

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>
To:
Date: 4/6/2016 8:14:18 AM
Subject: Morning Clips – Wednesday, April 6, 2016

Morning Clips – Wednesday, April 6, 2016

Governor Nikki Haley News:

USA Today: Cellphones are too dangerous for prison: Nikki Haley and Ajit Pai

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2016/04/05/nikki-haley-ajit-pai-fcc-contraband-cellphones-prison-criminals-crime-behind-bars-fcc-column/82649738/>

Nikki Haley and Ajit Pai

Contraband cellphones are now flooding into our nation's jails and prisons. They are flown into institutions via drones. They are thrown over prison fences stuffed into everything from footballs to dead cats. They are smuggled into facilities inside everything from underwear to legal papers. They are being used to run drug operations, direct gang activity and victimize innocent members of the public. In South Carolina alone, corrections officials confiscated over 4,000 contraband cellphones and related accessories in 2015. The problem reaches far beyond the Palmetto State. For example, one Georgia woman received a text demanding \$250 from inmates in the same prison as her fiancé. When she couldn't gather the money, she was texted an image of him with burns, broken fingers and the word "RAT" carved into his forehead. So on Wednesday we will be holding a field hearing on contraband cellphones in Columbia, S.C. We are pleased that Capt. Johnson will be there to tell his story. We hope this field hearing will help us find solutions for law enforcement and build the foundation for a strong FCC response. We need to make sure that the long arm of the law reaches behind prison walls. And we intend to do everything we can to ensure that happens.

Post and Courier: Gov. Nikki Haley backs plutonium removal from Savannah River Site, reasserts MOX lawsuit

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160405/PC16/160409689>

Derrek Asberry

Gov. Nikki Haley is applauding the federal government's plans to remove six metric tons of plutonium from the Savannah River Site in Aiken, but still expects to cash in on the up to \$100 million owed to South Carolina over a missed milestone at the site's MOX facility. The six metric tons of plutonium is not part of 34 metric tons outlined in the controversial MOX agreement. However, the plutonium stockpiles in both cases could be used to make weapons, which is why the federal government wants to dispose of the material. In Tuesday's federal register, plans were announced to use facilities at SRS to dilute the plutonium and dispose of it at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

Note: In a statement from Haley on Tuesday, the governor said the plutonium removal is a "big win for South Carolina, but we will continue to watch this process carefully, as the Department of Energy has not lived up to promises made in the past."

Note: Her comments are based on another plutonium issue impacting South Carolina: the unfinished SRS Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility. The facility is part of the nation's MOX program, which is designed to meet an agreement with Russia by converting 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium into commercial nuclear fuel. Haley recently reminded Moniz that South Carolina is suing the Department of Energy and others for missing a deadline at the MOX plant.

Note: "We will not back down from our lawsuit until the DOE pays the \$1 million a day fine they are

required to under federal law," Haley said.

General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: 'Let the Hunger Games begin'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160406/PC1603/160409645/1031/palmetto-sunrise-x2018-let-the-hunger-games-begin-x2019>

Gavin Jackson

State Senate Republicans will select from their tributes who will be the party's next Senate leader today. The election for a new Senate majority leader comes a day after Gaffney Republican Sen. Harvey Peeler announced his resignation from the post after more than a decade of wrangling votes and speaking for Senate Republicans. "I asked for someone else to take the wheel of the GOP Caucus today," Peeler said Tuesday evening on Twitter. "Now I will be a stronger and even more effective Senator." Peeler did not say who that "someone" was nor did he endorse a successor after his surprise announcement Tuesday..... The Senate will continue to debate ethics reform and could even approve the bill--which would move ethics oversight from House and Senate committees to an independent panel--today, Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, said..... This morning Haley will tour flood damaged homes in Sumter and rebuilding efforts underway thanks to money raised from the One SC Fund she launched in November. Money raised by the fund has provided financial assistance to nonprofit organizations assisting in recovery efforts in effected counties. Later, Haley will take part in a Federal Communications Commission field hearing in Columbia to tackle contraband cell phones in prisons. Haley and FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai authored an op-ed piece in USA Today on the issue.

Post and Courier: Veteran lawmaker calls on senators to pass bill creating independent panel for Statehouse investigations

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160406/PC1603/160409647>

Maya T. Prabhu

Amid an ongoing controversy between the S.C. attorney general and a special prosecutor assigned to a Statehouse corruption probe, a veteran legislator urged senators to pass a bill that creates a third-party panel to investigate lawmakers accused of wrongdoing. Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, took the Senate floor Tuesday and said it was time for his fellow lawmakers to pass a bill that would move ethics oversight to an outside body, while also requiring that elected officials disclose private income sources. Currently, lawmakers police themselves through ethics committees in the House and Senate.

Note: Martin's Senate floor plea comes a day after Gov. Nikki Haley used social media to push lawmakers to approve the bill as is.

Morning News: SC House speaker endorses Jay Jordan, sets sights on final roads bill

http://www.scnw.com/news/local/article_aee9482e-fb95-11e5-bce2-ff53fd0ce4e3.html

Joshua Lloyd

At a campaign event supporting Florence Republican Rep. Jay Jordan on Tuesday evening, South Carolina House Speaker Jay Lucas said the House will drive home a roads repair bill when it resumes session next week. After nearly a year of debate, the state Senate passed a bill last month that would use \$400 million annually from the general fund to cover road repairs in South Carolina. Lucas, who previously called the Senate's plan deceptive and irresponsible, said the debate isn't over yet and the House has more to consider before taking another vote.

Note: The decision to delay the House vote has caused more tension in an already contentious debate, giving rise to concerns from Gov. Nikki Haley, who said the roads bill will "die again" if the

House doesn't accept the Senate plan. In a letter to Haley last month, Lucas said the House will either agree to the Senate bill or pass an amendment to change the way the Department of Transportation is run. The House passed its own road funding plan last April that would raise the gas tax – currently third lowest in the nation.

Associated Press: Senate panel approves chance to forgive SC State's loans

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=L077xFFd

SC State Wire

A Senate committee has approved a plan that would allow South Carolina State University to pay \$3 million to forgive more than \$15 million worth of loans that kept the school from closing. The Finance Committee approved the proposal on a 13-6 vote Tuesday. The bill would have the state forgive \$1 million of the loan for each year that the university pays a maximum \$355,000 payment and does not run a deficit. It now moves to the Senate floor. The school received two loans worth close to \$18 million after budget problems threatened its accreditation. State Sen. Tom Davis opposed the plan. The Beaufort Republican says it is too generous and turns what was supposed to be loans into grants.

Greenville News: Senate gives key approval to police dash cam bill

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/04/06/senate-gives-key-approval-police-dash-cam-bill/82657192/>

Tim Smith

The Senate has given key approval to legislation that provides a process for releasing dash cam videos of police shootings and protects the last utterances of victims in 911 calls. The Senate on Tuesday voted 40-0 to give the bill second reading. Under the bill, law enforcement dash camera videos of officer shootings would be considered public and available under the state Freedom of Information Act but police and prosecutors could ask a circuit judge to withhold their release if there is "clear and convincing" evidence the video falls under one of several exemptions, such as depriving a defendant the right to a fair trial, interfering with a prospective law enforcement action or constituting an unreasonable invasion of personal privacy.

Wilson-Pascoe Dispute:

The State: Attorney General Wilson silent on top aide's smear effort

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article70162807.html#storylink=apmobile>

John Monk

A day after disclosures that one of Attorney General Alan Wilson's top aides sent an email to the S.C. Republican Party in which the aide proposed to use the party to initiate a smear campaign against Wilson's special prosecutor, Wilson remained silent. But some observers say Wilson should, at the least, disassociate himself from an effort by aide Adam Piper to enlist the Republican Party in trying to destroy the reputation of special prosecutor David Pascoe. Others, saying Piper's actions interfere with an ongoing investigation, think Wilson should discipline or fire Piper to show the attorney general's office is unbiased.

Post and Courier: Matt Moore may be a party man, but he's no political hack

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160406/PC16/160409684>

Brian Hicks

The Republican National Committee probably needs to move Matt Moore to the top of its short list. For some time now, the South Carolina GOP chair has been mentioned as a possible replacement

for Reince Priebus, who will step down from the RNC chairmanship next year. And Moore has proven repeatedly that he's just what a party in crisis needs. Because right now, Matt Moore is the only person acting like an adult in Columbia. The Post and Courier obtained texts and emails this week that show tremendous pressure on Moore to wade into this fight between Solicitor David Pascoe and Attorney General Alan Wilson.

Gov. Pat McCrory News:

The Herald: NC's LGBT controversy may affect economic development in York County

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/business/article70138652.html>

Don Worthington

Future economic development in York, Chester and Lancaster counties could be affected if companies cross Charlotte off their lists of possible expansion sites in the wake of a new North Carolina law that limits legal protections for LGBT individuals, South Carolina economic development officials say. Efforts in York, Chester and Lancaster counties could be affected if the companies avoid the Charlotte region in its entirety, not considering what's different in South Carolina. On Tuesday, PayPal announced it is scrapping plans for a Charlotte facility that would have employed 400 people because the state legislature overturned a Charlotte City Council nondiscrimination ordinance that would have allowed transgender people to use the restroom corresponding to the gender with which they identify. That decision could have a small impact on York County where those employees might have located. Companies and governments across the country have opposed North Carolina's action. Major companies with a Charlotte presence, such as Bank of America and American Airlines, have expressed concerns over the law.

Note: David Swenson, economic development director for York County, said it is possible the region could see an increase in interest. "We need to maximize what we can offer," he said. Businesses considering the Charlotte regional market have both North Carolina and South Carolina to consider, Swenson said, and they "have the freedom to choose an environment that might be better for them."

The Herald (Editorial): N.C.'s 'restroom' law is unjustified

<http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/editorials/article70070027.html>

Let's define North Carolina's so-called "restroom" legislation as what it really is: a bill to allow continued discrimination throughout the state against the LGBT community. And that's bad news not only for North Carolina but also the entire region. The bill, which was adopted last week during a special legislative session and then signed into law by Republican Gov. Pat McCrory, was a response to an ordinance passed by the city of Charlotte that banned unequal treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The new state law not only squelches Charlotte's anti-discrimination efforts but also forbids any other local government in the state from adopting similar measures. Even if state lawmakers are not inclined to enact legal protections for LGBT residents, they shouldn't stand in the way of counties, municipalities, school boards and other local governments that want to do so. We hope McCrory comes to regret signing a bill that so clearly was designed primarily to mollify his political base during an election year.

SC Agency News:

Associated Press: Audit: DOT should better prioritize state's road needs

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=lnD0DPJq

Seanna Adcox

South Carolina's Department of Transportation should better prioritize the state's roadwork needs, list

them in a way that's understandable and time construction to reduce repair costs, the Legislative Audit Council said in a report released Tuesday. The council's long-awaited audit, requested by legislators, found the state's highway system has deteriorated significantly since 2008, even as the DOT added 760 miles of lanes. While that widened congested roads, it added to maintenance costs. The report comes amid the Legislature's debate over how to fix South Carolina's crumbling roadways. Note: Gov. Nikki Haley continued pressuring House leaders on Monday to agree to the road-funding plan the Senate passed last month. It would allow Haley to appoint all commissioners. "It comes as no surprise to anyone who has been watching that our transportation system is broken," said her spokeswoman, Chaney Adams. "We have an opportunity to fix this problem."

Post and Courier: Report finds state Transportation Department needs better structure, more money
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160405/PC1603/160409682>

Gavin Jackson

The General Assembly's investigative arm found no mismanagement of the cash-strapped state Department of Transportation but says the current agency structure creates "confusion" and should be changed so that there's better use of the pot of cash for roads. The Legislative Audit Council's exhaustive report Tuesday detailed DOT's need for more money to fix the state's increasingly poor road conditions and also to change the governing structure of the agency — concerns that lawmakers and other state officials are debating to overhaul. While the report proposes several funding alternatives to supplement the state's 16.75-cent per gallon gas tax, no current legislation incorporates any of the alternative recommendations, including a surcharge on insurance premiums, rental car fees, charges on vehicle miles traveled and fees on alternative fuel or electric vehicles.

Greenville News: LAC report finds problems aplenty at DOT

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/04/05/lac-report-finds-problems-aplenty-dot/82664296/>

Tim Smith

The Legislature's watchdog agency issued a lengthy and critical report on the state's highway agency Tuesday, finding fault with the way priorities are set, its governance structure and the way road dollars are spent. But the long-awaited audit uncovered no acts of fraud or wrongdoing by the state Department of Transportation and concluded that costs by the agency are comparable to costs by transportation agencies in neighboring states. The 360-page audit also reported what many South Carolina motorists already know, that the state's roads have been in decline for many years even as projects added mileage to the system with revenues that have failed to keep pace with inflation. And all of that is being governed in a confusing system with two masters, the governor and the Legislature, the Legislative Audit Council reported.

Note: "It comes as no surprise to anyone who has been watching that our transportation system is broken in South Carolina — it's why we've been fighting for real reform to the DOT for years," said Chaney Adams, a spokeswoman for Gov. Nikki Haley. "We have an opportunity to fix this problem — and ultimately our roads — this year, but only if the House concurs with the Senate reform plan, and the governor will continue to press House Members to do just that."

SC Elections:

The State: Richland elections office will not get extra money

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article70168962.html#storylink=apmobile>

Sarah Ellis

The Richland County Voter Registration and Elections office will not get any additional funding after

telling county leaders it will run a deficit of more than \$1 million before July. County Council split evenly Tuesday night on whether to grant \$229,000 to the elections office to go toward required maintenance and licensing fees for voting equipment along with machine batteries, printers, phones and other supplies elections director Samuel Selph has said his office needs. In a tie on the final vote on the matter, the request was denied.

Independent Mail: Gambrell wins GOP runoff for Anderson-area Senate seat

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/gambrell-wins-gop-runoff-for-anderson-area-senate-seat-2fc60aea-b239-7c19-e053-0100007fd3a8-374696761.html>

Kirk Brown

State Rep. Mike Gambrell of Honea Path won the South Carolina Senate District 4 Republican runoff Tuesday, handily defeating Williamston Town Councilman Rockey Burgess. Based on unofficial results, Gambrell received 2,591 votes, or 58 percent, to 1,908 votes, or 42 percent, for Burgess. About 8 percent of the registered voters in the district voted in the runoff, roughly the same turnout as the March 22 primary. District 4 covers eastern and southern Anderson County, part of Abbeville County and the western edge of Greenwood County. Gambrell is not expected to face any opposition in a May 17 special election to fill the final months of Sen. Billy O'Dell's term. O'Dell died in January.

Savannah Morning News : Lowcountry woman to run for Clyburn's seat

<http://savannahnow.com/hardeeville/2016-04-06/lowcountry-woman-run-clyburns-seat#>

Scott Thompson

Bluffton Republican Laura Sterling filed to run against Democratic U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn for his 6th Congressional District seat. Meanwhile, Angela McCall-Tanner, the wife of Beaufort County Sheriff P. J. Tanner, will challenge 14th Judicial Circuit Solicitor Duffie Stone in the June 14 Republican primary. Sterling said recently a change is needed in Washington, D.C., and she will try to bring it by unseating Clyburn, who has filed to run for a 13th term. Sterling said she will run primarily on a platform to abolish the federal income tax.

Opinion/Editorial:

Post and Courier: Give ethics reform overdue approval

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160406/PC1002/160409661>

Editorial

Ethics reform has supposedly been on the Legislature's priority agenda for the last three years, but each year legislation has died in the state Senate. An ethics reform bill that would provide for independent investigation of legislative ethics complaints and greater disclosure of income sources for lawmakers could be considered as early as today. The Senate should approve it. The bill isn't as strong as the plan recommended by Gov. Nikki Haley's ethics review panel or the bill submitted by Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin, R-Pickens.

But it represents a significant improvement over the current ethics law, and it appears to have the benefit of broad support in the Senate.

Note: Gov. Haley agrees that amending the bill will only jeopardize its chances of approval. Failure to pass ethics reform legislation is not an option that the Senate should entertain after falling short so many times. The House has approved ethics reform legislation repeatedly, including by an overwhelming margin last year, only to see the Senate drop the ball.

Note: "Legislators are either for ethics or they are not," is how Gov. Haley put it.

The Herald: Herald editorial: York County's difficult task of stemming violence

<http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/editorials/article70199307.html>

Editorial

York County was rocked by the violent deaths of two teenagers over the weekend. But again, residents also were confronted with a familiar sense of helplessness, the realization that there is no obvious solution for preventing these senseless deaths. While there are no simple answers to ending the violence, a combination of things might help reduce it. Community cooperation with police is among the most crucial – not only in solving crimes but also in preventing them in the first place. We hear all too often that more guns make people safer. That wasn't the case in the deaths of Thorne and Dixon. They both would be alive today if not for the casual and careless use of guns

Aiken Standard: Masters provides economic boost to Aiken

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160406/AIK0201/160409754>

Editorial

Economically, this is the shot in the arm Aiken has been waiting all winter for. We sampled a bit of a taste with the Triple Crown kicking off the spring equestrian season. And now it's Masters Week. Aiken saw an economic boost of about 35 percent across the board from the Triple Crown in March. That was just the dress rehearsal. Accommodations tax figures show a near 100 percent spike in dollars spent in Aiken, based on May's numbers, which reflect dollars spent during April. Hotels have been booked for the week as visitors converge on the CSRA. The Aiken Municipal Airport is busier than any other week, handling up to 50 incoming flights a day. And it's just getting started.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press : FCC official participates in SC hearing on prison cellphones

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:6a4e2a7b7de74b3caa09cab4986bc441>

Meg Kinnard

Corrections officials say contraband cellphones are among the top security threats within prisons, and federal officials are in South Carolina to learn more about the problem. Federal Communications Commissioner Ajit Pai is participating Wednesday in a field hearing in Columbia to hear from officials about the issue. South Carolina Corrections Department Director Bryan Stirling and his predecessors have emphasized the danger smuggled cellphones present within prison. The state has sought permission to jam cellular signals at prisons, but that request has stalled before the FCC.

Associated Press: AAA Carolinas urging drivers to avoid distractions

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=aXRPRL6j

SC State Wire

April is the month when drivers are being urged to pay attention to their driving and avoid distractions while behind the wheel. Dave Parsons, president and CEO of AAA Carolinas, says that while progress is being made, distracted driving still plays a big role in traffic accidents and deaths. That's why the Charlotte-based motor club is urging drivers to avoid other activities during Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Distractions include such things as using a cell phone, eating and doing personal grooming and using GPS devices while driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that, during 2014, distracted driving was responsible for crashes that caused almost 3,200 deaths and about 430,000 injuries nationwide.

Post and Courier: Judge's patience 'running out' as feds' decision on death penalty for Dylann Roof looms

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160405/PC16/160409747>

Andrew Knapp

A judge on Tuesday said his patience was wearing thin as the federal government still has not decided whether to pursue the death penalty against Dylann Roof, the man accused of the deadly mass shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. After the case went through a review process at the Department of Justice that typically takes 90 days, it now sits on Attorney General Loretta Lynch's desk, a prosecutor told U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel. But without final word from Lynch, Gergel said he was forced to approve a fourth continuance, or delay. He does plan to set a trial date this summer for Joey Meek, the friend accused of not alerting authorities of Roof's plot before the June 17 attack that killed nine black parishioners.

Post and Courier: Fighting the flood; NOAA specialist talks steps, strategies to battle sea rise

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160405/PC16/160409679>

Bo Petersen

A new sea rise report comes out of every few weeks, it seems — including an alarming recent study indicating seas might rise six feet by the century's end — twice as high as previously predicted. It makes for a worrisome future for the flood prone Lowcountry. On Thursday, a federal coastal hazards specialist tries to sort it out. Doug Marcy, of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office for Coastal Management in North Charleston, is scheduled to speak to the Robert Luntz Group of the state chapter of the Sierra Club on Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Medical University of South Carolina's Baruch Auditorium, 284 Calhoun St. The meeting is open to the public and free, said Laura Moses, of the Robert Luntz group.

Associated Press: Comcast customer center in SC means 550 new jobs

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=B60iFnpw

SC State Wire

Comcast is building a new customer support center in North Charleston that will mean more than 550 new jobs for the area. Comcast announced on Tuesday that it is investing more than \$21 million in the new facility that will provide support for telephone, internet and X1 entertainment system customers. The company says the 80,000-square-foot facility should be operational by the second half of this year. It's the second customer service center Comcast will operate in the Charleston area. About 250 workers are employed at a center that opened early last year.

Independent Mail: Oconee County company expanding; 26 new jobs projected

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/oconee-county-company-expanding-26-new-jobs-projected-2fc2966c-e51e-3e7d-e053-0100007f780a-374695571.html>

Ray Chandler

An Oconee County company is one step closer to what county officials describe as a significant expansion. The Oconee County Council on Tuesday voted 4-0 to approve on second reading a fee-in-lieu-of-taxes incentive for an expansion of Nason, a company with operations off S.C. 11. Council member Reg Dexter was absent for Tuesday's vote. According to Richard Blackwell, county economic development director, with the expansion, previously code-named Project Switch by county officials, the company plans to invest about \$2.5 million to expand its plant footprint by 30,000 square feet, of which 20,000 square feet will be manufacturing space. The expansion will mean the creation of an estimated 26 new jobs, Blackwell said.

The Herald: Polish tire supplier to open first U.S. facility in Lancaster

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/business/article70192427.html>

Don Worthington

MAKROchem, a supplier of carbon black for the rubber and tire industry, is investing \$7.5 million in its first U.S. production facility, creating 20 jobs in Lancaster. MAKROchem, headquartered in Lublin, Poland, southwest of Warsaw, is a leading supplier of carbon black, a reinforcing filler in tires and other rubber products. With more than 20 years of commercial experience, the company also provides comprehensive logistics services, including transfer, warehousing and delivery. The company has bought a building at 2013 W. Meeting St. The 183,000-square-foot facility is expected to be fully operational this year, with hiring starting in May.

Area Development: Germany-Based Schaeffler Group USA Plans \$36.5 Million Expansion In Fort Mill, South Carolina

<http://www.areadevelopment.com/newsitems/4-5-2016/schaeffler-group-usa-fort-mill-south-carolina349031.shtml>

Schaeffler Group USA Inc. continues to expand its operations in Fort Mill, with an additional \$36.5 million investment that will create 105 new jobs in York County, South Carolina. The Fort Mill campus will be expanded to include an additional corporate building, expansion of one of the company's two manufacturing plants and a reworked plant entrance to accommodate the growth and increase in traffic. With completion of the expansion scheduled for fall 2017, hiring for the new positions is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2017.

Note: "Our growth has been achieved by supplying state-of-the-art technological innovations that are designed and manufactured by our outstanding employees. We are grateful to Governor Nikki Haley and the State of South Carolina for their enduring support of our operations as we continue our long and mutually rewarding partnership," he added.

Local News:

Associated Press: Aiken denies wrongdoing after couple sues over traffic stop

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ISjCel9g

SC State Wire

Aiken police say there was nothing improper about a traffic stop that two South Carolina residents say included an illegal cavity search in broad daylight. The city issued a statement Tuesday denying allegations against its public safety department by Lakeya Hicks and Elijah Pontoon, who contend in a pending federal lawsuit that their civil rights were violated during an October 2014 stop. Pontoon and Hicks say they were searched without consent. In addition to a cavity search, the complaint says a female officer exposed Hicks' breasts on the side of the road. Aiken police say the stop was part of an ongoing drug investigation and was prompted by a tip from an informant. They also say a body cavity search was never conducted, nor were private body parts ever exposed.

Aiken Standard: Officials enact policy changes amid allegations against Aiken police officers

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160405/AIK0101/160409685>

Maayan Schechter

Aiken city officials hope community members, particularly Aiken's minority community, feel a sense of openness and transparency within city government after officials enacted three new policy changes that include racial sensitivity training for all city staff. On Monday, Aiken leaders who included Aiken Mayor Rick Osbon and City Manager John Klimm sat down with the Aiken Standard to lay out three long-term policy changes amid heavy allegations against four of the City's police officers in a federal lawsuit that has garnered nationwide attention. The policies were agreed upon by Aiken City Council members, City staff and members of the community.

Beaufort Gazette: Deceased Marine recruit's family questions information about death

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/bg-military/article70121182.html>

Wade Livingston

An attorney working with the family of a dead Marine recruit says the family continues to question the information it has received from Parris Island. "We're not accusing anyone at this stage," Nabih Ayad, of Detroit-based Ayad Law, P.L.L.C, said Tuesday afternoon. "We have suspicions." Ayad said he's worked with the family of Raheel Siddiqui since he died March 18 after a 40-foot fall during recruit training on Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. The Naval Criminal Investigation Service continues to investigate Siddiqui's death and says, at the moment, there was no apparent foul play. But Ayad says information the family has received "doesn't make sense." He provided new details about the events preceding Siddiqui's fall. He also said that, based on the results of NCIS' investigation, he would call for a congressional investigation if necessary.

Associated Press: SC troopers to hold lunch to thank local agencies

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

SC State Wire

The South Carolina Department of Public Safety is thanking local police agencies with helping to find drunken drivers. Wednesday's lunch in Columbia also has a big prize - troopers will hold a drawing and give one department a fully equipped police vehicle. The Department of Public Safety will be giving out several awards, including officer of the year. The lunch is being held at Seawell's restaurant in Columbia.

Post and Courier: Community leaders to black N. Charleston gang members: Let's talk 'mature men to young men'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160405/PC16/160409665>

Melissa Boughton

Black male community leaders say they have a plan to address black-on-black crime, and it starts with gang leaders in North Charleston giving them a call.

Councilmen and activists gave their personal cellphone numbers at a Tuesday news conference outside the Felix Pinckney Community Center. "We want to speak to each of you individually, and after speaking to you individually, we will speak to you collectively, just mature men to young men," said Charleston County Councilman Henry Darby, one of four who gave out their number. "No media, no police officers, no women. Just us." There were about 10 men at the conference, which ended with them huddled in prayer. Three others also provided their numbers: community activist Jerome Heyward, North Charleston City Councilman Sam Hart and County Councilman Teddie Pryor. Hart said black men needed to stand up for their community.

The State: Columbia Fireflies excited about new city, stadium

<http://www.thestate.com/sports/mlb/article70144407.html#storylink=apmobile>

Lou Bezjak

"I feel a little overwhelmed, to be honest with you. You look at this stadium and, coming from Savannah, this is a big change," Leger said Tuesday during the team's media day. "The support we received has been great. On our first day of practice, a lot of fans came to check us out. That was only practice, so I can't imagine the first night we play here." The Fireflies held their second workout in preparation for Thursday's opener at Charleston. Columbia's homer opener is against Greenville on April 14. Leger said the players spent Monday finding places to live and getting used to the city where they'll live for the next six months.

Sun News: Conway putting \$250K into welcome signs, gateway improvements

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article70102197.html>

Charles D. Perry

City council members this week agreed to include a quarter of \$1 million in their upcoming budget for improving the gateways to the city. The money would pay for signage along major thoroughfares such as U.S. 501 and U.S. 701, but also for lighting along U.S. 378. "It needs to be a bit of a priority," Mayor Barbara Blain-Bellamy said of the welcome signs. "What we have now is pitiful." City officials don't have a defined plan for spending the money, but they said the funding should pay for some large \$25,000 signs as well as smaller ones costing \$10,000 to \$15,000.

The Herald: Lake Wylie residents hoping for more answers on lead in water

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article70174987.html>

Bristow Marchant

Residents of the River Hills neighborhood hoped Tuesday night to have their concerns eased about lead levels in their water supply, and the responsiveness of their water supplier. But many didn't feel they got the answers to their questions at a community meeting because – despite the presence of state and local officials who could speak broadly about the lead monitoring process and the area's water sources – no representative of Carolina Water Service, which directly provides water services to 8,900 Lake Wylie residents, was there to answer questions. More than a hundred people filled a recreation hall at Camp Thunderbird – just a few feet from the waters of the lake that feeds into their faucets – for a community meeting organized by state Rep. Ralph Norman, R-Rock Hill, on the community's water concerns.

The State: Push to allow Irmo homeowners to keep a few chickens stymied

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article70186387.html>

Tim Flach

The push to let homeowners in Irmo keep a few chickens was cooped up Tuesday. Town Council members settled on a one-year trial but balked when it came time to actually lift the bird ban entirely. "I am very disappointed in this outcome," said Tony Oravec, spokesman for Hens for Irmo. The split decision suggests the proposal won't be revived, Mayor Hardy King said. "There's no sense in spending more time on this," he said. "It's pretty much dead."

National News:

Associated Press: Battle between religious and gay rights splits GOP states

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:3c42963c209348f69e57b634e9e8f9fb>

David A. Lieb

Republican lawmakers upset about the Supreme Court decision legalizing gay marriage have advanced measures in about a dozen states this year that could strengthen protections for those who refuse on religious grounds to provide services to same-sex couples. The bills could benefit court clerks, photographers, florists, bakers, wedding-hall operators and others who say gay matrimony goes against their beliefs. For a party already being torn apart by the presidential contest, the state legislative efforts have exposed deep rifts between the GOP's social conservatives and its pro-business wing. Business leaders worry that such measures will allow discrimination and scare away companies and major events. So far, only a few proposals have become law. Those include narrowly tailored protections shielding Florida clergy from having to perform same-sex weddings and college religious organizations in Kansas from losing aid.

Associated Press: Legal pressure may be ahead for law denying service to gays

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:6507cd6e8b0a4392bac7ccd577921f8b>

Jeff Amy

The decision by Mississippi's governor to sign a law that allows religious groups and some private businesses to deny services to gay and transgender people may have headed off gathering opposition in the state's business community, but it could launch the state into litigation. Saying he was protecting religious freedom, Republican Gov. Phil Bryant signed the bill Tuesday without hesitation or fanfare just hours after it cleared its final legislative obstacle Monday. According to several supporters, Bryant said increasing pressure from businesses against the law illustrated Mississippi's need for it. "It shows why we need this bill, so people can not only believe what they believe, but act in accordance with their beliefs and not violate their conscience," said Rep. Andy Gipson, R-Braxton, who helped shepherd the measure through the chamber.

Associated Press: Impeachment call latest complication for Alabama governor

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:5ce1cf55dbd64ab3888d4cd11e314873>

Kim Chandler and Melissa Brown

Two weeks after admitting to sexually charged remarks to a female aide, embattled Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley faces a call for his impeachment from a bipartisan group of lawmakers who said the public has lost confidence in the Republican governor. Although the impeachment effort is considered a longshot in the legislative session that ends next month, it is a sign of the governor's growing political troubles in the wake of the scandal. "We are looking at this governor who has essentially betrayed the trust of the people of Alabama through actions and lies that have caused us to have some doubt about his leadership," Rep. Ed Henry said during a news conference at the Alabama Statehouse.

Associated Press: Cruz win in Wisconsin leaves Trump damaged front-runner

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:0a24d96cb6df408c81eaadb2aa0986f9>

Julie Pace and Jonathan Lemire

Republican Donald Trump emerged from Wisconsin as a damaged front-runner following a crushing loss to rival Ted Cruz, deepening questions about the billionaire businessman's presidential qualifications and pushing the GOP toward a rare contested convention fight. Democrat Bernie Sanders also scored a sweeping victory in Wisconsin's primary that gives him a fresh incentive to keep challenging Hillary Clinton. But Sanders still lags Clinton significantly in the delegate count. Both parties are turning their sights toward New York, which offers a massive delegate prize in its April 19 contests. It marks a homecoming of sorts for several candidates, with Trump, Clinton and Sanders all touting roots in the state.

Associated Press: Cruz, Sanders emerge victorious in Wisconsin primaries

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:edc03516c393432db26f6aeefdb5015c>

Julie Pace and Scott Bauer

Republican Ted Cruz stormed to a commanding victory in Wisconsin Tuesday, denting front-runner Donald Trump's chances of capturing the GOP nomination before the party's convention. Democrat Bernie Sanders triumphed over Hillary Clinton but still faces a mathematically difficult path to the White House. Trump's defeat capped one of the worst periods of his campaign, a brutal stretch that highlighted his weaknesses with women and raised questions about his policy depth. While the billionaire businessman still leads the Republican field, Cruz and an array of anti-Trump forces hope Wisconsin signals the start of his decline. "Tonight is a turning point," Cruz told cheering supporters at a victory rally. "It is a call from the hardworking people of Wisconsin to America. We have a choice.

A real choice."

Camlin Moore

Cell: 803-206-8236

Office: 803-734-8044