

Title: **Letter warns of threats to freedom of religion**
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 Size: 43.55 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Letter warns of threats to freedom of religion

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COLUMBIA — The presidents of seven faith-based, private colleges in South Carolina wrote a letter to Gov. Nikki Haley Monday saying they fear the loss of religious freedom because of government encroachments going on nationwide.

Five of the seven schools are based in the Upstate, including Bob Jones University in Greenville, North Greenville University, Anderson University, Erskine College in Due West and Southern Wesleyan University in Central.

Also signing were the presidents of Columbia International University and Charleston Southern University. The seven schools have a total of about 13,000 students.

Though the letter was sent to Haley, an accompanying press release described the document as an open letter to South Carolina from the lead-

ers of seven evangelical Christian schools.

The presidents mentioned government actions taken to allow transgender students to use the bathrooms of their gender identity as examples of threats against religious freedoms.

"In recent weeks we have grown concerned about developing threats to the free exercise of religion in higher education at both the national and state level, and the potential impact those threats would have on our longstanding ability to set expectations of conduct that align with our institutions' longstanding religious tenets," the presidents wrote.

The presidents cited California legislation that could deny students' participation in state grants programs at schools found in violation of state gender identity laws.

They also pointed to this year's

move by the U.S. departments of education and justice asking that schools nationwide allow students to use the bathrooms that correspond with their gender identity.

A federal judge in Texas on Sunday issued a temporary injunction of the directive in response to a lawsuit brought by Texas and 12 other states.

"The Obama Administration has placed mandates on educational institutions that essentially force public school students to use bathrooms with members of the opposite biological sex, even though to do so violates the privacy and modesty of students who may object on the basis of their deeply held religious values," the presidents wrote.

State legislation by Sen. Lee Bright, a Spartanburg County Repub-

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Letter

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lican, that would have required those using public bathrooms to use restrooms corresponding to their biological sex failed to make it out of a Senate committee earlier this year.

The presidents wrote that the nation historically has followed the idea that conscience and religious conviction come before the demands of government.

While there are disagreements among the institutions on some religious matters, they said, "we all agree that the government has no place in discriminating against religious individuals or religious educational institutions by disqualifying them from grant

and loan programs because of religious expression guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution."

"We are concerned that federal and state actions like the ones cited above could ultimately deny us the ability to fulfill our faith-based missions," they wrote, "by taking away our freedom to hire and dismiss employees, provide healthcare for our employees, protect the privacy of our students in restrooms, showers, and residence halls, and deny our students the ability to use the federal and state financial aid to which they are entitled at faith-based universities."

The presidents asked for Haley's help in standing "against any attempt

by the federal government to infringe on religious freedom.

They also asked the governor to oppose "any attempt by the South Carolina General Assembly or state executive agencies to enact legislation, policies, administrative actions, or executive orders that infringe on the religious freedom of private religious universities."

In a statement, Haley said she would work with the schools.

"I appreciate hearing from the leaders of our state's Christian universities," she said.

"South Carolina has a proud tradition of upholding religious freedom. I look forward to working with the universities to make sure we continue to honor that tradition."

Title: **Evangelical leaders seek Haley's help on transgender issue**
 Author: BY MEG KINNARD Associated Press
 Size: 14.26 column inches
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



SOUTH CAROLINA

Evangelical leaders seek Haley's help on transgender issue

BY MEG KINNARD

Associated Press

COLUMBIA

Presidents of seven evangelical Christian colleges are asking South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley to protect their institutions from mandates on the use of bathrooms by transgender students. They want the Republican to use her platform to "promote religious freedom."

The presidents warned in a letter delivered Monday that the Obama administration's order re-

quiring public schools to let transgender students use bathrooms consistent with their chosen gender identity could violate "the privacy and modesty of students" who object based on religious values.

The letter was signed by the presidents of Bob Jones University, Columbia International University, Charleston Southern University, North Greenville University,

Ersine College and Seminary, Southern Wesleyan University, and Anderson University.

Haley said she appreciated their input.

"South Carolina has a proud tradition of upholding religious freedom," she said in a response provided to The Associated Press. "I look forward to working with the universities to make sure we continue to honor that tradition."

Title: **School discipline, academics and the 18th horse**
 Author:
 Size: 57.97 column inches
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



CINDI ROSS SCOPPE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
THE STATE

School discipline, academics and the 18th horse

AFTER I WROTE last week about our state's disturbingly broad disturbing schools law, I got a letter to the editor and a letter to me that both referred to the October incident when a Richland County sheriff's deputy tossed a student from her desk and arrested her. Both letters asked, essentially: How else was the deputy supposed to remove the student from the classroom if she wouldn't let go of the desk?

And I remembered the story of the 18th horse.

"A farmer died," goes the story that was making the rounds on email chains last summer, "leaving his 17 horses to his three sons.

"When his sons opened up the will it read: My eldest son should get half of (the) total horses; My middle son should be given one third of the total horses; My youngest son should be given one ninth of the total horses.

"As it's impossible to divide 17 into half or 17 by 3 or 17 by 9, the three sons started to fight with each other.

"So, they decided to go to a farmer friend who they considered quite smart, to see if he could work it out for them.

"The farmer friend read the will patiently, (and) after giving due thought, he brought one of his own horses over and added it to the 17. That increased the

total to 18 horses.

"Now, he divided the horses according to their father's will.

"Half of 18 = 9. So he gave the eldest son 9 horses.

"A third of 18 = 6. So he gave the middle son 6 horses.

"A ninth of 18 = 2. So he gave the youngest son 2 horses.

"Now add up how many horses they have:

"Eldest son: 9

"Middle son: 6

"Youngest son: 2

"TOTAL = 17

"Now this leaves one horse over, so the farmer friend takes his horse back to his farm.

"Problem solved.

"Moral: The attitude of negotiation and problem solving is to find the '18th horse' — that is the common ground. Once a person is able to find the 18th horse, the issue is resolved. It is difficult at times. However, to reach a solution, the first step is to believe that there is a solution. If we think that there is no solution, we won't be able to reach any! Would be a good idea if all our politicians could do farmer math!"

What else could the deputy have done at Spring Valley? What if that's the wrong question?

Imagine what would have happened if, instead of calling in a school resource officer, the assistant principal had brought in the 18th horse. If he had said to the student who refused to

hand over her cell phone and then refused to leave: "Fine, I'll deal with you after class. And the results will be much worse than if you leave with me now." If he had then turned to the teacher and said: "Resume teaching. I'll just take a seat in the back in case the student decides she's ready to leave."

To me, there are no more daunting public-policy questions than how to improve the situation in our schools — whether that involves discipline or test scores, how to teach difficult-to-teach students or how to convince students to want to learn.

I can tell you how to make our highways safer, or make our tax code smarter, or prevent melt-downs like the one going on at the Richland County Recreation Commission, or improve our ethics law or our judicial-selection law or deal with a host of other problems. But those school problems don't have obvious answers, in large part because critics are absolutely correct to lay them at the feet of parents who don't do their jobs. What those critics refuse to recognize is that we

have to find answers even when they aren't obvious.

After I wrote in an earlier column that we have to make sure children in our state get a decent education, that we don't have the option of throwing them away, I got a call from a

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Size: 57.97 column inches

Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269

man who said we could never do that until we stopped irresponsible people from having children. I tried to explain that while I would love to do that, the federal courts simply would not allow it. But the man who had just told me it was pointless for our schools to even try to educate those kids replied that my response wasn't acceptable because he doesn't accept "it's impossible" for an answer.

“

**WHAT ELSE COULD
THE DEPUTY HAVE
DONE AT SPRING
VALLEY? WHAT IF
THAT'S THE WRONG
QUESTION?**



Although he was wrong to believe his solution *was* possible, he was right to reject the idea of impossible.

Imagine what would happen if — instead of saying there's nothing we can do to control misbehaving kids, or to teach difficult-to-teach children, because only more responsible parents can make a difference — we adopted Gov Nikki Haley's "can't isn't an option" mantra.

Imagine what would happen if — instead of declaring that 17 isn't divisible by three or two or nine, or shooting horses until we get to a number that is — we all searched together until we located that 18th horse.

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Title: **Leaders of Christian colleges seek Haley's help on transgender issue**
 Author: BY MEG KINNARD Associated Press
 Size: 29.14 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Leaders of Christian colleges seek Haley's help on transgender issue

BY MEG KINNARD

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Presidents of seven evangelical Christian colleges are asking South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley to protect their institutions from mandates on the use of bathrooms by transgender students. They want the Republican to use her platform to “promote religious freedom.”



Haley

The presidents warned in a letter delivered Monday that the Obama administration's order requiring public schools to

let transgender students use bathrooms consistent with their chosen gender identity could violate “the privacy and modesty of students” who object based on religious values.

Such mandates “could ultimately deny us the ability to fulfill our faith-based missions by taking away our freedom

to hire and dismiss employees, provide health care for our employees, protect the privacy of our students in restrooms, showers, and residence halls, and deny our students the ability to use the federal and state financial aid to which they are entitled at faith-based universities,” they said.

The letter was signed by the presidents of Bob Jones University, Columbia International University, Charleston Southern University, North Greenville University, Erskine College and Seminary, Southern Wesleyan University and Anderson University.

Haley said she appreciated their input.

“South Carolina has a proud tradition of upholding religious freedom,” she said in a response provided to The Associated Press.

“I look forward to working with the universities to make sure we continue to honor that tradition.”

With North Carolina facing economic boycotts and federal litigation over its law limiting discrimination protections and bathroom choices, a related effort failed in South

Carolina's legislative session this year, and Haley actively campaigned against the bill's sponsor, Sen. Lee Bright, who then lost his re-election bid.

But a federal judge in Texas recently favored the colleges' position, blocking the Obama administration's order and saying federal education law “is not ambiguous” about sex being defined as “the biologi-

cal and anatomical differences between male and female students as determined at their birth.”

Kevin Caiello, of the Palmetto Family Council, which distributed the letter, said the educators also were prompted to action by pending California legislation, which they fear other states could pursue as well.

Title: **Sanford paves way to oppose Trump**
 Author: JORDAN MORALES
 Size: 48.36 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Sanford paves way to oppose Trump

JORDAN MORALES

Last week, Rep. Mark Sanford of Charleston laid the ground work to follow Sen. Lindsey Graham in joining the principled ranks of "Never Trump" South Carolina congressional delegates (Sanford would make it plural, Graham is currently the only one). In an op-ed published in *The New York Times*, Sanford called for Mr. Trump to release his tax returns and emphasized the importance of transparency with the American people.

Says Sanford, "I am a conservative Republican who, though I have no stomach for his personal style and his penchant for regularly demeaning others, intends to support my party's nominee because of the importance of filling the existing vacancy on the Supreme Court, and others that might open in the next four years. However, my ability to continue to do so will in part be driven by whether Mr. Trump keeps his word that he will release his tax records."

To be sure, Donald Trump will never release his tax returns. His lawyer, Michael Cohen removed all doubt of that in a CNN interview when he said, "I personally will not allow him to release those tax returns until the audits are over." The audit excuse is only a thinly veiled dodge since Trump will not release his tax returns for years that he is not under audit either. Why he won't release them is unknown, but it's a logical assumption that he has something to hide, much the same reason Clinton won't release her Wall Street speech transcripts.

The interview with Mr. Cohen should be enough for Sanford to withdraw support for Trump. In fact, Trump has given him a beautiful exit ramp. Trump promised that he would release his tax returns, Sanford warned him to do so and then Cohen doubled

GUEST COLUMN



Jordan Morales is a Republican activist in Columbia and an advocate for Hispanic community outreach.

down on Trump's refusal. By Trump defaulting on his promise, Sanford could very easily transition from the feckless band of Trump apologists to being a Never Trump visionary.

By Sanford rescinding his endorsement, he would follow the straight and narrow path that Graham forged when Trump first became the presumptive nominee. But not only that, the former governor would be a good example to his successor, Gov. Nikki Haley (who is surely hanging on to the Trump train by barely a thread). His and Graham's stand could make it easier for politicians like Haley and Sen. Tim Scott to follow their lead. Lacking the wherewithal to take that path on their own, at least they might follow Graham and Sanford's guiding light.

But what would be the point in hanging your own nominee out to dry? In a word, survival. Trump has badly damaged the GOP brand with nearly every group of Americans that isn't already a hardcore supporter. Latinos, African

Americans, youth, women, everyone that's needed to win an election in the 21st century has a decidedly unfavorable view of Trump and that could affect the Republican Party in the long run after November. When this horrible election is over, we Republicans will need champions to lead the re-branding effort with those groups of voters. It will be somewhat difficult to be a part of that future when you were a bystander, watching as the GOP was destroyed from within by a con man.

What of the Supreme Court? This is perhaps the only cogent argument for Conservatives to back Trump. Indeed, it appears to be the justification that Sanford has used thus far. But consider this. FiveThirtyEight gives Trump less than a 12 percent chance of winning the election. Even if Trump won Florida, Ohio, Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Iowa and North Carolina, he wouldn't have 270 electoral votes. By the way, he's currently losing all those states to Hillary. Trump will lose and that's why our only hope for the Supreme Court is to hold on to our Senate majority, which is in peril of being dragged to the ocean floor by Trump's anchor.

The Senate has already exemplified steadfastness by refusing to budge on Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland. With only a Republican Senate, we may not get another Antonin Scalia, but at least we could prevent Clinton from appointing a 35-year-old communist to the bench. A 62-year-old Garland or some consensus pick would do minimal damage and wouldn't ruin the Supreme Court for conservatives for the next 50 years.

So what will Sanford do? It's hard to say at this point. No doubt it isn't an easy decision to throw your own nominee under the bus. But it's the right one for conservatives. It's the only way to defend the Senate, the Supreme Court and conservatism.

Title: **Thousands still need help in wake of historic floods**
 Author: BRUCE SMITH ASSOCIATED PRESS
 Size: 42.62 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Thousands still need help in wake of historic floods

More aid checks could come in January

BRUCE SMITH
 ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLESTON - Thousands of people in South Carolina still need home repairs, while the state has submitted a plan for using almost \$100 million in federal housing aid almost a year after historic rains inundated the state. The state is now also reviewing applications from farmers for state help.

Last October's rains, which some experts say was an event that happens only once every 1,000 years, dropped upward of 2 feet of rain and the long-term recovery from such an event generally takes three to seven years.

Recovery agencies are still working with about 3,600 clients, many of whom are still living in storm-damaged homes.

The state is reviewing applications from farmers for millions of dollars state lawmakers earmarked earlier this year for farm aid. And South Carolina forwarded a plan to the federal government last month for using of federal money to help for home repairs.

A look at the ongoing recovery:

Thousands still need help...

Falon Alo, the executive director of Hearts & Hands Disaster Recovery the flooding case management provider for the state, says the agency currently has 3,600 clients in the 24

counties that were declared disaster areas after the floods. "Just about every single one of them is living in an unsafe home with mold infestation, buckling floor and roofs that still leak when it rains because they have no place else to go," she says.

...many of them in the countryside

While other areas of the state, notably Charleston and Columbia, were hit hard, most of those who still in need help live in the Pee Dee area. "The vast majority of our clients are people who are elderly and disabled and living in poverty," Alo says. In one home lives an 8-year-old boy who is on the list for a heart transplant.

Help from the feds

After the storm about 103,000 people registered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for individual assistance. About 28,000 received some help with the average grant about \$3,000.

The state is getting almost \$100 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and last month submitted an action plan that is now being reviewed.

The first aid checks could come in January.

Farm aid

Stephanie Sox of the state Department of Agriculture says the department hopes to issue checks for farmers affected by the flood by Oct. 1. This week was the deadline for most farmers to apply although farmers in three upstate counties have until Sept. 6 because those counties were added to the federal disaster declaration later.

The aid comes from \$40 million lawmakers approved over Gov. Nikki Haley's veto. The money will be some help, although it's estimated the floods caused farm losses of \$375 million.

Recovery agencies are still working with about 3,600 clients, many of whom are still living in storm-damaged homes. The state is reviewing applications from farmers for millions of dollars state lawmakers earmarked earlier this year for farm aid.

Title: **PURPLEHEARTTRIBUTE**

Author:

Size: 18.6 column inches

Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



PURPLE HEART TRIBUTE

The Col. Jimmie Leach Purple Heart Chapter recently paid tribute to veterans at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island after Gov. Nikki Haley proclaimed Aug. 7 as Purple Heart Day. Pictured from left are Rueben Cedeno, Paul Sweet, Elizabeth Laban and Glenn Blackburn.



SUSAN BLACKBURN Submitted