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Subject: Morning Clips – Monday, March 24, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Rural SC hospitals explore avenues for help

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/23/3344126/rural-sc-hospitals-explore-avenues.html#storylink=cpy>

Joey Holleman

Fifteen of the 17 hospitals in South Carolina that filled fewer than 30 percent of their beds in 2012 were in rural counties, and nine of those hospitals operate independently on what amounts to rural islands. Thus it's no surprise that many of them are looking for help from urban hospitals or large hospital chains in terms of merger, consolidation, affiliation or formal clinical cooperation agreements.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley's administration increased reimbursement to 19 rural hospitals for uninsured care to lessen the blow of turning down Medicaid expansion.

Post and Courier: Success varies across S.C. in enrolling uninsured patients in Medicaid expansion alternative

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140323/PC16/140329703/1006/success-varies-in-sc-medicaid-alternative-expansion-scs-medicaid-expansion-alternative-has-varied-enrollment-success>

Lauren Sausser

The foundation of Gov. Nikki Haley's alternative to the "Obamacare" Medicaid expansion has been much more successful in some parts of South Carolina than others, according to early enrollment data released last week by the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Budget for African-American museum

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140324/PC1002/140329751/1021/budget-for-african-american-museum>

Editorial

Advocates for an African American Museum in Charleston have worked for years on what its focus should be and how it should present that important part of South Carolina's history. It would reflect poorly on the whole state if those efforts were scuttled because a short-sighted Legislature fails to provide adequate financial support for the effort.

Times and Democrat: Graham looking stronger in GOP primary race

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/graham-looking-stronger-in-gop-primary-race/article_8f2d52e6-b178-11e3-8999-001a4bcf887a.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Challengers to Sen. Lindsey Graham: OUR OPINION: Unity against incumbent aside, none is able so far to represent a significant challenge. The Republican opponents of Sen. Lindsey Graham are doing their best to make headlines that can elevate at least one of them to contender status in the June primary.

Rock Hill Herald: Be wary of gold mine proposal

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/03/23/5797617/be-wary-of-gold-mine-proposal.html?sp=/100/105/>

Editorial

If residents of Lancaster County want the hundreds of jobs that could come with a giant new gold mining operation, the tradeoff could be costly: 1,100 acres of damaged wetlands and a scarred landscape. For the past two years, Romarco Minerals of Canada has sought to reopen a long-closed mining site near Kershaw.

Legislative Session News:

Island Packet: Beaufort County leaders say drunken-driving bill should be stricter

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/03/23/3019392/beaufort-county-leaders-say-drunken.html?sp=/99/100/&ihp=1#storylink=cpy>

Zach Murdock

Beaufort County leaders would like to see stronger language in "Emma's Law," a bill intended to crack down on drunken driving. The bill, currently being considered by the S.C. House of Representatives, would increase the use of ignition interlock devices -- which test a driver's breath for alcohol before the car will start -- for those convicted of DUI under certain circumstances. It passed the Senate a year ago.

Aiken Standard: Ways & Means Committee looks at credit card processing fees

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20140324/AIK0101/140329728/1004/ways-means-committee-looks-at-credit-card-processing-fees>

Mayaan Schechter

Focusing on next year's state budget, the S.C. House of Representatives' Ways & Means Committee blocked an earlier proviso ban on credit card fees 84 to 31. But a new proviso concerning processing fees, if passed, could mean more paperwork for local governments and changes to the tax bill explaining credit card processing fees and mandatory tax payments.

Rock Hill Herald: Democrat to challenge Republican incumbent for District 48

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/03/23/5797576/democrat-to-challenge-republican.html?sp=/100/101/&ihp=1#storylink=cp>

Jie Jenny Zou

A Rock Hill Democrat will square off against state Rep. Ralph Norman, R-Rock Hill, in this year's race for a seat representing York County. Barry McGrew filed his notice to run on Friday with the state Elections Commission. The filing period opened March 16 and will close noon Sunday.

Associated Press: SC rep hosting forum on health care reform

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=k3ylAViT

Columbia residents are getting a chance to learn more about how to get insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act. A community health forum is taking place Monday at Brookland Baptist Northeast. The gathering is hosted by state Rep. Mia McLeod in partnership with the South Carolina Hospital Association.

South Carolina News:

Greenville News: Deal shows SC's flexing muscle as car state

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20140324/BUSINESS/303240007/Deal-shows-SC-s-flexing-muscle-car-state>

David Dykes

South Carolina's automotive cluster doesn't include just BMW Manufacturing. A Fortune 500 company is building parts for Toyota, the world's biggest automaker, in this Upstate town. BorgWarner has invested nearly \$60 million and created more than 470 jobs in the last five years — now employing more than 650 workers at its Seneca plant.

Associated Press: In SC, flood premiums may affect preservation

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=CpPHJ04a

Bruce Smith

About 29,000 property owners who have subsidized federal flood insurance in South Carolina face sharp premium increases as the government works to get the program back into the black. And about 5,600 of those policyholders are in Charleston, where there's concern that getting the flood insurance program solvent may make it much more expensive for people to preserve historic homes and buildings.

Associated Press: Duke Energy, utilities panel to discuss coal ash

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jgYLNz4E

Duke Energy officials and environmentalist plan to discuss coal ash issues with the agency that regulates utilities in South Carolina. The State newspaper reported (<http://bit.ly/1rhQoOQ>) Duke Energy spokesman Ryan Mosier says the utility will meet Monday with the S.C. Public Service Commission.

Anderson Independent: S.C. program helps homeowners facing foreclosure

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/mar/23/sc-program-helps-homeowners-facing-foreclosure/?partner=RSS>

Kirk Brown

A state foreclosure-prevention program has helped more than 7,100 South Carolina residents keep their homes. At least five Anderson County homeowners have received assistance from the program in the past six months, including a woman named Kathy.

Local News:

Post and Courier: New homes market continues to grow in Charleston region

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140324/PC05/140329824/1177/new-homes-market-continues-to-grow-in-charleston-region>

Tyrone Richardson

New housing developments continue to gain traction in the Charleston region in response to growth in population and home prices. One of the latest developments is the official opening of Royal Palms, a 52-townhome community at U.S. Highway 17 and S.C. Highway 41 in Mount Pleasant.

The State: Growing number of Columbia residents fed up with 'dysfunctional' City Council

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/03/23/3344105/growing-number-of-columbia-residents.html#storylink=cpy>

Clif LeBlanc

To say that municipal government in Columbia is in discord is to be polite. More and more the "d" word of choice is "dysfunctional." A sampling last week of long-time residents and local leaders shows that the state of governance is nearing a low point or – as the more genteel might say, is merely a reflection of hyper-partisan, computer-enabled times.

National News:

Associated Press: Jeb Bush, Hillary Clinton to discuss education

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=oz4dXT4h

Ken Thomas

Their presidential plans may be uncertain but one thing is clear: Jeb Bush and Hillary Rodham Clinton keep bumping into each other. Bush and Clinton were taking the podium Monday at a higher education conference in suburban Dallas organized by Bush, the former Florida governor who is the brother and son of Republican presidents.

Associated Press: Common Core spawns widespread political fights

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=DJVAs288

Bill Barrow

More than five years after U.S. governors began a bipartisan effort to set new standards in American schools, the Common Core initiative has morphed into a political tempest fueling division among Republicans.

Associated Press: Russia dominates, but Obama trip broadens outreach

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=GOWFcks7

Jim Kuhnenn

President Barack Obama begins a week of international travel with Russia's Crimean incursion at the top of his agenda, even as he simultaneously seeks to re-emphasize U.S. influence abroad. As he arrived in the Netherlands Monday on a sunny and brisk morning, no issue commanded more of Obama's and Europe's attention than Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the fear that Moscow could decide to expand further into Ukraine.

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