

Title: **With a sigh, delegation pledges to support Trump**  
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## S.C.'S CONGRESSMEN

# With a sigh, delegation pledges to support Trump

BY VERA BERGENGRUEN

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WASHINGTON

South Carolina's GOP-dominated congressional delegation has kept a low profile on the election front since Donald Trump became the de facto Republican nominee for president Wednesday.

Among the D.C. representatives of a deeply

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## TRUMP

interested" in being considered for the vice president's slot. She didn't name Trump either.

U.S. Sen. Tim Scott's campaign spokeswoman, Margaret Spaulding, issued a statement on the North Charleston Republican's behalf, saying, "As (Scott) has consistently said over the past year, he will support the Republican nominee."

She added, "Now that Donald Trump is the presumptive Republican nominee, the senator will do what he can to assist his campaign; however, his focus will remain on his own re-election and

Republican state that handed the billionaire businessman a resounding primary win in February, there has been no acknowledgment on social media that their party has decided, for all intents, on a presidential candidate, no statements of support.

serving the people of South Carolina."

Just a few hours before Cruz suspended his campaign Tuesday, taking with it any hopes of stopping Trump's nomination, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca, was tweeting that Trump was "completely unhinged."

"If we nominate Trump, we will get destroyed and we will deserve it," he tweeted.

Cruz dropped his presidential bid after a devastating loss to Trump in Indiana's GOP primary.

A day later, Ohio Gov. John Kasich followed,

When pushed, the GOP congressmen give tepid answers in unison.

The offices of U.S. Reps. Trey Gowdy, the Spartanburg Republican who had endorsed U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, and Jeff Duncan, the Laurens Republican who had en-

dorsed U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, said they would "support the Republican nominee." Neither named Trump.

Gov. Nikki Haley said the same thing Wednesday, adding she is "not

**SEE TRUMP, 5A**

leaving Trump the only remaining candidate from a original field of 17.

Graham, a famously vocal Trump critic, uncharacteristically has kept quiet since Trump's nomination became all but inevitable Wednesday, only praising Cruz and Kasich for "offering an alternative to Donald Trump."

Their colleagues face similar dilemmas.

Only one senator, Alabama's Jeff Sessions, and 16 GOP congressmen had endorsed Trump by Thursday afternoon.

Speaking to CNN,

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., declined to support the presumptive nominee. "I'm not there right now."

So far, no members of the S.C. delegation in D.C. have plans to attend July's Republican national convention in Cleveland. Haley's office said the governor would make a decision in June.

"The governor is focused on finishing the legislative session strong — and once it's over, she'll make a decision on the convention," said press secretary Chaney Adams.

Title: **ALSO...**  
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**ALSO ...**

●Husqvarna Consumer Outdoor Products is expanding its Orangeburg County operations, according to Gov. Nikki Haley's office. The company is investing more than \$29 million in a new main distribution center at its current site, at 172 Old Ellore Road in Orangeburg. The company produces outdoor power products, including robotic lawn mowers, ride-on mowers and chainsaws. For more information on Husqvarna North America, visit <http://www.husqvarna.com/us>.

●Charleston software company Blackbaud has been named to Forbes magazine's annual Fast Tech 25 list as one of this year's fastest growing public tech companies. The company provides software and services for philanthropic organizations. Forbes studied three years of revenue growth, projected growth and Blackbaud's earnings-quality score from Value Line. Blackbaud made the list at No. 25.

●Publix Super Markets Inc. has issued a voluntary recall for Wheatberry Salad, which has been available in plastic containers in Publix Delis. The sunflower kernels used in the salad are involved with a larger nationwide recall because of listeria concerns. The Wheatberry Salad was available in all Publix stores in the Carolinas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Tennessee.

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## State political roundup

### HOUSE PASSES S.C. FARM AID BILL SETTING UP SHOWDOWN WITH HALEY

COLUMBIA

A bill to give \$40 million to South Carolina farmers who lost much of their crops in last year's massive floods is on its way to a showdown with the governor.

The House voted 85-2 Wednesday to agree to the version of the bill the Senate passed 33-3.

The proposal allows farmers in disaster-declared counties to request grants of up to \$100,000 to cover up to 20 percent of their 2015 crop losses.

When 2 feet of rain fell in October, South Carolina farmers lost \$330 million of crops near harvest time.

Gov. Nikki Haley has said while she feels badly for farmers, she feels badly for small businesses too, and farmers shouldn't be treated differently. Her office didn't immediately respond Wednesday to whether her veto threat stands.

### HOUSE APPROVES LEGISLATION SPREADING FEES TO CELLPHONES

COLUMBIA

The South Carolina House has approved legislation that spreads the cost of phone services to cellphone customers, lowering fees on landline bills.

The 103-2 vote Wednesday follows a Public Service Commission ruling requiring cellphone companies to pay into the state's Universal Service Fund, which the Legislature created in 1996 to extend and maintain lines in rural areas.

More than 20 local telephone companies sought last fall's hearing after the bill stalled in the Legislature.

The legislation would cap rural companies' supplements at \$40 million. It also requires cellphone customers to begin contributing toward services for hearing- and speech-impaired residents. That would be capped at 10 cents monthly.

House Labor Commerce and Industry Chairman Bill Sandifer says it's only fair to

extend the fees to everyone who benefits from landline connections.

### SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE GETS INFORMATION ABOUT \$2B ROAD BILL

COLUMBIA

A House panel received information about a plan passed by the Senate to borrow more than \$2 billion to widen interstates and repair bridges over the next decade.

The subcommittee took no action Wednesday, but Rep. Chip Limehouse promised a vote before the next meeting of the whole House Ways and Means Committee.

State Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall says the bill is a good first step. She told the lawmakers she wants the DOT to show the public it can spend this money wisely so the agency will be trusted with more money to try and bring the entire state highway system into good condition.

The bill would use \$200 million a year in fees and vehicle sales taxes to borrow the \$2 billion.

— FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS

Title: **Haley 'not interested' in being Trump's vice president**  
 Author: BY JAMIESELF jself@thestate.com  
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# Haley 'not interested' in being Trump's vice president

**Gov. Nikki Haley: 'I am flattered to be mentioned,' but 'my plate is full'**

**Lexington Republican says she will support the GOP nominee**

**S.C. GOP party leaders: It's time to rally behind Trump**

BY JAMIE SELF

jself@thestate.com

COLUMBIA

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley ruled out being Donald Trump's running mate Wednesday as the New York billionaire's path to the GOP presidential nomination cleared.

In a statement, Haley said: "I have great respect for the will of the people, and as I have always said, I will support the Republican nominee for president."

"To the members of the press

who are asking, while I am flattered to be mentioned and proud of what that says about the great things going on in South Carolina, my plate is full and I am not interested in serving as vice president."

Meanwhile, S.C. Republican Party leaders called Wednesday for their party to unify behind Trump after his last two major opponents quit the race. U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas left the race on

Tuesday, following his landslide loss in the Indiana GOP primary, and Ohio Gov. John Kasich dropped out Wednesday.

"We have to respect the fact that Donald Trump has won dozens of states," said S.C. GOP chairman Matt Moore. "Republican voters clearly want an outsider who will shake things up."

**SEE HALEY, 9A**

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## HALEY

Moore said Trump, who won South Carolina's GOP primary in February, will have access to the state party's data and field operations immediately. "Our job, at the end of the day, is to help candidates win elections."

In a campaign previously abuzz with the possibility of Trump facing a contested convention, Cruz's exit Tuesday came as a surprise to some S.C. Republicans, said Glenn McCall, a Republican National Committee member from Rock Hill.

"I thought Sen. Cruz was going to go the distance," said McCall, who, as a party official, had remained neutral in the race. "But we have a presumptive nominee now, and we're all going to unify."

Speculation about Haley's prospects as a potential vice-presidential candidate intensified last year after she led an effort to remove the Confederate flag from the State House grounds.

Calls for the flag's removal came in response to a racial-

ly motivated mass slaying at a Charleston church.

The daughter of Indian immigrants and South Carolina's first female and minority governor, Haley's national profile has grown over her two terms. However, Haley would have been an unlikely choice for Trump, having used her higher profile to criticize the bombastic New Yorker.

Delivering the GOP response to President Barack Obama's final State of the Union address this year,

Haley warned the nation to ignore the "siren call of the angriest voices" — a slap at

Trump — and criticized his immigration proposals.

Later, Haley endorsed U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida in the S.C. GOP primary. When Rubio dropped out of the race, Haley said she would support Cruz.

*Jamie Self: 803-771-8658, @jamiemself*

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McClatchy file photo

South Carolina Republican Gov. Nikki Haley

Title: **Citizens could lose right to file pollution lawsuits**  
 Author: BY SAMMY FRETWELL sfretwell@thestate.com  
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# Citizens could lose right to file pollution lawsuits

**Bill would preclude citizens from suing over pollution under state law**

**Greens say lawmakers undercutting citizen rights**

**Boosters say other laws protect public from pollution**

BY SAMMY FRETWELL  
 sfretwell@thestate.com

Politicians in South Carolina have revived a plan that curtails the public's right to sue for enforcement of state pollution laws — and the bill is within a House vote of passing the Legislature.

The House Judiciary Committee voted 13-10 this week for legislation blocking citizens from suing under state law to stop corporations, utilities and

others from contaminating the environment. The bill, approved by the Senate more than a year ago, appeared to be dead in the House until it was put on the Judiciary Committee agenda for a vote this week.

Republican House Speaker Jay Lucas, who has supported efforts to limit state citizen suits, attended Tuesday's meeting and spoke with individual

committee members before the vote. Committee Chairman Greg Delleney, a Chester Republican who voted for the bill, declined to answer questions about the legislation when questioned Wednesday by The State newspaper.

Major corporations and some

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## POLLUTION

state utilities concerned about legal liability have backed a ban on citizen lawsuits, arguing that such court action isn't needed in South Carolina and only hampers progress in the state.

The Legislature attempted to impose a ban on citizen lawsuits about

four years ago, but the bill that passed proved ineffective at doing so.

Of concern to utilities are citizen lawsuits over coal ash, the toxic byproduct of making power. Coal waste ponds have polluted groundwater across South Carolina, from eastern Richland

County to the Pee Dee and the Grand Strand. Utilities say they are cleaning up the mess by digging out ash waste ponds, but groundwater contamination remains in some spots.

Democratic Reps. James Smith and Beth Bernstein, both of Columbia, said the

committee made a mistake in passing the bill.

Smith said the Legislature is stripping people's ability to stop illegal pollution discharges. In a citi-





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zens suit, a court can require enforcement of the law. Such suits are considered at both the state and federal levels when government departments don't enforce pollution laws. They aren't common, but are credited with helping require cleanups of contamination in South Carolina.

"You're either for letting your citizens stop illegal pollution or you are not," Smith said, calling the committee's action "pathetic."

The bill could be discussed by the House as soon as today, but is ex-

pected to be debated in about two weeks. If the House approves the bill, it would go to Gov. Nikki Haley for consideration. The Senate voted for the bill in 2015, but it had received little attention in the House. The version approved by the Senate contained an array of exemptions that allowed many suits to proceed. The House committee stripped many of those exemptions out.

"This is a bad bill," Bernstein said. "Hopefully, we can delay this from passing until the session

ends" in early June.

The S.C. Manufacturers Alliance has supported similar versions of the bill in the past. Among those backing the legislation this year is Santee Cooper, the state-owned utility that like other power companies has had problems with coal ash contamination.

When asked by The State newspaper, Duke Energy and SCE&G did not directly address whether they support a ban on citizen suits. But the companies signed a letter circulated at the judiciary committee meet-

ing. The letter explained the companies' commitment to cleaning up coal ash.

State Rep. Stephen Goldfinch, R-Georgetown, said power companies can get "stuck in an untenable" position over coal ash.

"Our power companies need remedy and a solution here," he said at Tuesday's meeting.

Rep. Dennis Moss, R-Cherokee, said Delleney assured him the public has a "right to protest" without citizen lawsuits. "We're just trying to streamline the process."

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**THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE**

# How Trump broke the rules ... and triumphed anyway

## Haley as Trump's GOP running mate? 'Not interested'

BY JAMIE SELF  
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S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley ruled out being Donald Trump's running mate Wednesday as the New York billionaire's path to the GOP presidential nomination cleared.

In a statement, Haley said: "I have great respect for the will of the people, and as I have always said, I will support the Republican nominee for president." "To the members of the press who are asking, while I am flattered to be mentioned and proud of what that says about the great things

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**SEE HALEY, 7A**

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**S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley**

➔ **MORE INSIDE**

Kasich calls it quits, **4A**

Can Clinton take votes from Trump? **7A**

Ariail on Trump, **C2**

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Associated Press

**Nikki Haley**

Title: **S.C. HOUSE APPROVES \$40MILLION IN AID TO FLOOD-STRICKEN FARMERS**  
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### **S.C. HOUSE APPROVES \$40 MILLION IN AID TO FLOOD-STRICKEN FARMERS**

A bill to give \$40 million to South Carolina farmers who lost much of their crops in last year's floods is on its way to a showdown with the governor.

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