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Subject: Morning Clips – Tuesday, December 2, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

WYFF (Video): Governor's Carolighting ushers in Christmas at Capital

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/governors-carolighting-ushers-in-christmas-at-capital/30010314>

Christmas has arrived at South Carolina's state capital. Gov. Nikki Haley and the first family hosted the Annual Carolighting on the Statehouse steps Monday night. This year's Carolighting was sponsored by the Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Columbia Garden Club and the Garden Club of South Carolina.

Associated Press: Council: SC database can stem prescription abuse

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=928ahyKz

Seanna Adcox

Requiring doctors to use a statewide database to check their patients' prescription history can significantly stem the rampant abuse of painkillers in South Carolina, a council created by Gov. Nikki Haley said Monday. That mandate is a key piece of the Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Council's recommendations for combatting abuse.

Note: Haley's spokesman, Doug Mayer, did not say whether they governor would support the mandate. Instead, he said Haley is "very proud and thankful" for the council's hard work toward finding solutions to the important issue.

Cola Daily: Students spread holiday cheer with annual poinsettia sale this week

<http://coladaily.com/2014/12/02/students-spread-holiday-cheer-with-annual-poinsettia-sale-this-week/>

Rachel Ham

Hundreds of people across the Midlands, including Gov. Nikki Haley, add holiday cheer to their homes each December with plants grown by students in Lexington School District One. The local tradition continues Tuesday as the annual poinsettia sale begins at 8:30 a.m. sharp.

Note: A few Future Farmers of America students also dropped off 20 poinsettias for the governor's mansion Monday. Bollier said the plants will be the focus of one room of the Haleys' home instead of a traditional Christmas tree.

Cola Daily: Adjutant General: 'Team South Carolina is ready' for severe winter weather

<http://coladaily.com/2014/12/02/adjutant-general-team-south-carolina-is-ready-for-severe-winter-weather/>

Allen Wallace

It was sunny and 65 degrees Monday in the Midlands, but the focus was on preparation for decidedly less pleasant weather at the South Carolina Emergency Operations Center in West Columbia.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley proclaimed Nov. 30 through Dec. 6 Winter Weather Awareness Week, and multiple state agencies gathered Monday to discuss preparations for winter storms.

S.C. Agency News:

Post and Courier: Lexington senator to pre-file bill that dissolves DSS

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC1603/141209965>

Cynthia Roldan

The state's beleaguered Department of Social Services would be dissolved in favor of a standalone protective services agency if a planned bill is approved by the legislature next session. Sen. Katrina Shealy, R-Lexington, said on Monday that her bill, the South Carolina Child Welfare Reform Act of 2015, would dissolve DSS and create a separate agency called the Department of Family Protective Services.

WLTX: Senator Pushes DSS Reform With New Bill

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/health/departments-of-social-services/2014/12/01/senator-pushes-dss-reform-with-new-bill/19754079/>

Jasmine Styles

A Lexington senator plans to pre-file a bill do away with the South Carolina Department of Social Services and start a new agency with a renewed focus. "We just want to protect the children and families in South Carolina," Sen. Katrina Shealy said. DSS is responsible for thousands of children in our state, offering them child support, food assistance and much more.

SCRN: State senators propose splitting up DSS

<http://www.southcarolinaradionetwork.com/2014/12/01/state-senators-propose-splitting-up-dss/>

Matt Long

Two of the three members of a state Senate panel investigating South Carolina's child services agency believe the best option is to split up the agency. State Sen. Katrina Shealy, R-Lexington, said Monday she will pre-file legislation this week that would abolish the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) and create a new agency to handle child protective services, child abuse investigations, foster families and adoption.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley has said her office is working to find a replacement, noting she had wanted to wait until after the November 5 elections to begin the search. Shealy said the governor has not yet indicated whether she supports the idea.

Post and Courier: Four companies offer health plans to ex-cooperative customers

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC16/141209940>

Lauren Sausser

Four insurance companies are offering coverage to nearly 4,500 customers who recently lost their policies through the South Carolina Health Cooperative. The South Carolina Department of Insurance announced last week that the cooperative, which was founded in 2012 as an option for small businesses to offer insurance for their employees, was on the brink of financial ruin.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Rock Hill Herald: School tax plan would ease inequality

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/12/01/6580304/school-tax-plan-would-ease-inequality.html?sp=/100/105/>

Editorial

A bill to create a new statewide property tax rate for businesses and industries to help raise money for schools might be a feasible way to ease some of the funding disparity between rich and poor school districts. But whatever plan the Legislature devises is likely to include a redistribution of wealth of some form or another.

Aiken Standard: Funding for prosecutors a necessary step forward

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20141202/AIK0201/141209962/1018/AIK02>

Editorial

There will be a lot of voices in the heads of legislators when funding requests come around in 2015. More money for roads and bridges is needed. More money for education has essentially been mandated by the S. C. Supreme Court after the conclusion of a recent decades-old case. However, there's one more that may be just as crucial when it comes to the future of South Carolina.

The State: Will the Midlands transit authority's second shot at a bus contract be a charm?

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3846903/bolton-will-the-midlands-transit.html#storylink=cpy>

Warren Bolton

WHILE IT'S understandable that the Midlands transit authority board wants to choose the right firm under the right contract to operate the public bus system, it shouldn't have taken nearly two years to get to this point. The board is in the early stages of reviewing bids from transportation firms and could make a decision soon about who the next bus operator will be.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: SC House set to elect Lucas its next speaker

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=H2T2cG7e

Seanna Adcox

State representatives are expected to elect Rep. Jay Lucas their next speaker during a special, organizational session. The House returns Tuesday for the two-day session. Lucas has been the lone candidate since two other Republicans vying to replace Bobby Harrell jointly withdrew Sept. 30.

The State: SC House to take up proposed reforms

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3847137/sc-house-to-take-up-proposed-reforms.html>

Cassie Cope

Members of the S.C. House of Representatives will make it clear Tuesday whether they are serious about reducing the power of their leaders. Representatives will adopt new rules that aim to prevent the corruption that led to the downfall of former longtime House Speaker Bobby Harrell, R-Charleston. They also will elect new leaders.

Florence Morning News: On verge of becoming SC Speaker of the House, Jay Lucas stresses inclusion

http://www.scnw.com/news/article_bce3c2d8-79d2-11e4-af10-a70869d071a0.html

Gavin Jackson

On the eve of his presumed election as Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Jay Lucas told members of the Florence Rotary Club on Monday that once in office, he will keep moving the state forward in an “inclusive” manner. The Hartsville lawyer never thought he’d be up for the speaker position, and when he took on the duties of the office 82 days ago, he admitted it was bewildering.

Sun News: Grand Strand legislators to introduce bills aimed to settle state permit challenges sooner

http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/12/01/4642021_grand-strand-legislators-to-introduce.html?sp=/99/209/&rh=1#storylink=cpy

Jason Rodriguez

Grand Strand legislators plan to propose bills in the House and Senate next year that would require groups or individuals appealing state construction permits to go before a judge to give cause for the appeal before it moves forward. Rep. Nelson Hardwick, R-Surfside Beach, and Sen. Greg Hembree, R-North Myrtle Beach, will each propose bills next session that they hope will set a process for appeals to state permits.

Anderson Independent: Legislators preview General Assembly's upcoming session

http://www.independentmail.com/news/legislators-preview-general-assemblys-upcoming-session_61877619

Kirk Brown

Members of Anderson County’s legislative delegation said Monday that fixing the state’s crumbling roads, ethics reform and school choice will top the agenda when the South Carolina General Assembly convenes next month. Sen. Billy O’Dell, Sen. Kevin Bryant, Rep. Anne Thayer, Rep. Joshua Putnam and Rep. Jonathon Hill shared their thoughts about the coming legislative session during the monthly meeting of 1st Monday Club of Anderson.

S.C. Federal Delegation News:

Associated Press: Scott making history as he is sworn into Senate

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

Tim Scott is making history in Washington as he is sworn in as the first black U.S. senator elected from the South since Reconstruction after the Civil War. The Republican lawmaker is scheduled to be sworn in on Tuesday at the U.S. Capitol. Scott has served in the U.S. Senate since January 2013.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Scott speaks to students about importance of education

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20141201/ARTICLES/141209967?Title=Scott-speaks-to-students-about-importance-of-education&tc=ar>

Lynne P. Shackleford

Just before hopping a plane to Washington, D.C., Sen. Tim Scott took some hard-hitting questions Monday from students in Kelli Foster’s advanced placement history class at Blacksburg High School. Scott stopped for a short visit with the class before his 2:50 p.m. flight back to the nation’s capitol for his Tuesday swearing-in ceremony.

Note: He was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley when Jim DeMint resigned from the Senate in 2013, and was elected last month to serve the remaining two years of DeMint’s term.

McClatchy D.C.: Kingmaker or royal pain to GOP: DeMint building Heritage into conservative force

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3847141/kingmaker-or-royal-pain-to-gop.html#storylink=cpy>

William Douglas

As a senator, Jim DeMint sometimes ran afoul of fellow Republicans by personally recruiting, nurturing and supporting his own stable of conservative candidates for Congress. Now, as president of the Heritage Foundation, the former South Carolina lawmaker is poised once again to flex his political muscles, entering his third year of running the influential conservative think tank that he believes will be an incubator for Republican ideas in next year's Congress.

South Carolina News:

The State: Educators: Reworked S.C. standards inferior to Common Core

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3847156/educators-reworked-sc-standards.html>

Jamie Self

South Carolina's breakup with Common Core is bittersweet. A S.C.-led revision of Common Core – ordered by lawmakers this year – is “inferior” to the original standards, educators told a S.C. Education Oversight Committee panel Monday, encouraging that panel to stick with Common Core until the state comes up with something better.

Post and Courier: Reviewers blast proposed math, English education standards for S.C.

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC1603/141209939>

Jeremy Borden

South Carolina's rush to replace its current Common Core education standards has left the state's newest proposal in disarray, stakeholders told an Education Oversight Committee panel on Monday. The divide between political leaders and educators was on display as the education subcommittee reviewed new math and English standards.

Post and Courier: Group says new Charleston County teacher pay scale creates inequities

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC16/141209915>

Amanda Kerr

A local education advocacy group is taking issue with the Charleston County School District's new pay scale for teachers, asserting that the new salaries aren't equitable and leave some of the district's most experienced educators making less over the life of their careers.

The State: Pilot killed In F-16 crash in Middle East

http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3846535_pilot-killed-in-f-16-crash-in.html?rh=1

Jeff Wilkinson

A U.S. Air Force pilot was killed when an F-16 Fighting Falcon crashed in a non-combat-related incident Sunday in the Middle East, according to the military. Currently, the 77th Fighter Squadron based at Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter is conducting combat operations in Syria and Iraq against the group calling themselves the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

The State: Media mogul gives Clemson \$3.3 million for waterfowl research on coast

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/01/3846835/media-mogul-gives-clemson-33-million.html#storylink=cpy>

The university announced Monday that media and automotive services conglomerate executive James C. Kennedy donated the money. The center would be the first endowed waterfowl conservation site of its kind in the Atlantic Flyway of the eastern United States, the university said in a news release.

Local News:

Sun News: Grand Strand law enforcement officials, managers agree on 23-mile traffic loop for Memorial Day weekend

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/12/01/4642121/grand-strand-law-enforcement-officials.html?sp=/99/134/142/#storylink=cpy>

Maya T. Prabhu

That loop would route drivers from George Bishop Parkway to Waccamaw Boulevard, which runs next to U.S. 501, onto S.C. 31 heading north to Grissom Parkway south, then onto U.S. 17 Bypass and down 29th Avenue North, Myrtle Beach police Chief Warren Gall said.

Post and Courier: Charleston-area authorities welcome body cameras for police officers, but worry about costs

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC1601/141209924>

Andrew Knapp

President Barack Obama's push Monday to outfit more of the nation's police officers with video cameras in the wake of the disputed shooting death of 18-year-old Michael Brown came as no surprise to Charleston-area law enforcement officials, but some of the authorities doubted whether the move would make the technology any closer to reality.

Sun News: Myrtle Beach metro leads US in new home construction permit growth

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/12/01/4642057/myrtle-beach-metro-leads-us-in.html?sp=/99/209/&ihp=1>

Steve Jones

The Myrtle Beach metro area led the nation in the rate of increase in new home construction permits from 2013 to this year, according to newhomesource.com, and the new residents moving into those new homes are helping fuel the area's reblooming jobs market, recently named sixth fastest growing in the U.S.

Island Packet: Beaufort chamber, legislation officials focus on limiting regulation, enticing opportunity, fostering growth

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/12/01/3463900/beaufort-chamber-legislation-officials.html?sp=/99/257/266/#storylink=cpy>

Erin Moody

Business regulations, the division of state dollars, improvements to attract visitors and businesses, and an overall desire to see "government to get out of the way," as Rep. Shannon Erickson put it, topped a list of concerns at the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual Legislative Reception.

Rock Hill Herald: Tempers flare as Chester Co. sheriff asks council for money to handle gangs

http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/12/01/6580506_tempers-flare-as-chester-sheriff.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy

Andrew Dys

Chester County Sheriff Alex Underwood's impassioned plea to the Chester County Council on Monday night for more deputies to keep officers and the public safe from gangs turned into an argument between Underwood and several council members over money needed to handle gangs the sheriff blames for three recent murders.

Index-Journal: Solar power passes first test

<http://www.indexjournal.com/news/Solar-power-passes-first-test>

Colin Riddle

With solar power becoming increasingly popular in North Carolina and Georgia, Greenwood City Council decided to move an ordinance that would allow the construction and usage of solar farms and panels inside city limits to its first reading. During a work session Monday evening, council agreed offering the capability wouldn't hurt.

Greenville News: Pickens School Board passes capital needs plan with no tax hike

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2014/12/01/pickens-school-board-passes-capital-needs-plan-tax-hike/19766257/>

Ron Barnett

After an hour-long work session and a discussion over competing motions that grew heated at times, the Pickens County School Board on Monday shot down a recommended tax increase and approved on second reading a plan to address some of the district's facilities and technology needs without raising taxes.

Post and Courier: Mount Pleasant rule change limiting council members moves forward

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141201/PC16/141209951>

Robert Behre

Mayor Linda Page's voice cracked Monday as she described why she wanted to amend the town's rules. "I don't get emotional very often," she told the crowded committee room, "but y'all made me mad." Her plea kicked off a colorful 90-minute debate over a rule change that would prohibit a Town Council member from putting an item on the monthly agenda without getting at least two other members to agree.

Rock Hill Herald: York County tax deal could lead to new spec building

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/12/01/6580587/york-county-tax-deal-could-lead.html>

Bristow Marchant

A new economic development deal could result in a \$9 million investment in the Riverwalk Business Park. The York County Council approved first reading of a fee-in-lieu-of-tax agreement between the county and Beacon Partners, listed under the project name "Project Lodestone," to cover the investment needed for construction of a new speculative building in Riverwalk.

National News:

Associated Press: Jeb Bush Condemns Obama Immigration Order

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/jeb-bush-maintains-profile-washington-visit-27283435>

Steve Peoples

Hinting that a decision on his presidential ambitions is coming "in short order," former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush on Monday condemned President Barack Obama's recent immigration order for going "way beyond" what other presidents have done ? including Bush's own father.

Brian Symmes

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