

Title: **Rubio to hold rally on Hilton Head**

Author:

Size: 11.47 square inch

Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



## Rubio to hold rally on Hilton Head

Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio will make one final stop in Beaufort County today in advance of Saturday's primary.

The U.S. senator from Florida will hold a rally at Signature Flight Support near Hilton Head Airport this afternoon as he crisscrosses South Carolina on a last-minute plane tour. Rubio is expected to speak in the area adjacent to the terminal at 2:15 p.m. after landing, according to a news release.

Doors open at 1:15 p.m., and attendees are asked to park on the streets near Signature Flight Support on Gateway Circle. Tickets for the Hilton Head rally

are available at <http://bit.ly/RubioRally0219> or [marcorubio.com/events](http://marcorubio.com/events).

Rubio trailed New York businessman Donald Trump and Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, in polls released by CNN and Fox News this week but picked up an endorsement from Gov. Nikki Haley on Wednesday. Sen. Tim Scott and Rep. Trey Gowdy have already voiced their support for Rubio in recent weeks. Haley and Scott will accompany Rubio today.

After a short meet-and-greet, Rubio will head out to his next destination. He has also planned stops in Charleston, Clemson, Columbia and Pawleys Island.



Title: **Week in Beaufort shows Jeb Bush stuck in time**  
 Author: BY SCOT LEHIGH The BostonGlobe  
 Size: 42.00 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015

## OTHER VIEWPOINTS

# Week in Beaufort shows Jeb Bush stuck in time

BY SCOT LEHIGH

The Boston Globe

### BEAUFORT

South Carolina has always been a firewall for the Bush family. This year, it looks more like a fire extinguisher.

It was hard to avoid that conclusion after attending both Donald Trump and Jeb Bush campaign events here in this beautiful city in the South Carolina Lowcountry.

On Monday evening, a driver, her window rolled down to enjoy the lovely weather, directed this question my way: "Where is all this traffic coming from?"

Simple. Donald Trump was scheduled to speak at the local high school.

Trump's event drew such a crowd that fire and police officials turned people away not just from the performance center where he spoke, but from the 700-plus-capacity auditorium that served as an overflow room.

You couldn't help contrast the numbers Trump attracted with the 200 or so who came out in mid-morning on Wednesday to see Jeb Bush.

Bush was earnest, smart, explanatory and expansive. Too much so for two Bush admirers I spoke with, who left mid-way through.

"I'm bored," one confided.

Leaving later, other long-time Bush supporters said, sadly, that things just weren't coming together for him.

Before the event, retired schoolteacher Paula Butner told me she had deep respect for the Bush family, and particularly George W., but was leaning toward Trump.

"I like how decisive he has been about immigration," she said. Given her affection for the Bush family, was she put off by the way Trump has gone after Bush for the Iraq invasion, saying his administration lied about Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction?

No. "I think it is just part of the games they play," Butner said of Trump's accusation.

The sense that the Palmetto tide had turned against Jeb was accentuated on Wednesday afternoon, when news broke that Gov. Nikki Haley's highly coveted endorsement would go to Marco Rubio, who is jostling with Bush and Gov. John Kasich of Ohio for the role of establishment alternative.

As for Trump himself, his event broke new

ground in the annals of self-admiration. Fielding softball questions from former South Carolina GOP chairman Van D. Hipp Jr., the candidate shifted voices, the better to boast about his own prescience and prowess.

"Trump was talking about Osama bin Laden a year or two before the World Trade Center came down," he declared.

Of course, Trump's candidacy is all based on the notion that Trump is possessed of unexampled talents, intelligence and abilities. Indeed, as Trump presents it, all problems

can be solved by a president with his intellect, toughness and deal-making prowess.

His pitch comes down to this: Trust me, I can.

Or rather: Trust Trump, he can.

And, talking to his backers, that seems to be enough for them.

"I am sick of politicians. He was a super businessman," said Susan McDowell, a South Carolina retiree. "You're doggone right I'm going to vote for him."

Back to Bush. He actually does have an array of reasonably well-thought-out conservative plans and proposals detailing what

he proposes to do on any number of issues, from college costs to health care for military veterans to the national debt. After he spoke, he spent considerable time answering questions from the audience.

Watching him, I found himself thinking, yet again, that Bush is a smart, thoughtful, decent guy — but one who is hopelessly stuck in another time.

A time when a potential president had to demonstrate a real understanding of the issues, to offer some realistic plans, to tell people what he would do if elected.

That all seems hopelessly antique in this year's Republican primary process.

Bush had hoped that a strong South Carolina finish could frame this race as Jeb versus Donald, the serious, experienced, conservative governor against the erratic, unpredictable, unpresidential outsider.

Instead, the message seems more likely to be that the state that has shined on his family is now declaring that the Bush era is over — and the Trump odyssey has dawned.



Title: **Trump, Rubio to make campaign stops in Pawleys**  
 Author: By Max Hrenda mhrenda@southstrandnews.com  
 Size: 33.48 square inch  
 Georgetown, SC Circulation: 8446

# Trump, Rubio to make campaign stops in Pawleys

By MAX HRENDA

mhrenda@southstrandnews.com

Georgetown County will play host to two of the front-runners for the Republican presidential nomination on the eve of the GOP primary.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and New York businessman Donald Trump are both scheduled to appear in Pawleys Island Friday, Feb. 19.

Rubio is scheduled to speak at Lowcountry Preparatory School, 300 Blue Stem Drive, at 11:45 a.m., while Trump will appear at 3 p.m. at Pawleys Plantation Golf & Country Club, 70 Tanglewood Drive.

The doors for Rubio's event will open at 10:45 a.m., while doors at Trump's event will

open at 2 p.m. Admission is free for both events, but anyone wishing to attend must first register for tickets. To check ticket availability, visit the Georgetown County GOP website at <https://georgetown.gop>.

Both Trump and Rubio are counted among the front-runners to receive the voters' nods in the Feb. 20 primary. As of Tuesday, Feb. 16, a compilation of state polls by the data aggregation news service RealClearPolitics indicated Trump commanded the lead with 33.8 percent support, while Rubio finished in third place with 16.3 percent; Texas Sen. Ted Cruz was the

only other candidate to poll in double digits with 21 percent.

The Rubio campaign may have received a boost earlier this week, however, when South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley threw her support behind the first-year U.S. Senator. Haley will join Rubio during his event Friday morning, as will U.S. Sen Tim Scott (R-SC), who has campaigned for Rubio over the past several weeks.

According to Georgetown County GOP Chairman Randy Hollister, the appearance of prolific Republican candidates near the GOP primary date is nothing new. Then-Texas Gov. George W. Bush visited the county near

the date of the primary during his first run for president in 2000, while Arizona Sen. John McCain did the same during his presidential run in 2008.

"We typically will have a few of the candidates stop in," Hollister said. "We will actually have had five of the six finalists in Georgetown County during this election season. I think that's pretty good, for a small county."

In addition to Rubio and Trump, Dr. Ben Carson visited Georgetown in May of 2015, while former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Ohio Gov. John Kasich each visited Pawleys Island in early February.



AP PHOTOS

**Republican presidential candidate, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla. speaks during a campaign stop, Tuesday, in Summerville, S.C.**



**Billionaire Donald Trump speaks to a crowd during a campaign stop.**

Title: **Bush argues serious leadership should displace Trump**  
 Author: BY STEPHEN FASTENAU [sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com)  
 Size: 48.05 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



# Bush argues serious leadership should displace Trump

BY STEPHEN FASTENAU  
[sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com)

Jeb Bush pushed back against Donald Trump on Wednesday in Beaufort, painting the Republican frontrunner as an entertainer unfit to lead.

Bush, struggling in the polls ahead of Saturday's S.C. Republican presidential primary, told a crowd at Beaufort Inn's Tabby Place that serious issues would arise for the next president and would require a serious leader. After the town-hall style event, Bush said he thought Trump's attacks on his brother, former president George W. Bush, during last week's debate could cost Trump on Saturday.

Trump "stepped in it" when he claimed the former president had advanced knowledge of the Sept. 11 attacks and didn't stop them and knew there weren't weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, Jeb Bush said.

"The guy got unhinged in the debate, and his

tendency is to double down when he says outrageous things, because somehow he thinks that it helps him," Bush said in an interview with The Beaufort Gazette and The Island Packet after the rally.

The comments come as Bush is working to remain in the conversation for the Republican nomination, efforts that include a buzz-worthy photo of a handgun posted to Bush's Twitter account this week.

Not long after Bush's Beaufort event, Sen. Marco Rubio earned Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement. Bush called Rubio a friend but said the senator lacked the necessary foreign policy experience.

George W. Bush was in Charleston earlier in the week to campaign for his brother. Former first lady Barbara Bush is expected to arrive in South Carolina on Thursday night and much of the Bush family will be in town by the end

of the week, Jeb Bush said.

## ADDRESSING UNDECIDED VOTERS

Mat Paulick, a 39-year-old Beaufort resident, arrived at the rally undecided.

And his mind still wasn't made up when Bush's staff allowed him to change his baby daughter's dirty diaper aboard the campaign bus.

Paulick wanted to ask Bush how he would unite both parties in Congress to get things done. He wasn't called upon, but was pleased with other Bush answers, when the candidate sought to find common ground with a young woman who is pro-choice and talked to the mother of a lesbian Air Force veteran about gay rights.

"Genuine, honest, friendliness, welcoming — I liked what I saw there,"

**SEE BUSH, 5A**

Title: **Bush argues serious leadership should displace Trump**  
 Author: BY STEPHEN FASTENAU sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com  
 Size: 48.05 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015

## BUSH FROM PAGE 3A

said Paulick, who is torn between Bush and Ohio Gov. John Kasich.

Longtime Beaufort resident Norman Morrall said he and a group of friends were still deciding and had seen Rubio and Trump. Morrall, an 82-year-old retired airline pilot, eliminated Trump after his appearance in Beaufort on Tuesday.

"He doesn't go into any detail," Morrall said.

Beaufort resident Andy Kinghorn wrote off Trump as "a disaster" and is deciding between Bush, Rubio and Kasich. He is afraid the similar candidates might dilute the support.

"I just hope the country will give (Bush) or one of the other serious candidates a chance," Kinghorn said.

### PLAN TO OVERHAUL VA, BUILD UP MILITARY

Bush called for complete reform of the Veterans Administration, which he said is bloated with too many administrators and too few caregivers.

He advocated veterans being given cards and allowed to go outside of the VA for care, citing horror stories of long wait times for treatment. Bush likened the additional options to school choice in his state while he was Florida governor and said competition will make the VA better.

"It's clear the bureaucracy needs to be challenged and modified and simplified," Bush said. "Everything they do is just mind-numbingly incompetent."

Bush also advocated more military spending. He said the Army was too small, many Marines don't meet the definition of readiness and that planes are older than their pilots.

### STILL MIFFED BY TRUMP

In going after Trump, Bush said the frontrunner's appeal is that "he is the big horse on stage."

He referenced some of Trump's failed business dealings as evidence of a blemished record. Bush sounded miffed that Trump's campaign wasn't derailed by comments like one last summer, when he said Arizona Sen. John McCain wasn't a war hero because he was captured, and later when Trump mocked a New York Times reporter with a disability.

Maybe Trump's attacks on George W. Bush will be enough, Jeb Bush said.

"I think he's dropping and we're moving up," Bush said. "So we'll see."

Stephen Fastenau:  
843-706-8182,  
@IPBG\_Stephen



Title: **Haley gives endorsement to Rubio**  
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com  
 Size: 104.93 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



# Haley gives endorsement to Rubio

U.S. senator from Florida wins support of S.C. governor

Haley is state's most popular GOP politician after handling of Charleston shooting

Jeb Bush was Haley's other likely endorsement choice

BY ANDREW SHAIN  
 ashain@thestate.com

Gov. Nikki Haley said Wednesday she endorsed U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., for president because he is best suited to restore GOP principles of limited government and cutting debt to Washington.

"I want a president who understands they have to go back to Washington, D.C., and bring a

conscience back to our Republicans," Haley, a Lexington Republican, told a crowd of hundreds gathered outside a Chapin warehouse.

Haley said she made the decision as a mother who wants a safer, more prosperous nation for her children and as the wife of a

combat veteran who wants more support for the military.

Haley did not say why she didn't choose other candidates running in Saturday's GOP primary.

"We have good people running

**SEE HALEY, 6A**

FROM PAGE 1A

## HALEY

for president, and I thank them today for their sacrifice and their willingness to serve," she said. "But my job was to find the person I thought who could do it the best.

"I wanted someone with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody who has the conviction to do the right thing," she said. "But I wanted somebody humble enough (who) remembers

that you work for all the people."

Haley, the state's most popular GOP politician in polls and a rising national GOP star, was South Carolina's most coveted Republican endorsement in the 2016 presidential race.

"She embodies for me everything that I want the Republican Party and conservative movement to be about," Rubio told the Chapin crowd.

The governor's endorsement comes at a critical time for Rubio.

The Florida senator needs to do well in South Carolina after finishing fifth in New Hampshire following a rattled debate performance. Rubio trails GOP front-runner Donald Trump and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas with just two days to go before Saturday's primary.

Haley joins U.S. Sen.

Tim Scott of North Charleston, the only African-American Republican in the Senate, and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, the Spartanburg Republican who heads a panel investigating the Benghazi attack, in endorsing Rubio.

Haley backed the GOP establishment candidate considered to have the best chance of challenging Trump and Cruz.

Former Florida Gov. Jeb

Title: **Haley gives endorsement to Rubio**  
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com  
 Size: 104.93 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688

Bush, who has shared advice on education issues with Haley and helped her raise money for her 2014 re-election bid, also was a contender to win Haley's endorsement. Bush's father and brother, both former presidents who won the S.C. primary, reached out to Haley in recent weeks.

But Bush has lagged in recent S.C. polls, falling to fifth in the six-candidate GOP field. Rubio is in third, according to most polls.

Haley's decision was a reversal. Tuesday, Haley said she had not made up her mind about who to endorse.

She endorsed Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential race. While the

former Massachusetts governor won the GOP nomination, he lost the S.C. primary to former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, breaking the state's three-decade streak of voting for the GOP candidate who landed on the November ballot.

Haley and Rubio share similar backgrounds. Both are 44-year-old children of immigrants who were elected to office in the Tea Party fervor of 2010.

Rubio initially met Haley when they first were running for their current offices. The senator spoke at the S.C. GOP's annual dinner in 2012 and started building relationships in the early-primary state. They have communicated

while Rubio has been on the campaign trail.

During stops in South Carolina this week, the senator has said Haley would make a good vice president. Haley became a favorite to make vice presidential short lists after her handling of last year's Charleston slayings and her successful call to remove the Confederate flag from the S.C. Statehouse grounds. She also gave the GOP response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union last month.

Haley's endorsement, while arriving later than expected, was not a surprise.

She had said she would not back Trump. She

urged voters not to listen to the "angriest voices" in her State of the Union response and has criticized Trump for his combative campaigning.

Trump has said Haley is not doing enough to protect South Carolina from Syrian refugees and the possibility of Guantánamo prisoners being transferred to the Navy brig outside Charleston. Haley has protested both issues to federal officials.

Haley has not criticized Cruz, but she has not kept in regular contact with the Texas senator.

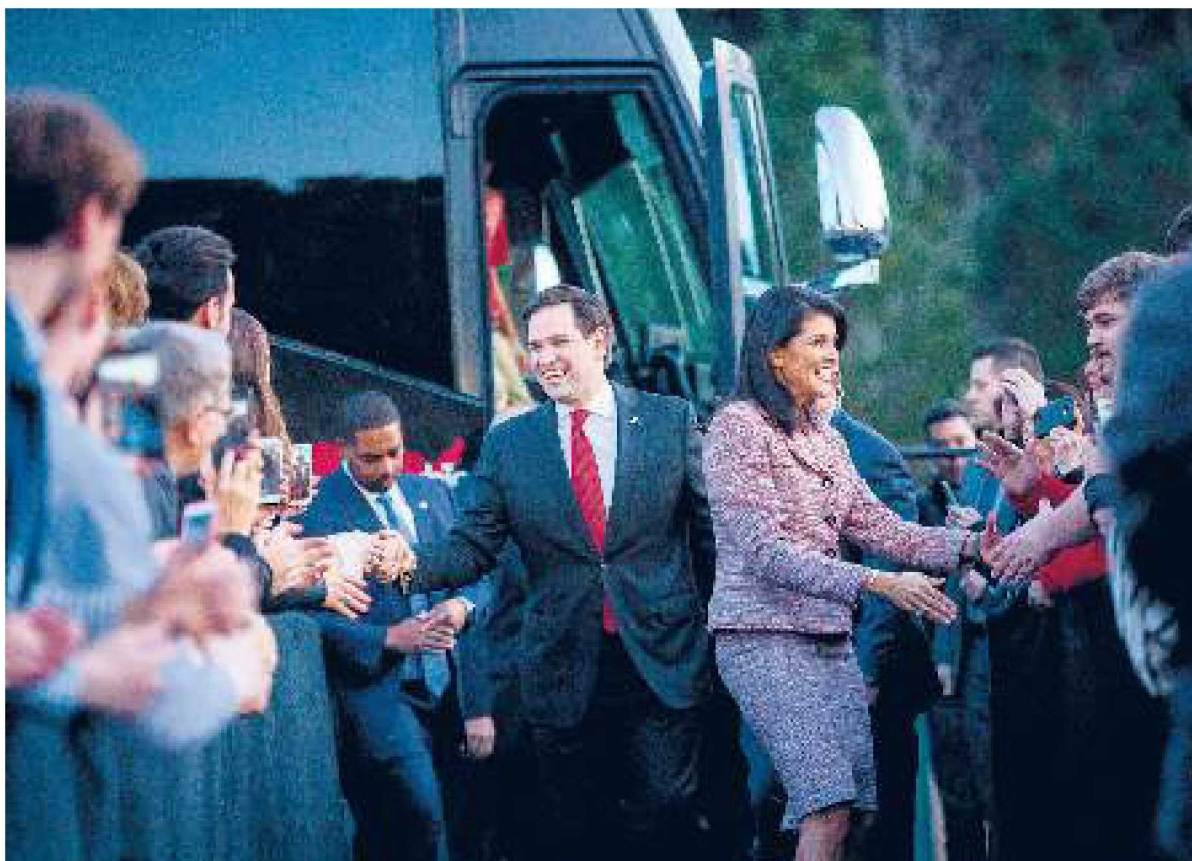
*Andrew Shain:*  
 803-771-8619,  
 @AndyShain



ERIC THAYER New York Times

Rubio speaks at a rally the same day Haley endorsed his White House bid.

Title: **Haley gives endorsement to Rubio**  
Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com  
Size: 104.93 square inch  
Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



ERIC THAYER New York Times

Sen. Marco Rubio and Gov. Nikki Haley arrive Wednesday for Rubio's campaign rally in Chapin.



Title: **Who to watch as debate on road fixes begins**  
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press  
 Size: 49.91 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



## S.C. SENATE

# Who to watch as debate on road fixes begins

BY JEFFREY COLLINS

*Associated Press*  
 COLUMBIA

South Carolina's Senate promises an extensive debate, starting Wednesday, on how to get more money to the state's roads and highways.

On Tuesday, Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman told members of the chamber to get to the Statehouse two hours early Wednesday for a session that could go well into the evening.

The proposal getting the most attention in the Senate would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add some other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads yearly to repave pothole filled interstates and roads, repair aging bridges and expand some highways. But plenty of amendments changing those figures are likely from Republicans who don't want to raise a lot of taxes and Democrats leery about widespread tax cuts.

Another big issue: Who gets to run the S.C. Department of Transporta-

tion? Some conservatives oppose a plan to have the directors of 10 regional government councils each pick three candidates for the DOT board to send to the governor to make the final choice. Gov. Nikki Haley wants more power over who is appointed to the board at the roads agency. Legislators currently pick seven members, with the governor choosing the eighth.

Here are people to watch as the roads debate begins in earnest:

## RAY CLEARY AND JOEL LOURIE

Cleary, a Republican from Murrells Inlet, and Lourie, a Democrat from Columbia, are the lawmakers trying to pull together a compromise.

They volunteered in part because they aren't running for re-election this year and feel they can herd the Senate to make what could be some unpopular decisions on rais-

**SEE ROADS, 6A**

Title: **Whoto watch as debateon road fixes begins**  
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press  
 Size: 49.91 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688

## ROADS

### FROM PAGE 3A

ing and cutting taxes.

"There's nobody in here who is going to get everything they want," Lourie told senators.

#### TOM DAVIS

Davis filibustered the roads bill last year and is the most vocal critic of how the DOT spends its money. The Republican from Beaufort hasn't ruled out voting for a gas tax increase, but is demanding reform at both the DOT and the State Infrastructure Bank, which pays for larger projects without the same kind of ranking process lawmakers require of the DOT.

Davis suggested last week that lawmakers use extra revenue to spend \$65 million immediately and get almost all the pavement on existing interstates up to good condition, so they can take more time to get a roads funding bill right.

"When you swallow an elephant, you do it a little at a time," Davis said.

#### NIKKI SETZLER

As Senate Minority leader, Setzler answers to Democratic members who want good roads, but aren't sure South Carolina needs to be cutting taxes when it's under a court

order to come up with a plan to improve poorer school districts, and with a state employee workforce that's only received small raises in the past eight years.

The West Columbia Democrat also thinks improving South Carolina's interstates is the key to keeping the state growing. He wants to widen nearly all of the more than 900 miles of interstate highways in the state to at least three lanes in each direction. That costs at least \$10 million a mile, or a total price tag close to \$9 billion. There are no current plans to do that.

#### HARVEY PEELER

Peeler has spent much of his 35 years in the Senate trying to get 20 or so miles of Interstate 85 widened in Cherokee County, where his home in Gaffney is located. It's one of only three two-lane segments of I-85 in the 265 miles of highway between Durham, N.C., and Anderson.

Peeler has long felt road funding is too politicized, as powerful lawmakers along the coast get money for projects that aren't as important.

Peeler, the Senate Majority Leader whose district includes parts of

western York County, must get a wide variety of Republicans on board – from conservatives reticent to raise taxes to more moderate members worried infrastructure problems will never get solved without a steady revenue stream.

#### GARY SIMRILL AND NIKKI HALEY

The Senate is not the end of the road for highway funding. Whatever comes out must go back to the House, where Rep. Simrill helped guide a bill through last year that would have raised about an additional \$500 million a year for roads.

The Rock Hill Republican says he's watching the Senate carefully, encouraged by its discussion. He doesn't agree with all the Senate ideas, but knows the bill will likely end up as a compromise between the Senate and the House.

"I think in conference we can work out details," Simrill said.

Haley has said she will only sign a bill that reforms DOT and offsets any increase in the gas tax with a comparable tax cut. She hasn't said whether she likes the Senate's plan. And she wields the veto pen.

Title: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**  
 Author:  
 Size: 65.25 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



**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 about letting the governor control the Transportation Depart-

Title: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**  
 Author:  
 Size: 65.25 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015

ment, 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 Transportation 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.*

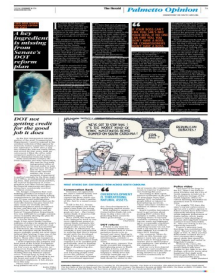
“

**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: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**  
 Author:  
 Size: 65.41 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



**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

Title: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**  
 Author:  
 Size: 65.41 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688

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)*

“

**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: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**

Author:

Size: 65.41 square inch

Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



Title: **Bills would raise minimum wage, repeal right to work law**  
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press  
 Size: 42.47 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



# Bills would raise minimum wage, repeal right to work law

BY SEANNA ADCOX

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.

**SEE LEGISLATION, 5A**



Title: **Bill would raise minimum wage, repeal right to work law**  
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press  
 Size: 42.47 square inch  
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688

## LEGISLATION

### FROM PAGE 3A

"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 Holzpfel, 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."



Cobb-Hunter

Title: **Analysis: Pope shines spotlight on GOP minority challenges**  
 Author: BY STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press  
 Size: 24.49 square inch  
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



# Analysis: Pope shines spotlight on GOP minority challenges

**BY STEVE PEOPLES**  
*Associated Press*

SPARTANBURG — The Republican Party's tug-of-war over its relationship with black and Hispanic voters was underway long before Pope Francis decided to answer a question about Donald Trump.

On one side, Marco Rubio and others insist the GOP must attract more minorities to win the presidency. On the other, leading rivals Trump and Ted Cruz embrace fiery rhetoric designed to motivate angry white conservatives. Complicating it all is immigration, the issue the party's pragmatic professionals can't square with the passions of their most faithful voters.

Pope Francis on Thursday shined an international spotlight on the intraparty debate when asked about Trump's call to build a massive wall on the U.S.-Mexican border, he



AP PHOTO/JOHN BAZEMORE

**Republican presidential candidate Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., speaks as South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley looks on during a rally Friday in Columbia.**

said those who seek to build walls instead of bridges are not Christian.

It's a high-stakes clash that could determine much more than South Carolina's Republican primary election today, but also whether the GOP nominee succeeds in Novem-

ber's general election.

"I don't think conservatism has ethnic boundaries," Rubio told The Associated Press on Thursday as he campaigned alongside South Carolina's Indian-American Gov. Nikki Haley and African-American Sen. Tim Scott.