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Subject: Morning Clip – Thursday, May 22, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: S.C. House passes ethics reform bill

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529833/1005/>

Jeremy Borden

The S.C. House easily passed its first attempt at sweeping ethics reform in decades, establishing a new body to investigate members of all three branches of government and requiring all lawmakers to disclose their sources of income.

Note: Questions on ethics have consumed the Statehouse as Gov. Nikki Haley and other leaders have pushed for comprehensive reform, arguing the current system doesn't instill public confidence.

Note: "While the House bill still contains some problems that we hope will be addressed in conference, this represents real progress for the people of South Carolina," Mayer said. "Now it's time for the Senate to join the House in making sure legislators are no longer investigating themselves or keeping their income secret."

Associated Press: SC House passes latest version of ethics reform

http://thetandd.com/news/state-and-regional/sc-house-passes-latest-version-of-ethics-reform/article_09c8eec2-0329-5ecb-877f-280d4f20c3e3.html

Andrew Coffman Smith

The latest version of an ethics reform bill passed by the South Carolina House on Wednesday would create an independent commission to investigate complaints against all publicly elected officials and judges.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley welcomed the legislation's advancement but remained critical. "It's time for the Senate to join the House in making sure legislators are no longer investigating themselves or keeping their income secret," said her spokesman, Doug Mayer.

The State: SC State runs out of cash, seeks aid for salaries, debt payments

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459854/sc-state-runs-out-of-cash-seeks.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

S.C. State University has run out of money to pay its employees and cover its debt payments, and will ask to draw at least \$1.2 million from a \$6 million emergency loan that the state offered last month, college president Thomas Elzey told The State on Wednesday.

Note: With expectations that S.C. State would have enough money to cover its salaries and bond debt, the \$6 million emergency loan – approved by a group of state leaders, including Republican Gov. Haley – was expected to go toward shrinking the school's \$13.6 million in unpaid bills.

Times and Democrat: S.C. State president presents proposal for stabilizing school before meeting

http://thetandd.com/news/local/s-c-state-president-presents-proposal-for-stabilizing-school-before/article_a99453fa-e16b-11e3-b2cf-0019bb2963f4.html

Dale Linder-Altman

South Carolina State University President Thomas Elzey presented his stabilization plan to trustees on Wednesday ahead of a gathering of the Senate-organized committee that's supposed to guide the institution through its financial crisis.

Greenville News: Plastics maker to open Oconee plant

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/money/business/2014/05/22/plastics-maker-open-oconee-plant/9427635/>

Woody White

A manufacturer of plastics and injection molding said Wednesday it plans to open a plant in Oconee County. Plastic Products Co. Inc. said its \$3.2 million investment is expected to create 68 new jobs. The company said its new operations at 199 Keowee Business Parkway in Seneca should be up and running as early as

June.

DSS Hearing News:

Post and Courier: DSS Director Koller tells Senate panel she'll personally review caseload numbers
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529858/1031/dss-director-koller-tells-senate-panel-shell-personally-review-caseload-numbers>

Cynthia Roldan

Caseload numbers for Department of Social Services staffers were the main subject of concern for a Senate panel on Wednesday, as it continues its investigation into the agency's practices. Department director Lillian Koller testified for a second time since the Senate's DSS Oversight Subcommittee started having hearings in January.

Associated Press: Koller acknowledges DSS workers' caseloads too big
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jYij4eNY

Seanna Adcox

The embattled director of South Carolina's Department of Social Services acknowledged Wednesday that many workers' caseloads are too large. Lillian Koller told a Senate panel the agency is working to set practical goals for the number of cases and children a social worker can manage.

Greenville News: Koller: DSS procedures not followed in death case
<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2014/05/21/lourie-grills-dss-director-senate-hearing/9371481/>

Tim Smith

State Department of Social Services Director Lillian Koller says agency procedures weren't followed in the death of a 5-month-old Richland County boy who workers tried to find for more than a month. Koller made the admission Wednesday during a return appearance before a Senate panel, while also saying she personally is attacking the problem of high caseloads in the agency by asking for an explanation if any workers' caseload exceeds 30.

The State: Embattled SC agency director promises to monitor workers' caseloads
<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459878/embattled-sc-agency-director-promises.html#storylink=cpy>

Cassie Cope

The head of the state Department of Social Services said Wednesday that she personally will monitor the caseloads of social workers with that agency. Senators said there have been multiple complaints from Social Services workers about the number of cases — up to 70 — that they are expected to handle.

S.C. Political News:

Greenville News: Graham, and challengers, report modest finances
<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/22/3459762/graham-and-challengers-report.html>

Mary Troyan

Sen. Lindsey Graham has a modest financial portfolio compared to many of his multimillionaire Senate colleagues, according to his most recent personal financial disclosure report. The report, filed with the Senate, shows most of Graham's holdings are in mutual funds, checking and savings accounts and a money market.

Associated Press: Democrats vying for SC superintendent to debate
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jliLZwto

The four Democratic candidates for South Carolina's state schools superintendent are meeting for a televised debate. ETV will broadcast the debate Thursday starting at 7 p.m. The Democratic primary centers on properly funding public education, increasing teacher pay, creating a fair teacher evaluation system and boosting state support for public schools.

Associated Press: Voters could decide if SC top general's appointed
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=9LEgvBF6

Susanne M. Schafer

South Carolina voters will likely get the chance to decide in November whether they want the governor to appoint the state's top military officer, the adjutant general. The Senate gave final voice approval

Wednesday to a proposal to put the constitutional question on the November ballot.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Aiken Standard: Keep adjutant general off future ballots

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140521/AIK0201/140529855/1018/AIK02/editorial-keep-adjutant-general-off-future-ballots>

Editorial

You may not know it, but the power to pick the head of our state's National Guard is in your hands if you're a voter. Each four-year election cycle, voters elect our adjutant general – the de facto commander of our state's military forces.

Post and Courier (Guest Column): Reform bill should speed Charleston Harbor deepening

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140522/PC1002/140529813/reform-bill-should-speed-deepening-of-charleston-harbor>

Ron Brinson

Congress this week will pass the Water Resources and Reform Development Act. This massive \$27.4 billion package of civil works addresses a menu of pent-up demands for modernization of the nation's navigation system, and the compelling necessity to reform a ponderous and costly regulatory system for vetting projects.

Post and Courier: Make it safe to walk

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140522/PC1002/140529803/1021/make-it-safe-to-walk>

Editorial

One study after another concludes that walking is a good way to improve one's health. And scientists agree that carbon vehicle emissions harm the environment. But from 2003 to 2012 in South Carolina, eschewing the car and walking proved anything but healthy for more than 1,000 pedestrians who died after being struck by vehicles.

Island Packet: Legislators must stop naming infrastructure

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/05/21/3122247/legislatures-must-stop-naming.html?sp=/99/342/>

Editorial

South Carolina is fortunate to be home to thousands of admirable volunteers, humanitarians and professionals who make this state a better place. But the vast majority of these South Carolinians will never have a stretch of road, a bridge or other piece of infrastructure named for them.

Legislative Session News:

Island Packet: SC House passes bill legalizing card, dice games

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/05/21/3122436/sc-house-passes-bill-legalizing.html?sp=/99/100/&ihp=1#storylink=cpy>

Zach Murdock

It will be back to fun and games soon for Sun City Hilton Head residents barred from playing canasta, bridge and mahjong by an antiquated state law, according to Sen. Tom Davis. On Tuesday, the S.C. House approved Davis' bill amending an 1802 anti-gambling law to allow games of cards, dice and tiles in homes and clubhouses.

Times and Democrat: S.C. House: School consolidation in Orangeburg won't pass this year

http://thetandd.com/news/local/s-c-house-school-consolidation-in-orangeburg-won-t-pass/article_bd65750e-e16a-11e3-ba2b-0019bb2963f4.html

Gene Crider

House members say they will not approve a Senate plan to consolidate Orangeburg County's three school districts this year. Instead, they want to wait until at least next session so the public has time to speak on the issues involved.

The State: House votes to OK solar; energy supporters call vote historic

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459478/solar-shining-after-dark-ages.html#storylink=cpy>

Sammy Fretwell

South Carolina took what is considered a historic step Wednesday to change the state's longtime resistance

to solar power. The state House of Representatives voted 105-0 for a solar energy bill that is forecast to make sun-generated electricity more abundant in the Palmetto State.

The State: SC local governments could get more state money

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459857/sc-local-governments-could-get.html#storylink=cpy>

Cassie Cope

The Board of Economic Advisors officially added almost \$86 million in revenue for the state budget that takes effect July 1, a move that could mean local governments will get additional money from the state. The board said there will be about \$61 million in additional money for the 2014-15 fiscal year. About \$41.6 million will be carried over from the current fiscal year and can be spent only once.

Florence Morning News: Senate nears adoption of West Florence special purpose tax district

http://www.scnow.com/news/politics/article_1433d124-e147-11e3-97a8-001a4bcf6878.html

Gavin Jackson

The South Carolina Senate is expected to approve the final reading of a bill Thursday to create a special purpose tax district for the West Florence Fire District. The bill removes the West Florence Fire District from a unified fire protection district that was passed last week by Florence County Council.

Greenville News: Beer bill vote delayed

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/2014/05/21/craft-beer-law-goes-vote-today/9371069/>

Eric Connor

An overhaul of South Carolina's beer production laws has been delayed, but both brewers and wholesalers say they believe a bill designed to attract a West Coast brewery's \$31 million expansion will pass before legislators break for the summer.

Sun News: Stone Brewing bill could emerge from committee on Tuesday

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/05/21/4240326/stone-brewing-bill-could-emerge.html?sp=/99/209/&ihp=1#storylink=cpy>

Steve Jones

The committee is working with the S.C. Beer Wholesalers Association to craft language that will satisfy the association's concerns but still allow Stone and other large craft beer brewers to produce up to 500,000 barrels a year and sell it on site.

Post and Courier: Midwives and birth centers hope for legislative fix to DHEC dilemma

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC16/140529818/1006/midwives-and-birth-centers-hope-for-legislative-fix-to-dhec-dilemma>

Lauren Sausser

South Carolina midwives are hopeful that state lawmakers will endorse a proposal that would allow birth centers to continue operating for another year even without express agreements that permit physicians to intervene on site during complicated deliveries.

The State: Officials changing gears to advance SC elections board bill

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459865/officials-changing-gears-to-advance.html#storylink=cpy>

Dawn Hinshaw

Legislators are shifting strategies to finish work on a bill to unify how county election boards are set up. Sen. Chip Campsen said proponents are looking ahead to Wednesday for a House vote on a bill giving state election officials authority to perform county functions in some cases.

The State: List of finalists for five election board seats goes to Richland legislators

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459360/list-of-finalists-for-election.html#storylink=cpy>

A committee of Richland legislators has selected the candidates for five seats on the county elections board. The list of 10 finalists was provided to The State newspaper by one legislator Wednesday and confirmed by a second after the Legislative Delegation Office declined to release the names, pending a SLED background check.

S.C. Federal Delegation News:

Greenville News: Scott, senators seek VA probe

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2014/05/22/scott-senators-seek-va-probe/9406447/>

Mary Troyan

Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina is asking the U.S. Senate to investigate the Department of Veterans Affairs' treatment of military veterans seeking health care. The Veterans Health Administration has long been criticized for backlogs and long wait times.

South Carolina News:

WLTX: Cracking Down on Contraband: "They Wanted To Kill Me"

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/local/2014/05/21/contraband-lee-county-prison/9396681/>

Steven Dial

We hear about drugs being smuggled into prisons, but cell phones behind bars is something that could be deadly. Four years ago Captain Robert Johnson a career corrections officer saw firsthand the dangers of cell phones in prison when a hit was put on him and he was shot six times at his home.

Associated Press: Joint South Carolina-Georgia port panel to meet

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=t6mChY4H

Bruce Smith

The joint board from South Carolina and Georgia working to develop a \$3.3 billion container ship terminal on the Savannah River is meeting in Charleston. The board of the Jasper Ocean Terminal will take up the budget for the next two fiscal years during its Thursday meeting.

Greenville News: Higher gas prices not expected to stop SC travelers

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/2014/05/21/higher-gas-prices-expected-stop-sc-travelers/9378753/>

David Dykes

More than 500,000 South Carolinians are expected to travel more than 50 miles from home this Memorial Day weekend, with most expected to go by automobile, despite gas prices that are 22 cents a gallon higher than last year.

Local News:

Seneca Journal: Oconee jobless rate lowest in 13 years

<https://upstatetoday.com/2014/05/oconee-jobless-rate-lowest-in-13-years/>

Carlos Galarza-Veve

Unemployment in Oconee County has dropped to 5.1 percent, the lowest level in 13 years. The latest labor market report released by the state shows that in April the number of workers holding a job in Oconee increased to 29,693, while the number of job seekers dropped to 1,593.

Anderson Independent: Manufacturer breathes new life into old textile plant

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/may/21/manufacturer-breathes-new-life-into-old-textile/?partner=RSS>

Nikie Mayo

Company executives hosted a plant tour for the Anderson County Council on Wednesday, showing off a revamped building and Caterpillar Inc. branded heavy equipment that includes parts made by McLaughlin.

Florence Morning News: Companies show interest in old Wellman plant

http://www.scnow.com/news/article_0218833c-e132-11e3-aa57-001a4bcf6878.html

John Russell

The former Wellman Plastics plant in Darlington might have a new tenant soon. Darlington County Economic Development Partnership Executive Director Frank Willis said Wednesday at least two companies are showing interest.

Island Packet: Seniors who didn't pass exit exam could be allowed to march in graduations

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/05/21/3122496/seniors-who-didnt-pass-exit-exam.html?sp=/99/100/&ihp=1#storylink=cpy>

Sarah Bowman

Forty-five seconds -- that is all it would take for senior Herbert Daise to walk across the stage during his Bluffton High School graduation May 30. To march with his classmates of several years. To shake the hands of his administrators and district officials. To wave to the crowd, his friends and family.

Anderson Independent: Pendleton may squeeze 2015 budget a bit more

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/may/21/pendleton-may-squeeze-2015-budget-a-bit-more/?partner=RSS>

Michael Eads

Town Council members want to squeeze a bit more money out of next year's budget before they take a final vote on it in two weeks. The council conducted a special meeting Wednesday night to have a public hearing about and first reading of the proposed fiscal year 2015 town budget.

National News:

Politico: Anatomy of a Veterans' Affairs scandal

<http://www.politico.com/story/2014/05/veterans-administration-scandal-106982.html>

Hadas Gold

Those reporters hadn't quite nailed down an explosive story alleging serious misconduct at the Veterans' Administration Hospital in Phoenix, so they used the obsession over the plane to continue working, and then waited for a lull in the 24/7 Flight 370 coverage so they could pounce.

Brian Symmes

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