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Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

Cato Institute gives Haley a D

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The Libertarian think tank Cato Institute has given Gov. Nikki Haley a D for fiscal performance in its recent rating of the 50 governors.

“Gov. Nikki Haley has championed tax cuts, but spending has risen quickly during her tenure,” the report states.

But the researchers seem to underplay that spending is mostly controlled by the Legislature in South Carolina.

One example cited by Cato is that Haley has proposed reducing income tax rates in exchange for gas tax increases to fund transportation and road improvements. Again, that sort of change ultimately hinges on the Legislature.

“One proposal was to swap a 10 cent per gallon gas tax increase for a phased-in reduction of the top individual income tax rate from 7 percent to 5 percent,” the report said. “Unfortunately, the legislature has not moved forward with reform.”