

# Guns on Campus



March 3, 2008

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● The next issue of  
 ● Capitol Journal will be  
 ● available on March 10th.  
 ●

## Top Story

*Prompted by recent shootings at VIRGINIA Tech and Northern ILLINOIS universities, lawmakers in more than a dozen states have introduced bills this year that would allow students to carry concealed weapons on campus.*

## SNCJ Spotlight

### States ponder allowing guns on campus

Prompted by mass shootings at VIRGINIA Tech and Northern ILLINOIS universities, lawmakers in more than a dozen states have introduced bills this year that would allow students to carry concealed weapons on campus.

Most of the proposed laws are based on a 2006 UTAH statute that forbids state colleges and universities from barring guns on their campuses. The Beehive State is currently the only one to unequivocally allow anyone with a concealed carry permit to bring their guns onto state university property,



That argument doesn't work, however, for students like Sarah Wexler, a junior at the University of CALIFORNIA Santa Barbara. In an e-mail response to *SN CJ*, Wexler says she doesn't believe most college students are mature enough to have guns close at hand, even if they have a permit. "I would still be worried they would do something stupid with it [a gun] if they got into a fight and had a spontaneous irrational moment," she says. "And what happens if someone who doesn't have a permit gets their hands on it? I truly doubt that all of the students who would have them [permits] would be mature enough to handle the responsibility."

Siebel also questions the reliance on qualifying for a concealed carry permit as proof that someone should have a gun. "Remember, because the state of VIRGINIA had not processed his mental health records correctly, it was perfectly legitimate for the VIRGINIA Tech shooter to have

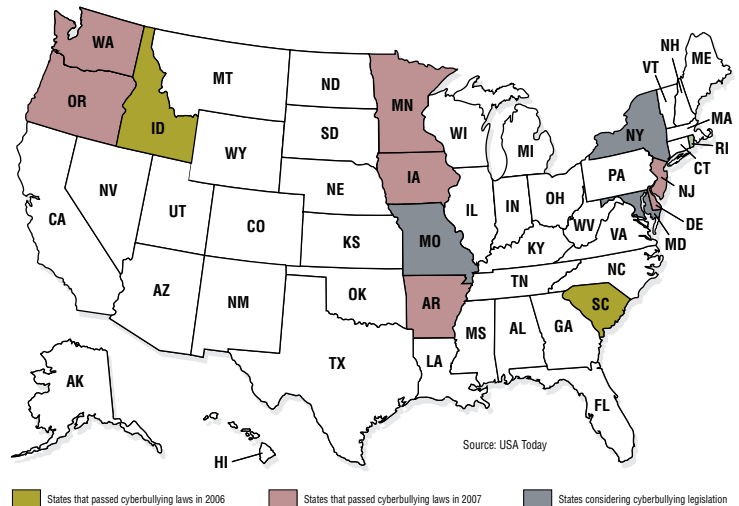
a gun. Under a law like what these people are proposing, he could have legally got a concealed carry permit and stockpiled guns right on campus."

Even with support from powerful groups like the NRA and grassroots organizations like SCCC, all of the current proposed measures noted here have a long way to go before they could become law. A vast number of equally powerful education and police organizations vehemently oppose allowing guns on campus, which will make any law very tempting for a governor's veto pen. The Brady Campaign's Siebel says he doubts most will ever get that far.

"I think cooler heads will ultimately prevail in these cases," he says, noting that the SOUTH DAKOTA bill passed the House by a 63-3 vote before being voted down in the Senate. "Everyone wants to stop campus shootings, but when people realize what is really being advocated for here, they will realize this isn't the way to go."

— By RICH EHISEN

## Bird's eye view



### States crack down on cyberbullies

The issue of cyberbullying gained national prominence last year with the revelation that a 13-year-old MISSOURI girl committed suicide because of an Internet hoax perpetrated by the mother of a former friend of hers. That and other incidents, combined with the insistence of parents, teachers and students, have spurred state lawmakers to address the problem. Seven states, including IOWA, MINNESOTA, NEW JERSEY and OREGON adopted cyberbullying laws last year. And at least five others — MARYLAND, MISSOURI, NEW YORK, RHODE ISLAND and VERMONT — have taken up similar legislation this session. Most of the laws apply only to school computers and computer networks. But some, including those passed by ARKANSAS and DELAWARE, allow school officials to police off-campus Internet bullying that affects their students.





them any. But the day still ended with the bill in the House Elections, Constitutional Amendments and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. In a statement, Beshear called on the lawmakers to “get their act together quickly.” The newly configured committee could take up the measure at its next regular meeting March 4 or convene a special meeting before then. (COURIER JOURNAL [LOUISVILLE])

**BUDGETS IN BRIEF:** With **NEW JERSEY**’s estimated budget gap having grown in recent weeks from about \$2.5 billion to \$3.2 billion due to the weak economy, Gov. Jon Corzine (D) proposed an unprecedented \$1.7 billion in cuts last Tuesday, including the elimination of up to 3,500 state jobs through early retirements and layoffs and the closure of one or more departments. • The **MASSACHUSETTS** House approved a 10-year, \$1 billion plan to bolster the life sciences industry, one of Gov. Deval Patrick’s (D) top priorities. The bill, which provides \$500 million for the construction of labs and research facilities, \$250 million for tax credits for life sciences companies and \$250 million for research grants, was expected to pass the Senate (BOSTON HERALD). • The federally recognized native Inupiat Eskimo community of Kavalina, **ALASKA** has filed a federal lawsuit against ExxonMobil and two dozen other oil, power and coal companies, alleging that the greenhouse gases they generate contribute to global warming that threatens the community’s existence. The village of about 390 people in Kivalina is built on an 8-mile barrier reef about 625 miles northwest of Anchorage (USA TODAY). • The Democrat-controlled **VIRGINIA** Senate voted last week to cut off state aid to Planned Parenthood because it offers abortions. The action marks the first time in over a decade that the chamber has stopped providing funding to the organization because of its abortion-related activities (WASHINGTON POST).

## The week in session

**States in Regular Session:** AK, AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, US, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WI, WY

**States in Skeleton Session:** OH

**States in Perfunctory Session:** IL  
Special Sessions “a”-“s”

**States in Special Session:** CA “c”, LA “a”, OR “a”, PA “a”, WI “c”

**States in Budget Hearing Recess:**  
DE, PA

**Special Sessions in Recess:** CA “a”, CA “b”, PA “a”

**States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2008:** LA

**States Projected to Adjourn:** UT, WY, VA, WV

**States in Special Session Projected to Adjourn:** CA “c”

**States Adjourned in 2008:** NM

**State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2008:** CT “a”, LA “a”, OR “a”

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS  
(session information current as of 02/29/2008)  
Source: State Net database

— Compiled by KOREY CLARK

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# Politics & leadership

## **D**EMS MOVE STEP CLOSER TO CONTROL OF NY SENATE:

The 48th Senate District in upstate NEW YORK has been represented by a Republican for a hundred years, and the state Senate itself has been controlled by the GOP for over 40. But Democrats broke the first streak and moved a step closer to ending the second last Tuesday when Assemblyman Darrel J. Aubertine (D) defeated Assemblyman William A. Barclay (R) 52 percent to 48 percent in a special election to replace retiring Sen. James W. Wright (R), narrowing the GOP's majority in the chamber to a single seat. The stunning upset — Republicans outnumber Democrats in the 48th 78,454 to 46,824 — naturally emboldened state Democratic Party Chairwoman June O'Neill. "The Democratic Party can meet and beat the Republican machine anywhere," she said. "If we can do it here, we can do it anywhere." And Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno unsurprisingly downplayed the result and vowed to stay the course. "We remain the majority party in the state Senate and will continue to fight for the issues that we believe most New Yorkers support," he said. But Aubertine's take on the race may provide the key to his victory: "For the party, clearly it's a victory, and I certainly don't want to diminish that. I just want everyone to recognize that I take this office the same way I took the office of the Assembly, and that was to serve everyone regardless of your political affiliation or where you live." (NEW YORK TIMES)

## **TEXAS JUDGE DECLARES OPEN SEASON ON HOUSE SPEAKERSHIP**

**BIDS:** Thirty years ago TEXAS passed a law barring corporations and other special interests from trying to influence elections for speaker of the House, the idea being that the operation of the Legislature was a purely internal matter. But last week, a federal judge, in connection with a lawsuit brought by a coalition of interest groups ranging from the conservative TEXAS Eagle Forum to the American Civil Liberties Union, lifted that ban on First Amendment grounds. "Whatever your politics, the First Amendment protects every Texan's right to speak out for, or against, speaker candidates," said ACLU Foundation of TEXAS legal director Lisa Graybill. And Hiram Sasser, an attorney for the Free Market Foundation, said the selection of speakers was now "no longer a back-room deal." But although the ruling was expected to have a major impact on this year's House races, in which last session's effort to oust Speaker Tom Craddick (R) has been a key issue, Republican Party spokesman Hans Klingler said the final decision about who is speaker will still reside with the House membership. "Ultimately, the only decisions which matter about who will help lead the Texas House of Representatives happen next January when the members of that body reconvene to begin doing the work of the taxpayers who elected them," he said. (DALLAS MORNING NEWS)



**U.S. SENATOR ALLEGES POLITICS IN CA EPA WAIVER:** At a press conference last week, U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CALIFORNIA) disclosed a memo written last year by EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality Deputy Director Chris Grundler stating, “it is obvious to me that there is no legal or technical justification for denying” CALIFORNIA’s request for a waiver to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles. The implication was that EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson’s decision last December to do just that was political. Johnson said at the time that there were no “compelling and extraordinary” circumstances warranting allowing CALIFORNIA to act independently of the federal government. Former EPA Administrator William K. Reilly, for whom the memo had been prepared, said in an interview that he refrained from relying heavily on it in his own communications with Johnson because Grundler “got a little emotional” with his language. The memo stated at one point, for instance, “If you are asked to deny this waiver, I fear the credibility of the agency that we both love will be irreparably damaged.” And ultimately, as EPA spokesman Jonathan Shradar put it, “The senator can put out as many documents as she wants — it’s not going to change the administrator’s decision.” (WALL STREET JOURNAL)

**BUDGETS IN BRIEF: CALIFORNIA**

Assemblywoman Karen Bass emerged from a 10-person battle royal last week to become the state’s next Assembly speaker. The 54-year-old Los Angeles Democrat, the top lieutenant of outgoing Speaker Fabian Nuñez, will be the first African American woman in CALIFORNIA history to hold the post (SACRAMENTO BEE). • CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) is creating the first cabinet-level post for the management of volunteerism in the country. The governor said his action was spurred by recent disasters, such as the oil spill in San Francisco Bay, that showed volunteers were hindered by the state’s lack of organization (NEW YORK TIMES). • LOUISIANA Gov. Bobby Jindal scored a major victory last week with the Legislature’s approval of core pieces of his ethics agenda before it adjourned. Among other things, the bills headed to the governor’s desk would require most elected and many appointed officials to disclose their finances, bar lawmakers

**Upcoming elections**

02/28/2008 - 03/20/2008

03/04/2008

**Florida Special Election**

House District 103

**Massachusetts Special Election**

House 8th Essex District; 32nd Middlesex District; 7th Bristol District; 23rd Middlesex District

**Ohio Primary Election**

House (All)  
Senate (All)  
US House (All)  
US Senate (All)

03/08/2008

**Illinois Special Election**

US House (IL 14th Congressional District)

**Louisiana First Special Primary**

US House (LA 1st Congressional District)

03/11/2008

**Indiana Special Election**

US House (IN 7th Congressional District)

**New Hampshire Special Election**

House Hillsborough Co District 07 (Goffstown, Weare)

03/18/2008

**Rhode Island Special Primary**

Senate 020

let Capitol Journal



and some appointees from entering into contracts with the state and impose additional restrictions on lobbying (ADVOCATE [BATON ROUGE]). • Despite being outspent by his GOP opponent nearly 2-1, **FLORIDA** Democrat Tony Sasso claimed the House District 32 seat held by Republican Bob Allen in last Tuesday’s special election. The victory marks the ninth time in a little over a year that a Democrat has claimed a House seat previously held by a Republican (ST. PETERSBURG TIMES).

– Compiled by **KOREY CLARK**

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# Governors

**B**USH COOL TO MORE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING: President George W. Bush responded coolly last week to a bipartisan collection of governors who urged his administration to commit more federal funds to repairing the nation’s deteriorating infrastructure. Doing so, they say, would not only help prevent disasters like last years I-35W bridge collapse in MINNESOTA, but also create thousands of jobs that would help bolster the economy.

The plea, which was made during a meeting of the National Governor’s Association in Washington D.C., came from a separate coalition of governors who have organized to lobby for more federal infrastructure funding. The group, called Building America’s Future (BAF), was created in January by governors Ed Rendell (D) of PENNSYLVANIA and Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) of CALIFORNIA, who, along with New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, serve as the group’s co-chairs. Thirteen other governors joined the organization at the NGA meeting.

The BAF governors cited an estimate from the American Society of Civil Engineers that says the U.S. needs more than \$1 trillion in infrastructure improvements over the next five years. That figure is daunting, particularly when

many states are feeling the pinch of an economic downturn.

“We need a national program. We need federal help,” said NEW JERSEY Gov. Jon Corzine (D), who said states

**“To stand back and not move forward now will only cost the nation and the taxpayers dramatically more in the future.”**

have numerous stalled infrastructure projects that need matching federal funds to get them started. “To stand back and not move forward now will only cost the nation and the taxpayers dramatically more in the future.”

“We are spending \$75 billion on infrastructure in Iraq,” Corzine added. “We could do this at home.”



But the Bush administration is so far not buying that argument. White House spokesperson Dana Perino said the President prefers to see if the recent stimulus package approved by Congress — \$300 to \$1,200 rebate checks being sent to millions of Americans as well as tax incentives for businesses — will get the economy moving on its own. Perino said Bush was against including infrastructure projects because “it’s not really a stimulative way to get the economy going.”

Not even all governors believe that the feds need to open up the coffers. “To be talking about another stimulus package that is focused on spending, rather than tax breaks to help spur the economy, I think is very premature,” said Republican

Gov. Haley Barbour (R) of MISSISSIPPI.

His words were echoed by MINNESOTA Gov. Tim Pawlenty, also a Republican, who said, “In terms of an immediate boost, there’s a lag time

**“To be talking about another stimulus package that is focused on spending, rather than tax breaks to help spur the economy, I think is very premature.”**

between when those things get approved and we actually get dirt moving.” Neither is a member of the BAF organization.

Schwarzenegger, however, made it clear he thinks states need more help from Washington if they are to make sure disasters like the MINNESOTA bridge collapse don’t happen again. “Everyone here knows this is a big national problem that affects our economy and endangers our communities,” he said. “It’s time for the federal government to step up and do its part.” (ASSOCIATED PRESS, STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK])

**O’MALLEY PUSHES NEW EMISSIONS REGULATIONS: MARYLAND** Gov. Martin O’Malley, (D) endorsed a legislative plan last week that would cut pollutants from homes and businesses to 25 percent below 2006 levels by 2020, and 90 percent by 2050. O’Malley had not made addressing climate change a major part of his 2008 agenda, so his support came as a surprise to some lawmakers like state Sen. Paul G. Pinsky (D), lead sponsor of the global warming measure. Pinsky said he was “pleasantly and extremely surprised at the strength of the support” O’Malley gave the bill. Many observers had expected the governor to steer clear of the issue after his recent push to raise the state sales tax to help resolve a long-term budget shortfall, a plan that drew heavy fire from both citizens and business interests. But state Sen. Jim Brochin, (D), who often sides with Republicans on fiscal and regulatory issues and who is a co-sponsor of the greenhouse plan, said the environment has become an issue that crosses party lines. “Even coming from a fairly conservative district like mine, I have yet to see how you can be too liberal on the environment,” he said. (BALTIMORE SUN)



**EXECUTIVE ORDERS:** CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) issues EO S-02-08, which creates the cabinet-level position of Secretary of Service & Volunteering to “collaborate with private organizations to increase investment and participation in service and volunteering” (STATE NET).

**“Even coming from a fairly conservative district like mine, I have yet to see how you can be too liberal on the environment.”**

**GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: FLORIDA** Gov.

Charlie Crist (R) announced plans for a new, low-cost health insurance program that would eliminate all of the 50-plus mandates the state now imposes on insurers, such as including chiropractors and acupuncturists in any coverage. Crist also proposed making all Sunshine State kids eligible for the state-sponsored **FLORIDA** KidCare program, regardless of their family income, and allowing non-student dependants to stay on their parents insurance plan until age 30 (MIAMI HERALD). • **VIRGINIA** Gov. Tim Kaine (D) proposed legislation that would require home lenders to warn borrowers when they are at risk of foreclosure and give them a grace period and some resources to become current with their payments. **MARYLAND** GOV. Martin O’Malley (D) recently proposed similar measures (WASHINGTON POST). • Governors Arnold Schwarzenegger of **CALIFORNIA**, Tim Pawlenty of **MINNESOTA** and Janet Napolitano (D) of **ARIZONA** all impose freezes on new government hiring. Each exempts hiring for critical public health and safety positions (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE, ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]). • **MISSOURI** Gov. Matt Blunt (R) has postponed the start of the state-sponsored Insure **MISSOURI** health care plan. The plan was to go into effect last week, but Blunt decided to hold off under intense pressure from lawmakers who questioned the plan’s cost and his authority to enact the pan without their approval. Blunt said he hopes to get the plan started by summer (NEWS-LEADER [SPRINGFIELD]). • A joint **ILLINOIS** legislative committee rejected Gov. Rod Blagojevich’s (D) latest proposal to expand a state health care program for working families. The committee wants the governor to gain full legislative approval. Through a spokesperson, Blagojevich, who contends he has the power to move forward without lawmakers’ permission, said he would move to expand the program anyway (CHICAGO TRIBUNE). • **UTAH** Gov. Jon Huntsman (R) played a little hardball with lawmakers last week, threatening to veto a proposal to ban a flavored alcohol beverage known as “alcopops” unless they first agreed to change a bill that would have limited the primary amount of liquor that could be served in an alcohol drink. Huntsman got his way, with both bills getting through the Senate and on to the House (SALT LAKE TRIBUNE).

– *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

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# Hot issues

**B** **USINESS:** The U.S. Supreme Court rules that **MAINE** cannot regulate transportation companies delivering tobacco products directly to consumers, saying that public health concerns do not trump the federal law that bars states from regulating prices, routes or services of shipping companies (**NEW YORK TIMES**). • The **GEORGIA** House approves HB 1066, legislation that would ban the sale and consumption of “vaporized” alcohol, liquor mixed with oxygen to create a mist that users breathe in instead of drink. It moves to the Senate (**ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION**). • The **UTAH** Senate approves SB 211, which would allow drinkers to be served up to 2.5 ounces of liquor at once. The measure also requires that alcohol flavored drinks called “alcohol-pops” be sold only at state-run liquor stores. The measure moves to the House (**DESERET MORNING NEWS [SALT LAKE CITY]**). • The **WEST VIRGINIA** House approves HB 4131, which would prohibit employers from forcing their workers to attend meetings endorsing their boss’s political candidates or philosophies or giving them anti-union rhetoric. It heads to the Senate (**CHARLESTON GAZETTE**). • The **ALABAMA** House approves legislation that would raise the state’s minimum level of auto insurance to at least \$25,000 for the injury or death of one person, \$50,000 for the injury or death of two people, and \$25,000 for property damage. It moves to the Senate (**MOBILE PRESS-REGISTER**).

**CRIME & PUNISHMENT:** The **WYOMING** House signs off on HB 46, a bill that would make dogfighting and cockfighting a felony punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$5,000 fine. It moves to the Senate (**WYOMING TRIBUNE-EAGLE [CHEYENNE]**). • **IDAHO** Gov. Butch Otter (R) signs legislation that makes dogfighting a felony punishable by up to five years in jail and \$50,000 in fines. Under the law, attending a dogfight as a spectator is now a misdemeanor (**IDAHO STATESMAN [BOISE]**). • The **IOWA** Senate approves SF 2203, which would make attending a dogfight or any other event where an animal is tormented or killed a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$7,500. It moves to the House (**DES MOINES REGISTER**). • The **MISSISSIPPI** House endorses a proposal to wave a state law that requires non-violent prisoners to serve 85 percent of their sentence before they are eligible for parole. It moves to the Senate (**SUN HERALD [BILOXI]**). • The **SOUTH DAKOTA** Senate approves HB 1313, which makes it a crime to send threatening messages via cell phone, satellite phone or computer. It goes to Gov. Mike Rounds (R) for review (**RAPID CITY JOURNAL**).



**EDUCATION:** The **FLORIDA** Board of Education adopts science standards that acknowledge evolution, but narrowly agreed to refer to it as “scientific theory.” The decision was a compromise between a group of scientists and teachers who wanted evolution taught as scientific fact and religious conservatives who did not want it taught as the exclusive explanation for the origins of life (ST. PETERSBURG TIMES). • The **UTAH** Senate approves SB 162, which would require legislative and/or gubernatorial approval before the state enters into federal education agreements such as No Child Left Behind. It moves to the House (SALT LAKE TRIBUNE). • The **MISSOURI** Senate approves SB 762, which requires all Show Me State schools to develop policies to deal with cyberbullying, or harassment that is carried out via electronic means like cell phones or e-mail. It moves the House (KANSAS CITY STAR). • **OREGON** lawmakers approve a measure that would allow the spouses and children of military personnel who have died or become totally disabled on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001 to attend the Beaver State’s public universities for free. It moves to Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D), who is expected to sign it (OREGONIAN [PORTLAND]). • **VIRGINIA** lawmakers endorse a bill that would require universities to develop an emergency plan and update it every four years, establish a threat-assessment team, and create a system to notify students and employees of emergencies by e-mail, phone, text messages or other means. It moves to Gov. Tim Kaine (D), who is expected to sign it (WASHINGTON POST). • The **IOWA** Senate approves a bill that would establish a statewide core curriculum for Hawkeye State schools by 2012. It moves to the House (RADIO IOWA).

**ENVIRONMENT:** A federal appeals court overturns a **CALIFORNIA** law that requires oceangoing ships to use low-sulfur fuel, instead of dirtier bunker fuel, on auxiliary diesel engines within 24 miles of the Golden State coast line. The court ruled that such regulation is a federal matter, and that the state must receive a waiver from the Environmental Protection Agency before the law may go into effect (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE). • The **UTAH** Senate approves a measure that would require Beehive State utilities to produce at least 20 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2025. It moves to the House (SALT LAKE TRIBUNE).

## In the hopper

At any given time, State Net tracks tens of thousands of bills in all 50 states, the US Congress and the District of Columbia. Here’s a snapshot of what’s in the legislative works:

**Number of prefiles last week:** 538

**Number of Intros last week:** 5323

**Number of bills enacted/adopted last week:** 769

**Number of prefiles to date:** 14,280

**Number of Intros to date:** 55, 047

**Number of bills enacted/adopted overall to date:** 3,329

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS  
(measures current as of 02/28/2008)  
Source: State Net database



**HEALTH & SCIENCE:** An **IOWA** Senate committee approves HF 2212, a proposal to ban smoking in the Hawkeye State’s public places and businesses. The committee stripped away a House-approved exemption for gambling casinos. It moves to the full Senate (DES MOINES REGISTER). • The **MARYLAND** Senate approves SB 243, a bill making it a misdemeanor subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 for health care workers, police officers, educators and others to fail to report suspected child abuse to authorities. It moves to the House (BALTIMORE SUN). • **NEBRASKA** Gov. Dave Heineman (R) signs legislation that enacts a statewide ban on smoking in public buildings. Hotel rooms are exempt from the statute (LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR). • The **WEST VIRGINIA** Senate approves SB 722, legislation that would require free and low-cost clinics to have a licensed pharmacist supervise the dispensing of prescription drugs. It moves to the House (CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL). • The **WISCONSIN** Senate approves SB 178, legislation that would require health insurers to cover treatment of children with autism. It moves to the Assembly (MILWAUKEE JOURNAL-SENTINEL).

## Upcoming stories

Here are some of the topics you will see covered in upcoming issues of the State Net Capitol Journal:

- **Pharmaceutical gifts to doctors**
- **National energy corridors**
- **Spin Life insurance**

**IMMIGRATION:** An **ARIZONA** House committee endorses HB 2412, which would allow police to cite people for criminal trespass if they disrupt traffic in the act of soliciting work. The measure is aimed primarily at illegal day laborers. It moves to the full House (ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]). • The Bush administration announces it will significantly raise the fines on employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants. Beginning March 27, the minimum fine rises from the current \$100 for a first violation to \$375, with a maximum of \$3,200. The maximum fine for repeat violations will jump from \$5,000 to \$16,000 per violation (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • The **UTAH** Senate endorses SB 81, which would require state and local police officers to enforce federal immigration statutes, force public employers and their contractors to verify workers’ legal status and make it a misdemeanor to transport or shelter undocumented immigrants. The bill moves to the House (SALT LAKE TRIBUNE). • The **WYOMING** House endorses HB 145, which would force residents to show a legal identification to be eligible to receive most state services. It moves to the Senate (CASPER STAR-TRIBUNE). • The **IDAHO** Senate approves legislation that will require immigrants to prove they are in the country legally before obtaining a Gem State driver’s license. It goes to Gov. Butch Otter (R) for review (IDAHO STATESMAN [BOISE]). • The **INDIANA** House endorses SB 335, a measure that would allow the state to revoke a company’s business license for repeatedly hiring illegal immigrants. The measure returns to the Senate to work out differences with the version already approved there before it can go to Gov. Mitch Daniels for review (INDIANAPOLIS STAR).



**SOCIAL POLICY:** The **MISSISSIPPI** Senate endorses SB 2550, which would establish covenant marriages in the Magnolia State. Covenant marriages require couples seeking a divorce to undergo a year of counseling before being able to dissolve their marriage. It moves to the House (CLARION-LEDGER [JACKSON]).

- The **WEST VIRGINIA** Senate unanimously approves legislation that bans discrimination in employment and housing on the basis of sexual orientation. It moves to the House (CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL).

**POTPOURRI:** The **UTAH** Senate endorses SB 190, which would require all Beehive State classrooms to display an American flag. It moves to the House (SALT LAKE TRIBUNE). • The **WEST VIRGINIA** Senate approves SB 567, which would bar riders of all-terrain vehicles from riding on paved roads, except for crossing highways. It moves to the House (CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL).

— Compiled by *RICH EHISEN*

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# Once around the statehouse lightly

**A** **RNIE’S GOT A GUN:** CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has been an international icon for so long now it is easy to forget there was a time when he was a simple buck private doing his mandatory time in the Austrian army. Enraptured even then with power, the young Schwarzenegger became a tank driver, an experience so memorable that years later he bought the America-made M47 he served in during his army stint. Schwarzenegger loaned the tank to an OHIO military museum in 2000, where, according to the *USA Today*, it stayed until just a few weeks ago when he asked for its return. Now, as the *Sacramento Bee* reports, Schwarzenegger has new plans for the armored beast: he wants to let inner-city students who do well in school and stay away from drugs and gangs take it out for a spin as a reward. Which we suppose is better than using it on lawmakers during the budget process.

**MAYBE ALABAMA SHOULD TRY THIS:** If you think the ALABAMA Legislature corners the market on lawmakers engaging in fisticuffs, well, you just haven’t been to Taiwan. For the better part of the last two decades, members of the country’s Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) have engaged in brawls — sometimes involving as many as 50 people — with the majority Nationalist Party, during the



middle of parliamentary sessions. But as Reuters reports, the DPP leadership has agreed to tone it down this year, saying the constant fighting has turned voters off so much that the Party suffered significant losses in the last election. Leaders also admit the fighting has usually been pre-planned to gain attention. That part clearly worked.

**PARIS HILTON IS SURE SCREWED:** We've all seen them: people driving around with a dog on their lap, all giddy-like and ears flapping in the breeze. Sometimes even the dog seems excited. But that will be a scene of the past if CALIFORNIA Assemblyman Bill Maze has his way. As the *Sacramento Bee* reports, Maze has introduced AB 2233, a measure that would make it illegal to drive with a live animal in your lap. We will presume, for the sake of argument, that it would still be okay to drive with a dead animal in your lap. Or, based on some of the really bad rugs we see some men wearing, one on your head.

**BRINGING THE BLING TO E-BAY:** You know, it might just be true that most of the wacky stuff in the world really does happen in CALIFORNIA. Or at least it did last week. As the *Capitol Weekly* reports, Senate Pro Tem Don Perata's famously hijacked Dodge Charger has shown up for sale on eBay. The car was lifted off Perata — at gunpoint no less — last December. The Don of CALIFORNIA wasn't hurt and the car was eventually recovered intact. Why, you may ask, would anyone want to jack a state-owned vehicle, not usually the kind of ride in demand by anyone younger than 50? Perhaps it is because the 62-year-old Perata drives like he dresses — in style. The 2006, candy apple red, 5.7l Hemi-powered Charger was sporting a tricked out set of chrome 22" Panther rims that made it look like it was rolling along at 80 mph when it was standing still. At press time, the leading bid was a touch over \$23,000.

## In case you missed it

Most observers believe that no matter who wins this year's presidential election, the next administration will have a more expansive concept of federalism than the present one. But tough economic times could still waylay hopes for an improved state-federal relationship. The State Net Capitol Journal took an in-depth look at this controversial issue in our Feb. 18 issue.

In case you missed it, the article can be found on our Web site at [http://www.statenet.com/capitol\\_journal/02-18-2008/html](http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/02-18-2008/html)

— By RICH EHISEN



**Editor:** Rich Ehisen — capj@statenet.com

**Associate Editor:** Korey Clark — capj@statenet.com

**Editorial Advisor:** Lou Cannon

**Correspondents:** Richard Cox (CA), Steve Karas (CA), Bruce McKeeman (CA), Jeff Kinnison (CA), Chelsea Wolfe (CA), Linda Mendenhall (IL), Lauren King (MA) and Ben Livingood (PA)

**Graphic Design:** Vanessa Perez

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