

Title: **Widening SC's I-95 would cost \$4 billion, road agency estimates**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 53.78 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Widening SC's I-95 would cost \$4 billion, road agency estimates

BY CASSIE COPE

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It would cost up to \$4 billion to widen Interstate 95 to six lanes in South Carolina, transportation officials said Monday.

That initial estimate includes widening about 190 miles of the interstate to three lanes in each direction from the state's border with Georgia to the border with North Carolina, replacing bridges along

the interstate and improving interchanges.

But it could be years before the state has enough money to pay for the widening project. The project also would have to rank high enough on Transportation Department priority lists to be fixed.

I-95 bottlenecks in South

SEE I-95, 6A

FROM PAGE 1A

I-95

Carolina, especially during high-trafficked holiday weekends. The three-lane road in Georgia shrinks to two lanes entering the Palmetto State.

"A project of that magnitude, first of all, would be unprecedented," Transportation Department Secretary Christy Hall said at the annual meeting of the S.C. Alliance to Fix Our Roads, a group of road contractors and consultants who want more money spent on road-building projects. The widening project likely would be completed in segments and phases, she said.

Federal money eventually could pay for part of the project.

"I do believe the Trump administration is serious about an infrastructure program," Hall said.

The Transportation Department is in the process of updating its pri-

ority list for interstate improvements.

It plans to unveil that list in the coming months, Hall said.

Rural parts of I-95 are included in the Transportation Department's \$50 million-a-year plan to make rural roads safer. That plan, unveiled last week, includes spending money to re-paint pavement markings, installing rumble strips to alert drivers they are near the road's edge and widening road shoulders to give drivers time to correct if they run off the road.

However, the agency has said it needs added state or federal dollars to pay for those improvements.

The \$50 million is part of much greater sum — an extra \$943 million per year — that the Transportation Department said it needs to make the

state's deteriorating roads safer, including spending \$500 million to re-pave crumbling highways.

Last week, House GOP leaders introduced a proposal to raise the state's 16.75-cent-a-gallon gas tax by 10 cents over five years. That increase, along with raising other driving fees, would raise roughly \$600 million a year for road repairs when enacted.

Legislators last week indicated there is appetite for a gas tax increase this year, in part because Gov. Nikki Haley is leaving office.

"When she's gone, our chances of passing common-sense legislation go up exponentially," said S.C. House Minority Leader Todd Rutherford, D-Richland.

State Sen. Thomas McElveen, D-Sumter, said Haley has been an impediment to raising the gas

tax. In 2015, Haley said she would veto any gas-tax hike that was not tied to a much larger income tax cut.

Haley is expected to resign from office sometime this week after the U.S. Senate confirms her to become U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Soon-to-be Gov. Henry McMaster has not said if he would veto a gas-tax increase.

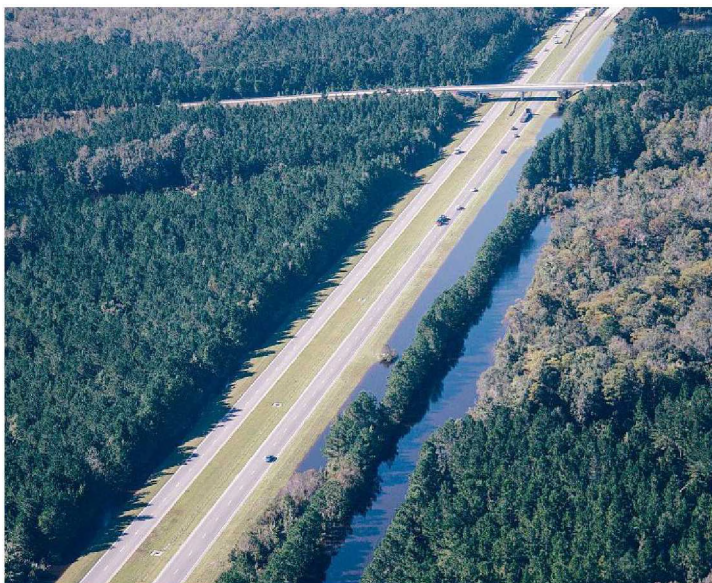
Rutherford said the proposed House plan doesn't raise enough money for roads.

"It is simply not enough," Rutherford said, adding arguments against raising the gas tax even more — including relying on local penny tax programs to pay for road projects and changing the structure of the Transportation Department — are shell games.

Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657

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**LEGISLATORS LAST
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FILE PHOTOGRAPH / THE STATE

An aerial view of I-95 in Horry County after area flooding in 2015.

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SC's Haley could have UN post by day's end

■ Gov. Nikki Haley could be confirmed as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations as early as Tuesday, setting the stage for a new S.C. governor in Henry McMaster.

BY JAMIE SELF
jself@thestate.com

Gov. Nikki Haley could be confirmed as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations as early as Tuesday, ushering in a new S.C. governor in Henry McMaster and a succession game in the state Senate.

FROM PAGE 1A

HALEY

After the U.S. Senate confirms Haley's appointment and Haley resigns as governor, the Lexington Republican will be sworn in as a member of President Donald Trump's Cabinet.

Haley would see a bump in pay – to \$187,000 a year as ambassador, according to a U.S. State Department spokesperson, from \$106,078 as governor. She also will get a paid-for apartment in New York. The official residence of the U.N. ambassador is a suite in the prestigious

First, Haley must get an official nod of approval from the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The committee is scheduled to take up a vote on her confirmation at noon. Then, the full Senate must vote on

whether to confirm her appointment.

That could happen as early as Tuesday. However, if Haley is not confirmed by the Senate on Tuesday, it could be next week before her nomination is voted on. The

Senate is not scheduled to meet Wednesday, Thursday or Friday as House and Senate Republicans hold a retreat in Philadelphia.

SEE HALEY, 5A

Waldorf Astoria hotel.

Upon Haley's resignation, McMaster would become governor, leaving a vacancy in the lieutenant governor's office that would be filled by the president pro tempore of the state Senate.

However, the current pro tem – Sen. Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence – does not want to become lieutenant governor, a largely ceremonial post. Leatherman is the most powerful legislator in the state, overseeing the Senate calendar and its budget-

writing committee, and serving on other boards that control state spending.

Leatherman is expected to resign as Senate president pro tem long enough to allow another senator to be elected to the post – most likely Sen. Kevin Bryant, R-Anderson – and become lieutenant governor. Then, Leatherman is expected to try to regain his post as president pro tem.

McMaster, a former S.C. attorney general and a Columbia Republican, would complete the re-

maining two years of Haley's term.

McMaster could become the state's longest-serving governor – serving 10 years – if, as expected, he runs for the office in 2018 and wins re-election in 2022.

S.C. law limits a governor to being elected twice – or eight years.

However, McMaster would not be elected to serve the final two years of Haley's term.

Matthew Schofield of McClatchy contributed.

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Haley's good showing

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She got a warm reception in part because of her personal charisma and her impressive record as governor. But her frank, thoughtful answers to the committee's questions indicated she would be a strong advocate for this nation, and would not hesitate to disagree with the expressed views of President-elect Donald Trump, who proposed her for the job soon after his election in November.

As Emma Dumain reported in The Post and Courier yesterday, Gov. Haley took issue

with Mr. Trump's characterizations that the United Nations is ineffective and that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is outdated. Russia, she said, "can't be trusted." And she challenged the advisability of a national registry for Muslims.

As U.N. ambassador, Mrs. Haley will be a member of Mr. Trump's National Security Council and an active participant in framing, as well as defending, U.S. foreign policy.

In a revealing comment about her approach to her new responsibilities, she said the new president's national security team — which will also include the secretaries of state and defense, the nation's top military officer, the attorney general and the president's national security adviser — will have to "educate, inform him of what we know, inform him of strategies."

— Post & Courier
 Charleston

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CINDI ROSS SCOPPE • ASSOCIATE EDITOR • THE STATE

How to hold a governor accountable for education

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Then the other teacher in the room, freshman Sen. Mike Fanning, explained in a way the lawyers in the room really couldn't, at least not with

the same credibility, why the notion of political accountability was anything but a distraction.

“As a history teacher,” he said, “the most frustrating thing to me was that everyone running for governor was pro-public education, and then when they became governor, there was no way as a teacher to hold them responsible, because their response was, ‘I can't do anything about that.’” Education superintendents, meantime, would tell teachers the lack of progress wasn't *their* fault because, for instance, the governor rejected their budget requests.

What teachers need, Mr. Fanning said, is the ability to say to candidates for governor, “if you say you're pro-public education, when we elect you, we expect you to do something about it.”

And so it was that the two Republicans and the one Democrat on the subcommittee approved the resolution to bring South Carolina into line with the 38 states where the chief educa-

tion official is a professional rather than a politician.

That vote for S.137, to ask voters in 2018 to amend the state constitution to have the governor appoint the superintendent, came an hour after a bipartisan *House* subcommittee unanimously approved an identical measure, H.3146, along with H.3036, which sets requirements for gubernatorially appointed superintendents (our *elected* superintendent simply must be at least 18 years old and a registered voter). Another bipartisan Senate subcommittee had unanimously approved a qualifications bill, S.27, the day before.

I don't mean by this to suggest that we are just a few perfunctory votes away from one of the most significant reforms to

our antiquated governmental structure ... ever. As we've seen too many times, bills can sail through subcommittees and die in full committee. They can sail through full committee and, at least in the Senate, die on the calendar without a moment's debate, let alone a vote. All that's required is for a single senator to say, you know, I don't like that bill, and for his colleagues not to insist on giving the bill one of a precious few priority debate slots.

But last week's votes were a good start to a year when — despite a promised push for the change by Education Superintendent Molly Spearman and Gov. Nikki Haley (pre-U.N. nomination) — I wasn't holding my breath for any significant reforms to the government that was designed centuries ago with one goal above all others: to

keep power away from any governor.

Mr. Fanning did a very nice job explaining the importance of being able to hold someone accountable for the progress — or lack thereof — in our schools. Beyond that, as Ms. Spearman and Ms. Haley explained to legislators in November, electing a superintendent independ-

ently of the governor can prevent us “moving the state forward with a common vision for education priorities” and result in “incompatible positions” (and a lack of coordination.” Which is something we've seen more often than not in the 30 years I've been watching governors and education superintendents who were, more often than not, incompatible even when they came from the same political party.

“What a fragmented approach does more than anything else is that it protects the status quo,” said Sen. Shane Massey, who chaired Thursday's Senate subcommittee meeting, “because if everybody's disagreeing, there's not going to be a whole lot done to change anything.” Having the education superintendent and governor on the same page all the time — not just during rare political alignments like we've had the past two years — puts more pressure on the Legislature, he said, to “move on some stuff.” Which we need.

Ms. Spearman recognized during her 2014 campaign that South Carolina was missing out on the most talented candidates because they weren't willing to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars, take a year away from their professions and go through



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“Our concern,” Education Association President Bernadette Hampton told Mr. Massey’s subcommittee, “is that we lose our right as citizens of this state, as taxpayers of this state, to have any say It’s like we’re

moving to a dictatorship.”

She noted that the Education Association’s research had revealed that both North Carolina and Georgia elect their superintendents. She could have added, had she been so inclined, that California does as well, along with its left-coast near-neighbor Washington state and a dwindling handful of other mostly Western states.

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BUT FOR ALL

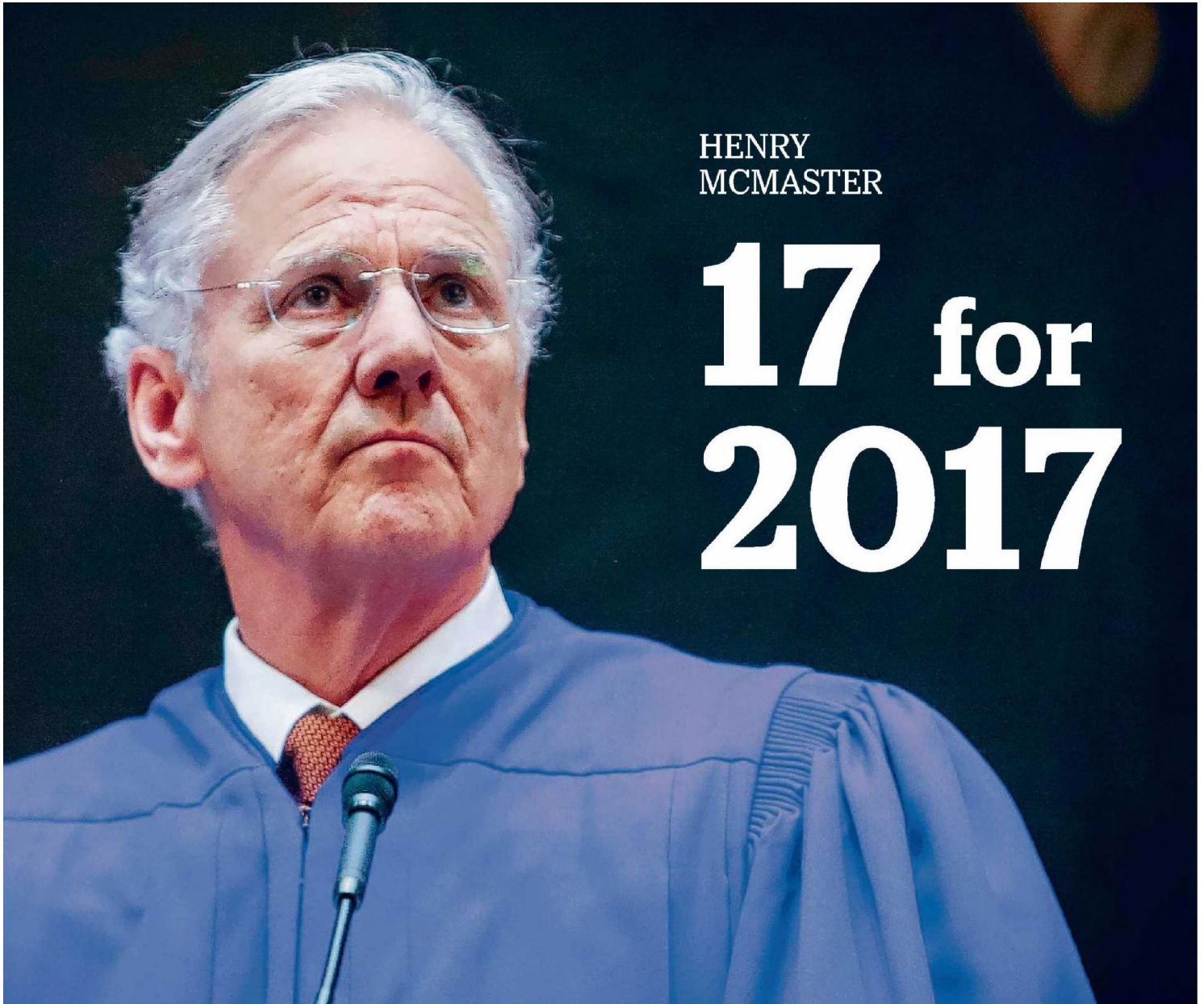
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TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

The 2017 S.C. legislative session began this month. Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster began his last days presiding over the Senate before taking over as governor.

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BY BRISTOW MARCHANT

bmarchant@thestate.com

With new leadership at the Governor's Mansion in 2017, here are 17 numbers about soon-to-be S.C. Gov. Henry McMaster.

\$106,078

McMaster's salary as governor

\$46,545

McMaster's salary as lieutenant governor

\$72,700

Excess contributions from McMaster's 2014 campaign for lieutenant governor. Last year, McMaster was assessed a \$1,500 fine and a public warning from the S.C. Ethics Commission.

69

McMaster's age. He would be the oldest governor since James F. Byrnes, who was 68 when he was sworn in for a single term in 1951.

52

Years since a lieutenant governor replaced a governor. Robert McNair succeeded Donald

Russell as governor in 1965 – and subsequently appointed Russell to a vacant U.S. Senate seat.

38

Years McMaster has been married to the former Peggy Jean McAbee.

2

Number of McMaster children. Henry McMaster Jr. is a law clerk in South Carolina. Mary Rogers McMaster is an actress in Los Angeles.

<2

Numbers of years left in Nikki Haley's term as governor. McMaster could be eligible to run for a full term of his own in 2018 and again in 2022 before hitting the term limit (although the state constitution is unclear on this point). If elected twice, McMaster would be South Carolina's longest-serving governor.

1969

Year McMaster graduated from the University of South Carolina. He also received a USC law degree in 1973. McMaster would be the first Gamecock governor since Jim Hodges left office in 2003.

6

Years spent as a JAG officer in the U.S. Army Reserve, 1969-75.

34

McMaster's age when President Ronald Reagan appointed

him South Carolina's U.S. attorney in 1981.

100

Men and women arrested during Operation Jackpot, McMaster's 1980s prosecution of marijuana smugglers on the South Carolina coast.

8

Years McMaster served as South Carolina's attorney general, from 2003-11.

3

Number of statewide races McMaster has lost: U.S. senator in 1986 (to Fritz Hollings), lieutenant governor in 1990 (to Nick Theodore), and the Republican primary for governor in 2010 (to Nikki Haley)

58

Percentage of the vote McMaster won in the 2014 race for lieutenant governor

30

Years as a member of Columbia's all-white Forest Lake Club

1st

S.C. elected official to endorse Donald Trump for president. Trump later appointed Nikki Haley to the UN, paving the way for McMaster to become governor.

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TRANSPORTATION

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I-95 WIDENING

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TRACY GLANTZ tglantz@thestate.com

An aerial view of I-95 in Horry
County after flooding in 2015.

Title: **HISTORIC COURTHOUSE IN ANEW ERA**
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YORK COUNTY

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE IN A NEW ERA

Courtroom reopening without flag of Confederacy

BY ANDREW DYS
adys@heraldonline.com

YORK

A version of the Confederate battle flag had flown for decades inside the main courtroom of the York County Courthouse. It stood among five other historic flags. Pictures of Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson hung behind the judge's bench.

No more.

The courtroom will reopen Sunday as part of a \$10 million courthouse renovation. But that historic courtroom will not have a Confederate flag or those pictures, York County Clerk of Court David Hamilton has decided.

Hamilton, as clerk, has authority over county courthouse buildings. He recently said he has a deep and strong understanding of York County history, but decided those items were part of an old era in the historic courthouse. But a new era will not include the flag or pictures, Hamilton said.

"It is a different time," Hamilton said. "When we looked at the historical items that included Civil War era items. This is a new era and time, and it is time to

move on."

The York County Courthouse, closed since 2011 for renovations, was built in 1914. Other historical items, including retired judges portraits, will go back in the courtroom along with the United States flag and South Carolina state flag, Hamilton said.

The Moss Justice Center in York, where criminal court has been held for two decades, has no Confederate flag in its courtrooms. Probate, family court and master in equity courts don't either. Magistrate courts do not have Confederate flags.

SEE FLAG, 8A

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FLAG

Hamilton's decision has earned praise from both political parties and county and legal and community leaders.

Kevin Brackett, 16th Circuit solicitor, recalled that as a young prosecutor in the early 1990s he had a case where the defense lawyer for a black defendant vehemently objected to the Confederate flag in the rear of the courtroom and the pictures behind the judge. The defendant and lawyer asked the judge that the items be removed, or that the trial be moved to a different courtroom.

"It was an issue, the flag and the pictures in the courtroom, that was raised in court," Brackett said. "It became a distraction."

Longtime defense lawyers Tom McKinney and Harry Dest, 16th Circuit public defender, who both have tried cases in the courtroom, agreed with Hamilton's decision.

"There is no place in a court of law, a place of justice for all, for the Confederate flag," McKinney said.

Lawyer Montrio Belton, treasurer of the York County Bar Association, said not putting the flag and pictures back up

is the right and wise move.

"A courtroom is meant to provide justice for everyone equally," Belton said. "The halls of justice mean everyone is equal. But the Confederate flag in a courtroom says something to people of color, that some way they might be disenfranchised."

State Rep. John King, D-Rock Hill and the leader of the S.C. General Assembly Black Caucus, praised Hamilton's decision. Longtime York lawyer Jim Bradford, who was part of a group that pushed for the York courthouse to be restored with dignity and historic integrity, also agreed.

The Confederate flag has been and remains a divisive symbol for millions of people. Outgoing Gov. Nikki Haley pushed for the flag outside the S.C. Statehouse to come down in 2015 after nine black people were killed by white supremacist Dylann Roof. In her State of the State address earlier this month, Haley called the Confederate flag, "a divisive symbol of an oppressive past."

Hamilton sought legal advice to make sure his decision did not run afoul of South Carolina's Heritage Act. That state law bars changes to monuments and historic buildings without legislative

action. Hamilton determined after getting legal advice that the best solution is to research the history of the particular flags that flew in the county courthouse, which Hamilton has been told flew over York County at different times in its history, then possibly put them in a display area at the renovated courthouse.

It is unclear exactly how long the flag and the pictures of Confederate generals were on the walls of the courtroom before renovations. It is even unclear who put the flags and pictures up, Hamilton said. The items have been stored at the McCelvey Center in York since renovations began.

The courtroom must ensure that all who enter it believe they are treated equally, Hamilton said. Lady Justice, the emblem of courts, has a woman with scales and blindfold.

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A crew works on the exterior of the York County Courthouse in 2016.

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Haley's good showing

While many Trump Cabinet nominees faced openly hostile questioning this week, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley won bipartisan applause when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing Wednesday on her nomination to be United States ambassador to the United Nations. And with good reason.

She got a warm reception in part because of her personal charisma and her impressive record as governor. But her frank, thoughtful answers to the committee's questions indicated she would be a strong advocate for this nation, and would not hesitate to disagree with the expressed views of President-elect Donald Trump, who proposed her for the job soon after his election in November.

As Emma Dumain reported in The Post and Courier yesterday, Gov. Haley took issue

with Mr. Trump's characterizations that the United Nations is ineffective and that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is outdated. Russia, she said, "can't be trusted." And she challenged the advisability of a national registry for Muslims.

As U.N. ambassador, Mrs. Haley will be a member of Mr. Trump's National Security Council and an active participant in framing, as well as defending, U.S. foreign policy.

In a revealing comment about her approach to her new responsibilities, she said the new president's national security team — which will also include the secretaries of state and defense, the nation's top military officer, the attorney general and the president's national security adviser — will have to "educate, inform him of what we know, inform him of strategies."

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