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Subject: Morning Clips – Friday, May 20, 2016

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General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: 'Precious few days left' in legislative session

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160520/PC1603/160529966>

Gavin Jackson

Another legislative week bites the dust with many bills still in flux and two weeks remaining--or more specifically six days. Well more like five days when you consider most, if not all, of Wednesday will be spent on judge elections in a joint session and then later the portrait unveiling of the late Sen. Clementa Pinckney in the Senate. Which is why Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, wasn't too happy Thursday when 20 senators adjourned session before even tackling the legislative calendar--sans one bill: the Berkeley County transgender bathroom bill by Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Charleston.

Associated Press: Bill shaving weeks off SC legislative session to House floor

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=FDfJN7n2

SC State Wire

A bill that would shorten South Carolina's legislative session by three weeks most years is on its way to the House floor. The Judiciary Committee approved legislation Thursday which would end the General Assembly's yearly sessions on the second Thursday in May. The session currently runs until the first Thursday in June.

Associated Press: Bill barring eye prescriptions from online exams becomes law

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=3Ym2QKLU

SC State Wire

A company offering prescriptions for contacts and glasses based on online eye exams no longer offers the service to South Carolinians. Opternative CEO and founder Aaron Dallek said his company stopped providing prescriptions in the state Thursday after the Legislature overrode Gov. Nikki Haley's veto. The House's 98-1 vote immediately made such prescriptions illegal. The Senate voted 39-3 Wednesday to overturn the veto. South Carolina becomes at least the third state to pass a law banning the practice.

Associated Press: Lawmakers, judges seek help for SC Stand Your Ground defense

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

Jeffrey Collins

The South Carolina Supreme Court is asking legislators to help them better define the state's "stand-your-ground" self-defense law, but a group of senators said Thursday that immediately expanding the law isn't the right way to do it. A Senate subcommittee decided not to vote on a bill Thursday that would shift the burden to prosecutors to prove that those who have killed someone were not in fear for their lives when claiming self-defense and allow an instant appeal that could delay trials for years if a judge rules against a defendant. The bill passed the House 106-0 in February.

Post and Courier: 'Stand your ground' bill stalls in Senate, unlikely to become law

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160519/PC1603/160519318>

Cynthia Roldan

A bill that would have expanded the state's "stand your ground" law by shifting the burden of proof to the prosecution will likely fail to become law before the Statehouse session ends in two weeks. Senators said they needed more time to study a South Carolina Supreme Court opinion published Wednesday to see how it plays

into the wording of the current proposal. With just two weeks left in the session and one more committee meeting scheduled between now and the June 2 adjournment, the bill stands little chance of becoming law.

Associated Press: Independent reviews of legislators steps from being law

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=hi5slQvf

Seanna Adcox

Complaints against South Carolina's legislators would be independently investigated under an ethics bill that could reach the finish line this session after four years of debate. If the Senate accepts changes the House approved Thursday on a 101-2 vote, the legislation will go to Gov. Nikki Haley's desk. Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin, R-Pickens, said he's optimistic. "It would be a huge step," he said.

The State: House passes independent investigations of lawmakers

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article78721332.html#storylink=apmobile>

Cassie Cope

The S.C. House passed a proposal Thursday to change the way allegations of unethical behavior by lawmakers are investigated. Under the House proposal, a revamped eight-member state Ethics Commission would investigate allegations against legislators. Those allegations now are investigated by legislators.

Post and Courier: S.C. House sends independent investigation law back to senators

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160519/160519301/sc-house-sends-independent-investigation-law-back-to-senators>

Maya T. Prabhu

Lawmakers on Thursday gave a proposed independent Statehouse investigation panel the authority to make public any accusations of wrongdoing against a lawmaker. The House voted 101-2 to amend a Senate ethics bill that gives an eight-member Statehouse ethics commission the ability to move an investigation forward instead of referring it to the House and Senate ethics committees. Those committees would then decide to make the information publicly available.

Post and Courier: MUSC doctor 'terrified' of 20-week abortion ban

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160519/160519302/musc-doctor-terrified-of-20-week-abortion-ban->

Lauren Sausser

The director of high-risk obstetrics at the Medical University of South Carolina called a proposed 20-week abortion ban "confusing," "scary" and "a big step backwards" for patients. "I've reviewed this with my colleagues here and everyone here is really terrified," said Dr. Scott Sullivan, a maternal-fetal specialist. "I've been practicing (obstetrics) for 20 years, and I have no idea how to stay within the confines of this law." On Tuesday, the General Assembly passed a bill that would ban abortions in South Carolina after 19 weeks. It would not make exceptions for victims of rape or incest.

WBTW: After two years, Grand Strand Medical Center is still waiting for approval to build mental health facility

<http://wbtw.com/2016/05/20/after-two-years-grand-strand-medical-center-is-still-waiting-for-approval-to-build-mental-health-facility/>

Brennan McDavid

A bill in the South Carolina Senate could make it easier for hospitals to expand. Last month, we told you about the need for more mental health facilities in our area. Grand Strand Medical Center applied two years ago for permission to build a new psychiatric wing. Any hospital or medical facility looking to grow must first obtain a Certificate of Need from DHEC. It's supposed to help regulate the cost of healthcare and prevent any duplication of services.

Greenville News: House panel replaces dash cam bill with FOIA revision

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/05/19/house-panel-replaces-dash-cam-bill-foia-revision/84581414/>

Tim Smith

The House Judiciary Committee has swapped a bill governing the release of police dash cam videos with revisions to the state's Freedom of Information Act, to get around a senator's block of the FOIA bill in the Legislature's final weeks. Committee members said Thursday they like both bills but were afraid unless they placed the FOIA language in the dash cam bill and removed the dash cam legislation, the FOIA legislation might die.

Post and Courier: The South Carolina Statehouse has always been an un-gentlemanly club

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160520/PC16/160529986>

Brian Hicks

Anyone who's shocked by allegations of sexual harassment at the Statehouse obviously hasn't spent much time there. The place is a cesspool of leering, groping and unwanted advances. It's pretty sleazy, always has been. That's not to say we should convict former Rep. Eddy Southard of Moncks Corner, accused of sexual harassment by three women, before he gets a fair hearing. It just means we shouldn't be surprised by anything coming out of the Statehouse — because this is nothing new.

LGBT Laws:

The State: Senate blocks Berkeley bathroom ban

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article78736532.html>

Cassie Cope

The S.C. Senate abruptly adjourned Thursday, blocking a vote on a proposed Berkeley County bathroom ban that opponents said could cost the state jobs and federal money. Senators quit work for the week as state leaders – including Gov. Nikki Haley, Commerce Secretary Bobby Hitt and Education Superintendent Molly Spearman – urged the issue of bathroom use in Berkeley schools be decided at the local level.

Post and Courier: Senate stalls on Berkeley transgender bathroom bill

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160519/PC1603/160519321>

Brenda Rindge and Gavin Jackson

The Statehouse bill that would return the Berkeley County School District's bathroom gender rule to where it was a month ago stalled Thursday at the urging of education and economic officials worried about the potential fallout. "It's amazing the length that some folks went through today to prevent a bill," said Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Charleston, author of the legislation that would require Berkeley students to use the restroom that corresponds with their gender at birth. Grooms' measure would reverse the district's policy change allowing students to use restrooms with which they identify. But the Senate unexpectedly adjourned just after noon, preventing the bill from heading to the House.

Greenville News: Activist: Spearman should resign or change stance on transgender issue

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/education/2016/05/19/activist-spearman-should-resign-change-stance-transgender-issue/84612536/>

Nathaniel Cary

State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman said in Greenville last week that her office has instructed school districts to comply with the U.S. Department of Education's directives regarding treatment of transgender students and that she didn't plan to oppose the federal directives. "We have instructed our folks, districts, to make sure they uphold the law and all students are treated as they need," she said in an interview with The Greenville News on Friday.

WLTX: Sumter Schools Postpones Decision on Transgender Bathrooms

<http://www.wltx.com/news/education/sumter-schools-postpones-decision-on-transgender-bathrooms/204929468>

The Sumter School District has postponed a decision on a set of policies that would have allowed transgender students to use the bathroom of the gender they identify with. The decision was made Thursday afternoon at special called meeting of the Board of Trustees to delay holding a third reading on the matter.

SC Agency News:

WIS: DSS looking to recruit 1,500 more foster homes

<http://www.wistv.com/story/32021713/dss-looking-to-recruit-1500-more-foster-homes>

Chad Mills

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) says it needs the public's help. Right now, about 4,000 Palmetto State children need a home. Overall, DSS is searching for about 1,500 new foster homes. The agency said it's making changes to turn things around. "It was the best decision of my life," said Tyrone Nixon. "Just to see them smiling, to know that they are happy, know that they are healthy. That's what keeps me going."

SC Political News:

Greenville News: SC House Speaker endorses Nanney

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/05/19/sc-house-speaker-endorses-nanney/84630352/>

Rudolph Bell

South Carolina House Speaker Jay Lucas of Hartsville traveled to Greenville to endorse fellow Republican Rep. Wendy Nanney Thursday evening and help raise money for her re-election campaign. Nanney, first elected to represent District 22 in 2008, is being challenged from within the GOP by Greenville attorney Jason Elliott. The contest will be decided during the Republican primary on June 14.

SC Elections:

Post and Courier: Judge candidate accused of violation

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160519/PC1603/160519300>

Gavin Jackson

A conduct question involving a judicial candidate up for election by the S.C. General Assembly next week needs to be handled before the position is filled, one lawmaker said Thursday. Chairman Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, said the issue needs to be addressed but conceded the matter involving the allegation of a judge candidate campaigning for lawmakers' votes before they were allowed to is beyond the commission's current control. "The election process is in the hands of the General Assembly and it will be up to General Assembly to take further actions regarding a particular race," Martin said. The election is Wednesday.

The Herald: Hayes, Climer talk term limits, roads, ethics in S.C. Senate debate

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article78766152.html>

Jennifer Becknell

Longtime incumbent S.C. Sen. Wes Hayes and challenger Wes Climer talked roads, term limits, ethics reform and more in a Thursday night debate at Winthrop University. The GOP primary in state Senate District 15 pits Hayes, 63 and a 32-year incumbent, against Climer, 33, who was born two years before Hayes was first elected to the Legislature.

Opinion/Editorial:

News & Observer: The politics of Benghazi

<http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/editorial-cartoons/dwane-powell/article78700427.html>

Editorial Board

House Republicans on the Select Committee on Benghazi have wasted time and money for two years now investigating the 2012 attack on a diplomatic compound in Libya that left Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans dead. Their stated goal was to find out what happened in that attack and how it might have been prevented. But their actual goal is clear: to blame then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for everything and to damage her current campaign for the Democratic nomination for president.

Post and Courier: Sanford tilts at another windmill

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160520/PC1002/160529983>

Editorial

Mark Sanford rightly pointed out Wednesday: "Indefinite detention is not consistent with the values that America was based on." Unfortunately, though, our 1st District congressman frequently skews what should be his legislative priorities by sacrificing pressing practicality to theoretical principle. He extended that pattern Wednesday as one of only three House Republicans voting for an amendment, introduced by Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., to cut off funding for the U.S. prison that holds terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: South Carolina police investigate officer shooting of driver

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Y2ubWqOE

Meg Kinnard

State police launched an investigation Thursday after a white police officer shot and wounded a black man before an early morning car chase in a Columbia suburb.

The officer wasn't hurt, and officials didn't have an update on the wounded man's condition. The shooting was reported to state police at around 1:30 a.m. Thom Berry, spokesman for the State Law Enforcement Division, said it happened after a Forest Acres police officer was called to investigate a noise complaint and found a man sitting in a car.

Local News:

The State: EXCLUSIVE: Feds accuse big Midlands doctors group of fraud

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article78732482.html#storylink=apmobile>

John Monk

The U.S. Justice Department has filed a civil fraud suit against a major Midlands family doctors group practice, alleging that for years the practice illegally ramped up bills by adding unnecessary charges when patients came in for visits. Many of the alleged extra charges involved blood and liver tests to older patients on Medicare, the lawsuit said. Medicare, a federal elderly health care program, paid "over \$9 million" in improper payments to Family Medicine Centers of South Carolina, "many of which were medically unnecessary," according to a government lawsuit against the practice.

The State: George McMaster banned from Palmetto Club for life, avoids jail

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article78702787.html>

John Monk

George McMaster, the brother of Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, was banned for life from the premises of the Palmetto Club and will never be allowed to be a club member again as part of a criminal sentence handed down on Thursday by a circuit judge. In a 15-minute unannounced hearing at the Richland County courthouse, Judge Tanya Gee also sentenced McMaster to 30 days in jail, suspended on six months' probation for assault and battery, third degree.

The State: Richland 2 black parents' group wants school board chairman to step down

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/education/article78709457.html>

Sarah Ellis

Feeling that Richland 2 school district leaders have not adequately responded to some community members' concerns, the Richland 2 Black Parents Association says it wants school board chairman James Manning to step down from his leadership role. "We strongly object to any allegation that we do not listen to our community," Richland 2 spokeswoman Libby Roof said in response Thursday, citing regular meetings with community-based groups that are involved in the district's strategic planning.

Sun News: Lawsuit accuses Horry detective of sexually assaulting rape victim

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/crime/article78578592.html>

Audrey Hudson

A lawsuit filed Wednesday against the Horry County Police Department and former Detective Troy Allen Large accuses the officer of sexually assaulting a woman whose rape case he was assigned to investigate. The lawsuit also accuses the detective, who worked for the department for more than 27 years, of pressuring the victim to participate in nude, "catfight" videos with other women who were sexual assault victims.

Sun News: Council chairman: Allegations in lawsuit against detective 'horrendous'

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article78669957.html>

Audrey Hudson

Horry County Council Chairman Mark Lazarus said Thursday that county officials are taking seriously an investigation into the police department as well as recent lawsuits filed by sexual assault victims and that he has complete faith in the law enforcement agency. A third lawsuit against the county and police department was filed Wednesday, accusing former Detective Troy Allen Large of badgering a rape victim to fight other women, in the nude, on videotape. The lawsuit says Large also sexually assaulted the victim whose rape case he was assigned to investigate.

Post and Courier: Firm plans \$1B deal to develop Charleston's Laurel Island into new community

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160520/PC05/160529996>

Warren L. Wise

An Ohio developer is hoping a proposed upper peninsular project by that name will beguile land lovers as well as it plans to invest \$1 billion over the next 10 years to reshape a vacant island into a thriving new community in Charleston. North American Properties plans to develop the upscale, mixed-use waterfront venture on the 160-acre Laurel Island site off of Romney Street.

National News:

The Hill: House rejects effort to bar Confederate flag from the Citadel

<http://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/house/280466-house-rejects-effort-to-bar-confederate-flag-from-the-citadel>

Cristina Marcos

Debate over flying the Confederate flag has returned to the House floor nearly a year after a racially motivated shooting in Charleston, S.C. House Democrats late Wednesday night used a procedural motion for the annual defense policy bill to attempt to add an amendment that would target the display of the Confederate flag at the Citadel military college in Charleston.

Associated Press: Poll shows strong support for paid family leave programs

<http://bigstory.ap.org/0cbee9b9aaab46cd969f1121668bbaca>

Alejandra Cancino

Time off from work to care for a child or relative is codified in federal law. Now, an overwhelming majority of Americans 40 and older want that time away from the job to be paid. An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll released Friday said 72 percent support paid family leave. Democrats were more likely to back it, but Republicans also expressed strong support. Overall, support was stronger among people age 40-64 and among women. At least 19 states are considering paid family leave laws, but only three have active programs. New York, the latest to approve it, will launch its program in 2018.

World News:

Associated Press: Egypt army says plane wreckage found near Alexandria

<http://bigstory.ap.org/d961bc75c7d24b6c9f4efcc4fc056eb7>

Maggie Michael

Egyptian air and naval forces have spotted a body part, passengers' personal belongings and other debris from EgyptAir flight 804 that crashed in the Mediterranean Sea, killing 66 passengers and crew who were en route from Paris to Cairo, the Egyptian army and Greek defense minister said Friday. It is not yet known what caused

the crash but some experts and officials have not ruled out terrorism as a possibility.

Associated Press: The Latest: Satellite spots oil slick near plane crash site

<http://bigstory.ap.org/10a73fcb20d7400f9e2126d786b1134a>

The European Space Agency says one of its satellites has spotted a possible oil slick in the same area of the Mediterranean Sea where EgyptAir Flight 804 disappeared. The agency says its Sentinel-1A radar satellite detected the 2 kilometer- (1.2 mile-) long slick about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southeast of the plane's last known location. It gave the coordinates as 33 32' N / 29 13' E. ESA says the information was passed to relevant authorities late Thursday to aid their search-and-rescue operations. The agency cautioned that there was no guarantee the slick was from the missing aircraft.

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