

Title: **Cassie Taylor receives 'Florence Nightingale Award'**

Author:

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Cassie Taylor receives 'Florence Nightingale Award'

Mrs. Cassie Grice Taylor, a registered nurse with Aiken Regional Medical Centers, was recently awarded the Florence Nightingale Award that recognizes excellence in nursing. This award showcases the valuable contributions made by nurses to patient care and exemplifies outstanding performance in nursing as well as a commitment to the nursing profession. Cassie was one of four nurses representing four different categories who was selected for this honor after a nomination process and a blind review.

Mrs. Taylor has been intimately involved in the development of a forensic nurse program at Aiken Regional Medical Centers. She first attended training in March of 2015 at the Medical University of South Carolina and participated in a forty hour program in order to become a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE). Since training, she has served as the lead SANE for the hospital and has trained two additional nurses to become examiners. She has been instrumental in drafting the first written contract in the state that enables ARMC to take sexual assault victims from local hospitals. A "Contract Signing Celebration" will be held in late summer to acknowledge and applaud this contract. The celebration will be attended by invited politicians including Governor Haley and Attorney General Alan Wilson. Also included will be representative(s) from the South Carolina State Office of Victim Assistance, twenty-five law enforcement agencies, representatives from four victims' advocacy centers, members of the press, and Mrs. Taylor who will also be a speaker.

Even though the role of SANE has encompassed much of her free time, Mrs. Taylor continues to serve as a preceptor to newly graduated RNs. She serves as the liaison for ARMC and keeps both the center and the area informed about current practices and legislation. She has continued to further her expertise as a certified emergency room nurse by completing training and certification in additional areas of her profession. She teaches various courses including ACLS (Advanced Cardiovascu-



Mrs. Cassie G. Taylor

lar Life Support) and PALS (Pediatric Advanced Life Support.)

Cassie is married to Hampton Taylor and they are parents to little Grice. The entire family participates in many volunteer activities and fundraisers such as providing bookbags and supplies, jackets, pajamas, Easter baskets, etc. to residents at the Nancy K. Perry Children's Shelter in Lexington. She has served on the board and as chief fundraiser for the Free Medical Clinic of the Midlands and was awarded Volunteer of the Year in 2015. This past Christmas, the family donated purses stuffed with essentials for homeless women in Columbia.

Congratulations to Cassie Taylor for receiving this recognition for the many contributions she makes to the nursing profession and to the community. Cassie's nomination form will be entered into the state's Palmetto Gold competition. Good luck, Nurse Taylor.

Title: **Palmetto Farm Aid preparations underway**
 Author: BY CAROLE BASTIAN
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Palmetto Farm Aid preparations underway

BY CAROLE BASTIAN

The South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) is currently working with its partners to map out a plan to distribute \$40 million amongst the farmers who suffered severe crop losses during the historic October 2015 floods, said Assistant Commissioner Aaron Wood.

In May, both the State House of Representatives and the State Senate voted overwhelmingly to override Governor Nikki Haley's veto of this budget item. All local legislators voted to provide the funding. In fact, the vote to override the veto was a whopping 112-2 in the House and 39-3 in the Senate.

The money will be provided as grants to qualifying farmers. To qualify, farmers must have a United States Department of Agriculture-Farm Service Agency issued farm number and be able to demonstrate at least a 40% crop loss as a result of the flood. Documentation of crops and acres planted, as well as the loss, will be required.

The advisory board is currently working to determine the specific criteria for eligibility and to establish the application process. The team expects that farmers will be able to apply sometime towards middle or late June.

According to text within the Farm Aid Fund bill, there are more than 25,000 farms across the state; crop losses were estimated at more than \$400 million. Only a third or so of those losses will be covered by traditional Federal crop insurance.

Total dollar figures for losses in Lexington and Saluda County are not yet available, said Powell Smith, County Coordinator for the Clemson Extension Service in Lexington County.

More information should become available from the state Department of Agriculture within the next few weeks, according to Stephanie Sox, Public Information Officer for the department. Interested persons can find more information from the local USDA office, the county Clemson Extension office, county Farm Bureau, Market Bulletin and on the SCDA website at agriculture.sc.gov.

Title: **Haley to endorse Rankin, Leatherman opponents**
Author:
Size: 5.42 column inches
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Haley to endorse Rankin, Leatherman opponents

FLORENCE — South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is heading to Florence and Myrtle Beach this week to endorse Republican primary challengers to two longtime state senators.

The Republican governor will be at Wholly Smokin' barbecue Wednesday to support Florence County GOP Chairman Richard Skipper in his race against Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman.

On Friday, Haley will be in Myrtle Beach endorsing businessman Scott Pyle at Longbeards Bar N Grill. Pyle is running against Sen. Luke Rankin, who is seeking a seventh term.

Title: **Cellphone fees, education mandates among new state laws**
 Author: Associated Press
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Cellphone fees, education mandates among new state laws

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — New laws in South Carolina extend taxes to cellphones, require students to learn about America's "founding principles," and fix a quirk in campaign finance law that has entangled many state officials.

The Legislature has passed dozens of measures in the final weeks of its session, which officially ends Thursday. A few of them:

Phone charges

Cellphone users will share the cost of phone services for rural customers and people with disabilities under a law Gov. Nikki Haley signed Wednesday.

Starting in January, the state's 1 million landline customers will pay less as fees extend to 4.5 million cellphones.

The law implements a Public Service Commission ruling in January that requires cellphone companies to pay into the state's universal service fund. Landline customers have been paying since the Legislature created the fund in 1996 to ensure affordable phone service in rural areas, where it's costly to extend and maintain lines.

The law caps payments to so-called telephone "carriers of last resort" and requires audits of how the money's spent.

It also requires cellphone customers to begin contributing toward services for hearing- and speech-impaired residents — a fee not addressed by the commission's ruling.

Currently, landline custom-

ers pay 25 cents monthly to ensure nearly 25,000 disabled customers can communicate by phone, plus nearly 3 percent of their bill for rural landlines. That will change to 6 cents and roughly 2 percent, respectively, applied to all phone bills.

Campaign donations

People running for office no longer have to abide by a quirky fundraising restriction if they advance to a primary runoff.

A law Haley signed Wednesday allows candidates to ask donors who maxed out their giving for a primary election to donate the next day for the runoff. Previously, they had to wait a week.

Runoffs are held two weeks after a primary. But under prior state law, the runoff cycle — for donation purposes — began seven days after the primary.

For a statewide race, donors can give up to \$3,500 per election cycle.

Before the June 2014 primaries, the South Carolina Ethics Commission issued an opinion reminding candidates about the law and cautioning them not to accept donations that put them over the per-cycle state limit. The seven-day rule is clear, but there's a perceived inconsistency, the commission wrote in opting not to punish violators from past elections.

Candidates in 2010 who had excessive contributions because of the seven-day rule included Haley and her Democratic foe, state Sen. Vincent Sheheen, as well as Attorney General Alan Wilson and his Democratic opponent.

Education mandates

Public schools must teach the United States' "founding principles" under legislation Haley signed Thursday.

Its preamble stresses the importance of the Tenth Amendment, which says powers not given to the federal government are given to the states or the people.

"The preservation of our great nation depends on strict adherence to the Tenth Amendment and other principles that protect the states and the people from overzealous acts of all branches of the federal government," it reads.

The law requires the state Board of Education and Education Oversight Committee to include the "principles that shaped the United States" in classroom standards for social studies. It specifies lessons must include the Federalist Papers, the structure of government, the separation of powers doctrine, and freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.

State law already required instruction on the "essentials" of the U.S. Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers.

Another law signed Thursday requires all literacy coaches and teachers from kindergarten through third grade to undergo training in dyslexia before the school year starts in August.

Title: **ON WATCH**
 Author: By ADAM BENSON abenson@indexjournal.com
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ON WATCH



Greenwood city police now outfitted with body cameras

By ADAM BENSON
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It's only a matter of time.

That's what Greenwood leaders say about outfitting all 58 city police officers with body cameras — now a requirement under state law. But purchasing the equipment is such a priority that City Manager Charlie Barrineau said officials might spend the \$435,000 now to bring the system online rather than wait for state reimbursement money to become immediately available first.

"People are now expecting police officers to wear cameras, and so we think from a liability standpoint, we're almost to the point where we can't afford not to wear cameras," Barrineau said Thursday. "We have talked to City Council about coming up with a plan to

do it immediately, even amending the 2016 budget to allow us to proceed."

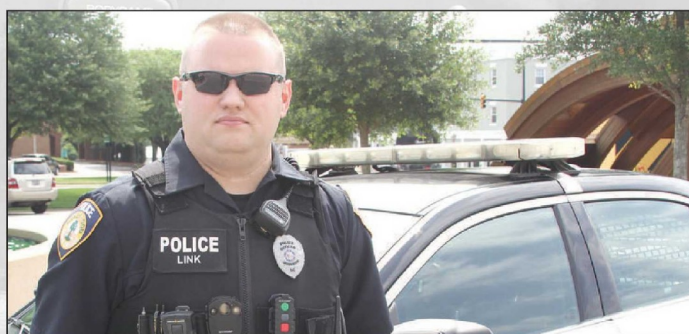
Last June, Gov. Nikki Haley made South Carolina the first state requiring every law enforcement agency to wear body cameras. Under the measure, departments would be reimbursed for equipment purchasing costs.

For Greenwood, that would be \$275,349. But city leaders want to go a step further.

"We could just buy body cameras, but we wouldn't have integration, and we want to get the integration of the in-car, the audio. The body camera alone doesn't help you if it's not integrated," Barrineau said.

To do so, the city would have to foot the roughly \$159,000 technology tab — including creating more bandwidth on servers to store the high-definition video.

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PHOTOS BY ADAM BENSON | INDEX JOURNAL

Greenwood Police Officer Jonathan Link wears an outdated body camera on his uniform during a break in his patrol shift Friday. City leaders are expected to purchase new equipment for the entire department.

CAMERAS

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Police Chief Gerald Brooks said the cameras will benefit his officers and the public.

In February, the state Law Enforcement Training Council approved Greenwood's body camera policy, which Brooks distributed to all personnel.

"I think they serve both of us equally well. For the public, they serve as somewhat of a watchdog. It records what a police officer says and does, and it then becomes available when necessary. We want it for the same reason. We want to know what happens, we need

the facts," he said.

Although the footage is largely exempt from the state Freedom of Information Act at this point, any person who is the subject of a recording may be given access.

And the policy is clear on when the cameras cannot be used: "On-duty officers are prohibited from covertly recording conversations or activity with other officers or personnel under any circumstances without consent," it says.

Brooks said a handful of body cameras are in circula-

tion, with one patrol officer wearing one per shift — but with up to eight on duty at once, their effectiveness is limited.

"The clip on them is about as strong as the clip on a pen and although when we got them they functioned, they didn't do anything near what we needed them to do and they're not very durable," Brooks said. "If you were a captain of a company in the Army and you sent word to headquarters that 'I need a Hummer' and they sent you back a child's go-kart — the

cameras that we've had, that's what they've been equivalent to."

Greenwood officer Jonathan Link, who was assigned a body camera during his shift on Friday, said authorities think the new equipment will help.

"It's a good thing. It gives us an impartial eye on what we do," Link said. "And it does kind of tend to slow people's behavior down."

According to statistics, that's true. In October, researchers at the University of South Florida issued findings a year-long



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study comparing use of force incidents with officers wearing body cameras to those who did not. Between March 2014 and February 2015, use-of-force incidents fell 53 percent among officers who wore cameras, while complaints from the public plummeted 65 percent. Danny Byrd, director of information technology for the city, said once an interaction is over and the camera turned off, footage will begin uploading within seven minutes. The data will be stored separately from other city servers.

Title: House gives key approval to road-funding, DOT reform bill
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
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House gives key approval to road-funding, DOT reform bill

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - The House has given key approval to a bill that would mean \$4 billion for work on South Carolina's crumbling roads and bridges as well as a new system of governance for the state's highway agency.

The House on Tuesday passed the bill by a vote of 102-3 with five more days left in this year's legislative session.

"Members of the House understand that the people of South Carolina expect their Legislature to pass a roads bill this year," House Speaker Jay

Lucas said in a statement afterward. "Although more effort must be made next session to find a long-term funding stream, this bill is a starting point that allows for adequate repair of deficient roads and bridges without raiding our state's General Fund."

The governance changes that would allow the governor to appoint all highway commissioners with the advice and consent of the Legislature, give the new board the power to elect a

transportation secretary and limit commissioners' service to two, four-year terms.

The project threshold for applications submitted to the state Transportation Infrastructure Bank would be lowered from \$100 million to \$25 million under the bill, and that board would have to follow the same objective criteria in selecting projects used by DOT.

Many lawmakers had insisted on changing the way the state Department of Transportation was governed before handing it more money.

"DOT reform is a crucial piece to the road funding puzzle," Lucas said. "The General Assembly should not give another penny to the Department of Transportation without certain accountability requirements in place to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. I am very pleased the House successfully amended the Senate version to include governance restructuring as an effort to

promote efficiency within DOT."

The bill would send about \$200 million from vehicle sales tax revenue and from fees collected by the state Department of Motor Vehicles to DOT, which could then use them to send to the state Infrastructure Bank to issue more than \$2 billion in bonds. That money in turn could free up other fund-

ing, for a total of \$4 billion that could be used over 10 years.

Not everyone was happy with the new bill.

Rep. Ralph Norman, a Rock Hill developer who voted against the bill, claimed borrowing \$2 billion would require monthly payments of \$11 million.

And he said the findings of a recent Legislative Audit Council report on DOT showed flaws with the agency that need to be fixed.

"We're going to be sending \$2.2 billion to a group that has is-

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Roads

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sues," he said, advocating instead the Legislature take more time to work on DOT and then consider alternative funding sources, such as removing some state sales tax exemptions or raise the gas tax.

"We need to reform DOT before we throw a bucket of money at them," he said.

Rep. Gary Simrill, a Rock Hill Republican who has pushed road funding and DOT reform in the House, said he supports the bill.

"There's a lot of complaining (by lawmakers), but the roads are still crumbling," he said.

Simrill said Gov. Nikki Haley supports the bill, which he described as a funding mechanism for roads, not a bond bill.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for us," he said.

Rep. Brian White, an Anderson Republican and chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, which passed the bill with the DOT reform, said the legislation was not a permanent solution to the state's roads.

"This is not the end all to fix all," he said. "But we have to start somewhere."

The House passed a road-funding plan last year along with governance reforms. But the Senate took no action on that plan until this year, when it changed it

with its plan to spend \$400 million from the General Fund, a plan it then jettisoned in favor of the latest plan to borrow billions. Senate leaders have characterized their plan as a stopgap measure meant to enact high-priority repairs.

State Transportation Secretary Christy Hall told a House subcommittee recently that the Senate's plan would borrow \$2.2 billion using bonds, enabling the state to spend about \$2 billion on interstates, \$1.2 billion to \$1.4 billion on pavements and \$950 million on structurally deficient bridges.

The Senate plan would finish all three phases of widening and improving the Upstate's Interstate 385, Columbia's "Malfunction Junction" and eliminate every load-restricted bridge in the state within 10 years.

The bond money would be used on specific projects already underway by DOT, which would then use money freed up by the new funding to pay for even

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more bridge and paving projects.

There would be no tax or fee increases as the result of the bill.

The bill would hand DOT \$1.5 billion from the bond money, which would use \$200 million from its interstate program to complete all interstate projects started from Act 98, including Phase 3 of I-85 to the North Carolina border and Malfunction Junction, the massive project to fix the convergence of I-20 and I-26 in Columbia that has plagued motorists for decades.

Title: **Nason Company adding 26 jobs in \$2.5 million Walhalla investment**
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Nason Company adding 26 jobs in \$2.5 million Walhalla investment

AMANDA COYNE
THE GREENVILLE NEWS

Nason Company will expand in Walhalla, adding 26 new jobs and \$2.5 million in capital investment.

The company will build a 30,000 square foot expansion of its existing facility, where it manufactures electrical, hydraulic and pneumatic components for military and industrial use. Currently, more than 100 design engineers and customer service personnel work at the Oconee County location.

Nason has been in the Upstate for more than 20 years. State and county officials lauded the expansion in a release

from Gov. Nikki Haley's office.

"Nason has been a wonderful corporate citizen of Oconee for many years and seeing this growth occur is highly encouraging on many fronts," said Oconee County Council Chairman Paul Cain in the release. "This expansion means that even more first-class products will continue to be made in Oconee to satisfy a global customer base, and it further confirms that Oconee has the right business climate and the skilled workforce that thriving businesses need."

Hiring for the new positions will begin in the third quarter of this year. Those interested can visit nasonptc.com for more information.