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Subject: Morning Clips – Tuesday, April 26, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Associated Press: Haley highlights efforts to help former prisoners find jobs

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=LYtdM97I

Seanna Adcox

Gov. Nikki Haley told prisoners Monday a better life beyond the barbed-wire fencing starts with a legal job, and it's her job to help them find one. "Every one of you deserves better. I don't know what got you in here, but I know you deserve not to come back," she told about 90 inmates at Manning Correctional Institution in Columbia, a pre-release center for men within six months of being released. "I want you to have a job so you've got something that makes you feel productive and worthy of living a good life." Haley was visiting the state Department of Employment and Workforce's "work ready initiative" at Manning. The program is intended to be the link between training for a job and actually landing one.

WIS: Gov. Nikki Haley praises workplace training program for ex-convicts

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31810574/gov-nikki-haley-praises-workplace-training-program-for-ex-convicts>

Allie Spillyards

Gov. Nikki Haley is predicting a win-win with a program to put the state's ex-cons to work and find workers for businesses having trouble finding them. Haley met with convicts at the Manning Correctional to highlight its "Work Ready Initiative." The program prepares offenders for careers to better succeed once they get out. Haley says it teaches life skills like punctuality, a strong work ethic, and how to interview well. It also provides training in jobs that have been tough to fill for many years. "What we have to do is make sure we fill the funnel, and we tell these companies, 'Okay. You're saying you can't get enough. Okay. Guess what. We've got them. And if you'll take a chance on them, then we'll keep your funnel full,' and we'll go from there," Haley said.

ABC Columbia: WATCH: Giving S.C. inmates a fair shot at employment

<http://www.abccolumbia.com/2016/04/25/watch-giving-s-c-inmates-a-fair-shot-at-employment/>

Grace Joyal

Nearly everyone who's behind bars will return to their communities. In South Carolina, about 900 people leave our prisons every month. About 18 months ago, the Department of Employment and Workforce partnered with the Department of Corrections, to make sure these ex-offenders are given a fair shot at success. The "Work Ready Initiative" at Manning Correctional Institute, provides trade and life-skills training to inmates six months before they're set for release.

Note: Monday, Governor Nikki Haley visited inmates before they're released as soon as next week, and as late as June. The governor offered words of encouragement, and listened to the worries these men have about re-entering the world. "I don't want a single inmate leaving any of our prisons without have a specified employment and workforce agent working on getting them a job every day," Governor Haley said.

WLTX: Department Of Corrections Trains Inmates For Work

<http://www.wltx.com/news/local/departments-of-corrections-trains-inmates-for-work/152954974>

Savannah Levins

Almost 11,000 people are released from our state's department of corrections every year. Now, state officials are trying to get those former inmates straight from prison to work. "They're ready for that second chance, but they're nervous about being judged," Governor Nikki Haley said Monday while visiting Manning Correctional to see the prison's training programs in action. In one area, inmates were learning how to lay bricks. It might look like busy work, but Haley says it's preparing them for success. "They're going through 6 months of life skills, resume building, computer skills, brick masonry, all sorts of training," she said. "The goal is that everyone who leaves the fence has a job." A partnership between the Department of Corrections and the Department of Employment and Workforce is training inmates while they're in jail.

WLTX: Haley to Testify Before Congress This Week

<http://www.wltx.com/news/local/haley-to-testify-before-congress-this-week/152956923>

Governor Nikki Haley will travel to Washington D.C. later this week to testify before members of the Homeland Security Committee. She's expected to lay out her concerns for the possible transfer of Guantanamo Bay detainees to South Carolina. There's been talk of housing them at the U.S. Navy brig near Charleston. Haley has been very vocal in her opposition to such a move. U.S. Representative Jeff Duncan is a member of the committee that will hear from the governor. He's also against any plans to bring Gitmo detainees to the state, saying no state should become a terrorist dumping ground, especially South Carolina. Haley will testify before the committee this Thursday.

WCBD: Haley to testify on prisoner transfers from Guantanamo Bay

<http://counton2.com/2016/04/25/haley-to-testify-on-prisoner-transfers-from-gunatanamo-bay/>

Shawn Cabbegestalk

South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley will testify at a hearing on prisoner transfers from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The Homeland Security Hearing is scheduled for this week Thursday, April 28. President Obama plans to close the prison housing detainees in the War on Terror. Several locations inside US Borders are reportedly being considered to house them. One location includes the old Navy Brig in Hanahan. Haley is strongly opposed to bringing any Gitmo prisoners to South Carolina. She'll testify at 10 a.m.

General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: House Ethics Committee meets over 'legal issue'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160426/PC1603/160429561>

Gavin Jackson

The House Ethics Committee meets this morning just to hold a closed door legal briefing and subsequent discussion. Sources earlier told The Post and Courier the hearing would address sexual harassment claims made against Rep. Eddie Southard, R-Moncks Corner, by a female House page. The meeting was scheduled Thursday morning shortly after news broke about the reported incident. Southard said if he resigned, as leaders told him to, he wouldn't need to go before the committee and the story wouldn't leak. He considered stepping down, but word apparently had already spread about his situation. When the House Ethics Committee meets to discuss such a matter it is typically printed on the meeting agenda, for example "In The Matter of Former Speaker of the House Robert W. Harrell, Jr.," earlier this year. It is possible members will discuss the matter in executive session, but

take no action in open session. Regardless, P&C reporters have been told the meeting will be worth attending.

The State: Schools, counties to be shorted in state budget

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article73877547.html>

Cassie Cope

With \$1.2 billion in additional money to spend this year, S.C. lawmakers are preparing to short-change S.C. schools and counties by \$600 million. Meanwhile, S.C. colleges will get \$75 million less than they received before the Great Recession. As a result, S.C. residents likely will get fewer services from local governments and college students will face more tuition hikes.

Post and Courier: Senate bill leaves Capt. Sam's Spit road up in the air

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160425/PC16/160429584>

Bo Petersen

Months-long lobbying efforts and a surprise compromise make the latest legislative bill affecting Capt. Sam's Spit appear decisive. It's anything but that. The state Senate-passed bill would keep a regulatory setback line that restricts how close to a beach you can build from being moved seaward as of the end of 2017. The line could determine whether there's enough legal space to build a controversial road across the narrow neck access to the spit, where Kiawah Partners plans to build 50 homes. Nobody knows yet where that 2017 line would be set on Capt. Sam's as state regulators work on a periodic coastwide update that has in the past moved the line farther away from or closer to specific beaches because of erosion or accretion.

LGBT Laws:

Greenville News : Bright hunts for bathroom bill votes on committee

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/04/25/bright-hunts-bathroom-bill-votes-committee/83505460/>

Tim Smith

Sen. Lee Bright is three votes shy of getting his controversial transgender bathroom bill out of committee heading into the week when lawmakers face a deadline to pass bills to the other chamber. Bright told The Greenville News he has six votes plus the possible vote of another who says he will vote for it if two more Republicans on the 17-member Senate General Committee do. He said he needs nine votes to advance the measure to the Senate floor. "We've come a long way from where we started," the Spartanburg County Republican said.

WIS: Mother of suspended transgender male student wants Horry County Schools to update bathroom policy

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31813991/mother-of-suspended-transgender-male-student-wants-horry-county-schools-to-update-bathroom-policy>

Amy Lipman

Following her transgender son's suspension from Socastee High School for using the boys' bathroom, the student's mother has opted to put him in online school. That means the student, identified as "R," won't get to walk across a stage at the end of his senior year and get his diploma. "That's a huge thing for teenagers to take that walk and he's not going to get to do that," said the mother, identified as Lynne. On Thursday, a letter from the Transgender Law Center was sent to Horry County Schools, warning that the district would face legal action if transgender students were

not allowed to use the restroom that matches the gender they live as daily. Lynne said her son had been using the boys' bathroom at Socastee High for more than three years. Then, in October, he was told to use the girl's bathroom or go to the nurse's office. R felt uncomfortable with both of those options. He was suspended in January for using the boy's bathroom.

Associated Press: More than 50 arrested protesting new North Carolina law

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:45bfa6fa60d841f3a5e2436ef20acfa5>

Gary D. Robertson and Jonathan Drew

More than 50 opponents of North Carolina's new law curtailing protections for LGBT people and limiting public bathroom access for transgender people were arrested at the statehouse Monday night. It wrapped up a feverish day that brought several thousand of impassioned demonstrators for and against the law to the capital city for the opening of the legislature's annual work session. Several hundred vocal critics of the legislation, approved in a special session last month, rallied outside the Legislative Building in the afternoon, then in waves of several dozen people each went inside and parked outside the offices of top legislative leaders for symbolic sit-ins. A final wave entered House Speaker Tim Moore's outer office but refused to leave, leading to 18 arrests. Most were led off quietly, but one woman chanted: "Forward together, not one step back!"

Charlotte Observer: 54 HB2 opponents arrested inside NC Legislative Building

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article73805467.html>

Anne Blythe

Fifty-four protesters against House Bill 2 were arrested inside the Legislative Building downtown Monday evening, and protests continued inside even after the North Carolina House and Senate opened their 2016 regular session and then promptly adjourned. The protesters, who had gathered in a crowd of hundreds on Bicentennial Plaza south of the building, were allowed late in the afternoon to enter in groups of 100 to continue their protest inside.

MOX News:

McClatchy DC: SC delegation, Putin agree: Obama's MOX shutdown would breach treaty

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/article73812692.html>

Vera Bergengruen

The Obama administration's plan to pull the plug on an unfinished, \$5-billion nuclear plant has brought together some unlikely allies – the South Carolina congressional delegation and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The mixed oxide (MOX) facility in Aiken, S.C., is part of a 2000 nonproliferation agreement with Russia that calls for the two countries to dispose of 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium. After years of cost overruns and chronic delays, the Obama administration effectively scrapped the S.C. project in its 2017 budget in favor of a cheaper, faster alternative called downblending. "This is not what we agreed on," Putin said earlier this month, according to a translation provided by the Kremlin. Putin said the decision was the reason he did not attend a major nuclear summit in Washington, D.C., a few weeks ago. "Russia fulfilled its obligations in this regard and built these facilities, but our American partners did not."

Note: Members of the South Carolina delegation, who have often framed opposition to cutting the project's funding in terms of the federal government breaking its promise to their state, piled on. "We find it unfortunate that DOE's short-sighted efforts to kill MOX have allowed President Putin – who is no friend of the United States and our foreign policy objectives – to claim the high ground about living up to international agreements," South Carolina Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott wrote in a letter to Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz.

SC Political News:

The State: Heated tone marks review of SC chief justice candidate Beatty

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article73851447.html#storylink=apmobile>

John Monk

Associate Justice Don Beatty's interview Monday with a screening committee for the S.C. chief justice post was marked by occasional testy exchanges and his statements about temperament and approach to the post. At the end, Beatty – who during the hearing at times had grown heated as he discussed statements attributed to him at a 2013 prosecutors' meeting – said he was sorry for being feisty at times. "I would have to apologize for my combative nature when it comes to this solicitor thing," Beatty told the nine members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission. "It's just been a matter that really has bothered me since it occurred. "If I've offended any of you with my tone or any comment that I might have made, please forgive me," he continued. "I'm no shrinking violet. But when attacked, I do respond."

SC Elections:

The State: UPDATE: SLED to investigate damaged campaign signs for SC sheriff candidate

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article73665847.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

A candidate for Richland County sheriff said several of his campaign signs have been cut and damaged, and some defaced with racial slurs. James Flowers, a former State Law Enforcement Division Agent who's running in the Democratic primary against incumbent Sheriff Leon Lott, said in a news release some signs have been defaced over the past month in the northeast part of the county. Richland County Sheriff's Department public liaison Curtis Jenkins said the investigation has been turned over to SLED because Flowers is running for sheriff.

Opinion/Editorial:

Post and Courier: End quotas for traffic tickets

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160426/160429570/end-quotas-for-traffic-tickets>

Editorial

Ticket quotas should have no place in police departments. They set arbitrary requirements for officers, and signal the public that police are out to get them. An S.C. House bill introduced by Rep. Justin Bamberg, D-Bamberg, would stop the unpopular practice — and would protect whistle-blowers who file complaints against agencies where quotas are required. The problem is that, even if Rep. Bamberg's bill becomes law, some police departments have unwritten rules about quotas: Officers are expected to give out three citations — or four, or 10 — during each shift. And if they don't, their superior officers take note. So even in some departments where there are no formal quotas and no officer is written up for failing to write enough citations, officers are pressured to do just that — write citations.

Note: Fortunately, Rep. Bamberg believes that his bill has broad support. It won the support of the House Judiciary Committee. Both chambers of the General Assembly at large should pass the bill, and Gov. Nikki Haley should sign it. That would send a signal to the public that the police are pulling them over for the right reasons, not to fill money-raising quotas.

South Carolina News:

WACH: Stricter regulations for food assistance in SC to start in coming months

<http://wach.com/news/local/stricter-regulations-for-food-assistance-in-sc-to-start-in-coming-months>

Melanie Barden

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps, will be seeing stricter regulations in the coming months. Under federal guidelines, people under the age of 49, without a job, and without a minor child should not receive food stamp benefits. However, if a state's unemployment rate is high, they are able to ask the government to waive those restrictions. This year, Governor Haley has chosen not to waive them, meaning those meeting the age limit without a job or children will no longer be eligible for food assistance.

Associated Press: Spearman announces \$770K in summer reading camp grants

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid= SX2NFa0e

SC State Wire

The South Carolina Department of Education has announced that 14 school districts and organizations will receive \$700,000 through the Summer Reading Camp Community Partnership Grant. State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman said in a news release Monday that the grant is meant to expand existing summer reading camps that help stop summer reading loss. The camps provide elementary school students who are significantly below grade-level reading proficiency with the opportunity to receive intensive instruction. Grant sites strategize ways to increase consistent student attendance.

Post and Courier: With Joint Base Charleston closures unlikely this year, stakeholders stay vigilant

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160425/PC1603/160429576>

Emma Dumain

The confluence of political infighting, a looming presidential election and disagreement over the size of U.S. troop strength makes it unlikely Congress will agree this year to another round of military base closures. That's good news for Joint Base Charleston — for now. South Carolina stakeholders who monitor congressional chatter related to Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, will remain vigilant, especially throughout the spring season. The House and Senate Armed Services committees, which could authorize a BRAC, are starting to move on their respective bills to renew Department of Defense programs for the upcoming fiscal year. The House panel will consider its fiscal 2017 National Defense Authorization Act on Wednesday.

Post and Courier: S.C. gas prices rise on report showing increased fuel demand

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160425/PC05/160429585>

Warren L. Wise

A report showing increased year-over-year demand for gasoline led to a jump in prices at the pump across South Carolina during the past week. The average price per gallon now stands at \$1.92, after rising 3.1 cents last week in the Palmetto State, according to gas price service GasBuddy. Motor club AAA's Daily Fuel Gauge Report puts the price a penny higher. That's still about 33 cents a gallon lower than this time last year. Nationally, the price jumped 2.4 cents per gallon to an average price of \$2.14, according to both gas price services Monday. That's about 39 cents less than the same day one year ago.

Island Packet : S.C. gas prices jump to highest point this year

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/state/south-carolina/article73792817.html>

Mandy Matney

Gasoline prices are on the rise in South Carolina, with Monday's average jumping to the highest point

so far this year. According to GasBuddy.com, the average price of gasoline jumped 3.5 cents in the last week in South Carolina to \$1.93 per gallon. The latest jump pushed prices to the highest point of 2016 across the state, but still down 32 cents from this week last year, according to GasBuddy. Gas prices have been climbing in South Carolina every week since late February, when the average price was \$1.49.

Local News:

Index-Journal: Davis joins sheriffs statewide in signing domestic violence pledge

<http://www.indexjournal.com/news/Davis-joins-sheriffs-statewide-in-signing-domestic-violence-pledge-16282309>

Damian Dominguez

Lakelands sheriffs have joined with others from across the state to address domestic violence. Sheriff Tony Davis added his name to the list of 46 on April 14, pledging to work with the state in adopting uniform policies and procedures on how to handle domestic violence cases. Gov. Nikki Haley's Domestic Violence Task Force has laid the groundwork for sheriff's offices to make changes over three years to better handle domestic violence. In the first year's initiatives, sheriff's offices have pledged to adopt formal policies to file incident reports on every call, have supervisory oversight on the reports and provide officers with reference guides to help them navigate the intricacies of domestic violence laws, among other things.

Sun News: Policy change makes it harder for retired teachers to 'double-dip'

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/education/article73864562.html>

Claire Byun

Future at-will employees of Horry County Schools now have a few more hurdles before they can start work. The Board of Education unanimously approved changes to the at-will policy during their regular meeting Monday. Now, employees who also receive retirement from the state must have more solid justifications for their work with Horry schools. At-will employees are people who have retired under the state's Teacher and Employee Retention Initiative (TERI) program and receive retirement, who are then hired again by a school district. Critics of TERI say it allows employees to "double dip:" at-will employees receive a pension and a paycheck from whatever district they're employed. The policy change stems from a need for transparency, said John Poston, District 8 representative.

The Herald: Rock Hill schools propose spending more for transportation, new hires

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/education/article73829527.html>

Jennifer Becknell

School district leaders propose spending \$200,000 for bus transportation to choice schools and additional teaching positions for growth, choice programs and for those students who need extra help. The preliminary spending proposals were among budget details presented to Rock Hill school board members Monday, during a workshop on the 2016-17 operating budget. District leaders say budget numbers won't be complete until the General Assembly approves school revenue. But Elaine Bilton, chief financial officer, said leaders expect more revenue.

The State: City of West Columbia creates internet purchase exchange zone

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article73828367.html>

Noah Feit

The City of West Columbia has created an Internet Purchase Exchange Zone for members of the public to use as a meeting place to exchange goods purchased on the internet. Located in the City of

West Columbia parking lot at 200 N. 12th Street, the exchange location is available for exchanges from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. The spot was chosen for its convenient location and is under video monitoring. Mayor Bobby Horton and the West Columbia City Council identified it as an opportunity to help citizens while finalizing transactions that began online.

The State: Two mega travel centers planned for I-77 and Bluff Road

<http://www.thestate.com/news/business/article73828642.html>

Jeff Wilkinson

The intersection of Bluff Road and Interstate 77 is about to go truckin' in a big way. National truck stop giants Love's Travel Stop and TravelCenters of America/Petro are building competing centers on the north side of I-77. They include restaurants, travel stores, mechanical shops and acres of truck parking. But some neighbors and others are concerned about the impact on traffic in the area and nearby wetlands. "There were concerns and still are," Todd Beasley, a middle school science teacher at nearby Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, said in an email to The State.

Post and Courier: City may push toll, sales tax for I-526 project

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160425/PC16/160429623>

Diane Knich

It's going to be a pivotal week for the completion of Interstate 526 across Johns and James islands, one that could either sound the project's death knell or jump-start it with a toll road plan. Charleston City Council on Tuesday will vote on a resolution to support asking for eight more months to develop a plan to cover the project's more than \$300-million shortfall. And that plan could include a toll road and a sales tax increase.

Aiken Standard: Kevin Kisner suspended by Palmetto Golf Club

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160424/AIK0301/160429728>

Aiken's Kevin Kisner confirmed on Twitter Sunday that he had been suspended by Palmetto Golf Club because of a video shot at the club for VICE Sports featuring the PGA Tour pro. Kisner tweeted Sunday morning that he was beginning his preparations for the Wells Fargo Championship and The PLAYERS Championship at Sage Valley Golf Club. Kisner, a member at Palmetto, then confirmed to GolfWRX's Ben Alberstadt that he and other members who appeared in the video, titled "Beer, Bets, and Golf Cart Races," were suspended by the club. In the tweet, Kisner said that it was "pretty comical." The length of the suspension is unclear.

Beaufort Gazette: Beaufort author Pat Conroy to be celebrated at public memorial event

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article73722597.html>

Stephen Fastenau

Fans and friends of late Beaufort author Pat Conroy will have another chance to say goodbye next month. Conroy will be celebrated with a public memorial at 5 p.m. May 14 in Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park. Conroy's wife, Cassandra King, as well as friends and fellow writers Bernie Schein, Ellen Malphrus, Patti Callahan Henry, John Warley and historian Walter Edgar are expected to attend and participate. Singer Marlena Smalls will perform some of Conroy's favorite songs. Conroy died March 4 at age 70 following a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. Planning for the public memorial began about the time of his funeral.

National News:

Charlotte Observer: Federal judge upholds law requiring voter ID in NC elections

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article73858107.html>

Anne Blythe

A federal judge has upheld North Carolina's voter ID law in a ruling posted Monday evening. U.S. District Judge Thomas Schroeder issued a 485-page ruling dismissing all claims in the challenge to the state's sweeping 2013 election law overhaul. Schroeder, a George W. Bush appointee, also upheld portions of the 2013 law that reduced the number of days people could vote early, eliminated same-day registration and voting and prohibited people from casting a ballot outside their precinct. The decision comes nearly three months after a trial on the ID portion of the law.

Associated Press: US to states: Make it easier for ex-prisoners to obtain IDs

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f89bd5499aba4aafa9da7d95635e7ab1/us-states-make-it-easier-prisoners-obtains-ids>

Eric Tucker

States should make it easier for convicted felons to obtain state-issued identification after they get out of prison, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said Monday in announcing a set of measures aimed at helping smooth the return to society for the hundreds of thousands of inmates released each year. The announcement is part of a broader movement to undo criminal justice policies that have meted out exceptionally long sentences for drug offenders, caused prison populations to balloon and, advocates say, created unnecessary barriers for ex-convicts looking to rebuild their lives. It amplifies an ongoing Justice Department push to rethink harsh drug sentences and to ensure alternatives to prison for certain nonviolent defendants, an effort known as "Smart on Crime." "The long-term impact of a criminal record prevents many people from obtaining employment, housing, higher education and credit — and these barriers affect returning individuals even if they have turned their lives around and are unlikely to reoffend," the department said in a seven-page policy statement titled "Roadmap to Re-entry."

Associated Press: Trump, Clinton aim for sweeps of Northeastern primaries

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:517790f1959a46e180e2dec2a3c65893>

Julie Pace and Catherine Lucey

Donald Trump is aiming for a sweep of all five Northeastern states holding primaries Tuesday, including Pennsylvania, leaving his rivals pinning their hopes of stopping the Republican front-runner on a fragile coordination strategy in the next rounds of voting. For Democratic leader Hillary Clinton, wins in most of Tuesday's contests would leave little doubt that she'll be her party's nominee. Rival Bernie Sanders' team has sent mixed signals about his standing in the race, with one top adviser suggesting a tough night would push the Vermont senator to reassess his bid and another vowing to fight "all the way to the convention."

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