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Subject: Morning Clips - Friday, August 9, 2013

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The Patch: Lifesaving Birth Defects Bill Becomes Law

Emerson Rose Bill named after Emerson Rose Smith of Clemson.

<http://easley.patch.com/groups/politics-and-elections/p/lifesaving-birth-defects-bill-becomes-law>

Jason Evans

A bill designed to help facilities detect problems with the lungs and hearts of newborns that ultrasounds may miss has been signed into law. Governor Nikki Haley joined with Senator Alexander, representatives from the American Heart Association, and Emerson Rose's parents, Jason and Susan Smith of Clemson, Wednesday in a ceremonial bill signing for S.341, the Emerson Rose bill. S.341 requires birthing facilities in South Carolina to perform a pulse oximetry test on every newborn child between 24 and 48 hours of life.

Note: "While I am blessed to be a governor, I am also blessed to be a mom and this bill pulls on my heart," said Gov. Nikki Haley. "Due to Jason and Susan Smith's dedication to making a difference and the action we are taking today, Emerson Rose's name is going to live on and positively influence the health of babies across the state."

The Journal: Haley on hacking: 'I'm not going to play the blame game'

<https://upstatetoday.com/2013/08/haley-on-hacking-%e2%80%99i%e2%80%99m-not-going-to-play-the-blame-game%e2%80%99/>

Norman Cannada

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley said she is "not going to play the blame game" in response to likely Democratic gubernatorial candidate Vincent Sheheen, who blamed her for the computer hacking of personal information of 3.7 million state taxpayers.

Note: "What you have seen is DOR has stepped up and made every security provision we can, but we didn't just do it with DOR. We did it with every agency," Haley said. "We've got infrastructure in place for every one of our agencies to make sure that we have 24/7 monitoring, so that we can make sure that if anybody pings it and there's anything that kind of tampers with our security, that we're on it right then and there."

CBS News: 2016: The year of the presidential woman?

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57597702/2016-the-year-of-the-presidential-woman/

Jake Miller

Many things are not remarkable about the growing list of names bandied about in the 2016 presidential speculation sweepstakes - you've got your governors, your senators, your ambitious House members, your former elected officials and cabinet members, your vice president. Most have been in politics for a long time, and a lot of them have the gray hair to prove it.

Note: Between Clinton, Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., Govs. Nikki Haley, R-S.C., Susana Martinez, R-N.M., and Mary Fallin, R-Okla., and cabinet secretaries Janet Napolitano and Kathleen Sebelius, it's a strong bet we'll see more than one woman behind the podium at a presidential primary debate come 2015.

The Patch: August is Farmers Market Month in South Carolina

<http://easley.patch.com/groups/summer/p/august-is-farmers-market-month-in-south-carolina>

Jason Evans

Local farmers market vendors are asking everyone to come celebrate Farmers Market Month in August by shopping at a farmers market in your community.

Note: Governor Nikki Haley has again proclaimed August as Farmers Market Month in South Carolina. Farmers Market Month is an extension of National Farmers Market Week, which runs August 4-10, and celebrates farmers markets as critical food hubs that bolster regional economies, while increasing access to nutritious foods.

The Journal: Oconee celebrates National Farmers Market Week

<https://upstatetoday.com/2013/08/oconee-celebrates-national-farmers-market-week/>

Mikayla Kreuzberger

Saturday marks the final day of National Farmers Market Week across the U.S., and officials of the Foothills Heritage Market are encouraging locals to support farmers today, Saturday and throughout August, which S. C. Gov. Nikki Haley recently proclaimed as Farmers Market Month. According to the national Farmers Market Coalition, there was a 10 percent increase in local farmers markets by the end of 2012, which means there are more farmers serving local markets and more people wanting to shop there.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Obamacare for you, not them

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130809/PC1002/130809442/1021/obamacare-for-you-not-them>

Editorial

It's called the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. But members of Congress belatedly decided they couldn't afford to comply with the requirements they mandated for nearly everybody else. So congressional leaders sought and obtained an Obama administration edict assuring that they — and their staffs — would still get a sweet, taxpayer-backed, health-insurance deal. This is despite the landmark legislation's mandate that federal lawmakers and their staffers participate in newly created federal insurance exchanges.

The Journal: Alexander is a class act

<https://upstatetoday.com/2013/08/alexander-is-a-class-act/>

Editorial

When Jason Smith stood up alongside his wife Wednesday and thanked Gov. Nikki Haley for signing the Emerson Rose Act and State Sen. Thomas Alexander, R-Walhalla, for his efforts to introduce the bill to the Legislature, he said something that deserves to be reiterated. "Susan and I learned a lot about how respected Sen. Alexander is by the state," he said. That makes us proud.

Post and Courier (Guest Column): New charter school option needs board support

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130809/PC1002/130809443/1021/school-board-should-back-new-charter>

Russel Daniels and Richard Latham

As Charleston County School Board member Todd Garrett noted in The Post and Courier on Jan. 21, 2013, "All of the peninsula's neighborhood schools are virtually segregated. The best are 'average' while most are 'at risk,' the lowest rating." The proposed Carolina Voyager Charter School is hoping to address this issue. Voyager will use technology-supported learning to allow every student to learn at their own pace. This "blended learning" approach combines traditional instruction, technology and tutoring to help each child maximize their learning potential.

Aiken Standard: Jobs policy must build full-time employment

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130808/AIK0201/130809573/1018/AIK02/editorial-jobs-policy-must-build-full-time-employment>

Editorial

A burgeoning shift in the economy of the United States is the disproportionate growth of part-time, low-wage jobs. According to the Associated Press, 162,000 jobs were added to the economy in June with 65 percent of those positions categorized as part-time. While the addition of these jobs are better than having increased unemployment, the country's economic rebound cannot occur if this gap continues. As with most aspects of economic theory, finding the root cause of our anemic growth isn't easy. However, state and national lawmakers should focus their efforts on generating more full-time, mid- and high-wage jobs. By crafting the right economic policies, we can rebuild the backbone of our economy.

Island Packet (Guest Column): Less than 5% chance for the American Dream in S.C.

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/aug/09/less-than-5-chance-for-the-american-dream-in-sc/>

Phil Noble

A huge new study was recently released by a team of academic economists at Harvard, and according to The New York Times, "researchers are calling it the most detailed portrait yet of income mobility in the United States. The study — based on millions of anonymous earnings — is the first with enough data to compare upward mobility across metropolitan areas. These comparisons provide some of the most powerful evidence so far about the factors that seem to drive people's chances of rising beyond the station of their

birth, including education, family structure and the economic layout of metropolitan areas." The Southeast had the lowest levels of mobility, and the numbers for South Carolina were especially bad.

Post and Courier: Clear-cut interstates no bargain

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130809/PC1002/130809440/1021/clear-cut-interstates-no-bargain>
Editorial

The debate over the state Department of Transportation's plans to cut down most of the trees in the median of I-26 between Summerville and I-95 has clearly demonstrated the public's view that the scenic interstate segment shouldn't be spoiled. That reaction probably also reflects public sentiment elsewhere in South Carolina. So motorists should take heed of a remark by state Sen. Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, at Wednesday's meeting of the State Infrastructure Bank in Columbia.

Index-Journal: RNC media threat not wisest move

<http://www.indexjournal.com/main.asp?SectionID=8&SubSectionID=154&ArticleID=20104>
Editorial

Reference here is to the RNC's complaint about NBC and CNN airing specials on Hillary Clinton. RNC chairman Reince Priebus said a planned NBC miniseries and a CNN documentary on the former secretary of state/first lady is nothing short of an "extended commercial" designed to promote a Hillary Clinton presidency. Yes, there is reason to think Hillary Clinton is going to seek her party's nomination in 2016, but so what? Like her or not, like her politics or not, Hillary Clinton has been a formidable woman in the political arena, one who very easily could and arguably should be selected for a documentary or miniseries.

Island Packet: Wanted: Candidates committed to seeing job through

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2013/08/08/2620073/wanted-candidates-committed-to.html#storylink=cpy>
Editorial

One bright spot to having to fill a Beaufort County school board seat less than a year after the last election is that we might be able to double up with a special election to fill a County Council seat left empty by another early departure. Mike Sanz, the school board member who announced Tuesday that he was leaving the board to return to a district teaching position, should make sure that happens, given the requirements of state election laws.

DHEC News:

The State: Templeton admits some top DHEC officials knew of TB problem in April

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/08/08/2908400/templeton-admits-some-top-dhec.html>
Sammy Fretwell

State health department director Catherine Templeton spent more than three hours explaining Thursday why her agency botched a tuberculosis investigation near Greenwood, where more than 50 school children were infected with the germ. But her answers didn't appear to satisfy Democratic state senators. Under their questioning, Templeton indicated that she did not learn about the TB probe until May 21. She later clarified that to say she did not know there were problems with the investigation until she visited a DHEC clinic in Greenwood on that day in May.

Note: She also suggested she was the target of a political agenda by Democrats. Templeton became DHEC director in March 2012. She was elevated to the position through the efforts of Republican Gov. Nikki Haley.

The State: SC DHEC Blasted For Missteps In School TB Probe

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=UWg1noE7
Sammy Fretwell

Inside: Her voice cracking as she stared across the crowded meeting room, Robin Cobb recounted Thursday how her 8-year-old son came down with tuberculosis and what she thinks of the state health department's efforts to protect him from the disease. At a state Senate hearing in Columbia, Cobb said the Department of Health and Environmental Control failed miserably in investigating a tuberculosis outbreak that sickened her boy and infected about 50 other schoolmates in Ninety Six, a tiny town in western South Carolina.

Associated Press: Director of SC agency apologizes again for TB case

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=1LzIW59L
Seanna Adcox

The director of South Carolina's public health agency apologized again Thursday for a botched investigation into a tuberculosis outbreak in Greenwood County that left residents in the dark for months as rumors circulated. The Senate Medical Affairs Committee grilled Catherine Templeton for hours about why it took so long for the agency to notify the public and begin testing children after local health officials were informed that a school janitor likely had the contagious disease.

Index-Journal: Seeking Answers

Panel hears testimony about what occurred in Ninety Six schools

<http://www.indexjournal.com/main.asp?SectionID=4&SubSectionID=40&ArticleID=20139>

Editorial

In a politically charged hearing Thursday about the state Department of Health and Environmental Control's (DHEC) response to the recent tuberculosis outbreak at Ninety Six Primary School, town native Robin Cobb told state senators how her family was affected by the health crisis.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: 24 rural areas in SC receive combined \$10 million

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/08/09/3634999/24-rural-areas-in-sc-receive-combined.html>

South Carolina's economic development agency has awarded \$10 million for water and sewer upgrades in 24 rural communities. The community development block grants announced this week by the state Commerce Department range from less than \$153,000 to \$500,000. Five municipalities or counties received that top amount for local projects: Calhoun and Greenwood counties, and the towns of Lyman, Ninety-Six and Pageland. Commerce officials say about 12,000 residents will benefit.

Aiken Standard: MOX layoffs to cut \$42 million from local payroll

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130809/AIK0101/130809496/1004/mox-layoffs-to-cut-42-million-from-local-payroll>

Derrek Asberry

The projected 500 layoffs at MOX could strip \$42 million from the annual payroll in five local counties. The multimillion-dollar figure comes from an economic impact study commissioned by the Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization. The five counties mentioned in the study are: Allendale, Barnwell, and Aiken counties in South Carolina, and Richmond and Columbia counties in Georgia.

Aiken Standard: SCE&G proposed rate increase adjusted

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130809/AIK0101/130809509/1004/sceg-proposed-rate-increase-adjusted>

Amy Banton

The proposed SCE&G rate hike may be slightly lower than expected but only by a few cents. The State Office of Regulatory Staff completed its review and suggests the rate hike be approximately 2.87 percent rather than the 2.97 increase that was initially requested by SCE&G. The impact on residential customers would be an average of \$4.17 more in their monthly bill rather than \$4.32 under the initial rate amendment proposal. The small cut in the requested increase slashes approximately \$2.4 million from the \$69 million SCE&G would gain from the revised rates.

Aiken Standard (Guest Column): State Museum expands permanent Civil War exhibit

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130808/AIK0403/130809529/1046/state-museum-expands-permanent-civil-war-exhibit>

Dr. Tom Mack

To coincide with the 150th anniversary commemoration of the War Between the States, the South Carolina State Museum has undertaken an ambitious expansion of its permanent exhibition on the conflict. Members of the curatorial staff have now reached the midway point in their efforts.

The State: USC's research grants drop 7 percent

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/08/08/2908691/uscs-research-grants-drop-7-percent.html>

The University of South Carolina brought in \$220 million in research funding and sponsored awards during the fiscal year that ended June 30, the institution's third-highest total ever but a 7 percent drop from the previous year.

Florence Morning News: Chase lays off last of its Florence employees

http://www.scnw.com/news/local/article_2d49285a-003b-11e3-8206-0019bb30f31a.html

Gavin Jackson

J.P. Morgan Chase announced Thursday morning it will lay off the remaining employees at its Florence Chase Home Mortgage office. The company said the remaining 450 employees at its mortgage operations would be laid off in the coming year.

Associated Press: Transit hub envisioned for SC's Grand Strand

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/08/08/3633238/transit-hub-envisioned-for-scs.html#storylink=cpy>

Plans are underway to create a regional transportation hub on the Grand Strand that can be used by residents, workers and tourists. The center would be a hub for local buses, taxis, Greyhound and even bicycles. A consultant working with the Coast Regional Transit Authority said Wednesday there are about 500 properties in Horry County with the 8 acres needed for the site. A list of possible locations is expected later this year.

Associated Press: Clemson says donors pledged \$102M in 2012-13

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/08/09/3634997/clemson-says-donors-pledged-102m.html#storylink=cpy>

Clemson University says donors pledged nearly \$102 million last school year. Officials say that brings Clemson's Will to Lead capital campaign to \$699 million raised since its 2006 launch. The total for 2012-13 includes about \$27 million raised through IPTAY, Clemson's athletic fundraising arm. That represented more than 15,000 donors. In all, more than 21,700 people either donated or committed gifts to the university during the fiscal year.

The Herald: Winthrop named among best schools in Southeast

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/08/08/5099497/winthrop-named-among-best-schools.html#storylink=cpy>

The Princeton Review says Winthrop University is among the "Best in the Southeast," noting its campus beauty, diverse population and top academic programs. The university has been listed in the Princeton Review's rankings every year since 2003 when the publication began.

Associated Press: Kangaroo Express hosts free military family night

http://www.scnw.com/news/state/article_cbdcf34-00dc-11e3-84d9-001a4bcf6878.html

Kangaroo Express is hosting a "Salute to the Troops," a free night of family entertainment in Sumter for military members and their families. The event is scheduled for 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday in the Memorial Fair Building in Sumter. There is a limit of four tickets for each military identification card shown. Military members are asked to get tickets at any of the eight Kangaroo Express stations in Sumter.

Local News:

The State: Deputies find body of missing teen Gabrielle Swainson

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/08/08/2908377/sheriff-calls-7-pm-press-conference.html>

Noelle Phillips and Darren Price

Deputies after 9 p.m. Thursday found the body of Gabrielle Swainson, the teen who went missing from her Northeast Richland County home one year ago. "The search for Gabbie is over. She's coming home," Sheriff Leon Lott said during a 7 p.m. press conference to announce his deputies had begun digging at an Elgin site they had searched before. The sheriff's department brought suspect Freddie Grant down from a federal penitentiary in Kentucky to point to where the girl was.

The State: Columbia Chamber Endorses Strong-mayor Concept; Plough Urges Vote Be Delayed

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VI13nGlz

Clif LeBlanc

The Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce on Thursday threw its support behind the mayor's push for a decision this fall on a strong mayor form of government. "Business leaders across Columbia are frustrated with how long it takes to get things done in this city," the chamber's chairman, Lee Bussell, said in a news release. "The largest area of economic growth in our state right now is the Lowcountry, and that's because cities like Charleston, North Charleston and Goose Creek already have this (strong-mayor) system of governance and can act quickly when it is needed."

Anderson Independent: County leaders support Senior Solutions efforts to buy land

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/aug/08/county-leaders-support-senior-solutions-efforts/>

Niki Mayo

Senior Solutions got the Anderson County Council's blessing Thursday to go after a multimillion-dollar bond issue to buy the land where the organization's office sits on Clemson Boulevard. Doug Wright, the president and chief executive officer of Senior Solutions, and Mike Pitts, the county attorney, said the resolution will not financially obligate the county. Senior Solutions provides a range of services to the elderly in Anderson, Oconee and Greenville counties. The organization's services include meal delivery, transportation assistance and adult day care. The organization already owns the building that it uses in the city of Anderson, but has long been operating with a 40-year lease on the land

The Item: Military, families invited to Fun Night

http://www.theitem.com/news/military-families-invited-to-fun-night/article_8727ef78-84be-55f4-806f-0a474e4b8c00.html

Bristow Marchant

Service members and their families at Shaw Air Force Base can take advantage of a night of free entertainment with their military IDs tonight at the Sumter fairgrounds. The Family Fun Night is sponsored by Kangaroo Express as part of the Salute Our Troops tour, currently making its way across the Southeast through Labor Day. The tour aims to give back to military families, while at the same time raising money for military causes.

Associated Press: 600-bed Student Housing Project Gets Initial Approval

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EtBjHc5K

Jeff Wilkinson

Columbia's design review commission has given preliminary approval to a nearly 600-bed student housing project on Huger Street at Blossom Street. The project, targeted for completion in August 2015, would be built by a New York City firm on land owned by Columbia developer Ben Arnold. Arnold plans to sell the 4-acre parcel to Park 7 Group, which will build and own the development. The project, which would be located at one of Columbia's key entryways, is one of four student housing complexes approved or proposed for downtown.

Aiken Standard: City Council will discuss road projects on Monday

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130809/AIK0101/130809508/1007/AIK0101/city-council-will-discuss-road-projects-on-monday>

Maayan Schechter

Aiken City Council will further discuss sections of the proposed S.C. Highway 118 bypass and Hitchcock Parkway widening project on Monday. The S.C. Department of Transportation has asked to go before Council to discuss and solicit ideas on what Council thinks are the project's pressing issues in the wake of the Augusta Regional Transportation Study subcommittee meeting last week.

The Herald: Drug-free coalition All on Board faces budget shortfall

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/08/08/5099857/drug-free-coalition-all-on-board.html>

Jie Jenny Zou

After a decade of programs targeted at curbing youth substance abuse, the All on Board coalition faces closure unless its two-person staff can raise sufficient funds by the end of September. Executive Director Bob Norwood has set a fundraising target of \$125,000 by Sept. 30 – enough to keep the drug-free coalition open for one year. All on Board lost its federal funding earlier this year after it failed to submit proper documentation in a renewal application. But once staff realized the error, the application had already been rejected.

Anderson Independent: Walhalla gets nearly \$400,000 for water lines

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/aug/08/walhalla-gets-nearly-400000-for-water-lines/>

Ray Chandler

State officials have awarded Walhalla a grant of nearly \$400,000 for the second phase of replacing and upgrading water lines in the city's Chicopee Mill Village area. The \$387,747 grant is part of \$9.9 million in community development block grant money announced Wednesday by the South Carolina Department of Commerce. The money is intended for 24 communities across the state, affecting almost 12,000 people, mostly those of moderate or low income.

The State: Lancaster County residents should ask gold mine, 'Why not in our back yard?'

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/08/09/2908247/bolton-lancaster-county-residents.html>

Warren Bolton

Canada-based Romarco Minerals, which is seeking to open a gigantic gold mine in Lancaster County, is offering to preserve Cook's Mountain and an adjacent riverfront plantation in Lower Richland — if federal and state regulators give it the OK to dig up or cover an unusually large amount of wetlands in Lancaster. No doubt, that deal would be greeted with excitement in Richland County, where folks have been concerned about the future of Cook's Mountain, a rare land formation on the Wateree River. Since the landfill operator bought Cook's Mountain in 2012, the public hasn't had access to it.

Island Packet: United Way touts increase in reading scores

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2013/08/08/2619939/united-way-touts-increase-in-reading.html>

Students in five Beaufort County schools and two Jasper County schools participating in the United Way of the Lowcountry's Early Grade Reading Program saw increases in the reading portion of their Measures of Academic Progress test scores, according to the United Way. A total of 154 students in St. Helena Elementary, Joseph Shanklin Elementary, Hilton Head Early Childhood Center, Hilton Head School for the Creative Arts, Pritchardville Elementary, Hardeeville Elementary, and Ridgeland Elementary participated in the Early Grade Reading initiative during the past the school year.

Post and Courier: Downtown library, controversial from its beginnings, being demolished

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130808/PC16/130809450/1006/a-library-8217-s-final-chapter>

Robert Behre

The Charleston County Library building on Marion Square inflamed the community before it was built, and controversy lingered during its 38 years of service and more than a decade after its doors shut. The debate shows few signs of ending for good, even as the vacant eyesore is torn down this week. Wrecking crews removed some of its pink marble before tearing down its walls to clear the site for a 100-foot-tall, neoclassical hotel by developer Mike Bennett's Library Associates LLC.

The Sun News: CCU's "Coastal Explorer" may help in studying offshore wind farms

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/08/08/3634487/ccus-coastal-explorer-may-help.html>

Jason M. Rodriguez

Coastal Carolina University Researcher Paul Gayes, for more than two decades, has had his eyes on a research vessel that can do the kind of research needed for offshore wind farms. By fall, the vessel will finally be in the hands of CCU students and researchers who hope to use it for further study of the ocean to some day help bring offshore wind energy to the Grand Strand.

National News:

Associated Press: Yemen official: US drones kill 12 in 3 airstrikes

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VcHOYB5q

Ahmed Al-Haj and Maggie Michael

The U.S. has sharply escalated its drone war in Yemen, with military officials in the Arab country reporting 34 suspected al-Qaida militants killed in less than two weeks, including three strikes on Thursday alone in which a dozen died. The action against al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, as the Yemen branch is known, comes amid a global terror alert issued by Washington. One Mideast official says the uptick is due to its leaders leaving themselves more vulnerable by moving from their normal hideouts toward areas where they could carry out attacks.

Associated Press: Obama to sign student loan deal

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/08/09/5100161/obama-to-sign-student-loan-deal.html>

Philip Elliott

Students heading back to college this fall will save thousands in interest charges on their loans after they graduate once President Barack Obama signs into law a rare bipartisan compromise. The president was scheduled to sign the deal Friday at the White House, ending a frenzied summer of negotiations to restore lower interest rates before millions of college students moved back into the dorms. About 11 million students this year are expected to have lower interest rates, saving the average undergraduate \$1,500 on interest charges on this year's loans.

Washington Post: Departure of GOP operatives could imperil debt-limit talks

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/departure-of-gop-operatives-could-imperil-debt-limit-talks/2013/08/08/9f595306-0037-11e3-9711-3708310f6f4d_story.html

Lori Montgomery

With another showdown looming over the national debt, Washington insiders last month received some unsettling news: Rohit Kumar, a Republican aide who has played a key role in warding off disaster, is leaving Capitol Hill. As Congress braces for a possible government shutdown next month and the fresh danger of default before Thanksgiving, the departure of Kumar, the chief negotiator for Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), is a huge loss.

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