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To:
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Subject: Afternoon Clips – Tuesday, February 9, 2016

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President's Executive Budget Defunds MOX:

Associated Press: SC sues Energy Dept over unfinished nuclear fuel project
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=06WRNwkj

Meg Kinnard

South Carolina has again sued the federal government over an unfinished project to convert nuclear weapons components into reactor fuel, saying in a lawsuit filed Tuesday that the administration has acted unconstitutionally in failing to complete the mixed-oxide facility by a Jan. 1 deadline.

Note: The lawsuit has been expected. Last month, Gov. Nikki Haley told Wilson that she wanted to sue, also warning Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz in December that the state would be forced to sue if his agency didn't start making payments. A clause in the law, however, makes the fine "subject to the availability of appropriations."

Aiken Standard: S.C. sues DOE over missed Savannah River Site MOX milestone on same day Obama seeks to terminate project

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160209/AIK0101/160209442>

Derrek Asberry

South Carolina is suing the Department of Energy, among others, for failing to meet commitments made to the state regarding construction of the Savannah River Site's MOX facility. The suit was filed Tuesday; the same day President Barack Obama released his fiscal year 2017 budget proposal which calls for the termination of the MOX project.

Note: Neither occurred, meaning DOE was supposed to pay the state \$1 million a day, capping off at \$100 million annually, beginning Jan. 1, 2016. The department has failed to do so and has ignored threats made by Gov. Nikki Haley.

The State: Obama proposes nixing MOX plant; SC attorney general files suit

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article59334313.html>

Sammy Fretwell

The U.S. Department of Energy plans to abandon construction of a multi-billion dollar nuclear fuel factory at the Savannah River Site as costs rise and questions abound over the need for the facility. In the DOE's budget request, the department says the mixed oxide fuel factory will be "terminated" beginning in fiscal year 2017, which starts in October.

Note: Tuesday's suit is intended to protect thousands of jobs that would come with the project, Wilson said. It asks that the federal government be prevented from bringing more plutonium to SRS until the plant is built. In addition to Wilson and Graham, Gov. Nikki Haley has supported completing the federally funded MOX factory.

Post and Courier: S.C. attorney general files lawsuit against Department of Energy to finish MOX project

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC1603/160209359>

Emma Dumain

S.C. Attorney General Alan Wilson has filed a lawsuit to force the U.S. Department of Energy to finish the mixed oxide fuel fabrication, or MOX, project at the Savannah River Site, the same day President Barack Obama submitted his final federal budget proposal to Congress calling for the program's termination.

Note: Wilson threatened to sue at the end of 2015 at the urging of Gov. Nikki Haley.

Greenville News: President Obama's budget would pull plug on MOX

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/02/09/president-obamas-budget-would-pull-plug-mox/80047746/>

Mary Orndorff Troyan

The unfinished \$4 billion plutonium recycling project in South Carolina would be abandoned under President Obama's proposed budget for fiscal 2017. After years of challenging its cost overruns and researching cheaper alternatives, the Obama administration wants to finally pull the plug on the mixed oxide (MOX) fuel fabrication facility at Savannah River Site.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley already has asked South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson to sue the Energy Department.

Note: "South Carolina will not idly stand by while DOE continues – in violation of federal law – to ignore its commitment to the people of South Carolina," Haley wrote.

Governor Nikki Haley News:

NJ.com: 5 reasons why Christie bought a ticket to S.C., the next GOP primary state

http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2016/02/5_reasons_why_christie_bought_a_ticket_to_south_ca.html

Claude Brodesser-Akner

While his path to the Republican presidential nomination hinges on doing well in the first in the nation primary of New Hampshire on Tuesday night, Gov. Chris Christie says he's already bought a plane ticket for South Carolina, where the next primary will be held on Feb. 20.

4. Christie may have an ally in South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley U.S. Sen. Lindsay Graham last month endorsed Jeb Bush, but the endorsement of popular South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is still up for grabs — and she certainly won't be endorsing Donald Trump, whose anti-immigrant rhetoric she called out after last month's State of the Union address.

S.C. General Assembly News:

The State: Proposal would allow removal of Confederate flag from Citadel chapel

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article59334628.html>

Cassie Cope

The Citadel could remove a Confederate flag from its campus chapel if a proposal filed by state Sen. Marlon Kimpson, D-Charleston, becomes law. The bill would allow flags from the Civil War to be removed from religious chapels and structures on the school's campus, placing them in another historic location at the public institution or in a museum.

Associated Press: Ethics: Former House Speaker Harrell must pay \$113,500

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

Seanna Adcox

A legislative panel ordered former South Carolina House Speaker Bobby Harrell on Tuesday to pay nearly \$113,500 within six months. In a unanimous vote, House Ethics Committee members also fined Harrell \$1,000 and publicly reprimanded their former colleague. The decision can't be appealed.

Post and Courier: Ethics committee orders former House Speaker Bobby Harrell to repay misused campaign funds, pay fine

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC1603/160209360>

Maya T. Prabhu

Former House Speaker Bobby Harrell has 180 days to pay more than \$113,000 in campaign money he's been accused of using improperly to pay for legal fees during his criminal ethics-related case, a panel of lawmakers said Tuesday.

The State: Former House speaker must repay \$113,475 in attorney fees, ethics panel rules

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article59310048.html#storylink=cpy>

Cassie Cope

Former S.C. House Speaker Bobby Harrell must repay \$113,475 that he spent from his campaign account on attorneys as he tried to fend off ethics charges, the S.C. House Ethics Committee ruled Tuesday. Harrell also must pay a \$1,000 fine for providing misinformation to the committee, which will issue a public reprimand to him.

WLTX: Ex-House Speaker Harrell Ordered to Pay \$113,000

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/local/2016/02/09/ex-house-speaker-harrell-ordered-pay-113000/80057890/>

Former South Carolina House Speaker Bobby Harrell will be ordered to pay \$113,000 to the state's general

fund and a \$1,000 fine. That's after the South Carolina House Ethics Committee voted unanimously Tuesday saying that Harrell had misspent his campaign funds to pay attorneys in his misconduct case.

S.C. Political News:

Post and Courier: Sen. Marlon Kimpson introduces bill to remove Confederate flag from Citadel chapel
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC1603/160209346>

Gavin Jackson

A Charleston senator filed a bill Tuesday to remove the Confederate battle flag from The Citadel's Summerall Chapel. The bill by Sen. Marlon Kimpson, D-Charleston, would amend the controversial South Carolina Heritage Act to allow for the removal of Civil War-era battle flags displayed in religious structures or chapels on the campus of an institution of higher learning.

The State: Bring Bible values back to politics, Graham tells State House crowd

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article59328568.html>

Tim Flach

Evangelist Franklin Graham called Tuesday for restoration of "Biblical principles" to politics at all levels. "America is being stripped of Biblical heritage," he told a crowd estimated at 7,100 people by organizers of a prayer rally on State House grounds. "We have taken God out of our government."

Post and Courier: Hollywood turns out for Hillary

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC1603/160209356>

Gavin Jackson

Actresses Angela Bassett and Vivica A. Fox, along with several members of the General Assembly, endorsed former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for president at the Statehouse on Tuesday. The actresses joined a few state lawmakers, including Sen. Marlon Kimpson, D-Charleston, who came out in support of Clinton with less than three weeks until the Feb. 27 Democratic primary.

Greenville News: Clinton gets endorsements from 6 black Democratic legislators

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/02/09/clinton-gets-endorsements-6-black-democratic-legislators/80059246/>

Amanda Coyne

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton picked up six new endorsements from black Democratic South Carolina legislators Tuesday afternoon, including one from Rep. Leola Robinson-Simpson, a Greenville Democrat.

S.C. Federal Delegation News:

Washington Post: Benghazi committee seeks to kill ex-staffer's lawsuit

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2016/02/09/benghazi-committee-seeks-to-kill-ex-staffers-lawsuit/>

Elise Viebeck

The House Select Committee on Benghazi is seeking to kill a lawsuit from former Republican staffer Bradley Podliska, who claims he was improperly fired after objecting to the panel's alleged investigative focus on former secretary of state Hillary Clinton.

South Carolina News:

Greenville News: Justice Department sues S.C. tax service

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/02/09/justice-department-sues-sc-tax-service/80049346/>

Elizabeth Sanders

The Justice Department is suing three Columbia-area Liberty Tax Service franchises for deliberately preparing false federal income tax returns. All three franchises are owned by Christopher Paul Haynes of Irmo. A lawsuit filed today alleges Haynes and his employees prepared false returns to increase customers' refunds.

Local News:

Greenville News: Pickens County School Board looks to close, consolidate three elementary schools

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2016/02/08/pickens-county-school-board-looks-close-consolidate-three-elementary-schools/80006836/>

Ron Barnett

A proposal to close three Pickens-area elementary schools and convert two others to serve only K-2 and grades 3-5 took a step forward Monday, as a divided committee of the Pickens County School Board endorsed the concept before an overflow crowd of vocal opponents.

Associated Press: SC county passes resolution against housing Gitmo detainees

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

Berkeley County is on record opposing the housing of detainees from Guantanamo Bay. Local media outlets report that Berkeley County Council unanimously passed a resolution Monday opposing bringing detainees to the Consolidated Naval Brig in Hanahan.

Post and Courier: Partnership to bring more focus on air pollution monitoring, research in Charleston

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC1211/160209365>

Last fall, the World Health Organization estimated that 3.3 million people die prematurely each year from prolonged exposure to air pollution. To put that into perspective, that's more than the number who die from HIV and malaria combined.

Post and Courier: As police kept details of crimes secret, Summerville man linked to sex attacks was freed on bail

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160209/PC16/160209366>

Andrew Knapp, Christina Elmore

As Summerville police kept secret the details of two brutal assaults and refused to publicly identify a man they said could be a serial rapist, the suspect posted bail on four felony charges and walked free last week.

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