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To:
Date: 2/18/2016 8:31:37 AM
Subject: Morning Clips – Thursday, February 18, 2016

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Gov. Nikki Haley Endorses Marco Rubio for President:

CNN: Nikki Haley endorses Marco Rubio

http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/17/politics/nikki-haley-endorses-marco-rubio/index.html?eref=rss_topstories

Dana Bash, Jamie Gangel, Eric Bradner

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is endorsing Marco Rubio, giving the Florida senator a huge boost just days before the state's crucial Saturday primary. Haley's endorsement came at a 6 p.m. Wednesday event in Chapin. "If we elect Marco Rubio, every day will be a great day in America," Haley said, riffing on her signature phrase.

Note: "I wanted somebody with fight, I wanted somebody with passion, I wanted somebody who had the conviction to do the right thing, but I wanted somebody humble enough to remember he works for all the people," Haley said.

Note: "I wanted somebody who could show my parents that the best decision they ever made for their children was coming to America," said Haley, who is a first-generation Indian-American.

Washington Post: Nikki Haley: 'Let's make Marco Rubio the next president!'

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/02/17/nikki-haley-lets-make-marco-rubio-the-next-president/>

Phillip Rucker

Gov. Nikki Haley enthusiastically endorsed Marco Rubio for president here Wednesday night, giving the Florida senator a boost just three days before South Carolina's crucial primary by saying he has passion, conviction and humility.

Note: "If we elect Marco Rubio, every day will be a great day in America," Haley said, a twist on the cheerful "every day is a great day in South Carolina" slogan she has used in two terms as governor.

Note: Explaining her decision, Haley said "I wanted somebody with fight, I wanted somebody with passion, I wanted somebody who had conviction to do the right thing. But I wanted somebody humble enough, who remembers that you work for all the people -- and I wanted somebody to go and show my parents that the best decision they made for their children was coming to America."

New York Times: Nikki Haley Endorses Marco Rubio, Aiming to Project Vibrant New G.O.P.

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/18/us/politics/nikki-haley-endorses-rubio-aiming-to-project-vibrant-new-gop.html?_r=0

Jeremy W. Peters, Jonathan Martin

Senator Marco Rubio of Florida on Wednesday won the coveted backing of South Carolina's governor, Nikki R. Haley, bringing together two of the youngest Republican rising stars at a moment when their party is facing difficult questions about whether instead to look to its past or to political outsiders for leadership.

Note: "I wanted somebody that was going to go and show my parents that the best decision they ever made was coming to America," Ms. Haley, explaining why she had picked Mr. Rubio, told more than 500 enthusiastic, sign-waving supporters who stood in the cold outside a warehouse for an evening rally here.

Post and Courier: Gov. Nikki Haley: 'We make presidents. Let's make Marco Rubio the next president of the United States.'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC1603/160219418>

Cynthia Roldan, Schuyler Kropf

Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement of Florida Sen. Marco Rubio ahead of Saturday's Republican primary shows there's an effort underway to combine the so-called establishment wing with its emerging youth movement and the growing crop of newcomers the GOP needs to survive.

Note: "I wanted somebody humble enough that remembers you work for all of the people," Haley said. "And I wanted somebody that was going to show my parents that the best decision they made for their children

was coming to America.”

Associated Press: South Carolina Gov. Haley endorses Rubio's presidential bid

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=AKEN14PG

Seanna Adcox

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has endorsed Marco Rubio, three days ahead of Saturday's first-in-the-South Republican presidential primary. Haley introduced the Florida senator at an event Wednesday night in Lexington County, saying he's a compassionate fighter who will "show my parents the best decision they ever made for their children was coming to America."

Note: "First and foremost, as a mom who wants her children to be safe in this country, who wants her children to have the education and opportunity," Haley said in explaining her choice to several hundred people gathered for the event outside a warehouse in Chapin.

Note: "I want a president who's going to have the back of our military veterans and those in active duty. I want a president who knows when we fight wars, we win wars," said Haley, whose husband Michael Haley is an officer in the Army National Guard who served in Afghanistan in 2013. "I want a president who understands we have to stop the federal mandates pushed on states like Obamacare and the EPA."

The State: Haley endorses Rubio for president

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60856927.html>

Andrew Shain

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley said Wednesday she endorsed U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., for president because he is best suited to restore GOP principles of limited government and cutting debt to Washington.

Note: "I want a president who understands they have to go back to Washington, D.C., and bring a conscience back to our Republicans," Haley, a Lexington Republican, told a crowd of hundreds gathered outside a Chapin warehouse.

Note: "We have good people running for president, and I thank them today for their sacrifice and their willingness to serve," she said. "But my job was to find the person I thought who could do it the best.

Note: "I wanted someone with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody who has the conviction to do the right thing," she said. "But I wanted somebody humble enough (who) remembers that you work for all the people."

Greenville News: Haley endorses, campaigns for Marco Rubio

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/02/17/haley-endorses-campaigns-marco-rubio/80516326/>

Tim Smith

Gov. Nikki Haley, courted by GOP presidential contenders for her support, made her choice public Wednesday, emerging on a Lexington County stage to endorse Marco Rubio three days before South Carolina's First-in-the-South presidential preference primary.

Note: Haley told a campaign rally of hundreds that she chose the U.S. senator from Florida because she believes he would make the best president for her children. "If we elect Marco Rubio, every day will be great day in America," she said, a twist on her catch phrase that every day is a great day in South Carolina.

Note: Standing outside on a cool evening, Mrs. Haley said: "If we elect Marco Rubio, everyday will be a great day in America." That's a play on Mrs. Haley's catchphrase, "It's a great day in South Carolina," something she's asked state employees to say every time they answer a phone call.

Wall Street Journal: South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley Endorses Marco Rubio

<http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2016/02/17/south-carolina-gov-nikki-haley-to-endorse-marco-rubio/>

Valerie Bauerlein

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Marco Rubio for president, providing a big boost for the Florida senator just days ahead of the Palmetto State's primary. At an event with Mr. Rubio in Chapin, S.C., Mrs. Haley said there were several good candidates to choose from, but "My job was to find the person who could do it the best."

WIS: Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Sen. Marco Rubio ahead of SC GOP primary

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31243419/gov-nikki-haley-endorses-sen-marco-rubio-ahead-of-sc-gop-primary>

Jeremy Turnage

After staying quiet as her fellow Republicans put down stakes in the Palmetto State in preparation for the South Carolina Republican Primary, Gov. Nikki Haley has finally settled on an endorsement. The two-term governor announced during a Chapin rally that she is supporting Florida Sen. Marco Rubio for Saturday's

primary.

Note: "I'm doing what a lot of people in South Carolina are doing, which is I watch the debate, been trying to go through all the different situations, I'm looking at all the different candidates and trying to figure out who that person would be, so I'm not at a point yet," Haley said on Tuesday.

The State: Rubio emerges as the anti-Trump, anti-Cruz favorite

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60970992.html>

Jamie Self

The Republican presidential hopefuls have two days to win support from S.C. voters – and a big question to answer. Who will be the GOP's anti-Trump, anti-Cruz candidate – promising to unite the party and, more importantly, beat the Democratic nominee in November?

Note: U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida became the most-likely-to-succeed Wednesday, winning the endorsement of S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley.

MSNBC: South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Rubio

<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/south-carolina-gov-nikki-haley-endorses-rubio>

Kasie Hunt

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Marco Rubio for president on Wednesday night. Her endorsement gives Rubio the backing of three of the state's most prominent, and popular, elected officials — Rep. Trey Gowdy and Sen. Tim Scott, both beloved figures in South Carolina, previously endorsed him. Haley appeared alongside Rubio at his Chapin, South Carolina, town hall Wednesday night.

USA Today: Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Sen. Marco Rubio for president

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/onpolitics/2016/02/17/reports-gov-nikki-haley-endorse-marco-rubio-president/80508912/>

Mary Troyan

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Marco Rubio for president Wednesday night at an outdoor rally in Chapin, S.C., just three days ahead of Saturday's Republican primary. Haley, a popular two-term governor and possible vice presidential candidate, arrived at the rally with Rubio on his campaign bus and explained why she decided to back the Florida senator.

Note: "I wanted somebody with fight, somebody with passion, somebody with conviction to do the right thing, but also somebody humble enough to remember you work for all the people," Haley said.

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: Marco Rubio endorsement outtakes

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160218/PC1603/160219375>

Cynthia Roldan

To the surprise of many and disappointment of others, Gov. Nikki Haley announced Wednesday she was endorsing Marco Rubio for president. Haley joins U.S. Sen. Tim Scott and Upstate Congressman Trey Gowdy as the most visible South Carolina politicians to go with Rubio. Gowdy said in a written statement that Haley, like Rubio, understands the American Dream.

UPI: S.C. governor Haley backs Rubio for president; senator says endorsement making 'big waves'

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2016/02/17/SC-governor-Haley-backs-Rubio-for-president-senator-says-endorsement-making-big-waves/9751455737077/

Ann Marie Awad, Doug G. Ware

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley plans to endorse Sen. Marco Rubio for the 2016 Republican nomination -- just days ahead of the party's key primary in her state, media reports said Wednesday. CNN cited an earlier report by The State that said Haley planned to formally announce the endorsement Wednesday evening.

CBS News: Gov. Nikki Haley endorses Marco Rubio in South Carolina

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/nikki-haley-to-endorse-marco-rubio-in-south-carolina/>

Jacqueline Alemany

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Marco Rubio on Wednesday, giving the Florida Senator a highly coveted endorsement just three days before the state heads to the polls.

Note: "I wanted somebody with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody that had conviction to do the right thing. But I wanted somebody humble enough that remember that you work for all the people," she said. "I wanted somebody who was going to go and show my parents that the best decision they ever made for their children was coming to America. We say that every day is a great day in South Carolina--ladies and gentlemen, if we elect Marco Rubio every day will be a great day in America."

Yahoo: Marco Rubio gets a big boost from Nikki Haley ahead of South Carolina primary
<https://www.yahoo.com/politics/marco-rubio-gets-a-big-boost-from-nikki-haley-001647545.html>

Holly Bailey

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley endorsed Marco Rubio's bid for the Republican presidential nomination Wednesday night, a potentially crucial boost for the Florida senator on the eve of the GOP primary here.

Note: "We say that every day is a great day in South Carolina," Haley declared. "If we elect Marco Rubio, every day will be a great day in America."

Note: "I wanted somebody with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody that had conviction to do the right thing," she said. "But I wanted to somebody humble enough that remembers that you work for all of the people, and I wanted somebody that was going to go and show my parents that the best decision they ever made for their children was coming to America."

TPM: Nikki Haley Endorses Rubio: He'll Make Every Day A 'Great Day In America'

<http://talkingpointsmemo.com/livewire/nikki-haley-endorses-rubio>

Sara Jerde

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley (R) endorsed Republican presidential candidate Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) on Wednesday, calling him the person to make every day "a great day in America."

Note: "I wanted somebody with fight. I wanted somebody with passion. I wanted somebody that had conviction to do the right thing. But I wanted somebody humble enough that remembers that you work for all the people," Haley said at a Rubio rally in South Carolina. "And I wanted somebody that was going to go and show my parents that the best decision they ever made for their children was coming to America."

Reuters: Republican presidential race erupts into four-way battle

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-rubio-idUSKCN0VQ2IT>

Steve Holland, Emily Flitter

The Republican race for the party's 2016 presidential nomination erupted into a four-candidate crossfire on Wednesday over who has the proper experience and is the most conservative, days before South Carolina voters put their stamp on the campaign.

Note: Amid the squabbling, South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley endorsed Rubio as the Republicans' best hope for winning the White House, a boost to Rubio and a blow to Bush, who had lobbied hard for her to pick him.

Note: Bush had a tough day, learning of Haley's endorsement right before a town hall meeting in Summerville, South Carolina, where four members of the audience second-guessed his campaign strategy and offered tips on how to have a greater impact in the state.

Business Insider: Marco Rubio just landed the endorsement Jeb Bush said 'would be the most powerful' in South Carolina

<http://www.businessinsider.com/nikki-haley-endorses-marco-rubio-2016-2>

Allan Smith

US Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Florida) just landed another huge endorsement from a South Carolina politician: Gov. Nikki Haley (R). Just three days before Saturday's primary, Haley is scheduled to appear with Rubio at a 6 p.m. town hall and announce her endorsement of the senator, The Post and Courier reported.

Politico: Rubio adviser: 'I think we're going to surprise a lot of people on Saturday'

<http://www.politico.com/blogs/south-carolina-primary-2016-live-updates-and-results/2016/02/2016-south-carolina-rubio-adviser-219410#ixzz40WVNEWG4>

Mike Zapler

Todd Harris is feeling the mo. The senior adviser to Marco Rubio wouldn't predict that Rubio will overtake Donald Trump or Ted Cruz in Saturday's South Carolina primary. But Harris was plainly upbeat Wednesday after his man scored the coveted endorsement of Gov. Nikki Haley.

Bloomberg News: Rubio and Allies Made Big Investment in South Carolina Insiders, Filings Show

<http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-02-17/rubio-and-allies-made-big-investment-in-south-carolina-insiders-filings-show>

Bill Allison

As Marco Rubio fights to regain his footing in the Feb. 20 South Carolina Republican primary, he's leading his opponents in at least one category: spending on local insiders. Rubio's presidential campaign has paid more than \$1.1 million to South Carolina operatives and political consultants, more than triple the amount of

all his opponents combined, according to a Bloomberg analysis of Federal Election Commission filings for 2015.

Note: Conservative Solutions PAC's media consultant and pollster, Jon Lerner, also has deep roots in the state. He served in the same capacity for Senator Tim Scott, a South Carolina Republican, and in four successful gubernatorial campaigns, including those of the sitting governor, Nikki Haley. The governor plans to endorse Rubio, South Carolina's State newspaper reported Wednesday, citing a person familiar with the decision.

National Review: Nikki Haley Endorses Marco Rubio

<http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/431497/nikki-haley-endorses-marco-rubio>

Jim Geraghty

Good news for Marco Rubio's campaign: South Carolina governor Nikki Haley just endorsed him — a major endorsement just days away from the primary. In 2012, Haley endorsed Romney, who lost South Carolina — he finished second with about 28 percent of the vote — but he went on to win the primary overall.

Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: South Carolina tourism shows healthy gains

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC05/160219408>

Allison Prang, Warren L. Wise

South Carolina's tourism industry boasted broad-based gains in key categories over the past two years, according to new figures from the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. "It's striking that economic indicators for tourism ... are up across the board, showing significant levels of growth over previous years," Duane Parrish, the agency's director, said Wednesday.

Note: After Scott's shooting and the potential fallout of rioting that followed other police-involved shootings of black citizens across the country, Haley said, "We had to figure out how to tell the rest of the country that's not who we are."

Note: Haley called the "graceful sweet spot" about South Carolina that people saw on TV at times last year a year-round event in the Palmetto State.

S.C. Presidential Primary News:

Associated Press: SC a bumpy campaign trail for Jeb Bush

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

Thomas Beaumont

The campaign trail turned rough Wednesday for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush as he reached for a strong showing in South Carolina's GOP primary Saturday. First, news leaked that Gov. Nikki Haley will endorse rival Marco Rubio, a development that Bush said left him "disappointed."

Washington Post: If Donald Trump wins South Carolina, can he be stopped?

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/02/17/if-donald-trump-wins-south-carolina-can-he-be-stopped/>

Philip Bump

By Saturday night, after polls close in South Carolina, Donald Trump is poised to have a gigantic lead in the Republican delegate race. By no means an insurmountable one, of course, but a big Trump victory there will start to raise questions about where, if anywhere, he can be stopped.

Post and Courier: Onlookers tell Bush not to let rivals distract from message during Summerville stop

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC16/160219399>

Bo Petersen

Jeb Bush didn't appear fazed and didn't mention Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement of rival GOP presidential candidate Marco Rubio as he stumped Wednesday at Summerville Country Club. "She's a great servant. I'm disappointed she didn't support me," Bush said of Haley, answering a question as he left.

Associated Press: GOP candidates pushing, maneuvering hard in South Carolina

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=BWlloJ7S

Julie Pace, Bill Barrow

Jeb Bush, John Kasich and Marco Rubio are locked in a high-stakes political chess match in South Carolina, strategically moving money and other campaign resources around in a bid to pull ahead in the

Republican primary race - or at least keep their campaigns afloat.

McClatchy DC: Holy war: Cruz battles Trump, Rubio for Christian conservatives

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60910747.html>

William Douglas, Lesley Clark

Clergyman Tim Squire says U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas “got me off the fence and off the sofa” with his fiery opposition to abortion and determination to end federal funding for Planned Parenthood. “Someone has to speak up for the voiceless,” Squire, a Charleston County resident, said Tuesday at a Cruz rally in Mount Pleasant.

Greenville News: Cruz spurns Trump lawsuit threat

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/02/17/cruz-spurns-trump-lawsuit-threat/80511766/>

Rudolph Bell

Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz said Wednesday he'd be happy to present evidence in court to show that Donald Trump, one of his rivals for the GOP nomination, continues to favor abortion rights and would not appoint a conservative justice to replace Antonin Scalia on the Supreme Court.

Post and Courier: In Mount Pleasant, Marco Rubio makes his case as GOP party unifier

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC16/160219410>

Deanna Pan

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio painted a dismal portrait of the nation Wednesday morning, one where people are stuck living paycheck to paycheck, small businesses are struggling and the United States garners less respect around the world. “The road we are on right now is the road to decline,” Rubio said. “It began eight years ago when Barack Obama was elected president.”

Anderson Independent: Cruz brings presidential campaign to Oconee County

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/cruz-brings-presidential-campaign-to-oconee-county-2bf81636-19bf-1633-e053-0100007f8dfb-369185271.html>

Ray Chandler

Ted Cruz was delayed before a gathering in Seneca on Wednesday because, as he told the crowd when he arrived, he had needed to hold a news conference answering the latest political maneuver from an opponent for the Republican presidential nomination. In this case, Donald Trump.

MSNBC: GOP field delves deep into policy at South Carolina town hall

<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/gop-field-delves-deep-policy-south-carolina-town-hall>

Benjy Sarlin

Republican presidential candidates delved deep into policy and offered some revealing personal tidbits in a CNN town hall on Wednesday in Greenville, South Carolina. The event, which featured Dr. Ben Carson, Sen. Marco Rubio, and Sen. Ted Cruz, was the first of two town halls hosted by the network.

Politico: Poll: Trump blowing out rivals in South Carolina

<http://www.politico.com/blogs/south-carolina-primary-2016-live-updates-and-results/2016/02/donald-trump-south-carolina-2016-poll-219373#ixzz40WYFJvxN>

Nick Gass

Buoyed by strong voter dissatisfaction with the Republican status quo, Donald Trump holds a commanding double-digit lead over all his rivals in South Carolina, according to the latest Monmouth University survey of likely primary voters released Wednesday afternoon.

Charlotte Observer: Ahead of SC primary, Republican hopefuls court Mulvaney

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/campaign-tracker-blog/article60827361.html>

Since libertarian Republican presidential candidate Rand Paul dropped out of the race, the other candidates have apparently been trying to win over Upstate S.C. Congressman Mick Mulvaney. According to a report in Politico, Mulvaney – who had endorsed Paul, a Kentucky senator – has been solicited by most of the other candidates for the Republican nomination.

CNN: Donald Trump: 'Lindsey Graham is a disgrace'

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/17/politics/donald-trump-attacks-lindsey-graham-in-south-carolina/>

Julia Manchester

Donald Trump lashed out at former presidential candidate Lindsey Graham in the senator's home state of

South Carolina Wednesday. "This guy Lindsey Graham, he's one of the dumbest human beings I have ever seen," Trump said at a rally in Bluffton. "He starts hitting me, saying vicious things, ends up with 0%. He left in disgrace."

Associated Press: Graham calls Trump a 'a kook,' Trump says senator 'knows nothing'

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60894047.html>

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump slammed U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., in Sun City Wednesday, calling his former rival "one of the dumbest human beings I've ever seen." Trump was responding to Graham's appearance on Fox News earlier Wednesday, where Graham called Trump "a kook" and "unfit for office," adding would be "the most flawed nominee in the history of the Republican Party."

Yahoo Politics: Lindsey Graham fires back at 'pathetic' Donald Trump

<https://www.yahoo.com/politics/lindsey-graham-fires-back-at-pathetic-donald-065505753.html>

Hunter Walker

Donald Trump is currently one of the leading contenders in the Republican presidential contest, but the businessman has reserved many of his sharpest attacks for a man who dropped out of the race in December 2015, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.).

The State: Trump vows to protect jobs in trade deals

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60989172.html>

Tim Flach

Republican presidential contender Donald Trump promised Wednesday to make the American economy stronger and protect jobs from being sent overseas. "We're going to be rich again, we're going to be strong again, we're going to be respected again," he told a crowd estimated at 4,000 at the Sumter Civic Center.

Note: He avoided any comment on Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement of Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: Familiar senator filibusters as SC Senate road debate begins

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

Jeffrey Collins

The South Carolina Senate began its 2016 debate on how to get more money to the state's roads Wednesday with a filibuster from the same senator who kept them from taking up the bill last year. Sen. Tom Davis took the floor and told his colleagues he was going to speak until they voted to sit him down.

Greenville News: Senate once again faces filibuster in roads debate

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/02/17/senate-once-again-faces-filibuster-roads-debate/80494382/>

Tim Smith

The Senate began its long-awaited debate on roads with a filibuster by the same senator who last year killed chances of a vote on a roads bill by staying at the podium. Sen. Tom Davis, a Beaufort Republican, told his colleagues Wednesday that he is convinced the Senate will not pass meaningful reform of the state Department of Transportation this year, something he asked for last year in his successful filibuster.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley has asked for the current system to be scrapped. The House passed a roads bill last year that gives the governor the authority to appoint the highway commissioners.

The State: Senator begins Year 2 of his filibuster of road-repair plan

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60851187.html>

Cassie Cope

The S.C. Senate started its much-delayed debate Wednesday of a proposal to repair the state's crumbling roads the same way it left the issue last spring – with state Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, filibustering. Senators had promised road repairs would be at the top of their agenda when they returned to Columbia in January.

Note: To pass a roads plan, senators must reach a compromise among competing interests who want the state's roads agency restructured, a demand of reformers; income taxes cut, a demand of Republican Gov. Nikki Haley; and a recurring revenue stream to pay for up to \$29 billion in road repairs and improvements over the next 24 years.

Post and Courier: Sen. Tom Davis continues his roads filibuster for another year

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC1603/160219394>

Gavin Jackson

As the roads debate cranked up Wednesday in the Senate, Beaufort Republican Sen. Tom Davis returned to the podium he left at the end of the 2015 session. After five weeks of anticipation, behind the scenes wrangling and committee meetings, Davis continued his filibuster related to the House-approved roads funding bill.

Note: Lourie is the co-author of an amendment with Sen. Ray Cleary, R-Georgetown, that would let Gov. Nikki Haley choose from three candidates from the 10 Council of Governments around the state to the DOT Commission.

Note: Increased funding, agency reform and tax relief are all critical to the passage of a roads bill, leaders and Haley have said.

Associated Press: Senate approved Smith for 2nd 4-year term at Public Safety

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=q8iz7TiR

The Senate has unanimously approved giving Leroy Smith another four-year term running the South Carolina's Department of Public Safety. Senators took a few minutes away from a filibuster on road funding Wednesday to give Smith a second term leading the agency that oversees the highway patrol, Transport Police and the Bureau of Protective Services, which protects Statehouse grounds.

Greenville News: Anderson, Oconee DSS caseloads 'startling'

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/02/17/dss-caseloads-abused-neglected-kids-still-problem/80494334/>

Tim Smith

Two years after lawmakers began pushing the state Department of Social Services to lower caseloads concerning abused and neglected children and spent millions to bring in more caseworkers, the numbers remain high for many counties. And two counties whose caseloads are raising eyebrows the most are in the Upstate.

WLTX: DSS Still Struggling with Heavy Case Loads

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/local/2016/02/17/dss-turnover-rate-drops-but-still-struggling-heavy-case-loads/80511078/>

Joyce Koh

The Department of Social Services told senators Wednesday that the agency's turnover rate has dropped from 39 percent in 2014 to 27 percent in 2015. Citing the drop as an accomplishment over the last year, Deputy Director of Child Welfare Taron Davis said their realistic goal would be 20 percent.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Washington Post: S.C. could narrow the GOP field

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160218/PC1002/160219391>

Jennifer Rubin

South Carolina polls show Donald Trump leading in South Carolina, but with Marco Rubio moving up and Ted Cruz dropping. After that, there is a significant drop-off until you get to Ohio Gov. John Kasich and Jeb Bush, who are virtually tied just below 10 percent.

The State: Kasich is the best candidate to break through DC gridlock

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/editorials/article60899592.html#storylink=cpy>

Editorial

THIS ELECTION CYCLE has certainly proven that millions of Americans are frustrated with their federal government. That's understandable, given the gridlock and hyper-partisanship that blanket nearly every issue connected to Washington. The good news is that South Carolinians this week have a special opportunity to help fix the problem.

Note: When many other Republican governors, including South Carolina's Nikki Haley, rejected extra Medicaid funding under Obamacare, Gov. Kasich accepted the money.

Post and Courier: Now whom will voters endorse?

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160218/PC1002/160219384>

Editorial

Gov. Nikki Haley's endorsement of Marco Rubio on Wednesday could give the Florida senator's bid for the Republican presidential nomination a significant boost — and not just in our state. South Carolinians voting in Saturday's Republican primary should give fair consideration to Gov. Haley's reasoning for her choice — just as they should consider other endorsements by state and local leaders.

Post and Courier: What 'cease-fire' means in Syria

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160218/PC1002/160219385>

Editorial

It looks as if President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry will get the formal cease-fire they have sought in Syria, beginning today. It will probably bring welcome humanitarian aid, in convoys that set out from Damascus on Wednesday, to some communities that have been isolated by the fighting.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: Automobiles, aircraft help South Carolina notch record \$30.9B in exports

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC05/160219422>

David Wren

South Carolina set another record in 2015 with \$30.9 billion in exports by both sea and air, with BMW automobiles accounting for nearly one-third of all goods sent to foreign countries. Last year's total is 4.2 percent higher than in 2014 and is the sixth consecutive year of export growth for the State Ports Authority, according to data from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Associated Press: Tourism now a \$19B industry in South Carolina

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=XrhjpOi6

Bruce Smith

Tourism has posted record numbers for three straight years, growing into a \$19 billion industry in South Carolina, state Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director Duane Parrish announced on Wednesday. Parrish told attendees at the Governor's Conference on Tourism & Travel that tourism meant \$19.1 billion to state's economy during 2014.

Associated Press: Another record year for SC with nearly \$31B in exports

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=dNMzxmr4

It's been another record year for exports in South Carolina. State officials announced Wednesday that the state exported nearly \$31 billion worth of goods in 2015, an increase of more than 4 percent over 2014. It was the sixth straight year that exports from South Carolina set a record. The figures are based on numbers from the U.S. Commerce Department.

Post and Courier: Congressional delegation to visit Emanuel AME Church in pursuit of lessons on racial healing

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160218/PC1603/160219400>

Emma Dumain, Jennifer Berry Hawes

It hasn't been a full year since the shooting at Emanuel AME Church, but nearly three dozen members of the U.S. House and Senate will soon fill the pews at a Sunday morning service to reflect on the legacy of the tragedy. Their visit in mid-March will close out a three-day tour around South Carolina, designed to teach participating lawmakers some deeper lessons about race relations and racial healing in the Palmetto State and, more broadly, in America.

Local News:

Sun News: EDC: Three Horry County companies planning to expand, hire 150 workers

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article60933757.html>

Charles D. Perry

If the projects go as planned, the jobs — which are projected to pay an average wage of more than \$20 per hour — would be the first announced since Josh Kay became CEO of the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corp. (EDC).

National News:

New York Times: Obama's Options for a Supreme Court Nominee, and the Potential Fallout

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/17/us/politics/supreme-court-path-is-littered-with-pitfalls-for-president-and-gop.html>

Jonathan Martin, Patrick Healy

The death of Justice Antonin Scalia immediately prompted lofty-sounding pronouncements from leaders of both parties. But behind the public statements, the two parties are engaged in raw political calculations about how to best leverage the vacancy, underscoring the country's deep polarization and the reality of how elections are waged nowadays.

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