

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>
To:
Date: 1/10/2017 7:53:09 AM
Subject: Morning Clips – Tuesday, January 10, 2017

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Nikki Haley: UN Ambassador News:

Breitbart News: Exclusive — ‘Dream Team’: Sean Spicer Explains Donald Trump’s ‘Most Talented Cabinet in Modern History,’ White House Transition

<http://www.breitbart.com/2016-presidential-race/2017/01/09/exclusive-dream-team-sean-spicer-explains-donald-trumps-talented-cabinet-modern-history-white-house-transition/>

Matthew Boyle

Incoming White House press secretary Sean Spicer, in an exclusive interview with Breitbart News, detailed how President-elect Donald J. Trump’s administration will be ready to go on day one thanks to a “dream team” cabinet and a largely unprecedented transition process that has flowed smoothly. The cabinet, Spicer argued, is not only filled with talented people of “quality and caliber” that Democrats can’t legitimately oppose, but, he said, it is the “most talented cabinet in modern history.” “I think not only are we ahead of schedule, which is historically important, but I think number two if you look at the quality of these individuals, the Democrats are basically trying to figure out how they can oppose these folks and they’re coming up empty because of the quality and caliber of each of these individuals,” Spicer said in a phone interview. “When you look at them, they might not agree with them, but they have to admit these are some very successful people in their various fields. And they’re probably, when you rate this cabinet overall, there’s no question it’s by far holistically the most talented cabinet in modern history.”

NOTE: Trump has not yet selected an Agriculture Secretary or a Veterans Affairs Secretary, but is expected to make those selections shortly. Hearings and confirmation is expected soon, as well, for cabinet-level administration slots such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator position, which will go to Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt; for incoming Office of Management and Budget (OMB) director Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R-SC), incoming United Nations Ambassador and outgoing South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, incoming Small Business Administration administrator Linda McMahon, and incoming U.S. trade representative Robert Lighthizer.

Clemson Wins 2017 National Championship:

Associated Press: What to watch in 2017: Clemson rebuild; Kelly's crossroads

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/20bb69c7b8a7446e81e2abd4696b919e/what-watch-2017-clemson-rebuild-kellys-crossroads>

Alabama will be great in 2017. That's a given. The Crimson Tide came up just short of its fifth national championship in eight seasons under coach Nick Saban, losing to Clemson 35-31 in the College Football Playoff title game Monday night. But Alabama is likely start next season as the No. 1 team in the country as Dabo Swinney does some rebuilding of the Tigers. The Tide contending for a national title is the one sure thing in college football. Nobody reloads better than Saban. Everything else is up for grabs, but college football fans will likely be keeping an eye on these developing stories.

Associated Press: Yes! Oh no!! Tigers, Tide fans ride emotional roller coaster

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

SC State Wire

They had to wait a year, some 35 years, but jubilant Clemson fans filled the streets near campus after the Tigers wrapped up their first national championship since 1981 with a dramatic victory over

seemingly unbeatable Alabama. It was a roller coaster ride of emotions for the Clemson faithful in South Carolina. And for Crimson Tide fans watching in Tuscaloosa. Students and fans clad in Tiger Paws and Orange sweatshirts near campus hugged each other when Clemson took a 28-24 lead in the fourth quarter of the national title game Monday night against the mighty Crimson Tide in Tampa, Florida. Minutes later they stood in stunned silence after Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts put the Crimson Tide back on top 31-28 with a touchdown moments later. Alabama fans had to be feeling pretty good.

Greenville News: Clemson wins the national championship

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/sports/2017/01/09/clemson-alabama-observations/96374820/>

Romando Dixon

Clemson scored 21 points in the fourth quarter to win the national championship. Alabama scored the first 14 points, but Clemson's defense held its ground and Deshaun Watson scored on a touchdown run in the second quarter. A Hunter Renfrow touchdown reception made the score 17-14 in the third quarter. O.J. Howard, yes the same one from last year, caught a 68-yard touchdown pass to give the Crimson Tide a 24-14 lead late in the third quarter. Watson accounted for his third touchdown of the game with a 4-yard touchdown pass to Mike Williams to cut the lead to three.

Independent Mail: Clemson makes history, fulfills legacies

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/sports/college/clemson/football/2017/01/10/clemson-makes-history-fulfills-legacies/96354136/>

Welcome back, "Title Tigers." Welcome to immortality, Dabo Swinney and Deshaun Watson. And welcome to the 2016 national championship. History was made, legacies fulfilled and a trophy hoisted by Clemson for the first time in 35 years as the Tigers knocked off vaunted Alabama 35-31 on Monday night at Raymond James Stadium when Watson found Hunter Renfrow for a 2-yard touchdown pass with one second remaining. "Eight years ago, our goal was to work our tails off and eventually get Clemson back on top," said Swinney, who joined Danny Ford as the only two Clemson coaches to capture the national title. "Tonight, that's a reality. It truly is. The paw is flying on top of the mountain tonight." Clemson said all week it had to beat the best to be the best. Alabama, which had won four national titles since 2009, certainly represented that. After coming up five points short a year ago, a revenge game for Clemson didn't go the Tigers' way for over three quarters. They trailed for more than 45 minutes.

The State: Time was on Tigers' side

<http://www.thestate.com/sports/college/acc/clemson-university/article125576994.html>

Matt Connolly

Clemson quarterback Deshaun Watson just watched Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts run for a 30-yard touchdown with 2:07 remaining to put the Crimson Tide on top 31-28 as it appeared Alabama might deliver Clemson another heartbreaking loss in a national championship game. Watson wasn't upset as Hurts crossed the goal line, in fact he was the opposite. "I just smiled right when they scored," Watson said. "I (saw) the two minutes and one second on the clock, and I just smiled, and I just knew." What Watson and the rest of Clemson's offense knew was that the Tigers still had time to score, even against the best defense in college football. "They left too much time for us," star receiver Mike Williams said. "We've been putting together two-minute drives the whole season." Clemson's top two offensive players were right.

Post and Courier: Clemson shocks Alabama to win national championship

http://www.postandcourier.com/sports/clemson-shocks-alabama-to-win-national-championship/article_4ebef07c-d6b7-11e6-84b2-cbd8e43fdf02.html

Aaron Brenner

The littlest guy on the field made the biggest play in Clemson football history. Hunter Renfrow's 2-yard touchdown catch from Deshaun Watson with one second remaining lifted No. 2 Clemson to a thrilling 35-31 victory over No. 1 Alabama in the 2016 College Football Playoff national championship game.

on Monday night. The game thrilled a Raymond James Stadium crowd of 74,512, about 60 percent of which was wearing orange. The Tigers (14-1) clinched their second national championship, paired with the 1981 title. "The Paw is flying on top of that mountain tonight," said Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney, beating his alma mater for a national title in his second try. "We saw the top of it last year, didn't quite get there. Tonight, we took that next step." This was this team's responsibility. This was this team's mission. There was really only one lid left on the program, and that was to win the whole dadgum thing."

Fox Carolina: Empire State Building lights up purple and orange to celebrate Tigers' win

<http://www.foxcarolina.com/story/34222184/empire-state-building-lights-up-purple-and-orange-to-celebrate-tigers-win>

Dal Kalsi

The Empire State Building, New York City's iconic skyscraper, was lit up in orange and purple overnight to celebrate the Clemson Tigers' national championship victory. The Tigers defeated Alabama 35-31 in the national championship football game in Tampa, FL. The Empire State Building tweeted to congratulate the Tigers shortly after the game ended early Tuesday morning.

WLTX: Clemson Flag to Be Flown Atop the State House

<http://www.wltx.com/sports/ncaa/clemson-tigers/clemson-flag-to-be-flown-atop-the-state-house/384679787>

The banner of the Clemson Tigers will atop the South Carolina State House sometime on Tuesday. Rob Godfrey, Gov. Nikki Haley's Deputy Chief of Staff, tweeted early Monday morning that the standard for the Tiger Nation would be hoisted on top of the dome. It's a traditional honor for South Carolina teams who win the national title. The USC Gamecocks flag went up on the dome in 2011 and 2012 each time the team won the College World Series. And last summer, the Coastal Carolina flag went up on the top of the capitol building when they claimed the College World Series.

General Assembly News:

Associated Press: SC lawmakers to face questions about indictments, governor

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=02vQJZ1v

Seanna Adcox

The 2017 legislative session begins under a cloud of uncertainty over who else may face corruption charges and how long Nikki Haley will remain South Carolina's governor. Legislators' priorities for the session starting Tuesday echo those of previous years. Their agenda includes fixing South Carolina's highways and shoring up the state pension system. Some lawmakers say whether they can form consensus depends on the next governor. If Haley is confirmed as President-elect Donald Trump's choice for United Nations ambassador, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster will become governor. He hasn't taken a public position on issues such as a gas tax increase. Questions also loom about a prosecutor's continued investigation, a month after 16-year veteran Rep. Jim Merrill was indicted on misconduct and ethics violations. He contends he's done nothing illegal.

WIS: Lawmakers to begin new session with familiar topics and less money

<http://www.wistv.com/story/34220230/lawmakers-to-begin-new-session-with-familiar-topics-and-less-money>

Jack Kuenzie

Inside the State House lawmakers will be getting back to business this week. The General Assembly will have less time to act since they agreed to a shorter session. Instead of wrapping up in June like previous years, they are scheduled to be out of the capital city on May 11th. On Tuesday, the 2017 session will get underway with some familiar issues but with less money to address them compared to last year. Once again, lawmakers will return to Columbia to take another stab at a solution for bad roads. Last year's decision to send \$4 billion in funding to road repairs over 10 years is still considered to be far short of the \$1.5 billion the Department of Transportation believes is needed on

an annual basis. Also, there will be more talk about raising the state's gas tax for the first time in three decades.

WLTX: Could a Roads Bill Pass this Session?

<http://www.wltx.com/news/local/could-a-roads-bill-pass-this-session/384573695>

Joyce Koh

The new legislative session begins Tuesday at noon, and lawmakers will be entering the year with some major changes that could affect the chances of a roads bill passing. Last session, lawmakers were able to pass partial reform for the Department of Transportation and a bill that would bond out \$400 million from the general fund for billions in roads funding each year. The most notable change likely to affect this session is Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster assuming the role of governor, once Nikki Haley gets confirmed as U.N. Ambassador. Sen. John Scott said that change in the executive office could have an impact on the efforts to pass a gas tax increase to fund a stream of revenue for roads. Haley has long been against raising the gas tax, especially if not offset by a tax cut of some sort.

Herald-Journal: David Turnipseed, former state senator and lawyer, dies at 71

<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20170109/david-turnipseed-former-state-senator-and-lawyer-dies-at-71?rssfeed=true>

Zach Fox

A prominent attorney and former state senator from Spartanburg County is being remembered for his likability in the courtroom and on the campaign trail. David English Turnipseed, of Moore, died Sunday after battling cancer. He was 71. "He was beloved by his constituents, he was beloved by his clients. He was straight as an arrow and had excellent integrity," said Gary Poliakoff, a Spartanburg attorney who knew Turnipseed well. "He was a wonderful guy all around." Turnipseed was a Democratic state senator from 1976 to 1984. He left the Legislature to practice law in Spartanburg County, which he did until retiring in 2015. Born in Mobile, Ala., Turnipseed was an active member of Tyger River Presbyterian Church and was an avid gardener. Attorney Doug Brannon worked closely with Turnipseed before he retired, with the two once sharing a practice.

Dylann Roof Case:

Associated Press: Roof's fate soon will rest in hands of 12 federal jurors

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

Meg Kinnard

The assault on Emanuel AME Church left a total of 12 victims: Nine who were killed that June night and three who survived the hail of bullets in the basement of the beautiful, historic structure in downtown Charleston. Now, after hearing testimony from relatives of those slain in the 2015 attack during a Wednesday night Bible study, the focus in Dylann Roof's trial again switches to a new set of 12 people: the jury. On Tuesday, jurors are set to begin deliberating over whether Roof, 22, should get the death penalty or life in prison for his crimes. Their decision must be unanimous. If they are unable to agree, a life sentence is automatically imposed.

Associated Press: What's up next in the federal trial of Dylann Roof?

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=QlapPV4f

Meg Kinnard

Jurors are expected to begin deliberations Tuesday as to whether Dylann Roof will receive the death penalty or life in prison for the 2015 massacre at a historic black church in South Carolina that left nine Bible study participants dead. Last month, the same jury took less than two hours to find Roof guilty of all 33 federal counts against him, including hate crimes and obstruction of religion. For four days, prosecutors presented their case as to why they feel the 22-year-old Roof should be executed for his crimes. Roof, representing himself, put up no defense. Here's what has happened in his trial and what to expect.

Associated Press: Wounds re-open as Dylann Roof's sentencing nears

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

Meg Kinnard

In a courtroom a mile from the scene of the Charleston church slayings, wounds re-opened as nearly two dozen friends and relatives of the nine victims shared memories and opined about a future without a mother, father, sister or brother. They shed tears and their voices shook, but none of them said whether Dylann Roof should face the death penalty or life in prison for gunning down the church members during a Bible study at Emanuel AME. That will be left up to the jury, which will begin its deliberations Tuesday after hearing a closing argument from prosecutors and perhaps Roof. He has represented himself during sentencing, but has not put up any fight for his life. He didn't call any witnesses, present any evidence and so far has not asked for mercy. He did try to limit the amount of heart-wrenching testimony the jurors heard, but with only little success.

Opinion/Editorial:

The State: We could use these 11 bills; most others, not so much

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/cindi-ross-scopepe/article125424149.html>

Cindi Ross Scopepe

MOST OF THE 556 bills that our legislators prefiled in advance of today's opening of the 2017 General Assembly won't become law. They shouldn't — just as most of the hundreds more that will be filed before lawmakers go home in May shouldn't. Here are 11 that should: H.3103 by Rep. Mike Ryhal would require any nonprofit that receives state funding to first provide "an accounting of the manner in which the funds will be spent, a copy of the organization's adopted budget for the year in which the funds are accepted, and a copy of the organization's most recent operating financial statement." It would be smart for state agencies — and local governments — to require this even if the bill doesn't pass, so they don't find themselves making six-figure payments to organizations that shouldn't receive tax money even if it turned out that they do what they claim to do.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: S.C. Education Superintendent Molly Spearman: Start replacing old school buses now

http://www.postandcourier.com/news/s-c-education-superintendent-molly-spearman-start-replacing-old-school/article_d278719e-d686-11e6-8089-f33985487a4f.html

Paul Bowers

Standing in front of a brand-new yellow bus on the Statehouse grounds in Columbia on Monday, S.C. Education Superintendent Molly Spearman called on state lawmakers to replace more than 1,000 school buses that have been on the road for 20 years or more. "We can no longer wait to address the needs of our state's student transportation system," Spearman said. "I am committed to working tirelessly with our state's leaders to ensure students have safe and reliable transportation for years to come." Spearman asked the legislature to spend \$95 million in non-recurring funds and \$10 million in recurring funds for buses, which the state can get at a reduced up-front cost thanks to a new lease-to-purchase program. The average age of a bus in the state fleet is now 15.5 years, with 236,000 miles on the odometer. Buses manufactured from 1995 to 1996 account for 45 percent of the fleet, according to the S.C. Department of Education.

Aiken Standard: South Carolina education superintendent outlines plans for replacing 1,000 school buses

http://www.aikenstandard.com/education/south-carolina-education-superintendent-outlines-plans-for-replacing-school-buses/article_41bab63a-d6a9-11e6-b6d1-4756dc3797f8.html

Larry Wood

A lease-to-purchase program for school buses would replace more than 1,000 state-owned buses that are 20 or more years old. S.C. Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman announced plans

Monday to request recurring and nonrecurring funds from the S.C. General Assembly for the program at a press conference at the Statehouse in Columbia. "I will be working very closely with the General Assembly to secure the resources needed for safe and efficient pupil transit," said Spearman, standing in front of a new \$80,000 2017 bus with the latest technology, safety and efficiency features. "Our current request to the General Assembly includes \$10 million in recurring funds and \$95 million in nonrecurring funds for school bus lease and purchase. We must have a recurring source of funding to use this very important and efficient way to getting new buses on the road." If approved, every district in the state would get at least a few new buses, Spearman said.

Local News:

Associated Press: Coroner: Man, woman found dead in apparent murder-suicide

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=3TsvvDu4

SC State Wire

Authorities say a man and woman were found dead in home in Spartanburg County from what appears to be a murder-suicide. Local news outlets report that Spartanburg County Coroner Rusty Clevenger says 57-year-old Anthony Huston was discovered dead from a gunshot wound on Monday. Clevenger says Joanne Brown Huston was also found shot. She was taken to a hospital, where she later died. It wasn't immediately clear Monday night who the shooter was or how many shots were fired. Officials have not released any other details.

The Herald: Rock Hill teen who shot puppy with BB gun 18 times pleads guilty, gets probation

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/crime/article125470429.html>

Andrew Dys

The Rock Hill teen who shot a puppy 18 times with a BB gun in February, in what was described in court as torture, was sentenced to 18 months probation Monday. De'Monte Ty'Juan Douglas, 18, pleaded guilty to felony ill treatment of an animal. He had been charged by Rock Hill police after the injured puppy, six weeks old at the time, was found Feb. 21 by a worker at the Wildwood Springs apartment complex. "He (Douglas) emptied the entire clip of the gun into the dog," prosecutor Megan Fuller told Judge Dan Hall. Other than admitting he was guilty, Douglas said nothing in court. At the time of arrest in February, Douglas tried to blame a younger teen for the shooting, but the younger teen who was prosecuted as a juvenile told officers it was "Douglas' idea to kill the puppy because it was diseased," Fuller said.

Post and Courier: Goose Creek High School student found with gun, arrested

http://www.postandcourier.com/news/goose-creek-high-school-student-found-with-gun-arrested/article_01d1dc9c-d6cc-11e6-8469-ff49651ca184.html

Angie Jackson

A Goose Creek High School student was arrested after being found with a gun Monday afternoon, authorities said. Berkeley County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Mike Cochran said deputies responded to the school after receiving a tip. The student was in possession of a loaded firearm, he said. No one was threatened or injured. Cochran said further details and an incident report will be released Tuesday morning.

Sun News: Court document: Women accused former NFL player's son of sexual assault for a 'ton of money'

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/crime/article125512034.html>

Emily Weaver

The son of former NFL player Ray Lewis Jr. contends in court documents that two women colluded to sue him for a "ton of money" in accusing him of sexual assault. Two Coastal Carolina University students claimed Ray Anthony Lewis III, a CCU football player who was kicked off the team after his arrest, assaulted them when they were intoxicated after a party last January. A court document says one of the women texted the other with the message, "if we both go after him it's a 2 against 1 and

we can sue for sh*t ton of money.” The document also says the women were “laughing at the emergency room.” The details were revealed in a motion from Lewis’ attorney to void the grand jury indictment charging Lewis with criminal sexual conduct.

Independent Mail: Accused Clemson student files another lawsuit

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/news/2017/01/09/accused-clemson-student-files-another-lawsuit/96364824/>

An unnamed Clemson University freshman on suspension for sexual misconduct has filed a second lawsuit in the case. The plaintiff, known only as John Doe, has been alleged to have forced himself onto another student — known only as Jane Doe — at a party on Oct. 24, 2015. Subsequent disciplinary action from the university led to John Doe receiving a one-year suspension, which ends Aug. 1, and spawned one lawsuit filed in June 2016 and a second lawsuit filed last week, both in U.S. District Court in Greenville. In the most recent lawsuit, John Doe is suing Jane Doe and a male student known only as Charles Doe. He claims Jane Doe “pursued him for more than a month,” gave him alcohol at a party before instigating sexual relations with him, and later conspired with Charles Doe to ruin him by concocting a sexual assault case against him.

The State: SC State has ‘real, balanced budget,’ president says

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/education/article125483679.html>

Avery G. Wilks

For the first time in “quite some time,” S.C. State University has a “real, balanced budget,” new president James Clark told members of Columbia’s Rotary Club Monday. “That required some cuts. That required removing some people from the payroll,” said Clark, who was hired at the historically black public college last June. “That was tough. But it’s business.” Clark said S.C. State’s financial woes can be blamed on a myriad of issues, including missteps that compounded over time. However, the retired, longtime AT&T executive vowed to continue to steer S.C. State out of the muck with a business-like approach to the Orangeburg school’s budget and internal culture. A key to the school’s future, Clark said, will be recruiting more students and keeping them in school. “You can be 50 to 100 students away from being in the red,” he said. “If you’re one of those smaller institutions, you must hit those enrollment numbers.”

WLTX: Sumter School District Hire Financial Consultant to Help With \$6.2mil Deficit

<http://www.wltx.com/news/local/sumter-school-district-hire-financial-consultant-to-help-with-62mil-deficit/384641292>

At Monday night’s school board meeting, Sumter County School Board took no action on the proposed plan to get the district out of a \$6.2 million deficit except to hire Scott Allen as a financial management consultant. Superintendent, Dr. Frank Baker tells News 19 that the Board got his plan a few weeks ago, after they received an audit showing that the district had a 6.2 million dollar deficit. That plan included eliminating overtime, cutting back the use of substitutes, a hiring freeze, reallocation of staff when someone leaves a position, along with cutting the supply budget. The plan also included a freezing of travel and conference attendance unless it was paid for by federal funds. The board took no action on the plan that will only save approximately \$3.4 million. Baker also told News 19 that the proposed plan only extends through the Spring Semester. Community members say they heard that the plan included the closing of schools, but Dr. Baker did not tell News 19 that was included in the plan.

Post and Courier: As sales slow, analyst says it’s time to cut the unprofitable Boeing 787-8

http://www.postandcourier.com/business/as-sales-slow-analyst-says-it-s-time-to-cut/article_0d4ec4ae-d690-11e6-b654-b79763edf2e3.html

David Wren

As Dreamliner sales face headwinds and Boeing Co. continues to chip away at \$30 billion in deferred program costs, an aerospace expert says it’s looking more certain that the 787-8 model eventually will be scrapped in favor of its newer and bigger siblings. Boeing, which builds the 787 in North

Charleston and Everett, Wash., hasn't announced any plans to do away with its original Dreamliner model. "While we always expected the majority of 787 orders to be for the 787-9, both the -8 and -10 are important members of the Dreamliner family that meet specific needs and missions for our customers," company spokeswoman Lori Gunter said. But Scott Hamilton, editor of aviation newsletter Leeham News and Comment, says it makes sense to ditch the 787-8 in favor of the more popular, more efficient - and more profitable - 787-9 and 787-10 models.

WIS: Columbia airport ready to protect travelers

<http://www.wistv.com/story/34220338/columbia-airport-ready-to-protect-travelers>

Meaghan Norman

Fort Lauderdale airport shooting suspect Esteban Santiago went before a judge on Monday. Two of the three charges against Santiago carry the possibility of the death penalty. Over the weekend, chilling surveillance video was released showing the accused shooter walking through the baggage claim and then pointing a gun as bystanders took cover. After this tragedy in Florida, what changes can we expect to see at local airports here in Columbia? Officials at Columbia Metropolitan Airport said they are not waiting for a tragedy to happen but they said they are ready just in case. The public safety officers at the airport have recently gone through active shooter training. They could not say what specific security measures have been put into place but they said they do have the tools needed to protect travelers and staff at the airport.

Herald-Journal: BMW reports record production year at Spartanburg plant

<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20170109/bmw-reports-record-production-year-at-spartanburg-plant?rssfeed=true>

BMW Manufacturing's Spartanburg plant again produced a record number of vehicles in 2016, the company announced Monday. The plant produced 411,171 X models in 2016. In 2015, the plant produced 400,409 vehicles, setting the previous record. Of the units produced in Spartanburg last year, the plant exported 287,700 vehicles — 70 percent of its total production. The Spartanburg facility is BMW's largest plant by volume worldwide. "Last year was a very successful year for Plant Spartanburg," BMW Manufacturing President and CEO Knudt Flor said in a statement. "Our X models continue to be extremely popular worldwide, and I'm proud of the commitment shown by our team of dedicated associates to deliver premium quality vehicles for our customers."

Independent Mail: Fixing EMS high on Anderson County officials' agenda

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/news/local/2017/01/09/fixing-ems-high-anderson-county-officials-agenda/96345730/>

Nikie Mayo

Overhauling Anderson County's delivery of emergency medical services will be a priority of county officials in 2017. Anderson County Council Chairman Tommy Dunn said he plans to appoint a three-member public safety committee Jan. 17 to lead efforts to improve emergency medical services. The committee will be made up of council members, but will work with paramedics and residents to make a plan for improving care. A county-commissioned study made public in October detailed multiple flaws found in Anderson County's delivery of care after a person dials 911 with a critical medical problem. "We appreciate all the people who have put years of their time and their blood, sweat and tears into EMS," Dunn said. "We aren't trying to throw any of our providers under the bus. But when you call 911 with an emergency, our goal is that everybody in the county would get the best care as quickly as possible."

President-elect Trump News:

Associated Press: Democrats to press attorney general pick as hearing opens

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/4d9cd488af6d4dd8ace9a5ae80a44b79/democrats-press-attorney-general-pick-hearing-opens>

President-elect Donald Trump's pick for attorney general, Sen. Jeff Sessions, is set to be questioned

by his peers in a high-visibility Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing. Sessions is likely to stress his conservative legal credentials even as he works to persuade Democrats on the panel that he can be fair and even-handed as the country's top law enforcement official. A two-day hearing will feature testimony from the Alabama Republican on Tuesday, followed the next day by statements from witnesses who support and oppose his nomination. Democrats are expected to challenge Sessions' commitment to civil rights, a chief priority of the Justice Department during the Obama administration. They also are likely to press him on his hard-line stance on immigration policy. But Republicans have expressed strong support and are expected to secure more than enough votes needed to confirm him, including from some Democrats in conservative-leaning states.

Associated Press: In final speech, Obama must reconcile his hopes with Trump's

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/dfaf051633e54f80a47ed6387f24255e/final-speech-obama-must-reconcile-his-hopes-trumps>

Now an elder statesman, Barack Obama is returning to Chicago where he launched his unlikely political career to tell Americans not to lose faith in their future, no matter what they think about their next president. Obama's final speech as president, before thousands who will gather at McCormick Place, is his last chance to try to define what his presidency meant for America. It's a fitting bookend to what he started eight years ago. It was in Chicago in 2008 that the nation's first black president declared victory, and where over the years he tried to cultivate his brand of optimism in American politics. "I'll be thinking back to being a young community organizer, pretty much fresh out of school, and feeling as if my faith in America's ability to bring about change in our democracy has been vindicated," Obama said in a White House video previewing his speech.

National News:

Associated Press: Life or death legal journey for airport shooting suspect

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f4809e7f090a488693b81cbaab38bd0f/life-or-death-legal-journey-airport-shooting-suspect>

A legal journey that could mean life or death for the suspect in the Florida airport mass shooting has begun with appointment of a public defender to represent the Iraq war veteran blamed for killing five people and wounding six more. U.S. Magistrate Judge Alicia Valle told Esteban Santiago, 26, at a hearing Monday that the three federal charges lodged against him could mean the death penalty if he is convicted. "We are telling you the maximum penalty allowed by law so that you understand the seriousness of the charges," the judge said. Shackled in a red jumpsuit in the heavily guarded federal courtroom, Santiago answered mostly yes or no to questions, and told the judge he understands the charges, which include committing violence against people at an international airport resulting in death, and two firearms offenses.

World News:

Associated Press: Mournful Iranians attend funeral of former leader Rafsanjani

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/a36cc48b9b4448099c6b09fc14d065d3/iranians-gather-funeral-former-leader-rafsanjani>

Hundreds of thousands of mourners flooded the streets of Tehran on Tuesday, beating their chests and wailing in grief for the late Iranian leader Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who died over the weekend at the age of 82. The crowds filled main thoroughfares of the capital as top government and clerical officials held a funeral service at Tehran University. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei held prayers by Rafsanjani's casket, as other dignitaries knelt before the coffin on which his white cleric's turban was placed, reaching their hands out for one final embrace. Just behind Khamenei was President Hassan Rouhani, whose moderate administration led the recent nuclear negotiations with world powers. Rouhani, who is all but certain to run for re-election in May, is viewed as embodying Rafsanjani's realist vision.

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Camlin Moore

Cell: 803-206-8236

Office: 803-734-8044