

The Morning
News
Florence, SC
Circ. 35092
From Page:
4
3/31/2016
61050



148 Five seek Tim Scott's Senate seat

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON — Election filing in South Carolina closed on Wednesday with four candidates having filed to run against U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, who is seeking his first full term in Washington.

Elsewhere two congressmen, including 1st District U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, have June primary challengers while the other five incumbent congressmen face major party opposition in the fall. In the General Assembly, 19 of 42 senators and 20 of the 109 House members have primary opponents.

U.S. Senate

» Democrat Thomas Dixon of North Charleston and three third-party candidates filed to run against Scott. Two are from the fledgling American Party that will select its candidate at a convention in May. Scott was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley when Jim DeMint resigned in 2013 and was elected to the remaining two years of DeMint's term in 2014. He's now seeking his first

full term.

U.S. House

» Sanford, a Republican and former governor, faces Rep. Jenny Horne of Summerville in the primary. In the 5th District, incumbent Republican Mick Mulvaney, first elected six years ago, faces Ray Craig of Lake Wylie. Sanford defeated Democrat Elizabeth Colbert-Busch, the sister of comedian Stephen Colbert, in a special election in 2013 to replace Scott. Horne drew national attention in a speech last year calling for the removal of the Confederate flag at the Statehouse after the slayings of nine parishioners at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

» There are two other congressional primaries. Phil Black of Lexington and Arik Bjorn of Columbia are vying for the Democratic nomination in the 2nd District to challenge longtime Republican U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson. In the 5th District, State Rep. John King of Rock Hill and Fran Person of Tega Cay are seeking the Democratic

nomination to run against Mulvaney.

General Assembly

» Two Senate Republicans, Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin, R-Pickens, and Sen. Lee Bright, R-Roebuck, each have three primary challengers. Martin, elected to the Senate in 1992, again faces former state Rep. Rex Rice. Bright's opponents include former state Rep. Scott Talley.

» Three GOP senators have two primary opponents. They are Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman of Florence, a 36-year Senate veteran; Corrections Chairman Mike Fair of Greenville, who first won a House seat in 1984; and Sen. Katrina Shealy of Lexington, one of two women in the Senate. Other Senate leaders in primaries include Majority Leader Harvey Peeler of Gaffney, Transportation Chairman Larry Grooms of Charleston, Ethics Chairman Luke Rankin of Conway and Banking and Insurance Chairman Wes Hayes of Rock Hill.

Title: **Transgender advocates fear bill's fallout even if it dies**
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
 Size: 50.84 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



Transgender advocates fear bill's fallout even if it dies

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press

COLUMBIA

Transgender people said Thursday they fear a South Carolina bill that would require them to use the public bathroom for their biological sex will stoke misguided fears and endorse restroom vigilantism, even if the bill ultimately dies as expected.

Opponents told a Senate panel the unenforceable measure perpetuates myths against an already-ostracized community, while supporters contend it's about protecting the privacy and safety of women and children.

The measure mimics part of a North Carolina law

passed last month that's caused economic fallout and debate nationwide.

A growing number of musicians have canceled concerts in North Carolina in protest, including Cyndi Lauper, Bruce Springsteen and Ringo Starr. In Massachusetts on Thursday, an LGBT group booted the Re-

publican governor off stage when he declined to commit to legislation expanding protections for transgender people.

The South Carolina bill, introduced last week, may go nowhere.

SEE TRANSGENDER, 9A

FROM PAGE 3A

TRANSGENDER

The proposal requires multistall bathrooms on public property to be designated and used according to the gender on people's birth certificates. It would also bar local governments from requiring businesses to let transgender people use the bathroom of their choice.

No vote was taken during the panel's second and final hearing. It's not yet clear whether the full committee will consider the measure. But even if it manages to advance to the Senate floor, Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Columbia, promises to use Senate rules to block debate. House GOP leaders say their chamber won't deal with the issue before session ends in June anyway. And opponents include Republican Gov. Nikki Haley, who has repeatedly called it unnecessary.

The sponsor, GOP Sen. Lee Bright, contends his bill

is a "matter of common sense," and its opponents are "forgoing the safety and privacy of the largest part of the population in order to defend" a tiny minority.

In a letter read at the hearing, Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said the bill addresses a nonissue. In his 41 years in law enforcement, he said, he's never heard of a transgender person attacking or otherwise bothering someone in a restroom.

He said he can't enforce a bill that burdens law enforcement with bathroom checks and exposes his agency to lawsuits.

"Obviously, DNA testing is cost prohibitive," he wrote. And asking deputies to check genitalia "invades subjects' dignity and privacy."

Transgender people say the bill's requirement would

put them in danger of harassment and violence, as they would clearly look out of place.

"To make discrimination legal is an atrocity," said transgender male Greg Green, a Citadel graduate and former police officer and firefighter. "Going to the bathroom is natural. Worrying about whether the person in the stall beside you is sitting or standing is not commonsense."

Sharon Mansell, a Beaufort mother of 10, said she sympathizes with transgender people's objections, but it's a mother's duty to protect her children. She said she fears that without the law, "someone with a perverted mind" can pretend to be transgender to abuse the opposite sex.

"I stand firm that we need to vote 'yes' for this bill for the protection of everyone,"

she said. "This is not a war against transgender people."

Oran Smith of the Palmetto Family Council said his members' top concern is "young girls who may have men in their shower rooms" at public schools.

Opponents argued laws already address assault and shower curtains can provide privacy.

O.K. Keyes, a transgender Columbia resident who works with LGBT youth,

said the bill invites people to hate a community they know little about.

"The legislation claims to protect, but it actually targets youth," said Keyes, 25. "Senators get to propose legislation to stir up their base and it ultimately dies, but in the process, it garners all this attention and talking points. And no one is thinking about what happens afterward."

Title: **Transgender advocates fear bill's fallout even if it dies**
Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
Size: 50.84 square inch
Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238

“

TO MAKE DISCRIMINATION LEGAL IS AN ATROCITY. GOING TO THE BATHROOM IS NATURAL. WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER THE PERSON IN THE STALL BESIDE YOU IS SITTING OR STANDING IS NOT COMMON SENSE.

Greg Green, a transgender male

Title: **WhodoesHaley cryforandwhy?**

Author:

Size: 6.04 square inch

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Who does Haley cry for and why?

Gov. Nikki Haley said she cried for the poor nine folks at the A.M.E. church in Charleston, but has she ever cried for the 25,000 men who gave their lives defending South Carolina — whom the Confederate flag and Soldier Monument honor?

All those soldiers asked was to be remembered so that future generations would understand the price of freedom from invasion, duty to their state and honor, courage and sacrifice. Gov. Francis Pickens would have Nikki Haley's head for what she did to sully the honor and sacrifice of more than a quarter of the men in South Carolina. Shame upon her.

*- Jeff O'Cain
Columbia*

Title: **SC transgender bathroom bill will not pass, Richland Democrat vows**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 48.67 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



SC transgender bathroom bill will not pass, Richland Democrat vows

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

A proposal to ban transgender people from choosing the bathroom they use is headed to a S.C. Senate committee vote after a panel hearing from supporters and opponents wrapped up its second day of hearings Thursday.

TRANSGENDER

FROM PAGE 1A

likely that GOP-controlled body will have time to deal with the proposal this year.

"The House Republican Caucus has a lot of issues that we are trying to address by the end of session," Bannister said Thursday.

Bills that do not pass by the June end of the session will die. To be considered next year, the proposal would have to be reintroduced.

More supporters spoke out Thursday than in Wednesday's hearing, when opponents turned out in droves.

Bright's proposal would require that bathrooms, showers and changing rooms at government-run parks, museums and schools be designated for use and used based on an individual's biological sex at birth, as listed on their birth certificate. The bill would apply only to bathrooms and changing rooms used by more than a person at a time.

Robert Boone, a pastor in Aiken County, said the proposal relates to moral decency.

However, a Democratic member of the Senate General Committee promised to block the proposal.

"This bill will not pass the South Carolina General Assembly this year," state Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Rich-

"How can we conscientiously enforce laws dealing with pornography when we replace the printed page that you find in a magazine with flesh in the restroom?" Boone asked.

Boone recounted his own experience of accidentally walking into a women's restroom, saying he was "embarrassed to death."

Oran Smith of the Palmetto Family Council said his conservative advocacy group is concerned about safety and privacy.

Smith said his group is concerned that men could be in locker-room showers with young girls. "We are looking for a way to protect against that," he said, adding Bright's proposal seems to do that.

August Huckabee, who lives in Colorado, said the proposal is a women's rights issue.

"The transgender movement is, in fact, extremely disrespectful to women and to the history of women's rights by claiming to be women," Huckabee said.

For centuries, women have fought for equality, including the right to vote

land, said after hearing testimony that included personal stories from transgender men and women and religious opponents and supporters of the proposal.

Republican Gov. Nikki Haley has said the proposal,

and wage equality, Huckabee said. "Feminists themselves should be in an uproar that a confused boy should decide that all it takes to become a woman is a mental fabrication that stems from a confusion of identity."

But Sen. Lourie said the women's rights organizations he has spoken with staunchly oppose the proposal.

Opponents also spoke out against the proposal Thursday.

Attorney Malissa Burnette, who represents S.C. Equality, a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organization, said the proposal will "hurt and divide our citizens."

She said the argument that the bill will protect children from men who dress up like women "perpetuates myths about transgender people."

Tim Bupp, pastor of Reformation Lutheran Church in Columbia, also opposed the proposal, addressing the argument that, absent a ban, predators will take advantage of people in bathrooms.

"There are predators

sponsored by state Sen. Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg, is not needed.

In addition, House Majority Leader Bruce Bannister, R-Greenville, said it is un-

SEE TRANSGENDER, 2A

(in) every aspect of humanity," Bupp said, adding some pastors and politicians are "the most despicable predators of all."

But, Bupp added, he would not refuse pastors or politicians "their basic right to use public facilities."

Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657, [@cassielcope](https://twitter.com/cassielcope)

What's next?

The Senate's full General Committee next will take up the proposal. When that committee — chaired by state Sen. Kevin Bryant, R-Anderson — will take up the bill has not yet been announced.

If that panel — of 10 Republicans and seven Democrats — passes the proposal, state Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland, said he will use procedural tactics to ensure it does not pass the full Senate this year.

Senators generally can ensure a bill does not pass by adding a "minority report." A single senator also can filibuster a proposal.

Title: **S.C. House alters roads bill; senators say bill is likely dead**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
 Size: 33.01 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



S.C. House alters roads bill; senators say bill is likely dead

BY JEFFREY COLLINS

Associated Press

COLUMBIA

The South Carolina House made changes Wednesday to the roads bill that has been debated for more than a year, leading senators and the governor to say the proposal is likely dead for the year.

South Carolina roads will still likely get more money. The House has placed an extra \$400 million in its budget it sent to the Senate.

But Wednesday's amendment greatly reduces the chances of reforming how commissioners are chosen to the board that helps run the Department of Transportation. Many lawmakers have said that is a critical first step toward getting closer to the extra \$1 billion a year the road agency has said it needs to get state highways back to good condition.

The House could have agreed to the Senate road bill, which allows Gov. Nikki Haley to appoint all members of the DOT board with Senate approval. But instead, the House changed the bill to have approval by the House and Senate.

"Government closest to the people is usually best. And there is no need to take 124 people out of the process," Rep. Gary Simrill,

R-Rock Hill, said of House members.

State Sen. Larry Grooms said in South Carolina's 240 years as a state the Ethics Commission is the only body where both chambers approve members. The Republican from Charleston said senators can't just remove that kind of precedence.

"They knew before they voted that putting in a joint confirmation was going to kill it," said Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey, R-Edgefield. "Several of us told them that beforehand. They knew it and they did it anyway. I think they've killed the bill."

Simrill, who has led the effort to pass a roads bill in the house since the fall of 2014 said that shouldn't be true. He said the House and Senate should agree to a conference committee to hash out their differences.

Massey said that committee likely wouldn't reform DOT enough.

The House waited until after the Legislative Audit

Council released its report on DOT. It found that 54 percent of the state's primary roads are now in poor condition, compared to 31 percent eight years ago. The audit also found DOT reve-

nues aren't even keeping up with inflation.

Gov. Nikki Haley has taken to Facebook to scold and threaten House members this week. After their 113-6 vote to amend the bill Wednesday, she posted the roll call. In an earlier message, she suggested the House was creating problems for future work to get more money for roads.

"The Republican House of Representatives plans to kill two years of work and that as a result, there will be no change in their road conditions anytime soon," Haley wrote.

Simrill said that kind of rhetoric doesn't respect the legislative process. He points out the House passed a more comprehensive road bill that included a gas tax increase nearly one year ago and the proposal sat in the Senate for 11 months.

The House also removed a Senate proposal to move \$400 million each year from the general budget fund and put to roads.

"At worst it is unconstitutional, and at best it is bad public policy," said Simrill, pointing out the state has failed to fund similar promises to education and local governments.

Title: **S.C.transgenderbathroombill draws more opponentsthan support**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 85.71 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



S.C. transgender bathroom bill draws more opponents than support

Proposal would ban transgender men, women from bathrooms of their choice

Three S.C. mayors, former state schools superintendent testify against proposal

Former Columbia city councilman supports ban

BY CASSIE COPE
 ccope@thestate.com

COLUMBIA

Grayson Keck, a 13-year-old transgender male student, goes to classes on the second floor at his Columbia school. But when he goes to the bathroom, he is required to use his school nurse's first-floor restroom.

"I spend most of my time walking up and down the stairs and down the hallway, just to reach the toilet," Keck told two state senators Wednesday.

Heck was just one of more than a dozen witnesses who testified Wednesday in opposition to a proposal that would ban trans-

gender men and women from using the bathrooms of their choice.

"I do not deserve to have the person I am (be) replaced by someone I don't want to be," Keck said. "I do not deserve to be forced to use a restroom where I do not feel safe."

Two state senators — bill sponsor Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg, and bill opponent Joel Lourie, D-Richland — heard from opponents and supporters of the proposal, which mimics part of a North Carolina law that brought a national backlash.

The bill would ban local governments from passing laws allowing transgender people to use the bathrooms or locker rooms of the gender with which they identify.

Bright's proposal faced a tough uphill fight to become law, considered unlikely this year.

If it passes the Senate's full General Committee, Lourie vowed to do everything he can, procedurally, to kill the proposal. And, in the Senate, a single member can hold up a bill, particularly as the legislative session winds down.

SEE TRANSGENDER, 9A

FROM PAGE 1A

TRANSGENDER

Republican Gov. Nikki Haley also has said the bill is unnecessary, and the state's powerful Chamber of Commerce opposes it.

However, a handful of supporters testified in favor of the proposal Wednesday.

"God only created two sexes," said Johnny Gardner, who often protests abortion in the State House lobby. "He created male and female."

Former Columbia City Councilman Cameron Runyan said Bright's proposal is needed to counteract local ordinances that force people to accept the LGBT culture.

But opponents of the pro-

posal outnumbered its supporters.

Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin, Florence Mayor Stephen Wukela and Greenwood Mayor Welborn Adams spoke against the proposal.

The proposal would hurt economic development efforts, Benjamin said. It also "empowers harassment and violence."

"In the City of Florence, our bathrooms are just fine," Wukela said, adding they don't require state supervision or regulation.

Greenwood's Adams said he has heard complaints

about dirty city-maintained bathrooms but never heard a complaint about bathroom access.

Former state schools superintendent Inez Tenenbaum said the bill invites harassment of transgender people and violates federal law.

The proposal is personal to some of those who testified.

Ross Scherer, a retired Army veteran and father of a 9-year-old transgender girl, said passing the bill would put his daughter's safety in jeopardy.

When his daughter dressed up as a princess for

Halloween, Scherer said he joined in — dressing up as a princess, too, to support her.

"With this heinous bill, we are being attacked by misinformed people who stand behind their misguided beliefs," Scherer said.

At one point, about 10 audience members stood up to identify themselves as transgender.

In introducing his bill last week, Bright said he was concerned about the safety of women and girls while they are in a bathroom.

The Upstate conservative told those at the hearing Wednesday he does not think transgender people are

Title: **S.C.transgenderbathroombill draws more opponentsthan support**
Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
Size: 85.71 square inch
Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238

pedophiles. Instead, he said he is concerned grown men would violate young women in the restroom.

But U.S. Attorney Bill Nettles testified he could not find a record of any incident in South Carolina in which a transgender person has assaulted another person in a restroom.

Another opponent of the proposal, Capri Culpepper, drew media attention in 2014, when she was told she had to remove her makeup

before a driver's license photo could be taken at the S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles.

Culpepper sued, and the state agency since has changed its policy, now allowing driver's license applicants to be photographed the way they look on a regular basis.

Senators will hear more testimony on the proposal Thursday.

Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657,

@cassielcope

“

WITH THIS HEINOUS BILL, WE ARE BEING ATTACKED BY MISINFORMED PEOPLE WHO STAND BEHIND THEIR MISGUIDED BELIEFS.

Ross Scherer, retired Army veteran and father of a 9-year-old transgender girl



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Grayson Keck and Dex Sexton testified against a controversial bill that would ban transgender people from choosing which bathroom they use Wednesday during a Senate subcommittee.

Title: **SCHousekills road-repairbill, according to Haley,Grooms**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 34.87 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



SC House kills road-repair bill, according to Haley, Grooms

House votes 113-6 to change Senate plan

Governor, senator say House action kills roads bill

But proposal now heads back to state Senate

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

Gov. Nikki Haley said Wednesday the S.C. House has killed a proposal to change the structure of the state Transportation Department, giving her more control over the state's roads agency.

But House members said the road-repair bill now is back in the Senate's court. Senators either can agree with the House's roads proposal or let a House-Senate panel work out the differences between the two propos-

als, they added.

The House voted 113-6 to send the roads issue back to the Senate.

The House's latest proposal includes requiring both the House and Senate — not just the Senate — approve the governor's nominees to the commission that oversees the Transportation Department. That caveat amounts to “essentially killing any possibility for a good roads bill,” Haley said in a Facebook post

Wednesday.

But Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Darlington, said House members could not approve the Senate's proposal, adding “it falls short of true reform.”

“The legislative process exists so that the General Assembly can work to-

SEE ROADS, 6A

ROADS FROM PAGE 3A

gether to move South Carolina forward, not provide opportunities for political grandstanding,” Lucas said in a statement.

However, state Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Berkeley, said having the full General Assembly approve commissioners — instead of just the Senate — would reverse 240 years of precedent.

In a stop-gap move, senators Wednesday approved permanently extending the governor's power to appoint the Transportation Department's head, in case a bill to restructure the agency does not pass.

“Understanding that the House took actions today to kill any type of restructuring and roads bill, I

decided we needed to move forward in preserving the position of secretary of transportation,” Grooms said.

House leaders pointed fingers at the Senate, saying it had failed.

State Rep. Gary Simrill, R-York, said the Senate should have adopted the House's road-repair proposal, which included res-

tructuring the roads agency and increasing the state's gas tax by the equivalent of a 10 cents a gallon.

But a gas tax died in the Senate. Instead, senators proposed spending an additional \$400 million a year on roads from the state's \$7.5 billion general fund budget.

The S.C. House has approved spending



Title: **SCHousekills road-repairbill, according to Haley,Grooms**
Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
Size: 34.87 square inch
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

\$415 million on road repairs this year in the budget that begins July 1.
House members also were critical of the Senate

for passing a road-repair proposal before senators saw the results of a Legislative Audit Council report on the Transportation

Department, requested by two dozen senators.
“Although a majority of the Senate requested this study, they passed their

amendment days before it was available and could not rely on its findings as a basis for their reform measures,” Lucas said.



Title: **Senate bill requires officials to report who pays them**
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
 Size: 34.72 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238

Senate bill requires officials to report who pays them

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press
 COLUMBIA

Elected and appointed public officials in South Carolina would have to report the sources of their private income – but not how much they are paid – under legislation approved Thursday by the Senate.

The Senate passed the measure by a vote of 40-1. In addition to legislators, the bill would include statewide officers, such as the governor, and members of public boards, such as school boards and city and county councils.

Sen. Vincent Sheheen called it “fake” disclosure.

“If the point of this is to disclose to voters so they can make intelligent decisions based on your economic activity, then y’all be real about it,” said Sheheen, D-Camden. “There’s a difference between \$100 and \$1 million.”

But his attempt to further amend the bill to require officeholders to report how much they make failed on a

voice vote.

Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin countered that requiring people to specify an amount would stop many who work for private businesses from seeking public office.

Martin said employers will say, “You go out and tell employees how much I pay you and you won’t work for me anymore.”

“We don’t want to discourage folks from serving in public office,” said Martin, R-Pickens. “If somebody has a job that gives rise to conflict, trust me, it will be known. That’s why you want that type of information out there.”

Another, perfunctory vote is needed to return the amended bill to the House, which approved it 110-0 last year.

If the bill becomes law, private income sources would show up in the annual “statement of economic interest” each officeholder must file by March 30 every

year. The statements currently require disclosure on public income sources, such as legislative pay.

The vote comes a week after Gov. Nikki Haley publicly accused her long-time ally, GOP Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, of helping to “kill income disclosures.” As the Senate’s presiding officer, he ruled the disclosure issue, under Senate rules, couldn’t be attached to another bill on ethics investigations.

“People deserve to know who pays their elected officials,” Haley posted on social media, along with a photo of McMaster and the Democratic senator who challenged the amendment. “There is no good excuse for what happened today – and how incredibly sad we are for our state.”

Senators of both parties have defended McMaster’s ruling as proper.

Martin said last week the issue wasn’t dead.

Debate continues Thursday in the Senate on the

separate bill regarding who should investigate ethics complaints involving legislators. Many senators don’t like the version that passed the House last year.

Currently, House and Senate ethics committees oversee campaign filings and ethics complaints against their own members, while the State Ethics Commission has oversight of all other officeholders.

Efforts to change that have failed repeatedly, despite legislators of both chambers and parties saying since 2012 that ethics reform is among their top priorities.

The push for ethics reform was renewed that year after Haley successfully defended herself against allegations that she illegally lobbied for employers while she was a House member and failed to report income sources. Haley agreed with legislators that the laws are too vague, and has since pushed for strengthening and clarifying them.

Title: **Bill draws more opponents than support**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 147.87 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



SC TRANSGENDER BATHROOM LEGISLATION

Bill draws more opponents than support

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

Grayson Keck, a 13-year-old transgender male student, goes to classes on the second floor at his Columbia school. But when he goes to the bathroom, he is required to use his school nurse's first-floor restroom.

"I spend most of my time walking up and down the stairs and down the hallway, just to

reach the toilet," Keck told two state senators Wednesday.

Heck was just one of more than a dozen witnesses who testified Wednesday in opposition to a proposal that would ban transgender men and women from using the bathrooms of their choice.

"I do not deserve to have the person I am (be) replaced by someone I don't want to be," Keck said. "I do not deserve to be forced to use a restroom where I do not feel safe."

Two state senators — bill sponsor Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg, and bill opponent Joel Lourie, D-Richland — heard

SEE TRANSGENDER, 5A



thestate.com: Video and more photos from Wednesday's State House hearing and rally

TRANSGENDER FROM PAGE 1A

from opponents and supporters of the proposal, which mimics part of a North Carolina law that brought a national backlash.

The bill would ban local governments from passing laws allowing transgender people to use the bathrooms or locker rooms of the gender with which they identify.

Bright's proposal faced a tough uphill fight to become law, considered unlikely this year.

If it passes the Senate's full General Committee, Lourie vowed to do everything he can, procedurally, to kill the proposal. And, in the Senate, a single member can hold up a bill, particularly as the legislative session winds down.

Republican Gov. Nikki Haley also has said the bill is unnecessary, and the state's powerful

Chamber of Commerce opposes it.

However, a handful of supporters testified in favor of the proposal Wednesday.

"God only created two sexes," said Johnny Gardner, who often protests abortion in the State House lobby. "He created male and female."

Former Columbia City Councilman Cameron Runyan said Bright's proposal is needed to counteract local ordinances that force people to accept the LGBT culture.

But opponents of the proposal outnumbered its supporters.

Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin, Florence Mayor Stephen Wukela and Greenwood Mayor Welborn Adams spoke against the proposal.

The proposal would hurt economic development efforts, Benjamin said. It also "empowers harassment and violence."

"In the City of Florence, our bathrooms are just fine," Wukela said, adding they don't require state supervision or regulation.

Greenwood's Adams said he has heard complaints about dirty city-maintained bathrooms but never heard a complaint about bathroom access.

Former state schools superintendent Inez Tenenbaum said the bill invites harassment of transgender people and violates federal law.

The proposal is personal to some of those who testified.

Ross Scherer, a retired Army veteran and father of a 9-year-old transgender girl, said passing the bill would put his daughter's safety in jeopardy.

When his daughter dressed up as a princess for Halloween, Scherer said he joined in — dressing up as a princess, too,

to support her.

"With this heinous bill, we are being attacked by misinformed people who stand behind their misguided beliefs," Scherer said.

At one point, about 10 audience members stood up to identify themselves as transgender.

In introducing his bill last week, Bright said he was concerned about the safety of women and girls while they are in a bathroom.

The Upstate conservative told those at the hearing Wednesday he does not think transgender people are pedophiles. Instead, he said he is concerned grown men would violate young women in the restroom.

But U.S. Attorney Bill Nettles testified he could not find a record of any incident in South Carolina in which a transgender person has assaulted another person in a restroom.



Title: **Bill draws more opponents than support**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 147.87 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

Another opponent of the proposal, Capri Culpepper, drew media attention in 2014, when she was told she had to remove her makeup before a driver's license photo could be taken at the S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles.

Culpepper sued, and the state agency since has changed its policy, now allowing driver's license applicants to be photographed the way they look on a regular basis.

Senators will hear more

Senate OKs requiring elected officials to reveal who pays them

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

testimony on the proposal Thursday.

—
Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657, @cassielcope

The S.C. Senate passed a proposal Wednesday to require elected officials and candidates to disclose where they get their money.

"Disclosing sources of private income is a significant first step for the Senate in enacting ethics reform," said Senate Judiciary Committee

chairman Larry Martin, R-Pickens. "It will provide the public with important information about who pays public officials, making potential conflicts more transparent."

Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey, R-Edgefield, said S.C. citizens deserve to know who is paying their elected officials.

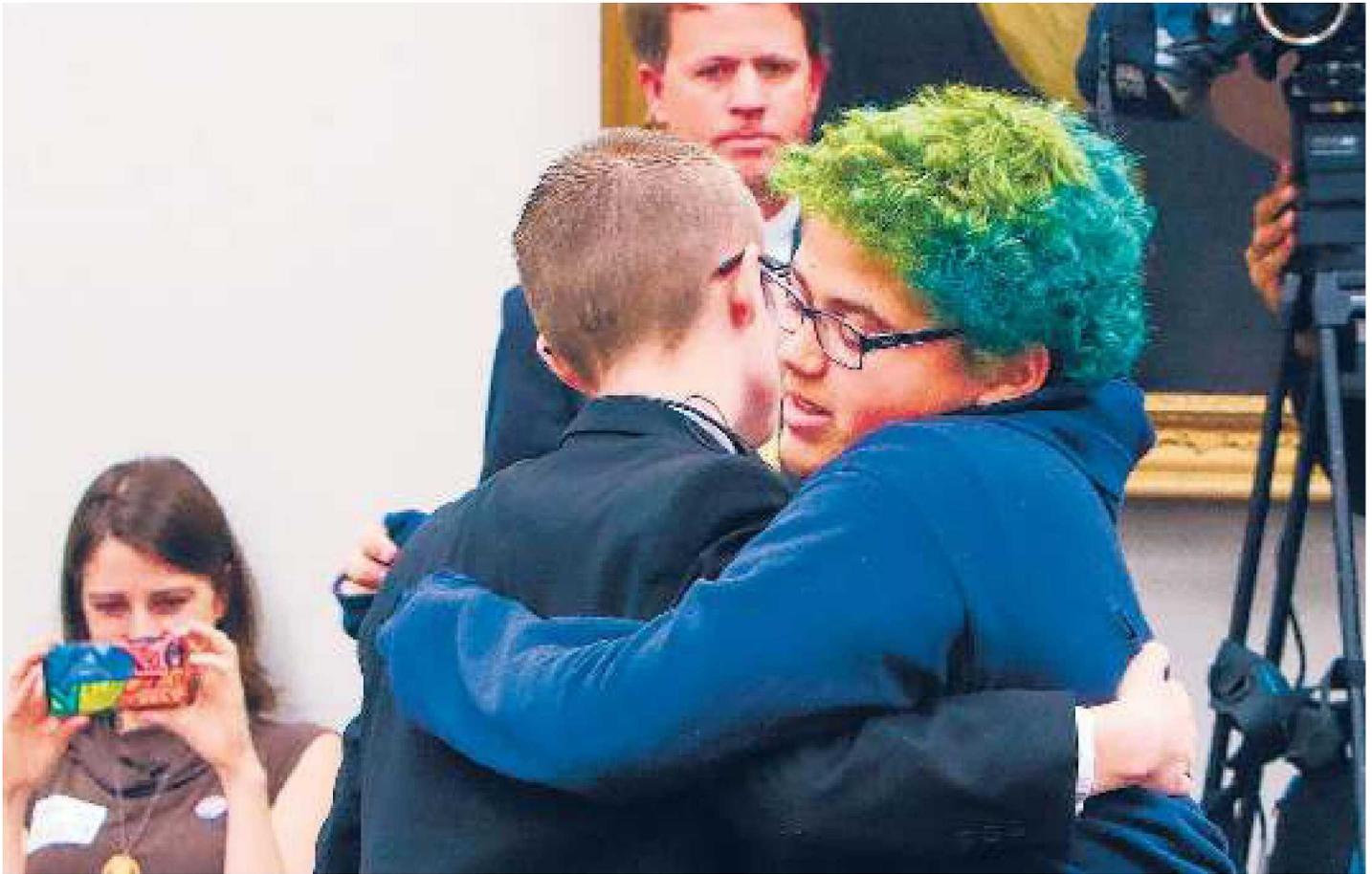
The League of Women Voters, which has advocated for ethics reform, was delighted the Senate approved the proposal,

said Lynn Teague of the group.

"This is a very important component of ethics reform that will help citizens to evaluate for themselves whether officials have conflicts of interest that might influence them," Teague said, urging senators now to approve a proposal that allows independent investigations of ethics complaints against legislators.

Martin and Massey said that will be the next step.

Title: **Bill draws more opponents than support**
Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
Size: 147.87 square inch
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Grayson Keck hugs Dex Sexton after they testified during a Senate subcommittee to consider the controversial bill that would ban transgender people from choosing the bathroom they use. They were against the bill.

Title: **Bill draws more opponents than support**
Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
Size: 147.87 square inch
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

The Trans Student Alliance at USC held a rally and news conference at the State House to protest the S. 1203 bill that would ban transgender people from choosing the bathroom they use.



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Senators Lee Bright and Joel Lourie listen to testimony during a Senate subcommittee hearing about the bill.

Title: **Pick the losers**
 Author:
 Size: 24.49 square inch
 Georgetown, SC Circulation: 0



Pick the losers

To the edidor,
 Applause from the audience.

“Welcome to the ‘Loser’s Round’ of “So You Think You Have a Deal,” brought to you by the American Petroleum Institute whose goal is to supply the United States with the best politicians money can buy. I’m your host Bob Blowhard.

“You remember that last week we brought back Sen. Tim Scott whose valiant effort to have the 50-mile offshore oil drilling restriction removed so oil rigs would be visible as close as three miles was rebuffed when President Obama pulled drilling leases in the Atlantic off the table. That qualified him as a big loser. Who do we have this week, Don?”

Don: “Gov. Nikki Haley, come on down!”

Bob: “Gov. Haley, this time you get to choose between door number one labeled ‘Pick the Winner,’ door number two labeled ‘The People’ or door number three labeled ‘Surprise.’ Which do you choose first?”

Gov. Haley: “Well, Bob, I’m usually pretty good at picking winners, so I’ll take door number one.”

Bob: “Sorry, governor, but you (and Tim Scott) decided to back Marco Rubio in this year’s presidential race. His lackluster performance in the debates and his loss in even his home state’s primary

knocked him out of the contest early. Care to try another

door?”

Gov. Haley: “I am the governor of the people of South Carolina, so I’ll take door number two.”

Bob: “Sorry, again, governor, but you pursued offshore oil drilling in the Atlantic in spite of the fact that every coastal community in your state opposed it and that over one million people wrote to the Federal Government opposing it. When President Obama withdrew leasing of oil rights in the Atlantic the best you could come up with was, ‘Golly, he sure pulled the rug out from under me!’ It is clear that you do not represent ‘The People’ so you lose on this one.”

Bob: “Since this is the ‘Loser’s Round’ we can’t let you go home empty-handed. You get what is behind the surprise door number three. You have won an all-expense paid trip to California by way of Florida, courtesy of oil and gas tycoons ‘The Koch Brothers,’ so you can take part in an intense training seminar on ‘How to Succeed in Politics by Representing only the Fat Cats’ with the hope that they will get more for their money next time. Don, who is our next loser?”

Don: “Now we have Gulf of Mexico sport fishermen, African big-game zebra hunter, and all-around macho man, S.C. Rep. Stephen Goldfinch. come on down!”

Applause from the audience.

*Ed Yaw
 Pawleys Island*