

November 16, 2009

The Race is On



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● The next issue of
 ● Capitol Journal will be
 ● available on November 23rd.
 ●

Top Story

The Obama administration finally announced the final rules for states to go after over \$4 billion in education funds last week. But states have been gearing up for the “Race to the Top” for months.

SNCJ Spotlight

States sprinting hard in the “Race to the Top”

The Obama administration has officially launched its “Race to the Top” competition for states seeking new federal education dollars. But anxious states have already been working for months on their plans for securing a piece of the \$4.35 billion pie the program has to offer.

Although small in comparison to the \$95 billion the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) allotted to education, Race to the Top funding represents the single largest amount of discretionary federal education spending in American history. The money will be dispersed to about a dozen



states over two rounds, the first in April 2010. The second round will come in September.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan released the competition’s final guidelines last Thursday after the department had fielded more than 1,000 comments during the 30-day public comment period that ended in August. Under those rules, states looking to score big will need to commit to making changes the administration feels will best raise academic standards, boost teacher quality, track student gains and improve failing schools. States must also demonstrate they have the ability to carry out their plans, including proof of significant buy-in from local school districts.

Not much changed from the original draft version of those regulations released last summer. Two significant changes, however, involve charter schools and the role student performance will play in gauging teacher effectiveness. After bitter objections from teacher unions, the final regulations were altered to ensure that student test scores would be only one component of a teacher- or principal-evaluation system. The regulations now require that such systems have multiple measures, including growth in student test scores.

“We thought Arne [Duncan] liked the girl with the brains but he’s dumped us for the popular girl...The education establishment got to them.”

was charter schools, they’ve muted that. The teacher reform piece was performance pay, they’ve muted that,” said Jeanne Allen, president of the nonprofit Center for Education Reform in Washington D.C. “We thought Arne [Duncan] liked the girl with the brains but he’s dumped us for the popular girl...The education establishment got to them.”

Duncan rejected that contention, saying the guidelines were still “tough but fair.” He also said the new rules actually encourage more charter schools, not less.

“We moved it out of just turning around the lowest performing schools and actually made charters more important,” he said.

Those differences clearly are not slowing down states that collectively are facing an estimated \$16 billion in school budget shortfalls for next year. Flawed or otherwise,

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: 285

Number of Intros last week: 344

Number of Enacted/Adopted last week: 162

Number of Prefiles to date: 35,348

Number of Intros to date: 155,066

Number of 2009 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 39,903

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(measures current as of 11/12/2009)
Source: State Net database

While the original regulations also strongly encouraged states to utilize charter schools to address failing public schools, the new regulations de-emphasize that option.

Those changes angered some reform advocates.

“The innovative reform piece



states are clearly lacing up their running shoes for a chance at the Race to the Top's gold. Many have in fact already changed key components of their education systems to improve their chances of getting in on the latest round of federal largesse.

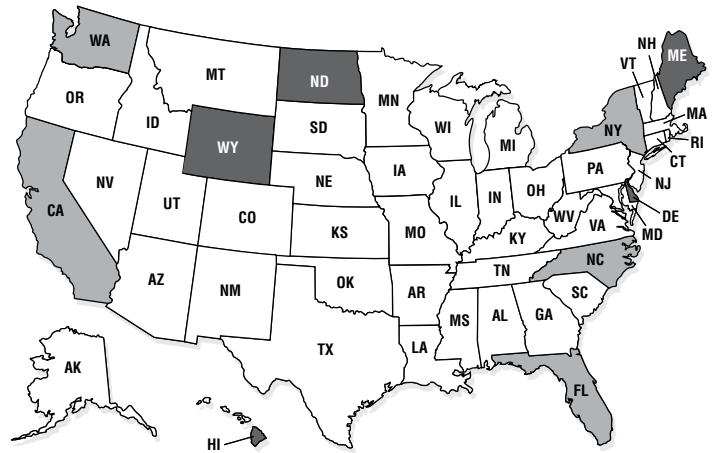
Several states, including CALIFORNIA, INDIANA, and WISCONSIN have taken steps to remove "firewall" laws that prohibit student achievement from being used to grade teacher performance. Meanwhile, four states — ILLINOIS, TENNESSEE, LOUISIANA, and DELAWARE — have raised or removed their caps on the number of charter schools they permit, and at least seven have similar plans in the works. COLORADO Gov. Bill Ritter (D) has also directed \$7 million in federal stimulus money to programs he hopes will improve the Centennial State's chances of

landing even more federal cash. At least 15 states have also accepted \$250,000 grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to pay for expensive consultants to help guide their proposals.

States will ultimately be graded on a 500-point system that scores their ability to meet four key "assurances": using college- and career-ready standards, building a workforce of highly effective educators, creating data systems to support student achievement, and turning around the lowest-performing schools. Duncan said there is "no fixed number" of states that will receive money through the competition. But he did emphasize that only the states with the most aggressive proposals and proven ability to bring them to fruition will be selected. Based on U.S. Department of Education budget figures, large states like CALIFORNIA, TEXAS, NEW YORK and FLORIDA could garner as much as \$700 million each. Smaller states could see anywhere from \$20 million to \$400 million.

Some states are already starting in a hole. ALASKA and TEXAS, for instance, will lose up to 40 points each for not joining the Common Core State Standards Initiative

Bird's eye view



Source: New York Times, Recovery.gov

Most jobs created or saved by federal stimulus

Least jobs created by stimulus

Obama administration reports stimulus saved jobs

The Obama administration released data last month showing the federal stimulus program has saved or created more than 640,000 jobs nationwide. While there is some question about the accuracy of that figure, it is unlikely that when all the numbers are finalized CALIFORNIA will be displaced as the state with the most jobs spared by the stimulus. The 110,185 total reported for the Golden State is nearly 70,000 higher than the tally for the No. 2 state: NEW YORK (40,620). The job markets of both states, however, benefited far more than that of the No. 50 state, WYOMING, where only 860 jobs were reportedly saved.





that Duncan and the National Governors Association championed last spring. That initiative encourages states to set common core curriculum standards. Unless changes are made before the applications are due in January, the 11 states that don't allow charter schools — ALABAMA, KENTUCKY, MAINE, MISSISSIPPI, MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA, NEBRASKA, SOUTH DAKOTA, VERMONT, WASHINGTON, and WEST VIRGINIA — will also lose 32 points each.

Still, some advocates are urging lawmakers and education officials to use caution in going after Race to the Top funds.

"I'm hugely concerned about unintended consequences," said Frederick Hess, an education director at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative research policy group. "States are rushing to stitch together grant proposals that will win points, but many could just turn out to be short-term political plays."

Other advocates, however, complain that the program does not go far enough. Amy Wilkins, of the Washington-based non-profit Education Trust, says the

scoring rubric and awards based on population actually discourage states from "unfettered boldness."

"[The department] could have really demanded a lot in exchange for unprecedented money," said Ms. Wilkins. Instead, she said, "It ain't a moonshot."

“States are rushing to stitch together grant proposals that will win points, but many could just turn out to be short-term political plays.”

Many critics also focus on the potential loss of local control, education's third rail. COLORADO education commissioner Dwight D. Jones understands that concern. Jones, who recently barnstormed the state to meet with dozens of local school superintendents and board members, knows that many educators are worried that chasing the money will force them to answer even more to Washington D.C.

"We're one of those Western states with a rich history of local control," Jones said. "There were lots of questions about what does it mean to have a state sign on to common standards with other states. Some people said we shouldn't chase a shiny new penny. I said our COLORADO agenda aligns well with what Secretary Duncan is encouraging."

Applications for the first round of funding are due in mid-January. The second round of applications will be due June 1, with winners announced by September 30, 2010. (NEW YORK TIMES, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, EDUCATION WEEKLY, ABCNEWS.COM)

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*



The nine states with scores most like CALIFORNIA's included every one of its neighbors, ARIZONA, NEVADA and OREGON, along with fellow Sun Belt state FLORIDA, all severely impacted by the housing bust. The remaining states consisted of the Midwestern cluster of ILLINOIS, MICHIGAN and WISCONSIN, and the Northeastern pair of NEW JERSEY and RHODE ISLAND.

The report warned that the 10 states' budget troubles could have significant consequences for the country as a whole. With the states accounting for more than a third of the nation's population and economic output, Pew said, any actions they take to balance their own budgets, such as tax increases or spending cuts, could potentially slow the national economic recovery. (STATELINE, PEW CENTER FOR THE STATES, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR)

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: The tax package that replaced MAINE's graduated income tax with a lower 6.5 percent rate for most residents this session (HB 1051) could be challenged at the polls next year. Election officials have certified that opponents of the tax system overhaul have collected enough signatures to bring the issue before voters (STATELINE). • **MICHIGAN** Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D) is asking state agency heads to submit plans by Nov. 30 to slash 20 percent from their 2011 budgets (STATELINE). • **VIRGINIA** spent 74 percent more money in its most recent budget than it did 10 years ago, due to changes in the economy, population growth and decisions by the General Assembly, according to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, the Legislature's watchdog agency (VIRGINIAN-PILOT [NORFOLK]).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Upcoming elections

11/12/2009 - 12/3/2009

11/17/2009

California Special Primary
Assembly District 72

Mississippi Special Election
House District 117

11/24/2009

Iowa Special Election
House District 33

Rhode Island Special Primary
House District 62 (if needed)

12/01/2009

Georgia Special Runoff
House Districts 58, 129, 141
Senate District 35

Tennessee Special Election
Senate District 31

Tennessee Special Primary
House District 83

Politics & leadership

POLITICAL DOWNSIZING MOVEMENT IN NY: This year, voters in three towns in western NEW YORK approved citizen-initiated referendums trimming their boards from five members to three. Voters in the county of Niagara, in the same part of the state, decided to reduce their county legislature from 19 members to 15. And residents of Limestone voted 3-1 to dissolve their entire village.



“It now is official,” the *Buffalo News* declared after the first few votes. “This is a movement...The mini-revolution seems unstoppable.”

The movement is largely the work of Kevin Gaughan, a local lawyer the *Buffalo News* dubbed the “downsizing guru.” Over the past few years, Gaughan has reportedly attended 263 meetings to argue for fewer elected officials and more participatory democracy.

Communities in NEW YORK aren’t the only ones downsizing, however. This month, voters in Holyoke, MASSACHUSETTS opted to consider changing their city’s charter and possibly reducing the size of its 15-member council.

The trend is a little surprising, given that polls show Americans generally have a higher opinion of their local government than of their state or federal government and overwhelmingly re-elect their local representatives.

But voters in western NEW YORK are frustrated with declining population, taxes and unemployment and with politicians’ inability to solve those problems. And the referendums give voters the opportunity to take some immediate action themselves, said Kathryn Foster, co-author of a study by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute.

The trend is also consistent with recent signs of broader public dissatisfaction with big government, such as the Tea Party movement and the heated town hall meetings over health care.

But anti-tax crusader Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform is skeptical that downsizing will go national.

“It’s a lashing out by people who feel they’ve tried everything,” he said. “But if five guys won’t stare down the unions or not replace some retirees, why will three?... NEW HAMPSHIRE has more legislators than CALIFORNIA, but it has lower taxes.” (USA TODAY)

POLITICS IN BRIEF: Gambling interests, natural gas drillers, and tobacco companies, which were among the only winners in PENNSYLVANIA’s recession-ravaged budget this year, have spent more than \$4.5 million combined on lobbying efforts since January, according to expense reports filed last week (PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER). • TENNESSEE House Speaker Kent Williams is seeking to be reinstated into the Republican Party before the start of the new legislative session in January. He was stripped of his GOP credentials earlier this year after he banded together with the chamber’s 49 Democrats to edge out the Republican nominee for the speakership by a single vote (TENNESSEAN [NASHVILLE]).

— Compiled by KOREY CLARK

In case you missed it

Voters made themselves heard earlier this month, giving the GOP a sweep of governor’s races in VIRGINIA and NEW JERSEY and overturning MAINE’s historic same-sex marriage law.

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

http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/11-09-2009/html

Governors

GOV CANDIDATES LINING UP IN CT: CONNECTICUT Gov. M. Jodi Rell's (R) surprise announcement last week that she would not seek another term has sent a host of potential candidates in both parties scrambling to secure status as the front runner to replace her. With the popular Rell now out of the race, Democrats believe they have a chance to regain the governor's office for the first time since 1991.

Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz has stepped up as an early leader for the Democratic nomination. A recent Quinnipiac University Poll gave her a slight lead over businessman Ned Lamont, 26 percent to 23 percent. Stamford mayor Dannel Malloy, former House Speaker James Amann and state Sen. Gary LeBeau all polled at less than 10 percent.

Republicans thought to be considering a run include Lt. Gov. Mike Fedele, House Republican leader Lawrence Cafero and Senate GOP leader John McKinney.

“CONNECTICUT joins a growing list of marquee states like CALIFORNIA and FLORIDA where Democrats will play offense in 2010.”

Rell provided the campaign's first moment of controversy last week when she refused to endorse Fedele, who had told reporters Rell had assured him she would support him regardless of what other Republicans got into the race. When asked about Fedele's claim by reporters, Rell noted that he had not yet declared his candidacy. She instead specifically mentioned

Cafero, McKinney and former U.S. attorney Kevin O'Connor as possible choices.

“I will support every Republican...that throws their name into the ring,” Rell said, adding, “They're all great Republicans, and they're all very competent.”

Perhaps, but none would likely have dared to challenge Rell had she run for re-election. The same Quinnipiac poll showed Rell with a 60 percent approval rating and a six-point advantage over the top Democrat, Bysiewicz. Those results, however, didn't make much of an impression on Rell. The governor said she was pleased with the poll's results but had no intention of changing her mind.

That was good news to Nathan Daschle, executive director of the Democratic Governors Association, who said Rell's unexpected departure makes CONNECTICUT a prime target for Dems in 2010.

“Moving CONNECTICUT into our list of top-tier pickup opportunities means that the DGA will invest in the state to ensure a Democrat wins in 2010,” Daschle said. “CONNECTICUT joins a growing list of marquee states like CALIFORNIA and FLORIDA where Democrats will play offense in 2010.”



drawing both incomes. That angered Rep. Lucky Varela (D), who authored HB 616, the bill Richardson vetoed. “He apparently wants to protect his colleagues and friends there who are working for state government and he doesn’t want to affect them,” Varela said, adding that lawmakers could still vote to override Richardson’s veto. (SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: Gov. Rick Perry (R) announced **TEXAS** will add an additional \$5 million to the \$1.2 million the Legislature approved in the past session for veterans’ mental health issues. The extra funding will go toward a planned peer-to-peer program the state is building to make it easier for veterans to ask for psychological help (SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Pat Quinn (D) created the new position of diversity enhancement director to help increase business opportunities for minority- and women-owned enterprises. Quinn named Darryl Harris, the former deputy director of operations for the state’s Capital Development Board, to the post (CHICAGO TRIBUNE). • **VIRGINIA** Gov. Tim Kaine (D) rejected a last minute clemency plea from convicted Washington D.C. sniper John Allen Muhammad last week. Muhammad was executed by lethal injection last Tuesday. His accomplice, who was a teenager at the time, is serving a life sentence in a **VIRGINIA** prison (WASHINGTON POST). • The administration of **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) submitted to a federal court a plan to reduce the state’s prison population by more than 40,000 in two years, largely by sending fewer people to prison for relatively minor crimes and parole violations. The state is under a federal court order to reduce its prison population to meet constitutional requirements (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Hot issues

B **USINESS:** **RHODE ISLAND** Gov. Don Carcieri (R) vetoes HB 5492, which would have required Ocean State mortgage lenders to give borrowers 45 days notice before beginning foreclosure proceedings. He called the measure “well intentioned” but of “dubious legality” (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: Prison officials in **GEORGIA** announce they will ban all tobacco use in the Peach State’s 37 correctional facilities by the end of 2010. Officials say the new policy will save taxpayers money in health care costs for inmates and protect non-smoking prisoners from second-hand smoke (ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION). • **RHODE ISLAND** Gov. Don Carcieri (R) signs

HB 5039, which allows police to obtain a blood sample from drivers involved in a serious car crash who refuse to take a breathalyzer test (RHODE ISLAND GOVERNOR'S OFFICE).

EDUCATION: WISCONSIN Gov. Jim Doyle (D) signs SB 372, legislation that allows the state to evaluate teachers based on student performance. The measure does not allow teachers to be disciplined or terminated for subpar student achievement. Doyle also signs SB 371, which requires the University of WISCONSIN System, the state Technical College System and the Department of Public Instruction to establish a system to track student data from preschool programs through postsecondary education (MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL). • **RHODE ISLAND** Gov. Don Carcieri (R) vetoes SB 211, which would have barred the use of radio frequency identification devices (RFID) on students on school grounds or on their way to or from a school function (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL).

ENVIRONMENT: Federal authorities remove the brown pelican from protection under the Endangered Species Act. The bird was first listed more than 40 years ago after hunting, DDT use in agriculture and habitat loss brought it to the brink of extinction. Federal officials say the pelican is now prevalent along the coasts of **FLORIDA, ALABAMA, LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, TEXAS, CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON** and **OREGON** (ASSOCIATED PRESS). • **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) signs a package of bills designed to overhaul the Golden State's water management system. The measures include SB 1 g, a bill that will create a state council to oversee the management of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta; SB 7 g which mandates that urban areas cut water use 20 percent by 2010; SB 6 g, which authorizes the collection of data on groundwater levels; and SB 2 g, which asks voters to approve \$11 billion in bonds to pay for the measures (STATE NET). • **WISCONSIN** Gov. Jim Doyle signs AB 281, a measure that limits phosphorus content in automatic-dishwasher soap to no more than 0.5 percent. The law goes into effect July 1 2010 (MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL). • The **MICHIGAN** Senate endorses a bill that would replace state park entry fees with a \$10 surcharge on vehicle registrations. It moves to the House (DETROIT FREE PRESS).

The week in session

States in Regular Session: DC, MA, MI, OH, PA, PR, US

States in Recess: NJ, NY, WI

States in Special Session: AZ "d", CA "e", CA "f", NE "a", NY "w"

Special Sessions in Recess: DE "a"

Upcoming Special Sessions: TBA: AZ "d", FL "b", MS "d", NY "v", OK "a"

States in 2010 Organizational Sessions: FL

States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2010: AL, FL, IA, KS, KY, ME, MT, ND, NH, OK

States Adjourned in 2009: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY

State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2009: AK "a", AL "a", AZ "a", AZ "b", AZ "c", CA "a", CA "b", CA "c", CA "d", CA "g", CT "a", CT "b", CT "c", CT "d", FL "a", HI "a", HI "b", IL "a", IL "b", IN "a", KY "a", MS "a", MS "b", MS "c", NM "a", NV "a", NY "a-v", TX "a", UT "a", VA "c", VT "a", WI "a", WV "a", WV "b", WV "c"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(session information current as of 11/13/2009)
Source: State Net database



HEALTH & SCIENCE: The **GEORGIA** Dept. of Mental Health announces it will bar smoking at all Peach State mental health facilities as of Jan. 5, 2010. Officials cited studies that show people with mental illnesses die 25 years younger than the general public, which they blame partly on excessive smoking. National statistics indicate that 75 percent of the mentally ill smoke (GEORGIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING [ATLANTA]).

SOCIAL POLICY: **WISCONSIN** Gov. Jim Doyle (D) signs SB 331, which requires child care providers to undergo a criminal background check at least every three months. The measure would also, among other things, permanently ban providers from the state-run child care program if they are convicted of certain offenses, including crimes against children, most felonies, welfare fraud or lying on a background check (MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL). • A **NEW HAMPSHIRE** House panel rejects HB 304, legislation that would have legalized assisted suicide in the Granite State. The full House will still be allowed to consider the measure next year. If that chamber accepts the committee's recommendation, the bill will die for the year (CONCORD MONITOR). • **RHODE ISLAND** Gov. Don Carcieri (R) vetoes HB 5294 and SB 195, matching bills that would have allowed same-sex partners in the Ocean State to make funeral arrangements for their loved ones (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • Buoyed for the first time by support from the Mormon Church, the Salt Lake City Council adopts a resolution barring employment and housing discrimination against gays and lesbians. The church has been among the most vocal opponents of previous attempts to grant homosexuals more rights, including same-sex marriage. It becomes the first city in **UTAH** to adopt such a measure (NEW YORK TIMES). • A federal judge rules that a **SOUTH CAROLINA** policy allowing the state to issue "I Believe" specialty license plates promoting Christianity are unconstitutional (THE STATE).

POTPOURRI: A **PENNSYLVANIA** House committee endorses HB 2070, which would ban Keystone State drivers from sending or receiving cell phone text messages while behind the wheel. It moves to another committee (PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE). • **RHODE ISLAND** Gov. Don Carcieri (R) vetoes HB 5094, the so-called "Blagojevich bill," legislation that would have stripped the governor of his power to appoint a replacement for a U.S. senator who dies or leaves office in mid-term (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • Still in **RHODE ISLAND**, Carcieri signs HB 5150, which bars motorists from reading, receiving or sending text messages while driving (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • **MASSACHUSETTS** Gov. Deval Patrick (D) signs HB 4310, legislation that will allow Bay State military personnel deployed overseas to cast electronic ballots in state elections. The measure also increases the Bay State's \$1,000 "Welcome Home" bonus to soldiers stationed in Iraq or



Afghanistan by adding \$500 for each deployment, enhances access to state contracts for disabled veterans and creates a “Medal of Liberty” for the next of kin for service members mortally wounded in action (BOSTON GLOBE).

– Compiled by RICH EHISEN

Once around the statehouse lightly

G ONE GONE GAVIN: So what does a downtrodden candidate do when his gubernatorial bid falls flat? If you are San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom, you disappear. As the *San Francisco Chronicle* reports, hours after Newsom announced he was dropping out of the CALIFORNIA governor’s race, he also dropped completely from sight, ditching several scheduled appearances without so much as a word. Newsom was so intent on bugging out that he neglected to inform his close staff where he was going or that he was even going to be gone. Word eventually got out that the boyish mayor had flown off to HAWAII to decompress after getting his campaign fundraising clock cleaned by his chief rival for the Dems’ nomination, state attorney general Jerry Brown,...a former gov once derisively known as “Governor Moonbeam” who hasn’t even yet declared himself to be a candidate. Which could explain the mayor’s sour mood.

OH, YOU MEANT THOSE CONTENDERS: Count CONNECTICUT Lt. Gov. Michael Fedele as one of the few people not taken off guard last week by Gov. M. Jodi Rell’s announcement that she would not seek another term. As the *Hartford Courant* reports, Fedele not only knew of Rell’s plans, he was confident the gov planned to quickly endorse him in his quest to replace her. Fedele told reporters that very thing, saying Rell had told him she would support him even if other Republican candidates got into the race. So imagine his surprise just one day later when, after being asked about the matter by reporters, Rell not only did not endorse him, but also ticked off the names of several of his challengers for the nomination, including House Republican leader Lawrence Cafero, Senate GOP leader John McKinney, and former U.S. Attorney Kevin O’Connor. Fedele has had no further comment.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN? TENNESSEE state Rep. Stacey Campfield figured it was Halloween, so why not wear a costume? All fine and good, except that Campfield chose to wear his get-up — a full head mask of a Mexican “Luchador” wrestler — while attending the University of TENNESSEE football game against



SOUTH CAROLINA. The Volunteers' stadium doesn't allow masks inside the facility. As the *Knoxville News Sentinel* reports, another spectator complained to security folks, who asked him to remove the mask. He refused. Things got ugly. They got worse when it turned out he was sitting in the wrong seats. When Campfield showed no interest in returning to his own seats, officers escorted him out of the stadium. No word on whether Campfield found a more "mask-friendly" venue to watch the game.

LOSE THE JOB, KEEP THE PERKS: Former MINNESOTA Gov. Jesse Ventura says he has no political ambition these days, but he still enjoys one perk from his time as the Gopher State's top dog. As the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reports, Ventura dropped by the Capitol last week to obtain his new "governor's ID card." Although Ventura says he is completely through with U.S. politics, the ID apparently comes in handy when dealing with authorities in his new digs in Baja, Mexico, where he says police often try to shake him down with bogus traffic violations. Flashing his official ID, he says, gets them to back off. And what is the former gov doing in Mexico? Mostly surfing and writing a book on conspiracy theories. Like how government officials use their office to get out of traffic tickets?

— By RICH EHISEN

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