

Title: **Haley stayed tone-deaf to coastal citizens**
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EDITORIAL

Haley stayed tone-deaf to coastal citizens

Over the past few months, there has been a lot of talk about a disconnect between Washington, D.C., and, well, everyone else.

We are told it is why the candidacies of Bernie Sanders, for the Democrats, and Donald Trump, for the Republicans, have found deep roots in the discontentment of voters.

Both candidates, who are as far apart from one another as politically possible, have found their campaigns bolstered by citizens who are looking for a voice much like their own.

Making political hay out of Washington politicians is easy, and it's certainly nothing new. In fact one of the best political jokes comes from Mark Twain: "Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

In fact, those in Washington are easy pickings for the discontented and the comedians. It's hard to tell which is which sometimes.

But you don't have to go all the way to Washington, D.C., to be discontented with politicians. Columbia isn't that far away, after all, and Gov. Nikki Haley is often as out of step as anyone in Washington.

When the Obama administration announced last month that it would not open up the Atlantic coast to oil exploration, coastal communities from Myrtle Beach and Pawleys Island to Georgetown and Hilton Head celebrated. For too long, residents braced for a future that could have included oil rigs off our coastlines. They also feared the worst if the unthinkable – a BP Horizon-like spill – occurred.

All in all, 23 municipalities representing every coastal town and city in the state formally opposed oil exploration off the coast.

But that wasn't enough for Haley, who when not campaigning for no-go presidential hopefuls like Marco Rubio, seemed stuck in the morass of Columbia and completely lost on the feelings of South Carolinians who don't hang around the state capital.

When the decision was announced that drilling would not be allowed, Haley offered a tone-deaf comment. "Just another disappointment from D.C.," she said.

The federal government, the governor went on to

say, pulled "the rug out from under us."

Not really.

The federal government actually listened to thousands of voices along the Atlantic coast, from Florida to the Carolinas. U.S. Rep. and former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford got it right.

"This is fantastic news for the coast of South Carolina," Sanford said. "Residents along our coast should be proud of the way they united on this issue and sent a compelling message to Washington."

How can Sanford and Haley, both Republicans, be so far apart on this one issue?

How can they be so far apart in understanding the pulse of whole regions of the state?

More than 400 businesses had called on Haley to not support oil exploration off the Atlantic coast, and towns, cities and communities along the coast called on the federal government not to let it happen.

They also implored the governor to stand with them.

She refused.

As far back as 2012, Haley was a champion for the oil companies, rather than her coastal citizens. In a press conference with U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, the governor said, "Offshore drilling is where we need to be."

Even while she espoused her disappointment in the federal government's decision not to allow offshore exploration last month, Haley tried to have it both ways by saying risky drilling would never have been allowed. "Tourism," she said, "is too huge to South Carolina to take that chance."

That's right, it is. But it's more than just dollars and cents, it's about protecting what is uniquely ours, given by God and entrusted to the people to nurture. It's also about listening to citizens and not being blinded by politics.

It's become a go-to political line to say Washington, D.C., politicians don't listen to – and, in turn, don't represent – the electorate, but the same can be said about Gov. Haley and others in Columbia. When an entire region from the northern to the southern end of the state begs to be heard, it shouldn't be that hard to hear their voices.

Title: **Want to graduate college debt free? Teach in a rural area**
 Author: SEANNA ADCOX ASSOCIATED PRESS
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Want to graduate college debt free? Teach in a rural area

SEANNA ADCOX

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA— The teacher shortage in poor, rural districts in South Carolina is so bad, the state is considering offering would-be instructors a way to graduate from college debt free.

The catch? They have to spend eight years in the state's neediest districts, where turnover is the worst and the closest Wal-Mart can be up to 45 minutes away. There's another, perhaps even bigger, hurdle with Gov. Nikki Haley's proposal: The state doesn't have enough teachers interested in its current \$5 million loan-forgiveness program.

"We're in deep trouble," said Melanie Barton, director of South Carolina's Education Oversight Committee. "We used to go to Ohio and Pennsylvania a lot to get teachers. Now those

states don't have surpluses."

The teacher shortage is nationwide. In South Carolina, colleges are graduating about 2,000 fewer teachers than needed. Many college students don't want to become teachers and the ones that do typically don't want to work in remote places. States are offering to wipe away college loans or increase salaries, but the incentives haven't enticed enough teachers.

In Indiana, the Legislature recently passed (March 22) the "Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship," rewarding students who commit to teaching five years in any public school with up to \$30,000 off their college tuition. But the program is limited to 200 students yearly who graduate in the top 20 percent of their

high school class.

House Speaker Brian Bosma, a Republican who sponsored the measure, called the program an "innovative way to encourage high school students."

"In today's economy, we realize our top-performing students have many college and career options," he said.

California faces one of the nation's most severe teacher shortages: Enrollment in college education programs has dropped more than 70 percent over the last decade, according to the Learning Policy Institute.

A bill to reinstate a program slashed during the recession offers loan forgiveness to graduates who spend four years in a disadvantaged

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Debt

Continued from Page 1A

or rural area teaching a subject where there is an identified shortage. But to get to pre-recession levels, California districts will need to hire 60,000 new teachers.

"You really can't afford to be a teacher if you owe \$20-25,000 in student loan debt," said bill sponsor, Sen. Fran Pavley, a Democrat, adding California's high cost of living in many cities makes being a teacher even more challenging.

A state task force in Idaho, on the other hand,

determined it would be more effective to increase average teacher salaries, said Blake Youde, spokesman for the Idaho State Board of Education.

Under the South Carolina governor's proposal, students could get \$30,000 worth of student loans erased by working in one of 20 districts where teacher turnover ranged from 11 percent to 34 percent last year.

"There's nothing worse for a child to see

teachers come and go, because it makes them feel it's not worth teaching in their school," said Haley, who grew up in Bamberg, a town of 3,500 people. The teachers will "become part of the community, so it may not have a movie theater and may not have a restaurant, but it has a community they fall in love with, and that's what we're going to focus on."

The existing Teacher Loan Program, created in 1984, offers less money — up to \$20,000 for tu-

ition — but the loan is erased in as few as three years if the graduate teaches a hard-to-fill subject, such as science, in a "critical" school. If the job doesn't fit both criteria, the loan's forgiven in five years.

And that doesn't require teaching in a rural district, since high poverty rates mean 70 percent of schools statewide are "critical." Yet, since 2013, a drop in applicants has left the program unable to spend the \$5 million legislators

provided in the budget.

Thelma Sojourner, superintendent of Denmark-Olar schools, said she's optimistic about the new rural teacher proposal. Her district of



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"Their eyes are always looking to see, 'How can I get to a larger district with more to offer?' If the opportunity comes, they take off," said Sojourner, a Denmark native who's worked in the district for 45 years, the last six

as superintendent. "If they are a good teacher, look at how many lives they can touch in seven or eight years. It would make a tremendous difference in terms of student performance."

Haley asked legislators to put \$13.5 million into the rural initiative. The South Carolina House instead put \$8.2 million in its budget toward the plan and an additional \$9 million to poor districts to be used

as one-time teacher signing or performance bonuses. The Senate hasn't taken up the plan yet.

In South Carolina, first-year teachers make just slightly more than graduates' average debt of \$29,000.

"Money isn't everything," said Jane Turner, director of South Carolina's Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement. "But if you've got a student loan to pay back, you

have to look at starting pay."

The Associated Press tried to talk to teachers in the current loan forgiveness program. Messages left with multiple district officials were not returned.

Fourth-grade teacher Lori Clarke, who went back to college from the business world to become a teacher, got \$45,000 worth of loans forgiven through the state's separate Career

Changers program.

Those loans were erased in three years of working in a high-poverty school in the Columbia area. She ended up staying for 11.

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Associated Press
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The catch? They have to spend eight years in the state's neediest districts, where turnover is the worst and the closest Walmart can be up to 45 minutes away. There's another, perhaps even bigger, hurdle with Gov. Nikki Haley's proposal: The state doesn't have enough teachers interested in its current \$5 million loan-forgiveness program.

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"You really can't afford to be a teacher if you owe (\$20,000) to 25,000 in student loan debt," said bill sponsor, Sen. Fran Pavley, a Democrat, adding California's high cost of living in many cities makes being a teacher even more challenging.

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SEANNA M. ADCOX AP

Fourth-grade teacher Lori Clarke prepares for students at Lonnie B. Nelson Elementary in suburban Columbia.

Title: **Some students could graduate debt free**
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Some students could graduate debt free

Proposal under consideration for teachers in needy districts

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Fourth-grade teacher Lori Clarke, on teaching in a high-poverty area

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AP PHOTO/SEANNA M. ADCOX

Fourth-grade teacher Lori Clarke prepares for her students at Lonnie B. Nelson Elementary in Richland School District 2 in suburban Columbia. South Carolina's Career Changers loan-forgiveness program nearly covered the cost of Clarke's master's degree in education from the University of South Carolina. After graduating, \$45,000 worth of loans were erased over three years of teaching at a high-poverty school in the Columbia area. She now works in a nearby school district.

Title: **One HotMama chef to represent SC at NYC event**
 Author: BY WADE LIVINGSTON wlivingston@islandpacket.com
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One Hot Mama chef to represent SC at NYC event

Orchid Paulmeier is one of four chefs named to the South Carolina Chef Ambassador program

Paulmeier owns Hilton Head Island's One Hot Mama, which sells barbecue and wings, among other things

BY WADE LIVINGSTON

wlivingston@islandpacket.com

Orchid Paulmeier tapped her foot up and down on the floor.

She stood near the end of the bar on Friday, her pink "Hot Mama" shirt clashing with One Hot Mama's — her restaurant's — black ceiling and low light. A man walked up to her, handed her a cookie sheet.

"I'd say 'Good luck out there,' but I know you're gonna wipe up," he said.

"Oh, I hope so," Paul-

meier said. "That's the pressure of it, you know? Like Wingfest wasn't so bad because I didn't win anything last year — I didn't even place. So I was back (this year) with a vengeance. For four years straight I won. So this year was just, like, 'I gotta win it.'"

"Well," the man said, "the rib thing — you're

like the Rocky Balboa of ribs."

Paulmeier is prepping for an upcoming rib competition. She'd smoked a rack for the man with the cookie sheet — a photographer, tasked with making her food look even better. A challenge, perhaps, considering Paulmeier's chops: successful restaurateur who might sell 500 pounds of meat and 2,000 chicken wings in a single day; Food Network star; and, soon, guest

chef at the James Beard House in New York City.

Paulmeier is one of four South Carolina chefs

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CHEF

named to the South Carolina Chef Ambassador program, an initiative developed by Gov. Nikki Haley and Chef Brandon Velie, according to a news release from the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. The program is designed to showcase the Palmetto State's food culture and travel appeal in other parts of the country, in hopes of driving more tourists to the state. In August, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism will host an event featuring Paulmeier and her fellow ambassadors at the James Beard House.

"It's like the Oscars of food," Paulmeier said, referring to the James

Beard Foundation, which gives out the country's top culinary awards.

The foundation operates the James Beard House, which carefully selects who can cook there. According to foundation's website, guest chefs are invited to the house because they have, among other things, a "national or regional reputation, as evidenced by press and resume/biography."

Paulmeier's story began in Chicago, where she lived for more than 20 years. Her parents — a nurse and an engineer — left the Philippines and raised her in the Windy City. She's a Chicago Cubs fan, and a fan of Uno's pizza. She likes

Italian beef and hot dogs, both from Widen's.

"We'll literally drive there straight from the airport," she said.

She married her high school sweetheart, and the couple has three teenagers. She opened the first One Hot Mama's in Bluffton in 2003, but sold it after she opened her current location on Greenwood Drive on Hilton Head Island in 2007. She was a finalist on Season 7 of Food Network Star in 2011.

"I'd like to get on another TV show, but I gotta find one that fits," she said. "Who wouldn't wanna go back on Food Network and compete for something?"

She's also hoping to

open a One Hot Mama's in Bluffton, and to franchise the restaurant — that's always been the goal, she said.

As for the meal she'll soon cook at the James Beard House, she can't say much. The menu has been finished for more than a month, she said. It'll feature some local grains trying to make a comeback.

Jimmy Red Corn Grits out of Edisto, she said. African Runner Peanuts that'll be used in a sauce.

That's all she could say — and August is a long time away.

On Friday, she was busy filling catering and other food orders. A clipboard crammed with about 20 pieces of paper dictated her

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day. Not much time to sit down and talk at the bar.

At the end of the bar at One Hot Mama's, Paulmeier laughed at the "Rocky Balboa of ribs" remark.

"Hey, he finally won an Oscar, right?" she said. "So we're good."

The man laughed, then left.

A customer who overheard the exchange asked her a question.

"I won four straight (Wingfests), then last year nothing, not even a second place," she said, answering him. "And then this year we won first judge's choice."

"So you're back?" the customer said.

"Always," she said as she laughed. "Even when I'm not, I think I am."

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IT'S LIKE THE

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Orchid Paulmeier, owner of One Hot Mama, referring to the James Beard Foundation, which gives out the country's top culinary awards



MICHAEL HRIZUK Submitted

Chef Orchid Paulmeier is shown at her Hilton Head Island restaurant One Hot Mama's. Paulmeier was recently selected to be a 2016 SC Chef Ambassador at the upcoming James Beard House in New York City.

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Haley vents over ethics bill

Senate will take up individual components of proposal after ruling halted the debate

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

COLUMBIA - The chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee says the Senate will take up individual components of an ethics bill next week after a ruling Thursday by Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster halted debate on the bill and drew a tongue lashing from the governor.

Sen. Larry Martin, a Pickens Republican, told *The Greenville News* that the Senate first will take up the issue of allowing the State Ethics Commission to conduct ethics investigations of lawmakers and then will take up

failure of ethics reform," he said. "It makes it a bit more challenging because you have to pass another bill. But you know what? It's not rocket science."

The Senate was debating a House-passed bill this week on ethics reform that Martin's committee had amended with other components. The House has passed ethics reforms bills individually and in one bill in an attempt to get them passed in the Senate, all to no avail during the past two years.

On Thursday, Sen. Gerald Malloy, a Darlington County Democrat, raised an issue with the way the Senate was considering the legislation.

McMaster, who is the presiding officer in the Senate, sustained the ruling, offering yet another setback to an issue that has seen a series of setbacks in the Senate in recent years.

That drew the wrath of Gov. Nikki Haley, who has pushed for ethics reform for four years and had told senators she wanted the bill passed without any new amendments.

"It is amazing the level elected officials will go to avoid disclosing who pays them," she posted on her Facebook page. "Never did we think that this Lt. Governor would help the Senate kill income disclosures. We have fought for this for four years because people deserve to know who pays their elected officials — including the part time ones, like the legislators and the Lt. Governor. Income disclosure was killed by Gerald Malloy and Henry McMaster. There is no good excuse for what happened today — and how incredibly sad we are for our state."

See HALEY, Page 4A



Nikki Haley

a separate House bill that would require lawmakers and public officials to disclose all sources of income.

"While yesterday was a bit of a disappointment,

it was not anywhere closed to

Haley

Continued from Page 3A

Haley posted photos of Malloy and McMaster on her Facebook page.

Malloy, after spotting the governor's post, issued a release attacking Haley as a "hypocrite."

"It's a really sad day in South Carolina when Governor Haley decides to criticize me for following the rules of the South Carolina Senate," he said. "Bless her heart. It seems to me that Gov-

ernor Hypocrite Haley has a bad case of short term memory loss. It was not too long ago that the Ethics Committee in the South Carolina House of Representatives white washed hear-

ings on Representative Nikki Haley for her failure to disclose her own income."

Malloy's reference was to the 2012 dismissal of ethics accusations

against Haley concerning her years as a legislator. A businessman had raised ethics questions tied to her failure to report income from an engineering firm and her work as a fundraiser

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for a hospital foundation. Haley denied she violated the law and none of the witnesses told the committee they were aware of any wrongdoing on her part. Her accuser was not allowed to testify.

"I find it very funny that she has the time to post on social media when our roads and bridges are falling apart, our schools are not being fully funded and rural hospitals are closing because of her failed leadership," Malloy added.

Martin, who has spearheaded ethics reform efforts in the Senate, said he talked with Haley after the ruling. He said he does not fault McMaster for it.

"I have great respect for the predicament that he was in," he said. "I don't fault him at all. I think it was a close call but he had to make a ruling he thought he could justify and I respect that."

He said there is another way to enact the same legislation, which he intends to push next week.

"Now what we need to do, rather than engaging in recriminations about what happened yesterday, is to move forward and pass these two bills," he said.

The first bill, which by amendment is already pending before the Sen-

ate, would allow the Ethics Commission to investigate but not punish lawmakers. Any disciplinary action, if necessary, would be handled by House or Senate ethics committees. Those committees now investigate and issue any penalties for lawmakers found in violation.

Martin said the reform also would make any allegations against a legislator public much earlier in the process and would send any possible criminal violations to the state attorney general's office.

"It is a much improved process," he said of the proposal. "It puts a wall between the Legislature and the investigation so no one can say members of the House and Senate are investigating themselves."

The second bill would require public officials to disclose all sources of income but not amounts. Lawmakers already publicly disclose income from public sources, such as their legislative pay or if their regular job is in the public sector, such as a county administrator.

Martin said some will push to disclose all amounts but he said businesses would oppose that because it could disclose proprietary information.

"What we're after is

the source," he said. "We're not after destroying people's ability to make a living."

He said debate about a proposal to force the disclosure of donors to so-called "independent committees," organizations that currently are not required to disclose funding sources and campaign on issues and sometimes produce ads for or against a candidate, may resume but he will not push it.

He said he made a deal with Senate Republicans not to push to include the issue if they supported putting an ethics bill up for debate.

Sen. Vincent Sheheen, a Camden Democrat, was at the podium talking about his proposal to require disclosure of such "dark money" when McMaster made his ruling. Now the Senate will have to bring up a House bill on the issue if it wants to debate it.

Democrats have said such organizations were behind robocalls and an effort to defeat any increase in the gas tax during the Senate's roads debate last month.

Sheheen said he and other lawmakers have been pushing for disclosure of who is bankrolling such groups for three years. He said such groups, which have been

tied to millionaires and billionaires, are "trying to steal our Democracy in this state and across the country."

"The only way to really solve the dark money problem is to shine light on it," he told the Senate. "There's a reason it's called dark money. It's because it's hidden money."

Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman told Sheheen that constituents in his district have received calls from a group attacking him, calls he said are not truthful.

"If they don't have to disclose who their donors are, then why would they care if they are truthful?" Sheheen asked. "Because they can do it all under the cover of darkness."

Martin, who has expressed his own frustration over the efforts of such organizations, said he does not believe the Senate will take up the issue if it votes on the issues of investigations and income disclosure.

He says the Legislature can't impose new rules on groups in the middle of an election cycle and the issue is a complicated one in the law because of various court rulings.

"The case law on what states can do to require disclosure has been a moving target," he said.

Title: **Lockheed Martin donates \$25K for state flood relief**
 Author: STAFF REPORT
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Lockheed Martin donates \$25K for state flood relief

STAFF REPORT

Lockheed Martin demonstrated its support of South Carolina's flood relief efforts with a gift of \$25,000

Representatives of the company presented a check to South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley in response to the major flooding that hit the state in late 2015. The funds will be used specifically to support flood recovery costs to return military veterans and their families to their homes.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that — with the addition of Sikorsky — employs approximately 126,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustain-

ment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

"At Lockheed Martin, we are committed to supporting the communities in which we live and work," said Don Erickson, Lockheed Martin Greenville Operations site director. "Our hope is that this gift will not only help restore the tangible losses caused by the flood, but will also provide encouragement to those who were impacted to know that neighbors are working together to rebuild our communities."

Haley has led the effort to raise funds for One SC, the organization established by the state to help South Carolinians rebuild and repair their homes that were damaged or destroyed during the flood.

"We have neighbors and families who are still in need as we continue to rebuild a stronger South Carolina, and we are grateful for the continued generosity and kindness of so many across the state and country," said Haley.

A number of state and federal government agencies and non-profits assisted residents immediately following the flood with needs such as temporary housing, goods and clothing.

The state is now into the long-term recovery phase. The greatest anticipated unmet need now is getting people back into a safe, habitable home.

For additional information about Lockheed Martin's support of military and veterans, visit <http://lockheed-martin.com/us/who-we-are/community/customer.html>.

Title: **LAC calls crumbling highways time bomb**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
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LAC calls crumbling highways time bomb

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - The cost to repair South Carolina's crumbling infrastructure is a "time bomb," a Legislative Audit Council official told House lawmakers Thursday.

But members of the House panel that heard results of this week's massive audit of the state Department of Transportation took no action on whether to concur with the Senate's roads bill that House leaders have criticized as inadequate to meet the state's long-term funding needs.

The panel, which last year drafted the House roads plan, spent five hours listening to LAC and DOT officials talk about the massive audit

released Tuesday that found problems with DOT's governance model, its prioritization of road projects and its operations, as well as its funding shortfall.

But Rep. Gary Simrill, a Rock Hill Republican who chairs the panel, told the panel afterward that Thursday's meeting was to gather information about the audit, not to recommend what to do about the Senate bill.

That didn't stop some lawmakers from trying.

Rep. Russell Ott, a Calhoun County Democrat, said he felt the LAC information is "very compel-

ling that the last thing we need to do is concur with what the Senate sent us."

Rep. Joe Neal, a Richland County Democrat, said the audit's result show "we don't have enough resources."

Neal said while he thinks neither the House nor Senate plans provide enough funding, he favors the House version.

"Right now it doesn't look like we're winning the roads war," he said.

Rep. Chip Limehouse, a Charles-

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Roads

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ton Republican and another member of the panel, tried to elicit opinions on the Senate's plan from officials appearing before the panel before voicing his own thoughts.

"I think the Senate plan is the worst plan since maybe the German army decided to invade Leningrad," he said.

The Senate's roads bill would spend \$400 million a year from the General Fund on roads and would allow the governor to appoint the DOT board.

House leaders have criticized the Senate bill, arguing it does not address the state's

long-term infrastructure needs with a sustainable source of revenue. The House roads bill passed last year raised about \$400 million through both a sales tax on gas and raising the cap on the sales tax on vehicles.

But late last year officials learned the state would have a \$1.4 billion budget surplus this year and that caused Senate Republicans to balk at any gas tax increase.

Gov. Nikki Haley is pushing House members to agree with the Senate bill, worried that if they propose changes, the bill will not pass this year and

reforms in the bill will be lost.

DOT Chairman Mike Wooten asked lawmakers Thursday to provide the cash-strapped agency with a sustainable source of funding, such as an increase in the gas tax, and not money from the General Fund.

"We finally have the team we need," he said of DOT's leadership. "Give them something to work with."

Brad Hanley, audit manager for the LAC, said if DOT spent every dime available each year just to fix roads in the state rated in poor condition, it would take 12 years, or a total of \$12.5

billion. He said the costs are a "time bomb" for the state if left unaddressed.

Hanley also said that even if all of the LAC's audit report findings are followed, the resulting savings are "not a bucket of money."

The audit reported no fraud or financial mismanagement, though it did question how DOT spent some of its money and resources.

State Transportation Secretary Christy Hall told the panel she wants the state to focus on fixing its primary roads, which carry about half of its traffic. But even focusing on primary roads that are in poor condition would cost \$2.3 billion,

she said.

Hall has previously estimated that it would take about \$1.2 billion more per year to improve all of the state's roads and bridges to good condition.

While answering lawmakers' questions on funding, Hall told them she felt the most critical issue for her agency was

addressing its governance. Currently, the transportation secretary, which leads DOT, is appointed by the governor, while most of the DOT board is elected by legislative delegations.

Some lawmakers voiced concerns with DOT other than funding.

Rep. Mac Toole, a Lex-



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ington County Republican, said while the agency needs more funding, he believes there are about 10-12 "major issues" in the audit that need addressing.

"Throwing money at this," he said, "I do not think is the answer to this issue."

Rep. Phyllis Henderson, a Greer Republican who chairs a House oversight panel on DOT and also sits on the panel that heard the audit results Thursday, said she is concerned with the lack of data and documentation discovered by auditors concerning the prioritization process.

zation process.

Rep. Bill Hixon, an Aiken County Republican, said he feels like the Legislature is near the finish line on roads but doesn't want to apply a financial Band-Aid to the need.

"We need to be able to dedicate a stream of funding," he said.

Simrill told the panel he remains hopeful.

"We all recognize that for the future of South Carolina roads, the LAC says it, DOT says it, there's nobody that does not say it, that we must have a reliable, sustainable futuristic source to pay for our roads," he said.

Title: **Bathroom bill in SC bad for business?**
 Author: AMANDA COYNE THE GREENVILLE NEWS
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Bathroom bill in SC bad for business?

Other states have paid price
in restricting transgenders

AMANDA COYNE

THE GREENVILLE NEWS

A bill filed in the South Carolina Senate that would restrict transgender people's access to restrooms and changing rooms could bring business problems that have plagued other states that have

enacted similar legislation, experts say.

Senate Bill 1203, filed by Sen. Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg, would bar local governments and school boards from passing laws or enacting policies allowing people to use multiple occupancy restrooms and changing facilities that correspond with the gender with which they identify. It would also mandate that

state-run parks, museums and other facilities only allow people to use the restrooms and changing facilities that correspond with their biological sex at birth.

By Thursday afternoon, three Upstate senators had joined the bill as co-sponsors: Sen. Kevin Bryant (R-Anderson), Sen. Larry Martin (R-Pickens) and Sen. Mike Fair (R-Greenville), all of whom are facing primary opponents. Bright, who also represents parts of Greenville County, is also facing a primary challenge, with three candidates running to unseat him.

The Greenville Chamber of Commerce came out against the bill Thursday, saying it does not promote economic inclusion, growth or competitiveness.

"This legislation simply opens a contentious debate on a problem we do not have here in our state," said Carlos Phil-

Inside

Senator slams
Bright's restroom
bill, **Page 3A**

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Bathroom bill

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lips, the chamber's president and CEO.

The bill has been compared to North Carolina's controversial House Bill 2, which includes provisions mirroring those in Bright's bill, but also blocks local policies that would protect LGBT people from being denied service at restaurants, hotels and other private businesses based on proprietors' religious beliefs. Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal recently vetoed a bill that would have allowed business owners to deny LGBT people service based on religious beliefs. Last week, Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant signed a law that would allow businesses and faith-based groups to deny LGBT people service, jobs, housing and adoption and foster care services on the basis of religion.

Companies have responded negatively to the controversial legislation in other Southern states. Payment company PayPal withdrew plans to add 400 jobs in a Charlotte expansion in response to the North Carolina legislation. NCAA President Mark Emmert has said that the law would count against the state when the sports league considers sites for future postseason games and tournaments, and the NBA said the legislation could affect its decision to hold its all-star game in Charlotte in 2017.

Before Deal vetoed the Georgia bill, the NFL said it would not consider At-

lanta for future Super Bowl sites if the bill became law. Disney was one of multiple film companies to threaten to stop filming movies in Georgia.

In South Carolina, similar reactions could be expected, said Derek Black, a University of South Carolina School of Law professor specializing in civil rights law.

"I don't have any reason to believe South Carolina would have a pass in a way North Carolina and Mississippi would not," Black said.

But much of the potential damage could already have been done simply by introducing the bill, said Tom Smythe, a Furman University business professor.

"The fact that the bill has been introduced at all creates this perception,

rightly or wrongly, that South Carolina is behind the times," Smythe said. "Just the introduction of the bill almost may cause as much damage as if it were passed ... We suggest that we're so pro-business, and we are, and something like this happens, and the business community says, 'You're not being pro-business.'"

Learning about legislation that is perceived anti-LGBT may give companies pause when considering South Carolina as a site for expansion or investment.

The only major difference in the po-

tential affect on South Carolina from states like North Carolina or Georgia would be the scale, Smythe said. Atlanta and Charlotte are popular sites for major professional sports events, and comparable places in South Carolina don't exist. However, the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the State House did provide South Carolina with more opportunities to host NCAA postseason games and tournaments. That opportunity could be put in jeopardy once more if Bright's bill were to pass.

"Last year we were able to welcome back in some business opportunities and athletic opportunities that we hadn't had before," Black said. "We took a big step in taking the flag down and saying South Carolina is as welcome as any other state. Passing a bill like this could undo some of that."

But whether the bill will pass is a significant question. It has less than a month to pass by the May 1 deadline that would carry it over to the House of Representatives. Gov. Nikki Haley, who has made economic development a hallmark of her administration, dismissed it as unnecessary with little chance of passage when speaking to reporters Wednesday and Thursday.

"Nothing is going to happen with the bill this year," Haley said.

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FILE

Sen. Lee Bright, who argued to keep the Confederate battle flag on the Statehouse last July, has filed a bill that would bar local governments from passing laws or ordinances allowing people to use multiple occupancy restrooms that correspond to the gender with which they identify.

Title: **Haley stayed tone-deaf to coastal citizens**
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EDITORIAL

Haley stayed tone-deaf to coastal citizens

Over the past few months, there has been a lot of talk about a disconnect between Washington, D.C., and, well, everyone else.

We are told it is why the candidacies of Bernie Sanders, for the Democrats, and Donald Trump, for the Republicans, have found deep roots in the discontentment of voters. Both candidates, who are as far apart from one another as politically possible, have found their campaigns bolstered by citizens who are looking for a voice much like their own.

Making political hay out of Washington politicians is easy, and it's certainly nothing new. In fact one of the best political jokes comes from Mark Twain: "Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

In fact, those in Washington are easy pickings for the discontented and the comedians. It's hard to tell which is which sometimes.

But you don't have to go all the way to Washington, D.C., to be discontented with politicians. Columbia isn't that far away, after all, and Gov. Nikki Haley is often as out of step as anyone in Washington.

When the Obama administration announced last month that it would not open up the Atlantic coast to oil exploration, coastal communities from Myrtle Beach and Pawleys Island to Georgetown and Hilton Head celebrated. For too long, residents braced for a future that could

have included oil rigs off our coastlines. They also feared the worst if the unthinkable – a BP Horizon-like spill – occurred.

All in all, 23 municipalities representing every coastal town and city in the state formally opposed oil exploration off the coast.

But that wasn't enough for Haley, who when not campaigning for no-go presidential hopefuls like Marco Rubio, seemed stuck in the morass of Columbia and completely lost on the feelings of South Carolinians who don't hang around the state capital.

When the decision was announced that drilling would not be allowed, Haley offered a tone-deaf comment. "Just another disappointment from D.C.," she said.

The federal government, the governor went on to say, pulled "the rug out from under us."

Not really.

The federal government actually listened to thousands of voices along the Atlantic coast, from Florida to the Carolinas. U.S. Rep. and former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford got it right.

"This is fantastic news for the coast of South Carolina," Sanford said. "Residents along our coast should be proud of the way they united on this issue and sent a compelling message to Washington."

How can Sanford and Haley, both Republicans, be so far apart on this one issue? How can they be so far apart in understanding the pulse of

whole regions of the state?

More than 400 businesses had called on Haley to not support oil exploration off the Atlantic coast, and towns, cities and communities along the coast called on the federal government not to let it happen. They also implored the governor to stand with them. She refused.

As far back as 2012, Haley was a champion for the oil companies, rather than her coastal citizens. In a press conference with U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, the governor said, "Offshore drilling is where we need to be."

Even while she espoused her disappointment in the federal government's decision not to allow offshore exploration last month, Haley tried to have it both ways by saying risky drilling would never have been allowed. "Tourism," she said, "is too huge to South Carolina to take that chance."

That's right, it is. But it's more than just dollars and cents, it's about protecting what is uniquely ours, given by God and entrusted to the people to nurture. It's also about listening to citizens and not being blinded by politics.

It's become a go-to political line to say Washington, D.C., politicians don't listen to – and, in turn, don't represent – the electorate, but the same can be said about Gov. Haley and others in Columbia. When an entire region from the northern to the southern end of the state begs to be heard, it shouldn't be that hard to hear their voices.