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To:
Date: 11/15/2015 8:57:52 AM
Subject: Clips – Sunday, November 15, 2015

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Gas tax advocates face new \$1.2 billion hurdle

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article44936271.html>

Cassie Cope

Efforts to raise the state's gas tax to pay for road repairs suffered perhaps a fatal setback last week when South Carolina lawmakers found out they will have \$1.2 billion in added money to spend next year. Momentum to raise the tax had been building since early October, when more than 2 feet of rain drenched portions of the state, washing out and damaging 541 roads and bridges.

Note: But Republican Gov. Nikki Haley said Friday that paying flooding costs should be separated as an issue from finding a long-term road funding solution.

Note: "The dangerous thing that can happen in government is when you start to combine one issue with the other," Haley said. "These are two separate issues and should be treated separately."

Note: Last year, critics ripped Haley for combining two issues – saying she would approve a gas tax increase if legislators passed a larger income tax cut. In her State of the State address in January, Haley proposed cutting the state's top income tax rate to a 5 percent from 7 percent over a 10-year period.

Post and Courier: Environmentalists, S.C. coastal Republicans agree on Atlantic drilling - don't

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1603/151119649>

Maya T. Prabhu

Proposals to allow testing for oil and gas off the Eastern Seaboard and possibly open the Atlantic to offshore drilling have made for unlikely allies among environmentalists and conservative Republicans. U.S. Reps. Mark Sanford and Tom Rice, Republicans who represent the South Carolina coast from North Carolina to the Georgia state line, have come out publicly against exploration off the state's shores.

Note: Republican Gov. Nikki Haley is part of a coalition of governors working largely behind the scenes with industry lobbyists to urge the Obama administration to open the Southeast coast to energy development.

Coastal communities matter: Sanford said he believes everyone should be given a chance to weigh in on the plans - federal and state officials, municipalities, business organizations and individuals. But, he said it's disappointing that Haley is disregarding the views of local communities.

S.C. Flood Recovery News:

The State: With no lake view, what happens to home values?

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article44917965.html>

Andrew Shain

Living on Lake Elizabeth in northeast Richland County for the past 15 years, Karen Jones said she felt like she was on vacation everyday as residents fished and rode in paddle boats. But the lake's 115-year-old dam failed during the historic rain storm on Oct. 4, draining more than 8 million gallons of water.

The State: Recovery along Lake Katherine includes sadness, patience and perspective

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article44917335.html>

Sarah Ellis

Cole Marshall can hardly catch his breath, the tears come so quickly as his father hugs him tightly. "Those memories are just so sweet," the 7-year-old says through heavy sobs and sniffles. His father, Steve Marshall, had been reciting memories they had made in the house on Burwell Lane.

The State: Pine Glen homeowners ready to rebuild after flood

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article44916969.html>

Tim Flach

Robbie Damron is camping in her driveway as she awaits the repair of her flood-damaged home in St. Andrews. "You make the best of a bad situation," she said of the prospect of living in a cramped RV until spring as she writes thank-you notes to 60 volunteers who helped clean up the initial mess.

S.C. Political News:

Post and Courier: Charleston given the cold shoulder by most GOP contenders

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1603/151119676>

Schuyler Kropf

With its grand homes, picturesque churches and history on every corner, Charleston has been a top tourist destination for several years running. But that hasn't been enough to lure some of the Republican presidential contenders to the Holy City even once.

Greenville News: Bob Jones University returns to the presidential political scene

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2015/11/14/bob-jones-university-returns-presidential-political-scene/75535460/>

Tim Smith, Rudolph Bell

When GOP presidential candidates Ted Cruz and Ben Carson visited Bob Jones University last week in separate events, it signaled to many in the political community that the evangelical institution in Greenville once again was ready for the national political limelight.

Greenville News: Cruz at BJU: Gay marriage issue not settled

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2015/11/14/cruz-bju-gay-marriage-issue-not-settled/75575760/>

Rudolph Bell

Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz told a crowd of cheering evangelicals in Greenville on Saturday that the issue of gay marriage is not settled despite the U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down state bans against the practice, including one voters had put into the South Carolina Constitution.

WIS: GOP Presidential candidates coming to SC next week

<http://www.wistv.com/story/30515609/gop-presidential-candidates-coming-to-sc-next-week>

Will Whitson

The closer it gets to February's presidential primary, the more presidential candidates will roll through South Carolina. With just about three months to go before the "First In The South" Primary, South Carolina is in each campaign's crosshairs. Marco Rubio and John Kasich each rolled through the Midlands following Tuesday night's GOP debate.

WYFF: Auditorium packed for Ben Carson Upstate event

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/ben-carson-speaks-in-upstate-this-morning/36424206>

Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson was in the Upstate Friday to curry voters' favor. Carson attended the Greenville County Republican Women's Club at 10 a.m. He then spoke at Bob Jones University in the Founders Memorial Auditorium as part of Sen. Tim Scott's Town Hall Series.

Associated Press: Cruz campaign making several stops around South Carolina

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=7froh7Dp

Sen. Ted Cruz is bringing his presidential campaign back to South Carolina. His campaign says the Texas Republican is taking part in a Rally for Religious Liberty on Saturday at Bob Jones University in Greenville. Family Research Council President Tony Perkins is among those expected on hand.

Florence Morning News: Presidential candidates set eyes on Florence ahead of 2016 primaries

http://www.scnw.com/news/article_4a643d08-8b30-11e5-b566-d78f8c41078e.html

Joshua Lloyd

With South Carolina as one of the early-state primaries for both the Republican and Democratic parties, Florence can expect to see a flurry of presidential campaigning between now and February. Several GOP candidates have already visited Florence and more have tentative plans to visit in the coming weeks.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Pension problems: South Carolina officials hope to get retirement fund investments back

on track

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151114/PC05/151119647>

David Wren, Gavin Jackson

After a dismal year in which South Carolina's pension fund fell far short of its moneymaking goals, state employees and taxpayers might be asked to spend millions of dollars more in coming years to shore up the retirement account. State officials and lawmakers are facing tough challenges, such as deciding if the fund's investment goals are unrealistic and possibly pursuing riskier investments to close the funding gap.

The State: Thigpen running for House seat held by McLeod

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article44777085.html>

Andrew Shain

Ivory Thigpen, a pastor and chiropractor, will run next year for the S.C. House seat in Richland County held by Democratic Rep. Mia McLeod. McLeod, who is in her third term in the northeast Richland district, is running for the state Senate seat held by Democrat Joel Lourie, who is not seeking re-election. McLeod is not running for her House seat, which is allowed under state law.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Ensure CDV law protects all couples

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1002/151119542>

Ed Buckley

The Domestic Violence Reform Act, which the General Assembly passed this year and was spurred largely by the Post and Courier investigative series "Till Death Do Us Part," marks a bold stand against the scourge of domestic abuse in South Carolina. It strengthens penalties for repeat offenders, strips gun rights in most cases, gives judges greater leeway to protect victims and creates a Domestic Violence Advisory Committee to study the issue and make future recommendations.

Note: Prior to that ruling, gay couples were completely excluded from South Carolina domestic violence protections - including the Domestic Violence Reform Act, which Gov. Nikki Haley signed into law just weeks before the Supreme Court decision.

Greenville News: State surplus should go meet urgent needs

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/opinion/editorials/2015/11/15/state-surplus-should-go-meet-urgent-needs-south-carolina/75655426/>

Editorial

South Carolina got some welcome financial news this past week: Economists project that at the end of the fiscal year the state will have a nearly \$1.3 billion revenue surplus thanks to a thriving economy and leftover funds from the previous budget year. The extra money comes at a good time. Just last week, some legislators proposed the state borrow as much as \$500 million to help pay for damage caused by October's torrential rains.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Focus new money on schools and roads

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20151115/OPINION/151119826/1128?Title=Focus-new-money-on-schools-and-roads>

Editorial

South Carolina lawmakers will have \$1.2 billion in new money to spend when they return to Columbia in January. They should focus on fixing the school funding system with the recurring money and fixing the roads with the one-time money. The state's Board of Economic Advisors studies the state economy and tax returns and predicts how much revenue the state will have to spend in the coming year.

Island Packet: Board's confusion is insulting to public

<http://www.islandpacket.com/opinion/editorials/article44968389.html>

Editorial

The Beaufort County Board of Education's recent decision to eliminate open public input at its meetings tells all one needs to know about why it is failing. The board has a major problem in the lost public trust in Superintendent Jeff Moss.

Post and Courier: Tecklenburg would serve the city best

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1002/151119537>

Editorial

Tuesday's runoff election is of historic importance to the city of Charleston, which will elect its first new mayor in 40 years. John Tecklenburg is the best candidate for the job. Mr. Tecklenburg's quality-of-life message should resonate with residents. He has the experience, focus and temperament to serve as the city's chief executive.

Post and Courier: Rice joins coastal protection chorus

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1002/151119536>

Editorial

Coastal South Carolina is a diverse region representing a broad range of people, incomes and lifestyles from Hilton Head to North Myrtle Beach. But there's one sentiment that residents share - their love of the coast, with its beaches, its marshes, rivers and creeks. They don't want to see it fouled with the byproducts of offshore oil drilling or by oil spills.

Post and Courier: Joe Riley: No regrets, no endorsement

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151115/PC1603/151119600>

Editorial

As the Charleston mayor's race winds down toward Tuesday's runoff, retiring Mayor Joe Riley said he has no regrets about stopping at 10 terms. He also doesn't plan to get involved in any last-minute politicking, saying he made the right move when he decided not to endorse a successor. All of the candidates have conducted themselves appropriately, he said.

South Carolina News:

The State: EXCLUSIVE — The Buzz: More S.C. voters support deputy than student in Spring Valley incident

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article44888139.html#storylink=cpy>

Jamie Self

The Richland County Sheriff's deputy fired after forcibly removing a Spring Valley High student from her desk – and tossing her across the floor – has many supporters in the Palmetto State, according to a new poll. Half of S.C. voters – Democrats and Republicans – said the student was "more in the wrong" than the Deputy Ben Fields, and nearly as many – 48 percent – said they oppose Sheriff Leon Lott's decision to fire Fields.

Fighting for next to last: At least one Republican presidential candidate thinks U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham is a threat – other than the Seneca Republican himself.

Associated Press: DSS visits to child care homes causes 56 to close so far

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=PbVIDe28

Seanna Adcox

Nearly 60 child care homes statewide have been forced to close since legislators passed a law last year allowing inspectors to make unannounced visits, and dozens more have been targeted for closure, according to the Department of Social Services. Leigh Bolick, director of the agency's early care division, said the law helps protect children.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Law enforcement officers firing into vehicles raises questions

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20151114/ARTICLES/151119808/1083/ARTICLES?Title=Law-enforcement-officers-firing-into-vehicles-raises-questions&tc=ar>

Daniel J. Gross

Delvin Tyrell Simmons lost his life on the campus of Spartanburg Methodist College. Authorities say the 20-year-old Limestone College student was a suspect in a vehicle break-in case and tried to make a getaway in a car when he struck a police officer, who shot and killed him.

Post and Courier: Handling of Ladson shooting a sign of changed 911 policies

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151114/PC16/151119644>

Andrew Knapp

After a 13-year-old shot at someone trying to break into his Ladson home last week, a dispatcher told him during a 911 call to put his hands up before opening his door. The dispatcher didn't want him to get hurt when he met with responding sheriff's deputies. Within minutes, the encounter happened without a mishap.

Local News:

Post and Courier: 13-year-old Ladson boy faces challenges in wake of self-defense shooting

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151114/PC16/151119675>

Melissa Boughton, Andrew Knapp

A 13-year-old Ladson boy who fatally shot a burglar last week is struggling to cope with the ordeal, but he hasn't yet visited a counselor despite desperately needing one, his father said. "He's not doing well, and I'm not doing well," the father, 57, said. "This is my 13-year-old baby. I see how this thing is (affecting) him every day. ... We are off course."

Island Packet: School board member calls for review of Jeff Moss' actions

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article44265111.html>

Rebecca Lurye

One Beaufort County school board member said she is planning to ask for a review of recent actions by Superintendent Jeff Moss, who altered the district's nepotism rule and approved his wife's hire at the start of the school year.

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