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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Gov. Nikki Haley supporting Columbia's strong mayor referendum

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/11/30/3130613/gov-nikki-haley-supporting-columbias.html#storylink=cpy>

Adam Beam

Just days before Columbia voters head to the poll to decide how their city should be run, the state's highest elected official has weighed in. Gov. Nikki Haley has come out in support of Columbia's strong mayor referendum, which will be decided on Tuesday, after discussing the issue with Mayor Steve Benjamin. A mailer explaining her position was sent to residents late this week.

Note: "After talking to Mayor Benjamin, Governor Haley was happy to lend her support," said Rob Godfrey, a spokesman for Haley, in a statement. "The governor has long believed in restructuring government to produce accountability and efficiency for the people it serves -- not just in state government, but at every level of government."

The State: Local leaders, including governor, weigh in last minute on Columbia's strong-mayor referendum

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/11/30/3131874/local-leaders-including-governor.html#storylink=cpy>

Just days before Columbia voters head to the polls to decide how their city should be run, the state's highest elected official and several powerhouse former city councilwomen are weighing in. Gov. Nikki Haley has come out in support of Columbia's strong-mayor referendum, which will be decided on Tuesday. Meanwhile, former longtime city District 3 representative Anne Sinclair and former councilwoman Belinda Gergel, who also once represented District 3, weighed in — on opposite ends of the debate.

Note: "After talking to Mayor (Steve) Benjamin, Governor Haley was happy to lend her support," said Rob Godfrey, a spokesman for Haley, in a statement. "The governor has long believed in restructuring government to produce accountability and efficiency for the people it serves — not just in state government, but at every level of government."

Note: "This is exactly the kind of reform Governor Haley has fought for at the state level and a rare opportunity for our city," Fogle said in a statement.

Note: McMaster said Haley's endorsement is a huge advantage for supporters of the strong-mayor system. "She is one of the leading voices probably in the country on reform and making things work better," McMaster said.

The State: The Buzz: War on Christmas and Confederate angels

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/11/30/3131969/the-buzz-war-on-christmas-and.html#storylink=cpy>

Jamie Self

Just in time for Thanksgiving, a Rock Hill charter school found its holiday concert the site of a debate on whether religious Christmas carols belong in school. The controversy spawned national attention and a liberty group's promise to lawyer up.

Common Core: The fight that unifies: S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley supports a bill currently in the state Senate that would render null and void the Common Core education standards – reviled by vocal limited-government activists and some lawmakers as a government takeover. Her support for the bill, confirmed by her spokesman Wednesday, really is no surprise to The Buzz, considering Haley supported an identical bill sponsored by Sen. Mike Fair, R-Greenville, in the previous legislative session.

Allen Olson didn't leave the Tea Party, the Tea Party left him: One of South Carolina's first Tea Party leaders has severed his ties with the conservative movement and is running for Lexington County Council.

Cola Daily: Annual Carolighting at State House set for Monday

<http://coladaily.com/2013/12/01/annual-carolighting-at-state-house-set-for-monday/>

Allen Wallace

The 47th Annual Governor's Carolighting event has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday at the State House.

Gov. Nikki Haley and her family along with Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin and his family will light the official State Christmas Tree at the event, which also will include performances from local musical groups.

Note: “The holiday season is a special time for South Carolinians and my family is always excited to participate in this beautiful tradition,” Haley said in a news release.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

The State: Columbians Must Vote In City’s Best Interest In Tuesday’s Strong-mayor Referendum

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=LrARfMk8

Editorial

Change doesn’t always come easy or without some trepidation - even when it is for the best. So the uneasiness and fear opponents express about empowering Columbia’s mayor to run the city’s day-to-day operations isn’t surprising. Tuesday’s referendum isn’t the first time voters have been asked to adopt a significant change in the way the city is governed - all in the interest of moving our capital city forward. In times past, Columbians have chosen the city’s future over fear and responded affirmatively. They must do so again Tuesday. This latest vote comes nearly 22 years to the day that another historic referendum changed the way the city is governed.

The State: Columbia Deserves More Than Council-manager Has Delivered

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=W4mVxQHa

Warren Bolton

Is it any wonder that Columbians wanted to change the city’s form of government in 1949? Then-Columbia City Councilman Lester L. Bates’ characterization of the commission structure under which the city operated paints a disturbing picture of a government ripe for inefficiency, waste and, yes, corruption. Five council members essentially divided the functions of government among themselves and ran them as their own fiefdoms. Mr. Bates, who later would be elected mayor, went on to say that “City Council serves the triple function of lawmaking, judging and administering.”

Post and Courier: Immigration reform, step by step

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131201/PC1002/131209948/1021/start-small-on-immigration>

Editorial

If passing immigration legislation were an easy task, such a bill would have been signed into law long ago. But there are fresh signs of a possible breakthrough that could achieve overdue repairs of a broken system. President Barack Obama, like President George W. Bush before him, has repeatedly tried — and failed — to get “comprehensive” immigration reform from Congress. However, President Obama recently sounded willing to ease that “comprehensive” demand. In a Nov. 19 interview before business executives at The Wall Street Journal CEO Council, the president said of House Republicans’ insistence on taking reform one step at a time: “If they want to chop that thing up into five pieces, as long as all five pieces get done, I don’t care what it looks like.”

Post and Courier: Just the facts about solar

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131201/PC1002/131209947/1021/just-the-facts-about-solar>

Editorial

For years, South Carolina has met the subject of solar power with considerable misinformation, and resulting mistrust. That could be about to change. Finally. A special Energy Advisory Council has all but completed months of exhaustive research in its mission to sort fact from fiction. The report in its draft form will be considered at a public hearing on Dec. 11 and finalized by the end of the year. The report provides solid data about the growing demand for solar energy, other states’ regulatory path to solar energy and potential related cost benefits and deficits. Its findings are clear: There is no good reason South Carolina can’t do better than it does now.

South Carolina News:

Greenville News: South Carolina colleges undergo building boom

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013312010097>

Ron Barnett

During an era of tuition increases that were blamed on state budget cuts, Clemson and the University of South Carolina spent more than \$1.2 billion on new buildings. Over the past decade, Clemson built or is in the process of building \$513.9 million worth of facilities, while USC spent \$733 million on major projects,

according to documents obtained by The Greenville News through Freedom of Information Act requests. However, the level of spending for construction at the two schools, and at institutions of higher education across South Carolina, is dwarfed by that spent by its nearest neighbors.

Post and Courier: Trains and planes: Why a railroad is buying Boeing's expansion site in North Charleston
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131201/PC05/131209991/1177/trains-and-planes-why-a-railroad-is-buying-boeing-x2019-s-expansion-site-in-north-charleston>

John McDermot

Contrary to previous and repeated public pronouncements, Boeing Co. won't be buying a big parcel of land near its 787 campus at Charleston International Airport. Not anytime soon, at least. Instead, a small public railroad is preparing to pounce on the 267 acres, though it's hardly a back-door land grab. The public bond market is at the root of this latest plot twist in the Boeing South Carolina growth story. The Palmetto State parachuted back into the murky world of municipal finance last week, when it raised \$146 million by issuing tax-backed debt to investors.

Post and Courier: Some Obamacare bright spots in S.C. amid sign-up horror stories
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131130/PC16/131139944/1177/some-obamacare-bright-spots-in-sc-amid-sign-up-horror-stories>

Lauren Sausser

There are plenty reasons to complain about Obamacare. The website, of course, doesn't work very well, at least not for everyone. But healthcare.gov's flaws are just the tip of the iceberg. Some insurers are tightening up their provider networks to cut costs. The prices of many health plans may increase next year. Beneficiaries potentially face canceled coverage if their policies don't comply with the law. These issues only tell part of the story, though. There are people out there — many of them here in South Carolina — who are happy with this federal law.

Associated Press: SC research lab aims to change building methods
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=6cRHZQAU

Seanna Adcox

The insurance industry hopes a 21,000-square-foot lab in rural South Carolina can help revolutionize the way homes are built and stem the cost of Mother Nature's disasters. Officials at the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety say the wake of destruction left by hurricanes, wildfires and other natural disasters can be greatly reduced with construction choices that cost little extra upfront. They hope research at the facility persuades people to make those choices, ultimately saving lives and money.

Rock Hill Herald: Some S.C. jails also use restraint chairs; others don't
<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/11/30/5458627/some-sc-jails-also-use-restraint.html#storylink=cpy>

Jonathan McFadden

The York County Detention Center isn't alone in its use of restraint chairs to control disruptive and violent inmates, but not all jails use them. Guards at the Spartanburg County Detention Center don't use restraint chairs, said Major Neal Urch, operations director for the jail, but for years they have used other measures to deal with unruly inmates. "I'm not saying they're good or bad," Urch said of restraint chairs. "If someone is verbally noncompliant ... if you can control that with your verbal commands ... and the person complies with that, nothing else is needed.

Associated Press: DHEC urges testing on World AIDS Day
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=WfZnjkeE

South Carolina health officials are urging residents to get tested for HIV and AIDS. Sunday is World AIDS Day, and officials with the Department of Health and Environmental Control say the day is a good reminder to get tested. DHEC's Janet Tapp says more than 15,000 people in South Carolina are living with HIV or AIDS. The theme of this year's World AIDS Day is "shared responsibility." Tapp says DHEC is encouraging private sector groups to work together to help identify and care for people living with the disease.

The State: Study Shows S.C. Has Among Highest ADHD Rates
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=41d4igtT

Joey Holleman

The incidence of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder is rising rapidly nationally, and South Carolina has among the highest percentage of children diagnosed with the condition, according to a recent report. The study, reported in the November Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, is

based on a 2011 survey of parents. The study found 11 percent of U.S. children 4-17 years of age have been diagnosed with ADHD at some point in their lives. That's 6.4 million kids, nearly 2 million more than in 2003.

The State: Walter Bristow, former SC lawmaker, judge dies

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/11/30/3130992/walter-bristow-former-sc-lawmaker.html#storylink=cpy>

Walter James Bristow Jr., an attorney who represented Richland County in the state Senate from 1958 through the 1970s and also served as a circuit judge, died at his home in Columbia Saturday. He was 89. Among his accomplishments as a Democratic legislator, Bristow sponsored bills to establish Midlands Technical College, Columbia Metropolitan Airport, the State Museum and Riverbanks Zoo. He is also credited with helping establish then-Richland Memorial Hospital, the Family Court system and the state Commission for the Blind.

Local News:

Greenville News: Parents urge Greenville County school board to take tough action on bullying

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013312010099>

Ron Barnett

Two parents, a grandparent and an adult who said he attempted suicide after being bullied as a child have urged the Greenville County School Board to take action to address bullying problems in schools. A mother choked back tears as she tried to tell her daughter's story recently to the school board. "She felt left out. She felt like the adults that were supposed to protect her, supposed to keep her safe, let her down," the mother said. "She did not feel safe going back to that school." The board, following its policy, didn't respond to comments from the speakers during the meeting. Later, Chairman Chuck Saylor told The Greenville News that the district is serious about trying to prevent bullying.

The State: Greenville's Successful System Didn't Need 'strong Mayor'

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=FGi881U8

Clif LeBlanc

Prosperity has come to Greenville under its strong-manager form of government, but it took steps and missteps – small and large – to get there, its mayor said. "I've experienced a dysfunctional council. I've experienced a dysfunctional manager," Mayor Knox White said of his 17-year tenure. "None of the systems is perfect. It's going to come down to the personalities and the willingness to work together. The personalities matter a lot." The Upstate's economic hub has operated with a professional city manager and a 4-2-1 election system for its City Council since the mid-1970s.

The State: Charleston's Mayor Flexes Muscle, Needs Consensus, Too

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

Clif LeBlanc

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley is the embodiment of a strong mayor: All major changes in the port city have to go through him. Riley has weighed in heavily on Columbia's strong-mayor referendum that is to go before voters Tuesday. He wrote a guest column that appeared in The State newspaper Nov. 17 in support of the capital city's conversion from the city manager system it has had 64 years. Riley also gave the newspaper an hour-long interview about the strong-mayor system in Charleston, which is "long overdue" in Columbia, he said.

Island Packet: Harbour Town businesses rejoice at dredging preparations

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2013/11/30/2823487/harbour-town-businesses-rejoice.html#storylink=cpy>

Tom Barton

Harbormaster Nancy Cappelmann gazes out her window at the barge with a crane floating in front of her office at the entrance to Harbour Town Yacht Basin and smiles. That equipment will carry a lot of her worries away. For the past two years, Cappelmann has fretted over the loss of business from boats that bypassed the marina and its striped lighthouse on Hilton Head Island's south end. Sediment has accumulated over the past decade, making the yacht basin too shallow for many boats during low tide.

Island Packet: School district one step closer to defining school choice for Beaufort County

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2013/11/30/2823210/school-district-one-step-closer.html#storylink=cpy>

Sarah Bowman

A Beaufort County Board of Education committee has met several times with district officials in recent weeks

to discuss a plan for school choice -- a term that means different things to different people. The school board's latest take on the concept is a system in which each school in the school district would offer its own overarching program -- International Baccalaureate or Montessori instruction, for example. Parents could then choose for their children any program within certain geographic boundaries.

Post and Courier: Use of Greenbelt money for land without public access questioned

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131201/PC16/131209998/1006/head-xy-head-xy-head-xy-head-xy>

Diane Knich

Developers likely would love to get their hands on the Legare Farm property, conservationists say. And why not? It's a beautiful mix of farmland and woods on the Stono River on the southern end of the island. It's also just a stone's throw from the resort islands of Kiawah and Seabrook. That's why they say the land should be preserved. The best way to do that, they say, is to pay the Legares \$900,000 with money from Charleston County's rural Greenbelt program to place a conservation easement on their 314-acre property.

Florence Morning News: Bond could bring much needed parking to downtown Florence

http://www.scnow.com/news/politics/article_0566b28e-5a1e-11e3-9f52-001a4bcf6878.html

Gavin Jackson

As road projects from the first Capital Project Sales Tax return to life and the first project for the second CPST gets underway, the City of Florence is preparing for a \$20.5 million infrastructure stimulus, so to speak, of its own to pay for projects such as downtown parking garages, a neighborhood basketball complex and others. In a special called Florence City Council meeting on Nov. 5, the council announced major news that it would be providing millions in incentives for the Kress and Royal Knight building redevelopment projects.

National News:

Associated Press: Critical thinking hallmark of Common Core class

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=GgDhVicT

Philip Elliott

Remembering the plot of a short story is no longer good enough in teacher Amy Lawson's fifth-grade classroom. Today's students are being asked to think more critically. For example, what might a character say in an email to a friend? "It's hard. But you can handle this," Lawson tells them. Welcome to a classroom using the Common Core State Standards, one of the most politicized and misunderstood changes in education for students and their teachers in kindergarten through high school.

Associated Press: Officials: Healthcare.gov making strides

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=KnfnWm6d

Darlene Superville

Visitors to the government's health care website encounter fewer errors and the system now works most of the time, administration officials said Sunday in a progress report. But they also acknowledged the rocky rollout of healthcare.gov included hundreds of software bugs, inadequate equipment and inefficient management. The government says more than 50,000 people can log on to the website and more than 800,000 people will be able to shop for insurance coverage each day.

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