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**To:** Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov  
**Date:** 3/10/2014 8:32:34 PM  
**Subject:** MOX Project, Veterans, and Clean Up Continues -- Update from Sen. Tom Young -- March 4 to March 10, 2014

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**MOX Project, Veterans, and Clean Up Continues -- Update from Sen. Tom Young  
-- March 4 to March 10, 2014**

I hope that you find this update helpful and informative. If I can help you with an issue, please let me know. Thank you for reading and for allowing me to serve our District!

**SRS -- Latest as to MOX Decision**

**What is the Issue?** : Last Tuesday, President Obama released his 2015 budget proposal which freezes funding for the MOX project at SRS. DOE officials said that the proposal places the MOX project into a "cold stand-by." The Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility is designed to turn weapons-grade plutonium into nuclear reactor fuel. That is part of a nonproliferation agreement between the United States and Russia to dispose of weapons-grade plutonium.

**What this Means -- Local and Regional Impact** : As of today, officials are still trying to determine the extent of the local impact because no official word has been released to the contractors associated with MOX. A shutdown could mean the loss of up to 1,600 jobs at SRS. The negative impact of such job losses on the Central Savannah River Area would be very significant. Also, 13 metric tons of plutonium, intended to be disposed of through the MOX facility, are stored at SRS. As of late last week, DOE officials could not provide specifics on a plan to dispose of these materials in the absence of an operational MOX facility.

**What this Means -- National Impact** : The MOX facility was being built as a part of an international agreement with Russia to dispose of weapons grade plutonium. The failure to proceed with the MOX facility leaves open questions as to (1) how will the federal government honor the United States' end of the agreement with Russia and (2) what will the cost of other alternatives be when compared to the price tag of

finishing the MOX project? Further, suppliers to the project are located in more than 35 states so any shutdown will have an impact beyond our region and state.

**Local Response :** Our County legislative delegation is meeting with Congressman Wilson, the Governor's staff, officials from the Department of Commerce, and officials from the Department of Health and Environmental Control later this week. Additionally, Senators Graham and Scott, joined by other U.S. Senators, wrote a letter last week to the Department of Energy seeking a reversal of the decision.

**Long Term Vision Needed :** This latest decision as to MOX underscores the need for the following: (1) new and clearly defined missions for SRS beyond clean up; (2) new efforts to harness the SRS National Lab as a catalyst for private entrepreneurship and private economic investment in our region similar to efforts undertaken at the national lab in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; (3) continued emphasis by local and state officials to make Aiken County attractive to new economic investment and to expansion by existing companies in our region; and (4) a clear path forward for the disposition of weapons grade plutonium stored at SRS. Your legislative delegation is committed to working together on these issues for the long term benefit of our community, region, and state.

### **Last Week in the Senate**

**Department of Commerce – Monthly Report :** The Department of Commerce has started a monthly report with information about economic investment in South Carolina. To see the latest, go here: <http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?ca=2701a7b9-0c2a-45ab-ba02-3b24ac732279&c=f76ec720-68d2-11e3-b2b7-d4ae5292c47d&ch=f7c105d0-68d2-11e3-b2b8-d4ae5292c47d>.

**Missed School Days :** Last week, the House of Representatives concurred with the Senate version of this legislation requiring school districts to use any remaining make-up days on the calendar and then the districts would be allowed to forgive up to 5 missed days. After the make up days are used, then the district's governing body has the discretion to excuse up to five missed days due to the bad weather problems.

**Texting and Driving :** Last week, the full Senate voted in favor of legislation that would ban beginning drivers - those with a permit or restricted license – from using cell phones at all. I voted in favor. There is opposition to another bill that would prohibit all drivers from texting while driving. I support that legislation.

**South Carolina and the Affordable Care Act :** Last week, the Senate started debating legislation related to the Affordable Care Act (a/k/a Obamacare) in South Carolina. A special committee held several meetings last Fall around the state as it explored constitutional ways to minimize the impact of the federal law on South Carolina. The committee's amendment is up for consideration. I expect the debate to be lengthy.



## Veteran Information Update

**Medal of Honor** : Last Thursday, we learned that Kyle Carpenter from Lexington County will be South Carolina's first Medal of Honor recipient since the Vietnam War.

To see the full story, go here: <http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/05/3306817/report-marine-to-become-1st-south.html>.

**Congratulations to Rep. Hixon!** : Last Tuesday, Rep. Bill Hixon of North Augusta was recognized by the American Legion for his work on behalf of veterans in the General Assembly during the past legislative year.

**Misrepresenting Military Service** : Tomorrow, the full Senate Judiciary Committee will consider a House bill making it a crime under state law for a person to misrepresent his or her military service to gain a tangible benefit. To learn more, go here: <http://www.thestate.com/2014/02/28/3297814/sc-lawmakers-look-to-make-lying.html>.

**Saratoga War Horse Project** : This organization is very involved in assisting veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). There is now an Aiken County presence working with local veterans. To learn more, go here: <http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140309/AIK0101/140309423>.

**Aiken County Veterans Services** : The Veterans Affairs Office provides professional counseling and assistance to over 15,000 veterans and their 40,000 dependents who apply for various State and Federal benefits available to the veteran for honorable service in the United States Armed Forces. Jim Harris is the contact and he can be reached at (803) 642-1545 or [veterans@aikencountysc.gov](mailto:veterans@aikencountysc.gov).

**Congressman Wilson – Veteran Assistance** : Congressman Wilson can also assist veterans. The local number to the Aiken County office is (803) 608-9747.

**Veterans and College Tuition Rates** : The Senate Education Committee will consider two bills this week related to veterans and their dependents attending college in South Carolina. The legislation would allow veterans and their dependents to pay in-state college tuition rather than be treated as out-of-state students paying higher tuition rates. More than 20 other states have already implemented similar measures.

## News Related to Ice Storm

**Federal Disaster Assistance – Ice Storm** : Local officials expect to hear later this week as to federal disaster assistance. Governor Haley sent a letter to the Administration last Tuesday requesting the assistance.

**Timber Damage** : The timber damage in South Carolina from the ice storm exceeds any storm in many years with the exception of Hurricane Hugo. To see the full story, go here: <http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/05/3307825/ice-storm-timber-damage-ranks.html>.

**Debris Removal – City of Aiken** : The City of Aiken is posting information on

Facebook, Twitter, and the City of Aiken web site and as to debris removal. The City also has provided this link: <https://www.cityofaikensc.gov/index.php/storm-debris-pickup-schedule-map/>.

**Debris Removal – City of North Augusta** : The City of North Augusta is posting information about debris removal on the City's facebook page. In addition, residents may email city manager Todd Glover at [tglover@northaugusta.net](mailto:tglover@northaugusta.net).

### **Constituent Information**

**Legislative Email Updates** : Locally, three members of the House of Representatives, who represent portions of Aiken County within Senate District 24, send regular email updates. Their respective contact information to get on their email lists to receive their email updates are as follows:

- Rep. Bill Hixon (Dist. 83): [bill@billhixon.com](mailto:bill@billhixon.com)
- Rep. Bill Taylor (Dist. 86): [bill@taylorscheuse.com](mailto:bill@taylorscheuse.com)
- Rep. Don Wells (Dist. 81): [dwells29801@gmail.com](mailto:dwells29801@gmail.com)

**Congressman Joe Wilson Contact Information** : Congressman Wilson now represents all of Aiken County. He has staff in Aiken County with office hours in Aiken and in North Augusta. His office number is [608-9747](tel:608-9747).

**Speaking with Groups Around the District** : If you are involved with a local group that would like for me to attend a meeting to provide a legislative update, please let me know.

**Report Waste, Fraud and Abuse in State Government** : To report waste, fraud and abuse in state government, you can call: [1-855-SC-FRAUD](tel:1-855-SC-FRAUD).

**Facebook**: I have a Facebook page for Senator Tom Young. Please "like" the page to receive updates during the week from me on Facebook.

**Tom Young's Website** : My website can be reached at <http://www.senatortomyoung.com>. There are links to a variety of constituent services; the status of sponsored bills; and roll call votes. Please add my web site as a bookmark on your computer.

**Small Business Help – SC Dept. of Commerce** : The South Carolina Department of Commerce has helpful information for small business owners and employees. To learn more, go to <http://sccommerce.com/south-carolina-business-network>.

**Save for College - Future Scholar 529 College Savings Plan** : South Carolina's 529 College Savings Plan Future Scholar offers special tax benefits for South Carolina residents. To learn more or to enroll, go to <http://www.FutureScholar.com/parents>.

**Child Passenger Safety** : To learn more about ways to keep your children or grandchildren safe in your car, go to <http://www.bucklebuddiessc.org/>. The information at this link is provided in part by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety.



**Request a Flag** : If you would like to request a state or U.S. flag flown over the State Capitol in Columbia, please let me know at [tom@senatortomyoung.com](mailto:tom@senatortomyoung.com). Flags vary in cost according to their size and their material from which they are made.

**State House Tours** : Tours are available for the S.C. State House by calling (803) 734-2430. If you set a tour between January and June and it is on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, please let me know so I can do my best to see you.

**Thoroughbred Country-- South Carolina Regional Tourism Organization** : To learn more about tourism in the four county region of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, and Barnwell, visit <http://www.tbredcountry.org>.

**Email Updates** : If you know of people in or around District 24 who do not receive my updates but they would like to get them, please email their names and email addresses to me.

**Road Issues** : If you see a road problem such as a pothole needing repair, call the SCDOT at 641-7665 or Aiken County at 642-1532 to report the problem. If you do not get a prompt response, please let me know at [tom@senatortomyoung.com](mailto:tom@senatortomyoung.com) or call me. Generally, most paved roads in the County are maintained by SCDOT and are identified on the road sign poles by a small black and white sign listing the road number, such as S-2-1669. Most unpaved roads in the County are maintained by the County.

Thank you for the opportunity and the honor to represent you. Please let me know if I can help you in any way or if you have questions about these or other issues. Your feedback is meaningful and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Tom Young  
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215-3631 (cell)

Paid for by Tom Young for Senate
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