

Title: **Leadership postraises Haley's national profile**

Author: BY BRISTOW MARCHANT AND CASSIE COPE bmarchant@thestate.com, ccope@thestate.com

Size: 89.9 column inches

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICS

Leadership post raises Haley's national profile

Haley and McMaster reportedly candidates for Cabinet posts in Trump administration

BY BRISTOW MARCHANT
AND CASSIE COPE

bmarchant@thestate.com,
ccope@thestate.com

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster are contenders for positions in President-elect Donald Trump's Cabinet.

Trump's transition team approached McMaster, a former S.C. attorney general, about possibly being U.S. attorney general. "I've been asked if I would be interested," said McMaster, the first statewide elected official

nationally to endorse Trump.

In addition, members of Trump's presidential transition team have discussed Haley as a potential secretary of state and for at least one other position, McMaster said, declining to name that post. "Her name has been mentioned," McMaster said, adding, "The depths of consideration for the various names that have been men-

tioned for various things, I couldn't tell you."

MSNBC's Joe Scarborough tweeted Wednesday that Ha-

ley, a second-term governor, reportedly is being considered by the Trump transition team for secretary of state.

McClatchy reported Wednesday night that Haley is meeting Thursday with Trump in New York.

Other names being floated for the nation's chief diplomat include: former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and former U.N. ambassador John Bolton.

The choice of Haley would be surprising.

She opposed Trump during

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the GOP's primary season, endorsing first U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and, after Rubio dropped out, U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, the last Trump challenger.

Trump and Haley have clashed on Twitter, where Trump said South Carolinians were embarrassed by the governor. Haley

responded dismissively, "Bless your heart."

As a governor, Haley has limited foreign policy experience other than trips abroad — to Canada, England, France, Germany, India and Japan — for business recruitment. Also, she was elected vice chair of the Republican

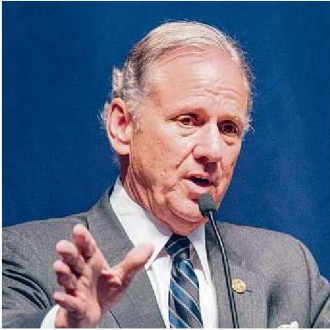
Governors Association on Wednesday and is expect-

ed to become chairman of that group in 2018.

The governor's office declined to comment Wednesday on the speculation.

McMaster, meanwhile, previously has said he planned to run for the GOP nomination for governor in 2018, when Haley's second term ends.

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Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster



JOHN RAOUX Associated Press

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker makes comments as South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley listens during a plenary session at the Republican Governors Association annual conference Tuesday in Orlando, Fla.

Title: **S.C. governor elected vice chair of Republican governors group**
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 Size: 40.92 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



S.C. governor elected vice chair of Republican governors group

BY CASSIE COPE

ccope@thestate.com

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's national profile got a boost Wednesday as she was elected vice chair of the Republican Governors Association.

Typically, vice chairs become the leader of the association the following year. For Haley, that means she would chair the GOP governors group in 2018, her final year as S.C. governor.

"Republican governors are making a difference, delivering results to the people of their states, and our record-breaking majority shows that the RGA knows what it takes to elect effective leaders," Haley said in a news release.

The election elevates Haley's

national stature, political observers say.

"It ups her national profile," said political consultant Katon Dawson, a former S.C. GOP chairman.

Winthrop University political scientist Scott Huffmon agreed. "It would further signal her move on to a national stage."

In her second-term as S.C. governor, Haley has made plenty of national headlines — for her handling of the Emanuel Nine church shooting, Confederate flag-furling controversy and flooding in 2015 and, most recently, for this year's Hurricane Matthew.

As governor, Haley has built

relationships with current and former GOP governors, including early Republican presidential contenders — former Fla. Gov. Jeb Bush; New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a former RGA chair; former Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, a former RGA chair; former Texas Gov. Rick Perry, a former RGA chair; and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, who was elected RGA chair Wednesday.

Haley also has campaigned actively for Republicans outside South Carolina, including stumping for Walker in Wisconsin, N.C. Gov. Pat McCrory and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, now the vice president-elect.

Haley's out-of-state contacts also yielded almost \$4 million for her 2014 re-election bid.

A RGA leadership post dem-

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*Scott Huffmon, Winthrop
political scientist*

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HALEY

onstrates Haley is national figure, not just a regional conservative, Huffmon said.

Haley already is a national celebrity, Dawson said, adding a top post with the RGA "takes it to the next level."

Former S.C. Govs. Carroll Campbell, David Beasley and Mark Sanford were all chairs of the RGA, serving as fundraisers and cheerleaders for other GOP governors.

A leadership position also sets up Haley for her post-governor life, Dawson said, adding Haley could serve on corporate boards because of her

government experience and national contacts.

Raising her profile could help Haley if she continues on to another elected position or goes into the private sector, Huffmon said. National name recognition could help her extend her donor base or contacts for the private sector.

This week's gathering of GOP governors took on a different tone after the Nov. 8 election of President-elect Donald Trump. Had Republican nominee Trump lost, the GOP governors would have been sizing each other up to run

for president in 2020.

Now, those ambitions have been put on hold and, instead, the Republican governors were joined by Vice President-elect Pence.

"Gov. Haley is still a rising star in the national Republican Party," said S.C. GOP chairman Matt Moore.

"She's such a unique voice in the national party," Moore said, adding, "The governors are very smart to put her in a leadership position."

Moore noted Haley spent a lot of time on the road last year, helping elect other GOP gover-

nors. Leadership positions in the RGA are a reward for that hard work, he said, adding he anticipates Haley now will increase her presence in the national media.

Haley will have "plenty of opportunity if she so desires" in national politics, Moore said.

Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657,
[@cassielcope](https://twitter.com/cassielcope)