmed health care, making us consistent with other Western democracies. Government has expanded Medicaid; some states have accepted this assistance for their neediest citizens. Others, such as South Carolina, have refused this federal funding out of disdain for most things coming from Washington, but not when it comes to holding out both hands for federal assistance to alleviate the devastation from the terrible floods that hit the Midlands particularly hard. What leaders would accept flood relief, but refuse health care for hundreds of thousands of South Carolin-

ians who have none? Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Nikki Haley and Tim Scott.

The other Republican presidential candidates are very conservative but remain in the center-right lane of the American political highway.

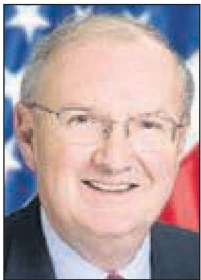
How has Trump turned campaign discourse into talk-radio conversation? His vulgarities in describing Clinton's loss to President Barack Obama in 2008 and his anti-woman description of Clinton's bathroom break during the last Democratic debate as "disgusting" are just two examples.

Despite his protestation, the latter is just another sample of his disdain for women. Remember his statement about fellow Republican Carly Fiorina: "Who could vote for that face?" To demean and bully are his trademarks.

So, this campaign has entered a phase where the leading Republican candidate says whatever outlandish fabrication he wishes, then denies it means what he says. Trump's values and Cruz's, too, are not consistent with the values of our country or of the three Democratic candidates.

Hopefully, the Republican Party will nominate a candidate for president whose values are consistent with that party's heritage.

Blaine Lotz of Hilton Head Island may be reached at [gblotz@yahoo.com](mailto:gblotz@yahoo.com).



**BLAINE LOTZ**

Special to the Packet  
and Gazette

Title: **Chamber links DOT reform to road funding**  
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
 Size: 51.46 square inch  
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# Chamber links DOT reform to road funding

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - South Carolina's business community is once again telling lawmakers to fix the state's roads.

This time, however, the State Chamber of Commerce has coupled its call for at least \$600 million in annual road funding with a request to reform the state's two major transportation boards.

Specifically, the chamber wants the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank to follow the same rules for setting project priorities that are required for the state Department of Transportation.

And the Chamber also wants DOT to be held accountable solely to the

governor, instead of the current system in which the governor appoints the leader of the agency but lawmakers appoint members of the highway commission.

"If we don't fix that model, we're not going to fix DOT," said Mikee Johnson, CEO of Cox Industries and a former chairman of the Chamber.

Senate Transportation Chairman Larry Grooms said he has proposed the same reform ideas now pushed by the Chamber. He said he agrees those reforms must be part of any solution on road funding but wasn't overly optimistic on the chances of a bill passing this year.

"Today I'm giving it 50-50 odds," he said.

The Chamber on Wednesday named infrastructure as one of the business group's three legislative priorities for this year, just as it had last year, when the House passed a road-funding bill but the Senate failed to act on it.

John Uprichard, chairman of the Chamber and the president of Find Great People of Greenville, said repairing the state's roads is not a new issue. Improving the state's roads and bridges, he says, is an opportunity that has been around for years.

"I think moving forward, the question is what are we going to do differ-

**See ROADS, Page 5A**

## Roads

Continued from Page 1A

ently to take advantage of these opportunities?" he asked.

Pushing for governance reform is a necessary part of any solution to the road-funding debate, said Ted Pitts, chamber president, as is tax relief.

Last year, Gov. Nikki Haley proposed increasing the gas tax by 10 cents a gallon but only if lawmakers changed the way highway commissioners are selected and reduced the state personal income tax rates.

The House passed a bill that would effectively result in a 10-cent increase at the pump, change the way commissioners are appointed, offer a carrot to counties if they agreed to take some of the local roads now in the state's inventory and grant some small tax relief.

In the Senate, Democrats balked at the idea of tax cuts and some Republicans said they could not stomach a gas tax hike, especially if it wasn't coupled with some tax relief.

The Chamber's "Competitiveness

Agenda" unveiled Wednesday does not list tax relief as part of its proposal but Pitts said it is something the Chamber supports and also feels is necessary for a solution, along with reform and funding.

"We think in order to get the issue elevated and moving forward, those three issues are going to have to be part of the plan," Pitts said. "We've talked with leadership in the Senate and we feel certain this is very important to them."

Some have advocated using some of the \$1 billion surplus lawmakers will have this year to pay for road repairs. But the Chamber is advocating spending at least \$600 million from additional revenue that is recurring and "sustainable," a diversified combination of cash streams that will supply funding each year.

Estimates for how much the state needs annually for transportation needs range from \$400 million to \$1.4 billion.

Bill Ross, executive director of the South Carolina Alliance To Fix Our Roads, says he believes the true need is closer to \$1 billion.

He is not yet convinced the path to a funding solution is clear.

"I think it's about as confusing and unclear as it's been," he said. "You hear a lot of discussion about the need for DOT reform but nobody seems to have an idea exactly what that is other than changing the governance and giving more authority to the governor."

He said DOT commissioners have no control over a large part of the agency's budget. He said much of it comes from the federal government and the future of federal highway money is anything but certain.

"It's such a complex issue because they interjected DOT reform and a tax reduction, which made it a three-part proposal instead of a one-part proposal," he said.

Johnson said the longer it takes to repair roads, the steeper the cost gets, pointing to a repair project on Interstate 85 last year that was halted when workers discovered the road needed to be rebuilt, not just repaved.

"The roads are decaying while we wait," he said.



Title: **Chamber links DOT reform to road funding**  
Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
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The Chamber also is pushing for a comprehensive plan for workforce development, with one agency or council taking charge. Business leaders want a better defined early-education program for all students.

And the Chamber also wants lawmakers to standardize the business licensing process statewide with a uniform application, renewal dates and standard classifications.

Title: **Haley to give GOP response**  
Author: The Associated Press  
Size: 9.76 square inch  
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# Haley to give GOP response

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley will give the Republican response to a State of the Union address that is sure to include President Barack Obama's plans for tightening gun sales, seven months after both spoke at funerals for the victims of a massacre at a historic black church in Charleston.

House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced Tuesday that Haley will speak for Republicans following Obama's Jan. 12 speech.

The South Carolina-born daughter of Indian immigrants is the state's first female and first minority governor. At 43, Haley is also the country's youngest governor.

"In a year when the country is crying out for a positive vision and alternative to the status quo, Gov. Haley is the exact right choice," Ryan said in a statement.

Haley becomes the third Republican woman ever to give the response.

Title: **Haley endorses Collins**  
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
 Size: 78.74 square inch  
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# Haley endorses Collins

## Haley to give GOP's response to president

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - Gov. Nikki Haley will deliver the GOP response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union speech to Congress next Tuesday.

Republican leaders said they chose Haley, the youngest governor in the country, to deliver what is being called the "Republican Address to the Nation" because she is a "proven leader"

who is "getting things done" in South Carolina.

"Nikki Haley has led an economic turnaround and set a bold agenda for her state, getting things done and becoming one of the most popular

governors in America," House Speaker Paul Ryan said in a statement. "In a year when the country is crying out for a positive vision and alternative to the status quo, Gov. Haley is the exact right choice to deliver the Republican Address to the Nation."

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell praised

Haley as a "proven leader."

"Not only has Gov. Haley fought to bring opportunity and prosperity to the people of her state, but she's also demonstrated how bringing people together can bring real results," McConnell said. "Gov. Haley knows the American

See **HALEY**, Page 7A

## Haley

Continued from Page 3A

Dream and wants to see every American share in it, and we're pleased that she will be delivering this year's Republican Address."

Haley, serving her second term, said she was honored to be selected to deliver the address.

"This is a time of great challenges for our country, but also of great opportunities," she said in a statement. "I intend to speak about both."

Haley and South Carolina filled the national spotlight in 2015 after a white gunman shot to death eight black parishioners and their pastor, a state senator, at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

Haley called for the lowering of the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds afterward and the Legislature ap-

proved a bill to remove the flag from the grounds.

Obama delivered the eulogy in Charleston for Sen. Clementa Pinckney, Emanuel's pastor.

Haley also earned plaudits for her leadership in the wake of catastrophic flooding in the state in October that killed 17, closed more than 500 roads and bridges and forced thousands to flee their residences.

The governor has been a repeated critic of Obama and his administration during her two terms, fighting Medicaid expansion under the president's health-care reform law, announcing a lawsuit when the White House placed on hold a program for turning weaponized plutonium into commercial nuclear reactor fuel at the Savannah River Site, and asking for a halt to the settlement of

Syrian refugees because of security concerns.

She also fought consideration by the administration of transferring prisoners from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to a Navy brig in Charleston and blamed the president when the National Labor Relations Board filed suit over Boeing opening a Lowcountry plant, a suit that was eventually dropped after Boeing agreed to raise wages for its workers in Washington state.

When she and other governors met with Obama in a private gathering at the White House in February of last year, she criticized the president in a Facebook post afterward for a lack of dialogue.

"It takes two sides Mr. President to work together," she posted.

Chip Felkel, a Greenville GOP political consultant, said choosing Haley for the GOP address "makes a lot of sense."

"It's an honor," he said. "It speaks to her position as one of the leading governors on the GOP side. Does that mean she is automatically going to be picked for vice president? I don't know that it does that, but I think it's an honor and should be looked at that way."

Felkel said choosing Haley isn't surprising when considering that South Carolina is a red state, the host of the first-in-the-South presidential primary next month and Haley is a very popular governor.

Haley is South Carolina's first female and the first minority governor, the daughter of Indian immigrants.

She was re-elected in November 2014.



Gov. Nikki  
Haley



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PAUL BROWN

Nineteen-month-old Asher Putnam, who is with his parents, Joshua and Holly Putnam, gets a high-five from Gov. Nikki Haley on Tuesday.



**Title:** Deadline rush for federal flood aid

Author:

Size: 8.52 square inch

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## Deadline rush for federal flood aid

Thousands of South Carolina residents affected by the historic Oct. 4 storm waited until the last possible day to apply for federal disaster assistance. Nearly 2,000 residents on Monday registered for aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, spokesman Carl Henderson said. That was a significant jump from the 100-200 registrations a day FEMA received recently, he said. More than 101,600 South Carolina residents ultimately registered with FEMA after the historic Oct. 4 rains and flooding, Henderson said. FEMA so far has approved roughly \$79.5 million in aid for individuals and households, though that should rise as registrations are processed and applicants appeal denial letters, Henderson said. Dec. 4 was the original deadline, but Gov. Nikki Haley requested and was granted a 30-day extension because hundreds of South Carolina residents still were applying daily for federal assistance. — *The State*