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**Haley Opposes Reopening
Nuclear Dump**

Gov. Nikki Haley asked state legislators not to reopen a nuclear dump in Barnwell County to waste from other states. The dump's owner, Energy Solutions, has recently been lobbying the Legislature to reopen the low-level waste facility, saying it would boost the economy and fill the state's coffers (and Democratic Sen. Brad Hutto, in whose district the dump sits, agrees). But others fear reopening the dump — which has been leaking radioactive tritium for decades, according to *The State's* Sammy Fretwell — could further harm the environment and send the wrong message about the state. “[T]he bottom line is we’ve worked very hard over the last few years to make sure we’ve improved the quality of South Carolina — the quality of the jobs, the quality of the environment, the quality of tourism,” Haley said at a March 19 press conference. “There are a lot of things we need to be working on right now, and taking in other states’ nuclear waste is not one of them.” — *Eva Moore*

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2015 | SOUTH CAROLINA MANUFACTURING CONFERENCE AND EXPO

Join manufacturing professionals from across the Southeast U.S. to discuss the latest manufacturing trends and topics, share their vision, become inspired and immerse yourself in South Carolina's manufacturing future.

■ **The Salute to Manufacturing Awards Luncheon.** The prestigious Silver Crescent Award, Manufacturing Excellence Awards and the Smart Choice SC Award will be presented.

■ **Five Keynote Speakers**
S.C. Commerce Secretary Bobby Hitt, Michelin President Pete Selleck and others.

■ **AME's (Association for Manufacturing Excellence)** annual SE United States Convention.

■ **Eight panel discussions**
Cyber Security, Venture Capital, Next Generation Manufacturing, Digital Manufacturing, Creating a Workforce, Supply Chains of the Future, Additive Manufacturing, The Future of Intellectual Property

■ **Greenville Technical College's Advanced Manufacturing Job Fair**

■ **Manufacturing career fair** for high schoolers.

■ **An exposition** with national, regional and state manufacturing suppliers.

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FEATURED SPEAKERS



Nikki Haley
Governor, South Carolina

Tuesday, April 14, 12:00 p.m.

Salute to Manufacturing Awards Luncheon

Gov. Haley will give the keynote speech at the Salute to Manufacturing Awards Luncheon. Haley will honor winners of several state-wide manufacturing excellence awards at the luncheon. Haley was re-elected as the 116th Governor of South Carolina in 2014. An individual ticket for the Awards Luncheon is \$60 and a corporate table is \$495. Both can be purchased online.





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Bobby Hitt

Secretary of Commerce, South Carolina

Tuesday, April 14, 4:30 p.m.

The State of Manufacturing in South Carolina

Bobby Hitt was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley to serve as Secretary of Commerce in 2011. Previously, he was the manager of corporate affairs at the BMW Manufacturing Company in Spartanburg and was involved in bringing BMW to the Upstate. He is also a past chairman of the South Carolina Manufacturers' Alliance. After Bobby Hitt's speech, he will hold a short press conference to take questions from the media.





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Pete Selleck

Chairman and President, Michelin North America

Wednesday, April 15, 4:15 p.m.

The Future of Manufacturing in South Carolina

Pete Selleck's keynote will close the conference. Selleck is responsible for coordinating all activities of Michelin in North America. With more than \$10 billion in sales and 21,500 employees across Canada, Mexico and the United States, Michelin is a global leader in the tire industry. Selleck joined Michelin in 1982 and served in manufacturing and general management in Greenville and Clermont-Ferrand, France. The first half of his career was focused on engineering, quality, and operational and leadership roles in North American manufacturing plants.

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Daimler brings van manufacturing to Lowcountry with new automotive plant

In one of the largest economic development announcements ever made in the Lowcountry, Mercedes-Benz Vans, a division of Daimler, plans to build its Sprinter vans and create 1,300 jobs at a new manufacturing facility in North Charleston.

This is the second-largest jobs announcement in the Lowcountry since 2011, with Boeing's being the largest and Benefitfocus being third-largest.

The company plans to invest about \$500 million to build a full-scale production facility on more than 200 acres in North Charleston. This new Mercedes-Benz plant brings another vehicle manufacturer to South Carolina — in addition to BMW in Greer — that will produce U.S.-made vehicles from start to finish.

"We are so excited to be announcing that Mercedes-Benz Vans (will have) full manufacturing right here in Charleston County ... Now these (vans) will be made in America," Gov. Nikki Haley said to state and local officials, company executives and employees during the announcement.

This new automotive manufacturing campus will build off of Daimler's current operations at 8501 Palmetto Commerce Parkway in North Charleston, where vans are currently reassembled after being manufactured in Germany.

The new van manufacturing campus will include a plant, a body shop, a paint shop and an assembly line, where employees will build the next-generation Sprinter vans for both the U.S. and Canadian markets.

Plans for the new production facility will enable the company to get the vans to market faster, to be closer to North

American customers and to be more economical, according to Volker Mornhinweg, head of Mercedes-Benz Vans.

The United States is Daimler's second-largest market for vans worldwide, behind Germany. The company sold almost 26,000 of its Sprinter vans in the U.S. in 2014, up 30% from 2013. The new Charleston plant is part of Daimler's plan to expand Mercedes-Benz Vans' global production network.

Company officials declined to comment on production rates. Mornhinweg said it takes about two days to produce one Sprinter van.

"It makes perfect sense that we will be building our vans where we sell them ... We are investing around half a billion

dollars to create a top-notch Mercedes-Benz van plant here in South Carolina," Mornhinweg said. "This plant is key to our future growth in the very dynamic North American van market."

Mornhinweg said expansion at the local site is an option in the future.

The German automaker will begin construction on the new plant in 2016. An opening date was not provided for competitive reasons, according to company officials. The state's Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved job development credits and a \$14 million Closing Fund grant to fund property improvements at the site.

"It's another reassurance and validation that folks can do the work here in our state," Sen. Paul Campbell, R-Goose Creek, said. "It's validation that we can support major manufacturing operations and help them be successful."

Over the past two decades, South Carolina has transformed from being

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primarily a textile and agricultural state to focusing on automotive and aerospace manufacturing, largely a result of a push by legislators and governors and recruiting efforts by Commerce and economic development agencies as states compete for companies.

Global automotive and aircraft manufacturers have moved to or expanded within South Carolina in recent years, including BMW in Greer, Honda in Florence, and Daimler and Boeing in North Charleston. The state is also considered to be on the short list for a Volvo plant.

From 2011 to 2014, manufacturing jobs in South Carolina grew by 13.5%, a rate nearly double the regional average, according to the state Commerce Department. The state's automotive industry — including tires — employs 57,600 people, according to Commerce's industrial directory. South Carolina now houses more than 250 automotive-related companies and suppliers, according

to Commerce.

Rep. Chip Limehouse, R-Charleston, said the new Mercedes-Benz plant is likely going to attract other car manufacturers to the region and create an automotive cluster in the Lowcountry, which could result in a "10x factor" for job creation, similar to BMW in the Upstate.

"This is certainly big news by anyone's standards in terms of the expansion of Daimler Chrysler resulting in 1,200 new jobs, but moreover, this indicates that South Carolina is rapidly becoming a leader in the automotive manufacturing industry," Limehouse said.

Daimler announced its North Charleston assembly plant in 2005. The company reassembles and distributes its

Sprinter vans from the facility under the Mercedes-Benz and Freightliner brands. The North Charleston facility employs 140 people currently, and the company previously announced plans to hire 60 more for reassembly.

The company has delivered more than 2.8 million Mercedes-Benz Sprinter vans to customers in 130 countries worldwide. The Sprinter van has been assembled and sold in the United States since 2001.

"Every time I now see a Sprinter van ... I'll know it was produced in North Charleston," North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey said. "It is a great day in South Carolina and a damn wonderful day in North Charleston." ⁽⁸⁵⁾

Largest* auto-related locations or expansions since 2011 in S.C.

COMPANY	CAPITAL	JOBS
BMW Manufacturing Co.	\$2.0 B	1,900
Bridgestone Americas	\$1.24 B	850
Michelin	\$1.15 B	870
Giti Tire Holdings	\$560 M	1,700
Continental Tire	\$504 M	1,700
ZF Transmissions	\$255 M	750
JTEKT Automotive	\$232 M	275
Schaeffler	\$215.4 M	733
Tognum America	\$62.5 M	30
Kimura	\$14.2 M	169
Kongsberg Automotive	\$7.3 M	300

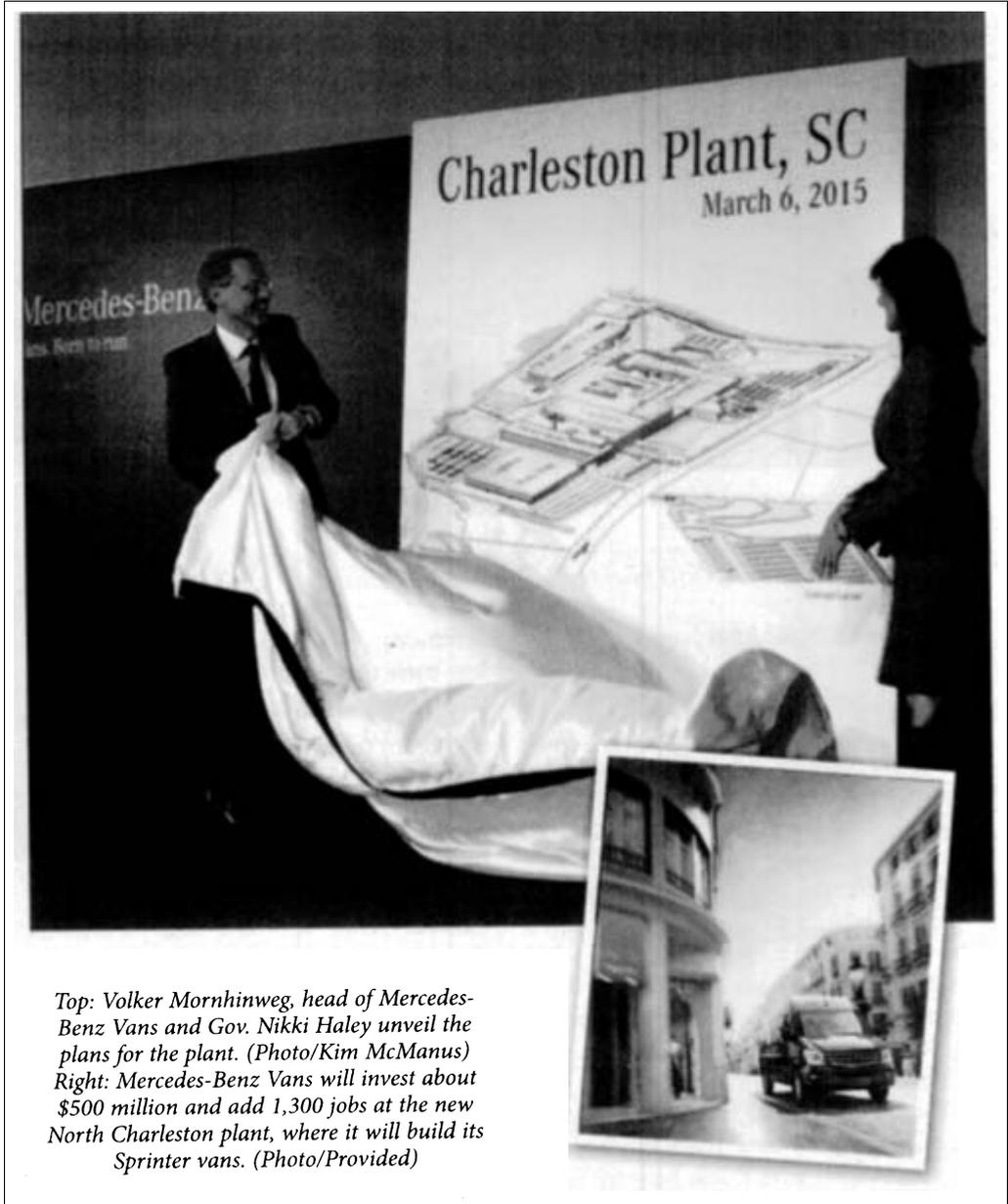
Source: S.C. Commerce Department

*This includes aggregated data from companies that announced multiple projects.





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*Top: Volker Mornhinweg, head of Mercedes-Benz Vans and Gov. Nikki Haley unveil the plans for the plant. (Photo/Kim McManus)
 Right: Mercedes-Benz Vans will invest about \$500 million and add 1,300 jobs at the new North Charleston plant, where it will build its Sprinter vans. (Photo/Provided)*

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148 State's lack of relief a huge budget lapse

There seems to be little talk and a lot of finger pointing as the 2015-2016 budget discussions get underway at the South Carolina Statehouse.

Any discussion of providing relief funding from Winter Storm PAX that hit the state in February 2014 has apparently been non-existent, according to members of the House Ways and Means committee, which is essentially the budget writing committee in the South Carolina House of Representatives. Also, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley's executive budget recommendation for the upcoming fiscal year includes nothing for storm relief. The governor's office has essentially said they didn't recommend any funding because they didn't believe the legislature will pass funding.

While the governor doesn't write the budget, it's part of her responsibility to nudge the General Assembly to appropriate funding for items he or she finds particularly important. Haley, for instance, did this successfully with her \$160 million education reform package that she pushed for last year. Now, a statement released from her office is saying that since the "General Assembly chose not to support" the \$16 million in non-recurring funding that she pitched very late in the legislature's budget writing process in 2014, the 2015-16 executive budget now doesn't include such a recommendation. This has brought reasonable and expected questions from local government officials, particularly in Aiken County - which was hit the hardest by the storm - about what can be done

locally to soften the fiscal blow of not getting any relief from the state. Aiken County Administrator Clay Killian and Emergency Services Director Tommy Thompson explained to the Aiken Standard that after virtually every natural disaster, the state has pitched in financially to take some of the burden off local governments.

To not provide funding in the 2015-2016 budget, would be a major gut punch to Aiken County's budget. The County, in particular, worked expeditiously to clean up roads in order to get the area back to normal as quickly as possible. About \$33.2 million in costs were incurred, according to Killian. To date, the County has received federal reimbursement of nearly \$22 million out of the expected \$27 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. That now leaves the County paying about \$6.1 million out of pocket.

Sure, the governor's budget is only a recommendation. However, her recommendations at least give legislators on the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance committees a framework for future expenditures. For her - or apparently none of her cabinet officials - to give these committees a reminder of the costs incurred by local governments during the storm last year is a major omission.

It's ultimately incumbent upon the legislature to write and pass the budget, so let's hope they have the political foresight to include fiscally responsible, yet appropriate dollars for local governments to cope with these storm costs.

To be this late in the game, however, with seemingly little to no indication of doing so is already a major blunder on the part of both the governor and the legislature.

— Aiken Standard



Carolinas congressmen have varied views on Atlantic drilling

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON — The five congressmen representing coastal districts in the Carolinas reflect the opposing views in states where both governors are strong advocates of offshore drilling and almost 20 coastal communities oppose the idea.

The federal Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management is now taking comment on what should be included in environmental studies to decide whether areas in the Atlantic are opened to oil and gas development later this decade.

Gov. Nikki Haley is a member of the Outer Continental Shelf Governors Coalition, which North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory chairs. The group's mission statement says it works to "influence a sensible path forward for the development of America's offshore energy resources." Drilling proponents say it can help reduce dependence on foreign energy and create jobs and revenue.

Hilton Head Island is the latest coastal community to go on record opposing drilling, joining 18 others in the Carolinas. Opponents worry that oil spills could harm the environment and coastal tourism.

A look at where the five coastal congressmen stand:

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C.

Jones' district runs from Greenville to the Outer Banks and southwest to Wilmington. He says any decision on drilling off North Carolina should be made by the people of the state — not Washington — and that the state should receive a fair share of energy revenue. He urged the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management to hold an additional public hearing this month so more people could be heard. They were. Some 670 people attended Monday's hearing in Kill Devil Hills, the most for any public meeting the agency has held.

U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C.

Butterfield's district reaches from Durham along the state's northern edge to the western end of Albermarle Sound. He and 52 other members of Congress wrote Interior Secretary Sally Jewell this month asking that the Atlantic be put off-limits to drilling. They said drilling would



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Opponents of opening waters off the Carolinas coast to oil and natural gas exploration hold signs in Mount Pleasant, S.C.

"threaten the economic and ecological productivity" of states and that at current consumption rates, Atlantic offshore oil would provide only five months of energy.

U.S. Rep. David Rouzer, R-N.C.

Rouzer's district runs from near Raleigh south to the coast and the South Carolina line. He supports oil and gas exploration, saying increased production will keep prices low, encouraging growth and meaning less oil revenue for the Islamic State and other terror groups. Government revenue will also help pay for coastal infrastructure, he says.

U.S. Rep. Tom Rice, R-S.C.

Rice's north-coast district includes Myrtle Beach. He favors oil exploration. "I don't know how you can make an intelligent decision about what you're going to do if you don't know what's there," he says. But he wonders if offshore drilling is practical with prices low and drilling operations on land being closed down. He says states should have a say in where offshore drilling is allowed. "I have always put a condition on my assent that it not be near tourism areas," he says.

U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, R-S.C.

Sanford's district runs from northeast of Charleston to the Georgia state line. A strong conservationist, he has opposed drilling in the past. "My perspective continues to evolve," he says. He sees no problem with exploring to at least see how much oil is offshore. "That's where we have been, but not further than that."

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A vaccine that can save women's lives

This week, the S.C. House deserves a pat on the back for passing a bill that will save women's lives.

For seven long years, women's advocates have been working to get the male-centric legislature to approve a bill that would allow the state to educate and vaccinate girls — with parental permission — to protect them against a virus that causes cervical cancer, a disease that kills about 4,100 women in the United States annually. Every month, five South Carolina women die from cervical cancer.

"In passing the Cervical Cancer Prevention Act, the House proved that they care about cancer prevention and putting vital public health information into the hands of parents," said Eme Crawford of the Tell Them advocacy network. "Most encouraging is that cervical cancer is preventable. By allowing parents to receive information on the vaccine, lawmakers have offered a new level of preventive health options to a generation of South Carolinians."

The House voted 83-27 to approve a bill to allow the state Department of Health and Environmental Control to develop a brochure that explains the benefits and side effects of the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccination for adolescent students and encourage parents to get their children vaccinated to combat the virus. Additionally, the bill would allow DHEC to offer the vaccine to children starting in seventh grade.

Some conservatives complain about side effects of the vaccine, but the Centers for Disease Control says HPV vaccines, licensed by the Food and Drug Administration, show no serious safety concerns,



Andy Brack
 Statehouse Report

as more than 46 million doses already have been distributed in the United States.

One of the major vaccines, Gardasil, was pioneered in Queensland, South Carolina's sister state.

Former Queensland Premier Peter Beattie noted that the vaccine is being used in more than 120 countries "and is saving the lives of thousands of women around the world every day," he told Statehouse Report. "Anyone interested in saving women's lives supports the use of the vaccine. Only ignorance opposes its use."

In South Carolina, the vaccine for students will not be mandatory. Parents can decide whether their children should take it.

More than two-thirds of South Carolinians supported the proposal to allow DHEC to offer the HPV vaccine to female students entering the seventh grade and explain the vaccine through a brochure, according to a Winthrop Poll released earlier this month.

Advocates emphasize that getting an HPV vaccination, which protects against about 70 percent of the 40 types of HPV, doesn't encourage sexual promiscuity. Rather, it's a preventive measure to protect women's health that simply saves lives and a lot of pain.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, HPV vaccination is





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recommended for 11- and 12-year-old girls: "It is also recommended for girls and women age 13 through 26 years of age who have not yet been vaccinated or completed the vaccine series. ... Ideally females should get the vaccine before they become sexually active and exposed to HPV."

"We're educating people on the virus and the availability of a vaccine that can prevent cervical cancer," noted Rep. Beth Bernstein, D-Columbia, who is pushing the bipartisan measure.

She emphasized that the bill did not mandate giving the vaccine to students but required "informed consent" of parents. She said Gov. Nikki Haley, who vetoed the measure three years ago over funding, has reportedly said she wouldn't veto it this year because the program would operate only if funding — generally from federal sources — is available.

The bill now heads to the Senate, where chief sponsor Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg, said a similar version made it through the committee process and is now on the Senate floor for consideration.

"I hope we'll pass it this year and start saving lives of women in South Carolina," he said.

Let's hope the Senate doesn't get bogged down in a lot of anti-vaccination nonsense and put women's lives at risk. Approve the HPV bill in short order to help parents understand the importance of the vaccination. If they decide against the protection for their children that the vaccination offers, they can just say no.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of Statehouse Report. He can be reached at brack@statehousereport.com.



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SC¹⁴⁸ seeks dismissal of suit over kids' needs

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — State officials want dismissal of a lawsuit accusing South Carolina's child welfare agency of endangering children in its care, saying the case is an attempt to force the court system to get involved in the agency's funding.

"Plaintiffs' claims are nothing more than a veiled attempt at asking this Court to instruct the Governor and the Director how to manage the Department and to order the South Carolina General Assembly to allocate additional funds to the Department," attorneys for the Department of Social Services wrote in court papers filed this week.

Attorneys for Director Susan Alford also said federal courts have no jurisdiction over the issues. The children mentioned in the suit, they noted, all have active family court cases, and it's there that complaints should be handled. In a separate filing, Gov. Nikki Haley says she should be dismissed from the case because she doesn't oversee DSS and only appoints its director.

Last year, two advocacy groups — Children's Rights and the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center — sued DSS and Haley, saying the agency failed to provide 11 children with basic health care and the right kind of attention.

One 16-year-old girl has been through at least a dozen placements in about eight years, according to the lawsuit, and was told by a caseworker that she was in a group facility because the agency didn't have enough foster homes. Other children were reportedly denied necessary therapy for months, abused by caretakers and kept from siblings also in the system.

According to the lawsuit, South Carolina's caseloads can be two or three times those of national and state standards, with some caseworkers having 60 or 70 children at a time.

The lawsuit echoed findings in an October Legislative Audit Council report, which said DSS relied heavily on unreliable data, failed to request extra money and ignored growing problems. The audit also said the agency didn't do enough to ensure





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children are placed in safe homes.

The audit also found DSS failed to properly investigate abuse allegations and child deaths. DSS said last fall it was aware of problems and welcomed any help it can get.

Alford was easily confirmed earlier this year to lead the agency. Amid bipartisan calls for her ousting, former Director Lillian Koller resigned last year, insisting for years that she didn't need additional money or manpower.

In this year's budget request, the agency had sought for its child-welfare division money for 277 additional employees — 73 percent of them caseworkers and supervisors. It also requested money for 35 additional vulnerable adult caseworkers and 22 more people to inspect day care providers.

The House's budget proposal, approved last week, pays for less than half the requested additional child-welfare workers. The House plan instead funds 120 caseworkers total, as well as the 22 day care inspectors. But the proposal doubles employees' pay raises.



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Haley doesn't want to change waste plan for nuclear dump

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is against the possibility of opening a Barnwell County landfill to low-level nuclear waste from across the country, saying she wants to make sure the state isn't spoiled for its children or grandchildren.

Haley said she isn't changing her personal mission to be known as the "jobs governor." But she said some jobs — such as those that might be generated by this proposal — aren't worth it.

"We don't sell our soul for jobs and money," Haley said Thursday at a news conference called to discuss the issue.

Haley was responding to talk around the Statehouse about adding states to the list that can now send low-level radioactive materials from hospitals and power plants to the Energy Solutions landfill run by Chem-Nuclear in Barnwell County.

Legislators voted in 2000 to only accept waste from South Carolina, New Jersey and Connecticut until the site is full or until 2023, and rejected an effort to change that deal eight years ago.

Sen. Brad Hutto, whose district contains the landfill, said the governor is jumping the gun because she hasn't seen his proposal. The Orangeburg Democrat said he is writing a bill so lawmakers can debate what to do with the site. He said a periodic review of the landfill and how it

operates is good policy, especially since it is still taking waste and he has no plans to increase the dump's capacity.

"Nothing is going to change about whether the future of our children is affected. It's there, it is going to be monitored in the long term," Hutto said.

Energy Solutions spokesman Mark Walker said the company was disappointed in the governor's comments, but looked forward to working with her and legislators on the future of the landfill. The firm does have a website at <http://truthaboutbarnwell.com/> where it makes its case that the people of Barnwell County are fine with the landfill and it operates safely.

Haley said she spoke to the company before making her decision.

"I'm not willing to go and take in nuclear waste our kids and grandkids might have to deal with," she said.

But Hutto said that is shortsighted. The landfill is at 87 percent capacity and will keep taking waste until it is full. Part of any new deal could bring in more money for the state for other environmental projects. And he wants to revisit why the landfill can accept low-level radioactive waste from New Jersey and not Pennsylvania.

"They've been a good corporate citizen in Barnwell," Hutto said of Energy Solutions. "And the people of Barnwell deserve to have this heard and considered."

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Walker says he has experience to put US on a rightward path

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The Associated Press

GREENVILLE — A conservative favorite thanks to his tangle with unions, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker pitched himself Thursday as a leader with the experience to put the nation on a path to the right.

"I am worried for the future of my children," the prospective 2016 Republican presidential candidate told Republicans in Greenville during the second of two state GOP events he attended in the early voting state. But, he added, "I am an optimist. ... I still feel good about America."

Walker also addressed a fundraising luncheon in Columbia, recounting his 2012 recall election victory and his successful efforts to weaken labor unions for public and some private workers. He painted a rosy view of his tenure as Wisconsin's governor, noting his fiscal policies and support for new abortion restrictions. The same "commonsense conservative" approach

can work in Washington, he said, and described the nation's capital as "68 square miles surrounded by reality."

Walker criticized President Barack Obama and his allies — including Hillary Rodham Clinton, the Democrats' presidential favorite if she runs as expected — as people who talk about "growing the economy in Washington." Instead, said the governor, "we should measure success on how many people are no longer dependent on government."

The 47-year-old son of a Baptist minister drew applause when he talked at length about prayer during his appearance in Greenville, part of an up-state region in which religious conservatives are particularly influential. "When someone tells me they're praying for me, I have to reach out and touch them," he said.

Besides attending the state party events, Walker met privately with Gov. Nikki Haley and other elected Republicans at the Capitol in Columbia.

South Carolina GOP Chairman Matt Moore said Walker impressed him as a social and fiscal conservative who favors a strong military posture. "He can pull from all those bases," Moore said. "He's the kind of candidate who will do well in South Carolina."

The state will hold the South's first primary, in February, just weeks after the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary.

Walker will be in rural Rock Hill and the coastal city of Charleston on Friday. His visit to the state follows a similar two-day whirlwind by former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

Walker didn't mention Bush or any other potential GOP rivals, but he said that his success in the recall effort has helped him build a national profile and advance fundraising, with more than 300,000 donors contributing from every state, most giving \$75 or less. Only 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney has more unique donors among Republicans, he said.





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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker speaks Feb. 28 in Palm Beach, Fla. Republicans lawmakers in statehouses nationwide are working to weaken organized labor, sometimes with efforts that directly shrink union membership.



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148 South Carolina Government
Haley says she will compromise on roads, but only so far

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley warned lawmakers again Thursday that she won't approve just any proposal to get more money to fix South Carolina roads. She said she will veto any plan that doesn't provide some sort of tax cut.

"They might as well not waste their time," Haley said of any plan that doesn't have tax relief. "We just won't go there at all. We'll let everything fall to the wayside before we allow the people of South Carolina to see a tax increase."

The governor also reiterated at a news conference that she is willing to compromise. In her State of the State address Haley suggested a 10-cent-per-gallon

increase in the gas tax, coupled with a 2 percentage point cut in the state income tax rate. She has said before she is willing to adjust those numbers or look at alternatives.

Both the House and Senate are working on their own plans. The version created by a special House committee would keep the gas tax the same, but start charging sales tax on fuel and combine that with an income tax cut to raise about \$400 million extra a year. Haley's plan also has been introduced in the House.

A Senate plan that made it through Sen. Ray Cleary's roads subcommittee would raise around \$800 million in new money for roads by raising the gas tax by 10 cents and allowing

it to continue to increase with inflation. It also raises the sales tax cap on automobile purchases from \$300 to \$1,400, eliminates dozens of sales tax exemptions and increases the fees for car registrations and driver's licenses.

The Department of Transportation has said \$400 million would be enough money to keep the roads in their current condition, while closer to \$1.5 billion

is needed to get roads to good condition by 2040.

Cleary's plan would eliminate the income tax on small businesses. That would cost the state about \$150 million, which the Murrells Inlet Republican said is much more affordable than Haley's tax cut, which economic advisers said would cost \$1.7 bil-

lion taken from the state's general revenue fund when fully put into effect.

Cleary has said Haley could go down in history as the governor who fixed infrastructure if she is willing to compromise. He said he is willing to talk compromise too, but all he and his colleagues in the Legislature can do is send the governor a plan.

"She wanted three things — more money for roads, reform and a tax break," Cleary said. "We're going to give her all three. If she wants to say, 'It is my way or no highways,' that's her decision."

Haley said she is working with House members and with Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Charleston, in the Senate. She said Cleary's idea

is just one plan.

"That's a whole lot of tax increases," Haley said. "We've made that very clear. That's not the direction we want to see South Carolina go."

The Senate plans to talk about roads in the Finance Committee next week. House members have said they would take up roads after the state budget, which was passed a week ago.

Business leaders are making road funding a priority this year, demanding more money to fill potholes that have formed even on the state's most heavily traveled interstates, and to fix bridges. They plan an even greater push with less than three months to go before the Legislature goes home for the year.

