

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

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**CINDI ROSS SCOPPE  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR  
THE STATE**

## ***Abuse of discretion? Red tape overload? Regulators gone wild?***

**S**TATE HEALTH inspectors swooped in on three abortion clinics this fall, making unscheduled inspections that turned up regulatory violations and resulted in suspended licenses and fines that are still being negotiated. The most frequently mentioned violations involved paperwork problems and aborted fetuses being sterilized with steam rather than incinerated.

Environmental regulators at the Department of Health and Environmental Control have been busy ordering dam owners to lower lake levels, hire engineers to perform inspections, make repairs and report back to the agency. Pronto.

Last month, the state Department of Social Services said that nearly 60 child-care homes had closed since the agency started conducting unannounced inspections — some after inspectors found violations, some simply because they weren't willing to face inspectors without warning.

Are these examples of regulatory overreach? Abuses of discretion by busybody bureaucrats using red-tape requirements to hound political targets? Cover-your-backside harassment of dam owners suddenly held to a higher standard?

An out-of-control bureaucracy bullying small-business owners out of business and meddling in child-care matters that are none of its business?

I don't think so, in any of those cases.

Maybe most of the problems at the abortion clinics involved paperwork, but when paperwork documents compliance with a significant state law, it's derelict for the state not to demand that it be produced.

Maybe DHEC had little evidence of problems with dams that did not breach in the early October deluge, but when it becomes clear that an agency has not been adequately enforcing its regulations, it's reasonable to step back and reassess.

Maybe — gee, I can't think of an excuse for people who are providing care for twice as many children as the law allows, while getting paid as if they are complying with that law.

Of course, I don't generally complain about red tape and bureaucrats and overregulation when regulators do their jobs.

As for the people who do complain, well, they've been remarkably silent in these high-profile regulatory crackdowns, even though the first two clearly were motivated by something other than a reasonable suspicion that the specific clinics and

dams were a problem.

My guess is that the anti-regulators have been silent because even the most adamant libertarian wouldn't dare speak out against strict enforcement of dam regulations these days. My guess is that there's a high correlation between the people who think regulation is a four-letter word and those who think abortion ought to be illegal; there's certainly a high correlation among elected officials.

When DHEC issued its first orders against the abortion clinics, Gov. Haley declared that "We will not tolerate law breaking of any kind." It was quite a statement from a governor who does not always let pesky little things like the law get in her

way, and who has been an aggressive combatant in the war on regulations.

Maybe this would be a good time for a little honesty when it comes to that war.

Maybe this would be a good time to admit that our outrage over power-grabbing, business-stymieing regulators has less to do with power-grabbing, business-stymieing regulators than with our feelings about what's being regulated. Maybe it would be good to admit that we're outraged when they enforce regulations that we don't like, and delighted when they en-

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force regulations that we do like, whether they crack down on activities we oppose or simply enforce common-sense laws — like keeping dangerous chemicals out of reach of children you are paid to keep safe.

How many people besides the owner gets upset, for instance, when DHEC bureaucrats use their regulatory powers to shut down a restaurant that can't pass health inspections?

Clearly, some regulations are nothing more than protectionism. I'm reminded of one that prohibits people from buying coffins from anyone except

funeral homes; it was written by funeral-home owners.

Clearly, government can, and should, do a better job of limiting paperwork, of sharing in-

formation across agencies rather than requiring people to fill out the same information time after time. And if that's what regulation opponents want to focus on, then fabulous.

Just as clearly, a lot of requirements that seem ridiculous to an honest person look quite reasonable when you realize they're written to protect against people who are not honest. Just as clearly, beyond a handful of outrageous examples, it's a lot easier to rail against regulations in general than to get into a debate about the goals and merits of a specific regulation.

In 2013, Gov. Haley charged a task force with reviewing state regulations and weeding out the ones that "stymie the private sector and hold our economy

back."

Her hand-picked panel spent a year reviewing more than 3,000 regulations. It proposed eliminating fewer than 50. Which is to say that it decided that 98 percent of the regulations needed to remain in place.

My guess is that we could do without more of those regulations. My guess also is that the governor's regulatory reviewers were correct to conclude that the vast majority serve a good purpose. Like making sure the dams that hold back water sufficient to wash out buildings and wash away cars and people are in decent working order.

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Title: **Haleysays she won't seek direct aidfor crops destroyed in flooding**  
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press  
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# Haley says she won't seek direct aid for crops destroyed in flooding

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press  
 COLUMBIA

Farmers packed the Statehouse on Monday to beg Gov. Nikki Haley to ask Congress for money to offset their estimated \$376 million in losses from last month's historic flooding.

But the Republican governor is unwavering in her refusal.

Farmers should have federally subsidized crop insurance, and under-insured farmers shouldn't be bailed out, her office said.

Last week, Haley asked the state's congressional delegation for \$140 million to help homeowners, many of whom had no flood insurance. Her letter did not include any direct aid for farmers. Instead, she asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expedite insurance payments to farmers.

"The governor does not believe we should treat farmers differently than any other business owner in South Carolina," said

her spokeswoman Chaney Adams.

Her stance puts her at odds with GOP Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers and Republican legislators. A Senate panel studying the storm's cost voted unanimously before the farmers' news conference to send Haley a letter urging her to change her mind. At the event, several Republican House members took the podium to ask her to sign the request.

Even for those with insurance, payments won't come close to covering farmers' costs, Weathers said.

"If every farm in South Carolina had picked the best crop insurance options available, the insurance proceeds still would not cover the basic cost of putting that acre of corn, cotton, soybeans in the ground," Weathers told the Senate panel.

Losses didn't stop with the initial flooding. While the Oct. 2-5 storm that

dumped 2 feet of rain on parts of the state did the bulk of the damage, the continued rainfall worsened the problem, as crops rotted in the fields, Weathers said.

The estimated losses include \$330 million worth of crops destroyed or damaged in the field at harvest time and \$46 million in winter crops that can't be planted in the muck, Weathers said.

While Haley's advocacy wouldn't automatically cause Congress to put the money in the federal budget, a request won't be seriously considered without her backing, Weathers said.

"Please request the funds and help save our communities," said fourth-generation farmer Jeremy Cannon of Turbeville, who was among hundreds of farmers who crowded outside Haley's office. "There is no revenue. We need your help, and we need it fast."

Title: **South Carolina's predictive power**

Author:

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# South Carolina's predictive power

CHARLESTON

Sen. Tim Scott, who evidently has not received the memo explaining that politics is a grim and bitter business, laughs easily and often, as when, during lunch in this city's humming downtown, he explains that South Carolina's Lowcountry is benefiting from what are called "halfbacks." These are migrants who moved from Northern states to Florida in search of warmth but, finding high prices and congestion,



**GEORGE  
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WASHINGTON POST  
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then moved halfway back, settling in South Carolina. Doing so, they have located in the state where, Scott believes and history suggests, the 2016 Republican presidential nomination will begin to come to closure.

Since picking Ronald Reagan over John Connally and George H.W. Bush in 1980, South Carolina's Republican primary elec-

torate has sided with the eventual nominee every four years, with the exception of 2012, when Newt Gingrich from neighboring Georgia was rewarded for denouncing as "despicable" a journalist's question during a debate here. This year, South Carolina votes just 10 days before the selection of convention delegates accelerates with the March 1 "SEC primary," so-named because five of the 12 primaries that day are in Southern states represented in that football conference.

The Human Snarl, aka Donald Trump, is leading polls here, where South Carolinians share the national consensus that, in Scott's mild words, "however it is today is not the way it should be." But it remains to be seen whether Republicans will vote for Trump

while so warmly embracing the senator who is his stylistic antithesis. Scott is "an unbridled optimist" (his description) who thinks Republican chances in 2016 depend on whether their nominee is an "aspirational leader" or someone "selling fear." Scott's un-Trumpian demeanor is both a cause and an effect of his popularity: He was elected with 61 percent of the vote in 2014 to complete the term of a senator who resigned. Which is why 13 of the Republican presidential candidates have eagerly accepted his invitations to hold town meetings with him. He took Ohio Gov. John Kasich to Hilton Head because it has so many Ohioans, some of them halfbacks. All the candidates covet Scott's endorsement, which will happen only if, as the Feb. 20 vote draws near, polls show a close race, perhaps a four-point difference between the leaders.

This could be a choice between two of Scott's Senate colleagues, Florida's Marco Rubio and Texas' Ted Cruz. If, he says, South Carolinians choose well — "not sending independents fleeing in the opposite direction" — America will be en route to a Republican presidency.

Scott, 50, became a congressman by defeating in a Republican primary the son of Strom Thurmond, the Dixiecrat presidential candidate in 1948 and then eight-term U.S. senator. In 2013, Scott became the second African-American Republican senator since Reconstruction (Ed Brooke of Massachusetts was the first), and today he and New Jersey Democrat Cory Booker are the Senate's only African-Americans.

Henry Olsen of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, whose specialty is conservative politics, says that among the four states that vote in February (the others are Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada),

South Carolina's electorate "best mirrors the nation's."

Writing for National Review Online, Olsen says the state's primary electorate closely reflects the national balance among the GOP's four factions — "moderates and liberals" (32 percent), "somewhat conservatives" (32 percent), "very conservative evangelicals" (28 percent) and "very conservative seculars" (6 percent). Iowa, says Olsen, favors candidates who are very religious and conservative, New Hampshire favors moderates, Nevada favors conservative seculars. Here, however, a dominant cohort is that which Olsen calls the national party's "ballast" — the "somewhat conservatives."

South Carolina's primary 10 weeks from now will be as distant from the state's 1980 primary that chose Reagan as Reagan's first presidential victory later that year was from Franklin Roosevelt's last victory in 1944. And when South Carolina voted in 1980, the huge and still growing Boeing plant in North Charleston, the Mercedes plant in North Charleston and the BMW plant in Spartanburg were still in its future. As were the halfbacks who are another reason South Carolina no longer has stereotypical Deep South demographics.

And why whichever Republican wins here will have done so in the first 2016 contest that approximates the electorates of the swing states that will determine the 45th president. This fact must be deeply satisfying to Nikki Haley, 43, South Carolina's Indian-American governor, and to Scott, who was born 44 days after enactment of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that made all of this possible.

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Title: **From Afghanistan to SC: A refugee's story**  
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# From Afghanistan to SC: A refugee's story

By DEANNA PAN

The Post and Courier of Charleston  
 COLUMBIA — Self-reliance.

That's Noor Amiri's favorite part about American culture.

"American people want to stand on their own feet. They don't want to rely on somebody else. Even the girl or boy — it doesn't matter," he said. "That's the good part for me."

And in many ways, 27-year-old Amiri embodies that up-from-your-bootstraps, Horatio Alger myth of hard work and survival. A few years ago, Amiri was an inter-

preter in his home country of Afghanistan, avoiding roadside IEDs in U.S. military convoys. Today, he's among 1,800 refugees who have resettled in South Carolina since 2002, striving for a better life for his family.

In the wake of the Nov. 13 massacre in Paris, committed by Islamic State militants, President Barack Obama has reaffirmed his plan to welcome 85,000 refugees, including 10,000 Syrians, to the United States next year. Meanwhile, a slew of Republicans governors,

including South Carolina's Nikki Haley, a former supporter of Syrian resettlement, have vowed to ban them from their states for fear of terrorists masquerading as refugees, fleeing from civil war and persecution.

On Thursday, the House of Representatives passed a bill suspending the resettlement program for Syrian and Iraqi refugees unless national security agencies can prove they pose no risk, making

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## REFUGEE

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an already rigorous vetting process nearly impossible to clear.

The furor confounds Amiri.

"Those people are suffering from war, from injustice, from cruelty so we need to help them. We need to be open-minded," he said. "Human beings are related. We need each other's help."

### A 'FAMOUS' FACE

Amiri grew up in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital city. His father was a truck driver while his mother tended to their 10 children. Amiri was just a boy when the Taliban seized Kabul. He was a teenager when U.S.-led forces drove the Taliban out. He learned English at private language institute in the city, became fascinated with American culture. When he found out the U.S. Army and NATO were hiring Afghan interpreters, he jumped at the chance to apply.

In 2009, at the age of 21, he was hired by the Army, first as an instructor for the Af-

ghan National Army, teaching soldiers how to drive safely in convoy, and later, an interpreter for Afghan and American special forces. In that role, Amiri worked alongside troops, gathering intelligence from villagers and their elders about

enemy movement. It was a challenging, dangerous job. Amiri once watched a Humvee explode on the road in front of him. And through his work, Amiri said, his "face was kind of famous."

"It was very, very difficult to protect ourselves, especially when we're traveling outside the bases or outside the job," he said. "We were listening on the radios that (translators) are the first target for them."

In June 2011, Obama announced that 33,000 American troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the summer of 2012. As the war started to wind down, Amiri said he got nervous. He thought of his new wife, Mina, and their a

1-year-old son, Mustafa.

"I felt I can't give him everything in Afghanistan because I was in danger," Amiri said.

At the end of 2012, Amiri applied for refugee status. Four months later, he found out his application was denied; he didn't submit a piece of paperwork. Amiri tried again, but this time, through the Special Immigrant Visa program, available to Iraqi and Afghan translators who served with the armed forces. Eight months later, at the end of 2013, the U.S. Embassy granted his visa. It was official: Amiri and his family were moving to the other side of the world.

### A NEW LIFE

On June 24, 2014, Amiri and his family landed in the United States. The trip, Amiri said, was "long and boring." His wife was seven months pregnant. His son was an antsy 3-year-old.

At JFK International Airport in New York, they were greeted by staff from the

International Organization for Migration. That's when Amiri learned where they were headed: Columbia, S.C.

Amiri expected to stay in New York or go to Virginia, California or Texas, states where he'd heard other Afghan families had been resettled. He'd never heard of Columbia.

"I was saying, 'No, I don't want to go! I don't know anyone there! I'm going to be by my own self!' My wife and kids, they needed someone to talk to them and welcome them," Amiri recalls. "There was not any other option."

It was almost midnight when they arrived in Columbia. Staff from Lutheran Services Carolinas picked his family up at the airport. The next morning, they drove them to their new home, a small apartment facing the woods on Broad River Road.

### THE BACKLASH

For more than two decades, Lutheran Commu-

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nity Services was the only agency in South Carolina resettling refugees, between 150 and 200 every year from such countries as Myanmar, Bhutan, Eritrea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan and Iraq. Then, this past spring, another faith-based refugee resettlement organization, World Relief, opened a branch in Spartanburg.

That's when the backlash started.

The phone in Lindsey Seawell's office at Lutheran Church of the Reformation started to ring every week. Anonymous callers would ask Seawell, a refugee services coordinator for LSC, not to resettle any Syrians. They'd ask her if she could "send people back." They'd tell her they "don't want any Muslims to come," Seawell said, and she would calmly explain: "'We gladly welcome them,' and they usually don't like that answer."

"Honestly, I think for me personally, what I believe is that we are to love the strang-

er and sojourner and we are to care for them," she said. "My motivation is my faith and what I believe God has asked me to do, and how he's asked me to live my life."

Religious nonprofits such as LSC contract with the federal government to provide services to refugees. LSC helps newly arrived families obtain housing, arrange doctor appointments, enroll in social service programs, learn to use public transportation and apply for jobs.

"The entire overarching goal of refugee resettlement," Seawell said, "is self-sufficiency."

The federal government provides resettlement agencies only \$925 per refugee to help pay for rent, food and other supplies for the first 30 days. LSC relies on volunteers, who donate mattresses, pillows, blankets and kitchen tables, to make up the difference.

After one year, refugees can apply for a green card. After five years, they can apply for citizenship.

"Moving to the U.S. is like taking 10 steps backwards. You don't know the culture and the language. The education and experience you have doesn't always translate in our context. Often refugees think their life will be easier," Seawell said. "Focusing on the freedom and safety they have I think that's what keeps them going."

#### **'STAND ON YOUR OWN FEET'**

The first months in Columbia were difficult for Amiri and his family. Mina was heavily pregnant. They didn't have a car. They missed the markets in Kabul. They longed for families and friends.

Amiri reminded himself: "It's going to get easier and easier until you can stand on your own feet."

Through LSC, Amiri and his wife met other Afghan families. Amiri found his own job, working the night shift at CarMax as a detailer. He's told his bosses he'd eventually like to become a mechanical associate. His wife, meanwhile, is

studying with an English tutor at LCS while taking care of their children, including their infant son, Muftaba or "Yama" for short.

They moved to a new apartment, where the rent is cheaper. They went on a short vacation this summer to Folly Beach. They like visiting Columbia's Statehouse, their local mosque, parks, barbecue restaurants and zoo — "one of the top 10 in U.S."

Most of all, Amiri loves how he safe he feels that he's no longer in danger.

"It was my fortune or destiny— we say 'faith' — to come here in South Carolina," he said. "Right now, I am satisfied."

**"The entire overarching goal of refugee resettlement is self-sufficiency."**

Lindsey Seawell, a refugee services coordinator, Lutheran Services Carolinas

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## OFFSHORE DRILLING

# Atlantic Coast cities rise up against plans

By SEAN COCKERHAM

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — As the Obama administration prepares to open the Atlantic Ocean to oil and gas drilling for the first time in decades, the coast is in rebellion.

Governments in more than 70 cities and counties in the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida have passed resolutions opposing oil exploration or drilling off their coasts, pushing the president to reverse course and keep drilling rigs from the Eastern seaboard.

The latest protest against Obama's plan came from the seaside town of Swansboro, N.C., which passed a resolution last week opposing offshore drilling.

"The risks are very real," said Frank Tursi, newly elected to the town's board of commissioners.

Obama's January announcement that he is proposing a drilling lease sale in the Atlantic has ignited a furious debate over energy, jobs and

the environment, with governors of East Coast states eager for development but many coastal towns afraid of the potential impact on tourism and fishing.

Drilling opponents along the Atlantic coast feel emboldened by Obama's decision last month to cancel drilling lease sales far to the north in the Arctic Ocean.

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## COAST

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They see a potential opening as the president becomes more assertive on environmental issues as he prepares to leave office after next year's election.

"For the life of me I just can't understand why this is even an issue. Tourism generates so much money to the state, it's basically the lifeblood of eastern North Carolina," said Matt Price, a real estate developer in North Carolina's Outer Banks. "I doubt people want to come to a place where oil washed up on the beaches or there's dead sea life from seismic testing."

Coastal drilling opponents are fighting an uphill battle, though — against their own governors and senators who support offshore drilling and would protest if Obama abandoned the plan. Republican North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory is pressing for the state to get a share of the federal money from offshore energy production, telling Congress this year that there

is "widespread support" in North Carolina for offshore drilling.

"Governor McCrory continues to support a multi-faceted energy strategy that will create jobs and help with our country's energy independence," McCrory spokesman Graham Wilson said this past week. "The governor's first goal is to find out what resources are available in a safe, environmentally responsible way."

Obama has opened a huge area of the Atlantic, from Delaware to central Florida, for seismic exploration for oil and natural gas. Those tests, in which seismic cannons repeatedly blast as loud as a howitzer under the sea, could begin as soon as the spring once federal permits are issued.

It's not clear how much oil and gas there is off the Eastern seaboard and the tests are meant to change that. The seismic cannons will blast compressed air under-

water, sending sound waves to the bottom of the ocean that produce echoes to be used by industry to map oil and gas deposits.

Oil companies will use the data to decide whether to bid on Atlantic drilling leases. The president proposes a 2021 drilling lease sale off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia, areas long closed to fossil fuel development. Governors of all those states support the drilling.

All major coastal cities in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia are against the drilling plan, though — with resolutions of opposition from Wilmington, N.C., Myrtle Beach, Charleston, Hilton Head Island, Savannah and dozens of smaller towns. Similar resolutions have been passed by cities in Florida, Virginia, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware.

"Every coastal municipality in South Carolina is now on board (with the opposition)," Billy Keyserling,

mayor of Beaufort, said at a recent meeting in Washington organized by the environmental group Oceana.

Keyserling said the U.S. already has a glut of cheap oil from the fracking boom. "We don't need to take these kinds of risks."

U.S. Reps. Mark Sanford and Tom Rice, Republicans who represent the South Carolina coast, also oppose Atlantic offshore drilling, as does Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-S.C. All four U.S. senators from North and South Carolina support drilling, though, as does Republican South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley.

Not everyone along the Carolina coast is opposed to drilling. Carteret County, N.C., which is between Wilmington and the Outer Banks, bucked the anti-drilling tide this month with a resolution in support of McCrory's push for oil and gas exploration off the state's coast.

Swansboro, N.C., Commissioner Jim Allen also supports offshore drilling, al-

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though his fellow town commissioners outvoted him 3-1 on the issue.

"I think if we've got gas or oil out there then I don't see anything wrong with us drilling for it," Allen said in an interview. "I am all for doing anything to create jobs."

Allen lost his re-election race this month. So did Dean Lambeth, mayor of Kure Beach, N.C., who drew hundreds of protesters when he supported oil and gas exploration last year.

"A lot of my campaign was based on opposing seismic

testing and offshore oil," said Emilie Swearingen, who defeated Lambeth in the mayor's race. "We have dozens and dozens and dozens of 'do not drill' signs all over our town."

Swearingen said the anti-drilling resolutions prove

that coastal opposition is strong and now it is a matter of convincing the rest of North Carolina.

"We need to get the word out to the Piedmont and the mountains," she said.

