

Title: **Many in SC GOP reluctantly standing by Trump**
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 Size: 81.99 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Many in SC GOP reluctantly standing by Trump

■ Despite GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump's unsteady performance, most S.C. Republicans continue to stand by their man.

BY CASSIE COPE
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Despite GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump's unsteady performance, most S.C. Republicans continue to stand by their man.

But that support comes reluctantly

from some.

Trump, they say, is the lesser of two evils, adding they cannot dream of voting for Democrat Hillary Clinton on

Nov. 8.

"Sometimes, he has a tendency to speak before he thinks," said Steve Coleman,

61, a conservative from West Columbia.

That tendency has brought a landslide of criticism to the bombastic billionaire real estate mogul this week.

Some Republicans cringed at Trump's feud with an American Muslim couple whose son died fighting for the United States in Iraq. Khizr Khan lambasted Trump last week at the Democratic

National Convention for calling for a ban on Muslims entering the country.

Trump responded in a TV interview Sunday by noting Khan's wife stood silently by her husband, adding, "Maybe she wasn't allowed to have anything to say."

Those comments — the final straw in a GOP campaign

SEE TRUMP, 5A

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TRUMP

marked by insults — led some Republicans elsewhere to switch their support to Clinton.

But that's not likely to happen among S.C. Republicans, although some are leaning toward voting for Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson.

'TOTALLY INAPPROPRIATE'

Sen. John Courson, R-Richland, disapproves of Trump's

feud with the Khans, a Gold Star family. "I thought that was totally inappropriate," said Courson, a former Marine.

Still, Courson said he always has voted Republican for president — "sometimes with great enthusiasm, sometimes with not great enthusiasm."

Asked how much enthu-

siasm he felt about voting for Trump, Courson laughed. "I'm a traditional Republican, and someone like Marco Rubio had great appeal to me. I'm just going to leave it at that."

South Carolina's top Republicans do not want to discuss Trump.

Earlier this week, Gov. Nikki Haley expressed support for the Khan family. Since

then, she has declined to discuss Trump.

However, Haley has said she will support her

party's nominee.

Asked at the GOP convention if she would vote for Trump, Haley replied, "Of course."

Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, the first statewide elected official in the country to endorse Trump,

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also did not weigh in on Trump's rocky week. Trump's other missteps in the past week have included:

- In an interview published Monday, Trump told USA Today he would hope his daughter, Ivanka Trump, would find another job if she were sexually harassed at work. Critics said the comment showed Trump — who publicly has defended Roger Ailes, a former Fox News executive accused of sexual harassment — doesn't get it. Women, they said, should not have to abandon their job or career because a man behaved inappropriately.

- Saying he loved babies when an infant started crying during a campaign event. Later, Trump said he was kidding, adding, "You can get the baby out of here."

- Refusing to endorse U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Arizona, and U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, in their re-election bids.

Still, S.C. Republicans say their support of Trump has not wavered.

S.C. House Majority Leader Bruce Bannister, R-Greenville, said no state GOP leaders that he has talked to are willing to vote for Clinton, citing her record and lack of trustworthiness.

"If (Trump) will get his message back to fixing the system — and get away from sort of the small, personal issues that are a distraction — we'll be better off," Bannister said.

Jerry Rovner, who was an S.C. delegate at the Republican convention, said his support of Trump is unchanged.

"It's unfortunate that these kinds of stories get the headlines when they don't have much to do with what's going on in America," Rovner said.

Rovner said he is concerned about issues that will affect his children and grandchildren.

"I'm not concerned about whether a baby's crying," Rovner said, predicting the fuss over Trump's stumbles will blow over. "Everything changes on a dime in this

country depending on the headlines of that day."

Rep. Phyllis Henderson, R-Greenville, said she will support Trump because he is the GOP nominee. But, she added, "Nothing that Donald Trump says surprises me anymore."

Henderson, who supported Carly Fiorina in the S.C. GOP primary, said she can't vote for Clinton. "It doesn't really matter to me that she would be the first female president."

What does matter, Henderson said, is ensuring there is not another eight years of liberal Supreme Court rulings and overreaching federal policies. Henderson added she can't vote Libertarian, saying she is a political realist. "A Gary Johnson vote? It's just a waste."

TRUMP A 'DANGEROUS COMBINATION'

But, to some Republicans, a vote for Libertarian Johnson is the best alternative. In his Twitter

description, Sen. Greg

Gregory, R-Lancaster, includes that he is "Not a Trumpster."

Gregory traces his dislike of Trump to the candidate's disparaging comments a year ago about Sen. McCain's military service.

"He's a dangerous combination of megalomania and ignorance," Gregory said of Trump.

Gregory added he cannot support Clinton, contending her presidency would hobble the U.S. economy.

"You'll see very few Republicans publicly endorse Clinton" in South Carolina, said Gregory.

But, Gregory added, Trump isn't acceptable. "With Trump you have no idea what you're going to get because he has no idea," Gregory said.

So, Gregory will vote for Libertarian Johnson, a former Republican governor of New Mexico. "I'm not going to be one of the people on the sidelines to say I didn't do anything to try to stop it."

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Not Hillary

Even after a turbulent week for Trump, most S.C. Republicans support the GOP presidential nominee.

"I try not to listen to all the media hype. Granted, I don't agree with everything Donald Trump does or says, but I'm not going to vote for Hillary Clinton." — Sen. Katrina Shealy, R-Lexington

"He is conservative on the majority of his points, and I think he does have business experience, and right now people care about the economy. They're looking for somebody who can turn the economy around. ... The

other main point is he's not Hillary Clinton." — Tyson Grinstead, S.C. Republican National Committee delegate from Richland County

"Trump needs to keep the focus on Hillary Clinton. The case against her is strong. Everything else is a distraction." — S.C. GOP Chairman Matt Moore

"Sadly, it appears Americans won't be choosing between candidates that are best suited to lead our country. Instead they are struggling to choose between the candidate they may not like or the candidate they may not trust. No one's perfect, but these choices are both seriously flawed." — Rep. Nathan Ballentine, R-Richland



Trump



Courson



Haley



McMaster



Bannister



Henderson



Gregory

Title: **Democrats: McMaster's support of Trump will ruin '18 plans**
 Author:
 Size: 13.64 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Democrats: McMaster's support of Trump will ruin '18 plans

Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster's continued support of Donald Trump will ruin his chances of being elected S.C. governor in 2018, the state's Democratic Party said Wednesday.

McMaster, a Columbia Republican long-specified to be a candidate for governor again in 2018, earlier on Wednesday tweeted a YouTube video of his GOP convention nomination speech for Trump with

the caption, "Nothing's changed."

The tweet followed a call from S.C. House Minority Leader Todd Rutherford,

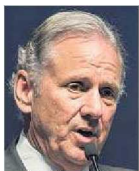
D-Richland, for McMaster and S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley to pull their support from the GOP nominee after his recent criticism of a Muslim Gold Star family.

"Henry McMaster ... has been one of the demagogue's most enthusiastic cheerleaders," the S.C. Democratic Party said in a statement. "If Henry McMaster thinks that this dangerous divisiveness will be his path to the Governor's Mansion in two years, he is in for a rude awakening."

McMaster has run for governor before, running unsuccessfully in the GOP primary in 2010.

Efforts to reach McMaster for comment Wednesday were unsuccessful.

— AVERY G. WILKS



McMaster

Title: **Hunt for Pokemon**
Author:
Size: 2.63 column inches
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Hunt for Pokemon

The international Pokemon Go craze took over Columbia like some sort of Mewtwo mind control. The State House was a hotspot – until it was shut down for an unknown reason. Now, even Gov. Nikki Haley, who tweeted about finding a Pokemon in her office, is calling for the spot to be restored.

Title: **Top SC Democrat weighs in**
 Author: MEG KINNARD ASSOCIATED PRESS
 Size: 34.56 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Top SC Democrat weighs in

To Haley, McMaster: Pull Trump support

MEG KINNARD
 ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA - South Carolina's top state House Democrat doubled down Wednesday on his call for top elected Republicans to withdraw their support of Donald Trump.

Alternatively, state Rep. Todd Rutherford said, Gov. Nikki Haley and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster must tell the state's voters if they still plan to vote

for the GOP nominee, given several days of events that have some within Trump's own party questioning his candidacy.

Republicans nationwide have faced scrutiny this week due to the feud between Trump and the parents of a Capt. Humayun Khan, a decorated Muslim Army captain killed in Iraq. At least one House Republican

has pulled support, saying he'd rather back Hillary Clinton than the GOP pick. U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, who has said he'd support the GOP's nominee, told The Associated Press

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"What is most troubling for the

people of South Carolina ... is the fact that their governor and lieutenant governor continue to stand by his side ..."

REP. TODD RUTHERFORD

Support

Continued from Page 3A

he was "growing increasingly uneasy" with that decision and was "nearing the line" past which he could no longer back Trump.

Trump declined to endorse House Speaker Paul Ryan's re-election bid, saying he's "just not there yet" — echoing Ryan's demurrer before endorsing Trump himself. On Fox Business News, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Trump backer, said the nominee had been "remarkably underper-

forming" in recent weeks.

"What is most troubling for the people of South Carolina ... is the fact that their governor and lieutenant governor continue to stand by his side no matter what," Rutherford, D-Columbia, said in a news release. "It is not enough to simply voice your disagreement with Mr. Trump's disgusting comments on a daily basis. The time has come for the leaders of our state to put country ahead of party and publicly reject his candidacy altogether."

Haley — who initially backed Marco Rubio before siding with Ted Cruz over Trump — attended last month's Republican National Convention and has reluctantly said she'd back the party's nominee. In a statement Monday, she expressed support for Khan's family and made no mention of Trump.

McMaster, the first elected official to endorse Trump, gave a speech officially nominating the candidate at the convention. On Wednesday, he tweeted "Nothing's changed," with a link to his nomination speech.

President Barack Obama on Tuesday castigated Trump as "unfit" and "woefully unprepared" to serve in the White House, challenging Republicans to withdraw their support for their party's nominee.

"Donald Trump's most recent meltdown is even more bizarre and troubling than usual," said Rutherford, seconding Obama's evaluation. "The Republican nominee for president is becoming more dangerous and unhinged by the minute and there seems to be no end in sight."

Title: **Haley, McMaster asked to withdraw support of Trump**
 Author: BY MEG KINNARD Associated Press
 Size: 25.26 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Haley, McMaster asked to withdraw support of Trump

BY MEG KINNARD
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina's top state House Democrat doubled down Wednesday on his call for top elected Republicans to withdraw their support of Donald Trump.

Alternatively, state Rep. Todd Rutherford said, Gov. Nikki Haley and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster must tell the state's voters if they still plan to vote for the GOP nominee, given several days of events that have some within Trump's own party questioning his candidacy. In its own release, the South Carolina Democratic Party took on McMaster separately, saying the Republican who is often mentioned as a 2018 gubernatorial candidate "is in for a rude awakening" if he thinks Trump is his ticket to the governor's mansion.

Republicans have faced scrutiny this week due to the feud between Trump and the parents of Capt. Humayun Khan, a decorated Muslim Army captain killed in Iraq.

At least one House Republican has pulled support, saying he'd rather back Hillary Clinton than the GOP pick. U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, who has said he'd support the GOP's nominee, told The Associated Press he was "growing increasingly uneasy" with that decision and was "nearing the

line" past which he could no longer back Trump.

Trump declined to endorse House Speaker Paul Ryan's re-election bid, saying he's "just not there yet" — echoing Ryan's demurral before endorsing Trump himself. On Fox Business News, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Trump backer, said the nominee had been "remarkably underperforming" in recent weeks.

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Title: **Director Toomey retiring from addiction services agency**
Author: Associated Press
Size: 7.59 column inches
Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



Director Toomey retiring from addiction services agency

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The director of the state Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services is retiring after 5 ½ years at its helm.

Gov. Nikki Haley announced Bob Toomey's retirement Tuesday.

Haley says Toomey has

provided hope for people who suffer from addictions and their families. She says his accomplishments include expanding treatment services for people addicted to opioid prescription painkillers.

Sara Goldsby, a consultant for the agency, will serve as acting director.