

ELECTION

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procedures. "Secondly, the voting rights section of the U.S. Justice Department has failed to approve this change and has asked us to have this referendum. And if it passes, then they will decide whether to allow us the change in the ordinance." Wukela said the change is an "extreme expense for the city to bear," especially when the Justice Department might say it's not going to allow it anyway. "And the reason the Justice Department has concerns about it is the reason I have concerns about it," he added. "In essence, the referendum and the change would almost exclusively remove the right for folks to vote for a straight-party ticket in the city, where they would have that right everywhere else and they've had that right in the past." Wukela said he doesn't see any justification for taking that power away from voters.

S.C. lawyers debate smoking in cars

By Seanna Adcox
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina lawmakers gave initial approval Wednesday to a bill making it illegal to smoke in a car with a child, but stalled on a measure allowing handguns to be stowed under the seat. A bill barring smokers from lighting up in cars with passengers ages 10 or younger was unanimously approved by a Senate committee, without debate. The misdemeanor could bring a \$100 fine. The main purpose is to "make people who normally do this think twice about it," said Sen. Darrell Jackson, D-Hopkins, who initially proposed the measure in 2007 after what he called a horrifying experience, considering the dangers of second-hand smoke. Pulling up beside a car at a Wal-Mart parking lot, he saw a woman puffing away on a cigarette with a child strapped in the back seat. His proposal previously passed the Senate but died in the House. He hopes the emergence of local laws across the state banning smoking in restaurants and bars will make legislators more willing to approve his idea. Four states and Puerto Rico already limit smoking in cars, though their

Four states and Puerto Rico already limit smoking in cars, though their laws differ on when children are old enough for drivers to light up, from 6 in Arkansas to 18 in California. Two municipalities and a county in the Northeast also ban smoking with a minor in the car, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Similar measures are pending in at least 20 other states. But the South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative isn't pushing the measure here, focusing instead on an issue it deems more important — raising the state's lowest-in-the-nation cigarette tax, said spokeswoman Kelly Davis. Meanwhile, a House panel postponed voting on a measure letting drivers keep their handguns under their car seat. State law already allows them to be in a closed glove compartment, console or trunk. Those restrictions don't apply to people with a concealed weapon permit, who can legally carry

the weapon on them. The sponsor, Rep. Bakari Sellers, said he thinks it would prevent costly court time for people charged with illegally carrying a gun simply because they didn't know it needed to be stowed elsewhere. The misdemeanor can bring as much as a \$1,000 fine and a year in jail. "It's freedom for gun owners, to have another place to comfortably store their weapon," said the Denmark Democrat, a concealed weapon permit holder. The National Rifle Association is remaining neutral on the bill, the only one of its kind proposed this year, said NRA spokeswoman Alexa Fritts. Rep. Mike Pitts, R-Laurens, said he signed on as a co-sponsor because the glove compartments and consoles in expensive sports cars and tiny compacts either are too small for a gun or don't exist.

SHELTER

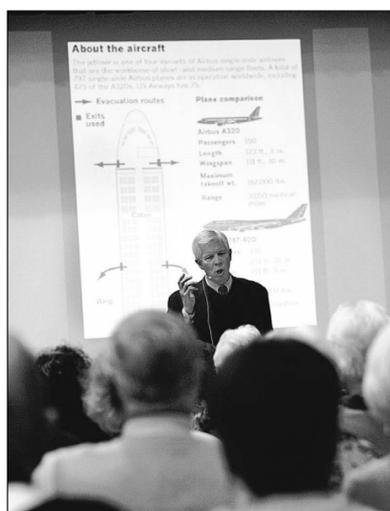
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\$126,910 and pushed the organization over halfway to the \$850,000 it needs to build a new no-kill animal shelter. Along with funding from the Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation, the humane society has about \$452,000 toward a new shelter, said Jason Coker, who handled the Bone-E-Fit fundraising. "The foundation is delighted to be partnering with the humane society and the city on this project," said Bradley Callcott, executive director of the Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation said. "We're looking forward to a quick completion of the building and, hopefully, you can bring it in at a good price." "We really feel like the Florence community can get us there," Boswell said. "We're still looking for donations. We can raise a million dollars, I know we can." "We're also looking for in-kind donations from electricians, plumbers and others," she said. "In-kind donations are just as important as monetary donations." The architect for the new shelter is Chris Clark of Chris Clark Architecture in Myrtle Beach. He said he will be working with the city, humane society and all the contractors who put in bids. "It's a fun building that is going to provide much more needed space for the animals," he said. "I look forward to finally seeing what this is going to do for the community, for the animals and working with the contractors to get those numbers where we need them." The current shelter is located at 1007 Stockade Drive, off National Cemetery Road, in Florence, and is open from noon to 5 p.m. every day except Wednesday and Sunday. For details on how to help or adopt a pet, call (843) 669-2921.

NUNN

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was seated next to a US Airways pilot. As the plane left the runway and gained altitude, he saw from his window seat a brown object fly by him and into the plane's engine. "I turned to the pilot and said, 'I think we just took a bird to that engine,'" Nunn said. The plane shook and he said he noticed a smell that could be described as a cross between a burnt electric circuit and a meat of some kind, he said. The pilot sitting next to him told Nunn the plane could fly with one engine, but neither of the men were aware that a bird had collided with the second engine. The plane immediately began losing thrust and he heard the sound of the engines slowing down, he said. "Capt. (Chesley 'Sully') Sullenberger came over the intercom and spoke the three words you never want



STAFF/ANGELA E. KERSHNER

US Airways Flight 1549 crash survivor Mike Nunn talks about where he sat on the plane, which gave him a direct line of sight with a brown object that flew into the engine of the plane, causing it to crash.

to hear in an aircraft and that is 'Brace for impact,'" he said. "He said it very matter-of-fact, there was no urgency in his voice but everybody knew this was not good ... the plane was like a library." The flight crew began to chant in unison, "Brace,

brace, head down, brace, brace, head down," he said. "They continued this chant until impact. At this point, I knew we were going into the river," he said. "And I knew at this point we would likely not make it." Even if they did survive the crash, Nunn said he

thought to himself, then surely they wouldn't survive the frigid waters of the Hudson. "My thoughts were of my family and I was regretting that I was putting them through this and that I would never be able to tell them again that I love them," Nunn said. He didn't feel like the plane was traveling downward as it hit the water but felt more like a massive deceleration, Nunn said. "Everything lurched forward — so much so that I expected the seats to be ripped up from the floor," he said. After landing, the pilot beside him said to Nunn, "Follow me." "I thought to myself, 'Try to lose me,'" Nunn said. He left the plane and boarded a small raft with several of the survivors, including Sullenberger, who has been celebrated as a hero for his remarkable water landing. The group later made it to a passing ferry. He called his wife imme-

diately and told her there had been a plane crash but didn't tell her until he was completely safe that it was his plane that had crashed, Nunn said. He didn't want his family to ever know a moment when they wondered if he was alright, he said. Nunn said he's flown several times since the crash and hasn't experienced any post-traumatic stress symptoms, though once home, he had trouble letting his family out of sight and hugged them often. In closing, Nunn had a few words of advice for the crowd: Get to know God, pay attention to the flight attendants as they point out the exits and be nice to your fellow passengers. "You never know when you'll have to share a (plane) wing with them," he said.

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