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To:
Date: 3/19/2014 7:13:25 AM
Subject: Morning Clips – Wednesday, March 19, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Greenville News: SC sues feds over plan to halt \$30B MOX project

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140319/NEWS03/303190016/SC-sues-feds-over-plan-halt-30B-MOX-project>

Tim Smith

The state is suing the federal government over its plans to halt a \$30 billion project at the Savannah River Site to convert weapons-grade plutonium to commercial reactor fuel, arguing that suspending the project is unlawful and unconstitutional.

Note: "They messed with the wrong state," Haley said.

Note: "You've got millions of dollars invested in this facility," Haley said. "And suddenly you're going to say, 'Never mind, we didn't mean it, never mind, it was a bad idea?' You can't do that when it affects lives of people."

Aiken Standard: S.C. sues the Energy Department over MOX facility

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140319/AIK0101/140319357/1004/sc-sues-the-energy-department-over-mox-facility>

Derrek Asberry

Gov. Nikki Haley and staff members said the state of South Carolina is filing suit in support of the Savannah River Site's MOX facility, because President Barack Obama's cold stand-by initiative violates agreements between the state and the federal government.

Note: "It's a facility that (Washington) D.C. started, and with plutonium sitting there ... and now you're going to stop MOX?" Haley questioned. "They're hurting the people of South Carolina, and we're not going to sit back and take it."

Reuters: South Carolina sues U.S. Energy Department to save reactor fuel plant

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/19/usa-scarolina-nuclear-idUSL2N0MG00920140319>

Harriet McLeod

South Carolina sued the U.S. Department of Energy on Tuesday over the federal government's plans to scrap a plutonium recycling plant that has been under construction for years in the state, arguing it violates a nuclear non-proliferation treaty with Russia.

Note: "In South Carolina when I was raised by my parents, your word meant something," Haley said. "In Washington, D.C., that's no longer the case. Now we have a facility that D.C. started, and plutonium sitting there, and now you're going to stop MOX? We're not going to stand back and take it. They have messed with the wrong state."

Greenville News: State computers may face new hacking risk

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140319/NEWS09/303190033/State-computers-may-face-new-hacking-risk>

Tim Smith

Almost a year and a half after a hacker broke into state computers and stole data affecting millions, state agencies are scrambling to prevent opening their computers again to hackers when the maker of a popular operating system stops maintaining it next month.

Note: "Ensuring that we have the most up-to-date computer technology and cyber security systems is one of Gov. (Nikki) Haley's top priorities," said Doug Mayer, a spokesman for the governor. "The governor's office is working with our cabinet agencies and the Division of State Information Technology as they continue to address any changes that need to be made."

Post and Courier: Charleston's African-American museum hits funding block

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC16/140319341>

Cynthia Roldan, Schuyler Kropf

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley's push to build an International African American Museum near the city's waterfront has hit a severe cash roadblock after the Legislature fell far short in providing the millions of dollars the mayor requested.

Note: Haley's communications director, Doug Mayer, issued a statement Tuesday saying the governor received Riley's request as information. "The governor appreciates Mayor Riley taking the time to meet on this issue, enjoyed the discussion, and will review the information that the mayor left regarding the project," he said.

Aiken Standard: Council tables final approval of storm recovery funds

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140319/AIK0101/140319341/1004/council-tables-final-approval-of-storm-recovery-funds>

Maayan Schechter

Aiken County Council agreed to table the final reading of an ordinance to appropriate \$2 million or less from the current budget's general fund for ice storm recovery on Tuesday.

Note: The state will pick up the remaining 25 percent of the cost to cover recovery and emergency operations since the White House approved Gov. Nikki Haley's request for federal disaster relief for 21 out of 46 counties last week.

Seneca Journal: Seasonal job losses hurt Oconee, Pickens

<https://upstatetoday.com/2014/03/seasonal-job-losses-hurt-oconee-pickens/>

Carlos Galarza-Veve

The jobless rate bounced up in Oconee and most of the other 46 counties in South Carolina as employers took seasonal jobs off the payroll in January, the latest state Department of Employment and Workforce labor statistics show.

Note: "Today's news is a real testament to the hard-working people of South Carolina and another sign that we're continuing to move in the right direction," Haley said.

2014 Campaign Cycle News:

Post and Courier (Video): RGA rolls out new advertisement against Sheheen on 'ObamaCare' support

<http://politics.postandcourier.com/?p=3222>

Jeremy Borden

The Republican Governors Association is rolling out a new advertisement hitting Gov. Nikki Haley's likely Democratic opponent, state Sen. Vincent Sheheen, on what is becoming a familiar theme — his support of the Affordable Care Act.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

The State: A get-out-of-ethics-jail-free card?

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/18/3333810/a-get-out-of-ethics-jail-free.html#storylink=cpy>

Cindi Scoppe

Rep. Kirkman Finlay's latest legislative newsletter arrived this morning with this outline of his package of ethics bills that recently came out of subcommittee: Those sound pretty good. Until you start looking at the actual bills. Specifically, H.4553. The bill does indeed allow candidates to correct "technical violations in campaign reporting."

Aiken Standard: Graham wrong on chain of command

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140319/AIK02/140319364/1018/AIK02/editorial-graham-wrong-on-chain-of-command>

Editorial

Putting the prosecution of military sexual assaults in the hands of seasoned, unbiased prosecutors will not undermine the authority of commanders, despite concerns expressed by U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. There's a clear reason why the U.S. Senate last week was considering changes to the current system — the shocking gap in the military regarding the number of sexual assaults and the number of sexual assaults actually reported.

The State: S.666 offers an education in legislative meddling

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/19/3334597/scope-s666-offers-an-education.html#storylink=cpy>

Cindi Scoppe

SENATE BILL 666 — the number alone should give you pause — would strip elected school board members of the power to approve their own budget, instead requiring voter approval in a public referendum. I'm sure some of you think that's just fine, but that's just the beginning.

Post and Courier: Folks are lining up to get beat by Lindsey Graham

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140319/PC16/140319334/1177/folks-are-lining-up-to-get-beat-by-lindsey-graham>

Brian Hicks

Apparently the electoral process is a little ambiguous for some folks in South Carolina. If you don't like a candidate - say, for instance, Lindsey Graham - you are perfectly within your legal rights to vote for someone else. You don't have to run against him.

Greenville News: Tax credits already bearing fruit

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140319/OPINION01/303190012/Editorial-Tax-credits-already-bearing-fruit>

Editorial

Upstate South Carolina already is getting a glimpse of the potential impact of a law signed last year that creates a significant tax incentive for so-called "angel investors" who are focused on investing in start-up companies that have high growth potential.

Rock Hill Herald: Backdoor attempts to ban abortion

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/03/18/5782803/backdoor-attempts-to-ban-abortion.html>

Editorial

Abortion foes have been unable to overturn Roe v. Wade either in the courts or in Congress. So they have had to resort to different tactics, including regulations that are so restrictive they amount to de facto bans on abortion. Four such bills have been introduced in the S.C. Legislature, three of them by state Sen. Lee Bright, R-Spartanburg.

Legislative Session News:

The State: Emma's law: Safety activists try to toughen laws they say coddle potential DUI killers

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/18/3334262/emmas-law-safety-activists-try.html#storylink=cpy>

John Monk

Placards have been posted across the Midlands. Bumper stickers have been put on cars. And David Longstreet has talked to about every civic group he could find to push for the passage of Emma's Law. He and his wife, Karen, of Lexington, lost their 6-year-old daughter Emma to a repeat drunk driver in 2012. On Thursday morning, after a year's delay, the proposed Emma's Law, which supporters say would cut down on DUI-related fatalities, injuries and crashes, will come up for consideration in an obscure S.C. House subcommittee.

Post and Courier: Child abuse bill moves forward in S.C. Senate

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC1603/140319326/1031/child-abuse-bill-moves-forward-in-sc-senate>

Jeremy Borden

Employers would be prohibited from disciplining, suspending or firing employees who report child abuse or neglect under a bill that passed the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday. The bill, H. 3124, received unanimous support and will move to the full Senate for a vote. Under the bill, an employer could be forced to reinstate an employee or pay back pay if they discipline or fire someone for alleging child abuse.

Post and Courier: Mayor Riley plans to push college merger issue at S.C. House meeting

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC1603/140319332/1031/mayor-riley-plans-to-push-college-merger-issue-at-sc-house-meeting>

Jeremy Borden, Schuyler Kropf

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley said he plans to push a merger between the College of Charleston and the Medical University of South Carolina when he appears in front of an S.C. House committee. The committee, scheduled to meet Wednesday morning, is made up of six House members with divergent views on whether to merge CofC and MUSC, a contentious proposition that would create the Lowcountry's first

comprehensive research university.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Spartanburg County officials concerned about House plan for state roads
<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20140318/ARTICLES/140319720/1083/ARTICLES?Title=Spartanburg-County-officials-concerned-about-House-plan-for-state-roads->

Felicia Kitzmiller

Rough roads could get worse if a House budget proviso is approved by the Senate, Spartanburg County officials warn. Last week, in an attempt to reduce the financial burden of more than 41,000 miles of state roads, the fourth largest system in the country, state representatives gave cursory approval to a plan designed to incentivize counties and municipalities into taking control of short roads.

Seneca Journal: Common Core revisions draw reaction

<https://upstatetoday.com/2014/03/common-core-revisions-draw-reaction/>

Greg Oliver

Officials are reacting to the South Carolina Senate Education Committee's approval last week to a bill that would keep Common Core State Standards in place while reviewing them by no later than 2018. The committee passed an amendment to the original bill which, rather than completely ban the standards, would review them, protect students' personal information, delay any new testing for two years and eliminate the high school exit exam from school district ratings.

Associated Press: Bill increases penalties for speeding in work zone

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Vph00zKg

Seanna Adcox

A bill dubbed by senators Tuesday as "Peanut's Law" aims to slow down drivers in highway construction zones across South Carolina by increasing penalties and state troopers' presence. Supporters told a Senate panel the measure is essential to the safety of drivers and workers in the inherently dangerous areas.

Associated Press: Bill to require cursive for SC students advances

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

Seanna Adcox

A bill requiring South Carolina's school districts to teach students how to write in cursive by fifth grade advanced Tuesday in the House. An 8-0 vote sent the bill to the full Education Committee. The main sponsor, Rep. Dwight Loftis, contends students still need handwriting skills despite the increase in digital communications.

Aiken Standard: Young optimistic on penny sales tax option

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140318/AIK0101/140319334/1007/AIK0101/young-optimistic-on-penny-sales-tax-option>

Rob Novit

S.C. Sen. Tom Young, R-District 24, continues to work on a Senate measure that would give the Aiken County School District, and those in some other districts, the authority to ask voters to support a penny sales tax through a referendum in November.

Anderson Independent: State graduation requirements to come under scrutiny

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/mar/18/state-graduation-requirements-to-come-under/?partner=RSS>

Sarah Freishtat

The state superintendent of education is forming a committee to recommend changes to the state's graduation requirements, such as creating multiple diplomas and changing the number of required credits. The committee, made up of school and industry officials from around the state, is designed to prevent students from dropping out of school by giving them new ways to earn a diploma, said Anderson District 5 Superintendent Tom Wilson, who is part of the advisory group.

Anderson Independent: S.C. bill would make lying about military service a crime

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/mar/18/sc-bill-would-make-lying-about-military-service/?partner=RSS>

Kirk Brown

Two veterans from Anderson County voiced strong support Tuesday for state legislation that would make it a crime for people to benefit from lying about their military service. Anderson County Veterans Affairs officer

Sammy Lewis said the measure is needed to punish anyone who fraudulently seeks military-related benefits. He said such claims slow the processing of aid for legitimate veterans.

Post and Courier: Dorchester again seeks funds for mandated state services

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC16/140319343/1006/dorchester-again-seeks-funds-for-state-services>

Bo Petersen

Dorchester County will try one more time to get state legislatures to make full payment of funds designed to run state-mandated services in the county. This time, there might even be a chance, said County Councilman George Bailey. The local government fund disbursed from state taxes to county and municipal governments was reduced after the 2008 recession.

S.C. Political News:

Post and Courier: Candidate filings Tuesday, March 18

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC1610/140319331/1031/candidate-filings-tuesday-march-18>

After second day of political candidate filing, here's who's in...

The State: Columbia pastor announces campaign for U.S. Senate

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/19/3334579/columbia-pastor-announces-campaign.html#storylink=cpy>

Jamie Self

Det Bowers, a Columbia pastor who stepped down from his church last year, has left light footprints as he's traveled the state to meet with GOP leaders and raise money from potential supporters in his run to unseat U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca.

Index-Journal: Third District U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan files to seek re-election

<http://www.indexjournal.com/Content/News/News/Article/Third-District-U-S--Rep--Jeff-Duncan-files-to-seek-re-election/4/40/24382>

Chris Trainor

Republican Third District U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan currently is serving his second term in the House of Representative. He is now hoping voters will send him back to Washington for a third term. Duncan formally filed Tuesday to seek re-election in the Third District. Partisan primary elections are set for June 10, with runoffs June 24, if necessary.

Florence Morning News: Branham declines to seek a seventh term in SC House

http://www.scnow.com/news/politics/article_756d8108-aef0-11e3-af0a-001a4bcf6878.html

Gavin Jackson

State Representative Lester Branham Jr., D-S.C. 61, announced Tuesday that he won't be running for a seventh term representing the people of southern Florence County and western Marion County. Branham, a Democrat, serves on the House Education and Public Works Committee and chairs the Higher Education Subcommittee and said spreading the message of higher education has been one of his primary missions while in the House.

Associated Press: Eckstrom wants ethics allegations dismissed

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=bSIqEpl1

Meg Kinnard

South Carolina's top accountant is seeking the dismissal of ethics allegations that he used campaign money to accompany his girlfriend to the 2012 Republican National Convention. Attorneys for Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom are asking the Ethics Commission on Wednesday to dismiss six charges of using campaign money for personal benefit.

The State: Richard Eckstrom asking SC ethics commission to dismiss charges

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/18/3333782/politics-richard-eckstrom-asking.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

S.C. Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom is scheduled Wednesday to ask the S.C. Ethics Commission to drop its case against him on charges of using campaign money to attend the 2012 Republican National Convention. The commission found probable cause in November that the state's top accountant spent \$1,642 from his campaign coffer on the trip to Florida that actually were personal expenses.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: South Carolina prison officials believe inmates posted rap video

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140318/PC16/140319327/1006/south-carolina-prison-officials-believe-inmates-posted-rap-video>

Dave Munday

A group of South Carolina prison inmates made a rap video and posted it to the Internet, a violation of prison policy. Officials say they have identified the inmates and will deal with them after their investigation is complete. Corrections officials did not say where the video was filmed or release the names of the inmates.

WLTX: Prison Rap Video Being Investigated

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/crime/2014/03/18/south-carolina-prison-rap-video/6579149/>

Steven Dial

The South Carolina Department of Corrections is investigating how several inmates were able to create and post a rap video online from behind bars. The video shows several inmates at a correctional facility in our state rapping to a camera. The video has had more than 400,000 views on the web, and new Department of Corrections director Bryan Stirling says it upsets him.

Associated Press: SC hospital expert talks on Affordable Care Act

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

The president and chief executive officer of the South Carolina Hospital Association is speaking about the state and its relationship with the Affordable Care Act. Thornton Kirby is slated to speak Wednesday at 1 p. m. at Wofford College in Spartanburg.

Associated Press: Clyburn to deliver USC Southern Studies talk

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Ide0sTcx

U.S. Rep. James Clyburn is delivering the Philip G. Grose Lecture in cooperation with the Institute for Southern Studies at the University of South Carolina. The lecture begins at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the Booker T. Washington Auditorium at 1400 Wheat St. The event is free and open to the public.

Local News:

The State: Elections office legal bills concern some on Richland County council

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/18/3334192/elections-office-legal-bills-concern.html#storylink=cpy>

Dawn Hinshaw

Just as Richland County legislators ask the county to represent them in court, three County Council members are questioning legal bills they've already had to cover for the state-appointed elections office. Members Greg Pearce, Seth Rose and Bill Malinowski asked Tuesday for a financial analysis of hours the county attorney's office has provided to an election board the county funds but does not supervise.

The State: Columbia Chamber names Blackstone as new leader

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/18/3334019/exclusive-columbia-chamber-names.html#storylink=cpy>

Jeff Wilkinson

A legislative advisor for former Gov. Mark Sanford and the state Chamber of Commerce has been named the new chief executive of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Carl Blackstone, 43, now a legislative advisor with the law firm Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, will take the reins of the Midlands' largest and most influential business advocacy group on Monday.

National News:

Associated Press: Campaign finance reports hint at parties' goals

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=r4dv9Ebb

Philip Elliott

Republicans are trying to convert hard-won gains in statehouses to successes in this November's congressional elections and the 2016 race for the White House, according to a review of their campaign finance reports. For Democrats, the next two years are more about protecting political turf and keeping a political machine humming.

Associated Press: Health law concerns for cancer centers

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_HEALTH_OVERHAUL_TOP_CANCER_CENTERS?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2014-03-18-17-46-02

Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar

Cancer patients relieved that they can get insurance coverage because of the new health care law may be disappointed to learn that some the nation's best cancer hospitals are off-limits. An Associated Press survey found examples coast to coast. Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is excluded by five out of eight insurers in Washington state's insurance exchange.

Associated Press: In Putin's backyard, nations look West for support

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=na6BmA3Y

Josh Lederman

After moving to annex Crimea, Russian President Vladimir Putin insists he has no intention of invading other regions in Ukraine, much less other nations. But leaders in Russia's backyard aren't so sure, and they're looking to Vice President Joe Biden for assurances that the U.S. has a plan to prevent that from happening.

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