

Title: **McMaster didn't kill ethics, but Haley's doing her best**  
 Author:  
 Size: 62.15 square inch  
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



**CINDI ROSS SCOPPE**  
**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
**THE STATE**

# ***McMaster didn't kill ethics, but Haley's doing her best***

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Except it wasn't precisely the year-long, left-for-dead ethics bill. It was a narrower bill the House had passed last year, to which Mr. Martin had convinced his committee to attach a larger reform measure.

And just as the reformers seemed finally to have enough votes and reform was about to be raised from the dead, Democrats had discovered a potentially fatal flaw: The original House bill simply created an independent panel to police legislators' compliance with the ethics law; the larger amendment did that but also required legislators to publicly report the sources of their private income.

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I was chagrined. Of course he was right: It's lawless to overturn a correct procedural ruling just because you don't like it. You might as well just throw out all the rules.

And who would suggest doing such a thing?

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No good excuse for Mr. McMaster's ruling? Perhaps not if you are unconcerned about such niceties as the rule of law.

I doubt there's anybody in this state who is more upset with Henry McMaster's ruling than Henry McMaster. Ethics reform has been a passion of his at least since the first time he ran for lieutenant governor, back in 1990. And since Gov. Haley appointed him and fellow former attorney general Travis Medlock to lead her ethics-reform task force four years ago, he has done far more than she has to

advance the effort.

You can argue that the Senate rules are too restrictive, or that they should be changed. But you can't argue that they should be ignored. At least not if you have any decency.

There never was much chance that the Senate would pass the ethics reforms we need this year. At this point, probably the best we can hope for is independent oversight — although that is no small thing. If Gov. Haley truly wants to help, she should leave legislating ethics to people who believe in doing so in an ethical way.

*Ms. Scoppe can be reached at [cscoppe@thestate.com](mailto:cscoppe@thestate.com) or at (803) 771-8571.*

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**NO GOOD EXCUSE FOR MR. MCMASTER'S RULING? PERHAPS NOT**

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Title: **Fitesa Simpsonville invests \$52 million for expansion to increase production**  
 Author: SCOTT KEELER DSKEELER@GREENVILLENEWS.COM  
 Size: 67.89 square inch  
 Simpsonville, SC Circulation: 38725



# Fitesa Simpsonville invests \$52 million for expansion to increase production

Move will create 38 new jobs over next five years

SCOTT KEELER

DSKEELER@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

Fitesa, a global designer and manufacturer of non-woven fabrics for hygiene, medical and industrial markets, has announced a \$52 million expansion to its existing operations in Simpsonville. The expansion will increase production capacity and is expected to create 38 new jobs over the next five years.

"It's another great day in South Carolina as we celebrate Fitesa and its decision to expand in Greenville County," Gov. Nikki Haley stated in a press release. "With global headquarters already established in the Upstate, this \$52 million

expansion and the 38 new jobs it will create further show Fitesa's fantastic commitment to our state and our people."

Fitesa was founded in 1973. Its products provide a variety of physical and aesthetic properties, including softness, strength, abrasion resistance and sustainability. They are used in products such as baby diapers.

The Simpsonville facility, which opened at 840 SE Main Street in 1990, is one of the company's 11 plants in eight countries across North and South

America, Europe and Asia. Fitesa is adding 20,000 square feet to the current 190,000-square foot facility. It will be making infrastructure improvements and adding equipment to increase production of spunmelt fabrics.

The latest expansion comes after a \$50 million expansion in 2013 that created 32 jobs. With this project, Fitesa will have invested more than a half billion dollars in its Simpsonville facility.

"Fitesa has been an integral manufacturing partner within the Greenville community for almost 30 years," Green-

ville County Council Chairman Bob Taylor said. "The company's growth and continued expansion are a true testament to the County's workforce and collaborative spirit."

Fitesa expects the latest expansion to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2017 and hiring for new positions will begin in the spring of 2017.

"We are pleased to continue to grow our operations here and appreciate the support of Greenville

County in making this announcement a reality," Fitesa Global Marketing Director Ray Dunleavy said.

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SCOTT KEELER/STAFF

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Title: **Hearing spotlights transgender bathroom bill in SC**  
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**THE LEGISLATURE**

# Hearing spotlights transgender bathroom bill in SC

BY JAMIE SELF  
AND ANDREW SHAIN

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When Danielle Driscoll's child came out to her as transgender and began transitioning last year from female to male, they were in the process of moving to Columbia.

"I was really proud of him," said Driscoll, recalling how her 13-year-old son started the school year by writing a note to his new teachers, explaining that he

was transitioning and asking if they would call him by his new name and refer to him using male pronouns.

"That took a lot of courage, especially in a brand-new school, and a brand-new place," Driscoll said. "That was kind of the start. It was like, 'OK, we're doing this.'"

Her son plans to take another step by joining other members of the transgender

community and their allies by testifying Wednesday morning against a Senate bill that would end transgender men and women using the bathrooms of their choice.

After the hearing, more than a dozen transgender organizations are planning to participate in a rally outside the State House, organized by the Trans Student Alliance at the University of South

Carolina.

The bill sponsored by state Sen. Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg, has mobilized the state's transgender community already energized by a similar law passed in North Carolina last month.

Bright's bill is "such a bigger issue than what rest-

**SEE TRANSGENDER, 7A**

## TRANSGENDER

**FROM PAGE 1A**

room you're using," Driscoll said. "Passing a bill like this feels like it would be saying, 'It's OK to not be accepting, and it's OK to not allow him to feel safe in his environment.'"

Bright said he's concerned more about the safety of women in restrooms than the feelings of transgender men and women.

"If a (small percentage) of the population wants to be something that a majority of the population thinks is strange and abnormal, that's their business," he said. "You can't force people to accept something like that."

Bright said he plans to have a top North Carolina lawmaker testify Wednesday

about his state's new HB2 law that includes a transgender bathroom ban. North Carolina House Majority Leader Mike Hager said seeing several Southern states considering similar laws shows "it's good policy."

Other testimony supporting the bill is being organized by the Columbia-based Palmetto Family Council, which sent an email blast Monday headlined, "Protect Our Children in Restrooms and Showers."

Family Council president Oran Smith said he has asked a lawyer with Arizona-based Alliance Defending Freedom, which works on religious issues, to provide a legal analysis of the bill at the hearing Wednesday

day. While no reports about significant incidents about men using women's restrooms have been reported to S.C. authorities, Smith said Bright's bill "would head something off."

Bright said he hopes to finish testimony this week so the bill could get a committee vote to go to the Senate floor next week.

But opposition is mounting. The state's top Republican, Gov. Nikki Haley, called the bill unnecessary. State Sen. Joel Lourie, a Richland Democrat who will join Bright in presiding over the hearing Wednesday, said that "with all the blood in my veins and all the oxygen in my body," he would block the proposal.

Bright's bathroom bill

would, if passed, make transgender students feel unsafe at school, said Greg Green, a 32-year-old transgender man who runs a support group for transgender people at his Columbia church.

"What it causes really is a lot of anxiety," said Green, who plans to testify Wednesday. "My concern is the outing."

Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin said he plans to testify Wednesday about the economic benefits of his city having anti-discrimination ordinances based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

"I believe that this bill will cost the state millions in lost business," he said. "We only have to look as far as North Carolina."

Gay, lesbian, bisexual

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and transgender supporters have criticized North Carolina political leaders after the passage of bill that also ended local ordinance providing protections based on sexual orientation.

**BRIGHT SAID HE'S CONCERNED MORE ABOUT THE SAFETY OF WOMEN IN RESTROOMS THAN THE FEELINGS OF TRANSGENDER MEN AND WOMEN.**

Last week, online payment provider Paypal called off an expansion in Charlotte, and rock star Bruce Springsteen canceled a concert in Greensboro. "There's not a price for

doing the right thing," said Hager, a Republican from Rutherfordton.

"My first role in office is protecting citizens, not how much business we can get."

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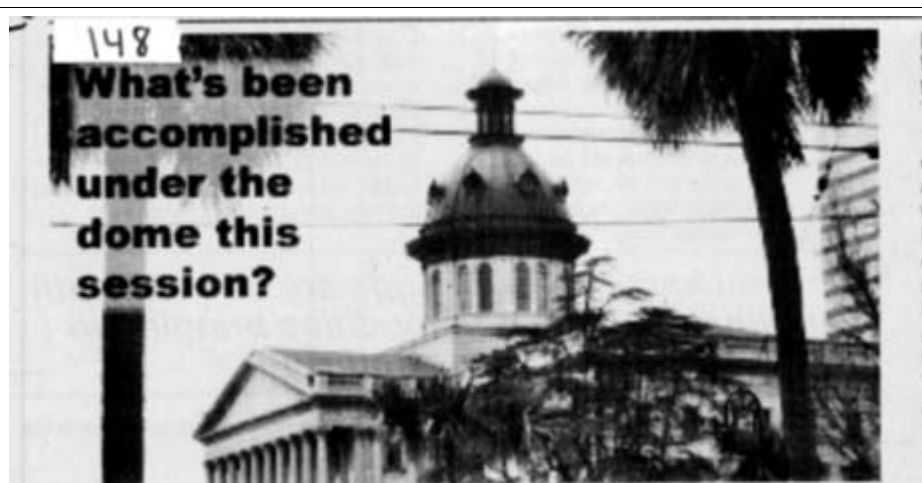
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By Cecilia Brown and Lia Grabowski  
Carolina Reporter

The South Carolina legislature has been in session for 36 weeks, and with only 9 more weeks left in the 121st legislative session, lawmakers must deliberate on dozens of bills, including the massive roads legislation aimed at repairing the state's aging highways and bridges. South Carolina's legislature runs on a two-year cycle, so bills introduced in 2015 may carry over through the 2016 session. With the session coming to a close this June, all bills not approved by both chambers and enacted into law will not be carried over into 2017. Those measures will have to be reintroduced in the next session if a proponent of the bill still hopes to see it passed.

During the 121st legislative session, which spans Jan. 14, 2015 to June 2, 2016, 1,678 general bills have been introduced to date in the House and Senate. Of those, 148 have been passed and enacted by both chambers of the South Carolina legislature.

The deadline for introducing a bill into either chamber is quickly approaching. All bills must be introduced in the House by April 15 and the Senate by May 1 to have any chance of being discussed and potentially passed during this session.

In order to get a bill signed into law, legislators must pass it in both the House and the Senate, meaning a bill must move from one chamber to be introduced in the other. As of May 1, this year's crossover date, it will become much more difficult for a bill to move between chambers, encouraging the legislators to work

through what items they have left to discuss before the end of the session.

After May 1, it will require a 2/3 vote from either chamber to bring a bill up for discussion, which is only likely to occur under rare circumstances.

#### Annual State Budget

The South Carolina legislature approved this year's annual state budget on March 22. The budget exceeds \$7.1 billion, including a 2 percent raise for state employees.

#### Concealed Weapon Permit

There are currently two bills in the House allowing the holder of an out-of-state concealed weapons permit to carry a weapon in South Carolina. One of the House bills would recognize permits issued by Georgia and North Carolina, under certain circumstances. Another just suggests the out of state conditions to carry a weapon.

#### Ethics Reform Act

Ethics reform has become a prominent issue in this legislative session, actively sought by the governor.

The House passed the bill quickly when it was introduced at the start of the session and sent it to the Senate by the end of January 2015. The bill was sent to committee in the Senate and wasn't seen again until Feb. 3, 2016.

In that span of time, Gov. Haley gave her State of the State address and implored senators to provide some sort of action on the ethics bill rather than let it die in committee. In a widely recognized bold statement, she paused in her speech to ask senators in the audience to stand up if they would support ethics reform,



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publically calling on them to support the bill and move it forward before the end of the session in June. The bill itself would amend the 1976 Code of Laws on the state's ethics commission. Under the amendment, the commission would be "four members appointed by the governor, four members elected by the Supreme Court, two members elected by the House of Representatives, and two members elected by the Senate," as stated in the bill.

The duties of the members of the commission would also be revised to include receiving complaints against legislators, candidates, judges, or any members of staff, oversee the investigations of said complaints, and make a determination about whether an ethical violation has occurred. If a complaint is found to be substantial, the commission would refer the case to the Commission on Judicial Conduct and Supreme Court.

#### Domestic Violence

This session, Governor Nikki Haley has signed only a little over 100 bills, including a recent amendment of the 1976 Protection from Domestic Abuse Act. The amendment, signed into law on March 15, established domestic violence fatality review committees in each circuit of South Carolina and provided instruction on how the committees should be run.

This bill was a small step in South Carolina and proponents of increased domestic violence legislation are protesting the legislators' inaction on the issue. High schools and law enforcement are working together to discourage domestic violence, and rallies are being held to persuade legislators to revisit bills that could die at the end of the session.

One domestic violence bill that has stayed in committee for over a year would create a legal consequence for "dating violence," a term not currently recognized under South Carolina law.

#### Roads

A major issue the legislature has tried to tackle this session is funding for South Carolina's roads, particularly in the aftermath of damage caused by the historic flood last October. There has been a variety of legislation proposed to solve the issue, but the most recent version is working its way through the legislature.

The legislation would allocate a recurring \$400 million from the general fund and overhaul the state Department of Transportation. Lawmakers also debated raising the

state's gasoline tax, the lowest in the Southeast, to generate funds.

Haley declared in her State of the State address that she would only approve a gas tax if it was accompanied by a cut to the state's income tax rates. When it became clear the gas tax would be a hard sell for the legislature, it was removed from the bill so there would be a better chance to pass any assistance for the deteriorating pothole-filled roads.

Included in the bill is a provision that would reconfigure the appointment process of the Department of Transportation. Gov. Haley has supported the change, in which the governor's office would now be in charge of appointing the Transportation Department positions.

#### Flood Relief

A separate piece of legislation also dealing with roads would devote \$25 million to DHEC for financial assistance in the form of grants and loans to aid dam owners in repairing damage from the October 2015 floods.

In an attempt to provide assistance for South Carolina farmers after crops were lost during the flood, the bill was introduced Jan. 21. It moved through the House to the Senate in early March and was referred to the Senate's Committee on Finance.

The bill would create a farm aid fund to supplement the minimal insurance relief provided to South Carolina farmers who lost more than 40% of their crops in last fall's devastation. As provided in the bill, the amount given to any one farmer could not exceed \$100,000 and would be equivalent to 20 percent of crops lost.

Tucker Hipps Transparency Act  
Clemson University student, Tucker Hipps, died in 2014 while on an early morning run with his fraternity pledge brothers. His parents believe he was the victim of hazing when he fell to his death off a bridge near the university. The Tucker Hipps Transparency Act would require institutions of higher learning to maintain reports of investigations and related information of members of sororities, fraternities and other organizations. These institutions would be required to make reports

available to the public and online, as well as supply students and their parents with reports before the student can begin the formal process of joining a sorority or fraternity. The

bill was introduced in the House in January, and sent to the Senate on March 17 where it was referred to the Committee on Education on the same day.

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## 148 In review—Three takeaways from the \$750 M House budget

by Jessica Cross @carolinaledger  
The Carolina Ledger

S.C. House chamber. File photo. The state House zipped through the approximately \$750 million budget Monday and Tuesday, passing it easily.

Here are three takeaways from that process—

The process was a cinch House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brian White said Wednesday that many people had told him how seamless the budgeting process had been. The Anderson Republican gave credit to the chairman of the subcommittees for their budget work.

The budget sailed through the chamber this week, passing 111 to 1 just before midnight. Rep. Jonathon Hill, R-Anderson, gave the lone dissenting vote on the bill.

"The budget process might be transparent, in theory, but unless you are in leadership you don't have much say over what goes into it. It is very much a top-down process," wrote Hill on Facebook Tuesday.

The roads funding portion reflects a roads fix tug-of-war in the Statehouse

The House included in its budget \$415 million, reserved for the Transportation Department and county governments for road maintenance and construction.

Republican Gov. Nikki Haley praised the House for funding roads at a Wednesday news conference, but urged members to concur with the portion of a Senate roads plan to reform the SCDOT commission. "The money doesn't mean anything if we don't reform the agency," she said.

That reform, she said, should either allow the governor to appoint commissioners or make the SCDOT into a cabinet agency. Currently SCDOT commissioners are elected by legislative delegations within each Congressional district, enabling what Haley called political horse-trading.

House leadership decried the

Senate plan as irresponsible earlier in March. That plan would reform the SCDOT and the controversial State Infrastructure Bank, and would set aside \$400 million annually for roads.

Senate Republicans, in turn, criticized a gas tax plan by the House after the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office's revised estimates showed that plan could garner far less than the \$427 million initially expected.

The House is expected to take up the Senate proposal after returning from furlough on April 12.

The House approved spending large sums of money without any debate. The House on Monday took up

sections that lacked amendments, and without any debate, approved almost every section.

Funding for the Retirement System Investment Commission was an exception. House members rejected that section, which would have given the agency \$17 million, by a vote of 53-51.

Notable budget increases, compared to the previous fiscal year, include—

- Members voted 83 to 4 to send to the Department of Health and Human Services approximately \$133 million more in general fund money.

- Lawmakers voted 82 to 20 to increase total funds to the Infrastructure Bank Board by \$15 million.

- The Department of Health and Environmental Control is set to receive \$13.8 million more in general funds. House members voted 79 to 0 to approve the funding.

- The House voted 98 to 0 to give the Department of Mental Health a \$25 million increase in total funds, including an \$11 million increase in general funds.

This isn't an exhaustive list of budget increases. For more information, see the searchable budget. Or, find out how representatives voted on each budget section Monday and Tuesday.

The budget is now before the Senate Finance Committee.

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## 148 Massey, Setzler, Corley, Carlton and Goings -- all pick up challengers Shootouts in House 81, and County Council District 3

Wednesday morning was a busy time for the Elections Commission, as several incumbents picked up last minute challengers. In the state senate race, Senators Nikki Setzler and Shane Massey both picked a challenger. Setzler(D-26) picked up a Republican challenger in Brad Lindsey, a resident of West Columbia, SC. Senator Massey(R-25) will be challenged by John Pettigrew of Edgefield in a Republican Primary. Pettigrew had announced his intentions to run against Massey in 2012 but was thrown off the ballot with hundreds of other candidates in a political scandal that rocked the South Carolina Senate as hundreds of potential candidates were removed from the ballot because of a last minute change in the law, while incumbents were unaffected.

Representative Chris Corley(R-84) will be challenged in a primary by Susan Swanson. Swanson, a former Chairwoman of the Aiken County Republican Party has made several forays into local races in the past, but has yet to come out with a win. Corley has received push back from fellow members of the house, who object to his brash style. Governor Nikki Haley joined into the chorus of voices from Columbia last week when she asked someone to challenge Corley on Facebook.

Aiken County Coroner Tim Carlton will be challenged by two other Republicans in the June primary. Sheriff's Office investigator Clay Adams and a former maintenance mechanic, Thomas Scott, both filed against Carlton early during the 15 day filing period.

Aiken County Treasurer Jason Goings also picked up a challenger for the Republican primary in the form of Lee Bodie of Aiken. Goings was among the candidates removed from the ballot in 2012, but ran a tough write-in campaign and won out over several other challengers.

The two open seats in Aiken County both attracted interest as House 81 brought in four contenders

and County Council District 3 attracted three. Running for House 81 in the wake of Don Wells decision to not seek reelection are, K.T. Ruthven the former Chairman of the Aiken County Republican Party and local realtor, Bart Blackwell owner of B&S Machine Tool and past President of the Aiken Chamber of Commerce, Chris Austin an attorney from New Ellenton, and newcomer Jeremy O'Donnell. All four will be running as Republicans and many insiders expect a runoff for the race.

County Council District 3 came open after Democrat Lawana McKenzie announced that she would not be seeking reelection. Three men have filed as Republicans to fill the seat. Danny Faegin, Don Turno, and Earl Clinton Jr. have all filed for the June Primary.

Sheriff Hunt will be challenged by Democrat Henry Sims.

Other new names to appear on the ballot that will be running unopposed are Tonya Marchant for Probate Judge, and Robert Harte for Clerk of Court.

Incumbents, Bill Taylor(House 86), Bill Hixon(House 83), Bill Clyburn(House 82), Ronnie Young(County Council Chair), J. Strom Thurmond(Solicitor 2nd District), Charles Barton(Auditor), Judith Warner(RMC), Chuck Smith(County Council District 4), and Andrew Siders(County Council District 7) will all be running unopposed as Republicans while Willar Hightower(County Council District 8) will be unopposed as a Democrat.

At the federal level, Congressman Joe Wilson and Senator Tim Scott both drew several challengers. Wilson will be challenged by Democrats Arik Bjorn and Phil Black, and American Party Candidate Eddie McCain. Scott will be challenged by Bill Bledsoe who is running as both a Libertarian and Constitution Party candidate, Thomas Dixon as a Democrat, and both Jim Hinkle and "Rebel" Michael Scarborough as American Party Candidates.



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## POLITICS:

# The way it is supposed to be

By **PHIL NOBLE**

Guest column

Politics – it's become a dirty word.

It's about crass politicians talking about "little hands" and other body parts; it's sleazy lobbyists who dole out campaign contributions for lawmakers' votes; it's political consultants who hire out to the highest bidder; it's politicians who spout fear, bigotry and lies simply because they can; it's a system of gerrymandered districts that make it impossible for reasonable moderate people to get elected; it's slick TV ads crafted based on public opinion polls and not political ideas or principles; it's regular citizens and their interests getting steamrolled by special interest and special influence; it's campaigns that cost way too much and are too often about fundraising; it's about gridlock in our national and state capitals where compromise is a dirty word; it's about something called super PACs that seem capable of dumping tens of millions in secret money into campaigns; it's a few governors, senators, congressmen or legislators getting together to work out "the deal" and then forcing it down the throats of the people who elected them; its industry lobbyists in Washington ganging up with the bureaucrats who issue special interest regulations that tell people on the local level what to do – and on and on it goes.

It does not have to be this way.

The word "politics" is a very old word. It goes back to the ancient Greek

word *polites* meaning citizen. A modern dictionary (i.e. Google) defines it simply and elegantly as to "engage in political activity."

The more you read and study the various definitions of the word and how it has changed and morphed over time, the more you understand that the key concept is always "the citizen" and their making the decisions that impact their lives.

The contemporary definitions of politics above show just how far we have strayed from the original Greek meaning.

All of this is why the recent "politics" around the issue of off-shore drilling in South Carolina and the Atlantic coast has come like a bolt of lightning out of the blue on a cloudless summer day.

Things just don't happen like this – but they did. What we would expect would happen, didn't. And what we expected wouldn't happen, did.

## First the facts

There are oil and natural gas deposits off the southeastern coast – and some people (mostly oil companies) want to drill to get it.

Other people (mostly just people, i.e. *polites*) don't want them to do it. Well, according to traditional politics as usual (see above) we can pretty much guess how this is going to turn out – oil companies win, citizens loose.



**NOBLE**

In January of last year, President Obama surprised almost everyone and announced that he would open the southeast coast to off-shore drilling for the first time ever.

The New York Times succinctly described the reaction: "...environmental advocates were shocked and enraged – and the oil industry was delighted."

Other than the fact that it was Obama (who generally supports environmental issues), what happened next was pretty much politics as usual.

The four governors of the coastal states (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia) all signed up to go along for the ride, Democrats and Republicans.

The next step in the usual political script was they signed up most, though not all, of the Washington senators and congressmen from these states. There were a few holdouts among low-ranking coastal congressmen and legislators (Democratic and Republican), but the same script says they would eventually cave, or there were not enough of them to matter.

So goes, politics as usual.

## Citizens win

But something happened along the way – the *polites* (Remember these folks? The citizens) said no. In the four states all along the coast, the people – and mayors and municipal councils in more than 100 communities, local newspapers, small businesses, environmental organizations, local fishermen and beach residents – said no.

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In fact, more than 1 million polites weighed in against the proposal, with petitions, letters, public comments, etc.

And they won.

Last week, the Obama Administration announced it was canceling the plan.

In the days since, there have been lots of reactions and lots of angry words – Gov. Haley said Obama had “pulled the rug out from under us.”

There were many factors that contributed to this stunning reversal, not the least of which was that the Navy opposed the drilling. But, one thing is clear – the polites of South Carolina were leaders in this fight.

Billy Keyserling, mayor of Beaufort, was one of the earliest and most vocal leaders in rallying the coastal mayors and councils. Frank Knapp of the

S.C. Small Business Chamber of Commerce, worked tirelessly to organize opposition among the small businesses up and down the coast.

Our state’s environmental groups such as the Coastal Conservation League and new ad-hoc groups such as Don’t Drill Low-Country worked very effectively.

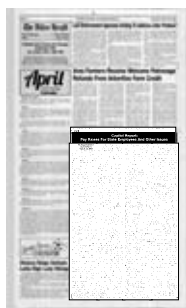
In the end, it was how politics is supposed to work: People understood the issues, they knew what it meant to them and their future and they went to work to win.

So, as has been said many times and many ways over many centuries, “Power to the polites!”

*Phil Noble is president of the S.C. New Democrats. E-mail him at phil@philnoble.com*



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## Capitol Report: Pay Raises For State Employees And Other Issues

By Representative  
Jackie Hayes  
March 24, 2016

House members included a 2 percent pay raise for state employees in the state budget plan -- double the amount that had been recommended by the House Ways and Means Committee. The budget also includes a 2 percent pay increase for teachers, with a full "step" increase.

The 2 percent raise, if approved by the Senate and the Governor, will help retain state employees, who earn, on average, about 15 percent less than people doing the same jobs in other states. Another change we made will increase funding for road repairs, raising the total to more than \$415 million.

One important budget amendment approved by the House adds \$2.9 million to fund new prosecutors specializing in criminal domestic violence crimes. This change, combined with a new law designed to curb domestic violence, should go a long way towards helping us address the problem. Gov. Nikki Haley recently signed into law a bill (H 4666), which I co-sponsored, establishing 16 special committees, one in each judicial circuit, to study domestic violence fatalities and to recommend needed changes in state laws, state policies and law enforcement training as well as public education about domestic violence.

I supported an amendment to increase funding for the Local Government Fund, but we were unsuccessful in getting it approved.

In other action, the House and Senate adopted H 4443, a concurrent resolution declaring June 17, 2016, as Mother Emanuel Nine Day, to reflect on the tragic murder of nine churchgoers at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston on June 17, 2015. The resolution encourages state agencies to look at improving race relations and economic equality for minorities, as well as focusing on efforts to help the homeless in our state.

I also want to share with you some of the dozens of measures

that the House has approved and sent to the Senate during the past few weeks.

H 3130 would allow "low-risk" adult and juvenile offenders convicted of certain nonviolent crimes to be considered for home detention, with monitoring through a GPS tracking device. Anyone convicted of drug trafficking offenses carry-

ing a maximum sentence of up to ten years could not apply.

The Timothy Wayne Gibson Act (H 4688) would forbid anyone from moving a temporary road closure sign or device. An amendment approved on the House floor would allow someone to move and then replace the sign in order to access his or her premises. The bill is named after a Department of Transportation worker who died during the flooding last fall when the truck he drove overturned and was swept away.

H 3989, the "Persons With Disabilities Right to Parent Act" would protect the parenting rights of individuals with disabilities. The bill would help ensure that a parent's disability will not cause the parent to be denied custody of his or her child or visitation with the child. In addition, the bill would encourage family courts to consider ways to accommodate the parent's disability.

The Experimental Health Care Treatment Law (H 4542), approved by the House and sent to the Senate, would authorize physicians to prescribe promising experimental treatments for patients with a terminal illness. Specifically, the bill would apply to patients expected to die within six months, and who have unsuccessfully tried all other approved treatments. In such cases, physicians would be allowed to help prescribe drugs or devices that have been approved in the First Phase of testing by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration but not yet approved for general use.

The House approved H 3706, which would require the state Department of Health and Environmental Control to develop a program to train and



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certify individuals to administer emergency shots of epinephrine, as from EpiPens, to treat anyone experiencing life-threatening allergic reactions. The bill would allow day care facilities, colleges, universities, restaurants, sports arenas and certain other entities to get a prescription for EpiPens to have on hand in case of emergencies. Anyone administering the EpiPen would have to be trained and certified, and the patient would have to be experiencing anaphylactic shock, a dangerous allergic reaction, with symptoms that often include difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, low blood pressure and sometimes heart failure.

H 4413 would require designated "safe havens" for abandoned babies to display a notice informing the public that it is a safe haven. It also would expand the current law to babies up to 180 days old. Current law allows someone to leave an infant up to 30 days old at designated locations, such as hospitals, police stations and fire stations, under certain circumstances without criminal penalty.

The S.C. Founding Principles Act (H 3848) would require students to study the principles that shaped the United States. This instruction would be incorporated into the required study of the U.S. Constitution and the S.C. Social Studies Standards, overseen by the State Board of Education and State Oversight Committee. The bill would require the instruction to include, at a minimum, the Federalist Papers, the structure of government, the role of the separation of powers and the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. Another bill, H 4150, would designate September 17 each year as "United States Constitution Day," in recognition of the signing of the Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787.

In an effort to reverse the decline of deer in our state, H 4943 would establish a new deer tagging system requiring hunters to tag every deer taken. The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would be required to conduct a four-year study on the status of

the deer population and review the tagging program. DNR also would be directed to set up a coyote tagging and bounty program to help reduce coyotes in the state. The agency would tag and release at least three coyotes in each of the four game zones and then pay a bounty of at least \$1,000 for any hunter who bagged the tagged coyote.

Other bills approved by the House and sent to the Senate include:

-H 4937, which would re-establish the S.C. Education and Economic Development Coordinating Council to implement a career pathways program in public schools to help students learn the skills needed to become a trained workforce.

- H 4938, a joint resolution directing the S.C. Department of Education to survey college students pursuing education degrees to determine if they would consider teaching in rural and economically chal-

lenged school districts and to find out what incentives, if any, would draw them to teach in rural communities. The survey results would be reported to the General Assembly by Dec. 1, 2016.

- H 4939, which would require the Department of Education develop a system for providing technical, financial and academic assistance to underperforming schools districts; to monitor underperforming school boards as well as the professional development of teachers and staff; and to establish a committee to identify the state's obsolete education laws.

-H 4941, which would require the Department of Education to establish a statewide program for addressing school districts with financial problems. The program would need to address three levels of concern: a fiscal watch, a fiscal caution and a fiscal emergency, with differing requirements.

-H 5085, a resolution I cosponsored, recognizing that abuse and neglect of children is a significant problem in our state; commending the work of children's advocacy centers; and declaring Tuesday, April 26, 2016 as Children's Advocacy Center Day.

-H 4535, which would repeal







outdated state laws. For instance, one law still on the books forbids the operation of public dance halls on Sunday, and another prohibits minors under 18 from playing pinball machines.

- H 5020, which would establish an annual South Carolina Day of Service on the third Saturday of May to encourage state residents to “roll up their sleeves and lend a

hand” to make a positive difference in our state.

-H 3036, which would designate Jan 17 each year as “Eartha Kitt Day” in honor of the internationally known actress and singer, who was born in the community of North, South Carolina.

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*The Legislature meets in Columbia on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays*

*from January to mid-June. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 803-734-3099, at 333C Blatt Building, P.O. Box 11867, Columbia, S.C. 29211 or call me at home at 843-774-6125, at 240 Bermuda Road, Dillon, S.C. 29536. My email address is JackieHayes@schouse.gov.*

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## The State Capitol Report

Submitted by  
Rep. Patricia Moore Henegan  
SC House District #54

House members approved a 2 percent pay raise for state employees in the state budget plan - double the amount that had been recommended by the House Ways and Means Committee. I joined many legislators in fighting for even more of an increase, but to no avail. Nonetheless, we are happy with the 2 percent raise. The budget also includes a 2 percent pay increase for teachers, with a full "step" increase.

The 2 percent raise, if approved by the Senate and the Governor, will help retain state employees, who earn, on average, about 15 percent less than people doing the same jobs in other states. Another change we made will increase funding for road repairs, raising the total to more than \$415 million.

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*Thank you for the trust that you have placed in me. I can be reached in Columbia on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 803-212-6896. My Columbia address is Rep. Pat Henegan, 333A Blatt, P.O. Box 11867, Columbia, SC, 29211 or [pathenegan@schouse.gov](mailto:pathenegan@schouse.gov). On Mondays and Fridays, you can reach me at 843-479-7838. You may also call 843-479-5622 to set up an appointment to meet me on Mondays or Fridays at my Bennettsville office at the Office of Veterans Affairs in the D.D. McColl House, 300 West Main Street. The address of my local office is P.O. Box 41, Bennettsville, SC 29512.*