

April 12, 2004

Will a governor join the ticket?



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Top Story

The presidential election is not until November, but the fall race is already in full swing for several Democratic governors seeking to join MASSACHUSETTS Senator John Kerry on the Party's ticket.

Governors Spotlight

Several swing state governors vie for VP consideration

MASSACHUSETTS Sen. John Kerry (D), the all-but-nominated Democratic challenger to President George W. Bush in November, has kept relatively mum on whom he favors as a vice-presidential running mate. Kerry's reticence has fueled copious spec-

ulation among both pundits and politicians, with several current Democratic governors said to be under consideration.

Among those most prominently noted of late are IOWA Gov. Tom Vilsack, who also chairs the Democratic Governors' Association, PENNSYLVANIA Gov. Ed Rendell, KANSAS Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, MISSOURI Gov. Bob Holden, NEW MEXICO Gov. Bill Richardson, WEST VIRGINIA Gov. Bob Wise and VIRGINIA Gov. Mark Warner. ARIZONA Gov. Janet Napolitano had previously been mentioned as a potential running mate, but no longer appears to be under consideration. There are numerous other candidates as well, including NORTH CAROLINA Sen. John Edwards, INDIANA Sen.

Evan Bayh, and FLORIDA Sen. Bob Graham. NEW YORK Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and former NEBRASKA Gov. Bob Kerrey round out the group. While all of the name-dropping and speculation is merely that until Kerry actually chooses someone, there is some reason to consider several of the gubernatorial members strong prospects.

Richardson's name has been bandied about for months, mostly because of New Mexico's status as a key swing state that went to Democrat Al Gore in 2000 by only 366 votes. But Richardson has other desirable qualities as well, including stints in the Clinton White House as the head of the Dept. of Energy and as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Another presumably enticing factor in Richardson's favor is his Hispanic heritage (Richardson's mother is from Mexico). Richardson, however, has repeatedly said he does not want the job, even telling a national TV audience on Meet the Press that he has no interest in the position, which many chalk up to the normal political-speak of someone who really does.

Iowa is another swing state that went to Gore by the slimmest of margins in 2000, with only 4,130 votes separating the candidates. Although Vilsack has not openly campaigned for a spot on the ticket, he has voiced strong support for Kerry's candidacy. Vilsack doesn't deny his interest in seeking higher office, and has been acting a lot like a national candidate lately by adopting strong anti-Bush themes. Just last week Vilsack took several verbal jabs at Bush for what the governor said were proposals that would boost the federal deficit by more than \$6 trillion over the next decade. He has also taken an increasingly partisan stand on Iowa issues in recent weeks, speaking out at length against Hawkeye State GOP policies on education and taxes.

Vilsack's criticism of the president came last week when he joined with Rendell, Sebelius, Richardson, Holden, Wise, NEW JERSEY Gov. James E.

*State Recaps
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State Net Web site*

ID, IN, ME, NM, SD,
UT, VA, WA, WV, WY

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2003-04 State Session
Recaps showcase legislative
statistics for each state.



McGreevey (D), WASHINGTON Gov. Gary Locke (D), WISCONSIN Gov. Jim Doyle and DELAWARE Gov. Ruth Ann Minner to send a letter to Bush asking the president to spell out his economic plans. The letter said the president's policies have aided only the wealthiest Americans while offering states "little or no help" with their fiscal difficulties. Vilsack later said the Bush program will lead to "debts, deficit and decline."

Kerry associate James A. Johnson has begun discussions with potential running mates, with Vilsack and Richardson among those already interviewed. Sebelius remains intriguing as a candidate who would add gender balance to the ticket. She is also a moderate who has remained popular with voters in a predominantly Republican state. Warner and Wise could be big draws in the South, although neither is overly well thought of in their own state.

Kerry's camp is also said to be in dispute over their alleged top choice, ARIZONA Sen. John McCain, a Republican. McCain has also repeatedly said he is not interested. Kerry's decision is expected within the next eight weeks. (SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN, NEW YORK TIMES, LAWRENCE JOURNAL-WORLD, BOSTON GLOBE, THE IOWA CHANNEL, QUAD CITY TIMES, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION)

JEB BUSH BACKS DRIVERS LICENSES FOR ILLEGALS: FLORIDA

Gov. Jeb Bush (R) has endorsed a bill that would grant limited drivers licenses to the

estimated 400,000 illegal immigrants working in the state. The bill, SB 1360, would require that applicants go through a background check prior to being issued a license, and obtain insurance directly thereafter. A Bush spokesperson said the bill is "solid, sound policy," because it ensures fingerprints and other critical information on the new drivers would end up in state databanks. But opponents counter that SB 1360 actually rewards lawbreakers, and is more about the GOP's continuing efforts to woo the Sunshine State's growing Mexican and Cuban communities than highway safety. Both sides predicted the bill will face a rough road in the Legislature. (ORLANDO SENTINEL).

Quote ...

"We shouldn't allow them to come into the country to begin with, but once they're here, what do you do? Do you basically say they are lepers to society? That they don't exist?"

—FLORIDA Gov. Jeb Bush (R) denying that he is encouraging illegal immigration to the U.S. by supporting a bill that would grant drivers licenses to undocumented aliens.

... unquote

"If we find out that a person is an illegal alien, they should be deported from the country, not given a drivers license. The last thing we want to do is encourage illegal immigration, and in my opinion, this bill will do that."

—FLORIDA state Sen. Mike Haridopolos (R) reflecting on the difficulties the Bush proposal will face in the Legislature. (ORLANDO SENTINEL)

CARCIERI UNDER ETHICS INVESTIGATION: The RHODE ISLAND Ethics Commission voted last week to investigate whether Gov. Don Carcieri (R) violated state ethics laws by accepting an invitation to watch the New England Patriots play football from the private box of financial giant Fleet Bank. The Commission's vote means that if the allegations are proven, the governor's actions would constitute a "willful and knowing" violation. A Carcieri spokesperson dismissed the charge, saying the governor himself announced his use of the Fleet box, and that he paid a total of \$573 for the game and food. The Commission's next step will be to determine if there is probable cause to believe Carcieri broke Ocean State law. If so, the governor would have to face a trial-like hearing that could end in a fine or, in a worst case scenario, removal from office. Carcieri was not exactly waiting around with baited breath, as he introduced legislation that would limit the amount of money victims of malpractice can receive for pain and suffering damages. The governor announced the bill from the steps of a Pawtucket hospital, saying that if the state's medical malpractice laws are not fixed, the state will face doctor shortages as medical practitioners leave the state for less costly environs. (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: A new *Honolulu Advertiser* poll shows **HAWAII** Gov. Linda Lingle (R) with a 65% approval rating. The figure is down a bit from last year, when the frosh governor tallied a 71% mark (HONOLULU ADVERTISER). • **ALABAMA** Gov. Bob Riley (R) has decided not to seek a delegate's seat at this summer's Republican National Convention. It marks the first time in the modern era that a GOP governor from the Heart of Dixie will not lead his party's convention delegation. The state's GOP chairmanship will instead be held by U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (R) (MOBILE REGISTER). • **MISSOURI** Gov. Bob Holden (D) proposed an amendment to the Show Me State constitution that would make it harder for the Leg-

The Week in Session

States in Regular Session:
AK, AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, HI, IA, IL, KY, LA, MA, MD, MN, MO, MS, NE, NH, NY, OK, PA, SC, TN, VT

States in Special Session:
ME "b", VA "a"

States with Projected Special Session:
AZ "c" on 4/12/2004
OR on 6/1/2004
TX on 4/19/2004

States in Recess:
AR "b", CA "d", CA "e", DE, KS, MI, RI, US, WI

States in Budget Hearing: NJ

States in Skeleton Session: OH

Currently Prefiling:
MT (Drafts for 2005)

States Adjourned:
GA, ID, IN, ME, NM, SD, UT, VA, WA, WV, WY

States in Special Session Adjourned:
CA "a", CA "b", CA "c", CT "a", CT "b", DE "a", LA "a", MD "2003 session", UT "c", WA "a", WA "b", WA "c", WI "d", WI "e", WV "a"

Projected Regular Session Adjournment:
KY, MD, NE

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions
Source: State Net, 4/9/04



islature to cut state-provided health care for children. Holden’s proposal would require approval from a two-thirds majority of both legislative chambers to cut the MC+ for Kids program. Cuts can currently be made by a simple majority (JEFFERSON CITY NEWS TRIBUNE). • **NORTH DAKOTA** Gov. John Hoeven (R) announced a new state-run prescription drug Web site designed to help residents find cheaper medicines from in-state and Canadian sources. Hoeven said the site is intended to help pressure the federal Food and Drug Administration to change its policy of disallowing the importation of pharmaceuticals from Canada (ASSOCIATED PRESS, THE FORUM [FARGO]). • **MASSACHUSETTS** Gov. Mitt Romney (R) called for a task force to develop legislation to reduce or eliminate state subsidies received by new and bad drivers. The Bay State is the only one in the nation to set all aspects of automobile insurance rates (BOSTON GLOBE).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Budget & taxes

VIRGINIA ON THRESHOLD OF BUDGET COMPROMISE: A vote this week in VIRGINIA’s House of Delegates could finally break the deadlock in the General Assembly over the state budget. Last Tuesday, a group of moderate Republican delegates broke with the staunchly anti-tax, GOP House leadership and offered a compromise tax proposal that would raise close to \$1 billion through increases in the sales tax, cigarette tax and other fees. The group said they had enough votes to pass the plan — HB 5018 — through the full chamber, but the bill was held up in the House Finance Committee on the order of Speaker William J. Howell (R), who said the bill lacked the votes necessary to send it to the floor. Early the next day the breakaway faction had been contemplating a rare parliamentary procedure known as committee discharge to yank the bill out of committee on a majority vote of the House’s 100 delegates, a tactic which had last been used — without success — in 1982, during the fight over the Equal Rights Amendment. But after four anti-tax Republicans failed to show up for a committee vote on the compromise proposal that morning — at Howell’s request — the measure passed 10-8. Anti-tax delegates did manage to postpone the floor vote on the bill until today to give them time to reign in the breakaway Republicans. Gov. Mark Warner (D), who was criticized by the breakaway delegates for not being aggressive enough in campaigning for the measure, said he intended to do that nonstop. The governor, however, did not say whether he would sign the compromise bill if it was approved. What he did say was that he didn’t think the House proposal would “be the final product; I think the Senate is going to come

back with some changes.” But even that is contingent upon the bill’s passage in the House. And while some lawmakers are predicting a narrow victory, others say the vote is too close to call because delegates are switching sides daily. (RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH, WASHINGTON POST)

GEORGIA SPECIAL BUDGET SESSION COMING? GEORGIA

Gov. Sonny Perdue (R) announced last week that he will call lawmakers into special session, after they passed a budget with a \$57 million deficit on the last day of the General Assembly’s 40-day regular session. “The 2005 budget passed today by the Legislature was not balanced, and true to my word I will not sign it,” Perdue told reporters shortly after lawmakers adjourned at midnight last Wednesday. The House and Senate both approved the \$16 billion spending plan in the closing hours of the session, but legislators were stuck with the \$57 million shortfall because they couldn’t agree on a separate proposal to raise court fees to pay for a new public defender program. The conflict centered around Perdue’s desire to control the program’s fund, with some lawmakers and judges arguing that executive control of the fund would violate the constitutional separation of power. The governor did not say exactly when he would convene the special session, only that it would be soon, as the current budget expires June 30. (ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION)

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: Despite campaigning on a promise not to raise sales or income taxes, **NEW JERSEY** Gov. James E. McGreevey (D) admitted for the first time last week that he is planning an income-tax hike on the state’s millionaires in order to fund property tax relief. According to a member of McGreevey’s administration, the decision was motivated by the need to raise the governor’s approval rating — currently languishing in the 30s — in time for next year’s gubernatorial race (TRENTON TIMES). • In **OHIO**, House Republicans have drafted a tax reform plan that would increase income taxes for middle-income residents while providing about \$1 billion in tax cuts for people making over \$100,000 a year. The plan, which the Republicans are calling “a work in progress,” may just be a negotiating tactic to extend the state’s current sales tax rate, which is scheduled to expire next year (PLAIN DEALER [CLEVELAND]). • A **TENNESSEE** lawmaker wants to require moonshiners and drug dealers in the state to pay a tax on their illegal goods if caught by police. The levy, which has been dubbed the “crack tax,” is based on a **NORTH CAROLINA** law that has netted that state \$6 million since it was enacted five years ago (THE TENNESSEAN [NASHVILLE]).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*



Estimated medical costs of obesity (2003 dollars)			
State	Total costs in millions	Medicare costs in millions	Medicaid costs in millions
Alabama	1,320	341	269
Alaska	195	17	29
Arizona	752	154	242
Arkansas	663	171	180
California	7,675	1,738	1,713
Colorado	874	139	158
Connecticut	856	246	419
Delaware	207	57	66
Florida	3,987	1,290	900
Georgia	2,133	405	385
Hawaii	290	30	90
Idaho	227	40	69
Illinois	3,439	805	1,045
Indiana	1,637	379	522
Iowa	783	165	198
Kansas	657	138	143
Kentucky	1,163	270	340
Louisiana	1,373	402	525
Maine	357	66	137
Maryland	1,533	368	391
Massachusetts	1,822	446	618
Michigan	2,931	748	882
Minnesota	1,307	227	325
Mississippi	757	223	221
Missouri	1,636	413	454
Montana	175	41	48
Nebraska	454	94	114
Nevada	337	74	56
New Hampshire	302	46	79
New Jersey	2,342	591	630
New Mexico	324	51	84
New York	6,080	1,391	3,539
North Carolina	2,138	448	662
North Dakota	209	45	55
Ohio	3,304	839	914
Oklahoma	854	227	163
Oregon	781	145	180
Pennsylvania	4,138	1,187	1,219
Rhode Island	305	83	89
South Carolina	1,060	242	285
South Dakota	195	36	45
Tennessee	1,840	433	488
Texas	5,340	1,209	1,177
Utah	393	62	71
Vermont	141	29	40
Virginia	1,641	320	374
Washington	1,330	236	365
W Virginia	588	140	187
Wisconsin	1,486	306	320
Wyoming	87	15	23

Source: North American Association for the Study of Obesity, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, National Conference of State Legislatures.

Politics & Leadership

LOCKE PICKS ‘BACKUP’ PRIMARY: WASHINGTON Gov. Gary Locke (D) signed into law a replacement for the state’s court-challenged “blanket” primary system, in the process rejecting the Legislature’s first choice, the Top Two primary. Lawmakers had recently adopted the Top Two system, which would have advanced the top two vote-getters for each office to the general election regardless of their party affiliation. The plan Locke approved, a MONTANA-style primary requiring each voter to choose one party’s ballot but keeping that selection confidential, was actually a last-minute amendment to the Top Two bill inserted ostensibly as a fallback in case the Top Two was found unconstitutional. Using his veto power, Locke removed everything in the bill but the Montana plan, essentially turning the measure on its head. The move angered many legislators, who accused the governor of abusing his veto power. But some lawmakers said the bill had intentionally been drafted to push Locke into vetoing the Top Two portion, a claim the governor supported. Locke also contended that the Montana plan gives voters more choices in the general election and is more open to third parties than the Top Two, adding that the Top Two would have been challenged by both major parties just as the blanket primary had, because it failed to give them adequate control over the selection of their nominees.

Ironically, the future of the Sept. 14 primary is no more certain as a result of the governor’s action. Although party leaders said they could live with the new system at least for the upcoming primary, they left open the prospect of contesting it in the future. A more immediate concern to the governor and supporters of the Montana plan is that the Washington Grange, the sponsor of the 1934 initiative that created the blanket primary system, plans to challenge the primary bill in court, claiming that because of Locke’s veto the bill’s title and its contents no longer match, as required by the state constitution. The Grange has also filed an initiative with the Secretary of State that would seek voter approval of a separate version of the Top Two primary in November. (NEWS TRIBUNE [TACOMA], SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER)

SCHWARZENEGGER WANTS PART-TIME LEGISLATURE: CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) said last week that he’d like to make the Legislature part-time so lawmakers would be more productive and less likely to come up with “strange bills.” The governor, who was vacationing with his family in HAWAII, said in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* that the Leg-



ing greater accountability of charter schools and the approval of a ban on smoking in all restaurants and public places. Another major issue was a proposed ban on same-sex marriage. That measure ended up dying in committee, but the issue is expected to resurface again next year (KCBI-TV BOISE).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Hot Issues

B **USINESS:** For the second time in a month voters in Southern **CALIFORNIA** communities go to the polls to block the building of a new Wal-Mart store. The world’s largest retailer vows to continue its efforts to expand its business in California (**ORANGE COUNTRY REGISTER**). • The **TENNESSEE** Senate approves legislation that would stop small Volunteer State cigarette manufacturers from avoiding participation in a national tobacco settlement. Tennessee was one of 46 states that entered into the agreement, which required tobacco companies to give states an estimated \$200 billion through 2025, but a loophole in the state law allowed companies that only did business in a few states to avoid paying. It heads now to Gov. Phil Bredesen (D) (**THE TENNESSEAN [NASHVILLE]**). • A federal court rules that state fees imposed upon **LOUISIANA** alligator processors to pay for a \$400,000-a-year marketing campaign for the alligator industry violate the First Amendment. The suit was brought by a company that claimed the generic advertising did not adequately showcase the uniqueness of their products (**NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE**). • The **ARIZONA** House approves HB 2570, which will allow Grand Canyon State bars to serve alcohol until 2:00 a.m. It heads to Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) (**ARIZONA REPUBLIC**).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: The **CALIFORNIA** Supreme Court rules that the killing of a pregnant woman counts as two homicides, even if the killer does not know about the pregnancy. The ruling overturns a lower court ruling that said the assailant must know the victim is pregnant to be charged with double murder (**SAN DIEGO UNION TRIBUNE**). • The **IOWA** House passes a bill that would allow prosecutors to charge people responsible for the death of an unborn child with first-degree murder. It heads to Gov. Tom Vilsack (D), who says he will examine similar laws in other states before acting on it (**QUAD CITY TIMES**). • Still in **IOWA**, the Hawkeye State Senate unanimously passes a bill that makes it a crime punishable by up to a year in jail to film or photograph a person in a state

of undress without their consent. It heads to Gov. Tom Vilsack (D) (DES MOINES REGISTER). • The **COLORADO** House unanimously approves HB 1269, which would send people caught making bootleg tapes of mainstream movies to jail for up to a year. It has another vote in the House before heading to the Senate (ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS). • A **LOUISIANA** Senate committee approves SB 277, a measure that would make Pelican State drivers who accidentally kill someone while driving subject to being charged with vehicular manslaughter. It heads to the full Senate (NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE).

EDUCATION: The **TENNESSEE** Senate approves a bill that would require university police to notify local law enforcement of any campus deaths or sexual assaults, which would then be jointly investigated. It heads now to Gov. Phil Bredesen (D) (THE TENNESSEAN [NASHVILLE]). • The **DELAWARE** House unanimously approves HB 357, a measure that would delay until 2006 the First State's three-tiered high school diploma system. The bill now heads to the Senate (DELAWARE STATE NEWS). • A **COLORADO** House committee rejects HB 1315, a bill that would have guaranteed students freedom from discrimination on the basis of their political or religious beliefs. Supporters say the measure was necessary to protect conservative students from what they claim is a liberal bias on the part of teachers and administration, while critics contend the bill would have endorsed anti-gay hate speech and the boycotting of mandatory diversity training (ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS). • A **LOUISIANA** House committee endorses without debate HB 1044, a bill that sets aside two segregation-era laws that allow the governor to shut down schools in order to avoid federally mandated racial integration. It now heads to the full House (NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE).

ENVIRONMENT: The **MAINE** Senate approves legislation that would ban the gasoline additive methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE), which has been found to be contaminating groundwater supplies in several New England states. The bill is now under review by Gov. John Baldacci (D) (BOSTON GLOBE). • **COLORADO** Gov. Bill Owens signs HB 1151, legislation that allows Centennial State forest officials to tap into a special fund to help pay for firefighting helicopters in the first hour of a fire. The measure also allows officials to accept public and private donations for that fund (ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS). • **IDAHO** fish and game authorities change the official status of the gray wolf from "endangered species" to "big game animal." Those authorities said that by changing the designation, killing of wolves is now under regulation by the Gem State's Fish and Game Commission. The commission says there are no plans to implement a wolf hunt

(CASPER STAR-TRIBUNE). • The **ALASKA** House votes unanimously to partially exempt small cruise ships from wastewater dumping restrictions implemented in 2001. The bill heads to the Senate (JUNEAU EMPIRE).

HEALTH: Smoking in **IDAHO** restaurants gets snuffed out as Gov. Dirk Kempthorne (R) signs SB 1283, a measure which bans lighting up in all public places except bowling alleys and bars. The law takes effect July 1 (IDAHO SPOKESMAN REVIEW). • **IOWA** Gov. Tom Vilsack (D) signs a measure that creates a statewide survey of all Hawkeye State stillbirths. The study is aimed at determining what causes those deaths (DES MOINES REGISTER).

SOCIAL POLICY: The **LOUISIANA** House says couples who have entered into a covenant marriage must seek counseling from the time they begin considering dissolution right up to the final divorce decree is granted. The bill, HB 252, passed 95-3 on its way to the Senate (NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE). • The **MAINE** House approves a bill that would let unmarried couples — including same-sex couples — inherit property when a partner dies without leaving a will. The bill also would set up a state registry for domestic partners and give domestic partners certain other rights, such as making medical decisions if the other partner becomes incapacitated. It moves now to the Senate (PORTLAND PRESS HERALD).

POTPOURRI: A **MARYLAND** Senate committee shoots down a measure that would have banned assault weapons in the Old Line State. The bill would have prohibited ownership of military-style weapons and extended a federal assault weapons ban that expires in September (CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE). • The **ILLINOIS** House approves a bill that bans anyone under the age of 18 from entering a tattoo parlor unless they are accompanied by a parent. The bill also changes the legal age for getting inked from 21 to 18. It moves to the Senate (ASSOCIATED PRESS, DAILY HERALD [ARLINGTON]).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Once around the statehouse lightly

THEY NEED A LAW I? A bill now motor-ing through the LOUISIANA Legislature (SB 554) is a “duh.” Sponsored by Sen. Reg-gie Dupre, the bill prohibits anyone from watching a DVD or other screen entertainment while operating motor vehicle. According to *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*, Dupre’s bill follows a 2003 “duh” that pre-vented drivers from watching a TV while navigating through traffic. As with all “duhs,” the mind-boggling aspect is the notion that the law is needed in the first place. Are there really that many nimrods in Louisiana to warrant making it officially illegal to watch “The Sopranos” while driving a car?



THEY NEED A LAW II? Okay, so LOUISIANA doesn’t have a monopoly on nimrods. DELAWARE may have its share, as well. As the *Delaware State News* reports, a group of First State lawmakers has introduced a bill (HB 369) to ban ... uh ... tongue splitting, where a person’s tongue is literally cut in two to cre-ate a snake-ish effect. Seems that the practice of creating one’s own forked tongue has become a fad in recent years, but side affects include infection, nerve damage, swelling, bleeding and a permanent speech impediment. The law won’t ban the practice if it is carried out for medical reasons.

CRIME WAVE. The price of gas has breeched \$2 a gallon in many states, and the *Boston Herald* reports increased numbers of a kind of petty criminal — the fuel-and-flee artist. According to industry experts, the number of thieves who pilfer at the pump is up as much as 300% over a year ago. Currently, the crime is the same as shoplifting, but MASSACHUSETTS lawmakers are considering a proposal to make it a felony.

CRIME VICTIMS. They are called “mooch lists,” and if your name shows up on one, it can only mean one thing — you’ve responded to some outlandish offer from a con artist, who then put your name on the list for use in future scams.

But as *The Seattle Times* reports, the state of WASHINGTON has joined with AARP to fight back. When the FBI recently raided fraudulent telemarketing operations, part of the confiscated swag was a series of “mooch lists.” The state took the lists and, with help from AARP volunteers, began calling previous victims with advice on how to avoid future scams.

SELF-IMPOSED CRIME. In ARIZONA, nearly 400 residents have taken advantage of a year-old state law that allows compulsive gamblers to ban themselves from every casino in the state. According to the *Arizona Daily Star*, once a so-called “self-exclusion contract” has been signed, a person violates the contract at his or her peril. Casinos can refuse to pay winnings, bounce offenders or arrest them for trespassing. Of course, there is always NEVADA and CALIFORNIA.

CRIME AGAINST BAMBI. Officials in WISCONSIN have been concerned about an outbreak of chronic wasting disease among Badger State deer. So, the Dept. of Natural Resources wanted to test six whitetail fawns being confined at an animal rehab shelter near Lake Geneva because one of the babes had been brought to the shelter from an area known as a hotbed for wasting disease. The problem: The department wanted to kill the fawns, all of whom had been nursed back to health from various ailments. None was currently sick — or even showed signs of illness. But as *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reports, the animals have been granted a reprieve in the form of a bill to be signed this week by Gov. Jim Doyle. They won’t be killed unless one of them develops the disease.

LOTTERY WINNERS. No, they weren’t the holders of winning tickets. They were GEORGIA Lottery officials who left state service and cashed in on the Lottery’s generous leave and vacation policy. According to *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, former Lottery chief Rebecca Paul and three of her top lieutenants left Georgia to work for the TENNESSEE Lottery. Paul got a “severance” check for \$125,139, while her three aids split \$174,059. Why? Because lottery corporation employees can cash out up to three years’ worth of unused vacation and half

In the Hopper

State Net’s database tracks tens of thousands of bills in all 50 states at any given time. Here’s a snapshot of what’s in the legislative works:

- **Number of prefiles/intros this week:** 4,237
- **Number of prefiles/intros overall in 2004:** 95,742
- **Number of bills enacted/adopted this week:** 587
- **Number enacted/adopted overall in 2004:** 10,263
- **Total number of measures in State Net database:** 168,764

— Compiled By GINA HUMMELL
(2003-04 data current as of 4/2/04
Source: State Net)



of their unused sick leave. The paper points out that the nearly \$300,000 Paul and her cohorts took away would have funded 75 full-year scholarships at the Univ. of Georgia — the other use for lottery revenue.

— *By A.G. BLOCK*

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