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Subject: Afternoon Clips – Thursday, January 7, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Gov. Nikki Haley setting her own agenda for State of the Union response

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article53550030.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley said Thursday that she plans to address challenges in her state and nation that she thinks are most important in her Republican response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union address next week.

Note: Haley declined to reveal details of what she planned to say, except to repeat that she is giving an "address" to the nation rather a "response" to Obama.

Note: "I certainly am not one to compete against the president or try to imply that I could be," she told reporters. "I just wanted to take this as an opportunity to express the challenges that I think we have seen in our state but also in our country and the solutions ... and the opportunities that can be there."

WJBF: South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley Announces Statewide Domestic Violence Reforms

<http://wjbf.com/2016/01/07/%EF%BB%BFsouth-carolina-governor-nikki-haley-announces-statewide-domestic-violence-reforms/>

Randy L. Key

Governor Nikki Haley, along with members of the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force, and solicitors from around the state held a Statehouse press conference Thursday afternoon announcing the implementation of the first set of significant, statewide reforms to address domestic violence in South Carolina.

Note: "This is a chance for everybody in South Carolina to change our ranking on domestic violence. This is a chance for everybody in South Carolina to say, 'We all can do something about this,'" said Gov. Haley at the press conference. In extending how long the task force will exist, Gov. Haley said it is "too good to stop now."

Associated Press: Gov. Haley: Changes being made to fight domestic violence

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

Meg Kinnard

Gov. Nikki Haley says progress is being made in South Carolina's fight against domestic violence. Haley told reporters Thursday she has signed an executive order giving the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force more time to continue finding ways to fight the problem.

Greenville News: Lawmakers: DOT's flood work could help road-funding bill

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/01/07/lawmakers-dots-flood-work-could-help-road-funding-bill/78297508/>

Tim Smith

When the state Senate failed to take up and vote on long-term road-funding plans last year, some senators attacked the state's transportation leaders and their spending, arguing the highway department's budget had increased by hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years but the state's roads were still in bad shape.

Note: A year ago, Gov. Nikki Haley proposed raising the state's gas tax by 10 cents per gallon, but only if lawmakers also changed the way DOT commissioners are chosen and adopted a reduction in the state's personal income tax rate.

Note: The House last April passed a bill that would raise more than \$300 million for road repairs, change the system for picking highway commissioners and offer a carrot to counties willing to take some of the local roads in the state's inventory, with a tax cut much smaller than Haley wanted.

WSOC: Nikki Haley preparing for national spotlight, opposite president

<http://www.wsoc.com/news/news/local/nikki-haley-preparing-national-spotlight-opposite-npzPS/>

Thursday afternoon to talk about the results of a statewide domestic violence initiative.

Instead, she ended up answering far more questions about her upcoming moment in the national spotlight next week. Haley was picked by GOP leaders to deliver the party's response to President Barack Obama's final State of the Union speech on Tuesday.

Note: "I always say this and I know you guys don't believe me, but we've got a lot more things to do and so I'm looking forward to continuing on with those challenges and continuing to get more solutions for our state," she said.

National Journal: Why Republicans Want Nikki Haley to Be the VP

In the South Carolina governor, GOP pros see a prospective vice presidential candidate who could trump Hillary Clinton's advantage with women voters.

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/s/237460/why-republicans-want-nikki-haley-be-vp>

Alex Roarty, Karyn Bruggeman

Republicans picked South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley to respond to President Obama's State of the Union Address next week because the charismatic conservative, only months after deftly managing the removal of the Confederate flag from state Capitol grounds, is one of party's most likeable and talented politicians.

Union Daily Times: Haley appoints new Clerk of Court

<http://uniondailytimes.com/news/3322/haley-appoints-new-clerk-of-court>

A new Union County Clerk of Court has been appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley. Union County Supervisor Frank Hart announced Wednesday evening that Haley had issued an executive order appointing June Miller as Clerk of Court. Union County has been without a Clerk of Court since Dec. 4 when Freddie Gault resigned to become District Congressional Liaison for US Fifth District Rep. Mick Mulvaney.

Senator Billy O'Dell Passes Away:

Associated Press: Longtime South Carolina State Sen. O'Dell dies at age 77

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

Meg Kinnard

Longtime South Carolina state Sen. Billy O'Dell died Thursday at the age of 77, authorities said. Greenwood County Coroner Sonny Cox said his office was notified and responded a little before 11 a.m. to lawmaker's home, where he was pronounced dead. Cox said the cause of death is thought to be related to a heart condition.

Note: In a statement, Gov. Nikki Haley said she was grateful for the service of O'Dell, who she said had "worked tirelessly for the people of his district and the state." Haley added that O'Dell "made South Carolina a better place."

The State: SC Sen. Billy O'Dell passes away

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article53486565.html>

State Sen. Billy O'Dell, R-Abbeville, died Thursday at the age of 77. Greenwood County Coroner Sonny Cox said his office responded a little before 11 a.m. to the lawmaker's home, where he was pronounced dead. Cox said the cause of death is thought to be related to a heart condition.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley said of O'Dell, "He made South Carolina a better place."

WLTX: South Carolina State Sen. William O'Dell Dies

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/politics/2016/01/07/south-carolina-state-sen-william-odell-dies/78409168/>

South Carolina State Senator William O'Dell has died of a heart attack. Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler confirmed O'Dell's death during a meeting at the State House Thursday morning. O'Dell was 77 years old.

Note: South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley released the following statement on his death. "For more than 25 years, Senator Billy O'Dell worked tirelessly for the people of his district and the state, and we are forever grateful for his service. Michael and I ask that you lift up Senator O'Dell's wife, Gail, and his family, friends and constituents during this difficult time. He made South Carolina a better place."

Anderson Independent: Sen. Billy O'Dell dies

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/sen-billy-odell-dies-28c0e2c0-591c-0a33-e053-0100007f91bf-364519981.html>

Nikie Mayo

Sen. Billy O'Dell, who served in the South Carolina General Assembly for more than a quarter-century, has died. O'Dell, a Republican from Ware Shoals, represented parts of Anderson, Abbeville and Greenwood counties in the Senate. He was expected to attend a meeting of the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce on Thursday morning.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley said O'Dell worked "tirelessly for the people of his district."

Note: "We are forever grateful for his service," she said. "Michael and I ask that you lift up Sen. O'Dell's wife, Gail, and his family, friends and constituents during this difficult time. He made South Carolina a better place."

WHNS: State Senator William O'Dell dies at 77

<http://www.live5news.com/story/30909446/sen-william-odell-dies-at-age-77>

Dal Kalsi, Kim Kimzey

The Ware Shoals native was a businessman who had served as a Republican in the state's Senate since 1989. Senator Harvey Peeler called for a moment of silence to honor O'Dell. during a legislative panel at the State House on Thursday morning

Note: "For more than 25 years, Senator Billy O'Dell worked tirelessly for the people of his district and the state, and we are forever grateful for his service. Michael and I ask that you lift up Senator O'Dell's wife, Gail, and his family, friends and constituents during this difficult time," Haley announced on Thursday. "He made South Carolina a better place."

WYFF: Flags at half staff in honor of longtime SC senator

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/longtime-sc-senator-dies/37312658>

Stephanie Towers

Anderson County has lowered flags at half staff to honor longtime South Carolina state Sen. Billy O'Dell who died Thursday. O'Dell was 77-years-old. Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler, R-Gaffney, said during a workshop attended by dozens of reporters and editors at the Statehouse Thursday that O'Dell had suffered a heart attack.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley released a statement on the O'Dell's passing: "For more than 25 years, Sen. Billy O'Dell worked tirelessly for the people of his district and the state, and we are forever grateful for his service. Michael and I ask that you lift up Sen. O'Dell's wife, Gail, and his family, friends and constituents during this difficult time. He made South Carolina a better place."

Greenville News: Sen. Billy O'Dell of Ware Shoals dies, senators say

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/01/07/sen-billy-odell-ware-shoals-dies-senators-say/78408818/>

Tim Smith

Sen. Billy Odell of Ware Shoals, a state senator since 1989, has died, the Senate's majority leader announced this morning. The 77-year-old Greenwood businessman served as chairman of the Senate General Committee and served on other committees, including the Senate Finance Committee.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: Can South Carolina Republicans and Democrats work together?

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=hy5Xk6yt

Jeffrey Collins

The last time South Carolina lawmakers met in Columbia, the House's 46 Democrats were joining with about that many Republicans to pull down the Confederate flag that flew at the Statehouse for 50 years. If lawmakers could come together after what police said was the racially motivated killing of nine black people at a Charleston church, can they also unite on less emotionally charged issues like paying for roads, improving education and fixing flood damage?

Associated Press: South Carolina lawmakers propose raising minimum dropout age

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=rFI5xAZU

South Carolina lawmakers are making another attempt to cut the state's high school dropout rate. A bill to be considered by General Assembly this year would raise the minimum dropout age from 17 to age 18. Lawmakers and supporters of the bill held a news conference in Charleston on Wednesday to draw public attention to the effort, local media outlets report.

Post and Courier: Cultivating talented workforce among Charleston chamber's top legislative priorities
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160107/PC05/160109581>

David Wren

Developing a talented workforce through education, apprenticeships and other initiatives — including an aeronautical training center at Trident Technical College — is a key priority for the state Legislature to address this year, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce said Thursday.

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: Legislators to participate in session preview

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160107/PC1603/160109561>

Cynthia Roldan

A panel of legislators from both chambers of the General Assembly will give the state's reporters a rundown of what to expect during the 2016 Legislative session with just five days to go until starts. Panelists participating in the annual media-only event include the leaders of both chambers, House Speaker Jay Lucas and Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: GasBuddy projects another year of low gas prices

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160107/PC05/160109551>

Warren L. Wise

Motorists can expect another year of less pain at the pump. Gas price service GasBuddy predicted Thursday the price of gasoline nationally will average \$2.28 a gallon, down from an average \$2.40 a gallon last year. If the forecast holds, it will be the fourth year of declining gas prices across the U.S.

Note: A rise in gasoline taxes could also affect prices. South Carolina's business leaders continue to press lawmakers to raise the gasoline tax to help pay for road upkeep and construction, but legislative efforts stalled last year and Gov. Nikki Haley has repeatedly promised to veto a rise in gas taxes without an offsetting reduction in income taxes.

Associated Press: Offshore wind could be years away off SC, if it comes at all

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=yKa9BXH9

It could be years before offshore wind turbines are built off South Carolina, if they are built at all. Officials of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management tell local media outlets that if no investors come forward to lease tracts off the coast, the concept will not move forward.

Post and Courier: Judge: Solicitor's disciplinary records to remain private

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160107/PC16/160109534>

Christina Elmore

Disciplinary records for 9th Circuit Solicitor Scarlett Wilson won't be made public, a judge ruled Thursday after hearing a motion to dismiss a lawsuit seeking access to the documents. Columbia attorney Desa Ballard filed the lawsuit in October on behalf of S.C. Lawyers Weekly and its parent company, Dolan Publishing.

Local News:

The State: Disaster centers closing in Richland County as federal officials scale back operations

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article53498815.html#storylink=cpy>

Avery G. Wilks

Half of the disaster recovery centers in Richland County will close on Friday as federal assistance agencies continue to scale back operations in South Carolina. Centers at 608 Main St. in Eastover and at 2850 Congaree Road in Gadsden will close at 6 p.m.

Post and Courier: Students rejoice: CCSD Board votes to exempt exams for seniors with an 85

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160107/PC16/160109549>

Paul Bowers

On Wednesday, less than a week before final exams are to begin for semester-long classes, district officials sent out a memo announcing that all of the schools would have to abide by Policy IKAA, a pre-existing rule wherein any high school student can exempt an exam with a 93 average and no unexcused absences.

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