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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: More plutonium headed to SRS

<http://www.thestate.com/news/business/article51215535.html>

Sammy Fretwell

More plutonium is targeted for disposal at the Savannah River Site as concerns rise about an existing stockpile of the radioactive material already on the weapons complex. Nearly a ton of plutonium, a toxic nuclear weapons component, would be sent from Europe, the Pacific Rim and North America to SRS, where it would be stored until the government decides its final destination, according to a recent U.S. Department of Energy report.

Note: Haley spokeswoman Chaney Adams said this week the governor opposes permanent disposal of plutonium at SRS. “The governor has been clear about this critical quality of life issue since the beginning of the administration,” Adams said in an email. “South Carolina will not be a dumping ground for weapons-grade plutonium and nuclear waste.”

Aiken Standard: Department of Energy starts search for spent fuel repository

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20151222/AIK0101/151229811/departments-of-energy-starts-search-for-spent-fuel-repository>

Derrek Asberry

The Department of Energy has officially started searching for states and communities interested in housing the nation’s nuclear spent fuel. Execution of this approach would officially reverse the controversial Yucca Mountain project, which was expected to house defense and commercial materials and remove waste from sites around the nation, including the Savannah River Site and four nuclear power plants in South Carolina.

Note: A few states, including New Mexico and Texas, have already shown interest following the March announcement. But Chaney Adams, a spokesperson for South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, said in May that the governor is committed to not bringing in more shipments of nuclear waste or fuel to the Palmetto State. “Gov. Haley has been clear on this issue since taking office – South Carolina’s taxpayers have paid for Yucca Mountain, and it should be completed and opened,” Adams said.

Associated Press: More plutonium could be headed to Savannah River Site

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=IGspX3w8

More plutonium may be headed to the Savannah River Site near Aiken. The State newspaper said (<http://bit.ly/1U4qQRP>) a report by the U.S. Energy Department said nearly one ton of plutonium would be sent to SRS from Europe, the Pacific Rim and North America.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley said last week she wants the government to process the plutonium already at the plant. She said the material should be removed if it is not processed. A processing facility is years behind schedule.

Sun News: New report on offshore drilling harm disputes 2013 study that highlights benefits

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article51168600.html#storylink=cpy>

Emily Weaver

Debate over offshore drilling is heating up with the final plan for oil and gas exploration along the East Coast expected to be released in a few months. Business leaders are pleading with the governor to keep it away from South Carolina, more studies have come out supporting each side and some question whether it’s even an issue as oil prices continue to drop.

Note: Business leaders held a news conference at the Statehouse last week calling on Gov. Nikki Haley to “withdraw South Carolina from the federal government’s plans for offshore drilling.”

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: Panel cuts cost to display Confederate flag at museum

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Nmf0l8vd

A panel has cut by a third the estimated cost to display a Confederate flag that was removed from the South Carolina Statehouse earlier this year. The State newspaper reported (<http://bit.ly/22pPnGT>) that the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission on Tuesday reduced the estimated cost of the display from \$5.3 million to \$3.6 million.

Horry News: Several South Carolina bills address Syrian refugees

http://www.myhorrynews.com/news/state/article_01743716-a8e4-11e5-a665-938ede4c57f5.html

Michael Smith

Recent terror attacks here and abroad have prompted South Carolina lawmakers to file a slew of legislation aimed at regulating, and in some cases, outlawing refugee resettlement in the Palmetto State. Six bills were filed in the S.C. House and Senate during the pre-filing period that ran from Dec. 2 to Dec. 10, all by Republican lawmakers.

Note: President Barack Obama, however, strongly supports welcoming refugees and scolded state governments opposed to it. Among the governors opposed is S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley. Haley has stopped short of calling for an outright ban on refugees, as other governors have espoused.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Lawmaker pre-files bill to allow medical use of cannabis oil

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20151222/ARTICLES/151229928/1083/ARTICLES?Title=Lawmaker-pre-files-bill-to-allow-medical-use-of-cannabis-oil&tc=ar>

Chris Lavender

A Landrum lawmaker has pre-filed a bill to allow physicians to prescribe CBD oil, also known as cannabis oil or cannabidiol, for some medical conditions. Republican state Rep. Doug Brannon filed the bill on Dec. 10. The bill also establishes a registry and dispensing organizations to deliver CBD for medical use.

Note: In 2014, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the "Medical Cannabis Therapeutic Treatment Research Act" which was signed into law by Gov. Nikki Haley. The act created a committee to determine how to dispense the CBD oil.

S.C. Political News:

Aiken Standard: Aiken Republicans praise Lindsey Graham's presidential run amid campaign suspension

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20151221/AIK0101/151229922/aiken-republicans-praise-lindsey-graham-x2019-s-presidential-run-amid-campaign-suspension>

Derrek Asberry

Local Republicans are championing the efforts of U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., following Graham's announcement on Monday that he is suspending his presidential campaign. Graham was never able to make a surge in the Republican primary polls, though he took credit for several achievements during his six-month 2016 presidential bid.

Post and Courier: Ben Carson stumps at VFW in Ladson

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151222/PC1603/151229785>

Schuyler Kropf

Republican presidential hopeful Dr. Ben Carson told 100 supporters at a VFW lodge that his critics should not think his soft-spoken manner means he's weak on the issues. "I would like to let people know that the volume at which someone says something does not determine their strength," Carson said to applause Tuesday night.

Post and Courier: Republican debate in Charleston may feature only six candidates on main stage

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151222/PC1603/151229801>

Schuyler Kropf

Space on the main stage at the Fox Business Network debate in Charleston next month could be limited to just the top six polling candidates, according to details announced Tuesday. The network also confirmed there will be an undercard debate Jan. 14 as well.

Sun News: Hundreds turn out for Carson campaigning in North Myrtle Beach

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/politics-government/article51124560.html>

Audrey Hudson

More than 200 potential voters lined up Tuesday to meet GOP presidential contender Ben Carson in North Myrtle Beach to get books and campaign posters signed, photos snapped, and to shake hands with the surgeon-turned-politician.

Florence Morning News: Fiorina holds town hall before addressing business leaders

http://www.scnw.com/news/article_abc2f32e-a8e5-11e5-a6b0-3f2979b5bda7.html

Joe Perry

Carly Fiorina made the case for her presidential aspirations Tuesday morning at Wholly Smokin' Downtown before giving the keynote address at Florence County Progress Inc.'s annual luncheon held at the Florence County Civic Center. Fiorina spoke about her blueprint to lead the nation through "pivotal and perilous" times, touched on foreign policy and national security issues and told both crowds about her experience in the business world.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Fix S.C. pension system

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151223/PC1002/151229789>

Editorial

According to the Legislative Audit Council, which on Monday released an assessment of the state's public pensions, the pension portfolio has not met its target (7.5 percent rate of return) over the past decade, and is not expected to meet it over the next 30 years, resulting in a shortfall in the two largest pension funds of as much as \$11 billion.

Post and Courier: Whose candidates are sorry now?

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151223/PC1002/151229790>

Editorial

The struggle against radical Islamic terror continues with an ever-rising death toll, and not just in the Middle East. The national debt is a record \$18 trillion, with no tangible hope for long-term deficit reduction — or long-overdue entitlement reform — in sight. And the Affordable Care Act is falling far short of its ambitious title.

S.C. Federal Delegation News:

Florence Morning News: Sen. Tim Scott praises South Carolinians' resilience in aftermath of floods

http://www.scnw.com/news/article_39ce6bea-a8f8-11e5-991e-939ed7ec22d3.html

Jessica Imbimbo

South Carolinians have the right mindset when it comes to bouncing back from historic and catastrophic October floods, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina said Tuesday. "The average person throughout the state has said 'we can do the heavy lifting ourselves,'" Scott said during a stop in Florence. "That's the best attitude we could ever hope for."

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: Teachers won't be judged on end-of-year tests under revamp

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=tHhXC3tK

Seanna Adcox

Teachers won't be judged by their students' scores on end-of-year tests under a proposed revamp of South Carolina's educator evaluation system. State Superintendent Molly Spearman announced her proposal this week following Congress' overhaul of the No Child Left Behind education law, signed last week.

Note: "I'm all in on this one," said Brennan, president of BB&T for South Carolina and Gov. Nikki Haley's appointee to the board, adding he's never liked the idea of evaluating teachers based on annual tests.

Greenville News: Concerns raised over flood food stamp applications

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2015/12/22/concerns-raised-over-flood-food-stamp-applications/77700412/>

Tim Smith

According to figures provided to The Greenville News by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the State Department of Social Services, the state has approved 184,173 applicants for one-time Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits in 24 counties, while a total of 96,132 people have

registered in those same counties for flood aid from FEMA.

Associated Press: Catawba Indian Nation loses domestic violence grant

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=PEP1MiFi

The Catawba Indian Nation has lost a federal grant to combat domestic violence. The Herald of Rock Hill reported (<http://bit.ly/1NLq2NZ>) a three-year grant from the U.S. Justice Department runs out at the end of the year. The grant of nearly \$750,000 had paid three full-time staffers to help Catawba Indians leaving abusive relationships and support services to help set up new homes.

Local News:

WCSC: Local law enforcement serves homeless community for special lunch

<http://www.live5news.com/story/30815122/local-law-enforcement-serves-homeless-community-for-special-lunch>

Samantha Bleiweis

Local law enforcement officials spent their lunch break serving the community in a different way Tuesday. "I saw one gentleman crying when he was getting his food. So, that really touched me. That was kind of tough to see him crying... and most people were happy and he was being comforted by other people, but that was touching," said Bryan Stirling, Director of the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

The State: Flash flood watch for Lexington, Richland counties Wednesday

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article51255075.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

Columbia residents can expect moderate to heavy rain, as well as dense fog, the National Weather Service tweeted Wednesday morning. NWS has issued a flash flood watch for several South Carolina counties, including Richland and Lexington.

National News:

McClatchy DC: Congressional investigation sought of nuclear workers compensation program

<http://www.thestate.com/news/nation-world/national/article51167625.html>

Lindsay Wise

A Kansas City, Missouri, congressman who once worked in a nuclear weapons plant told McClatchy he will seek a hearing and a congressional investigation into the federal compensation program for employees who became sick after working at such facilities around the country.

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