

Title: **Haley to testify before Congress against moving Gitmo detainees to S.C.**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
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Haley to testify before Congress against moving Gitmo detainees to S.C.

BY ANDREW SHAIN

ashain@thestate.com

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley will testify Thursday before the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee on the possibility of moving Guantanamo Bay detainees to a Navy brig outside Charleston.

Haley has opposed moving the 80 detainees, including accused terrorists, to the facility in Goose Creek, less than 20 miles northwest from one of the

state's top tourist destinations.

"We're not going to allow that kind of character to come in," the governor said last year.

President Barack Obama has pledged to close the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, detention camp during his campaign. His administration formalized plans to

close Gitmo earlier this year, but the White House did not announce a new prison site. More than a dozen are under consideration.

Haley will speak about "state and local perspectives regarding the impact of transferring Guantanamo detainees to the homeland," according to the House committee.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, R-Laurens, is a member of the Homeland Security Committee and another critic of plans to move the detainees to the United States.

"No state should become a terrorist dumping ground, especially not South Carolina," he wrote in an op-ed column.

Title: **Crossover deadline clouds outlook for action on bills**
 Author: BY JAMIE SELF jself@thestate.com
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THE BUZZ

Crossover deadline clouds outlook for action on bills

BY JAMIE SELF
jself@thestate.com

Lawmakers in the House and Senate have one week left to pass bills from one chamber to the other before their policy hopes are – almost certainly – dashed for this legislative session.

Next Sunday is the crossover deadline. If a bill fails to pass in either the House or Senate and cross the lobby to the other chamber by that date, it will need a steep two-thirds vote just to stay alive.

A look at proposals that need a vote this week to beat the odds:

IMPROVING RURAL SCHOOLS

Operating in the shadow of a school equity lawsuit, state lawmakers introduced a handful of bills this year aimed at improving the state's ailing K-12 public

schools, deemed unconstitutional by the S.C. Supreme Court two years ago.

Several proposals have cleared the House, including defining what a S.C. high-school graduate should know and giving the S.C. Department of Education authority to take over a school district in financially dire straits.

But the bill likely to have the most impact on the bank accounts of poor, rural school districts only just passed committee last Tuesday and hit the House floor.

First proposed by Gov. **Nikki Haley**, the bill would commit up to \$200 million a year in state spending to help school districts renovate and build school facilities.

Given its broad support, the bill likely will clear the House this week and sail smoothly into the Senate.

FIXING S.C. ROADS

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The Senate and House have passed their own preferred road spending plans, but the chambers have failed to agree on a single path forward.

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BUZZ

surest way to make sure "there's no slip between the lip and the cup" on a roads fix before the legislative session ends.

TRANSGENDER BATHROOM BILL HAS STEEP CLIMB

State Sen. **Lee Bright's** bill to require transgender people to use the bathroom assigned to their biological birth sex has one week to get to the Senate floor and pass there to avoid the crossover deadline.

The Spartanburg Republican needs nine votes from Senate General Committee members to bring the bill directly to the Senate floor, skipping a committee vote. Bright said Friday he needs three more votes toward that nine.

Even if Bright succeeds, Democrats say they will block the bill on the Senate floor.

DISTURBING SCHOOLS

One of four bills that would change the state's

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The panel's chairman, **David Weeks**, D-Sumter, said it's possible the bill could go directly to the

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But House Judiciary Chairman **Greg Delleney**, R-Chester, said that is unlikely because it would require the unanimous consent of the GOP-controlled House to bring the proposal to the floor for a vote.

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The bill passed the House 71-22 in February. The Senate then passed the bill, making some changes to provide for exceptions.

Now, Delleney needs 83 of the House's 124 members to OK a House-Senate compromise on the bill, already approved by the Senate.

So what's holding up the bill?

Attendance.

"We've had a lot of people out for sickness and business and other

reasons," Delleney said.

Delleney has tried twice to get the compromise approved, failing by one vote the first time and by three votes the second time in a chamber made up of 78 Republicans and 46 Democrats.

Delleney said he will try again in the next couple of weeks. Meanwhile, he has been counting votes, working to hold onto the support he has.

Efforts to persuade are going the other way, too.

Both sides are talking to everybody they can, said state Rep. **James Smith**, D-Richland, who opposes the abortion legislation.

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Sen. Lee Bright's transgender bill among proposals likely to fizzle out

Plans to ban abortion at 20 weeks stalled but only temporarily, supporter says

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OTHER VOICES

There's still a way to get real ethics reform

BY CINDI ROSS SCOPPS

The debate that Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin describes as watching a melting iceberg has been inducing whiplash in recent days. So this might be a good time to review where we are on ethics:

On the first day back at work after Gov. Nikki Haley attacked Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster for killing a requirement to make lawmakers tell us who pays them, the Senate voted 39-4 to remedy his disappointing but correct procedural ruling, by pulling an income-disclosure bill up to the top of its agenda from its burial ground deep down in the contested calendar.

The next day, senators voted 40-1 in favor of that bill, and everybody reported that the Senate had passed income-disclosure requirements.

Then senators came back the following day and did not actually pass the bill – which requires two votes, not just the one that everyone seemed to believe made it a done deal – and hands were wrung anew over its suddenly uncertain fate.

Meantime, the bill to allow an independent body to investigate legislators' ethics compliance, the one that had looked to be on the fast track the previous week, got bogged down.

Into that mix stepped Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman, who vowed to try every day for the rest of the session to force a vote on a bill to combat so-called dark money, by requiring organizations to tell us who bankrolls them if they exist for the primary purpose of influencing our votes. That's the bill that has the Koch brothers telling lies about our ethics bills in order to derail it. The Senate voted 28-16 to move that bill to the top of the agenda.

Alas, a majority wasn't enough for Sen. Leatherman's motion to pass. But it would be enough for a

motion made by the chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, as Senate Rules Chairman Ronnie Cromer explained, all but promising that he would make that motion if the Senate passed the bill that currently holds the Rules Committee slot on the agenda. That's the independent-investigations bill that the Senate would have taken up next if Sen. Leatherman had not made a motion for the Senate to adjourn.

There are two important take-aways from those events:

- The Senate is completely unpredictable. Predictably so.

- There is an obvious compromise to be had on ethics.

No matter how impossible it might seem, nothing is impossible in the Senate.

Not much needs saying about the Senate's unpredictability. Just when you are sure you know what will and won't pass, what has and hasn't passed, where there is and isn't consensus, everything changes. This is because the Senate can do anything by unanimous consent, and on the flip side, a single senator can easily tie up the Senate, and senators don't hesitate to use bills like pawns in a chess game, sacrificing them as needed to prevent votes on the bills they really want to kill. Until the lieutenant governor and the speaker ratify a bill, there is always a way senators can undo what looks to be done.

But there is much to say about that possible ethics compromise, because no matter how impossible it might seem, nothing is impossible in the Senate. Maybe unlikely, but not impossible. (See previous paragraph, and the 10 before that.)

Most rational Republicans in the Senate support all three ethics bills, as do most House members, who passed them last year by a cumulative 314-5. You can never know

for sure, since it is the Senate, but based on last week's vote, nearly all the Senate's Republicans and

Democrats seem to support the income-disclosure bill. That should pass this year. Unless it becomes a pawn, or gets blocked by a pawn.

But Senate Democrats, Sen. Leatherman and one or two more Republicans oppose letting an independent entity investigate complaints against legislators. And the Senate's Crazy Caucus – a fluid minority of Republicans who could kindly be called libertarians – opposes shining any sunlight on dark money. I suspect, but can't know for sure, since it's dark money, that they count on dark money to get re-elected in spite of being ... crazy. (See Bright, Lee.)

Usually, the rational Republicans prefer to work with the Democrats, because they're not ... crazy. But after trying for years to come to an agreement on ethics, and with Gov. Nikki Haley clamoring for income disclosure and independent investigations but not an end to dark money, the rational Republicans cut a deal with the crazies: Help us pass an income-disclosure and independent-oversight bill, and we won't try to add dark money to that bill.

That agreement was working until McMaster ruled that income disclosure and independent investigations couldn't be voted on in the same bill. And that appears to have opened the door for a realignment.

If some sort of ethics bill actually passes, someone's going to end up unhappy – either Leatherman and the Democrats because dark money is not addressed, or the Crazy Caucus because it is. It looks like Leatherman and the Democrats have just been given a second chance to decide which it will be. We should all hope they make the

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Scoppe writes editorials and columns for The State. Reach her at cscoppe@thestate.com or follow her on Twitter @CindiScoppe.

Title: **AG's political future suddenly at risk**
 Author: JOHN MONK JMONK@THESTATE.COM
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AG's political future suddenly at risk

JOHN MONK

JMONK@THESTATE.COM

COLUMBIA - For six years as attorney general, Alan Wilson could do little wrong when it came to his public image. He has been talked about by many as a contender in the 2018 governor's race.

That has changed.

In the past month, Wilson, a 42-year-old Republican, has been gobsmailed by publicity that is a politician's nightmare.

In a filing in the state Supreme Court, Wilson has been accused of trying to halt a State Law Enforcement Division investigation into possible public corruption in the Legislature.

Days later, two of Wilson's political allies later were revealed by The State newspaper as potential subjects of the probe. And, during a March 30 news conference, Wilson hurled personal insults at the prosecutor who made the filing in the high court. Wilson also emotionally claimed that unnamed "cowards" and

"haters" were out to get him.

Then, a top aide, Adam Piper, was discovered hatching a plot to publicly smear Wilson's legal opponent, special prosecutor David Pascoe. Wilson did not discipline Piper.

These events spell trouble for Wilson's future, some say.

"It just looks to the average fellow that the attorney general is trying to push something aside," said Neal Thigpen, a state GOP activist for more than 40 years and a former political science professor at Francis Marion University in Florence, which Wilson attended. Thigpen also is a friend of Wilson's father, Joe Wilson, a Republican congressman from South Carolina since 2001.

"Logically, you would have to say, this could have an effect on whether Alan makes the race or not," Thigpen said. "This could be damaging — regardless

of the outcome" in the high court.

Asked Friday about his political future and whether it had been affected by the Supreme Court controversy, Wilson's office released a short statement.

"The attorney general is focused on doing the best job possible as attorney general," said Wilson spokeswoman Hayley Thrift. "Our filings speak for themselves."

Wilson, like Gov. Nikki Haley, is from Lexington County. They were elected to statewide office the same year.

But even she said recently that the now-month-old Wilson-Pascoe dispute is "an embarrassing mess" and called on the Supreme Court to end it.

In his filings in the state Supreme Court, Pascoe has accused Wilson of try-

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Wilson

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ing to halt Pascoe's and SLED's ongoing state grand jury investigation of legislators' possible criminal violations.

Pascoe has asked the Supreme Court to decide whether Wilson has the authority to intervene in the investigation after the attorney general recused himself because of con-

flicts and appointed Pascoe as prosecutor instead. Pascoe also has asked the court to keep Wilson from firing him.

College of Charleston political science professor Gibbs Knotts said the stakes are high for Wilson. Although all the facts aren't known in the Wilson-Pascoe battle, and the state Supreme Court has yet to rule, controversies involving finances or pub-

lic corruption and alleged cover-ups — as the current dispute is rife with — are the worst kind of publicity for a politician, Knotts said.

"Even sex scandals aren't as bad," Knotts said. "If people view this as some type of corruption scandal, that could be damaging for Wilson's future prospects."

Some remain strongly loyal to Wilson.

Laura Hudson, head of the S.C. Crime Victims' Council, said, "All of our crime victims are very much in favor of Alan continuing his career. I don't see any reason why not. He's done so much for victims of criminal domestic violence and forming a human trafficking task force and using the bully pulpit of the attorney general's office to get things done."

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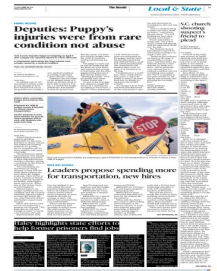
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Haley highlights her plan to help former inmates find jobs

Gov. Nikki Haley is highlighting her administration's efforts to help inmates find a job when they're released from prison. The Republican governor told inmates Monday at Manning Correctional Institution they deserve a better life on the other side of the barbed-wire fencing, and that starts with a job. Haley was visiting the state Department of Employment and Workforce's "work ready initiative" at Manning. About 450 former inmates have completed the program since it launched in November 2014. The state agency says 98 report they're employed. Exact numbers are unknown. Inmates in the program learn a construction trade, gather computer and interview skills, craft a resume and apply for jobs online. The agency is asking employers to give ex-prisoners a chance. Nearly 200 businesses are on the "second chance" list. — AP

Title: **Haley highlights state efforts to help former prisoners find Jobs**
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Haley highlights state efforts to help former prisoners find jobs

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press

COLUMBIA

Gov. Nikki Haley told prisoners Monday a better life beyond the barbed-wire fencing starts with a legal job, and it's her job to help them find one.

"Every one of you deserves better. I don't know what got you in here, but I know you deserve not to come back," she told about 90 inmates at Manning Correctional Institution in Columbia, a pre-release center for men within six months of being released. "I want you to have a job so you've got something that makes you feel productive and worthy of living a good life."

Haley was visiting the state Department of Em-

ployment and Workforce's "work ready initiative" at Manning.

About 450 former inmates have completed the program since its launch in November 2014. According to the agency, 98

report they're currently employed. Exact numbers and where they work are

unknown.

But the agency plans to cross-match wage records to better track the program's

results.

The program is intended to be the link between

training for a job and actually landing one.

Inmates at Manning were already learning construction trades such as brick masonry and carpentry. The initiative added the teaching of computer, interview and "life" skills – such as proper attire and how to explain their incarceration. Inmates also craft a resume and apply for jobs online. Some inmates have been in prison so long, they don't know how to work a computer, said Department of Corrections Director Bryan Stirling.

"Before, they would still have job training, but we

would basically give them a bus ticket and drop them off at the bus station and have them fend for themselves," he said.

Only inmates imprisoned for non-violent offenses qualify for the program. Other criteria include having a discipline-free record, a GED or high-school diploma. Nearly 470 are currently enrolled.

The program is too new for Corrections to have a recidivism rate for participants.

But if an ex-offender gets a job, they're much less likely to commit

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PRISONERS

crimes for money, Stirling said.

The program is "good not only for these folks but for public safety," he said. "If they're working and busy, they won't get in trouble."

The employment agency is asking employers to give ex-prisoners a chance. So far, they've put 200 businesses on the "second chance" list. Incentives "to help employers feel more comfortable" include federal tax credits, a federal insur-

ance program and on-the-job training credits, said DEW Director Cheryl Stanton.

Of the roughly 900 inmates released from prisons statewide monthly, 100 of them leave from Manning, Stirling said.

While the program is limited, last month Corrections began registering every prisoner in DEW's database for job seekers as they're released, he said.

Haley said the program's still being devel-

oped, but the ultimate goal is that "every person who leaves the fence has a job" waiting for them.

"These are people who made bad decisions, but they aren't people we should throw away. These are people who deserve a better life. It's our job is to make sure we lift them up and give them life skills and training skills," she said. "This is about filling the needs of businesses and giving people second chances."

Title: **Haley highlights state efforts to help former prisoners find Jobs**
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Haley

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Haley highlights efforts to help former prisoners find jobs

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press
 COLUMBIA

Gov. Nikki Haley told prisoners Monday a better life beyond the barbed-wire fencing starts with a legal job, and it's her job to help them find one.

"Every one of you deserves better. I don't know what got you in here, but I know you deserve not to come back," she told about 90 inmates at Manning Correctional Institution in Columbia, a pre-release center for men within six months of being released. "I want you to have a job so you've got something that makes you feel productive and worthy of living a good life."

Haley was visiting the state Department of Employment and Workforce's "work ready initiative" at Manning.

About 450 former inmates have completed the program since its launch in November 2014. According to the agency, 98 report they're currently employed. Exact numbers and where they work are unknown. But the agency plans to cross-match wage records to better track the program's results.

The program is intended to be the link between training for a job and actually landing one.

Inmates at Manning were already learning construction trades such as brick masonry and carpentry. The initiative added the teaching of computer, interview and "life" skills — such as proper attire and how to explain their incarceration. Inmates also craft a resume and apply for jobs online. Some inmates have been in prison so long, they don't know how to work a computer, said Department of Corrections Director Bryan Stirling.

"Before, they would still have job training, but we would basically give them a bus ticket and drop them off at the bus station and have them fend for themselves," he said.

Only inmates imprisoned for non-violent offenses qualify for the program. Other criteria include having a discipline-free record and a GED or high-school diploma. Nearly 470 are currently enrolled.

The program is too new

for Corrections to have a recidivism rate for participants.

But if an ex-offender gets a job, they're much less likely to commit crimes for money, Stirling said.

The program is "good not only for these folks but for public safety," he said. "If they're working and busy, they won't get in trouble."

The employment agency is asking employers to give ex-prisoners a chance. So far, they've put 200 businesses on the "second chance" list. Incentives "to help employers feel more comfortable" include federal tax credits, a federal insurance program and on-the-job training credits, said DEW Director Cheryl Stanton.

Of the roughly 900 inmates released from prisons statewide monthly, 100 of them leave from Manning, Stirling said.

While the program is limited, last month Corrections began registering every prisoner in DEW's database for job seekers as they're released, he said.

Haley said the program's still being developed, but the ultimate goal is that "every person who leaves the fence has a job" waiting for them.

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SEANNA ADCOX AP

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley talks at Manning Correctional institution Monday in Columbia to inmates who are scheduled to be released.

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Haley to testify before Congress against moving detainees to SC

BY ANDREW SHAIN
ashain@thestate.com

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley will testify Thursday before the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee on the possibility of moving Guantanamo Bay detainees to a Navy brig outside Charleston.

Haley has opposed moving the 80 detainees, including accused terrorists, to the facility in Goose Creek, less than 20 miles northwest from one of the state's top tourist destinations.

"We're not going to allow that kind of character to come in," the governor said last year.

President Barack Obama has pledged to close the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, detainment camp during his campaign. His administration formalized plans to close Gitmo earlier this year, but the White House did not announce a new prison site. More than a dozen are under consideration.



S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley

Haley will speak about "state and local perspectives regarding the impact of transferring Guantanamo detainees to the homeland," according to the House committee.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, R-Laurens, is a member of the Homeland Security Committee and another critic of plans to move the detainees to the United States.

"No state should become a terrorist dumping ground, especially not South Carolina," he wrote in an op-ed column.