

From: Rep. Bill Taylor, SC House District 86 <bill@taylorschouse.com>
To: Adams, ChaneyChaneyAdams@gov.sc.gov
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Subject: Pure Baloney!

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Pure Baloney!

Dear Friends:

I've heard repeatedly from constituents they want SCDOT reformed before millions of additional dollars are sent to that agency to fix our state's roads. This week, the SC House of Representatives took decisive action to create real reform.

Too Much Political Drama

It wasn't easy. Gov. Haley insisted we rubber stamp the Senate's plan. Before our debate she took to social media and bashed the House for planning to amend the Senate proposal which she called "real, good reform". She went further to accuse House members of trying to kill reform.

My response is simple: "That's pure baloney!"

House Speaker Jay Lucas put it this way:

"The real shame is that Gov. Haley has chosen to put politics over policy and mislead the people of South Carolina. Sadly, instead of working with us to initiate real and meaningful reforms to fix our roads, Gov. Haley focuses on stopping progress with baseless political attacks."

The House last year passed a plan to increase the state's gas tax by the equivalent of 10 cents a gallon. The Senate waited nearly a year and changed that plan last month killing a gas-tax increase. Instead, the Senate proposed spending \$400 million a year from the state's general fund budget on roads. That's the money that pays for public education and all other government services.

Rep. Gary Simrill, who sponsored the gas tax proposal, said Tuesday the Senate plan failed to adequately provide for road repair.

"It is folly to make a promise to the people of South Carolina that roads will be fixed without a reliable, steady funding stream," he said. "The governor is now echoing these promises that she knows cannot be kept. That is the real shame."

House Passes Final Amendment to Roads Bill
Moves to the Senate for an up or down vote

The House had delayed action on the Senate amendments for several weeks until it received the findings of the [Legislative Audit Council report](#) which exposed insufficiencies within SCDOT. That year-

long investigation provided keen, independent insights into the operations of SCDOT that are invaluable in retooling that agency to meet the current road crisis and create an agency citizens can have confidence in for years to come. With those new revelations in front of us, the House could not in good faith pass the Senate amendment because it fell short of true reform.

With much debate this week, the House amended the Senate version of the roads bill ([H.3579](#)) by an overwhelming vote of 113-6. The legislative process exists so that the General Assembly can work together to move South Carolina forward, not provide opportunities for political grandstanding.

The House's amendment preserves qualifications and requirements for Highway Commissioners, solidifies the transparency of the State Infrastructure Bank, and removes irresponsible budgeting practices that threaten the stability of our economy.

Provisions in the House Amendment to [H. 3579](#)

- Highway Commissioners are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the General Assembly
- Commission appoints a Secretary of Transportation with advice and consent of the General Assembly, who then serves at the pleasure of the Commission to create a single line of authority from the Governor, to the Commission, to the Secretary.
- Eliminates the Joint Transportation Review Committee, but retains the required qualifications for Commissioners to ensure appointees have appropriate education and experience. These qualifications and requirements were removed in the Senate amendment.
- Adopts the State Infrastructure Bank language in the Senate version and requires the entity to follow SCDOT prioritization criteria for projects
- Removes the irresponsible \$400M general fund mandate because it is unreliable. This year's House passed budget appropriated \$415M additional funds to SCDOT, an amount larger than specified in the Senate amendment, and we will continue to give available funds to SCDOT in the future.
- Addresses the Legislative Audit Council's concerns expressed in report by placing the SCDOT Chief Internal Auditor under the independent State Auditor

Time for the Senate to Vote

It's now up to the Senate; they have the option of taking a vote or not taking a vote. A vote for concurrence would result in the bill's passage and sending it to the Governor's desk for signature. Nonoccurrence would result in the formation of a conference committee to hammer out differences. We obviously prefer a vote for concurrence, but welcome the idea of blending our two versions together. Regardless, the most important action is for the Senate to take a vote and bring us one step closer to fixing our roads.

At the end of the day, South Carolinians want progress on this issue and repairing our crumbling infrastructure starts with SCDOT reform.

I'm RUNNING

Filing has closed for the Primary Election to be held June 14. I am unopposed. I trust that is an indication that I continue to uphold my promise to be a "Strong Voice and Effective Leader" in my service to you at the Statehouse. I am deeply honored to service and appreciate your support.

[Click Here](#)

In your Service,

Bill Taylor

803-270-2012

Representative
South Carolina General
Assembly

Bill@taylorschouse.com

www.Taylorschouse.com

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Photo of the Week

You just never know who you will campaign.
bump into on the floor of the House of
Representatives. Clemson Coach Dabo
Swinney was at the Statehouse leading the
'Coaches Against Cancer'

Bill Taylor for SC House District 86, P.O. Box 2646, Aiken, SC 29801

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