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Subject: Afternoon Clips – Wednesday, May 21, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

CNN: Christie defends RGA chairmanship amid fiscal mess in N.J.

<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/05/21/christie-defends-rga-chairmanship-amid-fiscal-mess-in-n-j/>
Ashley Killough

Gov. Chris Christie, who chairs the Republican Governors Association, argued Wednesday that fiscal problems back at home in New Jersey aren't clouding his leadership abilities at the RGA.

Note: Haley also defended Christie at the event Wednesday. "Let's be clear, we would not want him to give up the chairmanship. He completely has the backing of all of the Republican governors. He's been a rock star," she said, citing his fundraising ability and efforts to spread their message. "We wouldn't let him step down."

New York Daily News: GOP governors staunchly back Chris Christie at Republican Governors Association event

<http://www.nydailynews.com/blogs/dailypolitics/gop-governors-staunchly-back-chris-christie-republican-governors-association-event-blog-entry-1.1800535#ixzz32Nt8fhYW>

Corinne Lestch

GOP leaders in the Republican Governors Association praised New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie for his tough leadership despite the Bridgegate scandal that has rocked his presidential aspirations.

Note: "We would not want him to give up the chairmanship," Haley said Wednesday at a press briefing at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. "He completely has the backing of all the Republican governors. He's a rockstar - not just raising money, but going out and really fighting to tell our story. So we wouldn't want him to step down."

MSNBC: Chris Christie: I won't step down as RGA Chair

<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/christie-hailed-rock-star-republican>

Aliyah Frumin

Despite the ongoing scandal surrounding embattled New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and the lane closure plot on the George Washington Bridge, the GOPer said on Wednesday that he has no intention of giving up his seat as chairman of the Republican Governor's Association.

Note: Haley – who's up for re-election in 2014 – rushed to Christie's defense when the Garden State politician was asked by a reporter about his future with the RGA. "We don't want him to give up the chairmanship," the tea party favorite said. "He completely has the backing of all the Republican governors. He's been a rock star...not just raising money but going out there and really fighting to tell our story. And so we wouldn't let him step down."

Post and Courier: S.C. House passes ethics reform

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529833/1031/sc-house-passes-ethics-reform>

Jeremy Borden

The S.C. House easily passed its first attempt at sweeping ethics reform in decades, establishing a new body to investigate members of all three branches of government and requiring all lawmakers to disclose their sources of income.

Note: Questions on ethics have consumed the Statehouse as Gov. Nikki Haley and other leaders have pushed for comprehensive reform, arguing the current system doesn't instill public confidence.

The State: SC State will ask for at least \$1.2 million to pay salaries, loans

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3458661/sc-state.html?sp=/99/132/312/169/#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

S.C. State University will ask to draw at least \$1.2 million from a \$6 million emergency loan the school

received from the state last month, college President Thomas Ezey told The State on Wednesday. About \$500,000 is needed to pay salaries next week, while another \$700,000 will cover bond debt payments in June.

Charleston Business Journal: Comact Equipment to expand operations, add 60 jobs in Dorchester County

<http://www.charlestonbusiness.com/news/51466-comact-equipment-to-expand-operations-add-60-jobs-in-dorchester-county>

Comact Equipment U.S. Inc. plans to expand its manufacturing facility in Dorchester County with a \$1.8 million investment and 60 new jobs, according to a news release from Gov. Nikki Haley's office.

GSA Business: GHS expansion has AnMed suggesting patient 'cherry picking'

<http://www.gsabusiness.com/news/51464-ghs-expansion-has-anmed-suggesting-patient-cherry-picking>

Bill Poovey

Greenville Health System's plan to expand in Spartanburg and Anderson counties signals a possible turf war in Anderson. The resolution approved Tuesday by trustees of GHS, the state's largest nonprofit health care system, says it will file certificates of need on the projects.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley's Republican administration last year suspended the program administered by the S. C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, saying the open market and not the state should determine where health care facilities expand or make major equipment purchases.

DSS Hearing News:

Associated Press: Koller: DSS determining ideal caseload for workers

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jYij4eNY

Seanna Adcox

The embattled director of South Carolina's Department of Social Services says she will begin personally inquiring about workers who are handling more than 30 cases. Lillian Koller told a Senate panel on Wednesday that caseloads have improved but acknowledged the agency needs more people.

Post and Courier: DSS Director faces questions of caseload numbers

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529858/1177/dss-director-facing-questions-of-caseload-numbers>

Cynthia Roldan

Department of Social Services Director Lillian Koller testified Wednesday for a second time before a Senate panel and for the first time addressed the recent death of a Richland County infant. During that portion of the hearing, Koller detailed a plan rolled out by Gov. Nikki Haley last week that is meant to address the issues at the Richland County DSS office, which is where the staffer assigned to handle Bryson's case was based.

Greenville News: Lourie grills DSS director at Senate hearing

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2014/05/21/lourie-grills-dss-director-senate-hearing/9371481/>

Tim Smith

State Department of Social Services Director Lillian Koller came to a Senate panel this morning armed with two notebooks of data for senators but not the answer to a question by Democratic Sen. Joel Lourie of Columbia.

The State: DSS chief says not aware of agency being investigated, addresses worker caseload

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3458752/dss-chief-says-agency-not-being.html?sp=/99/205/&ihp=1#storylink=cpy>

Cassie Cope

Senators grilled the director of S.C. Department of Social Services again on Wednesday asking about worker caseloads and if a state or federal law enforcement department was investigating the agency. Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland, who has repeatedly called for Koller's removal, asked her if she were aware of any investigation into the agency by South Carolina Law Enforcement division or federal agency.

Anderson Independent: S.C. Senate panel questions DSS director

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/may/21/sc-senate-panel-questions-dss-director/?partner=RSS>

Kirk Brown

Responding to concerns from a legislative oversight committee, South Carolina Department of Social Services director Lillian Koller pledged Wednesday that she will stay "personally involved" in monitoring the workload of her agency's employees.

2014 Campaign Cycle News:

The State: Haley challenger Tom Ervin's radio ad zings Haley for noshing with rocker Joan Jett

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459264/haley-challenger-tom-ervin-zings.html?sp=/99/132/312/169/>
Jamie Self

A new radio ad by Tom Ervin, a self-described independent Republican running for governor as a petition candidate, criticizes Gov. Nikki Haley for dining with "rock star" Joan Jett in New York City while state lawmakers debate ethics reform.

Note: "It's just silly politics," said Haley's campaign spokesman Rob Godfrey. "No one in our state has pushed harder, or is pushing harder, for ethics reform than Governor Haley."

Post and Courier: Gov. Nikki Haley criticized for Joan Jett lunch

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529852/1005/ervin-hits-haley-for-i-love-rock-and-rolls-joan-jett-lunch>

Schuyler Kropf

Independent candidate for governor Tom Ervin released a new radio ad Wednesday riffing Gov. Nikki Haley as "missing in action" after having lunch with rock star Joan Jett at the Republican Governors Association meeting earlier this week in New York.

Note: Rob Godfrey, Haley's campaign spokesman, downplayed the ad as a stunt. "It's just silly politics. No one in our state has pushed harder, or is pushing harder, for ethics reform than Governor Haley," he said.

Post and Courier: Tuesday's election results make Sen. Lindsey Graham optimistic

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC1603/140529850/1031/tuesdays-election-results-make-sen-lindsey-graham-optimistic>

Robert Behre

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham said this week's primary results bode well for his crowded primary challenge on June 10. A main theme from Tuesday's GOP primaries, particularly the Senate races in Georgia and Kentucky, was that the Republican establishment candidates have learned how to beat tea party challengers.

The State: Lindsey Graham touts re-election backing from 'values' coalition

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/05/21/3459322/lindsey-graham-touts-re-election.html?sp=/99/132/312/169/#storylink=cpy>

Jamie Self

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham announced the formation of a "pro-family and pro-life" coalition backing his bid for re-election to a third term. Called the S.C. Values Coalition, the group is co-chaired by former Attorney General Charlie Condon of Charleston and Lisa Van Riper, president of S.C. Citizens for Life.

Anderson Independent: Two Republicans vie for District 3 seat in S.C. House

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/may/21/two-republicans-vie-for-district-3-seat-in-sc/?partner=RSS>

Vince Jackson

With Rep. B.R. Skelton's retirement, two people are seeking to become the Republican candidate for the District 3 seat in the South Carolina House. The district covers Clemson, Central, Six Mile and Norris.

Republicans Ed Harris, a small-business owner, and Gary Clary, a former circuit court judge, will compete in a June 10 primary.

Legislative Session News:

Associated Press: SC economic advisers increase revenue by \$86M

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=8A113d6

South Carolina's economic advisers have increased their revenue projections by nearly \$86 million. The Board of Economic Advisers voted unanimously Wednesday to recognize that state coffers are collecting more money than it projected earlier. The approved adjustments include an additional \$45.6 million in taxes

and \$10.6 million in lottery profits being collected this fiscal year.

Greenville News: Lawmakers put off vote on beer law

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/2014/05/21/craft-beer-law-goes-vote-today/9371069/>

Eric Connor

The "Stone Bill" — as it's called to lure a \$31 million investment by a West Coast brewery — was discussed this afternoon in a Senate and House committee that ultimately decided not to take action and to return to consider changes on Tuesday, state Rep. Derham Cole of Spartanburg, a sponsor of the bill, told GreenvilleOnline.com.

Post and Courier: Committee to discuss so-called 'Stone bill' aimed at attracting beer jobs to South Carolina

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20140521/PC16/140529860/1006/>

Glenn Smith

A conference committee between the state House and Senate is meeting today to discuss a fast-tracked bill that would loosen restrictions on breweries in an effort to draw job-producing beermakers like Stone Brewing Co. to the Palmetto State.

Associated Press: SC high court sets June 24 hearing in Harrell case

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=vD5vdVe2

Meg Kinnard

South Carolina's top prosecutor will soon get a chance to argue before the state Supreme Court why a judge was wrong to dismiss an investigation into one of the state's most powerful lawmakers. The high court on Tuesday set a June 24 hearing date for the case involving Attorney General Alan Wilson and House Speaker Bobby Harrell, both Republicans.

Local News:

Greenville News: Tax breaks possible to develop former mill site

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/golden-strip/2014/05/21/tax-breaks-possible-develop-former-mill-site/9375849/>

Nikki Withington

Developers could receive a tax break when they restore historic properties in Simpsonville. Simpsonville City Council has adopted its version of the state Bailey Bill, which allows the city to grant special assessment for eligible historic rehabilitation properties.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Students and faculty protest closing of center at USC Upstate

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20140521/ARTICLES/140529927/1112?Title=Students-faculty-protest-closing-of-Upstate-center>

Jenny Arnold

Supporters of USC Upstate's Center for Women's and Gender Studies protested Wednesday its proposed closure. The center featured programming on a variety of topics, including race, sexual orientation, feminism and religion, and it was women who took center stage during Wednesday's protest.

National News:

McClatchy DC: Obama calls allegations of VA misconduct 'disgraceful' but stands by Shinseki

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/05/21/228047/obama-calls-allegations-of-va.html#storylink=cpy>

Lindsay Wise, Lesley Clark

President Barack Obama defended Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki on Wednesday but warned that if allegations of misconduct at VA hospitals prove to be true, he will not hesitate to punish those responsible.

Associated Press: Analysis: GOP avoids past mistakes in Senate picks

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2014/may/21/analysis-gop-avoids-past-mistakes-senate-picks/?partner=RSS>

Charles Babington

Tuesday's elections are the best proof yet that Republicans are avoiding previous mistakes and improving their chances of controlling the Senate during President Barack Obama's final two years in office. GOP voters again chose solidly conservative nominees while rejecting the most extreme and outlandish types

who led the party to painful losses in 2010 and 2012.

Brian Symmes

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