

Title: **State assistance expanding for impoverished new S.C. mothers**

Author:

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## State assistance expanding for impoverished new S.C. mothers

More impoverished new mothers and babies will get state attention in coming months in an effort to assure family health, Gov. Nikki Haley said Tuesday.

Plans call for nurses to work with an additional 3,200 mothers, mainly in rural areas, to provide “the tools they need to be successful,” Haley said.

The project expands an

effort that originally assisted 1,200 families, providing advice on job training, education and parenting skills as well as health care.

The \$30 million early childhood project overseen by state Health and Human Services officials will be paid for partly through a partnership with five foundations.

— TIM FLACH

Title: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**  
 Author:  
 Size: 65.1 square inch  
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



**CINDI ROSS SCOPPE**  
**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
**THE STATE**

# ***A key ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan***

**I**F YOUR BOSS boss can't fire you, she's not your boss. If no one can fire you — or even cut your pay or reduce or increase your responsibilities or in any other way influence your work conditions — then you really don't have a boss.

The members of the state Transportation Commission don't have a boss. If the plan approved by the Senate Transportation Committee to "reform" the commission becomes law, they *still* won't have a boss. And that's a problem, a problem that significantly diminishes the benefit of overhauling the commission — and significantly reduces the bang we'll get for our transportation bucks.

It would be wonderful if we could widen and improve and even build new roads everywhere anyone wanted them. But even if we raised the gas tax by \$2 a gallon (legislators are considering 10 to 12 cents), we still couldn't afford that.

So it's essential that we target our limited transportation dollars to our greatest needs. If the

road conditions, population density and traffic volume demonstrate that we need more road work in the Upstate than the Lowcountry, then we need a Transportation Department that can devote more resources to the Upstate than the Lowcountry. If we know objectively that there is a greater need for road improvements in urban areas than in rural areas, we need a Transportation Department that is not forced to spend money on lower-need projects in rural areas.

To have that sort of agency, we need a Transportation Commission that makes decisions about which roads to build, improve and repair based on the needs of our state rather than the needs of the regions of our state. Yet a regional vision is almost guaranteed under the current arrangement, whereby each of seven separate groups of legislators appoints one commissioner. That is one reason we're seeing less impressive results than we ought to from our road funding.

Allowing the governor to appoint the commissioners

creates the possibility that they will focus on the needs of the entire state, rather than their regions. It also creates the possibility that we can hold someone accountable for the state of our roads, which simply cannot be done when road decisions are made by people appointed by 170 legislators.

But just letting the governor appoint the commissioners doesn't guarantee a statewide perspective, and it doesn't guarantee that the governor can be held accountable for the commission's decisions. The other essential component is letting the governor fire her commissioners if she thinks they're making bad decisions.

Nothing like that is possible with the Legislature's commissioners. They are appointed for fixed terms and can be removed only if they break the law or can be demonstrated to be guilty of "malfeasance, misfeasance, incompetency, absenteeism, conflicts of interest, misconduct, persistent neglect of duty in office, or incapacity."

There are a lot of state senators who talk a good game

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about letting the governor control the Transportation Department, and the bill approved earlier this month by the Senate Transportation Committee gives her that authority. Sort of. But it doesn't let her fire the commissioners.

If the governor can't fire her commissioners, then the only way they'll have a statewide perspective is if the governor somehow manages to appoint people who voluntarily maintain that perspective rather than doing what transportation commissioners always have done: trade votes to make sure their own part of the state gets just as much road work as every other part of the state, even if the need isn't as great.

The Senate Transportation Committee bill makes it extra difficult for governors to appoint state-focused commissioners, because it doesn't actually let her appoint the people she wants to appoint: It makes the 10 regional Council of Government districts the new Trans-

portation Commission districts (think Central Midlands Regional Council of Government) and requires the governor to appoint commissioners from a list of nominees submitted by each council.

Perhaps the councils will shed their parochialism for this exercise, but that's difficult to imagine, since they exist for the very purpose of looking after their part of the state. To expect them to nominate people who focus on the good of the entire state would be like expecting the governor to appoint someone to a federal transportation panel who focuses on needs of the nation as a whole rather than just South Carolina.

It might be nice to imagine that this would happen, but it's not realistic.

Gov. Nikki Haley has been quite successful at getting the DHEC board to do her bidding, even though her appointees to that board have this same protected status as transportation commissioners. But the issues

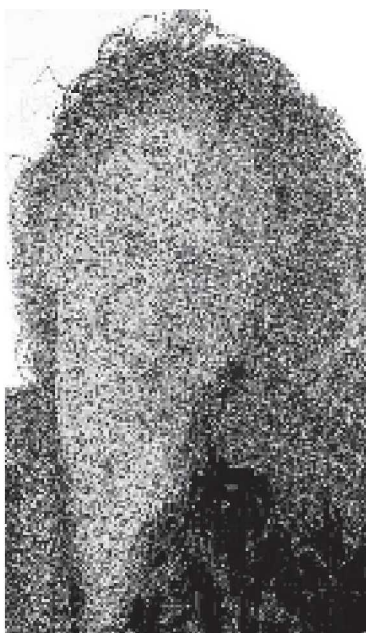
before the DHEC board have a lot to do with political philosophy, and governors can always find people who agree with their political philosophy.

The Transportation Commission decides where road money is going to be spent, and absent some intervening force, that has little to do with political philosophy and lots to do with regionalism. And that's something we can't afford.

*Ms. Scoppe can be reached at [cscoppe@thestate.com](mailto:cscoppe@thestate.com)*

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**IF YOUR BOSS CAN'T FIRE YOU, SHE'S NOT YOUR BOSS; IF NO ONE CAN FIRE YOU, YOU DON'T HAVE A BOSS. THE COMMISSIONERS DON'T HAVE A BOSS.**



Title: **S.C. senators have choices on spending new road money**  
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS The Associated Press  
 Size: 85.40 square inch  
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# S.C. senators have choices on spending new road money

BY JEFFREY COLLINS

The Associated Press  
COLUMBIA

As South Carolina senators prepare to debate how much extra money to give to the state's highways and bridges, the leader of the roads agencies has been careful to give lawmakers plenty of options while not pushing them too hard in any direction.

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has given senators a host of options, from spending just \$65 million extra a year to get the pavement on the interstates up to good condition while doing no bridge work or expansion to \$800 million in new money that would attack congestion, widen more than 150 miles of major highways and get rid of old bridges.

One PowerPoint slide she likes to show lawmakers has nearly a dozen options on how she could spend whatever extra money lawmakers can find.

The Senate started debate on a roads bill last week, and Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman told his colleagues they could spend most of this week on it.

The proposal getting the

most attention on the Senate floor would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add a number of other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads, nearly reaching Hall's most expensive option.

But the idea only cuts income and other taxes by \$400 million over that period, and Gov. Nikki Haley and other conservative lawmakers want an even swap. Supporters of the amendment say they factored in that a third of the gas tax is paid by out of state drivers who need no tax break, but some lawmakers don't think the basis behind that estimate has been proven.

Reforming the DOT's board and the State Infrastructure Bank, which helps borrow money for expensive projects will also be discussed, with conservatives again fearing the proposal doesn't go far enough to give the governor more control of the agency.

If lawmakers give the DOT more money without reform "we're going to see hundreds of millions of

dollars going to rural areas where it is not needed," said Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort.

For her part, Hall promises to use whatever money she gets wisely. But she also is carefully pointing out that the state's roads are reaching a crisis. "The fear I have is that we have waited too long," Hall told lawmakers last week during hours of testimony.

She used what was supposed to be a repaving project on Interstate 85 to make her point. Tests showed the foundation of the road had crumbled from years of neglect, adding about \$10 million to what was supposed to be a \$48 million project. Hall said she fears a similar problem on an upcoming resurfacing of Interstate 26 between Newberry and Columbia.

Sen. Ray Cleary, a Republican and Murrells Inlet dentist who has been pushing for more money for roads for years, likened it to a patient who can floss or brush, wait and have a cavity filled, or wait even longer and need a crown or more extensive dental work.

"I can fix it for \$100,

\$300 or \$3,000, depending on when you see me," Cleary said.

The one thing all lawmakers agree on is something must be done. With all the attention on interstates, Hall worried the primary roads that carry nearly half the state's traffic are falling apart quickly and about to reach a crisis. Only 20 percent of pavement on them is in good condition.

"It's been neglected and it's at a point where it's going to take complete reconstruction," Hall said.

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IT'S BEEN NEGLECTED AND IT'S AT A POINT WHERE IT'S GOING TO TAKE COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION.

*Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall on road pavement needs*



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Associated Press

A Multimodal Transportation Plan developed by the S.C. Dept. of Transportation envisions the state will have to spend \$60 billion on highways during the next quarter century. The plan also notes that, based on current revenue projections, the state will be \$1.5 billion short each year through then for its highway needs.



Title: **Bills would raise minimum wage, repeal right to work law**  
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX The AssociatedPress  
 Size: 52.54 square inch  
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# Bills would raise minimum wage, repeal right to work law

BY SEANNA ADCOX

The Associated Press  
 COLUMBIA

Proposals to raise the minimum wage in South Carolina and repeal an anti-union law have virtually no chance of passing in the Republican-dominated Legislature, but Democrats hope to spark a debate as the nation's attention turns to the first-in-the-South primary state.

Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, who sponsored both bills, said it's time to discuss living wages in a state that ranks 46th in child poverty, 48th in per capita income and last in union membership.

"We keep hearing all these glowing numbers about how great things are," she said of jobs touted by GOP Gov. Nikki Haley. "Yet we get reports that show we're ranking in the bottom. ... I don't see why we can't

at least start talking about the reality of what it means to work in South Carolina on one hand and still be eligible for assistance on the other."

Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg, held a news conference on the bills last week after a House panel officially adjourned debate on both. A second hearing is not expected.

One bill would set the state's minimum wage at \$10.10 an hour. South Carolina is among 21 states where employers can pay as low as \$7.25 an hour, the federal minimum since 2009.

Proponents call \$10.10 a start. That's the minimal pay for federal contractors, as per President Barack Obama's 2014 executive order.

"We'll continue to fight for \$15" an hour, said Rachel Nelson of Charleston, who makes \$9 an hour at Hardee's after 10 years as a fast food worker.

The mother of three children, ages 8 to 12, told the House panel she'd like to get off of public assistance, but her paychecks make it impossible.

"With my last check, I was only able to pay my light bill," Nelson said. "Trying to keep a roof over our heads is a constant stresser in my life."

More than 2,600 state employees make less than \$10.10 an hour, or about 4 percent of the state-paid workforce. Just over half of those employees are considered temporary, according

to the Department of Administration. It noted the numbers could be higher since public colleges aren't required to send the agency data on temporary workers.

Rep. Todd Atwater, who sits on the subcommittee, contends raising the minimum wage is bad for the economy because it increases products' cost and eliminates entry-level jobs often filled by high school and college students.

"It hurts the workers they're trying to help," said Atwater, R-Lexington.

The answer, he said, is better training, so students graduate from school with skills that enable them to get a higher-paying job.

Cobb-Hunter's other bill would repeal the state's right-to-work law.

About half of states have such laws, which means unions can't force employees across an entire worksite to pay membership dues as a condition of employment.

Haley, who frequently lambasts unions, considers the state's low union membership an economic development tool.

About 41,000 people – or just 2.1 percent of South

Carolina's workers – belong to unions, leapfrogging North Carolina in 2015 to rank last nationwide, according to a January report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Seth Holzopfel, with the International Association of Firefighters in Myrtle Beach, said the law should be renamed the "right to work for less" – contending it's made South Carolina a virtual sweatshop – or "right to freeloader," as it allows people in a union-covered job to receive benefits without paying dues.

As expected, the state's Chamber of Commerce adamantly opposes the proposal.

Mikee Johnson, president of Cox Industries, said it would halt the state's economic momentum.

"We've got to have the jobs before we get the wages. This is one of those things that would stop companies from coming to South Carolina," he said, adding that none of his 500 workers make less than \$10 an hour. "South Carolina workers do not need fewer choices when it comes to how they work every day or added costs forced upon them."

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WE KEEP HEARING ALL THESE GLOWING NUMBERS ABOUT HOW GREAT THINGS ARE. YET WE GET REPORTS THAT SHOW WE'RE RANKING IN THE BOTTOM. ...I DON'T SEE WHY WE CAN'T AT LEAST START TALKING ABOUT THE REALITY OF WHAT IT MEANS TO WORK IN SOUTH CAROLINA ON ONE HAND AND STILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE ON THE OTHER.

*S.C. State Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, who sponsored a proposal to raise the state minimum wage*

Title: **Rubio event goes late after plane trouble**  
Author: From Staff Reports  
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## Rubio event goes late after plane trouble

**Marco Rubio, Sen. Tim Scott and Gov. Nikki Haley were to speak in Pawleys Island late Friday night**

*From Staff Reports*

Republican primary contender Mario Rubio, Sen. Tim Scott and Gov. Nikki Haley were set to host a town hall event in Pawleys Island at 11:45 a.m. Friday; however, the event was rescheduled about 15 minutes before it was supposed to start.

The event was rescheduled for 10 p.m. Friday at the original location, Low

Country Preparatory School.

The town hall was rescheduled because Rubio's plane couldn't take off in Columbia, according to a release.

"I sincerely apologize for the events today. Obviously we had no intention of this happening but the plane simply couldn't take off," said Jordan Russell, from Rubio's campaign camp.



Title: **Donald' rump rallies draw nearly 12,000 people to MB**

Author:

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# Donald Trump rallies draw nearly 12,000 people to MB

**Trump hosted events in Myrtle Beach, Pawleys Island**

**GOP frontrunner focused on health care, job creation**

**S.C. Republican primary on Saturday**

Marco Rubio may have the backing of S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley, but Donald Trump kicked off his most recent Myrtle Beach rally with an endorsement from the state's second in command.

Lt. Gov Henry McMaster, speaking to a crowd of about 12,000 Friday afternoon, said the nation is "living in dangerous times."

"We need a man who speaks the truth, a man who says what he means, and says it in a voice that everybody can understand," McMaster said.

For McMaster, that universal voice is the New York businessman topping the polls in South Carolina. Trump's love affair with the Grand Strand began in January 2015 when he gave the keynote address to the S.C. Tea Party Convention in Myrtle Beach.

Since then, Trump has made his way down the coast several times. He spoke for about an hour at the Myrtle Beach Sports Center, then made his way to Pawleys Island for a town hall at 3 p.m.

"It's a movement, we have a movement going on," Trump said. "We have to go

out tomorrow, we all have to go out and vote."

People lined up hours before doors opened, and officials began trickling people in at 10 a.m. Bob Bonneville, a snowbird from Pennsylvania, made sure to get to the sports complex early so he could grab a seat. Bonneville said he's previously seen Jeb Bush in person, but Trump's rally was unlike anything he's ever seen.

"It's quite different. But it's a good way to get informed, so that when we get back home we'll know who to vote for," Bonneville said.

Bonneville and his wife have been in Myrtle Beach for three weeks - "ground zero for all the political stuff," he said - and hasn't missed any of the buzz surrounding Trump's campaign. He's confident that the frontrunner can sustain his lead with the help of the South.

"He's got something about him," he said.

Trump spoke for about 20 minutes at his Pawleys Island address to a packed Pawleys Plantation Clubhouse. He answered a handful of questions ranging from college affordability, personal property rights and the future of the coal industry.

Unlike the Myrtle Beach event, which drew several thousand people, Trump's Pawleys Island rally was much more intimate. Trump still hit on all his major points - health insurance,

job creation and his opposing candidates - but was able to interject a more personal vibe.

He stuck around to sign autographs, take selfies and shake hands after both events, which helped seal the deal for Elhamy Ibrahim.

Ibrahim, a Muslim and Myrtle Beach resident, made it to the front row after Trump's first event. Ibrahim told Trump he was a Muslim supporter, to which Trump excitedly took several pictures.

"He speaks from the heart, and we need someone like that for president," Ibrahim said.

Earlier this week Gov. Haley endorsed Marco Rubio for president, adding to Sen. Tim Scott and Rep. Tom Rice's approvals. Trump didn't sound worried about his chances in South Carolina, especially with the backing of former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

The additional endorsement from Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona, improves his chances as well, Trump said.

"And when you have Sheriff's Joe endorsement, you know you're the toughest on the border," Trump said.

Trump's hour-long speech touched on the usual issues of immigration, military strength and repealing and replacing Obamacare. Most of his points circled back to creating jobs and, per his slogan, "making American great again."

"America needs a busi-

nessman," said Carolyn McClintick, of Murrells Inlet.

McClintick has been a Trump fan for decades. She's attended two of his rallies decked in a blinking stovetop hat, red scarf and plenty of Trump buttons.

"I told my husband 30 years ago that Trump should run for president, and here we are," she said.

McClintick doesn't think Haley's endorsement of Rubio will hurt Trump's

chances. She was surprised the governor endorsed Rubio - who was scheduled to visit Pawleys Island Friday morning but had plane trouble - but didn't think it would matter much in the end.

"I know so many people that don't like [Haley] anyway," McClintick said.

One protester was escorted out of the rally about halfway through Trump's speech. Trump's supporters cheered and chanted throughout the disruption, and the candidate jumped right back into his speech.

Trump wrapped up his stump by vetting himself as the best candidate to create jobs, improve healthcare and "build a wall around Mexico."

"We're no longer going to be the stupid people, folks," he said. "We're going to be smart, and we're going to win."

Claire Byun: 843-626-0381,  
@Claire\_TSN

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YOU SEE HOW I'VE  
CLEANED UP MY  
ACT? I DON'T USE  
BAD LANGUAGE  
ANYMORE.

*Donald Trump*

“

PART OF ME LIKES  
WHAT [TRUMP]

SAYS, AND PART  
OF ME CAN'T SEE  
HIM AS  
PRESIDENT. I'VE  
GOT TO GET OVER  
ONE OF THOSE  
FEELINGS.

*Bob Bonneville, who  
attended Trump's Myrtle  
Beach rally*

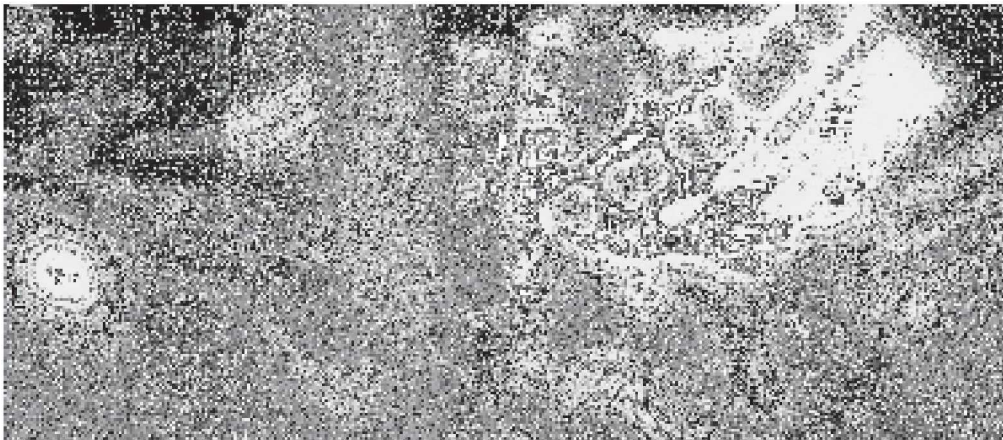
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THESE PEOPLE

ARE NOT GOING  
TO GET YOU TO  
THE PROMISED  
LAND; THEY'RE  
POLITICIANS.  
EVERY SINGLE  
PERSON ON  
STAGE WITH ME,  
THEY'RE ALL  
CONTROLLED BY  
INDUSTRIES, BY  
COMPANIES, BY  
LOBBIES OR

SPECIAL  
INTERESTS.

*Donald Trump,  
referencing his  
opponents*



JANET BLACKMON MORGAN jblackmon@thesunnews.com

Donald Trump rallies at the Myrtle Beach Sports Center on Friday. About 12,000 people attended the rally in Myrtle Beach and the rally at Pawleys Plantation Country Club a few hours later. The Republican presidential primary is Saturday in the South Carolina.

Title: **S.C. GOP primary day: Can anyone stop Trump?**  
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com  
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# S.C. GOP primary day: Can anyone stop Trump?

Record turnout expected in Republican primary

Donald Trump leads Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio as the candidates turn for finish line

## What's at stake?

BY ANDREW SHAIN

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South Carolina voters finally will learn Saturday if the season of the insurgent political candidate is real.

Political newcomer Donald Trump is leading the pack into Saturday's S.C. Republican primary, according to polls. U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who angered some in his own party by shutting down the federal government in a failed attempt to stop the Affor-

dable Care Act, stands second.

The two insurgents won the GOP's first two races in Iowa and New Hampshire.

A GOP establishment candidate has not placed better than third in S.C. poll averages. But U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida is hoping to punch his primary ticket out of the state.

Here's a look at the primary that likely will narrow the Republican field to four candidates.

## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

**Donald Trump:** A win could propel the New York billionaire toward the GOP nomination. He remains ahead in national polls but his S.C. lead is narrowing, according to one poll released this week. Anything less than a victory in the Palmetto State would be disappointing to Trump, who has

SEE FINISH, 11A

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## FINISH

led in S.C. polls since the summer. If Trump falters, blame will be placed on his critical comments during last Saturday's debate about former President George W. Bush's role in the 9/11 attacks and his off-color language.

**Ted Cruz:** The U.S. senator from Texas needs to finish second in South Carolina, a state with a large bloc of evangelical voters, his main base of his support. Cruz won in Iowa, a state where a majority of GOP voters are evangelicals. And he has one of the best ground games in South Carolina. A third-place finish will be blamed on voters thinking his campaign has played dirty tricks.

**Marco Rubio:** The U.S. senator from Florida wants to come out of South Carolina as the candidate of the

GOP establishment. He has a chance with S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's recent endorsement and rising poll numbers, some of which show him challenging Cruz for second. A poor finish could be a sign that voters are worried about his lack of experience.

**John Kasich:** The Ohio governor made strong gains in South Carolina after a finishing second in New Hampshire. But the Republican race's more moderate candidate was starting from the back of the pack in South Carolina. Kasich could come in fourth, which would be good enough to keep going to March primaries in Ohio and Michigan, more favorable Midwestern ground.

**Jeb Bush:** The former Florida governor needs to

beat expectations and finish third to remain in the race. Bush invested a great deal in the state, where his father and brother won en route to the White House. Bush and his allied super PAC have spent the most on ads, and his brother, a former president, and mother, a former first lady, campaigned for him.

**Ben Carson:** The retired neurosurgeon is polling last in South Carolina. Like Bush, a top-three finish realistically is a must to keep going. Carson, who said Friday he would not quit the race, has S.C. support, having raised the most money among active Republican candidates from donors in the state last year.

## KEYS

**Trump** has the backing of a board base of voters —

from moderates to evangelicals — and is looking to win support across the state.

**Cruz** wants a strong showing in the Upstate and Pee Dee, areas where social conservative candidates Mike Huckabee in 2008 and Rick Santorum in 2012, fared well.

**Rubio** could use help from Charleston and Hilton Head, coastal areas where GOP establishment candidates can perform better.

**Kasich** and **Bush** will look for support from the coast to the military-heavy Midlands.

**Carson**, like Cruz, needs a boost from Upstate evangelicals.

## TOP S.C. ENDORSEMENTS

Trump received the endorsement of Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster.

Rubio has endorsements

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from Haley, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of North Charleston and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy of Spartanburg.

Bush has the support of U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham.

Cruz has the backing of U.S. Reps. Jeff Duncan of Laurens and Mark Sanford of Charleston.

#### RECENT S.C. GOP PRIMARY HISTORY

The last time the White House was open was in 2008, when U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., beat former Gov. Mike Huckabee, R-Ark., by less than 4 percentage points in South Carolina.

In the 2012 race to face Democrat President Barack Obama, South Carolina's three decade-long streak of choosing the eventual GOP presidential nominee was

snapped. Former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich soundly defeated former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who went on to win the GOP nomination.

#### TURNOUT

Record turnout is expected.

The large GOP field and interest generated by Trump are credited with producing high turnouts in the Iowa and New Hampshire GOP races earlier this month.

But the number of South Carolinians voting Saturday will dwarf those states. In 2012, for instance, 603,856 voters went to the polls for the S.C. GOP primary, 61 percent more than the combined voted in Iowa and New Hampshire that year.

#### BALLOT

The ballot will have 12

names, but just six candidates remain active — Bush, Carson, Cruz, Kasich, Rubio and Trump.

The six who have dropped out but will appear on the ballot are: Chris Christie, Carly Fiorina, Jim Gilmore, Mike Huckabee, Rand Paul and Rick Santorum.

#### S.C. GOP polls

*Average of polls from Sunday through Friday, according to Real Clear Politics*

**Donald Trump:** 31.8%

**Ted Cruz:** 18.4%

**Marco Rubio:** 17.8%

**Jeb Bush:** 10.3%

**John Kasich:** 9.5%

**Ben Carson:** 6.9%

#### What's at stake in the S.C. primary?

● **50 delegates** to the Republican Convention that will nominate the GOP candidate for president

● The top-finisher statewide will get **29 delegates**.

● Also, the top-finisher in each South Carolina congressional district — there are seven — will get **three delegates**.

● After Iowa and New Hampshire, **Donald Trump** is leading the delegate count — **at 17**. He is followed by Ted Cruz at 11, Marco Rubio at 10, John Kasich at five, Jeb Bush at four and Ben Carson at three.

● Winning the nomination requires **1,237 delegates**.





Title: **Just go ahead and pass a roads bill**  
 Author: This editorial ran in The Herald of Rock Hill.  
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## EDITORIAL

# *Just go ahead and pass a roads bill*

*This editorial ran in The Herald of Rock Hill.*

**D**iscussing what kind of roads bill the Legislature should pass might be futile when the Senate seems dead-set against passing any roads bill at all. Nonetheless, we agree with state Sen. Creighton Coleman, D-Winnsboro, who contends that passing a bill would be easier if paying for road repairs could be unlinked from income tax reform.

Coleman, whose district includes parts of Chester and York counties, said last week that combining the two issues is folly.

"We can debate income tax reform, but let's get the roads fixed. Tying them together will

prolong it tremendously. Let's put politics aside and do what's right," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler, R-Gaffney, whose district also includes parts of York County, is equally frustrated but takes a different approach to linking other issues to a roads bill. He argues that for any bill to have a chance of passing, it will have to include tax relief to offset an increase in the gas tax as well as restructuring of the S.C. Department of Transportation.

Gov. Nikki Haley has pledged to veto any legislation that increases

gas taxes unless it also drastically cuts income taxes and overhauls the DOT.

The House passed a bill last year that could avoid the governor's veto. A similar bill that would raise roughly \$800 million a year for roadwork by increasing the gas tax – which hasn't been raised since 1987 – and increasing vehicle sales taxes and license fees is in special debate status in the Senate.

But because of the antiquated rules of the Senate, debate on the bill has been stalled by opponents. And stalling this bill essentially has brought the business of the Senate to a standstill – preventing action on other crucial priorities such as ethics reform, educational equity and reform of the judicial selection process.

One argument is that the way to begin to dislodge this logjam would be for Democrats to acquiesce to Haley's demand to cut the state's top income tax rate to 5 percent from 7 percent over a 10-year period. But there are good reasons not to do that.

Foremost among them is the fact that most of the income tax relief would go to the state's wealthier taxpayers while the burden of higher gas taxes would hit low-income residents the har-

dest, taking a higher percentage of their disposable incomes.

Another problem is that the proposed income tax, when fully phased in by 2025, would deplete state revenues by about \$1.4 billion a year. That would be offset somewhat by projected growth each year, but not enough to fully replace lost income tax revenue. And the cost of the tax cut would be far higher than the money raised through an increased gas tax and other fees.

There is no good reason to drastically cut the state's income tax rate. No evidence suggests that doing so would enhance the state's ability to attract new business investment, as proponents claim.

What almost surely would deter business growth is bad roads. As Coleman asserts, senators need to pass a roads bill and then deal with the issue of income tax reduction and reforming the DOT in separate legislation.

But that's not likely to happen. Too many senators worry that they would have to pay a political price for raising the gas tax without offsetting tax cuts.

We wonder what political price they will pay for not fixing the state's roads.



Title: **Is it Trump's race to lose?**  
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## THE GOP PRIMARY ELECTION IN SC

# Is it Trump's race to lose?

Voters will put polls to test as campaigns wind down

BY ANDREW SHAIN  
 ashain@thestate.com

South Carolina voters finally will learn Saturday if the season of the insurgent political candidate is real.

Political newcomer Donald Trump is leading the pack into Saturday's S.C. Republican primary, according to polls. U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who angered some in his own party by shutting down the federal government in a failed attempt to stop the

Affordable Care Act, stands second.

The two insurgents won the GOP's first two races

**FROM PAGE 1A**

## GOP

field to four candidates.

### WHAT'S AT STAKE?

**Donald Trump:** A win could propel the New York billionaire toward the GOP nomination. He remains ahead in national polls but his S.C. lead is narrowing, according to one poll released this week. Anything less than a victory in the Palmetto State would be disappointing to Trump, who has led in S.C. polls since the summer. If Trump falters, blame will be placed on his critical comments

in Iowa and New Hampshire.

A GOP establishment candidate has not placed better than third in S.C. poll averages. But U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida is hoping to punch his primary ticket out of the state.

Here's a look at the primary that likely will narrow the Republican

**SEE GOP, 6A**

**ONLINE**

**thestate.com:** Go to the

state.com Saturday for any polling problems and results

**MORE INSIDE**

Mark Sanford endorses Ted Cruz, **6A**



Clinton, Sanders square off in Nevada, **6A**

Primaries a \$24 million windfall for S.C. hotels, **6B**

A look at how South Carolina is being portrayed in the media nationally, **1C**

during last Saturday's debate about former President George W. Bush's role in the 2001 terror attacks and his off-color language.

**Ted Cruz:** The U.S. senator from Texas needs to finish second in South Carolina, a state with a large bloc of evangelical voters, his main base of support. Cruz won in Iowa, a state where a majority of GOP voters are evangelicals. And he has one of the best ground games in South Carolina. A third-place finish will be blamed on voters thinking his

campaign has played dirty tricks.

**Marco Rubio:** The U.S. senator from Florida wants to come out of South Carolina as the candidate of the GOP establishment. He has a chance with S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's recent endorsement and rising poll numbers, some of which show him challenging Cruz for second. A poor finish could be a sign that voters are worried about his lack of experience.

**John Kasich:** The Ohio governor made strong gains in South Carolina after finishing

second in New Hampshire. But the Republican race's more moderate candidate was starting from the back of the pack in South Carolina. Kasich could

come in fourth, which would be good enough to keep going to March primaries in Ohio and Michigan, more favorable Mid-western ground.



Bush

**Jeb Bush:** The former Florida governor needs to beat expecta-

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tions and finish third to remain in the race. Bush invested a great deal in the state, where his father and brother won en route to the White House. Bush and his allied super PAC have spent the most on ads, and his brother, a former president, and mother, a former first lady, campaigned for him.

**Ben Carson:** The retired neurosurgeon is polling last in South Carolina, just months after challenging Trump for the lead in the GOP race. Like Bush, a top-three finish realistically is a must to keep going. Carson, who said Friday he would not quit the race, has S.C. support, having raised the most money among active Republican candidates from donors in the state last year.

## KEYS

**Trump** has the backing of a broad base of voters — from moderates to evangelicals — and is looking to win support across the state.

**Cruz** wants a strong showing in the Upstate and Pee Dee, areas where social conservative candidates, Mike Huckabee in 2008 and Rick Santorum in 2012, fared well.

**Rubio** could use help from Charleston and Hilton Head, coastal areas where GOP establishment candidates can perform better.

**Kasich** and **Bush** will look for support from the coast to the military-heavy Midlands.

**Carson**, like Cruz, needs a boost from Upstate evangelicals.

## TOP S.C. ENDORSEMENTS

Trump received the endorse-



Carson



Kasich and Mark Sanford of Charleston.

ment of Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster.

Rubio has endorsements from Haley, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of North Charleston and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy of Spartanburg.

Bush has the support of U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham.

Cruz has the backing of U.S. Reps. Jeff Duncan of Laurens

## RECENT S.C. GOP PRIMARY HISTORY

The last time the White House was open was in 2008, when U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., beat former Gov. Mike Huckabee, R-Ark., by less than 4 percentage points in South Carolina.

In the 2012 race to face Democrat President Barack Obama,

South Carolina's three decade-long streak of choosing the eventual GOP presidential nominee was snapped. Former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich soundly defeated former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who went on to win the GOP nomination.

## TURNOUT

Record turnout is expected.

The large GOP field and interest generated by Trump are credited with producing high turnouts in the Iowa and New Hampshire GOP races earlier this month.

But the number of South Carolinians voting Saturday will dwarf those states. In 2012, for instance, 603,856 voters went to the polls for the S.C. GOP primary, 61 percent more than the combined voted in Iowa and New Hampshire that year.

## BALLOT

The ballot will have 12 names, but just six candidates remain active — Bush, Carson, Cruz, Kasich, Rubio and Trump.

The six who have dropped out but will appear on the ballot are: Chris Christie, Carly Fiorina, Jim Gilmore, Mike Huckabee, Rand Paul and Rick Santorum.

## S.C. GOP polls

*Average of polls from Sunday*

*through Friday, according to Real Clear Politics*

**Donald Trump:** 31.8%

**Ted Cruz:** 18.4%

**Marco Rubio:** 17.8%

**Jeb Bush:** 10.3%

**John Kasich:** 9.5%

**Ben Carson:** 6.9%

## What's at stake in the S.C. primary?

● **50 delegates** to the Republican Convention that will nominate the GOP candidate for president

● The top-finisher statewide will get **29 delegates**.

● Also, the top-finisher in each South Carolina congressional district — there are seven — will get **three delegates**.

● After Iowa and New Hampshire, **Donald Trump** is leading the delegate count — **at 17**. He is followed by Ted Cruz at 11, Marco Rubio at 10, John Kasich at five, Jeb Bush at four and Ben Carson at three.

● Winning the nomination requires **1,237 delegates**.

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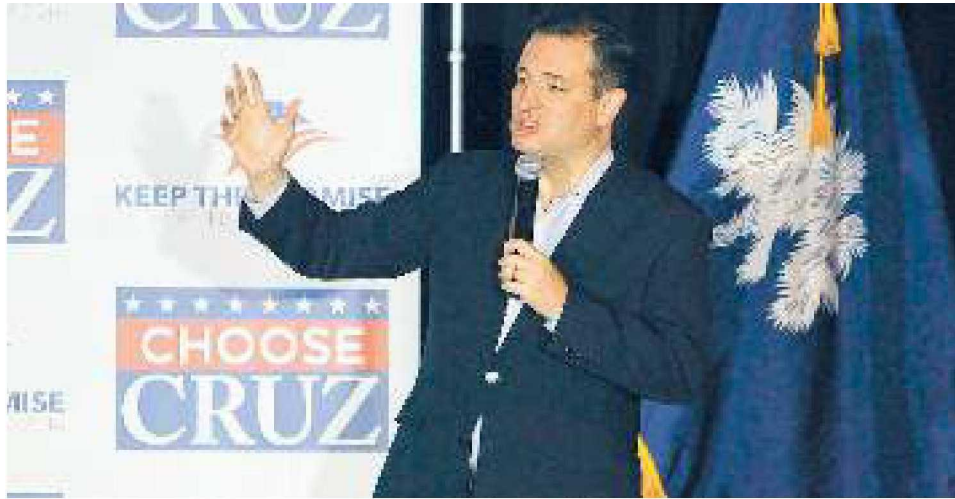
Marco Rubio with Gov. Nikki Haley at a Columbia rally. Haley is backing Rubio.



GERRY MELENDEZ gmelendez@thestate.com

Donald Trump gets an endorsement from Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster at Harmon Tree Farm near Gilbert last month.

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Ted Cruz speaks to supporters Friday at a rally in Columbia.



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## AS OTHERS SEE US

# Perspectives on Palmetto politics

*South Carolina has been in the national political spotlight for the past 1.5 weeks, since the New Hampshire primary on Feb. 8. Here is a sampling of what national reporters and columnists have said about the Palmetto State.*

### Race, as always, is the dividing line

"This is absolutely nothing to do with race," says Ray, a Tea Party activist explaining why he still resents Gov. Nikki Haley's decision to remove the Confederate flag from the State Capitol grounds. One thing I learned early growing up in the South is that it is *always* about race. So I was not at all surprised when Ray, lest anyone misconstrue his concern with governmental overreach, elaborates: "If they can make us take down the Confederate flag today, they can make us take down all those statues of Martin Luther King tomorrow."

I spent a week in South Carolina in

January, driving from the north coast to the Georgia border, and while I saw statues of John C. Calhoun (secessionist and slave owner), Wade Hampton (secessionist and slave owner), Ben Tillman (ardent segregationist), and Strom Thurmond (ditto), as well as memorials to Robert E. Lee and the Confederate war dead, I didn't see a single statue of King. So in reading what follows, the safest policy is to assume that whatever the topic, it is also, always, about race — especially when it isn't supposed to be.

South Carolina is a state built on denial and silence. Nobody tells you that the pristine wildlife sanctuaries scattered throughout the Lowcountry were once rice plantations whose earthen dikes and sluice gates were constructed using slave labor. Or that the Citadel — the state-funded military academy in Charleston, which boasts that its cadets "fired the first

hostile shots of the Civil War" — gets its name from an arsenal built in response to a slave revolt led by Denmark Vesey, a carpenter who'd purchased his freedom after winning the lottery. Or that in 2015, more than 60 years after the *Brown* decision (which included a South Carolina case), segregation in the state's schools remains the rule rather than the exception. . . .

Yet in the cracked mirror of race, it is whites in South Carolina who say they are oppressed — beaten down by political correctness and the heavy hand of Washington. Only in a state where everyday reality remains separate and unequal would the refusal to expand Medicaid make political — if not economic or moral — sense. While the days of "colored" and "white" drinking fountains may be long gone, political party has become

**SEE OTHERS, 4C**

FROM PAGE 1C

## OTHERS

such a reliable proxy for race here that it may come as a shock to learn that the state's Republican junior senator, Tim Scott, is black. In 2013, Scott came to Myrtle Beach and told the Tea Partiers, "I know you're not racist.... It's the other side that plays favorites."

— D.D. Guttenplan  
*The Nation*, Feb. 3

### A state of 'rough-and-tumble politics'

South Carolina is famous for its rough-and-

tumble politics — in 2000, for example, there was a whisper campaign that John McCain had fathered a black child. He wound up losing to eventual President George W. Bush. It derailed his candidacy. With as wide a field as this one, and the stakes being so high, watch out for more dirty tricks. . . .

Iowa was tailored for a Christian-conservative candidate, like Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, and New Hampshire gave a jolt to centrist, establishment figures like Kasich, the

Ohio governor, and it solidified Trump's dominance across the board. In South Carolina, all of those elements combine.

In 2012, two-thirds (65 percent) of GOP primary voters described themselves as born-again, evangelical Christians. But almost one-third also described themselves as moderate. In Iowa this year, a similar 64 percent of caucus-goers were evangelical, but only 14 percent were self-described moderates. . . .

As NPR's Sarah

McCammon has explained, there are clear, regional splits in the Palmetto State:

● **The Upstate:** The most socially conservative, religious voters are clustered in the Upstate, anchored by Greenville and Spartanburg and home to fundamentalist Bob Jones University. On Friday (Feb. 12), most GOP candidates were at the famed college for a Faith and Family Presidential Forum, talking up their socially conservative values on abortion and same-sex



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marriage. Only Trump, who's come under fire for his obscenities and previous support of same-sex marriage, didn't attend.

● **Lowcountry:** The more moderate, heavily military and veteran Lowcountry is where Bush, the former Florida governor, is focusing most of his attention. It's where strategists in the state say he could be surprisingly strong.

● **Midlands:** In 2008, conservative candidates split support in the Upstate, and Arizona Sen. John McCain ran strong in

the establishment-minded Midlands and Lowcountry for a win. In 2000, McCain was also strong in

the Lowcountry, which includes Charleston and Hilton Head, but George W. Bush beat him out in the rest of the state to claim victory.

– Jessica Taylor  
*npr.org, Feb. 13*

### **State expects public professions of faith**

Two-thirds of South Carolina residents say they pray daily and half

say they read the Bible at least once a week. In 2012's primary, 65 percent of Republicans said they were evangelicals or born-again Christians. It's tough to win in South Carolina with only a cursory nod to faith; the faithful want one of their own to win, and South Carolina demands public professions of faith.

– Philip Elliott  
*Time magazine, Feb. 15*

### **S.C. politics: A savage, gladiatorial spectacle**

South Carolina, the

nation turns its troubled heart to you. And we expect you will rip it apart.

In Texas, they say, politics is a contact sport. In South Carolina, it is a savage, gladiatorial spectacle. Case in point: The George W. Bush forces who ran the John McCain Straight Talk Express off the road in South Carolina and then pulverized it. McCain didn't know what hit him.

– Ann McFeatters  
*Tribune News Service, Feb. 11*