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To:
Date: 11/30/2014 9:48:01 AM
Subject: Clips – Sunday, November 30, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Greenville News: Projections show gas tax revenue falling in years ahead

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2014/11/29/projections-show-gas-tax-revenue-falling-years-ahead/19690863/>

Tim Smith

The two major sources of revenue lawmakers are studying to help the state repair its crumbling infrastructure will decline in coming years, according to projections submitted to a House committee. The numbers show revenue for both the gas tax and a proposed sales tax would decline in coming years, the result of cars that get better gas mileage, hybrids that use little or no gas and an aging population that doesn't drive as much, state analysts say.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley has threatened to veto any increase in the gas tax, one of the lowest in the nation and last raised in 1987, spurring Simrill and other lawmakers to consider alternative revenue proposals.

The State: THE BUZZ: Campaign accounting, Harrell style

http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/29/3843828_the-buzz-campaign-accounting-harrell.html?rh=1

Jamie Self

The State Law Enforcement Division released a 42-page report on ex-House Speaker Bobby Harrell's public-corruption investigation, giving the public more insight into why the Charleston Republican ended up in hot water.

SLED: Harrell fibbed about expenses: On Sept. 19, 2012, Harrell wrote the House Ethics Committee that he was giving his campaign account \$22,955 back of the nearly \$300,000 he had reimbursed himself from his campaign account from 2009-13.

Wanted: DSS director focused on children: Now that the 2014 election is behind her, Gov. Nikki Haley said she is on the hunt for a new leader for the state's child-welfare agency.

Note: Haley said the media spotlight has been hard on the search. "It has scared away a lot of people that I think would have been good, but at the same time, we've got to find someone that is as comfortable with the public side of it as they are with actually running the agency."

Associated Press: Uninsured in SC eligible for Checkup screenings

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

Seanna Adcox

South Carolina's Medicaid agency is offering residents who fall into an insurance gap due to Republican's refusal to expand Medicaid eligibility a limited benefits program intended to catch illnesses early. What happens if a problem is detected is still being worked out.

Note: Roughly 140,000 people are enrolled in Checkup. That's an increase of 30,000 since July 1 and more than three times the number enrolled in the previous "family planning" benefit when Gov. Nikki Haley took office in January 2011, according to the agency. It hopes 200,000 will be enrolled by next summer.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Attorney general has domestic violence plan that deserves support

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20141130/OPINION/411301007/1128/opinion?Title=Attorney-general-has-domestic-violence-plan-that-deserves-support>

Editorial

South Carolina lawmakers should give serious consideration to a plan outlined by Attorney General Alan Wilson to reform the state's domestic violence laws. The Palmetto State has a serious problem with domestic violence, consistently ranking as one of the top states in the nation for the number of women killed by men.

Post and Courier: Justice delayed is public safety denied

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC1002/141139960/1021/justice-delayed-is-public-safety-denied>

Editorial

Few things enrage people more than a violent crime committed by someone who is out on bail for another crime. But the scenario plays itself out in South Carolina again and again. One reason is that prosecutors are in such short supply that the list of cases awaiting trial is staggering.

Note: As reported by The Post and Courier's Glenn Smith, it is expected to take an additional \$7.7 million to hire 100 more prosecutors and get the state's legal system functioning well. Area solicitors are asking Gov. Nikki Haley and legislators to provide it.

The State: New research center a welcome shot in arm for Innovista

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/29/3841342/editorial-new-research-center.html?sp=/99/205/&ihp=1>

Editorial

NEWS THAT the University of South Carolina will partner with Fluor Corp. and IBM to develop a research center is a welcome shot in the arm for Innovista. The research campus that many understandably believe will transform our state's economy has struggled to gain momentum due to the weak economy, poor management and bad decision-making.

The State: SC House, Senate take vastly different approaches to their huge new mission

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/30/3841347/scope-sc-house-senate-take-vastly.html?sp=/99/168/#storylink=cpy>

Cindi Scoppe

SENS. TOM YOUNG, Katrina Shealy and Joel Lourie have spent more than a year trying to figure out why the Department of Social Services isn't protecting the vulnerable children under its care, and how to fix the problem, and they still haven't gotten there. It has taken so long largely because few legislators have more than a surface understanding of what goes on inside state agencies.

Post and Courier (Guest Column): Heed warning sign on S.C. road woes

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC1002/141139958>

Ron Brinson

"The roads in this state are a disgrace." - Pete Selleck, chairman and president, Michelin North America
That's raw bottom-line talk from someone who operates a huge investment in South Carolina. And it confirms our state's ugly and inconvenient truth of a shoddy, unbecoming highway system.

Post and Courier: South Carolina has put a price on safety, and it's a bargain

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC16/141139996/1177>

Brian Hicks

Get in line: State lawmakers are sympathetic to the constraints of the judicial system, but none of them can promise the check is in the mail. The problem? Well, all this costs money and there is a finite amount of that to spend.

Times and Democrat: The more people know solar, use, support grow

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/the-more-people-know-solar-use-support-grow/article_3cea603a-7858-11e4-9770-77cc360bef24.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Solar energy and environmental consciousness; OUR OPINION: Claflin is a major energy user already making use of sun's energy. An abundant supply of energy and the systems to deliver are facts of life for which South Carolinians and Americans can be thankful.

Florence Morning News: Sunshine finally might be in the 2015 forecast

http://www.scnow.com/opinion/article_4077dc66-780b-11e4-9b59-77c80710302c.html

Editorial

The first regular session of the 121st South Carolina General Assembly is scheduled for Jan. 13, 2015. That's a Tuesday. It's a little more than six weeks away, or 44 days. The session will end on or around June 4, 2016. That's right. Sessions last two years, but sessions don't last all year.

Post and Courier: Help conservation thrive in perpetuity

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC1002/141139959/1021>

Editorial

In the ACE Basin, along the Cooper River, and within the Ashley River Historic District, easements have been instrumental in achieving a variety of valuable public benefits - preserving habitat, halting urban sprawl, maintaining water quality and retaining the coastal landscape.

Aiken Standard: Other lenders should follow recent example

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20141130/AIK0201/141139997/1018/AIK02>

Editorial

Those burdened with student debt may soon be able to breathe a sigh of relief as two of the biggest private lenders are set to relax repayment terms. Wells Fargo and Discover have announced they're seeking declines in the interest rates for borrowers, a move that should be applauded.

Island Packet: Noise study offers good news about jets

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/11/29/3459686/noise-study-offers-good-news-about.html?sp=/99/342/>

Editorial

A long-overdue noise study of the F-35B is in, and it sounds promising: In most phases of flight, the next-generation fighter jets are no louder than the planes they will replace. A summary of the report, released by the military's office for the Joint Strike Fighter in late October, indicates the F-35B is slightly louder on takeoff, but significantly quieter on all approaches.

S.C. General Assembly News:

The State: USC wants \$51.3 million in added state money

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/29/3843008/usc-wants-513-million-in-added.html?sp=/99/205/&ihp=1>

Andrew Shain

The University of South Carolina is asking S.C. lawmakers for added money to pay for major projects at the state's flagship college that could land more students. USC is asking legislators for \$51.3 million in new money for its main Columbia campus next year. The money would go to add classrooms, and further expand USC's summer session and its Honors College, which attracts top-performing students.

Times and Democrat: After high court decision, lawmakers say schools need more than money

http://thetandd.com/news/after-high-court-decision-lawmakers-say-schools-need-more-than/article_ab494f7e-7852-11e4-bd78-df282df5ed43.html

Dale Linder-Altman

Two decades after a group of schools sued the state, South Carolina's Supreme Court has decided something is wrong with the education system — it just isn't saying what the solution is. "They didn't tell us what we should do, but they did tell us that what we are doing is not what we should be doing," said Sen. John Matthews, D-Bowman.

Post and Courier: Paul Thurmond filming his own history of his senator father

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141129/PC1603/141139997/1031>

Schuyler Kropf

Facing a lunchtime audience of West Ashley Rotarians, Nancy Thurmond told the story of how President Richard Nixon telephoned her husband, U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond, on an August morning in 1974. Nancy picked up the receiver, nudging her sleeping husband awake.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics: State agencies start scrambling for cash

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC1603/141139990/1177>

Lindsey Graham's got McCain's vote: U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham first floated the idea that he might run for president in 2016 a month ago, and he recently got encouragement from a likely place: his close friend and political ally Sen. John McCain.

SLED report outtakes: A report by the State Department of Law Enforcement provided a window for South Carolinians into former House Speaker Bobby Harrell, private business owner.

Vying for the cash: Countdown to Session 2015 has begun, as legislators prepare to prefile bills in the coming weeks. But perhaps the most daunting task lawmakers will face when they return is how to spread the wealth.

The State: Some \$800M paid to SRS workers for Cold War radiation exposure

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/30/3843366/cold-war-radiation-exposure-results.html?sp=/99/205/&ihp=1>

Samantha Ehlinger

More than 8,000 current or former workers of the Department of Energy nuclear site in Aiken have received at least \$800 million in federal compensation and paid medical expenses for job-related illnesses, Labor Department data show.

Aiken Standard: S.C. prosecutors request additional funding

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20141130/AIK0101/141129413/1004/sc-prosecutors-request-additional-funding>

Teddy Kulmala

Second Circuit Solicitor J. Strom Thurmond Jr. is among South Carolina's prosecutors who are handling four times the national average of criminal cases, and they are asking the General Assembly for additional funding to reduce that caseload.

The State: SC tire dump still not cleaned up

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/29/3843831/sc-tire-dump-still-not-cleaned.html?sp=/99/205/&ihp=1>

Sammy Fretwell

Cleaning up a notorious tire dump in Calhoun County has been a larger task than some expected. Discovered more than three years ago and said to be visible from space, the illegal tire dump made the news from Great Britain to Florida as South Carolina regulators scrambled to find the culprit and devise a cleanup plan for the site.

Greenville News: Co-op woes leave workers without insurance

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/health/2014/11/29/co-op-woes-leave-workers-without-insurance/19691065/>

Liv Osby

Dr. Don Marler thought a cooperative of small businesses banding together to obtain affordable health insurance was a good idea so he signed up his Pickens Dental practice. But then he learned that the co-op, which is in deep financial trouble, was taken over by the state Department of Insurance, leaving them all without coverage.

Local News:

Post and Courier: Dorchester County to consider dissolving road authority

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC16/141139989/1177>

Brenda Rindge

With residents frustrated by stalled road projects, Dorchester County Council will consider dissolving the volunteer board that oversees spending on some of the county's most critical road work. The Dorchester County Sales Tax Transportation Authority was overhauled in September, but the slimmed-down board hasn't gotten the county's roads program back on track, County Councilman David Chinnis said.

Florence Morning News: Ferguson events have Pee Dee buzzing

http://www.scnow.com/news/article_1c6384fa-7825-11e4-81df-d3680592c969.html

Shamira McCray

The Aug. 9 killing of Michael Brown, a black, unarmed 18-year-old, by white officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri, has caused outrage within the St. Louis area and protests across the nation. On Monday, a grand jury decided not to indict Wilson for the shooting, which resulted in more intense riots in Missouri, despite the Brown family's call for peaceful protest.

Rock Hill Herald: Gang violence in Chester no longer somebody else's problem

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/11/29/6574303/gang-violence-in-chester-no-longer.html?sp=/100/101/&ihp=1>

Andrew Dys

When gang members shoot each other in fights over turf, women and status, shouts of outrage are heard, but hollow. Screams for change do not last past the funerals. Look at Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles. Gangs of black men, Hispanics, whites. The color is different, but results are the same – drugs, guns, prison, death.

Rock Hill Herald: Sign-up for health care reform law underway

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/11/29/6574867/sign-up-for-health-care-reform.html?sp=/100/101/&ihp=1>

Bristow Marchant, Don Worthington

Many people were turned off last year by the troubled launch of federal health care reform. But with enrollment on the federal health care exchange open again, many are finding it easier the second time around. Before she signed up this month, 43-year-old Melanie Durocher of Rock Hill hadn't had insurance for a year.

Post and Courier: Charleston's Harbor National sale underscores reality for smaller banks

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141130/PC05/141139986/1177/charlestons-harbor-national-sale-underscores-reality-for-smaller-banks>

John McDermott

And then there were four. This week, perhaps as early as Monday, one of the five surviving banks born and raised in the Charleston region will be absorbed into a larger financial institution from off, following broader industry trends. The others can count themselves among an increasingly rare breed - the locally based community lender.

National News:

New York Times: G.O.P. Gains by Tapping Democrats' Base for State Candidates

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/30/us/gop-gains-by-tapping-democrats-base-for-state-candidates-.html?ref=politics&_r=0

Shaila Dewan

As Republicans took control of an unprecedented 69 of 99 statehouse chambers in the midterm elections, they did not rely solely on a bench of older white men. Key races hinged on the strategic recruitment of women and minorities, many of them first-time candidates who are now learning the ropes and joining the pool of prospects for higher office.

New York Times: Suit on Health Law Puts Focus on Funding Powers

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/30/us/politics/suit-on-health-law-puts-focus-on-funding-powers-.html?_r=1

Robert Pear

In mounting the latest court challenge to the Affordable Care Act, House Republicans are focusing on a little-noticed provision of the law that offers financial assistance to low- and moderate-income people. Under this part of the law, insurance companies must reduce co-payments, deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs for some people in health plans purchased through the new public insurance exchanges.

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