

Title: **Finalpick isTheDonald**
Author:
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Final pick is The Donald

For those who are wondering, after I handicapped the candidates a month ago, my final choices are John Kasich and Donald Trump. The Hispanics are unrealistic, while Jeb Bush and Ben Carson have faded away. Now to paraphrase Bob Bestler when endorsing

Nikki Haley, I kind of like the idea of Trump speaking from the Bully Pulpit.

- Dick Withington, Myrtle Beach

Title: **Why are S.C.'s presidential primaries on separate days?**
 Author: BY CAROLE BASTIAN
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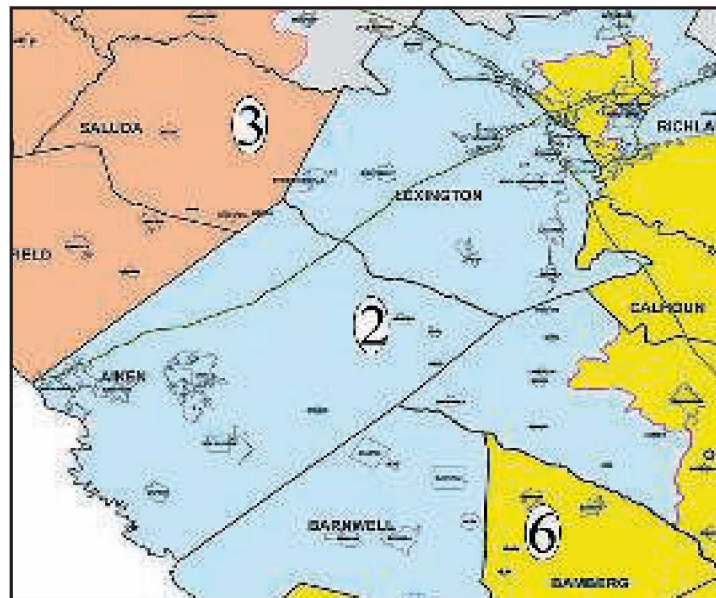
Why are S.C.'s presidential primaries on separate days?

BY CAROLE BASTIAN

South Carolina is one of just 11 states conducting the Republican and Democratic Presidential Preference Primaries (PPP) or caucuses on separate days. This costs the taxpayers between 15% and 20% more than if the primaries were held on the same date, according to election officials. The increased costs are primarily due to wages paid to poll workers, temporary personnel and technicians for two full days of voting rather than just one. Two separate primary dates also result in significant repetition of preparations by the regular and temporary staff of both county and state election commissions.

The Republican PPP was held Saturday, February 20, and the Democratic PPP will be held on February 27. Both are open primaries, meaning that a SC voter can cast a ballot in either one. The trend of Saturday voting arose to reduce costs and increase turnout, according to Eric Appleman of the non-partisan research group, Democracy in Action.

Overall, Marci Andino, Director of the South Carolina Elections Commission (SEC), estimated the two primaries will cost about \$2.6 million, while same-day voting would



Map of congressional districts

run somewhere around \$2.2 million. In Lexington County, which has 96 individual precincts, those figures are predicted to be about \$135,000 for the separate primaries compared with about \$80,000 to \$90,000 if the Republicans and the Democrats voted on the same day, said Dean Crepes, Director of the county's Voters and Registration Commission. Following the primaries, the SEC will reimburse each county for the costs.

The two-separate-primary-dates arrangement is tied

up in the state legislation which sought to maintain South Carolina's, "First in the South" status. In mid-2007, the state's General Assembly passed legislation (Bill S.99) which required the State Election Commission to run the Presidential Preference Primaries. However, the legislation specifically left scheduling of the primary dates to the party committees. Prior to this legislation, the primaries were "... party-run affairs; this posed a substantial financial and logistical challenge for the state parties which had to

raise funds privately," said Mr. Appleman.

Although then-Governor Mark Sanford (R) vetoed the bill, the legislature overrode him by a vote of 36-7 in the Senate and 87-18 in the House. As the 2012 election season approached, it was discovered that there was a line in the bill that limited its effective date to the 2008 election only. During the 2011 budget negotiations, legislators sought to make the bill permanent by including the funding in the state budget. Governor Nikki Haley (R) opposed these efforts, believing that the funding for the primaries should be raised privately. These monies were among those that she vetoed during her line-item review of the proposed budget (Bill H.3700, Vetoes 27 and 28), but the legislature overrode her veto and the bill took effect.

Some of the funds come directly from the candidates who wish to be included on the ballot. The filing fee allowed under the state law is \$20,000 per candidate who is by his or her political party as legally eligible for election. This year, 14 Republican and four Democrats were certified, paying a total of \$360,000. (There is no refund for candidates who withdraw or suspend their

See **PRIMARIES**, Page A3

Title: **DHECneedsfundingtontoprotect health, safety**
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EDITORIAL

DHEC needs funding to protect health, safety

Legislators have slashed funding for SC Department of Health and Environmental Control by 37 percent, but haven't reduced its duties

Other agencies have suffered the same plight, though few do more vital work than DHEC

Once the state tells people it will keep water, air, restaurants & medical procedures safe, it has an obligation to do that

This editorial ran in The State.

Rivers that aren't being monitored often enough for us to know whether the fish are safe to eat. Air-monitoring equipment that's so broken-down that officials don't know whether it's safe to issue permits for new industry. Underground storage tanks and abandoned gold mines that aren't being cleaned up to stop gasoline and acid and metals from leaching into the groundwater. And the giant hazardous waste dump on the shore of Lake Marion that we can't even monitor properly, much less shore up to prevent water contamination of unimaginable proportions.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that the state Department of Health and Environmental Control — the agency charged with making sure we have clean water to drink and clean air to breathe and that the people who cook our meals and provide our medical care don't infect us — says it doesn't have the money to do its job. We slashed its budget from \$169 million in 1998 to \$107 million today. That's a 37 percent reduction. A 37 percent reduction that doesn't even factor in the inflation and growing pop-

ulation that make it cost more to do the job the agency was doing eight years ago. Yet we didn't reduce what we expected the agency to do.

We saw rather dramatically the result of such cuts in October, when the floods washed out dams that hadn't been inspected as they should have been or repaired as they ought to have been, because

DHEC didn't have the inspection staff or the enforcement staff to make sure our public-safety laws were obeyed.

If DHEC is spending money wastefully — and any bureaucracy is going to, whether it's in the public sector or the private sector — then it absolutely is appropriate to try to get that under control. And to the extent that this is what former DHEC Director Catherine Templeton did as she oversaw the defunding of the agency (the budget dropped as low as \$83 million at one point), we applaud her work.

But Templeton's successor, Catherine Heigel, has told the Legislature she needs an additional \$35 million just to cover the basics. That still would be \$27 million less than the agency received in 1998, when there were fewer people and businesses in

South Carolina and everything (except maybe gasoline) cost less.

We've seen no reason to believe that Heigel, a former Duke Energy executive who was hand-picked by Gov. Nikki Haley to run the agency, is a spendthrift, or a shill for the bureaucracy. It's more reasonable to think she's a professional who put her reputation on the line and then discovered that the agency she inherited simply does not have the resources to do the job state law requires it to do. As she told lawmakers last month, it is her job to at least make them aware of the problems — which a lot of people believe Templeton declined to do for political reasons.

Even Haley has requested an \$18 million budget increase, which suggests there's some serious underfunding, given her preference for cutting taxes to paying for government services.

We can debate whether the state should be in the business of inspecting the strength of dams and the purity of river water and the safety of restaurants and whether it should limit how much pollution manufacturers can spew into the air and take on the task of cleaning up hazardous sites that have been abandoned by bankrupt owners.



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But there should be no debate on this: Once the state decides to do those things, it is obliged to *do them*. Well.

DHEC isn't the only agency that sustained massive cuts to its funding without corresponding cuts to its responsibilities, and it's not the only one that is still struggling. The Department of Social Services leaps to mind, and there are others, and our Legislature needs to

handle them the same way it needs to handle DHEC:

If the state is not going to guarantee that the water is safe to drink, it needs to let people know that they drink it at their own risk. If the state is not going to hold companies to the pollution standards set in state law and regulations, it needs to just stop spending our money on a program that promises to do that but doesn't.

We believe the state ought to be working to protect the public health, by regulating how much our environment can be despoiled and making sure people who are paid to handle our food and our medicines are doing so safely, and we expect that most South Carolinians feel the same way. That means we have to pay for the equipment and the people who do that important work.

Title: **Polls: Trump, Clinton still leading in SC**
 Author: BY JAMIE SELF jself@thestate.com
 Size: 46.34 square inch
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Polls: Trump, Clinton still leading in SC

BY JAMIE SELF

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Five new polls out Thursday show New York billionaire Donald Trump holding his lead in Saturday's S.C. Republican presidential primary.

Trump averaged 32 percent support from likely voters in the GOP primary, according to the five polls. Trump's support ranged from a low of 29 percent to a high of 34 percent, according to the polls.

U.S. Sens. Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio are battling for second place, with both at 17 percent, according to an average of the polls. Four of the polls had Cruz in second. However, S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Rubio Wednesday night, too late to be reflected in the polling results.

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush averaged 11 percent across the polls.

However, two of the polls had him at 14 percent.

Ohio Gov. John Kasich averaged 10 percent across the polls, followed by retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson at 6 percent.

The polls, released Thursday, were from American Research Group, Fox News, the S.C. House GOP, Harper Polling and the Emerson College Polling Society.

The polls all were taken after the GOP presidential debate in Greenville Saturday, where Trump criticized former President George W. Bush for the 2001 terrorist attacks happening on his watch – a comment some predicted might hurt him in South Carolina, where the Bush family is popular.

CLINTON STILL

LEADING

Meanwhile, Democratic presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton maintains a strong lead over U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont in their party's Feb. 27 S.C. primary, according to a new poll.

Clinton has 59 percent support while Sanders has 30 percent, according to the Monmouth University poll, released Thursday. Still, Clinton's lead was down from 48 points in a November Monmouth poll.

Among African-Americans – expected to make up a majority of Democratic primary voters – Clinton's margins are wider than among Democrats overall.

While Sanders has a 48 percent to 44 percent edge over Clinton among white voters under 50,

Clinton is beating Sanders among under-50 black voters, 60 to 26.

Sixty-nine percent of black voters 50 years and older preferred Clinton while 12 percent picked Sanders in the poll.

Sanders performed well among self-identified S.C. independents likely to vote in the S.C. primary Feb. 27, leading

Clinton by 46 to 43.

However, Clinton is beating Sanders 65 to 24 among self-described Democrats.

Sanders has been polling better in Nevada, whose Democrats will caucus Saturday, a week before S.C. Democrats hold their presidential primary.

Jamie Self: 803-771-8658, [@jamiemself](https://twitter.com/jamiemself)

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 Author: BY JAMIE SELF jself@thestate.com
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S.C. GOP primary

New polls, released Thursday, in the GOP primary

FOX NEWS

Feb. 15-17, margin of error 3.5 percent

Donald Trump: **32 percent**

Ted Cruz: **19 percent**

Marco Rubio: **15 percent**

Jeb Bush and Ben Carson: **9 percent** each

John Kasich: **6 percent**

AMERICAN RESEARCH GROUP

Feb. 16-17, margin of error 5 percent

Trump: **33 percent**

Rubio: **20 percent**

Kasich: **15 percent**

Cruz: **13 percent**

Bush: **8 percent**

Carson: **3 percent**

S.C. HOUSE GOP

Feb. 17, margin of error 2 percent

Trump: **34 percent**

Cruz: **18 percent**

Rubio: **16 percent**

Bush: **14 percent**

Kasich: **9 percent**

Carson: **5 percent**

HARPER POLLING

Feb. 16-17, 4 percent margin of error

Trump: **29 percent**

Cruz: **17 percent**

Rubio: **15 percent**

Bush: **14 percent**

Kasich: **13 percent**

Carson: **8 percent**

EMERSON POLLING

Feb. 15-16, 5 percent margin of error

Trump: **33 percent**

Cruz: **20 percent**

Rubio: **19 percent**

Bush and Kasich: **9 percent** each

Carson: **5 percent**

SOURCE: Real Clear Politics

Title: **CRUZAIDE: RUBIO MUST WIN S.C.**

Author:

Size: 8.68 square inch

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S.C. GOP PRIMARY NOTES



Marco Rubio

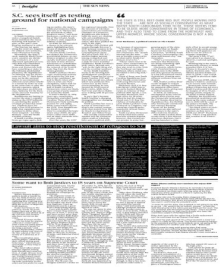
CRUZ AIDE: RUBIO MUST WIN S.C.

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz's campaign is trying to raise the stakes on S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement of rival GOP presidential candidate Marco Rubio.

Rubio — who has won the endorsements of Haley, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy — “has to win” South Carolina, a Cruz spokesman said Friday.

“If he doesn't finish first, this is a massive loss,” said Jason Miller. “Rubio has to win here.

“He has the very popular sitting governor, very popular junior senator, very popular Upstate congressman. ... If Rubio can't win here, under these favorable circumstances, where can he win?”



Title: **Lawsuit aims to stop resettlement of refugees to S.C.**
 Author: BY ROB BARNETT rbarnett@greenvillenews.com
 Size: 40.14 square inch
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Lawsuit aims to stop resettlement of refugees to S.C.

BY ROB BARNETT

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RICHLAND COUNTY

A Richland County man has filed a lawsuit seeking to stop the resettlement of refugees in South Carolina in order to protect the state from "criminals, narco-drug traffickers, terrorists, rapist (s)" and people "hostile to assimilation and the laws of South Carolina."

The suit names as defendants Gov. Nikki Haley, the state Department of Social Services and two nonprofit agencies that help refugees start new lives in the state.

"The extraordinary and well founded potential for terrorism and other violent crime made possible by this inflow of Refugees from

hostile Islamic states was simply not properly addressed in the State Plan," Walter Brian Bilbro, the plaintiff, says in an affidavit in support of his motion for a temporary injunction or temporary restraining order against the state's agreement with the federal government to allow refugees to resettle here.

In response to the lawsuit, the governor's staff referred to a letter she wrote to Secretary of State John Kerry in the aftermath of the Paris terrorist attacks last Novem-

ber in which she asked that no Syrian refugees be allowed to resettle in South Carolina, "until I can be assured that all potential refugees from Syria have no ties to terrorist organizations."

Ted Goins, president of Lutheran Services Carolinas, one of the defendants in the suit, said his organization has resettled a total of two Syrian refugees in the state, both in the Midlands.

Another family had been approved but their case was delayed, he said.

"We have not been informed that we will be getting any more," Goins said.

Jason Lee, of World Relief in Spartanburg, a religious nonprofit that assists in refugee relocation, said his office hadn't been served with the lawsuit. But he said the organization hasn't resettled any Syrian refugees in South Carolina and has no plans to bring any in during 2016.

Those are the only two agencies contracted with the federal government to assist in resettling refugees, according to the State Department.

"Lutheran Services Car-

olinas has received a copy of that legal filing and we are analyzing that suit now," Goins said. "On the face of it, it appears to be without merit, but we won't be commenting further until we've had time to review it with our legal team."

DSS spokeswoman Marilyn Matheus said, "The Department of Social Services has been served with the lawsuit regarding the refugee resettlement program. Our staff are reviewing the allegations and preparing a responsive pleading."

"We do not have any comment on the lawsuit at this time."

In his affidavit, Bilbro describes himself as a 46-year-old, 1991 graduate of the University of South Carolina, married, with two young daughters.

"When I found out that agents of the non-profit Lutheran Services couldn't legally share their religion or Judeo-Christian values or invite the refugees to church...I realized the high degree of negligence and reckless misrepresentations being perpetrated on me as a taxpayer, my family and the Public interest," he wrote.

"I am bringing this action because I believe this exploitation of my constitutional rights as a citizen and the abuse of my daughters and my wife's rights are inevitable under the current plan, and therefore must cease immediately before it has reached the horrifying tipping point we are now witnessing in Europe," he wrote.

The lawsuit, filed by attorney Lauren Martel of Hilton Head, cites two cases filed by Ned Sloan of Greenville in asserting that Bilbro, as an individual, has legal standing to take the issue to court because of its "public importance."

The lawsuit asks for a receiver to be appointed to oversee the funding of the refugee resettlement program in South Carolina and to stop the program until all funding can be accounted for.

"Allowing one case to come into South Carolina where a terror attack happens or his daughter or wife or neighbor got attacked as is happening in many other locations is Irreparable," the lawsuit says.

Title: **Former college QBs are coveted campaign partners**
 Author: BY JOSH KENDALL jkendall@thestate.com
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USC FOOTBALL

Former college QBs are coveted campaign partners

BY JOSH KENDALL
jkendall@thestate.com

On Wednesday night in Chapin, Republican presidential hopeful Marco Rubio picked up the most coveted endorsement in Columbia. Also, the governor of South Carolina backed Rubio.

Maybe that's an overstatement, but in the state of South Carolina it's only a slight one. In case you haven't noticed, out state is starting to swell with a

very Southern phenomenon – the ex-quarterback-favored-son-turned-political-endorser.

Connor Shaw entered the race Wednesday. The winningest quarterback in University of South Carolina history introduced

SEE CAMPAIGN, 2B

 **ONLINE**

GoGamecocks.com: Video of Connor Shaw introducing Rubio.

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 Author: BY JOSH KENDALL jkendall@thestate.com
 Size: 51.92 square inch
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CAMPAIGN

FROM PAGE 1B

Rubio at an event in Chapin. Rubio's campaign trumpeted Shaw's appearance and endorsement earlier in the day with an email to media members that referenced "USC football legend Connor Shaw."

Legend? Well, yeah probably. Shaw won 27 games as the Gamecocks starting quarterback from 2010-2013, presiding over the most sustained success in the school's history and becoming an undeniable star in a state that has no professional idols like Cam Newton to suck up all the celebrity air space.

It may be only in South Carolina where a person who's only old enough to be voting in his second presidential election and whose bona fides thus far have been earned exclusively while wearing shoulder pads can be a powerful campaign presence, but there was Shaw on Wednesday, being cheered by a large crowd as he welcomed Rubio and Governor Nikki Haley to the stage.

"I was nervous," said Shaw, now with the Cleveland Browns. "I don't think I get that nervous for football games."

Shaw spent 15 minutes

privately with Rubio prior to Wednesday night's event and then went over the talking points for his short speech with a Rubio campaign manager.

"He's a big football fan," Shaw said of Rubio. "It was really cool."

Shaw is the second ex-quarterback to hit the campaign trail this month. Former Clemson quarterback Tajh Boyd, who helped kick start Dabo Swinney's turnaround with the Tigers, has been at several events with Ohio governor and presidential hopeful John Kasich.

Both Shaw and Boyd were approached by the campaigns of their respective candidates, and neither handed out their endorsement lightly, they said. Shaw picked Rubio chiefly because of how outspoken he is about his Christian faith and his foreign policy plan, Shaw said. Boyd was drawn to Kasich by his promise to move power from the federal government to state governments, Boyd said.

For the campaigns, it's a no-brainer - latch onto a former college hero in a state where former college heroes have a lofty position on the social totem pole. Shaw spent 45 minutes after Rubio's

Wednesday night talk signing autographs and posing for pictures with fans, including two young fans who asked him to "dab" for the photograph.

"That's the first time I've done that," he said.

When Boyd was added to a Kasich event at a Mauldin BBQ restaurant, the RSVPs for the speech quickly went from 200 to nearly 500, Boyd said.

"I was like, 'That's big,' " Boyd said. "I knew I had a little bit of pull, but I thought, 'Let's see how much pull I've got.' I embrace the South Carolina people and hold them in high regard, and I think they do the same with me."

Kasich's tabbing of Boyd was a wise move politically given that he needs all the upstate votes he can get and that the governor of Ohio could hardly cozy up to a Southeastern Conference guy and expect to be welcomed back to the heart of Big Ten country when the presidential race is complete.

Pitting an orange endorsement against a garnet one is always a good talking point in the Palmetto State anyway. It's honest-to-goodness political football.

"Absolutely, it gets you

geared up," Boyd said of the chance to compete against Shaw even if it's indirectly. "I think it's good for the state. I really like Connor and respect his opinion. I think it's good because it shows you are more than a football player because ultimately we are more than that."

Especially in South Carolina. Donald Trump brought several Iowa football players on stage with him during a January rally in Iowa City before that state's caucuses but didn't get much bump out of the move, finishing second behind Ted Cruz, but this is the SEC, where the blessing of the hometown gridiron star is just short of papal.

Nick Saban could probably get Alabamans to vote overwhelmingly for Bernie Sanders (although Saban feels more like a Trump guy).

Shaw doesn't expect to take up a career in politics at any point, he said ("But I never saw myself in the football position I am in right now either," he added.), but Boyd would like to run for office "five or 10 years down the line," he said. Both players are Greenville residents, so if Shaw changes his mind the Greenville mayoral race could be interesting in a few years.





Title: **S.C. womendeserveanequal-pay law**

Author:

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EDITORIAL

S.C. women deserve an equal-pay law

Gov. Nikki Haley, who has experienced gender discrimination in her public life, should be sympathetic to the plight of underpaid women

South Carolina ranks as one of only four states in the nation without an equal-pay law

Women in South Carolina make 80 cents for every dollar that similarly employed men make

This editorial ran in The Herald of Rock Hill last week.

While Gov. Nikki Haley is predictably conservative on most issues, she sometimes is willing to go against the grain, such as when she recently helped lead the effort to bring down the Confederate flag that had flown on the grounds of the Statehouse. We suggest that she now consider leading the charge to pass equal pay protections for women in South Carolina.

Haley, who, as a woman politician, has experienced gender discrimination in her public life, should be sympathetic to the plight of underpaid women in the state's workforce. And as the state's governor, she is uniquely positioned to make the case for South Carolina women.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, which made it easier for women to challenge discriminatory pay in court, was the first bill President Barack Obama signed into law. As reported earlier this month on the seventh anniversary of the law, South Carolina ranks as one of only four states in the nation without an equal-pay law.

The others are Alabama, Mississippi and Utah, although Utah introduced equal-pay legislation this month.

Comparing the pay of men and women can be difficult, even when they have similar jobs. Nonetheless, the disparity is so wide in many cases that the only logical culprit is gender discrimination. Women in South Carolina make 80 cents for every dollar that similarly employed men make, according to the National Partnership for Women and Families. That comes to a difference of \$8,272 a year.

For women of color, the gap is wider. African-American women make 57 cents for every dollar a white man makes in South Carolina, while Hispanic women make 48 cents. Opponents of an equal-pay law in the state fear that it could have a negative impact on small businesses, although we can't understand how allowing small businesses to discriminate against women employees is a worthwhile benefit.

Some opponents no doubt have an aversion to the equal pay law simply because it is championed by the federal government – and specifically by Obama. Another

possible reason the law has not gained traction in the state is because the Legislature is so heavily dominated by men. South Carolina has only 22 women in the state House and only two in the Senate, or about 13.5 percent of all legislators, which is among the lowest in the nation.

In Colorado, by contrast, women occupy 42 percent of the seats in the state Legislature, the highest percentage in the nation. Some South Carolina lawmakers have tried to push equal-pay legislation. Charleston Rep. Leon Stavrinakis, a Democrat, introduced a bill that would make it illegal for a state agency to "discriminate against an employee on the basis of gender" by paying a woman less than a man for the same work as long as they are equally qualified. But the bill has been stalled for more than a year.

Someone such as Haley might be able to break the logjam.

Ironically, despite the widespread opposition to equal-pay legislation in the Legislature, it is extremely popular with voters. A 2014 Winthrop University poll found that three out of four South Carolinians are in favor of such a law.



Title: **South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Marco Rubio for president**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 59.36 square inch
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South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Marco Rubio for president

Florida senator wins coveted support from S.C. governor

Haley is state's most popular GOP politician after handling of Charleston shooting

Jeb Bush was considered the other likely choice

BY ANDREW SHAIN

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CHAPIN

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley said Wednesday that she endorsed Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., for president because he was best suited to restore Republican principles of limited government and cutting debt.

"I want a president who understands they have to go back to Washington, D.C., and bring a conscious back to our Republicans," Haley, a Republican, told a crowd of hundreds gathered outside a Chapin warehouse.

Haley said she made the decision as a mother who wants a safer, more prosperous nation for her children and as the wife of a combat veteran who wants more support for the military.

The governor did not say why she didn't choose other candidates.

"We have good people running for president, and I thank them today for their sacrifice and their willingness to serve and to honor this great country and make

her better," she said. "But my job was to find the person I thought who could do it the best.

"I wanted someone with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody who has the conviction to do the right thing," she said. "But I wanted somebody humble enough (who) remembers that you work for all the people."

Haley, the state's most popular GOP politician in polls and a rising national GOP star, was South Carolina's most coveted Republican endorsement of the 2016 presidential race.

"She embodies for me everything that I want the Republican Party and conservative movement to be about," Rubio told the crowd.

The governor's endorsement comes at a critical time for Rubio.

The Florida senator needs momentum in South Carolina after finishing fifth in New Hampshire and a rattled debate performance.

Rubio trails Donald Trump and Ted Cruz in the Palmetto State with three days ahead of the South Carolina GOP presidential primary.

Haley joins U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of North Charleston, the only African-American Republican in the Senate, and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, a Spartanburg Republican who heads a special panel investigating the Benghazi attack, in endorsing Rubio.

Haley has decided to back the establishment candidate considered to be in the best position to challenge Republican front-runners Trump and Cruz.

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, who has shared advice

SEE RUBIO, 8A

“

I WANTED SOMEBODY HUMBLE ENOUGH (WHO) REMEMBERS THAT YOU WORK FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.

Gov. Nikki Haley

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FROM PAGE 3A

RUBIO

on education issues with the governor and helped her raise money for her re-election bid in 2014, also was considered a top contender to win Haley's endorsement. His father and brother, both former presidents who won the South Carolina presidential primary, have reached out to Haley in recent weeks.

But he has lagged in recent South Carolina polls, falling to fifth in the six-candidate GOP field. Rubio sits third.

Haley's decision was a bit of a reversal in the past day. The governor told reporters Tuesday that she had not made up her mind on who to back in the 2016 race.

She endorsed Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential race.

While the former Massachusetts governor won the GOP nomination, he lost the South Carolina primary to former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, breaking the state's

three-decade streak of voting for the candidate who landed on the November ballot.

Haley and Rubio share similar backgrounds. They are both 44-year-old children of immigrants who were elected to their current seats in the tea party fervor of 2010.

Rubio first met Haley when they were first running for their current offices. The senator spoke at the South Carolina GOP party's annual dinner in 2012, a way for him to start building relationships in the early-primary state. They have communicated while Rubio has been on the trail.

The senator has said during stops in South Carolina this week that Haley would make a good vice president. Haley has become a favorite to make vice presidential short lists after her handling of last year's Charleston shooting and successful call to remove the Confederate

flag from the South Carolina State House grounds. She gave the Republican response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union last month.

Haley's endorsement, while arriving a little later than expected, was not a complete surprise.

She said she would not back Trump. She said she was referring to him as one of the "angriest voices" in her State of the Union response and criticized him over his combative campaigning.

Trump has said Haley is not doing enough to protect South Carolina from Syrian refugees and the possibility of Guantanamo prisoners being transferred to the Navy brig outside Charleston. Haley has protested both issues to federal officials.

Haley has not criticized Cruz, but she has not kept in regular contact with the Texas senator.

Title: **Lawsuit aims to stop refugee resettlement in S. Carolina**
 Author: RON BARRETT The Greenville News
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Lawsuit aims to stop refugee resettlement in S. Carolina

Richland County man names the governor of S.C., the state Department of Social Services and two nonprofits in his suit

2 Syrian families have been resettled in the Midlands

RON BARRETT

The Greenville News

A Richland County man has filed a lawsuit seeking to stop the resettlement of refugees in South Carolina in order to protect the state from "criminals, narco-drug traffickers, terrorists, rapist(s)" and people "hostile to assimilation and the laws of South Carolina."

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"The extraordinary and well-founded potential for terrorism and other violent crime made possible by this inflow of Refugees from hostile Islamic states was simply not properly addressed in the State Plan," Walter Brian Bilbro, the plaintiff, says in an affidavit in support of his motion for a temporary injunction or temporary restraining order against the state's agreement with the federal government to allow refugees to resettle here.

In response to the lawsuit, the governor's staff referred to a letter she

wrote to Secretary of State John Kerry in the aftermath of the Paris terrorist attacks last November in which she asked that no Syrian refugees be allowed to resettle in South Carolina, "until I can be assured that all potential refugees from Syria have no ties to terrorist organizations."

Ted Goins, president of Lutheran Services Carolinas, one of the defendants in the suit, said his organization has resettled two Syrian refugees in the state, both in the Midlands.

Another family had been approved but their case was delayed, he said.

"We have not been informed that we will be getting any more," Goins said.

Jason Lee, of World Relief in Spartanburg, a religious nonprofit that assists in refugee relocation, said his office hadn't been served with the lawsuit. But he said the organization hasn't resettled any Syrian refugees in South Carolina and has no plans to bring any in during 2016.

Those are the only two

agencies contracted with the federal government to assist in resettling refugees, according to the State Department.

"Lutheran Services Carolinas has received a copy of that legal filing and we are analyzing that suit now," Goins said. "On the face of it, it appears to be without merit, but we won't be commenting further until we've had time to review it with our legal team."

DSS spokeswoman Marilyn Matheus said, "The Department of Social Services has been served with the lawsuit regarding the refugee resettlement program. Our staff are reviewing the allegations and preparing a responsive pleading."

She declined further comment.

In his affidavit, Bilbro describes himself as a 46-year-old, 1991 graduate of the University of South Carolina, married, with two young daughters.

"When I found out that agents of the nonprofit Lutheran Services couldn't legally share their religion or Judeo-Christian values

or invite the refugees to church ... I realized the high degree of negligence and reckless misrepresentations being perpetrated on me as a taxpayer, my family and the Public interest," he wrote.

"I am bringing this action because I believe this exploitation of my constitutional rights as a citizen and the abuse of my daughters and my wife's rights are inevitable under the current plan, and therefore must cease immediately before it has reached the horrifying tipping point we are now witnessing in Europe," he wrote.

The lawsuit, filed by attorney Lauren Martel of Hilton Head, cites two cases filed by Ned Sloan of Greenville in asserting that Bilbro, as an individual, has legal standing to take the issue to court because of its "public importance."

The lawsuit asks for a receiver to be appointed to oversee the funding of the refugee resettlement program in South Carolina and to stop the program until all funding can be accounted for.