

Title: **Proper Polymers adding 87 jobs, \$15.4M investment**
Author: AMANDA COYNE THE GREENVILLE NEWS
Size: 10.07 square inch
Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Proper Polymers adding 87 jobs, \$15.4M investment

AMANDA COYNE
THE GREENVILLE NEWS

Proper Polymers will add 87 jobs in Greenville with a \$15.4 million investment in a new manufacturing facility in the Upstate.

The company will construct a 50,000 square foot facility in Greenville County's Matrix Park, where it will manufacture injection molded components for the automotive industry. The facility is expandable up to 100,000 square feet and is expected to open for operations in October. Hiring is anticipated to begin in the summer, but most will not be hired until the second and third quarters of 2017.

"Proper Polymers is a great example of the 'ripple effect' that occurs with an automotive original equipment manufacturer," said Greenville County Council Chairman Bob Taylor in a release from Gov. Nikki Haley's office. "Magna Decostar comes to supply BMW, Proper Polymers comes to supply Magna. We are grateful ... for their commitment to our area."

Title: **Haley: Study the impact of governments on business**
Author: ASSOCIATED PRESS
Size: 10.38 square inch
Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Haley: Study the impact of governments on business

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA— South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley says a statewide evaluation of local taxes and regulations will help counties attract and grow businesses.

The Republican issued an executive order Wednesday creating the Local Government Competitiveness Council.

The order says city and county governments can benefit or burden the business community, so there should be an analysis of local governments' performance on economic and quality-of-life issues.

It contends that "would almost certainly benefit South Carolinians" by identifying best practices and improvement opportunities. The committee is tasked with determining the impact of local decisions on issues such as public infrastructure, taxes and workforce readiness.

It will be led by Rick Reames, director of the state Department of Revenue. The group will report its findings and recommendations to Haley. The order contains no timeline.

Title: **Testy Senate finally takes up roads bill**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 56.88 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Testy Senate finally takes up roads bill

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - The Senate began debating and voting on a roads bill Wednesday evening, almost a year after the House passed its own bill to fix the state's ailing roads and weeks after business groups, citizens and even the governor called for action.

The breakthrough followed three weeks of filibusters and a day of sena-

tors and the governor voicing frustration over the lack of Senate votes.

But it remained unclear what, if anything, the Senate would agree to, as tempers flared after Republicans in the Senate forced a limit on debate.

Democrats and Republicans met privately into the night to try and work out a solution.

The Senate did not take up two ini-

tial amendments, the second of which was ruled out of order.

Then the chamber voted 24-16 along party lines to limit debate, frustrating Democrats who said they were baffled why Republicans who spent weeks filibustering would want

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Roads

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to limit senators now that debate could begin.

"We're ending a debate we never had," said Sen. Tom McElveen, a Sumter Democrat.

Sen. Vincent Sheheen, a Camden Democrat, said the move was part of a maneuver to avoid a vote on the gas tax.

Senators said 248 amendments were pending Wednesday evening and Democrats vowed to take the 20 minutes allotted to debate each one.

"We can be here forever," said Sen. John Scott, a Columbia Democrat.

Democrats moved repeatedly to recede or adjourn, calling for roll call votes and promising procedural votes to take up time.

"All we're asking for is the time we deserve for the citizens we represent to be heard on the issue that is the most pressing issue in this state," said Sen. Brad Hutto, an Orangeburg Democrat. "You all have monopolized the podium for weeks and weeks and we have let you because we were going to give you the

time and the courtesy to speak."

Democrats said it appeared there was a GOP push for a plan that would use some of the state's \$1.3 billion in new revenue to pay for road repairs instead of raising the gas tax.

Hutto charged that some senators were scared to vote on any bill with an increase in the gas tax because of an ongoing campaign against any increase by an out-of-state group.

Sen. Larry Grooms, a Berkeley County Republican who chairs the Senate Transportation Committee, told the Senate before his amendment was ruled out of order that his plan was perhaps the only chance at a compromise.

"If we can't do this we won't have a bill," he said. "We're facing nothing after a year."

Grooms' plan provides \$400 million more per year for roads using recurring funds from the state's \$1.3 billion in new revenue and then give the governor the authority to appoint highway commissioners.

Grooms said he knows

some senators want more spent on roads but his plan at least "gives us something." The \$400 million is approximately what the House roads plan would have raised had gas prices stayed at the levels they were at in early 2015.

Grooms said the \$400 million would allow the state to improve some bad roads but would not address issues on interstates that require added lanes.

The move to begin debate and consideration of amendments followed a failed move by Sen. Paul Thurmond, a Charleston Republican, to stop the filibusters earlier in the day. Only six senators voted then to limit debate. It was the first time any senator had moved to end debate.

Shortly afterward, the Senate voted to carry over the first amendment on the roads bill and to go to Grooms' amendment.

After several Democrats argued the amendment was out of order, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster sustained their request. The Senate then voted to limit

debate. The arguments over limiting debate followed a day and evening of flared tempers.

At one point, Sen. Darrell Jackson, a Columbia Democrat, asked to address the Senate on a matter of personal interest, a routine courtesy. But a senator objected, causing Jackson to say similar requests by Republicans could face his objection.

Earlier in the day, Gov. Nikki Haley voiced her frustration over the continuing lack of action.

Haley said Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman and several other senators were not allowing progress on the bill because they opposed reform to the state Department of Transportation board, which she wants. She said passage of a roads plan was being "held hostage."

The issue of reforming the DOT board is one of three in a comprehensive roads bill that Haley has said must also provide tax relief in addition to funding or she will veto it.



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 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 56.88 square inch
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

“We have horse-trading for roads going on right now,” she said. “What we’re seeing right now is they don’t want to give up control. You can’t throw a dollar at roads if you can’t promise us that it’s going to get spent wisely.”

Two of the senators conducting filibusters, Sen. Kevin Bryant, an Anderson Republican, and Sen. Tom Davis, a Beaufort Republican, say they oppose

the roads bill passed last year by the Senate Finance Committee because they do not want to see an increase in the gas tax and want to see DOT reform.

Davis and Bryant said Wednesday they are upset the House Ways and Means Committee last week spent only \$65 million of \$766 million in recurring new state revenue on roads. The committee in total approved spending

\$250 million on roads, mostly for county transportation committees.

Bryant said the amount approved by the House shows a commitment to “grow government,” not to fix roads.

Sen. Margie Bright-Mathews, a Colleton County Democrat and the Senate’s newest member, took to the podium at the start of the Senate’s day to plead for the body to take up the

roads bill, saying horrific highway accidents because of bad roads were killing or injuring children.

Sen. Greg Hembree, an Horry County Republican and former prosecutor, told the Senate that the state’s biggest problem was not roads but Senate rules, including those that allowed filibusters, that he argued favored a dictator more than a democratic Legislature.

Title: **S.C. Senate Republicans force vote on roads bill**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
 Size: 68.35 square inch
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



ROADS

S.C. Senate Republicans force vote on roads bill

BY JEFFREY COLLINS

Associated Press
COLUMBIA

Republicans in the South Carolina Senate decided Wednesday to begin forcing votes on a bill to get more money to the state roads.

Republicans united for a cloture vote after appearing to get behind a proposal that would take \$400 million out of the general budget and put it toward roads without raising the state's gas tax.

Although the 24-16 vote along party lines about 6:30 p.m. Wednesday started the process in motion, it could be a while before any vote on the whole bill. Senate rules give members 20 minutes to debate an amendment, and Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman said earlier this week there were 300 amendments to the bill to be heard.

Democrats were furious at the move and warned they would take as much

time as allowed, not caring if they stalled the state budget and any other bills.

"I don't know how long we are going to stay here, but it's a while," said state Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg. "Now we got ourselves into a parliamentary snafu that will take days, weeks, months."

Republicans forced the issue after weeks of inaction. Conservative senators were filibustering to stop a gas tax increase but suddenly stopped to take up an amendment that provided extra highway money without raising the gas tax and would allow the governor to appoint all eight members of the Department of Transportation's board.

"We have to fix the way we fix roads before we give them more funding," said Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Charleston.

When Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster ruled that amendment could not be

considered, Republicans moved to limit debate. A similar amendment will be heard later.

The action took place hours after Gov. Nikki Haley said Leatherman was using his position as president of the Senate to hold the roads bill hostage.

"He is holding hostage our roads in the name of power, and that's one of the worst things you can ever do," Haley said. "The senators need to get strong and listen to their constituents."



Haley

cloture motion.

Haley's comments at a news conference Wednesday continued a long-standing feud between the

two Republicans. Haley went to a chamber of commerce event in Florence last year and, with Leatherman in attendance, blamed him and a few Democratic lawmakers for stopping ethics reform.

“

HE IS HOLDING HOSTAGE OUR ROADS IN THE NAME OF POWER, AND THAT'S ONE OF THE WORST THINGS YOU CAN EVER DO. THE SENATORS NEED TO GET STRONG AND LISTEN TO THEIR CONSTITUENTS.

Gov. Nikki Haley

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Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
Size: 68.35 square inch
Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



JEFFREY COLLINS AP

State Sen. Hugh Leatherman of Florence, left, and Sen. Harvey Peeler of Gaffney listen to a filibuster on a roads bill Wednesday. Gov. Nikki Haley accused Leatherman of delaying on purpose.

Title: **Terri DeCenzo awarded Order of the Silver Crescent**
 Author:
 Size: 72.69 square inch
 Conway, SC Circulation: 6250



Terri DeCenzo awarded Order of the Silver Crescent

Terri DeCenzo, executive director of Women in Philanthropy and Leadership (WIPL) for Coastal Carolina University, has been awarded the Order of the Silver Crescent by S.C. Governor Nikki Haley.

The award, one of the state's highest honors, is given to individuals for significant contributions, leadership, volunteerism and lifelong influence within a region or community of the state.

The award was presented to DeCenzo recently in Myrtle Beach during WIPL's annual Women's Leadership Conference and Celebration of Inspiring Women, an event she has

spearheaded since becoming the organization's executive director in 2007.

In a message accompanying the award, Haley commended DeCenzo for her leadership in establishing the conference and for her significant legacy of community service.

"[You] have been a wonderful inspiration to others, and your contributions will have a lasting impact for our state for years to come," Haley wrote.

Under DeCenzo's leadership, WIPL has awarded more than \$172,500 in scholarships to 122 deserving CCU students. The annual Women's Leadership Conference and Celebra-

tion of Inspiring Women has become the organization's signature event and has featured more than 250 world-class speakers and has honored 30 exceptional women whose lives have made a significant impact in South Carolina, the nation and beyond.

DeCenzo, wife of CCU President David A. DeCenzo, actively participates on the board of directors for S.C. Catholic Charities. She served on the American Red Cross board and on the Foundation Board for Georgetown Hospital System, as well as on the Health Advisory Committee for the American Association of Colleges and Univer-

sities (AACSU), the Horry County March of Dimes March for Babies (2010 and 2011 as co-chair), and was an adviser to the Safe Families Initiative that has established a Family Justice Center in Georgetown County. Additionally, she has worked with a youth ministry, Habitat for Humanity and the Cancer Coalition.

In April 2015, the Zonta Club of Myrtle Beach recognized her with its Gold Star Award for leadership and dedication to initiatives that "improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women and girls."

Title: **Terri DeCenzo awarded Order of the Silver Crescent**

Author:

Size: 72.69 square inch

Conway, SC Circulation: 6250



DeCenzo honored

**Terri DeCenzo, right, is
presented the Order of
the Silver Crescent by
CCU trustee Natasha
Hanna.**

COURTESY

Title: **Worry lingers with S.C. Senate Republicans \$400M road plan**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
 Size: 22.94 square inch
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Worry lingers with S.C. Senate Republicans \$400M road plan

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The House speaker and some other lawmakers were cautious while many Senate Republicans and the governor celebrated a plan that could set aside an additional \$400 million to repair South Carolina roads without raising the gas tax.

House Speaker Jay Lucas said the Senate needs to come up with a better plan, while Sen. Ray Cleary said all proposal does is make sure the Department of Transportation has money for one year and even if it's available that it won't be enough to expand roads in a rapidly growing state, only maintain them.

"If we go into another recession, what are you going to cut?" said the Murrells Inlet

Republican, who is in the last year of his 12-year Senate career. He has spent most of that time trying to get a stable source of money for roads, such as by raising the gas tax.

Lucas' statement Thursday pointed out the 323 days since the House passed its road plan, which raised the sales tax on fuel for a more stable funding source.

"The current Senate amendment simply kicks the can further down the road and frankly, into a pothole. The General Assembly has been using general fund dollars to slap a Band-Aid on roads for years with very little to show for it," the Hartsville Republican said.

A year ago, a gas tax increase appeared nearly inevitable. Gov. Nikki Haley stunned the entire Statehouse

by saying she could support a gas tax increase if there was a corresponding tax cut. The state Chamber of Commerce followed with a poll saying most South Carolinians could support raising the gas tax for the first time in 30 years to fix potholes and bridges. Claims for damage caused by poor roads have increased rapidly and business leaders suggested the economy might slow if the state didn't improve its roads. But three senators, led by Sen. Tom Davis, filibustered at the end of the 2015 session against a gas tax hike and stuck their ground this year, eventually bringing nearly all the Senate Republicans to their side. The governor also praised the plan on her Facebook page as "exactly what we need in South Carolina."

Title: **Worry lingers with SC Senate Republicans' \$400M road plan**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
 Size: 17.82 square inch
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



Worry lingers with SC Senate Republicans' \$400M road plan

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
 Associated Press

COLUMBIA

Some lawmakers were cautious while many Senate Republicans and the governor celebrated a plan that could set aside an additional \$400 million to repair South Carolina roads without raising the gas tax.

Sen. Ray Cleary said all the plan does is make sure the Department of Transportation has money for one year, and even if it's available, that won't be enough to expand roads in

a rapidly growing state, only maintain them.

"If we go into another recession, what are you going to cut?" said the Murrells Inlet Republican, who is in the last year of his 12-year Senate career. He has spent most of that time trying to get a stable source of money for roads, such as by raising the gas tax.

A year ago, it appeared Cleary might get his wish. Gov. Nikki Haley stunned the entire Statehouse by saying she could support a gas tax increase if there was a corresponding tax cut. The state Chamber of

Commerce followed with a poll saying most South Carolinians could support raising the gas tax for the first time in 30 years to fix potholes and bridges. Claims for damage caused by poor roads have increased rapidly and business leaders suggested the economy might slow if the state didn't improve its roads.

But three senators, led by Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, filibustered at the end of the 2015 session against a gas tax hike and stuck their ground this year, eventually bringing nearly all the Senate Republicans to their side.

"It was about making sure the dollars people send up here for roads and bridges are spent in a responsible way," he said.

Title: **Clemson may oversee school for troubled teens**
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
 Size: 34.41 square inch
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



Clemson may oversee school for troubled teens

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press
 COLUMBIA

Legislators could put Clemson University in charge of a public residential school for troubled teens that is on the verge of losing its accreditation.

A proposal advanced by the House budget-writing committee would transfer oversight of John de la Howe School to the university on July 1, along with funding for the school that spends

\$92,000 annually per student. Clemson officials would be tasked next school year with evaluating turnaround paths for the sixth-through-10th-grade school in rural McCormick and reporting their recommendations.

"We believe Clemson has the expertise and background to go in and save that school," said Rep. Kenny Bingham, R-Cayce, chairman of the committee's K-12 panel. "I believe it's the only way to

keep the doors open."

One possibility, he said, would be turning John de la Howe into a public charter school sponsored by Clemson.

Both are land-grant schools. John de la Howe was founded as a farming school benefiting poor and orphaned children, as per the 1797 will of its namesake.

It has previously collaborated with Clemson on agricultural projects, said its president, Danny Webb.

But the proposal's chances are uncertain.

Clemson officials aren't commenting beyond saying it's under review.

Webb said no one at his school has been consulted at all.

"What we will continue to do is serve the state's most vulnerable students ... until a decision has been made," he said. "We

will continue to provide them a safe haven, so they can heal, grow and make lasting changes."

Rep. Shannon Erickson, who voted against the idea in committee, said there should be a thorough discussion among all

stakeholders, including the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Social Services, on what it will take to make the school successful.

Asking Clemson to study the issue is a waste of time, she said.

"Studying it for a year is just kicking the can down the road ... and these are children's lives at stake," said Erickson, R-Beaufort, a teacher.

State-supported since 1918, John de la Howe provides 24-hour care on its 1,200-acre campus for children with serious behavior problems. The school's roughly 70 em-

ployees include teachers and dorm counselors — one for every eight students, across three shifts, Webb said.

As of Thursday, the school housed 72 students, he said.

Legislators have questioned what to do with the school, a stand-alone state agency, for more than a decade.

In 2003, then-Gov. Mark Sanford recommended, without success, closing the school and sending its students to a military-like public school in West Columbia for at-risk teens. In 2014, Gov. Nikki Haley recommended putting the Department of Juvenile Justice in charge of John de la Howe.

A final decision on the school's status will be made before next month's State Board of Education meeting, according to the agency.

Title: **Scott considering a Richland County Council comeback?**
 Author: BY SARAH ELLIS sellis@thestate.com
 Size: 26.50 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



EXCLUSIVE

Scott considering a Richland County Council comeback?

Charged with felony DUI, Kelvin Washington reportedly will decide by the end of March whether to seek re-election

Bernice Scott, Washington's mother-in-law, might seek seat if Washington does not, Councilman Norman Jackson says

BY SARAH ELLIS
sellis@thestate.com

Richland County Councilman Kelvin Washington, facing a felony DUI charge, does not plan to resign from County Council, his fellow Lower Richland Councilman Norman Jackson said Thursday.

Jackson said he was told by one of Washington's family members Thursday that Washington is working through some health issues and will decide by the end of this month whether to run for re-election. His term



Scott



Washington

as the District 10 representative is up this year.

If Washington decides not to run, Jackson said, Washington's mother-in-law, Bernice Scott, might decide to run. Scott, who held the seat before Washington was elected, told Jackson that a group of citizens had approached her and asked her

to consider running, Jackson said.

Scott, a force in county government for 20 years, served from 1988 to 2008.

Filing for County Council and other partisan seats statewide opens March 16 and closes March 30.

Washington is charged with felony DUI in connection with a crash Saturday night on Bluff Road that sent him and two other men to the hospital, one with a severe head injury.

Washington did not attend Tuesday night's council meeting because, according to his attorney, he was recovering from the weekend crash.

Gov. Nikki Haley has called for the resignation of Washington and 11th Circuit Solicitor Donnie Myers, who also recently was charged with a misdemeanor DUI.