

Title: **Howto holdagovernor accountablefor education**
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CINDI ROSS SCOPPE • ASSOCIATE EDITOR • THE STATE

How to hold a governor accountable for education

SENATORS listened respectfully Thursday as the head of the S.C. Education Association told them that the idea of letting the governor appoint the director of the state Education Department was “a distraction.”

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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the rigors of campaigning in order to run for the job.

But for all the logic and practicality from supporters, opponents of this change have a powerful weapon of their own: hyperbole.

“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.

Which means we must be off to the Gulag in the vast majority of the states, since either the

(elected) governor appoints the education superintendent or the superintendent is selected by the state board of education — which is appointed by the (elected) governor.

Ms. Scoppe can be reached at cscoppe@thestate.com or at (803) 771-8571.

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BUT FOR ALL

THE LOGIC AND PRACTICALITY FROM SUPPORTERS, OPPONENTS HAVE A POWERFUL WEAPON OF THEIR OWN: HYPERBOLE.



Title: **Haley's UN confirmation on tap as McMaster waits**
 Author: BY JAMIE SELF jself@thestate.com
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S.C. GOVERNOR

Haley's UN confirmation on tap as McMaster waits

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 secession game in the state Senate.

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.

FROM PAGE 1A

HALEY

apartment in New York City. The official residence of the U.N. ambassador is a suite in the prestigious 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 – state Sen. Hugh

ment.



Haley

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

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.

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.

In her new job, 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

SEE HALEY, 10A

Leatherman, R-Florence – does not want to become lieutenant governor, a largely ceremonial post that oversees the state's Office on Aging.

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 state 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 remaining 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.

Reporter Matthew Schofield of McClatchy contributed.

Jamie Self: 803-771-8658, @jamiemself

Title: **Well, well**
 Author:
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not been good enough. That is no secret to anyone inside or out of this chamber. We simply haven't done enough to prepare S.C.'s children for the future."

OK Ms. Ambassador, very well said. I do agree, but.

I just hung up from Rep. Wendell Gilliard and we both asked each other the same question. Where the were you a year ago?

Let's get it straight without any dirty politics.

Raising the dropout age to 18 in S.C. is not the cure-all for what our governor is talking about, but it surely goes a long way in preparing more of S.C.'s children for their future. For all the educators who are saying we don't need more trouble makers in our schools, I say, stop the stereotyping and offer more hands-on training to all our students not just at-risk students.

We worked hard last year to try and fix a gap in our education system. What we got back was a bunch of dirty politics. But, we came close.

Well, thank you Governor Haley and President Obama, your State Of The State and State Of The Union speeches got me back in for another shot at improving our schools throughout our great state of South Carolina.

This time, I have more experience when dealing with dirty politics and more motivation knowing that our highly respected former governor is encouraging all of us to improve our public education system.

Looking forward to this exciting challenge.

Any doubters this time?

Mark Epstein

Mount Pleasant

Well, well

Just when I started enjoying my retirement by playing golf and traveling a little bit, Ambassador Haley reignites my fuse.

During our outgoing Governor's State Of The State Address last Wednesday Nikki Haley announces that: "for as long as most of us can remember, our public schools have

Title: **Goodbye Nikki, Hello Henry: S.C. Ready For a Governor Swap**
 Author: By Andy Shain Photos by Grace Beahm
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Goodbye Nikki, Hello Henry: S.C. Ready For a Governor Swap

Goodbye Nikki

By Andy Shain

Photos by Grace Beahm

With Donald Trump giving South Carolina a new governor as early as next week, it's time to see what the state is getting by trading Gov. Nikki Haley, a young national political star who is a daughter of Indian immigrants, for Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, a Trump supporter who is a longtime GOP party leader.

Haley, slated to become Trump's United Nations ambassador, became a popular governor with job announcements and catchphrases. But her accomplishments came with catches.

Her Great Act Revisited

How will history treat Haley? South Carolina's first female and first minority governor helped bring major employers to the state after the recession. She convinced lawmakers to spend more on education and share more information with the public about how they make money.

The governor that a news magazine called "The Face of the New South" also turned away Medicaid expansion under the new

federal health care law and refused to aid farmers for their losses after a historic flood.

Haley also became renowned for her deft handling of crises, including ice storms,

hurricanes and a shooting that became part of the national debate on racial conduct by police. But the act that generated much of her praise and fame came after the worst crisis of all.

Haley called for removing the Confederate flag from the State House grounds days after a white supremacist shot a pastor and eight of his parishioners at a historic Charleston African-American church in 2015.

Her view evolved after the shooting and contradicted a comment she made during an election debate months earlier when she insisted the flag was a non-issue because CEOs eyeing the state had not complained about the Civil War banner.

Asked why she didn't publicly object to the flag in the years before Dylann Roof entered Emanuel AME Church, Haley said she was focused on repairing South Carolina's recession-damaged economy. Removing the Confederate flag at the State House, an eyesore to South Carolina's image, came up occasionally but lawmakers did not want a repeat of the harsh battle from 2000 that moved to the flag off the State House dome.

"It was too hurtful. It was too divisive," she told a reporter during a tearful interview after the shooting. "They didn't want to revisit [it]."

Legislators were willing to take down the flag after the church shooting, which took the life of a state senator, but not without some of that divisiveness Haley was warned

about.

Some lawmakers protested removing the flag, especially so quickly after such an emotional event. They had their say.

The flag came down but not without a statement from the House Speaker Jay Lucas a week later saying he would not allow debate over removing other divisive historic symbols in the state "throughout the remainder of my time as speaker."

Haley agreed. The State House Confederate flag was it. The state needed to heal.

"Monuments in themselves are somewhat museums. Flags are considered living and breathing," she said two weeks after the shooting but weeks before the flag was removed. "That's the reason why the Confederate flag is something — that if it's flying — that represents the people, and the State House is supposed to be for all people."

Friend or Foe

McMaster's move across the State House first-floor lobby will end 14 years of having governors who relished fighting with lawmakers on the second floor. Haley's defiance came after two terms of Mark Sanford, who famously sparred with legislators every chance he got.

Haley would attack lawmakers who opposed her, trying to shame them in news conferences and Facebook posts.

While Haley was a bit more friendly with the General Assembly than her one-time

continues on page 12

January 18-25, 2017

Nikki, continued from page 10



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mentor Sanford, how much she moved the needle in reforming state government is debatable.

She won some additional funding for rural schools (using a post-recession bump in tax revenue) but hardly enough to fix decades of inequities with more well-off districts. She points to streamlining government administration, but government purchasing remains outside the control of a new cabinet agency.

She lauds how lawmakers must now reveal more of their and their families' sources of

income, but legislators essentially are still policing themselves.

She failed to win meaningful reform in oversight of the Department of Transportation. And then she tried to oust entrenched lawmakers who opposed her without much success.

Half wins are better than none at all. She said she used her voice the best she knew how. But lawmakers keep talking about how they are already looking forward to a more friendly relationship with McMaster. Haley

said she doesn't care.

"[M]y job was never to make best friends with the legislators upstairs," she said last week. "My job was to make sure that I showed them the vision of what a South Carolina that was strong economically successful would look like."

What will be interesting to watch is whether a more collaborative governor could get more accomplished — or just end up bending to the will of the second floor.

It's a Great Day in S.C., Really?

Nikki Haley's catchphrase, "It's a Great Day in South Carolina," the one she had cabinet agencies use to greet callers, was considered as a possible slogan placed on the state's new license plates.

But in her exit interview with S.C. reporters last week, Haley took no responsibility for failures at agencies under her control.

Instead, she praised changes made after problems cropped up. The state's child-welfare agency had a spate of kids dying despite contact with caseworkers. More than 50 state-regulated dams burst after a major 2015 storm. Inmate riots rocked the state's juvenile criminal agency. And hackers stole millions of taxpayers' financial information from the state tax department.

The state added money, staff and new procedures after each failure. "I focused on how we can make it better," Haley said. "That's all you can do."

But is governing by crisis really governing? Shouldn't the agency directors chosen by the governor work to fix problems before they fester into trouble?

Crises will always happen, but perhaps future governors can learn from the overburdened caseworkers, underpaid guards and lack of oversight so they won't have to learn lessons the hard way. **F**

Let us know what you think: Email editor@free-times.com.

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X Tale of Two Governors

Nikki Haley

Henry McMaster

44	AGE	69
Bamberg	HOMETOWN	Columbia
Clemson	COLLEGE	USC
Governor	CURRENT JOB	Lieutenant governor
Business manager at her family's clothing store, S.C. House member	PREVIOUS JOBS	Attorney in private practice, S.C. attorney general
United Nations ambassador	NEXT JOB	S.C. governor
\$106,078	2015 SALARY	\$58,683
Michael	SPOUSE	Peggy
Captain in S.C. National Guard	SPOUSE'S JOB	Co-owns family rental-property management firm
2	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	2
Bentley (labradoodle)	DOG	Boots (bulldog)
12	YEARS IN ELECTED OFFICE	10
5-0	ELECTION RECORD	3-3
Backed by Sarah Palin during 2010 GOP primary	POLITICAL LUCK	Backed Haley after losing to her in 2010 GOP primary
Rubio (then Cruz, kind of)	PREFERRED 2016 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE	Trump (political luck, part II)
Accused of lobbying while she was a state rep (cleared of charges)	ETHICS RUN-IN	Took excess campaign cash from donors (repaying \$72,700 to donors, paid \$5,100 fine)
Do it my way	GOVERNING STYLE	How can we help each other, friend?
Wearing boots	TRAIT PEOPLE DWELL ON	Foghorn Leghorn-like voice
Joan Jett	MUSICIAN QUOTED RECENTLY IN A SPEECH	Buffalo Springfield

Title: **Legislators: McMaster's rise could be good for SC**
 Author: BY JOSHUA LLOYD Morning News jlloyd@florencenews.com
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Legislators: McMaster's rise could be good for SC

BY JOSHUA LLOYD

Morning News

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FLORENCE — As lawmakers in Washington, D.C., prepare to vote on South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley to become the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, state officials are prepping to work with a new governor.

Henry McMaster, the current lieutenant governor, is poised to move into the governor's spot to finish the final two years of Haley's term.

Though McMaster hasn't publicly stated his stances on many of the key issues facing the state — roads, pension, education and tax reform — lawmakers from the Pee Dee say a new governor could be good for progress on those issues.

Florence Republican Rep. Phillip Lowe said one of the largest changes in state legislation this year will be McMaster's takeover as governor.

"I think we'll see less vetoes and more willingness to work with us on these issues," he said. "I think McMaster will be a little easier to please. He'll be looking to build some consensus in both chambers and solve some problems that we haven't been able to the past few years, like roads. We're hoping for more communication and understanding, and hopefully he'll be willing to compromise and work with us to get some good bills passed."

See **MCMASTER**, Page 3A

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McMaster

From Page 1A

It's been widely speculated that McMaster will run for the state's top spot in the 2018 gubernatorial election.

Rep. Jay Jordan, a Florence Republican, said the next two years will give McMaster a chance to prove to the people of this state that he can be an effective governor.

"I think this will be his audition for the people of South Carolina," Jordan said. "He'll have a couple years to prove that he can work with the legislature and get things done for our state. I hope at the top of his priority list are two of the most critical issues and that's infrastructure and education. We'll have to wait and see."

Sen. Ronnie Sabb, a Democrat from the Williamsburg area, is somewhat leery of McMaster's right-leaning track record but is optimistic about the change of pace.

"I have a lot of respect for Lt. Gov. McMaster, but you can tell he's all conservative," Sabb said. "I would hope that in his ascension to the governor's mansion he stays in the middle on the issues. I do think he has the ability to discern what's best for the state as a whole, not just one side."

Rep. Terry Alexander, a Florence-area Democrat, said there's a largely unknown factor about a McMaster governorship, but that the climate in Columbia points toward excitement.

"We'll see what he becomes. It's a different role than what he knows," Alexander said. "He's not just presiding over a chamber; he's presiding over the entire state. Either way, we're excited about what he'll bring to the position. We don't know where he stands on some of the issues, and we see that as an opportunity."



McMaster

Title: **Haley declares Tigers Champions Day**
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Haley declares Tigers Champions Day

From release

COLUMBIA – Gov. Nikki Haley issued a proclamation Friday recognizing the Clemson University Tigers for winning the 2017 College Football Playoff National Championship.

The proclamation designated Saturday, Jan. 14, as Clemson Tigers Na-

tional Football Champions Day throughout the state of South Carolina. It encourages all state citizens to join together in congratulating the Clemson football team and head coach Dabo Swinney for their last-second victory over Alabama to win the title.

On Tuesday, the governor, a 1994 Clemson

graduate, ordered a Clemson flag be flown over the State House to honor the Tigers. She issued the following statement:

"I'm a proud Clemson alum, I'm a proud governor, and I'm a proud South Carolinian. Clemson



Haley

showed their heart and humility throughout the entire season, and in an unforgettable national championship victory, they reminded us that, with faith and hard work, anything is possible. That's what defines South Carolina."

Title: **Haley reflects on successes but downplays the flag issue**
 Author:
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Haley reflects on successes but downplays the flag issue

Gov. Nikki Haley took a victory lap Wednesday around a legislature with which she didn't always get along.

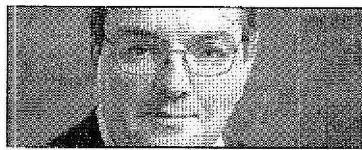
"When I was first elected, I heard over and over again from governors around the country that this would be the best job I would ever have," she said in her final State of the State address prior to expected confirmation soon as the new ambassador to the United Nations. "I didn't understand what they meant back then — and if I'm honest, some days, especially during the legislative session, I didn't agree with them."

But after six years as the state's pilot, Haley described South Carolina's condition as "blessed" for having moved forward and, in part, for steering the state from being a punch line for late-night comedians.

Her bellwether accomplishments have been economic: the addition of more than 85,000 jobs, \$21.5 billion in capital investment and a drop in unemployment from 11.1 percent to 4.4 percent. And while she didn't fully get her way with legislators on restructuring or ethical accountability for lawmakers, both were mentioned as being improved in her six years as governor.

Haley also recognized that the state's huge public education system, despite some positive changes, still needs a lot of work.

"Every South Carolina child deserves a quality education, regardless of where he or she is born and raised, regardless of who his or her parents are or what they do," she told legislators convened in the House chamber. "And as the elected leadership of the state, it is our obligation to give it



Andy Brack
The Statehouse Report

to them."

And then the kicker: "We failed in that obligation for too long."

Yes we have. It might have helped education over the past six years if Haley had spoken up like this louder and more often. Maybe standing up taller for public education would have reduced the billions of dollars of underfunding it has suffered during the 14 years that she and her one-time mentor, predecessor Mark Sanford, were at the helm.

On Wednesday night, Haley admitted to state lawmakers that fixing education wasn't for the lack of trying, although the issue didn't get nearly as much attention as her laser focus on creating jobs and economic development. Sometimes, she said, the job seems so big and daunting that it seems that educational solutions are too complex.

Nevertheless, she urged the legislature to change the state superintendent into a cabinet, not elected, position. She also noted progress in reframing the education funding formula to account for poverty, and gifted and talented students. She mentioned new reading coaches pushed by legislators, better technology and incentive pay for some teachers.

Haley is right to celebrate these changes, but they're mostly changes around the edges — changes that

don't help rural kids get an education that's on par with kids in Greenville or Charleston. But the governor was also savvy enough Wednesday night to realize that the state has a long way to go.

While Haley has much to celebrate in her six years as governor, we were surprised by how she downplayed what might become the accomplishment for which she is best remembered: the quick removal of the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds after the June 2015 massacre at Emanuel AME Church.

In her address, she didn't mention the words "Confederate flag." Maybe she didn't want to rub salt into wounds of some who might still be burning about the flag's fate. Instead, she simply stated, "I will remember the willingness of the people in this room to step into someone else's shoes, find genuine understanding, remove a divisive symbol of an oppressive past, and move South Carolina forward."

Haley and a plethora of state lawmakers who pushed to get the flag off the Statehouse grounds still deserve credit for what they did. But now, as the governor heads into a job that will be filled with negotiation, the state needs to continue to move forward to heal and confront its cruel past of racial injustice.

Through the years, Haley has been a punching bag for some policy proposals that disproportionately hurt poorer South Carolinians. Despite policy disagreements, all South Carolinians should recognize her public service and thank her for it.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of Statehouse Report. Have a comment? Send to: feedback@statehousereport.com.

Title: **Confederate Relic Room board not giving up on \$3.6M flag plan**
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Confederate Relic Room board not giving up on \$3.6M flag plan

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The governing board of South Carolina's Confederate Relic Room isn't giving up on a \$3.6 million proposal to expand the state's military history museum and display the battle flag removed from Statehouse grounds in summer 2015.

The board voted unanimously Thursday to "vigorously advocate" for the proposal legislators shot down early last year, when a House subcommittee chairman emphatically refused to use taxpayers' money to fund any of it.

Commissioners say they believe legislators didn't understand the project's breakdown and will stress as they try again that the rebel flag display represents \$550,000 of the total price tag — a cost that includes electronic screens scrolling the names of 22,000 South Carolina soldiers killed in the Civil War.

The unanimous vote came after the museum's director suggested displaying the flag in existing office space at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

"We're mandated to exhibit it. We need to move forward and not let it sit," Allen Roberson said.

His suggestion involved

combining two offices, raising the ceiling and installing glass doors to separate the space from the main gallery. While the flag furled in July 2015 is historically significant as the last Confederate flag to fly on Statehouse grounds, it is not a military history artifact and therefore should not be displayed next to regimental flags that bear the bullet holes, gunpowder residue and bloodstains of battle, Roberson said.

Commissioner Leland Summers said that display would be a temporary solution.

"I have no qualms about having available to us other contingency plans, but we need to aggressively pursue the plan we already submitted," said Summers, commander of South Carolina's Sons of Confederate Veterans. "We don't need to sell ourselves short."

Legislators approved bringing down the rebel flag following the massacre of nine black parishioners at a historic Charleston church. The gunman sentenced to death earlier this week could be seen in photos with the flag.

The law specifically sent the flag to the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, which has arti-

facts from every war South Carolinians have fought in. A separate measure directed the museum's director to estimate costs for the flag's "appropriate, permanent, and public display."

But House leaders balked at the \$3.6 million price tag of the board's December 2015 proposal. That included \$1.1 million to expand the museum — which is located at the back of the State Museum building, through a separate door — \$500,000 for a new entrance, \$850,000 to conserve existing flags and supporting artifacts and \$650,000 to exhibit those.

Much of the museum's collections are in storage due to lack of space.

"We're not funding it," then-Rep. Chip Limehouse, R-Charleston, said at a budget hearing last February. "If we have to delay the display of the flag a few years, so be it."

Instead of spending any money on the flag, the Legislature approved studying the possibility of moving the 121-year-old museum to Charleston. That idea was nixed by Gov. Nikki Haley's veto.

The museum's leaders said Thursday that legislators never formally approved or rejected their plan.

Title: Speaker Lucas Reacts to Governor Haley's State of the State Address House Will Focus on Roads, Education, Retirement and Tax Reform

Author:

Size: 13.48 column inches

Wagener, SC Circulation: 0



Speaker Lucas Reacts to Governor Haley's State of the State Address House Will Focus on Roads, Education, Retirement and Tax Reform

(Columbia, SC) – House Speaker Jay Lucas (District 65-Darlington) issued the following statement following Governor Nikki Haley's State of the State address:

"I appreciate Governor Haley's selfless service to the people of South Carolina over the last twelve years. Fixing our crumbling infrastructure, offering quality education to our children, providing tax relief for South Carolina taxpayers and stabilizing our retirement system will be the House's priorities for this upcoming legislative session. Once Governor Haley is confirmed as Ambassador to the United Nations, I look forward to working with then-Governor McMaster as the House continues to champion the needs of South Carolina families."

Title: **Governing board of Confederate Relic Room not giving up on \$3.6M expansion proposal**

Author:

Size: 33.48 column inches

Sumter, SC Circulation: 19018



Governing board of Confederate Relic Room not giving up on \$3.6M expansion proposal

COLUMBIA (AP) — The governing board of South Carolina's Confederate Relic Room isn't giving up on a \$3.6 million proposal to expand the state's military history museum and display the battle flag removed from Statehouse grounds in summer 2015.

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His suggestion involved combining two offices, raising the ceiling and installing glass doors to separate the space from the main gallery. While the flag furled in July 2015 is historically significant as the last Confederate flag to fly on Statehouse grounds, it is not a military history artifact and therefore should not be displayed next to regimental flags that bear the bullet holes, gunpowder residue and bloodstains of battle, Roberson said.

Commissioner Leland Summers said that display would be a temporary solution.

"I have no qualms about having available to us other contingency plans, but we need to aggressively pursue the plan we already submitted," said Summers, commander of South Carolina's Sons of Confederate Veterans. "We don't need to sell

ourselves short."

Legislators approved bringing down the rebel flag following the massacre of nine black parishioners at a historic Charleston church.

The law specifically sent the flag to the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, which has artifacts from every war South Carolinians have fought in. A separate measure directed the museum's director to estimate costs for the flag's "appropriate, permanent, and public display."

But House leaders balked at the \$3.6 million price tag of the board's December 2015 proposal.

Instead of spending any money on the flag, the Legislature approved studying the pos-

sibility of moving the 121-year-old museum to Charleston. That idea was nixed by Gov. Nikki Haley's veto.

The museum's leaders said Thursday that legislators never formally approved or rejected their plan.