

July 7, 2008

# Sick Daze



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The next issue of Capitol Journal will be available on July 14th.

## Top Story

*For almost half of U.S. workforce, getting sick means losing precious income they can rarely afford to go without. Now, several states are considering bills to require employers to give workers a minimum number of paid sick days each year.*

# SNCJ Spotlight

## States consider paid sick leave

While getting sick is never any fun, for most Americans illness is simply an inconvenience that means taking a few paid days off from work until they feel well enough to get back on the job.

But for almost half of the U.S. workforce, nearly 60 million people, that is not an option. Time off sick means no pay, leaving those employees with the unenviable choice of working with some nasty bug or losing precious income they can rarely afford to go without.



Ohioans for Healthy Families (OHF), is now working to gather the 121,000 signatures necessary to get it on the November ballot.

The deadline for that is August 6, but OHF spokesperson Dale Butland says they have already collected over 160,000 signatures, and he anticipates they will ultimately turn in more than 200,000. “There is absolutely no question that this will get onto the November ballot,” Butland says. If so, it appears to have a good chance of passing. A June 4 Quinnipiac University poll showed 70 percent of voters support the measure. Butland notes that several other polls have shown similar results. “This is an idea whose time has come,” he says.

Not everyone agrees with him on that. Business groups like the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), which claims 350,000 members nationwide, say proposals like those in OHIO and CALIFORNIA will cost employers billions of dollars in new employee expenses, which will ultimately lead to the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs. A recent NFIB study in CALIFORNIA, for example, predicts that AB 2716 will impose \$4.6 billion in new direct costs on Golden State businesses, and cost another \$59.3 billion in lost sales over the law’s first five years. That, the study says, will force employers to cut at least 370,000 jobs. Over 36 percent of those losses, they say, will come in companies with fewer than 100 employees.

John Kabateck, executive director of NFIB/California, says lawmakers should look at those numbers before “asking small businesses to spend what they don’t have.” Kabateck contends that most of the 23,000 CALIFORNIA employers that belong to NFIB already offer their workers some form of flexible scheduling that fits the kind of business they are in. He adds that, while well-meaning, measures like AB 2716 ultimately hurt the very people they are trying to help, workers in service sector jobs that are the most likely to get cut when small business owners face a sudden spike in their costs.

“We’re already facing record-high unemployment and a \$15 billion budget deficit,” Kabateck says. “This is a particularly bad time to impose an employer mandate like this one that will cost so much and eliminate so many jobs.”

## The week in session

**States in Regular Session:** CA(Senate), DC, MA, NC, PA, US

**States in Recess:** CA(Assembly), MI, NJ, NY

**States in Special Session:** AK “d”, CA “c”, MS “a”, PA “a”, VA “b”

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

**States in Skeleton Session:** OH

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

**States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2009:** KY, MT, ND

**States Adjourned in 2008:** AK, AL, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MO, MS, NE, NH, NM, OK, RI, SC, SD, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY

**State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2008:** AK “c”, AL “a”, AR “a”, CT “a”, DE “a”, KY “a”, LA “a”, LA “b”, ME “a”, NC “b”, NH “a”, NV “a”, OR “a”, VA “a”, WI “c”, WI “d”, WI “e”, WV “a”, WV “b”

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS  
(session information current as of 07/03/2008)  
Source: State Net database



Dick Castner, the executive director for the Western Region of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, echoes that thought, saying “We don’t have a problem at all with paid sick leave, but we do think it should be between the employer and the employee to work out, with no government mandate.”

But paid sick leave supporters point to other studies that show allowing workers to stay home when they are ill actually helps a company’s bottom line by reducing employee turnover and making it less likely that sick employees will infect others

**“This is a particularly bad time to impose an employer mandate like this one that will cost so much and eliminate so many jobs.”**

in the workplace. A study by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR), for instance, says that AB 2716 will actually save CALIFORNIA businesses

more than \$1 billion each year. That is why, they say, every other industrial nation in the world already allows sick leave as part of its basic labor policy.

So why so such a huge difference of opinion on what paid sick leave actually means to a company’s ledger sheet? Ohioans for Healthy Families’ Dale Butland says studies like the NFIB report too often presume that workers will automatically use every bit of available sick leave they have each year. But Butland says that IWPRs 2004 National Health Interview Survey shows that “more than half of the workers with sick leave never use a single day of that time off.”

Jim Lazarus, Senior Vice President of Public Policy with the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, says it is too early to say whether that city’s first-in-the-nation paid sick leave policy has hurt or helped its employers. He says that while “illicit sick leave use is the number one fear among most employers,” they have not

**“There really is no way to oppose this without looking like you are hard hearted.”**

received many complaints from their members. Part of that, he says, could be that “90 percent of the businesses in San Francisco already had

paid sick leave” before the law went into effect. He says that neither the county nor the SF chamber are tracking the results yet, though that could change in the future.

What happens if AB 2716 gets to Schwarzenegger is unclear, although the NFIBs Kabateck says he expects the governor will veto it. “This governor steadfastly supports preserving jobs in CALIFORNIA,” Kabateck says.

But The U.S. Chamber’s Castner says businesses must be ready to roll with whatever happens in OHIO, CALIFORNIA or anywhere else. “You pretty much have to suck it up,” he says. “There really is no way to oppose this without looking like you are hard hearted.” But be that as it may, Castner also predicts that many companies in those two states will soon cut back on other employee benefits, such as health care and pay raises, to compensate for the additional costs of sick leave. He



also notes that the push for sick leave is likely to get stronger at both the state and federal level if Democrats do well in the November elections.

OHF's Butland concurs, noting Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama supports similar legislation at the federal level. But he also points out that the polls show a large majority of Republicans support the OHIO measure. The reason, he says, is simple.

“Everybody gets sick,” he says. “This really isn’t a party issue.”

— *By RICH EHISEN*

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## Budget & taxes

**S**TATES COMPRESSING WORK WEEK TO SAVE ON GAS: With the average price of a gallon of gasoline creeping past \$4, states have begun shifting their employees to four-day work weeks to cut the employees’ commuting costs and their own energy bills.

UTAH Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. (R) has taken the most aggressive action, announcing last month that he is imposing a four-day workweek on about 17,000 state employees for at least a year, beginning in August. The designated employees will work Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., allowing about a third of the state’s 3,000 public buildings — none housing essential services, such as law enforcement or public education — to be closed on Fridays.

While UTAH is the only state that has opted to make a four-day workweek mandatory, FLORIDA and SOUTH CAROLINA have offered some of their employees the option of working compressed weeks this summer. NEW MEXICO Gov. Bill Richardson (D) has ordered state agencies to adopt alternate work schedule and telecommuting policies — which could involve establishing satellite offices for telecommuting throughout the state — by Sept. 1. And VERMONT Sen. Vincent Illuzzi (R) has proposed shifting public schools along with state government to a shorter workweek.

The compressed workweek idea has its critics. Some say it inconveniences the citizens government is supposed to serve. And even some supporters concede it’s not for everyone. Kay Durnett, executive director of the ARKANSAS State Employees Association, for example, points out that working a 10-hour day could be unbearable for a state employee whose job is, say, investigating child abuse.

But advocates say shorter workweeks relieve commuter-clogged roadways, reduce emissions and reduce energy consumption at state facilities, saving taxpayers money. Les Fugate, KENTUCKY’s deputy assistant secretary of state, said the staggered four-day workweek program his office implemented in mid-June has

boosted moral and productivity. And some employees seem to like the idea of an extra day off.

“Hard working state employees need a break, and without a pay increase, a condensed work schedule is the best way to give it to them,” said OKLAHOMA state Rep. Mike Shelton (D), who’s pushing a four-day workweek along with the Oklahoma Public Employees Association. (STATELINE.ORG)

**BUDGETS IN BRIEF:** State tax revenues, adjusted for inflation and tax cuts, were down 5.3 percent in the first quarter of 2008 compared to the same period last year, according to a report released last week by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government. That not only marks the third quarter in a row that total adjusted revenue declined but also the weakest first quarter for states since early 2003 (NEW YORK TIMES).

- **CALIFORNIA’s** new fiscal year began last Tuesday without a state spending plan in place as lawmakers continue to wrestle with a \$15.2 billion budget deficit. The state will continue to provide essential services but payments to local governments, community colleges and other programs will not be made (SACRAMENTO BEE).
- President Bush signed a spending bill last week that included a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits. The measure was expected to be a great relief for states with high unemployment rates, like **MICHIGAN** (DETROIT FREE PRESS).
- **NEW HAMPSHIRE** Gov. John Lynch (D) has signed the bill overhauling the state’s pension system. (See NH OVERHAULS RETIREMENT SYSTEM in June 9 issue of *SN CJ*) (NASHUA TELEGRAPH)
- **NEW JERSEY** Gov. Jon S. Corzine (D) signed a nearly \$33 billion state budget last Monday, less than 10 hours before the state’s July 1 constitutional budget deadline. The spending plan slashes funding for hospitals, nursing homes, municipalities, property tax rebates and colleges but increases money for public schools (ASSOCIATED PRESS).
- Over \$30 billion in statewide construction projects were stalled last Tuesday by a glitch in a budget bill sent to **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D). Two sentences in a 475-page spending measure awaiting the governor’s signature barred the funding of any state project initiated after August 31, 2007 (CHICAGO SUN-TIMES).
- Also in **ILLINOIS**, Blagojevich called lawmakers back to Springfield this week for another go-round on the state budget, despite the absence of any indication that the standoff between him and House Speaker Michael Madigan (D) has abated (ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH).
- **WEST VIRGINIA** finished its 2007-08 budget year last Monday with a record \$3.928 billion in tax collections. The increase was driven mainly by high energy prices (CHARLESTON GAZETTE).
- **FLORIDA** lottery officials announced last week that the Sunshine State will become the 30th to join the multi-state Powerball lottery game in January (SUN-SENTINEL [SOUTH FLORIDA]).

– Compiled by **KOREY CLARK**

## Upcoming elections

07/03/2008 - 07/24/2008

07/15/2008

### **Alabama Primary Runoff**

US House (All)

US Senate (Jeff Sessions)

### **Georgia Primary Election**

House (All)

Senate (All)

US House (All)

US Senate (Chambliss)

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# Politics & leadership

**HIGH COURT CAMPAIGN FINANCE RULING THREATENS STATE LAWS:** Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the so-called “millionaire’s amendment” to the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform act of 2002. That particular provision allowed candidates facing wealthy, self-funding opponents to collect more in public funds than other candidates. Publicly funded candidates up against deep-pocketed challengers in U.S. House races, for example, were entitled to triple the normal \$2,300 per-donor, per-election sum.

But a NEW YORK businessman who lost two congressional races despite spending \$3.5 million of his own money alleged (in *Davis vs. Federal Election Commission*) that the provision had unfairly burdened him. And five of the high court’s nine justices agreed with him, endorsing an opinion from the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals which held that treating candidates differently based on how much their opponents spend penalized the free speech of wealthy candidates.

Legal experts say the court’s ruling could jeopardize similar laws in at least eight states: ARIZONA, CONNECTICUT, KENTUCKY, MAINE, MINNESOTA, NEW JERSEY, NEW MEXICO and NORTH CAROLINA. In fact, the prominent INDIANA-based election-law attorney James Bopp Jr. said he intends to ask the Supreme Court to hear his challenge to NORTH CAROLINA’s program, which provides public funding for judicial races.

“We definitely will be filing,” he said. “We think the court should consider taking this up.”

But several state programs have already survived challenges in federal courts. NORTH CAROLINA’s was just upheld by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on May 1.

And Nick Nyhart, president of the group Public Campaign, which advocates for public financing of campaigns, said an advantage the state programs might have before the Supreme Court is that unlike with the overturned millionaire’s amendment, participants have to sacrifice their freedom to raise unlimited private money in order to receive public funds.

Paul S. Ryan, a lawyer with the Washington-based Campaign Legal Center, which supported both the federal millionaire’s amendment and NORTH CAROLINA’s program, likewise, said the state programs wouldn’t necessarily be overturned in spite of the new threat.

“It’s definitely not a slam dunk,” he said. (CQ POLITICS)

**POLITICS IN BRIEF:** A NEW JERSEY appeals court upheld the constitutionality of the state’s pay-to-play law barring companies that make large political donations from receiving state contracts. It was the first major legal test for the 2005 law (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK], NEW JERSEY LAW JOURNAL).

— Compiled by KOREY CLARK

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# Governors

**JINDAL'S FLIP-FLOP FALLOUT:** Just days after saying he would sign SB 672, a controversial bill that would more than double lawmakers' pay, LOUISIANA Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) yielded to extreme public pressure and vetoed the measure instead. That backlash included the launching of several recall campaigns against Jindal and lawmakers who supported the pay hike.

Jindal originally said he would sign off on the pay raise even though he considered it to be "excessive" and "over the top," mainly to encourage lawmakers to support several ethics reform measures he is pushing. But the governor changed his mind early last week when it became clear that he had more to fear from angry voters than from miffed lawmakers. By the end of last week, recall petition papers had been filed with the Secretary of State's office against Jindal and four Republican legislators: House Speaker Jim Tucker and state Reps. Franklin Foil and Stephen and Joe Lopinto. Polls also showed Jindal's popularity taking a major plunge, with just 25 percent of

**"I clearly made a mistake by telling the Legislature that I would allow them to handle their own affairs, and as with all mistakes, you can either correct them or compound them. I chose to correct my mistake by vetoing this bill."**

subjects saying they viewed his job performance as "very favorable," down from 47 percent just a few months ago.

"It is clear to me that the legislative pay raise is, in itself, a threat to our reform movement and our progress as a state," Jindal said in a statement announcing his veto.

"I clearly made a mistake by telling the Legislature that I would allow them to handle their own affairs, and as with all mistakes, you can either correct them or compound them. I chose to correct my mistake by vetoing this bill."

Jindal's veto resulted in the recall campaign against him immediately being dropped, though it is unclear if the other recall campaigns will follow suit. But while the veto may placate voters, it has almost certainly done what Jindal originally feared it would: created a schism between him and some Pelican State lawmakers.

Senate President Joel Chaisson and House Speaker Pro Tem Karen Carter Peterson, both Democrats, said Jindal's sudden about-face on the pay raise will make it hard for some lawmakers to believe him in the future. Chaisson said Jindal needs to do better at explaining his position to lawmakers, saying he needs to "just be honest with us." Peterson also lamented that Jindal had numerous chances to object to the raise throughout the legislative process, but chose to say nothing. "What does your word mean?" she asked. "How do you trust a person or believe he will keep his word?...His integrity is in question."

Sen. Ann Duplessis, who authored SB 672, questioned both Jindal's integrity and his understanding of the rigors of being a legislator, saying he "has never been a state lawmaker. He went from being 'Boy Wonder' to Congress to being elected governor."

Not everyone, however, found fault with Jindal's veto pen. Several lawmakers echoed the thoughts of Sen. Jody Amedee (D), who opposed the pay hike. Amedee said the governor "did the right thing," adding that "the people spoke and he listened." Senate Finance Committee Chairman Mike Michot (R) also vowed to keep Jindal's "reform agenda on track."

But observers like Jim Brandt, president of the Public Affairs Research Council, a nonpartisan government watchdog group, say that while the brouhaha probably won't hurt Jindal's long-term agenda, it can't help but "add to the power struggle between the Legislature and the governor that cropped up in the session. It is going to make governing a little trickier." (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW ORLEANS, ADVOCATE [BATON ROUGE]).

**WESTERN GOVS WANT NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY:** Western governors say they are tired of waiting for Washington to come up with a national energy policy, so they plan to draft one of their own in hopes it will influence whichever presidential candidate takes office next year. Speaking at the annual Western Governors Association meeting in WYOMING, WGA chairman and UTAH Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. compared the nation's energy challenges to that of John F. Kennedy's 1961 goal of putting a man on the moon. Huntsman said the nation needs a clear goal such as the one Kennedy presented, with specifics on how to achieve it. Western governors, he said, are uniquely situated to provide the vision. Summit attendee Jeff Immelt, chairman and CEO of General Electric, agreed, saying that "The people who are going to drive change, particularly in the clean energy, clean water space, are going to be governors."

But drafting such a policy is no guarantee that it will have the influence that governors want. WASHINGTON Gov. Christine Gregoire (D), for one, was skeptical that the federal government would listen, saying any such plan could either be ignored or "get turned into mush" by Congress. Others, however, said anything is better than the current energy situation, which many contend is no policy at all. "What we have today is the worst of all worlds. We have nothing," Immelt said. (NEW YORK TIMES, SALT LAKE TRIBUNE)

**GOVERNORS IN BRIEF:** Governors from OREGON and NEW YORK each had surgery last week. OREGON Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) missed last week's Western Governors Association meeting after having surgery to remove his gall bladder. He is expected to make a full recovery. NEW YORK Gov. David Paterson's (D) procedure was to remove a cataract (USA TODAY) • OHIO Gov. Ted Strickland (D) is planning to hold several televised, invitation-only forums on reforming



Buckeye State primary and secondary schools. Strickland has said he will reveal a plan to fix the state's education funding system in 2009 (COLUMBUS DISPATCH).

• **MINNESOTA** Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R) took over as chair of the Education Commission of the States, a Denver-based non-profit group that works to bring together policy makers and education leaders to work on public school issues. Pawlenty is also currently the chairman of the National Governors Association, a post he leaves this summer (MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

## 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:** 56

**Number of Intros last week:** 438

**Number of bills enacted/adopted last week:** 775

**Number of prefiles to date:** 20,815

**Number of Intros to date:** 86,252

**Number of bills enacted/adopted overall to date:** 23,681

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS  
(measures current as of 07/02/2008)  
Source: State Net database

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# Hot issues

**B** **BUSINESS:** The **DELAWARE** Legislature fails to override Gov. Ruth Ann Minner's (D) veto of SB 245, which would have barred governments from using eminent domain to take private land for economic development (NEWS-JOURNAL [New Castle-Wilmington]). • The **RHODE ISLAND** Supreme Court overturns a court ruling that would have required several of the nation's largest paint companies to clean up lead-based paints found in more than 240,000 Ocean State properties. The earlier verdict found the companies liable for creating a public nuisance by manufacturing and selling a toxic product that has resulted in elevated lead levels in tens of thousands of school children (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate endorses SB 1137, which requires lenders to give homeowners at least 30 days notice before beginning foreclosure proceedings. It also grants renters 60 days to relocate if the home they are renting is lost to foreclosure, and authorizes local governments to force lenders to maintain property that is sitting empty after a foreclosure. It moves to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R), who is expected to sign it into law (LOS ANGELES TIMES).

**CRIME & PUNISHMENT:** A federal judge in **NEVADA** postpones implementation of the Silver State's new sexual predator law until he decides whether the law is constitutional. The judge said enacting the law now would harm





under 21, up to \$36,000. Opponents complained, however, that lawmakers dropped a key requirement to have companies pay for claims when “medically necessary.” The measure moves to the House (PATRIOT-NEWS [HARRISBURG]). • **LOUISIANA** Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) signs HB 958, legislation that requires health insurers to cover treatment for autism in those younger than 17. The coverage has an annual \$36,000 cap and does not apply to policies for businesses with fewer than 50 employees (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW ORLEANS]).

## Upcoming stories

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

- **Nuclear power**
- **Prison health care**
- **No Child Left Behind**

**HOMELAND SECURITY:** The **ARIZONA** Court of Appeals rules that the state Attorney General’s Office is legally entitled to seize funds being sent by wire from other states into Mexico. Although the court acknowledged funds being taken from Western Union wire transfers never actually pass through the Grand Canyon State, it said there is enough evidence to conclude that the money is linked to human smuggling and other crimes occurring in the state. Western Union, which opposed the ruling, says it may appeal the state Supreme Court (ARIZONA DAILY STAR [TUCSON]).

**IMMIGRATION:** A **KENTUCKY** Court rules that it is not illegal for Bluegrass State landlords to rent property to illegal immigrants. The court ruled that there had to be evidence that the defendant intended to violate federal or state immigration laws by concealing or hiding tenants (KENTUCKY POST [COVINGTON]). • The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to hear a challenge to a **KANSAS** law that allows illegal immigrants to pay in-state tuition at Sunflower state public colleges and universities. The lower tuition rate is available to illegal immigrants who attend **KANSAS** high schools for three years and obtain either high school diplomas or state-issued GEDs. The students must sign affidavits saying they plan to apply or are applying for U.S. citizenship (KANSAS CITY STAR).

**SOCIAL POLICY:** The **ARIZONA** Senate approves a constitutional amendment that would define marriage as being between only one man and one woman. Voters must approve the proposal before it can become law (ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]).

**POTPOURRI:** In **HAWAII**, Gov. Linda Lingle (R) signs HB 2557, legislation that gives journalists limited protection from being forced to reveal their sources. The law, which will expire in 2011, protects print, radio and broadcast media as well as journalists who publish their work on the Internet and can show that they are writing in the public interest (HONOLULU STAR BULLETIN).

– *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

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# Once around the statehouse lightly

**RECALLING THE RECALL:** Go ahead and cross NBC newsman Tom Brokaw off CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Christmas card list. During a recent appearance on “Meet the Press,” Brokaw welcomed the Governor by reminding him that in the 2003 recall election he “ran as a fiscal conservative who would change the system, who would bring business-like techniques” to Sacramento, but that now the state faces a \$15 billion budget deficit, record unemployment and the worst housing crisis since the Depression. Brokaw also hammered Schwarzenegger for double-digit growth in state spending and the governor’s declining popularity, noting that if he were running a private company instead of a state he probably would be fired. To all of which Schwarzenegger quipped, “Are you always this positive?” Guess you can’t really ruffle a guy used to fending off alien predators, futuristic cyborgs and Legislative Democrats.

**MOVIE MAGIC:** Speaking of Arnold, everybody remembers that his 1987 action flick *Predator* featured two future governors: Schwarzenegger and Jesse “The Body” Ventura. But people may not know that the slash and dash gorefest almost produced a third governor. In 2003, *Predator* cast member Sonny Landham — better known for his role as the murderous thug “Billy Bear” in the 1982 Eddie Murphy megahit *48 Hours* — tinkered with running for the KENTUCKY governorship as an independent. That campaign fell flat, but Landham, now 67, is not ready to call it a career. As reported by the Associated Press, the now Libertarian Landham is running for Congress, seeking to unseat U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). It could be tough sledding, however. Aside from having some, ahem, “adult” roles on his movie resume, Landham’s past also includes a few years in jail for stalking one of his four ex-wives, a conviction that was later overturned. Of those troubles, Landham says, “What can I do? That was a part of my life you cannot call back.”

**I FEEL YOUR PAIN:** Running a state is undoubtedly hard work, but it sure beats getting a real job. So determined WASHINGTON Gov. Christine Gregoire last week when she tried her hand at being a home health care worker for a few hours. As the *Tacoma News Tribune* reports, Gregoire detoured during a campaign stop to spend a few hours shadowing 56-year-old Rosa Vadillo, a real in-home worker, as part of a program intended to give politicians a sense of a “regular person’s” workday. Gregoire spent her time changing beds, making breakfast and even unclogging a toilet. The gov said she was glad for the experience, but assured Vadillo that, “I’m keeping my day job.”



**NO RESPECT, NO RESPECT AT ALL:** Jen Singer is tired of stay-at-home-moms (SAHM) getting the shaft. Three years ago, Singer, a NEW JERSEY author and SAHM herself, convinced Garden State lawmakers to recognize by proclamation her self-created holiday, “Please Take My Children to Work Day,” to give women like her a day off from the craziness of child rearing. But as the *Newark Star-Ledger* reports, Gov. Jon Corzine’s office opted this year to honor the similar but different “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, which is aimed at mothers who work outside the home. That irks Singer, who fumed that “stay-at-home moms always have to prove why we should get a day off.” Singer is sending the kids to grandma’s for the day anyway. Her big plans? “I’m going to watch the cushions stay on the couch. And not do any laundry,” she says.

## In case you missed it

All signs point to Democrats making huge gains in Congress this fall, and perhaps even winning back the White House. But as Lou Cannon discusses in the June 30th issue of SNCJ, would such a landslide produce a Democratic avalanche in state elections?

In case you missed it, the article can be found on our Web site at

[http://www.statenet.com/capitol\\_journal/06-30-2008/html](http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/06-30-2008/html)

— By *RICH EHISEN*



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