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Subject: Clips - Wednesday, March 6, 2013

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Governor Nikki Haley News

Associated Press: Haley announces fundraisers for potential campaign

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=R41zQ0U8

Staff Report

Gov. Nikki Haley says 32 business leaders from across South Carolina have volunteered to help her raise money for a potential re-election campaign. Haley announced the names of her finance advisory committee Tuesday in a statement first provided to The Associated Press. They include former state GOP Chairman Katon Dawson, former U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Wilkins and former South Carolina Policy Council president Ed McMullen.

Associated Press: A look at Haley's fundraising team

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=5Du2GyXE

Staff Report

Republican Gov. Nikki Haley on Tuesday announced the following 32 people have volunteered to raise money for her potential run for a second term: Dan Adams, Mike Brenan, Derick Close, Ernie Csiszar, Leighton Cabbage, Katon Dawson, Jim Dyke, Dave Ellison, John Ferguson, Dr. Eddie Floyd, Karen Floyd, Bill Hewitt, Jim Hudson, Mikee Johnson, Don Leonard, Leighton Lord, Ted McGee Jr., Pat McKinney, Foster McKissick III, Smyth McKissick, Ed McMullen, Steve Mudge, Beth Myers, Norman Pullium, Greg Ryberg, O. L. Thompson, David Tigges, Don Tomlin, Bhavna Maker Vasudeva, Chad Walldorf, Ambassador David Wilkins, Barry Wynn.

The State: Gov. Nikki Haley unveils re-election finance committee

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661366/gov-nikki-haley-unveils-re-election.html>

Andy Shain

Gov. Nikki Haley named a 32-person finance advisory committee Tuesday for a 2014 re-election bid that she has not formally announced. The first-term Republican from Lexington announced a 164-person grassroots steering committee nearly three weeks ago. Haley is expected to announce her re-election bid this summer.

The State: Haley names re-election finance committee

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661887/sc-political-briefs-haley-names.html>

Andrew Shain

Gov. Nikki Haley named a 32-person finance advisory committee Tuesday for a 2014 re-election bid that she has not formally announced. The finance committee includes: David Wilkins, former S.C. House speaker and U.S. Ambassador to Canada; Don Tomlin, a real estate developer; Katon Dawson, former S.C. GOP chairman; Barry Wynn, finance chairman for former U.S. Rep. Gresham Barrett's 2010 gubernatorial campaign; and Beth Myers, a senior adviser in Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential run and his former chief of staff when he was governor of Massachusetts.

Associated Press: SC group sponsoring info session on biz tax filing

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=22nMKVuq

Staff Report

The South Carolina African American Chamber of Commerce is offering small business owners a chance to get more information about filing their taxes. The chamber's Small Business Tax Seminar is scheduled for Wednesday at the Richland County Administration Building in Columbia.

Note: Officials from Gov. Nikki Haley's office and the S.C. Department of Revenue will be on hand to discuss the state's tax structure, as well as tax incentives and credits available for small businesses. They'll also answer questions about the recent Department of Revenue computer system hacking and what it

means for small businesses.

The State: Survey finds majority in state support Medicaid expansion

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661026/survey-finds-majority-in-state.html>

Joey Holleman

More than half of older adults in the state disagree with Gov. Nikki Haley's plan to turn down Medicaid expansion, according to a survey by the AARP. The survey found that 54 percent of the respondents support expanding Medicaid to cover low-income adults. A U.S. Supreme Court decision last summer allowed states to opt out of the Medicaid expansion provision of the federal Affordable Care Act. Haley has pledged not to accept the expansion, saying it's an extension of a wasteful federal program.

Note: Haley and Keck have spoken out against the expansion, but the state Legislature will have a say in the decision. Several bills have been introduced — some requiring the state to turn down expansion, some requiring the state to accept expansion. In budget hearings, no funds have been set aside to pay for the administration of expansion, which even in the early years would be an expense that falls on the state. While some Republicans have expressed reluctance at turning down federal funding, even those leaning towards accepting expansion have said they don't expect to have enough votes to override a veto by Haley.

Post and Courier: New poll finds majority of S.C. adults favor Medicaid expansion in state

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309589/1006/new-poll-finds-majority-of-sc-adults-favor-medicaid-expansion-in-state>

Lauren Sausser

Most South Carolina adults interviewed for a new poll think the state government should expand Medicaid eligibility to include more low-income residents. The poll was commissioned by AARP, a group in favor of expanding Medicaid in South Carolina under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. A statement about the poll was published Tuesday on AARP's website, but the full results have not been released.

Note: "The federal government likes to wave around a \$9 match like it is some silver bullet, some extraordinary benefit that we cannot pass up. But what good do the nine dollars do us when we can't come up with the one?" Haley said in January during her State of the State address.

The State: 'HPV' vaccine bill advances in S.C. House

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661891/hpv-vaccine-bill-advances-in.html>

Jamie Self

An effort to vaccinate children against the human papillomavirus — a sexually transmitted disease that causes cervical cancer in women — advanced in the House Tuesday. More commonly called HPV, the virus also leads to cancer in males, Dr. Jennifer Young Pierce, with the Medical University of South Carolina, told a House panel Tuesday.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley vetoed a similar HPV bill last year.

Greenville News: Some worry inland port will increase I-85 traffic woes

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130306/NEWS09/303060009/Some-worry-inland-port-will-increase-85-traffic-woes>

Rudolph Bell

At the new Amazon.com distribution center in Spartanburg County, more than 300 people fill orders placed online by consumers around the country. The 1-million-square-foot warehouse specializes in larger items available through the company's website, such as canoes or auto parts.

Note: Peeler said raising the gasoline tax to generate revenue for road improvements is a "nonstarter" because Gov. Nikki Haley has said she'd veto any increase and there aren't enough votes in the Legislature to override her.

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South Carolina News

The State: How taxes go down while spending goes up

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/06/2661553/scoppe-how-taxes-go-down-while.html>

Cindi Ross Scoppe

For many, it's an article of faith: Taxes in our state are going up, and government is growing. And little wonder, with elected officials from the governor on down constantly harping about how crucial it is to slash taxes and how awful it is for the Legislature to keep "growing government" — something we're likely to hear another round of as the House prepares to debate next year's state budget and the politicians, or at least

the Republican politicians, try to convince the tea party faction that they're pure enough to trust.

Associated Press: Democrats say GOP early voting bill limits access

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=9HsG6bTN

Staff Report

A South Carolina House committee advanced a bill that creates a nine-day window of no-excuse-needed early voting, but limits voters' ability to vote early. The bill sent Tuesday to the House floor ends the hybrid form of early voting available for a month before Election Day. Democrats say the measure limits voters' access to polls.

The State: SC GOP blocks early voting bill

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661897/sc-gop-blocks-early-voting-bill.html>

Adam Beam

Early voting is not coming to South Carolina anytime soon. Republicans are blocking an early voting bill in the state Senate as payback for Democrats blocking another bill the Republicans want. And while the House Judiciary Committee approved an early voting bill on Tuesday, Democrats hate it because they say it would restrict rather than expand voters' access to the polls.

Post and Courier: Democrats furious as House panel advances early voting measure

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309591/1006/democrats-furious-as-house-panel-advances-early-voting-measure>

Stephen Largen

A state legislative panel approved a bill Tuesday that would create a nine-day early voting period in the state but eliminate its 30-day in-person absentee voting process. House Democrats said replacing the 30-day window with a shorter early-voting period is a clear attempt to limit access to the ballot, with one Democrat saying the bill unfairly targets minority voters.

Greenville News: Don't add to cost of common cold (Opinion)

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130306/OPINION/303060003/Editorial-Don-t-add-cost-common-cold>

Editorial

When South Carolinians are miserable because of a common cold or allergies, they should be able to buy a cold medicine that contains pseudoephedrine without having to get a prescription. If a law were passed to make medicines such as Sudafed available by prescription only, it would drive up healthcare costs for the average family, probably make people take extra time from work and surely overwhelm doctors' offices that already are quite busy and especially so during cold and allergy seasons.

Associated Press: US Ed Dept approves SC teacher-evaluation plan

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=vXgBIQu6

Seanna Adcox

The federal Education Department has approved Superintendent Mick Zais' plan for evaluating teachers and principals in South Carolina, handing a blow to educator groups that had offered their own plan. Zais spokesman Jay Ragley on Tuesday called the validation from the Democratic administration a significant achievement that should put to rest partisan fears.

Associated Press: Corps says cuts could delay SC harbor deepening

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

Bruce Smith

The \$300 million effort to deepen the Charleston Harbor shipping channel that has been on the fast track in recent months could be delayed by automatic government spending cuts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers district engineer warned Tuesday. "All I can tell you is that there is a potential our efforts could be delayed in the Charleston Harbor deepening study," Lt. Col. Ed Chamberlayne told reporters.

Associated Press: GOP delays 1st District debate until after primary

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

Staff Report

The South Carolina Republican Party has canceled a 1st Congressional District debate that had been planned for next week. Instead, the party has opted to hold a debate between the two candidates who are expected to make a GOP runoff.

Post and Courier: S.C. GOP 1st District debate pushed back to March 28

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309597/1006/sc-gop-1st-district-debate-pushed-back-to-march-28>

Robert Behre

The state Republican Party will hold its 1st Congressional District debate on March 28 instead of March 14. The wait will let the party's primary voters winnow the field from 16 to two. S.C. GOP Chairman Chad Connelly announced the change Tuesday at Porter-Gaud, the private school in West Ashley where the debate will be held. Technically, one Republican candidate could win the March 19 primary outright if he or she manages to get more than 50 percent of the vote, but the jam-packed field of 16 makes that the longest of shots.

Post and Courier: Ben Frasier: 'I'm not a plant'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309592/1006/ben-frasier-im-not-a-plant>

Robert Behre

Ben Frasier said he always has saved his small change so when a congressional race rolls around, he would have enough to enter. "I said, 'Lord, if you don't want me to run, don't let me raise the filing fee,'" he said. Whether or not divine intervention was involved, Frasier paid the \$2,900 fee in January to run for South Carolina's 1st Congressional District seat, this time freshly vacated by Tim Scott, now a U.S. senator.

Associated Press: SC Guard commander accepts South Pole state flag

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=D3TgwFY9

Staff Report

South Carolina Adjutant General Robert Livingston is to receive a South Carolina state flag that was part of an expedition to the South Pole commemorating its discovery. Wednesday's ceremony is scheduled for 9 a. m. in Maj. Gen. Livingston's office in the National Guard building in Columbia.

Associated Press: SRS workers brace for cuts in hours

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661879/srs-workers-brace-for-cuts-in.html>

Staff Report

Effects of massive federal budget cuts are becoming apparent in South Carolina as agencies prepare to slash costs. Workers at Savannah River Site near Aiken were told Monday they would be working reduced schedules starting in April because of the cuts, while other employees there will be laid off, at least temporarily.

Associated Press: SC public defender charged with drunken driving

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Tm7RPIAg

Staff Report

Conway police have charged a public defender for Horry and Georgetown counties with drunken driving. Thirty-two-year-old Melinda Knowles was charged with DUI and possession of an open container of alcohol after she was stopped near a school in Conway early Saturday.

Post and Courier: Berkeley County case: Ethics a fine line in school referendums

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309590/1006/berkeley-county-case-ethics-a-fine-line-in-school-referendums>

Brenda Rindge

School districts often look to voters for help in finding the money to update old buildings and build new ones. In doing so they walk a fine line, officials say. "School districts can provide information about the referendum, but where the line is drawn is you cannot tell people how to vote," said Debbie Elmore, spokeswoman for the S.C. School Boards Association. "That's the key."

Associated Press: Vermont professor to talk food systems at Clemson

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

Staff Report

The Clemson University community is getting an education on food systems. Farmer, professor and author Philip Ackerman-Leist is speaking at the school Wednesday. His lecture is entitled "Rebuilding the Foodshed: Remapping Our Expectations for the Food We Share."

The State: Vote delayed on bonds to fund USC renovations

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661935/vote-delayed-on-bonds-to-fund.html>

Andy Shain

The University of South Carolina might have to postpone renovating three dorms after questions from a State Budget and Control Board member delayed voting Tuesday on a \$34 million bond to pay for the project. The delay has heightened concerns at the state's flagship university about future projects set to be paid with bonds, including \$12 million for an indoor football practice facility and up to \$48 million for a new law school.

Associated Press: Autism scholar speaks at USC on growth of autism

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VCCqN5nP

Staff Report

Understanding the growth of autism is the focus of an annual sociology lecture to be delivered in Columbia. Autism scholar Peter Bearman of Columbia University is scheduled to deliver the talk Wednesday at 2:30 p. m. in Sloan College on the University of South Carolina campus. The talk is free and open to the public.

Associated Press: Dow hits record, erasing Great Recession losses

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=aKSY6zka

Bernard Condon

The stock market is back. Five and a half years after the start of a frightening drop that erased \$11 trillion from stock portfolios and made investors despair of ever getting their money back, the Dow Jones industrial average has regained all the losses suffered during the Great Recession and reached a new high. The blue-chip index rose 125.95 points Tuesday and closed at 14,253.77, topping the previous record of 14,164.53 on Oct. 9, 2007, by 89.24 points. "It signals that things are getting back to normal," says Nicolas Colas, chief market strategist at ConvergeX Group, a brokerage. "Unemployment is too high, economic growth too sluggish, but stocks are anticipating improvement."

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Hyperlocal News

WIS TV: State grand jury mulling indictments in Lexington County poker ring

<http://www.wistv.com/story/21525594/state-grand-jury-mulling-indictments-in-lexington-county-poker-ring>

Jody Barr

Multiple sources confirmed to WIS that the video poker investigation involving a sitting Lexington town councilman and connected to a former senator and sitting sheriff is in the hands of the statewide grand jury. The body could decide whether the state Attorney General brings charges from the investigation. State Law Enforcement Division agents opened an investigation into Councilman Danny Frazier's involvement in a clandestine video poker business that operated machines throughout Lexington County and West Columbia. The investigation started after an unidentified witness recorded conversations with Frazier where the councilman spells out how to set up and run the illegal businesses.

Post and Courier: Water Missions' new headquarters takes shape on former Navy base, with solar power

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309575/1006/water-missions-8217-new-headquarters-takes-shape-on-former-navy-base-with-solar-power>

David Slade

The charity Water Missions International is putting the finishing touches on its new headquarters in North Charleston, and that includes hooking up one of South Carolina's largest solar arrays. The Christian nonprofit works to establish clean water and sanitation systems in impoverished areas overseas. The solar array on the former Navy base is related to the connection between water and power.

Pickens County News: Pickens County gives initial OK to tax breaks for unnamed company

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130306/BUSINESS/303060021/Pickens-County-gives-initial-OK-tax-breaks-unnamed-company>

Julie Howle

Pickens County Council has given preliminary approval to tax breaks for an unidentified company expected to create new jobs in the area. Council has approved an ordinance on second reading that would give approximately 26 acres in the Pickens County Commerce Park to a company, dubbed "Project Delta."

The State: Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort officials waiting to make call on Beaufort Air Show

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/05/2661913/marine-corps-air-station-beaufort.html>

Erin Moody

Base officials waiting to make call on Beaufort Air Show Although the U.S. Navy has announced its intention to cancel the Blue Angels' appearance at the Beaufort Air Show in April, the demonstration team's performance has not been officially called off. So those organizing the show April 27-28 at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort will continue their preparations and hope for the best.

Associated Press: Hilton Head makes largest land buy in 20 years

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/06/2662480/hilton-head-makes-largest-land.html>

Staff Report

The Town of Hilton Head Island is buying more than 100 acres on the resort island - the largest single parcel the town has acquired since it was incorporated 30 years ago. It's also the town's largest land purchase since the 1990s. The Island Packet of Hilton Head reports (<http://bit.ly/XN3Xql>) the town will spend \$5 million to buy 102 acres in Port Royal Plantation. There will be no decision on what to do with the land for a couple of years.

Post and Courier: Red Cross to break ground on new North Charleston facility today

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309567/1006/red-cross-to-break-ground-on-new-north-charleston-facility-today>

Staff Report

The American Red Cross is scheduled to break ground today on its new North Charleston facility across from City Hall. The groundbreaking ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. at 2424 City Hall Lane, a news release said.

Post and Courier: Hospital to give free mammograms, breast tests

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309570/1006/hospital-to-give-free-mammograms-breast-tests>

Lauren Sausser

Roper St. Francis Healthcare's Mount Pleasant Hospital will offer 40 free mammograms and breast cancer screenings on March 20, but registration is required to attend. The free event is cosponsored by Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

Post and Courier: City putting out fires with tax increase (Opinion)

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130306/PC16/130309577/1006/hicks-column-city-putting-out-fires-with-tax-increase>

Brian Hicks

If you live in West Ashley, don't complain about Charleston's emergency tax increase just yet. You may end up turning a profit on the deal. The mayor asked for this property tax hike, which City Council approved last week, ostensibly to put more police officers in downtown zones — his response to the ongoing cops-in-schools debate.

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National News

USA Today: CDC sounds alarm on deadly, untreatable superbugs

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130306/NEWS/303060018/CDC-sounds-alarm-deadly-untreatable-superbugs>

Liz Szabo and Peter Eisler

A family of "nightmare" superbugs — untreatable and often deadly — is spreading through hospitals across the USA, and doctors fear that it may soon be too late to stop them, senior health officials said Tuesday. "These are nightmare bacteria that present a triple threat," said Thomas Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "They're resistant to nearly all antibiotics. They have high mortality rates, killing half of people with serious infections. And they can spread their resistance to other bacteria."

Associated Press: States' rights bills surge in GOP states

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=HR5kj9qB

Sean Murphy

One bill would make it a felony to enforce the new federal health care law, punishable by up to five years in prison. Another prohibits a physician from asking a patient about firearms. Yet another is designed to curb the possible influence of the United Nations in local government. While provocative bills aren't particularly

unusual in state legislatures, so many have been offered by conservatives in Oklahoma this year that GOP leaders have established a special committee to handle what is now a major category of business: measures to combat the federal government's influence in the states.

Associated Press: Top Los Angeles mayor candidates to meet in runoff

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=j3FtZhWr

Michael R. Blood

With all precincts reporting in Los Angeles, two City Hall veterans earned the right to advance to a runoff election to replace outgoing Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. City Councilman Eric Garcetti and city Controller Wendy Greuel set up a contest of two Democrats who occupy a lot of similar positions in an election to determine who will lead the nation's second most populous city that's troubled by double-digit unemployment and a looming budget gap.

Associated Press: Military leaders welcome House GOP budget bill

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268744/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=p9OhTSSX

Donna Cassata

A massive House Republican measure to keep the government operating would ease some of the pain of automatic spending cuts slamming the Defense Department, the nation's senior military leaders told Congress on Tuesday. Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff painted a dire picture of construction projects on hold, limits on aircraft carriers patrolling the waters and even a delay in the expansion of Arlington National Cemetery due to the \$43 billion in across-the-board cuts that kicked in Friday.

Associated Press: Deal elusive on expanding gun background checks

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ExtSHJHe

Alan Fram

Despite signs of stepped-up White House involvement, a bipartisan compromise over expanded background checks for gun buyers remained elusive Tuesday as a Senate committee prepared for votes this week on curbing firearms. Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., has been the lead Republican negotiating with Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and other Democrats over a compromise background-check measure. They've been stuck over Democrats' insistence that records be kept on sales between private individuals.

Associated Press: TSA to allow small knives, bats, clubs on planes

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268744/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Dbe0UDsR

Joan Lowy

Airline passengers will be able to carry small knives, souvenir baseball bats, golf clubs and other sports equipment onto planes beginning next month under a policy change announced Tuesday by the head of the Transportation Security Administration. The new policy conforms U.S. security standards to international standards, and allows TSA to concentrate its energies on more serious safety threats, the agency said in a statement.

Associated Press: Senate panel votes to approve Obama's CIA nominee

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EsCxJ2jN

Richard Lardner

The Senate Intelligence Committee voted Tuesday to approve President Barack Obama's pick to lead the CIA after winning a behind-the-scenes battle with the White House over access to a series of top-secret legal opinions that justify the use of lethal drone strikes against terror suspects, including American citizens. John Brennan's installation at the spy agency has been delayed as Senate Democrats and Republicans have pressed the Obama administration to allow a review of the classified documents prepared by the Justice Department. The senators have argued they can't perform adequate oversight without reviewing the contents of the opinions, but the White House had resisted requests for full disclosure.

Associated Press: Hugo Chavez, fiery Venezuelan leader, dies at 58

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268744/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=GL6BWKYH

Frank Bajak and Ian James

President Hugo Chavez was a former paratroop commander and self-styled "subversive" who waged continual battle for his socialist ideals. He bedeviled the United States and outsmarted his rivals time and again, while using Venezuela's vast oil wealth to his political advantage. Chavez led one coup attempt, defeated another and was re-elected three times. Almost the only adversary it seemed he couldn't beat was cancer. He died Tuesday in Caracas at age 58, two years after he was first diagnosed.

Associated Press: US lawmakers push for tougher NKorea sanctions

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VU9gL1WG

Matthew Pennington

Likening North Korea to a mafia state for its illicit activities, Republican lawmakers Tuesday called for tough U.S. action to cut the authoritarian nation's access to hard currency that helps fund its missile and nuclear programs. In addition to U.S.-supported moves afoot at the U.N. Security Council to tighten international sanctions in response to Pyongyang's latest nuclear test, there's also pressure in Congress for unilateral action by Washington.

Associated Press: Too much money spent in Iraq for too few results

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=A6ixG9U3

Lara Jakes

Ten years and \$60 billion in American taxpayer funds later, Iraq is still so unstable and broken that even its leaders question whether U.S. efforts to rebuild the war-torn nation were worth the cost. In his final report to Congress, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction Stuart Bowen's conclusion was all too clear: Since the invasion a decade ago this month, the U.S. has spent too much money in Iraq for too few results.

Associated Press: Top US commander: Iran sanctions not working

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=LaZHxNdz

Lolita C. Baldor

The Obama administration program of sanctions and diplomatic efforts to stop Iran from gaining nuclear capabilities is not working, the top U.S. commander in the Middle East told a Senate committee Tuesday, adding that Tehran has a history of denial and deceit and is "enriching uranium beyond any plausible peaceful purpose." Gen. James Mattis, head of U.S. Central Command, said it still may be possible to use sanctions and other pressure to bring Tehran "to its senses." But he also warned that he believes Iran is using the ongoing negotiations to buy time.

Associated Press: US accuses Iran of nuke 'deception and delay'

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268743/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=uUPmzloT

George Jahn

A senior U.S. envoy accused Iran of "deception, defiance and delay" Wednesday in dealing with international concerns about its nuclear program, reflecting frustration over Tehran's expanding uranium enrichment program and stalled U.N. attempts to determine whether Tehran has worked secretly on nuclear arms. Joseph Macmanus, the chief U.S. delegate to the International Atomic Energy Agency, also suggested that the U.S. might push for tougher diplomatic action in the coming months.

Associated Press: Kerry: US confident in arms-vetting for Syrians

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=s8XPuvQi

Matthew Lee

Secretary of State John Kerry said Tuesday the Obama administration is confident that the vast majority of weapons being supplied to Syrian rebels by U.S. allies are going to moderates and not finding their way to extremists. Speaking in Qatar, one of several Arab nations providing weapons to the rebels, Kerry told reporters he had spoken to Qatari leaders about the matter and said there are now "greater guarantees" that nearly all the arms and ammunition going to the opposition inside Syria are getting into the hands of moderates.

Associated Press: EU probes Germany's energy discounts for industry

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268743/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ehHmddw9

Staff Report

The European Commission formally launched an investigation Wednesday to find out whether energy price cuts granted to industrial clients in Germany is a hidden form of state aid. Large electricity consumers were exempt from paying around €300 million (\$390 million) in network charges last year alone - an arrangement that may put competitors in other member states at a disadvantage, said the Commission, which is also the 27-nation bloc's antitrust watchdog.

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