

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>
To:
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Subject: Afternoon Clips - Thursday, March 10, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: Haley calls on House to keep roads momentum going forward
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC1603/160319967>

Cynthia Roldan

Gov. Nikki Haley likes what she's seeing in the Senate with the roads bill. After spending nearly two months stuck in filibuster limbo, Senators passed a bill that assigns \$400 million from the state budget for road repairs, without raising the gas tax.

Note: But Haley lauded the effort on social media. She has been supportive of the plan since last week when the Senate first adopted the amendment. She also called on the House to take action as well.

Note: "Thank you to the Senate for moving the ball today on roads," Haley wrote. "They acknowledged that you have to reform the system before throwing money at it. Road improvements should be based on safety, traffic, and development, not on which legislative members are in leadership. House members, your turn. Let's finish this."

DJJ reform stories:

Associated Press: Guard: Gangs are strong in South Carolina's juvenile prison
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=MChC99ej

Jeffrey Collins

An officer at a juvenile prison in Columbia told lawmakers that gangs are strong in the jail which has led to three riots in the past eight months. Catherine McKnight told a House committee investigating the Department of Juvenile Justice on Thursday that if the situation isn't improved children and staffers could be killed. DJJ Director Sylvia Murray told legislators that the agency hasn't had a gang intervention specialist in a year and the police chief's job has been open for almost three years despite having more than \$3 million in the bank at the end of last year. Murray says DJJ is taking steps to protect prisoner and staff safety like implementing stricter discipline, installing sinks that can't be ripped from walls and housing juveniles based on risk.

The State: SC Juvenile Justice lacked police chief, gang expert while violence broke out
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article65238772.html>

Jamie Self

Juvenile Justice officer who spends 12-hour shifts working directly with the youth inmates told lawmakers that gang activity, poorly trained officers, mistrust among employees and absent supervisors are threatening the safety of juveniles and employees. The testimony follows the recent revelation that there was a riot at the agency's Broad River Road location in late February, the third serious incident in eight months, according to state Rep. Kirkman Finlay, the panel's chairman. Director Murray offered lawmakers examples of steps the agency has taken to improve safety for inmates and officers. They include updating the security of facilities – shatter-proof glass and more razor-wire fences, for example. The agency also is putting in place a rapid-response team of correction officers and offering more overtime to increase staffing during the most vulnerable hours between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m., after inmates have gotten out of school. The House panel agreed

Thursday to ask the S.C. Legislative Audit Council to review the agency.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: Senate passes SC roads bill; House criticizes plan

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

SC State Wire

The South Carolina Senate has given final approval to a bill that offers an additional \$400 million to state roads and changes the structure of the board that runs the Department of Transportation. Senators passed the bill without debate Thursday, sending it back to the House. The House passed its own bill last April that raises a tax on fuel. The Senate version takes the \$400 million out of the general budget and allows the governor to name all eight members of the DOT's board. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brian White said in a statement that the Senate bill is a plea for the House to use the budget to help the Senate avoid its inability to pass a comprehensive roads bill with a stable source of revenue.

WLTX: House Speaker Slams Senate Roads Bill

<http://www.wltx.com/news/politics/house-speaker-slams-senate-roads-bill/76189113>

The South Carolina Senate has given final approval to a bill that offers an additional \$400 million to state roads and changes the structure of the board that runs the Department of Transportation. Senators passed the bill without debate Thursday, sending it back to the House. The House passed its own bill last April that raises a tax on fuel. The Senate version takes the \$400 million out of the general budget and allows the governor to name all eight members of the DOT's board. House Speaker Jay Lucas slammed the deal, calling senator's version "deceptive."

Greenville News: House leaders erupt over Senate roads bill

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/10/house-leaders-erupt-over-senate-roads-bill/81588372/>

Tim Smith

On the same day the Senate gave final approval to its roads bill, House leaders attacked the plan, blasting it as "deceptive" and "irresponsible." The Senate's bill, which actually amends a very different House bill, would dedicate \$400 million annually for roads from the General Fund and transfer the power to appoint the state's highway commissioners from the Legislature to the governor. House Ways and Means Chairman Brian White of Anderson said the Senate roads bill was not a serious attempt to address the state's long-term infrastructure needs. Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler of Gaffney told The Greenville News that it was "mind-boggling" that Lucas, as a GOP leader of the House, was attacking the Senate's plan.

Note: "Senate moved on roads," she Tweeted Wednesday. "Reforming so that Improvements are based on safety and traffic not on legislators in power. House, your turn."

WIS: Democrats, House leadership slam Senate roads bill as 'phony'

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31436972/democrats-house-leadership-slam-senate-roads-bill-as-phony>

Will Whitson

After a days-long filibuster, a breakthrough, and some final amendments, the South Carolina Senate has sent their version of the roads and infrastructure bill back to the House of Representatives. However, Senate Democrats and House leadership slammed the bill as not a long-term solution to the ongoing roads troubles in the state. The third, mostly ceremonial reading of the bill passed the Senate on Thursday morning in a quick voice vote with no opposition from Senate Democrats. The bill now returns to the House considerably different from the bill that arrived in the Senate last year. The Senate's version of the bill gives the state Department of Transportation \$400 million in funding this year from the state's general fund and largely reforms the department. However, the gas tax, proposed as a long-term funding solution for the state's crumbling roads, was booted after opposition from Senate Republicans. House Republicans leaders slammed the work done by the Senate, calling

it an "unsustainable solution."

The State: SC lawmakers propose raising age of children allowed to ride in car's front seat
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article65174212.html>

Jamie Self

S.C. lawmakers are considering raising the age of children allowed to ride in the front-passenger seat of a vehicle. A S.C. House bill, in its original form, would ban children from riding in the front seat of a vehicle until they are 13 years old, more than doubling the age that a child must be to ride in the front seat now. Under current law, children cannot ride in the front seat until they are 6 years old, unless a vehicle does not have a rear passenger seat or all passenger seats are occupied by children under 6. The bill is an effort to update state law to reflect changes in safety regulations used by car-seat manufacturers and public safety officers trained to check for car-seat safety, Erickson said.

Post and Courier: Purchasing sex in South Carolina could soon land you on the sex offender registry

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC1603/160319960>

Maya T. Prabhu

People who purchase illicit sex in South Carolina could soon be placed on the sex offender registry and pay stiffer fines if a bill making its way through the Legislature becomes law. Advocacy groups for victims of sex trafficking and prostitution told a Senate panel Thursday the main deterrent for "johns" who purchase sex is being placed on the registry and having the public know their crimes. Lawmakers gave initial approval to a bill that will increase the penalties for those purchasing illicit sex and includes a special distinction — with stiffer consequences — for those soliciting sex from people who are "profoundly mentally disabled." The panel amended the bill, sponsored by Sen. Katrina Shealy, R-Lexington, making a first offense draw a fine between \$100 and \$250, or face up to 30 days in jail.

WLTX: Bill Would Do Away with DSS, Create New Agency

<http://www.wltx.com/news/health/departments-of-social-services/bill-would-do-away-with-dss-create-new-agency/76085817>

Senators overseeing the South Carolina Department of Social Services considered a bill Thursday to do away with the agency, and create family protective services instead. The bill would essentially split the existing agency, putting family, children, and elder care under family protective services. It would then move all financial matters under the Department of Health and Human Services. The sponsor of the bill, Lexington senator Katrina Shealy, says the main goal of this is to allow caseworkers and other DSS employees to put all of their focus into improving the life of children in families. The bill didn't see any movement during the meeting, and DSS director Susan Alford responded by saying smaller agencies are effective, and that she supports focusing on outcomes.

Greenville News: Senate panel presses DSS on overdue computer project

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/10/senate-panel-presses-dss-overdue-computer-project/81573404/>

Tim Smith

Federal fines on a state child support enforcement system decades overdue could total almost \$200 million if the system is running in 2019. That's the estimate a state Department of Social Services official gave to the Senate DSS Oversight Committee Thursday as senators pressed DSS to accelerate the project, which has been in the works since the early 1990s. "They built the internet in 14 years. They built the Great Wall of China in 20 years," said Sen. Katrina Shealy, a Lexington County Republican. "We can do better than this." The child support enforcement system project has been the source of frustration for legislators for many years. South Carolina remains the only state not to have an automated child support enforcement system up and running in response to a 1988 federal law.

Greenville News: Senators hear mother's story of Seneca police shooting

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/09/senators-hear-mothers-story-seneca-police-shooting/81523852/>

Tim Smith

With tears and determination, the mother of a Seneca 19-year-old shot to death by a police officer last summer is asking that lawmakers require the release of video and autopsy results to the family of the person shot. A Senate panel that heard Angie Hammond's story Wednesday declined to include the proposal in a bill it approved on officer-involved shootings. But Sen. Larry Martin, a Pickens Republican and chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said afterward that another panel considering a bill on the release of dash-cam videos will consider the proposal.

S.C. Political News:

The Herald: VP Biden pens letter for Tega Cay congressional candidate

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article65153317.html>

Bristow Marchant

Early in the campaign season, a recent entrant in the Fifth Congressional District race has nabbed an early, if unsurprising, endorsement. Vice President Joe Biden this week penned an endorsement letter for Fran Person, the Tega Cay Democrat running against Republican U.S. Rep. Mick Mulvaney of Indian Land. "Fran and I have worked together for years; he's traveled the country and the world with me. He's smart, he's tireless and I don't know anyone who doesn't respect him," Biden says in the letter sent out by Person's campaign. Person, a University of South Carolina graduate, worked as an aide for Biden from 2006 to 2014, first in his Senate office and later when he joined the Obama administration. He eventually left Biden's office with the title "adviser to the vice president."

USA Today: Sen. Lindsey Graham warns GOP obstruction on judges cuts both ways

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2016/03/10/sen-lindsey-graham-warns-gop-obstruction-judges-cuts-both-ways/81588940/>

Paul Singer and Mary Troyan

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., on Thursday ruefully endorsed his party's refusal to consider a Supreme Court nominee offered by President Obama, saying that while he understands the political reality, he believes the Senate's own precedents are being destroyed. At a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing Thursday, senators of both parties returned to the talking points they have batted back and forth since the moments after the Feb. 13 death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Republicans, led by chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, said there is no point having a hearing on any Obama nominee because, during the current presidential election cycle, there is no way a nominee would be confirmed.

Post and Courier: Graham and Scott vote for legislation to help states combat heroin and opioid abuse

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC1603/160319957>

Emma Dumain

Both of South Carolina's U.S. senators on Thursday helped pass legislation that gives states more resources to combat heroin and opioid addiction. Republicans Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott were among the 94 members who voted in favor of the bill, formally known as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. Only one senator, Republican Ben Sasse of Nebraska, voted "no." The troubling trend is reaching into South Carolina where opioid-related deaths have jumped 118 percent between 2013 and 2014, according to data from the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Stop wasting taxpayer money and close Gitmo

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC1002/160319979>

Letter

This is America, which has honored the rule of law throughout its history and allowed America to become an economic and social model for the world. Gitmo is a stain on that reputation and persistent benefit to our enemies who waste no time pointing to its despicable reputation. Let's get over this unfounded fear and foolishness, let's save that half billion dollars and let's follow the rule of law. Let the president close down that wasteful and unnecessary facility.

Sun News: Many ways to get money to fix roads

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article64987377.html>

Letter

There has been too much discussion about how to get the money to fix S.C. roads which are in need of repair. I offer a few suggestions: Instead of raising the gas tax 16.7 cents a gallon, why not raise it .05 cents a gallon. That way it will not hurt everyone. Another idea is to raise the tax on auto purchases from \$300.00 to \$500.00. Where most of us northerners came from, we paid up to 7 percent on a purchase of a car. Another way is to make everyone who drives a scooter or mo-ped be required to have a driver's license and insurance. There are many who have lost their license and are using mo-peds to get around. Our S.C. government has been talking about fixing our roads but has done nothing about it long enough. Let's get busy and fix our problems.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: The Latest: Missing children found safe in South Carolina

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=1glmLQyH

SC State Wire

Three children reported missing in a swampy area of rural area of South Carolina have been found safe at a nearby house. Colleton County Sheriff R.A. Strickland said the children were found late Thursday morning in an abandoned house about 100 yards from their residence. Strickland said the house had been checked Wednesday night when the youngsters were reported missing and nothing was found. He said the children were found when it was re-checked Thursday morning. The sheriff said the children are in good condition and have been reunited with their families.

WACH: SCDOT Secretary says progress being made on flood impacted roads and bridges

<http://wach.com/news/local/scdot-secretary-says-progress-being-made-on-flood-impacted-roads-and-bridges>

Matthew Stevens

SCDOT Secretary Christy Hall has released her March report on the current conditions of the state's roads and bridges following October's flooding. Hall says that 25 bridges need to be fully replaced following the flooding. Two of the bridge projects have been completed, while 17 others have been handed over to contractors to begin work. Currently, 24 roads remain closed in the state due to dam breaches. A total of 48 roads are still closed in the state. DHEC are overseeing the dam repairs and say that seven are current unregulated. "SCDOT continues to work with DHEC and dam owners to find a path forward to re-open roads impacted by dam failures. We are anxious to return all of the roads to service," said Hall.

Local News:

Associated Press: No election for Iva Town Council, mayor this year

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=6cn3YEHk

SC State Wire

For the second term in a row, there will not be an Iva election. The Independent Mail reports (<http://bit.ly/1R90wJr>) that this year, no one is challenging the Iva Town Council members or the

mayor. The current members except for one will return to their seats. Iva Mayor Bobby Gentry will remain as mayor for his seventh term. Ward 2 council member Ken Norwood didn't seek re-election. There was only one candidate to take over the position - Billy Dwayne Kelley. The council members will take office July 1 for their upcoming two-year terms.

The Herald: York Co. Democrats plan next step in presidential nomination

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article65153367.html>

Bristow Marchant

Now that South Carolina's presidential primaries are over, the next stage in choosing a presidential nominee begins. On Saturday, the York County Democratic Party will hold its precinct reorganization meetings at Freedom Temple in downtown Rock Hill, where officers will be chosen for each precinct in the county. Organizing precincts is the first step in the nominating process. From Saturday's meeting, delegates will be chosen for the county and state Democratic conventions, as well as the national party convention in Philadelphia in July where the party's presidential nominee will be formally chosen. Saturday's meeting will also choose county party officers. It will begin at 10 a.m. To be eligible to participate in your precinct organization or be a delegate at any level, you must have voted in the Democratic presidential primary on Feb. 27.

Post and Courier: Chamber forecast: Accelerating job growth to fuel Charleston's economy

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC05/160319964>

David Wren

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce usually relies on computer modeling to forecast area economic conditions. This year, the chamber rejected every computer-generated growth forecast and adjusted the numbers higher. "The board changed every single number," said Mary Graham, the chamber's chief advancement officer, referring to an economic outlook board that reviews the forecast. "The models still had the recession in play and in many ways it said we weren't going to grow very much. We all knew there was way too much happening in our community for that to happen."

Herald- Journal: Auto products manufacturer to build \$2.6M plant in Gaffney

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160310/articles/160319980>

Essex Weld Solutions, an international automotive products manufacturer, will establish a plant in Gaffney with a \$2.6 million investment. The investment is expected to bring 70 new jobs to the area. Essex Weld USA Inc., the company's American subsidiary, will manufacture custom and standard automotive racking products, and provide professional engineering services and certifications for shipping and storage containers.

Aiken Standard: Barnwell health care site to expand office hours to help fill hospital void

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160310/AIK0101/160319979>

Christina Cleveland

A Barnwell health care site will begin expanding its office hours to help with patients once treated at the recently closed Southern Palmetto Hospital. According to Barnwell County Council members R. Keith Sloan and Freddie Houston Sr., Low Country Health Care System — which operates an office across from the former hospital on Wren Street — will expand the office's hours to 12 hours a day, five days a week. Southern Palmetto Hospital, formerly the Barnwell County Hospital, closed in January after a decline in hospital patient volumes over the years, according to hospital officials. The hospital had reportedly been operating with losses of \$2.5 million within the past year due to low patient population and uncompensated care, despite efforts to "improve efficiency, collections and the facility."

Aiken Standard: Aiken a possible site for Dairy Queen's planned South Carolina expansion

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160310/AIK0101/160319989>

Dede Biles

International Dairy Queen Inc. is looking to significantly expand its quick-service restaurant operations in South Carolina, and Aiken and North Augusta are included in that strategy. "We've identified the state of South Carolina as one of our targeted areas for new store growth," said Jim Kerr, vice president of franchise development for Minnesota-based Dairy Queen. "When I look at the entire state, we have 75-plus new store opportunities – all Dairy Queen Grill & Chill locations."

Beaufort Gazette: Beaufort County land preservation program secures hundreds more acres
<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article65161717.html>

Stephen Fastenau

A Beaufort County land preservation initiative has secured large tracts of land in Bluffton and near Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. The Moody family placed an easement on their 108-acre family farm in northern Beaufort County, according to a news release. The farm is located within the Air Station's Air Installation Compatible Use Zone, where noise and safety are a concern. The easement was bought by the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation program and Air Station. More than 3,600 acres in conservation easements have now been secured by the land program and MCAS. Part of the land will be used by the county to build a regional stormwater basin and two other basins to restore water quality in the Okatie River. The regional stormwater basin is partially funded by a federal grant of \$792,000 the county received in late 2015.

Post and Courier: Battling a behemoth: Hilton Head anglers hook great white shark with rod and reel
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160310/PC16/160319958>

Bo Peterson

They had already caught a few big redfish and Troy Bowman was worn down. Then zing! The big line baited with fish carcass raced out. "It took off like a bus," said Capt. Chip Michalove of Outcast Fishing. Any doubt what they had hooked vanished when the massive fish leapt out of the ocean — a great white shark. "It jumped completely out like a killer whale at Sea World. Straight up," Michalove said.

Herald-Journal: Schools placed on lockout after false report of lions escaping Hollywild
<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160310/articles/160319992>

Daniel J. Gross

A bogus call claiming two lions had escaped from Hollywild Animal Park in Wellford put several Spartanburg County schools on lockout Thursday morning and has left Hollywild officials questioning the motive behind the false claim. The call, which came in shortly after 7 a.m., claimed that two lions were seen eating a horse in a field near Hollywild Animal Park. Spartanburg County environmental enforcement officers responded to Hollywild and found that all animals were accounted for and none had escaped. Before the "all clear" was given, three nearby schools were placed on lockout, meaning no one was permitted to come in or out of the school buildings.

Beaufort Gazette: School district, former Bluffton principal to argue appeal in court next month
<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article65159122.html>

Rebecca Lurye

A former Bluffton principal will once again argue in court that he was wrongfully fired, more than three years after he was first placed on administrative leave by the Beaufort County School District. Oral arguments in the district's case against former H.E. McCracken Middle School principal Phillip Shaw will be held on April 20 in the S.C. Court of Appeals in Columbia, according to the court. The appeal was filed by superintendent Jeff Moss in February 2015 after Judge Marvin Dukes III overturned the school board's decision to formally dismiss Shaw in November 2013. During the school board hearing that resulted in Shaw's termination, school district officials had argued the principal kept odd hours and was often inaccessible while leading H.E. McCracken Middle, lacked leadership and was insubordinate.

The Herald: Winthrop says it will put emergency box at robbery attempt scene

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article65204977.html>

Bristow Marchant

After an outcry and online petition drive, Winthrop University now says it will install an emergency call box in a parking lot that was the scene of an attempted armed robbery of a student last week, and where another student was sexually assaulted in 2014. Winthrop President Dan Mahony made the announcement in an email sent to students on Wednesday. "I was happy to meet with the students who led a recent petition effort today," Mahony says in the email. "I let them know that we will place a call tower on a concrete platform to be installed on the parking lot 'island' closest to Margaret Nance (residence hall)."

Sun News: Former Myrtle Beach city councilman, solicitor dies at 94

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article65181882.html>

Emily Weaver

The Grand Strand community is mourning the death of former city councilman and solicitor Hopkins "Harry" Gardner Charles, who died Tuesday evening following a stroke he suffered several days earlier. Charles was 94 years old. Charles served as solicitor for the 15th judicial circuit and 12 years as councilman and mayor pro tem on the Myrtle Beach City Council.

National News:

Associated Press: Obama says GOP leaders to blame for party 'crackup'

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:d2868fdec4c146c4b7dd813480f4d846>

Kathleen Hennessey and Steve Peoples

Years of Republican hardline politics and divisive rhetoric have spawned Donald Trump and the "crackup" of the GOP, President Barack Obama said Thursday, scoffing at the notion that his actions or policies were to blame for the charged political climate. At a Rose Garden press conference, Obama laid the responsibility on Republican leaders, who tolerated "maximalist," uncompromising politics and created an environment where "somebody like Donald Trump can thrive." The president said conservative leaders should reflect on the policies that landed the party in its current turmoil.

Associated Press: Military to check for water contamination at 664 sites

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=fdG39ucY

Jennifer McDermott

The military is checking whether chemicals from firefighting foam might have contaminated groundwater at hundreds of sites nationwide and potentially tainted drinking water, the Defense Department said. The checks will be carried out at 664 sites where the military has conducted fire or crash training, the department told The Associated Press this week.

Note: So far, 28 naval sites have been tested. California has the most, with 85, followed by Texas, with 57, Florida, with 38, and Alaska and South Carolina, each with 26, according to a list provided to the AP. Each state has at least one site.

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Camlin Moore

Cell: 803-206-8236

Office: 803-734-8044