



The Morning
News
Florence, SC
Circ. 35092
From Page:
1
1/8/2016
61050



¹⁴⁸ Haley: Changes being made to fight domestic violence in SC

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Progress is being made in South Carolina's fight against domestic violence, but more time is needed to study the problem and come up with ways to combat it, Gov. Nikki Haley said Thursday.

At a Statehouse news conference, Haley told reporters she has signed three new executive orders pertaining to the issue, which was a major topic during last year's legislative session. One would give the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force more time to continue finding ways to fight the problem.

Nationwide, South Carolina consistently ranks among the worst states per capita in women killed by men. A year ago, Haley created the task force to come up with systemic, cultural changes to combat the problem.

In August, the panel issued dozens of recommendations, including training more 911 operators, improving documentation of the crime scene and increasing the number of

shelters statewide.

Another order would direct Cabinet agencies to change human resources policies to provide more guidance on how to handle employees who may be affected by abuse, such as providing them with leave and available resources.

The third order requires Cabinet agencies that regularly screen people for benefits and other assistance to look for domestic violence signs.

In the session that ended last summer, legislators passed a law that increased penalties for domestic violence convictions and gave prosecutors more options for punishment.

On Thursday, flanked by prosecutors from across the state and other members of the task force, Haley said the panel is "going too good to stop" and needs more time past the Dec. 31, 2015, deadline originally set up in her order that created it.

Haley also said that her executive budget for the coming year would allocate funding to help combat the problem, including about \$19 million to fund new prosecutors to handle domestic violence cases, many of which are now prosecuted by law enforcement officers, who are often going up against privately funded attorneys on the defense side.

"I was mortified when I learned

See **VIOLENCE**, Page 3A



The Morning
News
Florence, SC
Circ. 35092
From Page:
3
1/8/2016
61050



Violence

From Page 1A

that it was law enforcement who were prosecuting these cases," Haley said.

Several professional licensing boards in the state have committed to include domestic violence training in their continuing education courses, Haley said.

Title: **Changes for DOT finally to Senate**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 44.95 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Changes for DOT finally to Senate

Bill can pave way to roads
funding, committee hopes

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

COLUMBIA - Senate debate on a road-funding bill is a step closer after a committee sent to the floor a bill that would give the governor the power to appoint all the state's highway commissioners.

The 9-6 vote by the Senate Transportation Committee Thursday was the first time in two years the panel has approved a bill on the contentious issue and it came despite opposition from some of its most powerful members, who agreed afterward the bill was a means of breaking a stalemate on road funding.

"It's a vehicle," said Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler of Gaffney, who wants the governor to have appointment power but had problems with the bill. "It's an empty vehicle but it's a vehicle."

Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Larry Grooms also voted against the bill because of problems he had with it. But he said it will enable the Senate to start a debate on fixing the state's roads and bridges.

"I believe the action today will advance an overall roads bill," he said.

The issue of restructuring the board of the state Department of Transportation was tied to road funding a year ago by Gov. Nikki Haley, who told lawmakers then that she would support raising the state's gas tax by 10 cents per gallon but only if they also scrapped the present system of picking highway commissioners and reduced the state's income

tax.

Currently, legislative delegations elect seven of DOT's board members, one from each congressional district. The governor appoints an at-large commissioner. The governor also appoints the state secretary of transportation.

Haley has threatened to veto any road-funding bill that does not contain tax relief and restructuring.

The House last year passed a bill to give the governor the power to appoint highway commissioners, to provide some modest tax relief and to raise about \$400 million annually in taxes and fees.

But the Senate never voted on a roads bill, in part because the Senate bill on the calendar only raised revenue and Republicans wanted both tax relief and restructuring.

This week, the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, began debating a tax relief plan.

The chore of restructuring fell to Grooms' committee, which has labored over the issue multiple times over the past two years without agreement.

A subcommittee Thursday recommended a plan for the governor to appoint commissioners from each of DOT's seven maintenance districts. The commissioners would then elect

See ROADS, Page 4A

Title: **Changes for DOT finally to Senate**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 44.95 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

Roads

Continued from Page 1A

the DOT leader.

But various senators voiced problems with that plan. Some wanted the commissioners to come from regional council of government areas.

Sen. Chip Campsen, a Charleston Republican, proposed the appointments come from no districts to keep commissioners from focusing so much on one area of the state. Otherwise, he said, the Legislature is signaling to commissioners that it is OK to focus on their regions instead of as the state as a whole.

"There is no good solution when you start divvying up the state," he said.

After Peeler suggested the committee be polled on the issue of whether they favored the governor appointing commissioners, what he considered the first hurdle, Leatherman proposed an amendment that would allow the governor to appoint commissioners after

each COG recommended three names. Each commissioner would be screened by a legislative panel as they are now and confirmed through the Senate.

The 10-person board would then select DOT's leader. Leatherman's amendment proposed commissioners serve a maximum of 12 years. But the panel changed that number to six years.

Peeler suggested a five-person board, with two COGs each recommending three names to the governor but Grooms said he did not know how two COGs would agree on three names.

Grooms said under the plan that passed, the Greenville COG, which contains 25 percent of the state's population, would only get one commissioner.

In the end, Leatherman's plan passed 9-6.

Also Thursday, the Senate confirmed Christy Hall as DOT's permanent transportation secretary.

Title: **2015 was difficult for South Carolina farmers**

Author:

Size: 17.36 square inch

Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



2015 was difficult for South Carolina farmers

As a retired Clemson agronomist, I've watched with sadness the reports of crop losses in South Carolina from last fall's October flood. A farmer friend from Sumter County told me he couldn't harvest any of his soybeans due to wet fields, even after flood waters subsided. This was after he lost his corn crop to a severe summer drought. Most cotton and peanut farmers in the coastal plain watched their crops rot in fields, too wet to support harvesters. Estimates of crop losses now exceed \$350 million.

Of course, the general public and non-agricultural businesses also suffered badly in affected areas, but the tragedy with agriculture is that there was little in the way of a safety net available. Federal crop insurance is available, but it's expensive. Thus, few farmers buy enough to even cover planting costs. Federal loans exist, but farmers have to show that bank loans are not available, and they must have an approved repayment plan (this sounds difficult if you've just suffered a financial tragedy).

Gov. Nikki Haley has offered little more than lip service, saying that like small businesses, farmers should have gotten more insurance. And in her State of State address, she didn't even mention the plight of farmers, who suffered mightily. The

Legislature is discussing this subject, but the state's roads and bridges appear to have the highest priority for funding.

Clemson University Extension Service and the South Carolina Department of Agriculture are offering assistance, especially as planting season approaches. However, lots of farmers will not survive and thus will be liquidating many or all of their assets.

For the state's largest industry – agriculture –2015 was a disastrous year.

Jim Palmer
Clemson

Title: **State senators unveil tax relief plan for roads bill**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 56.42 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



State senators unveil tax relief plan for roads bill

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

COLUMBIA - Senators are considering a tax relief plan that would offer a little something for most in the state to help grease the wheels of a road-funding bill that stymied senators last year.

Sen. Ray Cleary, a Murrell's Inlet Republican and Sen. Joel Lourie, a Columbia Democrat, unveiled a proposal Tuesday before the Senate Finance Committee that would provide about \$400 million in annual tax relief through a combination of income tax cuts, expanded tax brackets, tax relief for businesses and even a state earned income tax credit that would help poor working South Carolinians compensate for an increase in the gas tax.

The committee is now hoping the Sen-

ate Transportation Committee can reach a compromise on the issue of restructuring the state Department of Transportation, the third component Senate GOP leaders say is needed for any roads bill to pass.

"This baby is a triplet," Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler said. "It's got to have reform, it's got to have revenue and it's got to have relief. For us to take these babies from the nursery, you've got to have those three triplets in the stroller."

The plan being discussed would eventually send \$750 million to roads by year five, a combination of a 12-cent-per-gallon increase in the gas tax phased in over three years, an increase in the sales tax

fee paid on vehicles, and increases in driver's license and vehicle registration fees, as well as out-of-state trucker fees.

The gas tax would be indexed for inflation.

That would still fall short of the \$1.2 billion a year in additional money DOT says it would need to completely address all existing road and bridge needs. But it would be more than the \$400 million per year proposed by Gov. Nikki Haley.

It was Haley who a year ago tied the issues together, saying she would accept a 10-cent-per-gallon increase in the gas tax if lawmakers passed an income tax

See RELIEF, Page 8A

Title: **State senators unveil tax relief plan for roads bill**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 56.42 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

Relief

Continued from Page 1A

cut and also changed the way highway commissioners are chosen.

The House passed a roads bill this past year but proposals stalled in the Senate.

The tax relief plan discussed Tuesday would mostly come in the form of individual income tax savings, at an average of \$149 per taxpayer.

The proposal would combine a reduced rate with expanded tax brackets to offer savings for all those with tax liability.

For instance, instead of beginning to tax those with taxable income of \$2,920, the reform plan would start the bottom bracket at \$3,710. The top bracket would move from \$14,600 to \$18,550.

The savings would range from \$42 for those with taxable incomes of \$5,000-\$10,000 per year to \$12,000 for those with taxable incomes of \$2 million or more.

For the 107,000 with taxable incomes of between \$40,000 and \$50,000, the savings would amount to \$191.

The plan also would adjust the tax credits for two-wage earner families, providing a maximum credit of \$315, up from \$210; increase the refundable tax credits for college tuition to \$1,500 and create a state earned income tax credit, which would average \$85 for an estimated 515,000 workers who are

eligible in the state.

But that part of the plan is causing heartburn for some Republicans, who say they have a hard time sending money to people who pay no income tax. Peeler called it a "pinchpoint," saying he wasn't closed to the idea but also wanted supporters to look for alternatives.

"Eighty dollars to someone making \$8,000 a year, man it's the difference between eating one day or not," Lourie said. "Why would that be a sticking point?"

Sen. Darrell Jackson, a Columbia Democrat, said the idea was to offer something to the working poor who would not benefit from tax relief, since they would pay proportionately more for any gas tax increase. He reminded Republicans that his constituents are not asking for tax relief but for their roads to be fixed.

For businesses, the plan would reduce the business personal property tax from 10.5 percent to an effective rate of 9.5 percent, saving \$32 million by year four. It would also reduce the manufacturing assessment ratio from 10.5 percent to an effective rate of 8.5 percent, for a savings of \$52 million by year four.

Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, who also chairs the Senate Finance Committee, said he wants the committee to take the tax relief plan and any restructuring plan and add them to the road-funding

bill now up for debate to give the Senate a starting point and get debate underway.

"Is it what I want?" Leatherman asked of the tax-relief plan. "No, absolutely not. But I think we've got to get a starting point, get on the floor of the Senate."

Lourie, who is not running for re-election, pleaded with his colleagues to work toward agreement.

"If we're going to get a roads bill, we've got to come together and start building a nucleus of consensus," he said. "If this is not right, tell us what is."

Sen. Tom Davis, a Beaufort Republican who last year blocked consideration of a roads bill because he said he wanted to see reforms to DOT and the state Transportation Infrastructure Bank, said the committee had not discussed the possibility of using any of the state's \$1.3 billion in surplus revenue this year toward roads.

People, he told the committee, are going to want to know why the new money is not going to fix the roads "and we're going to have that discussion."

Sen. Wes Hayes, a Rock Hill Republican, argued that because \$250 million of tax relief would come in the first year, that amount would come from the new money, an indirect way of paying for roads with some of the new money.

"We're taking a third of our growth and giving it back to taxpayers," he said.

Title: Gov. Haley urges civility, challenges lawmakers in State of State address
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 78.27 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Gov. Haley urges civility, challenges lawmakers in State of State address

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

COLUMBIA - Gov. Nikki Haley broke down in tears recalling the shooting of nine people at a Charleston church last year as she challenged a joint assembly of legislators Wednesday evening to act worthy of the greatness she said South Carolinians showed in 2015.

Haley asked lawmakers to dedicate bond money for poor schools, to agree to a roads plan, finally pass ethics reform and supply more prosecutors so law enforcement officers no longer have to handle cases of domestic violence in court.

In her sixth State of the State speech, Haley recalled last year's string of tragedies that drew national attention, including the murders of eight black parishioners and their pastor, Sen. Clementa Pinckney, the shooting death of an unarmed and fleeing black man by a North Charleston police officer and massive flooding that killed 17 people, as challenges that left South Carolina "bent but not broken."

"We are a different South Carolina than we were one year ago," she said. "Of that there can be no doubt. A place, a people, cannot go through what we have gone through and not come out changed on the other side. The questions we in this room must ask ourselves are: What does that mean? What do we do with it? My hope is that we follow the example set by those around us."

County: Greenville

Near the end of her speech, Haley's voice cracked as she asked lawmakers to recognize two survivors of the Emanuel 9 shooting who were in the balcony.

"Just as the nine we lost inform my belief that angels must exist in heaven, these two women, and the precious little one who was with them that night, are proof that we have angels living here on Earth," she said after pausing through tears.

The youngest governor in the nation who celebrated her 44th birthday Wednesday, Haley delivered the GOP address following President Barack Obama's State of the Union speech last week. She continued her plea for more civil political discourse Wednesday night.

"The building we sit in invites disagreement," Haley said. "That is a good thing, a healthy thing — we should not pretend to all believe the same things nor should we be silent about where and when we differ. But disagreement does not have to mean division. Honest policy differences do not need to morph into personal dislike, distrust, and disillusion."

On the issue of domestic violence, Haley said the state ranks at the top of the nation in the percentage of women killed by men.

"Domestic violence is an issue that has plagued us for far too long," she said. "Tonight, I say it will plague us to that extent no

more."

Survivors, she said, "need to know we have their backs" by ending the practice of law enforcement officers prosecuting domestic violence cases in court, one of only three states that allow such a practice.

"No survivor deserves to show up in court and see a legally untrained po-

lice officer arguing his or her side, while a highly paid defense lawyer argues on behalf of the abuser," she said. "If you join me, in South Carolina, no survivor ever will again."

Haley in her executive budget has asked for funding for 144 prosecutors to take the place of police in courts for such cases.

On the issue of education, Haley asked lawmakers to pass legislation asking voters to decide if the state education superintendent should be appointed by the governor, instead of elected, as is now done.

She asked for support of measures to provide incentives for teachers to locate and stay in rural districts, including covering the full cost of a college education for any student who agrees to teach in a challenged district for eight years, repaying student loans for recent graduates who agree to the same commitment and covering the cost of graduate courses for career educators teaching in challenged districts.

"Children deserve to

know that teachers believe in them enough to stay," she said. "We have to slow this revolving door. I know we can, and now, I know we will."

She also asked lawmakers to permanently dedicate 1 percent of the state's bond capacity for new K-12 school facilities. In proposing using bonds for K-12 schools, she said she does not support borrowing for new buildings in the state's "bloated" higher education system.

"No one can look at the tuition hikes parents and students have seen over the last decade and tell me that higher education doesn't have enough money," she said. "And no one can drive the campuses of Clemson, South Carolina, and so many others, see the brand new facilities and massive new construction projects, and tell me that they represent our greatest need."

The K-12 facilities borrowing would not go to all school districts and the districts could not determine if they qualified, she said. Projects also would come with standards so that projects could not "break the bank or waste millions of dollars."

On roads, Haley repeated her plan she unveiled a year ago to lawmakers that she would support an increase in the state's gas tax of 10 cents per gallon, if lawmakers changed the current system of legislators electing highway commissioners and if they also approved

Title: **Gov. Haley urges civility, challenges lawmakers in State of State address**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 78.27 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

an income tax cut.

"Pass legislation that cuts our taxes, reforms our flawed transportation system, and invests in our roads, and I will sign it," she said. "Pass legislation that does not do all three of those things, and I will veto it. The choice is clear, and it's all yours."

Haley added that her executive budget pays for this year's tax cut with surplus revenue and said enough new revenue would come in next year to do the same.

On ethics reform, Haley said her remarks were directed only to the Senate, which has not passed reforms.

She asked senators who favored income disclosure to stand and then asked senators to stand or remain standing if they also favored "true" independent investigations of legislators. She said the exercise gave the public an idea of what a vote might look like.

The Democratic response to the speech was delivered by Rep. Mandy Powers Norrell of Lancaster, who noted that like Haley she grew up in rural South Carolina but she had a different view of the state.

"Are you proud of our public education sys-

tem?" she asked. "Are you satisfied with the condition of our roads and bridges? Are you confident that if you got sick, you could afford the treatment? In the past 25 years, our state has declined in almost every category. We've been duped."

Norrell said Republicans have held majorities in the Legislature, and held almost all statewide offices in that time but education has been underfunded, the state's roads have deteriorated and healthcare has become an issue.

She charged that Haley "turned her back" on the

state's farmers damaged by the floods by refusing to seek federal supplemental aid beyond loan programs and existing disaster relief. Haley has said she did not want to treat farmers any different than any other small business that was not adequately insured.

"For a generation, we have continued to elect the party that refused federal health care funds, that underfunds public education, and that refuses to address our crumbling roads and bridges," she said.



SEAN RAYFORD/AP

Gov. Nikki Haley delivers the State of the State address.

Title: **BACK IN CONGRESS**
 Author: By COLIN RIDDLE criddle@indexjournal.com
 Size: 114.08 square inch
 Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494

BACK IN CONGRESS

Flooding, roads major issues going into legislative session

By COLIN RIDDLE

criddle@indexjournal.com

As lawmakers return to Columbia this week, a number of issues will be looming when each chamber convenes at noon Tuesday for the next legislative session.

A top issue will be earmarking funds for the state's infrastructure, whether stressed from age or the recent flooding that devastated much of Columbia and the Midlands as a whole.

Flooding, roads

"The big issues are going to be the flooding, and we may exacerbate that issue," said state Rep. Mike Pitts, R-Laurens. "I think how we proceed in dealing with the devastation of the flood will be one of the largest issues that the state deals with this year."

Pitts' fight will come on behalf of farmers, who were affected and lost much of their harvest in October's historic flooding.

Pitts said he wants to make sure the state provides farmers relief for what flood insurance does not cover, since federal law only allows up to 60-percent coverage.

Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brian White, R-Anderson, is drafting the Palmetto Farm Aid bill to address those concerns, according to Pitts.

Pitts said Gov. Nikki Haley will likely veto the bill if passed because she thinks flood insurance

should cover up to 100 percent of losses and the U.S. Congress will likely take up that issue.

The issue of the state's dilapidated roads, which carries over from last year's session, will likely tie into the flood debate, Pitts said.

"Those two issues, with it being an election year, could

dominate the entire session," Pitts said.

State Rep. Craig Gagnon, R-Abbeville, warned against impulsive action.

"You don't want to enact laws that are knee jerk for something that only occurs every 1,000 years, but you want to make sure people are safe and you have policies in place that make

sense," Gagnon said.

He gave the example of possible legislation in response to the number of dams that failed during the flood, which caused more damage and led to more flooding.

The Legislature can't make a blanket statement for all dams, Gagnon said, and some, such as farmers with dams on small ponds, need exemptions.

"You have intentions of making things safer for people, but you have unintended consequences," Gagnon said.

The roads bill passed last session in the House but stalled in the Senate, largely because of state Sen. Tom Davis' filibuster.

"Certainly if the Senate does not pass it, we need to go back and find something that has more support with the Senate," Gagnon said.

Pitts said he has heard from Republicans and Democrats, who would like to use federal money to pay for repairs to roads damaged by flooding and state funds for improvements to those roads.

Instead of putting Band-Aids on, the state could begin the process of absolute repair, he said.

However, the question remains how much or how little the federal government will cover, according to Pitts.

Refugees

Pitts said the Legislature will likely debate whether to block Middle East refugees from being settled in the state by the federal government.

"It's an election year, and that's one of the hottest topics out there," Pitts said.



Title: **BACK IN CONGRESS**
 Author: By COLIN RIDDLE criddle@indexjournal.com
 Size: 114.08 square inch
 Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494

Pitts said the biggest issue is the federal government not having a proper, full-proof vetting system for refugees.

However, there are certain refugees he would not want to keep from resettlement, such as those who help American soldiers.

See **LEGISLATIVE**, page 4A

LEGISLATIVE

Continued from 1A

Gagnon said he has little confidence in the state's authority to block refugees since it is a federal program and issue.

"We can't block them, but what we can do is prevent the state from spending any funds and put the entire burden on the feds, where it should be," Pitts said.

State departments

The state Legislature will have eyes on two state departments this session — the Department of Social Services

and the Department of Education.

Pitts said a task force is looking into how efficiently DSS operates and whether the department is overstepping or abusing its authority.

DSS has been the center of controversy, including litigation and instances where children died after DSS involvement.

He said the task force has been charged with determining if DSS is accomplishing its mission in protecting vulnerable people.

Gagnon said the educa-

tion committees and the Department of Education are regularly meeting to create a workable plan to satisfy the state Supreme Court's ruling on Abbeville County School District v. State of South Carolina, which determined the state had failed to provide an adequate education to students in rural schools.

"I certainly think there will be some major changes budget wise and the school system," Gagnon said. "The state Supreme Court gave us no direction, so they are doing the best they can."

Gun laws

What has charged headlines most recently is President Barack Obama's executive action to overhaul background and mental health checks in an effort to curb gun violence.

A number of bills have been prefiled in the state Legislature, which Gagnon said are likely to sit tight in committee.

"Gun control will likely be passed over. All (bills) are hastily put together and are not put together well,"



**MIKE
PITTS**



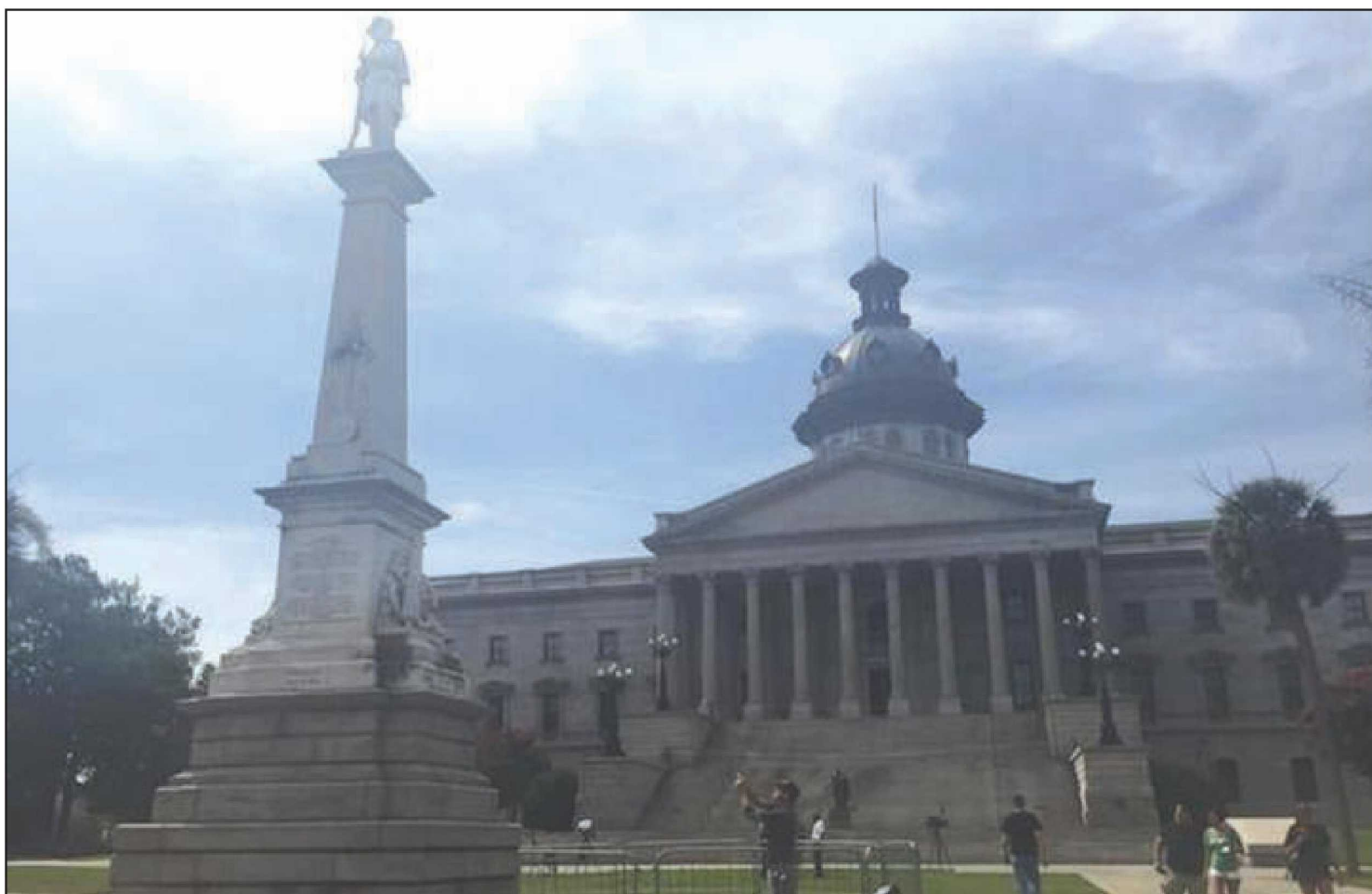
**CRAIG
GAGNON**

Title: **BACK IN CONGRESS**

Author: By COLIN RIDDLE criddle@indexjournal.com

Size: 114.08 square inch

Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

People visit the statehouse in Columbia. Lawmakers return this week to address multiple issues facing South Carolina.

Lexington
County
Chronicle
Lexington, SC
Circ. 5652
From Page:
5
1/14/2016
67264



- 148

PHOTOS BY TERRY WARD | CHRONICLE

U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio are seen on stage at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center on Jan. 9 as part of the Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity.

Protesters ejected from Republican forum at convention center

BY TERRY WARD
lexchront@yahoo.com

"We're on the wrong track," said U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan.

As almost 66% of Americans agree, Republicans are voicing that sentiment in the 2016 presidential election.

Republicans vying to be the party's presidential nominee were at the The Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center Saturday.

Promoting school choice, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) said education is one key to improving lives.

"Poor people are condemned to send their children to poor schools," Rubio said.

Protesters favoring lenient immigration interrupted Rubio five times and were removed from the convention center.

"He wants to deport our families," one said.

Rubio has been called a pro amnesty for illegal aliens candidate.

But he said: "We're going to follow the immigration law."

His response to the protester drew loud applause.

The forum, moderated by Ryan and U.S. Sen Tim Scott, R-SC, featured six presidential candidates. Their focus, according to forum literature, was fighting poverty and expanding opportunity.

Gov. Nikki Haley said 25,000 jobs have been filled in the state by combining job training efforts with welfare operations to get people off of assistance and back to work.

U.S. Sen Lindsay Graham, R-SC, said he'd cross the aisle.

"If it takes me working with a Democrat to get jobs, I will do my part," Graham said.

Near the end of the forum MSNBC Morning Joe hosts Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough were on stage.

"From what I've heard here today, this is a Republican Party that could take the White House in the next election," Brzezinski said.

Florida Governor Jeb Bush, retired neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and business leader Carly Fiorina also participated.



MSNBC Morning Joe hosts Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough are seen on stage with U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan during the Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity.



Lexington
County
Chronicle
Lexington, SC
Circ. 5652
From Page:
5
1/14/2016
67264





Lexington
County
Chronicle
Lexington, SC
Circ. 5652
From Page:
1
1/14/2016
67264



¹⁴⁸S.C. legislators express optimism on roads plan

BY HAL MILLARD

halmillard@gmail.com

Here we go again?

A bipartisan panel of S.C. legislators said last week they remain confident the state's General Assembly can reach a consensus on a plan to address the state's crumbling roads and bridges this legislative session.

The lawmakers, however, said the same thing last year before a plan to raise the state's gas tax and other measures to address roads died in a filibuster by Republican Beaufort Sen. Tom Davis. The gas tax, seen by many as the best option to create a sustainable funding source for road repairs and construction, stands at 16.75 cents per gallon and has not been raised since 1987.

While South Carolina has dithered, at least 15 other states have raised gas taxes or other fees for roads since 2013. The state needs upwards of \$40 billion over the next 25 years simply to bring the state's transportation infrastructure up to par.

As the legislature planned to get back to work Jan. 12, Davis told a gathering of journalists last week that he is optimistic a plan can be ready and passed by the end of next month. However, fellow GOP Sen. Harvey Peeler cautioned a plan might be passed before the legislative session ends in June.

Complicating matters are a full slate of upcoming elections in both the House and Senate, questions over how to allocate a \$1.3 billion, one-time surplus, flood relief funding, and debate over a roads plan that likely would entail a major restructuring of the state Department of

Transportation and state income tax relief tied to any gas tax increase.

That same bundling of priorities helped doom the roads plan in the last legislative session.

Davis said he could support a gas tax increase this session, but only if DOT restructuring is part of the final plan.

"I think in order to get to any rational discussion about the gas tax you've got to correct the expenditure process, you've got to have DOT accountable directly to the governor and you've got to rein those guys in," Davis said.

Gov. Nikki Haley said last session she would veto any gas tax increase that does not also include a plan to cut income taxes. Meanwhile, many in the legislature, particularly Democrats, have argued that income tax relief and DOT restructuring should be considered separately from a gas tax increase.

Whatever the debate brings, it's time for state lawmakers to finally act.

"Infrastructure has been a major need and a major concern for the 15 years I've been in the State House, and we're probably a good two decades behind in our infrastructure plan overall," said Lexington County delegation member Rep. Kenny Bingham of Cayce.

"We've got to move forward. The need is now obvious," Bingham said. "And since the need is obvious, the General Assembly is bound to take action on that need. You're not going to have a booming economy unless you have the infrastructure. It is the absolute bread and butter of what we have to do and what we must do as a state."



Columbia Star
Columbia, SC
Circ. 775
From Page:
11
1/15/2016
67102



• CHURCH/CHARITY

148
Interfaith Partners of South Carolina announced the launch of **S.C. Interfaith Harmony Month (January)** December 29, State House Rotunda. During the month of January, many congregations and religious groups will hold special events and services during which they will welcome people who are not members of their group to visit, including Teen Interfaith Service Weekend, Saturday, January 16; Baha'i' Open Service, Sunday, January 17; I Shall Not Be Silent Film, Monday, January 18; Facing Fear in Our Houses of Worship, Tuesday, January 19; Native American Winter Storytelling, Wednesday, January 20; Stories of the Prophets From the Holy Qu'ran, Friday, January 22; Musical Shabbat Worship, Friday, January 22; Tree of Life Congregation 120th Anniversary Concert, Saturday, January 23; Opening Season of a Season For Non-Violence, Saturday, January 30; 2016-The Year For Interfaith, monthly starting Sunday, January 31; USC Methodist Student Network program, Sunday, January 31; Dances of Universal Peace, Friday, February 5; and Lights of Nut Pagan Ceremony, Sunday, February 7. For the fourth year in a row, Governor Nikki R. Haley has declared January to be South Carolina Interfaith Harmony Month. Interfaith Partners will host a special presentation on Tuesday, January 19 called "Facing Fear in Our Houses of Worship." 798-8007.



Chapin Times
Chapin, SC
Circ. 1971
From Page:
1
1/14/2016
67081



¹⁴⁸ Gov. Nikki Haley announces statewide Domestic Violence Reform

*Gov. Haley Was Joined By
Members Of The S.C. Domestic
Violence Task Force And Solicitors
From Around The State*

Governor Nikki Haley, members of the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force, and solicitors from around the state held a Statehouse press conference on Thursday, Jan. 7th announcing the implementation of the first set of significant, statewide reforms to address domestic violence in South Carolina.

Less than a year after the Task Force presented her with recommendations, Governor Haley announced that 10 of those recommendations have been addressed through a combination of Executive Orders, the governor's Executive Budget, and agreements with state boards and non-government associations.

Actions taken by Governor

Haley and the S.C. Task Force:

- Governor Haley announced that her Executive Budget for 2016-2017 will fund new prosecutors, new judges, and new public defenders to end the practice of law enforcement officers prosecuting domestic violence

crimes in the courtroom, which will also reduce caseloads, decrease backlogs, and ensure that a dedicated prosecutor is assigned to every county in South Carolina.

- Executive Order 2016-02 – extends the Task Force to ensure that all 50 Task Force recommendations will be completed and that meaningful results are rendered for the people of South Carolina.

- Executive Order 2016-03 – orders that all Cabinet agencies adopt a comprehensive HR policy for domestic violence that includes

(Con't. on page 3)





Chapin Times
Chapin, SC
Circ. 1971
From Page:
3
1/14/2016
67081



THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2016, THE CHAPIN TIMES -

Gov. Nikki Haley announces statewide Domestic Violence Reform

(Con't. from page 1)

procedures for confidentiality, safety and security, performance and leave, and educating employees regarding available resources.

- Executive Order 2016-04 – orders certain Cabinet agencies that offer direct client services to adopt a risk assessment screening policy for domestic violence.

- The Task Force has received commitments from nine professional boards to include domestic violence training in their continuing education: Doctors, Nurses, Dentists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Cosmetologists, and Counselors

and Therapists.

- The Task Force has created a one-page regional brochure to be printed from LLR's website for those professional boards to distribute and make available in offices in all parts of the state.

- The Task Force has created a standardized reporting form for local governments to use when sending their annual report to the Treasurer's Office of how criminal fines and fees are spent on victim services.

Additional information about the S.C. Domestic Violence Task Force can be found on Governor Haley's website.