

Catherine B. Templeton

Catherine Templeton is serving the state of South Carolina after 20 years of working in private industry. One of the first cabinet appointments made by Governor Nikki Haley after her election, Templeton was confirmed as the labor secretary for South Carolina in 2010.



During her year at the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR), Templeton cut the fixed costs of the agency by 25%, measurably increased customer service by reducing response time from 24 minutes to 32 seconds, put professional licensing online for convenience and transparency, returned millions of dollars to the tax payers, reduced fees, privatized non- government functions, and pushed lawmakers in her testimony to eliminate government regulation of whole professions.

After successfully reforming LLR, Templeton was asked to lead South Carolina's largest and most complex agency, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Charged with protecting the air we breathe, water we drink, and health of our population, among a myriad of other important programs like nuclear facilities and controlled substance enforcement, DHEC commands a \$600M federal and state budget, 3600 employees, and over 100 locations around the state.

In her first 18 months at DHEC, Director Templeton expanded healthcare services and access statewide, reduced the time it takes to get an environmental permit by 40%, and deregulated or reformed regulations that had been in place for decades. While creating these efficiencies and service enhancements, she cut the budget \$68M, maintained all services during the federal government shutdown, operated under sequester, and did not request a dime from the South Carolina General Assembly.

Templeton has directed public health efforts to the one issue that that kills the most South Carolinians, makes the most sick, and if prevented would save the state the most money in healthcare costs: Obesity. In September 2014, the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reported that South Carolina dropped from No. 7 to No. 10 in adult obesity.

Among other boards and committees, Director Templeton sits on the Homeland Security Advisory Council, the Governor's Savannah River Committee, First Steps board, State Emergency Response Council, South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind board, the SC Health Care Coordinating Council Board of Directors, and the National Oceanic Council – representing Florida, Georgia, SC, and NC.

Referred to as a consensus builder, Templeton also enjoys a reputation as a plain spoken reformer. She was one of five people placed on Governor Haley's short list to become a United States Senator from South Carolina upon the resignation of Senator Jim DeMint. United States Supreme Court Justice (Ret.) Sandra Day O'Connor appointed Templeton as the National Coordinator of the Justice's iCivics program that educates children on the importance of civic involvement and the role of the three branches of government. She received the University of South Carolina School of Law's highest award, the Compleat Lawyer, and was recognized by her peers as one of the nation's Best Lawyers.

Templeton's appointment to DHEC runs through 2016.

What They're Saying:

“She is one of the highest-profile players in an administration that says it's trying to chop through state bureaucracy and regulations to create a more business-friendly environment. Piece by piece, she is restructuring an agency she said hadn't had a critical self-analysis in 30 years. The way she does business continues to rile opponents and sometimes even supporters. But when crises blow up, she is out front taking the heat.”

Post & Courier, December 28, 2013

Templeton on Haley's short list for appointees to succeed retiring GOP U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint.

CNN, December 11, 2012

“She's the first director who isn't entangled by webs of allegiance to the way things always have been done. The first director whose reflexive reaction to criticism isn't to defend the agency — or to attack the critics — but to acknowledge fault. The first director who walks that thin line between gratuitous government bashing and disarming candor . . . ”

Cindi Scoppe, Editor – **The State Newspaper**, July 19, 2013

A "consensus builder" and "pragmatist."

Editors - **Post and Courier**, March 22, 2012

“But even those who are unsatisfied with some of Templeton’s changes give her good marks for her accessibility, energy and pleasant manner. They say that’s a departure at DHEC, an agency criticized for a lack of vision and a circle-the-wagons mentality when faced with criticism.

“It’s night and day from my perspective,” state Conservation Voters director Ann Timberlake said of the differences at DHEC under Templeton. “Catherine is more willing to be head-on about things. We don’t have to always agree, but she’s very willing to talk, to receive information. She asks questions.”

“She has a magical demeanor,” Schweitzer said. “Very seldom will you see her when she’s not smiling, even when delivering news somebody doesn’t want to hear. When she listens to people, she is really listening. People like to be heard, whether you agree with them or not.”

The State Newspaper, March 9, 2013

One of 14 people nationwide included on **Governing** magazine's 2013 GOP Watch List:

“She’s ruffled some feathers with personnel housecleaning at her new agency, but those moves have earned her plaudits in some corners. She’s also found common ground with some environmentalists, working to clean up polluted neighborhoods and winning praise for trying to reduce a backlog of expired pollution discharge permits.”

February 6, 2013

Created a statewide, coordinated Emergency Response Network under the Incident Command framework.

DHEC Chief Commended for Handling of TB Case

Index-Journal - Greenwood, SC, August 7, 2013

“The [DHEC] board unanimously passed a resolution affirming their support of DHEC Director Catherine Templeton They said in the resolution that they support and commend Templeton, "For her transparent and professional handling of the agency response.”

The Greenville News, August 14, 2013

Addressing Pinewood hazardous waste site:

“Director Templeton has identified a need [at the Pinewood Hazardous Waste Site] that affects millions of South Carolinians," said Sen. Thomas McElveen, D-Sumter. "The safety of drinking water from Lake Marion is fundamentally critical to over a third of our state. I am encouraged to see the director commit to prioritizing the long term viability, continued safety and reliability of the Pinewood Trust.”

The Item - Sumter, SC January 9, 2014

“It took a lot of guts to do this If you look at the path people follow in this state, the one we most often follow is the easy way out.”

Dana Beach - ***The State Newspaper***, January 9, 2014
South Carolina Threatens Washington Over Clean Up –

“The slowdown has set off a fierce battle between the Energy Department and South Carolina, where officials say they have been double-crossed in what they view as the state’s biggest environmental threat. In an unusual display of resistance . . . South Carolina is threatening to impose \$154 million in fines on the federal government for failing to meet its promised schedule.”

New York Times, Nov. 28, 2013

“(Awarding Templeton the Defender of Manufacturing Award), Gossett said consistency, certainty, accessibility, and the ability to strike a balance between creating jobs and preserving the natural heritage of the state are the chief criteria for a good regulator. And Catherine has done that.”

December 11, 2014, ***Spartanburg Herald Journal***

“Quite frankly, if you ask me what would make us more comfortable - if the President would name Catherine Templeton as the Ebola Czar, I'd feel more comfortable.”

Senator Harvey Peeler (R - Gaffney), SC Senate Majority Leader and
Chairman Medical Affairs Committee
