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Subject: Morning Clips – Tuesday, March 4, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: South Carolina employment reached all-time high in 2013, report says
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140303/PC05/140309836/1010/south-carolina-employment-reached-all-time-high-in-2013-report-says>

Tyrone Richardson

South Carolina's employment reached an all-time high at the end of 2013, according to new information released today.

Note: "This is a real testament to our ever growing business community and world-class workforce and we couldn't be more excited to keep these jobs coming in and getting every person in our state back to work," Haley said in a written statement.

The State: SC drops effort at enforcing immigration law

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/03/3303745/sc-drops-effort-at-enforcing-immigration.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

The state of South Carolina reached a tentative agreement Monday that bans police from holding motorists while checking to see if they are in the country illegally. Officers still can ask motorists stopped on other potential violations for documents to prove their citizenship, as provided for under the state's 2011 law.

Note: "Illegal immigration is still a serious issue in this state, and this settlement doesn't change that or Gov. Haley's position on the matter," said Haley spokesman Doug Mayer. "The fact is, the federal government has completely failed to address this problem and, until they do, South Carolina will continue doing what is necessary to uphold the laws of our state."

USA Today: South Carolina puts brakes on immigration law

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/03/03/south-carolina-immigration-law/5971023/>

Alan Gomez

South Carolina became the latest state to soften its crackdown on undocumented immigrants when state officials on Monday agreed to a settlement with groups that filed a lawsuit.

Note: A spokesman for South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley said the settlement doesn't change the fact that states are being forced to grapple with the issue because the federal government has failed to fix the country's broken immigration system.

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2014 Campaign Cycle News:

Associated Press: GOP governors' group releases anti-Sheheen ad

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Hd1BfER0

The Republican Governor's Association is running a TV ad against South Carolina Sen. Vincent Sheheen that ties him to President Barack Obama and highlights his support of the federal health law. In return, Sheheen called the ad that began airing statewide Monday hypocritical and misleading.

Index-Journal: South Carolina GOP rallies the troops

<http://www.indexjournal.com/Content/News/News/Article/South-Carolina-GOP-rallies-the-troops/4/40/24061>

Frank Bumb

This year figures to be a busy election cycle for South Carolina. With filing for the June primaries and the November general election mere weeks away, the Greenwood County GOP received a call to arms from

South Carolina Republican Party Chairman Matt Moore. Moore said Gov. Nikki Haley is a "target" for national Democrats and South Carolina must remain solidly Republican in the two U.S. Senate races for the GOP to take control of the upper chamber in 2014.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Greenville News: State needs to protect military

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140304/OPINION01/303040004/Editorial-State-needs-protect-military>

Editorial

It is likely that recently proposed cuts to the United States armed forces will result in base closures around the country. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said in February that the Obama administration wants to reduce the Army by up to 80,000 active-duty troops, making it the smallest it has been since before World War II.

Post and Courier: Foster united front against Russia's aggression

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140304/PC1002/140309790/1021/russias-ominous-aggression>

Editorial

The State Department warned Russia on Monday that it must withdraw its troops in Crimea or suffer serious economic and political sanctions. But while that threat is warranted, it's difficult to imagine it striking much fear in Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Times and Democrat: Russia, Putin will not cede influence in Crimea, Ukraine

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/russia-putin-will-not-cede-influence-in-crimea-ukraine/article_6bb68e4a-a336-11e3-baaa-0019bb2963f4.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Russian leader's choice; OUR VIEW: Putin will do what it takes, but he has reason to try avoiding military solution. Any worry that Russian leader Vladimir Putin had about the image of Russia before, during and after the Winter Olympics is long gone. The upheaval in neighboring Ukraine has the Russian leader showing his true colors to the world.

Rock Hill Herald: MOX plant overruns make it too costly

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/03/03/5733978/mox-plant-overruns-make-it-too.html#storylink=cpy>

Editorial

As the old saying goes, if you find yourself in a hole, stop digging. That should apply to the ill-fated program at South Carolina's Savannah River Site to convert plutonium produced for nuclear weapons into fuel for energy plants. Work began in 2007 on a new factory at SRS, a former nuclear bomb plant along the South Carolina-Georgia border where reactors have been shut down for years.

Aiken Standard: Permit certification law accident waiting to happen

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140303/AIK0201/140309844/1018/AIK02/editorial-permit-certification-law-accident-waiting-to-happen>

Editorial

The new concealed-carry law recently passed in South Carolina has been a hot-button issue since the day it was passed. The law allows concealed-weapon permit holders to carry guns into establishments that serve alcohol. That provision of the law, in itself, is one that can be debated at length.

Post and Courier: More Medicaid = more Medicaid fraud

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140304/PC16/140309815/1005/more-medicaid-more-medicaid-fraud>

Frank Wooten

"Such a deal!" No, they don't pitch it with those exact words. But the voices urging South Carolina's acceptance of "free" federal Medicaid expansion dollars do make it sound as if we can't afford to turn them down. Gov. Nikki Haley, however, has turned them down - and rightly so - after looking that gift horse in the mouth.

S.C. Federal Delegation News:

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Graham: America's global strength dwindling

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20140303/ARTICLES/140309932?tc=ar>

Felicia Kitzmiller

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham said Monday that America's global strength is dwindling. He cited threats from Russia, Syria, Iran and extremist groups, and argued against a recent proposal to downsize the military. Graham said he is a supporter of strong action and said he missed former President George W. Bush because "at least you knew where you stood with him."

Legislative Session News:

Greenville News: Senate panel to consider pension fund changes

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140304/NEWS/303040015/Senate-panel-consider-pension-fund-changes>

Tim Smith

The co-chairman of a Senate panel that has heard weeks of testimony about the state's \$28 billion pension fund says he isn't sure any changes are necessary. The testimony has included predictions by the state's treasurer of dire consequences if something isn't done about high investment fees paid by the State Retirement System Investment Commission, and accusations by a chief executive of the agency that the commission is endangered by the treasurer's actions.

Sun News: Possible Common Core compromise gets mixed reviews

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/03/03/4069709/possible-common-core-compromise.html#storylink=cpy>

Vicki Grooms

A state Senate compromise on a bill to repeal the Common Core State Standards in South Carolina is getting mixed reviews from some critics in Horry County, while school district officials defend the standards, which already are being used in the schools. A Senate education subcommittee on Wednesday forwarded a proposal that would keep the standards in place and review them no later than 2018.

Post and Courier: Medical cannabis bill is giving hope to the sufferers of epilepsy and their families

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140303/PC1211/140309785/1177/medical-cannabis-bill-is-giving-hope-to-the-sufferers-of-epilepsy-and-their-families>

David Quick

Yet Gordon is among more than 100,000 people suffering from epilepsy in South Carolina who have new hope. Many want state lawmakers to pass a new bill, the "Medical Cannabis Therapeutic Treatment Research Act," that will allow for the prescription and research on cannabidiol oil for patients with intractable epilepsy.

Post and Courier (Blog): Palmetto Sunrise: Senator believes he's found the 'Obamacare' answer

<http://blog.postandcourier.com/palmetto-politics/2014/03/04/palmetto-sunrise-senator-believes-obamacare-answer/>

Jeremy Borden

In one of the most fevered debates in politics, S.C. Republican Sen. Tom Davis hopes to lower the volume. The senator says that by following a road map laid out by the U.S. Supreme Court, Davis believes he's found a way to slow "Obamacare" without running afoul of the courts or the federal government.

Post and Courier: Group wants strong regulations for S.C. alligator farms

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140303/PC1603/140309799/1031/group-wants-strong-regulations-for-sc-alligator-farms>

Jeremy Borden

Don't plan on ordering up that South Carolina-sourced alligator sausage just yet. The prospect of South Carolina's first alligator farms, a practice generally associated with Florida or Louisiana, has raised interest as the S.C. Senate weighs a bill, S. 714, that would allow for and regulate the prospective new industry. Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg, said many of the group's concerns will be dealt with once state agencies write regulations governing alligator farms.

Anderson Independent: State Rep. Anne Thayer seeking re-election

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/mar/03/state-rep-anne-thayer-seeking-re-election/?partner=RSS>

Kirk Brown

Republican state Rep. Anne Thayer of Anderson has announced that she will run for a third term in South Carolina House District 9. Thayer has held the District 9 seat since she was elected in 2010. The district extends from the city of Anderson to Williamston and Pelzer. According to a finance report that she filed last month, Thayer has \$18,818 in contributions on hand for her re-election bid. At this point, she faces no challengers.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: College of Charleston board releases names of finalists for president
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140303/PC16/140309803/1177/college-of-charleston-board-releases-names-of-finalists-for-president>

Diane Knich

University of West Florida provost Martha Saunders is the only woman on the list of four finalists for the president's post at the College of Charleston. If hired, she would be the college's first female president. The school's Board of Trustees officially released the names of the finalists Monday, after months of speculation on who might be the school's next leader.

Times and Democrat: S.C. State cuts 8 jobs in move to save money
http://thetandd.com/news/s-c-state-cuts-jobs-in-move-to-save-money/article_4e2c47ce-a355-11e3-8f7b-001a4bcf887a.html

Dale Linder-Altman

Days after being officially inaugurated as the 11th president of South Carolina State University, Thomas Elzey is ending a number of temporary employment positions as part of a deficit recovery plan he recently submitted to the S.C. Budget and Control part.

The State: College of Charleston presidential finalists down to 4
<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/03/3303607/college-of-charleston-presidential.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

The College of Charleston will choose from a powerful state politician, an influential Washington insider, a veteran Ivy League professor and a former college president to lead South Carolina's third-largest college. Trustees announced four finalists Monday. All reportedly have the backing of different factions of campus leaders, turning the presidential search into another piece of S.C. political intrigue.

Florence Morning News: Wofford president speaks to rising college costs
http://www.scnow.com/news/education/article_85343604-a33d-11e3-98fa-0017a43b2370.html

Ellen Meder

The Florence Rotary Club hosted the new president of Wofford College at its meeting Monday and got his unique perspective on problems with the ever-rising cost of higher education, as well as his view of issues that have been over-hyped.

Associated Press: Statewide tornado drill slated for South Carolina
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=4DhZdHn8

South Carolina is holding a statewide tornado drill as part of Severe Weather Awareness Week. Officials will sound outdoor sirens and send a tornado warning alert over weather radios at 9 a.m. Tuesday as part of the drill. The South Carolina Emergency Management Division says schools will activate their safety plans, and businesses and homes are encouraged to go over their own plans about how to stay safe if a tornado threatens.

Local News:

Anderson Independent: Study: Property tax law shortchanges some local school districts
<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/mar/03/study-property-tax-law-shortchanges-some-local/?partner=RSS>

Sarah Freishtat

Some local school districts were shortchanged by a 2006 law designed to save homeowners money on property taxes, according to a recently released study from Clemson University. The law, Act 388, replaced schools' property tax revenue with a one-cent sales tax, and allowed that sales tax money to be distributed to each school district.

The State: City Council to vote on Columbia baseball stadium

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/03/3303640/columbia-city-council-to-vote.html#storylink=cpy>

Noelle Phillips

City Council is poised to vote Tuesday on a contract to build a baseball stadium, with the team's owner pledging money even if the Bull Street development falters. Under the agreement, Hardball Capital would be on the hook for payments until the total amount of private development in the Bull Street project reached \$60 million.

National News

National Journal: Congressional Democrats Face Uphill Battle in Midterms

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/off-to-the-races/congressional-democrats-face-uphill-battle-in-midterms-20140303>

Charlie Cook

At this point, eight months before the Nov. 4 election, it's hard to see a lot of good news for congressional Democrats. No matter how you look at it, the House seems out of reach. Today, Republicans appear a bit more likely to gain than to lose seats; it would take a cataclysmic event for Democrats to score the net gain of the 17 seats they need to take the majority.

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