

May 22, 2006

Fair or Foul?



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Top Story

When MARYLAND lawmakers overrode a gubernatorial veto to enact a "fair share" health care mandate in January, many states quickly followed with copycat bills. But the results so far are not what some people expected.

SNCJ Spotlight

Fair share bills: in with a bang, out with a whimper

When MARYLAND lawmakers passed the state's historic large employer health care mandate — the so-called Wal-Mart or "fair share" bill — in January, emboldened labor leaders vowed a slew of copycat bills would soon follow in statehouses across the country. But while lawmakers in approximately two dozen states did introduce similar bills this year, most of these measures have either died a quiet death or are adrift in committee limbo.

Buoyed by strong support from the AFL-CIO and other national labor groups, most of the fair share measures would require companies with a certain number of employees — as few as 100 (NEW YORK AB 10583), but more often 10,000 — to spend at least 8 percent of the cost of their payroll on healthcare for their workers or pay fines to the state. Those funds would then be used to help offset the cost of employees using state-subsidized healthcare programs.

Despite the initial fanfare, most state fair share proposals this session have gained very little traction. A few, including both bills introduced in WASHINGTON (HB 2517 and SB 5637) died without even getting a vote, while another measure in COLORADO (HB 1316) was also postponed indefinitely. A second COLORADO proposal, SB 227, which would require only that companies with 50 or more employees receiving public healthcare annually report those figures to state labor officials, is now awaiting a decision from Gov. Bill Owens (R).

Most other state measures have yet to make it out of a committee assignment. One that has, MINNESOTA Senate Bill 2673, cleared the Senate Finance Committee last week, but it is not expected to pass the full chamber. A companion bill in the House has not moved from committee. CALIFORNIA Senate Bill 1414 has also stayed in play, moving last week into its third committee, where it is awaiting further fiscal analysis.

A major obstacle for most states considering fair share bills has been the lawsuit filed in February by the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), which represents not only Wal-Mart, but also such retail heavyweights as Home Depot, Best Buy, Target and Lowe's. That suit seeks to overturn the MARYLAND law on the grounds that the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), which governs self-funded employee benefit plans, preempts it. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) have also filed supporting briefs in the case. RILA has also made it clear it will file similar suits against any state that follows the MARYLAND lead.

The Week in Session

States in Regular Session: CA, DC, LA, MA, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, US

States in Special Session: CA "a", VA "a"

States in Recess: DE

Special Sessions in Recess: OK "a", PA "a"

States Projected to Adjourn: AZ, KS, ME, MN, OK, TN

States Adjourned in 2006: AK, AL, CT, CO, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, MD, MO, MS, NE, NM, SD, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY

States in Special Session Adjourned in 2006: AR "a", AZ "a", LA "a", OR "a", TN "a", TX "c"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

Source: State Net, 05/19/06

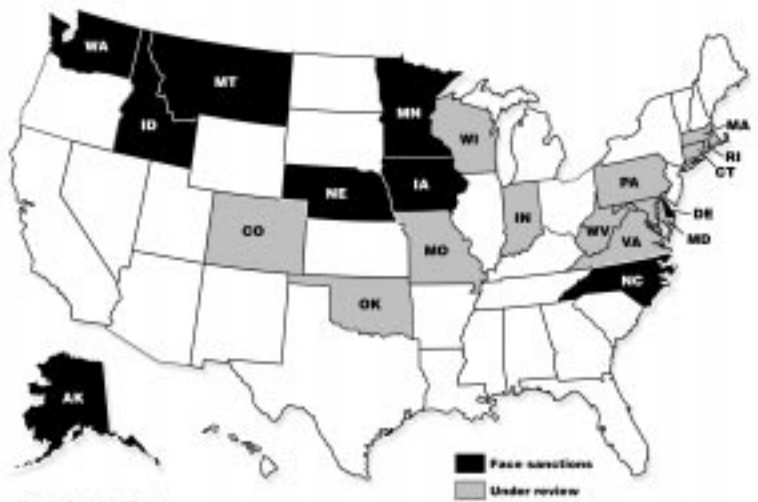
Laura Tobler, who tracks healthcare issues for the National Conference of State Legislatures, says the uncertain nature of what happens next has clearly kept states from acting too aggressively on duplicating MARYLAND's efforts.

"Most states are being a little conservative right now," she says. "They are not going to move forward with these bills until the MARYLAND court case gets settled."

Another significant challenge for fair share proponents is that more than a dozen states have already ended their legislative sessions for the year, with many more soon to follow. That leaves precious little time or legislative energy to take on what would surely be a ferociously divisive issue that would ultimately end up in the courts anyway. Tobler also notes that while the sheer number of fair share bills out there made for good headlines, in reality many of them were introduced more as a policy statement by their authors rather than in the belief that the measure would actually make it through the legislature.

Naomi Walker, however, believes the reason fair share bills have stalled is more about hardball politics than legal concerns or making toothless social statements. Walker, the director of state legislative issues for the AFL-CIO in Washington DC, says Wal-Mart has launched intense lobbying efforts against the measures in virtually each state where a bill was introduced, making them a very tough sell in an election year.

Bird's eye view



Source: Associated Press

States lose federal aid over No Child Left Behind failings

Four years after implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind law, not a single state will meet the statute's mandate to have a highly qualified teacher in every core class by this school year. According to a new report from the U.S. Department of Education, 29 states have made progress in meeting the requirement, but at least nine are far enough off the mark that they will lose at least some federal education funding. That number could also grow higher as 12 states are still under federal review. All states, regardless of their ranking, must now submit a new plan for having 100 percent of their core class instructors achieve "highly qualified" status — those teachers who have a bachelor's degree, a state license and proven competency in every subject they teach. The accompanying map shows the nine states facing federal penalties and the dozen yet to be reviewed.



focus on moving SB 1414 through the system. “The best thing we can do to help other states with this legislation is to keep working on moving our own bill forward.”

Regardless of whether states prefer to emulate MARYLAND or MASSACHUSETTS, Tobler says people on all sides of the issue are rapidly accepting “the idea that public dollars alone cannot solve this problem.”

“There clearly is strong interest by legislatures in including employers in gaining the solution to the problem of the uninsured,” Tobler says. “The question is whether they do it in a mandatory way or through some kind of state subsidies. But in either case, I think the drive is to look at doing this through the private sector first, then augmenting that system with public money. So, I do think we will see even more public/private partnering ideas next session.”

— *By RICH EHISEN*

Budget & taxes

HIGH COURT REINSTATES CORPORATE TAX INCENTIVES:
Last Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a lower court ruling from two years ago that struck down a \$281 million package of tax breaks given to DaimlerChrysler AG for rebuilding a Jeep factory in Toledo, OHIO.

In a 9-0 decision, the high court ruled that the OHIO taxpayers who had brought the suit had no standing to do so “simply by virtue of their status as taxpayers,” and that their claim that their local and state tax burdens had been increased by the tax breaks was merely conjecture. The justices’ unanimous decree reversed the 2004 ruling of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which held that the OHIO tax credits unconstitutionally interfered with interstate commerce.

The case had been closely watched by officials across the nation, as nearly every state offers some form of tax incentive; CALIFORNIA, ILLINOIS, MASSACHUSETTS, MICHIGAN, NEW YORK and TEXAS alone grant about \$844 million a year in such credits.

OHIO Attorney General Jim Petro (R) was understandably satisfied with the high court’s ruling. “This win will protect OHIO and other states not only from having good tax laws struck down, but also from fighting endless, expensive court battles on issues like this,” he said.

But observers point out that the justices’ failure to address the issue of whether the OHIO tax breaks infringed upon Congress’ exclusive power to regulate interstate

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Politics & Leadership

PENNSYLVANIA VOTERS VENT ANGER: For the last several months, political players and observers in the Keystone State have pondered whether last summer’s pay raise scandal would have a significant impact on this year’s legislative races. Last Tuesday, they got their answer, when 16 incumbents — nearly all of whom had voted for the somewhat surreptitious legislative and judicial pay hike — lost their seats in primary elections held across the state.

The outcome wasn’t a complete surprise. After all, the state’s voters had demonstrated their ire over the issue last November when they rejected the retention bid of a sitting Supreme Court Justice, generally a mere formality. What was a bit unexpected, however, was that two of the legislature’s top leaders — Senate Majority Leader David J. “Chip” Brightbill (R) and Senate President Pro Tem Robert Jubelirer (R) — were among the casualties.

“I thought for sure both [Jubelirer and Brightbill] would survive these challenges,” said Sen. Jeff Piccola (R). The leaders’ defeats were particularly astounding, given that both had raised over \$1 million for their campaigns, a sum usually seen only in Congressional races. “I had everything. We raised the money. We had the organization. We had everything you could ask for...” said a stunned Jubelirer.

But all of those resources weren’t enough to overcome the outrage of Republican voters like Kay Eppinger, who said, “I still am mad. And I will be until we get them out and get some new blood in there,” and Jackie Cluck, who declared, “We just want to vote the incumbents out.” The fact that there were acceptable alternative candidates available in so many races — 61 incumbents actually faced primary challengers — made it that much easier for voters to act on their anti-incumbent impulses.

Michael Young, a public opinion researcher based in Harrisburg said, “The defeat of Jubelirer and Brightbill is going to send seismic shock waves through the PENNSYLVANIA political establishment that are probably going to be felt for years to come.” At the very least, the results of the election ensure that nearly a fifth of next year’s General Assembly will be newcomers. (PATRIOT-NEWS [HARRISBURG])

AT THE POLLS: According to unofficial tallies completed last Wednesday, state Sen. Charles Starr (R) was defeated by challenger Larry George in the

Republican primary for OREGON's 13th Senate District, one of the most talked-about races in the Beaver State this year. Starr became part of the first father-and-son duo to serve in the OREGON Senate when his son Bruce was elected to the chamber in 2002. George, however, will likely become part of another father-and-son Senate team in the fall. His father, Gary, is also a senator, and the 13th is a Republican-leaning district (OREGONIAN [PORTLAND], STATESMAN JOURNAL [SALEM]). • In another upset, in the state of KENTUCKY, Rep. Gross Lindsay (D), a 23-year veteran of the legislature and chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, lost his primary bid to political newcomer David Allen Watkins. With no Republican challenger for the 11th District seat, Watkins, a 63-year-old family physician, will claim it outright (COURIER-JOURNAL [LOUISVILLE]).

POLITICS IN BRIEF: In still more election-related news, Joan Browning, the runner-up in last month's tight Democratic primary for one of the two seats in WEST VIRGINIA's 28th House District, has asked for a recount. Browning lost to former county commissioner Steve Malcomb by just two votes. A recount will also be sought by the losing candidate in the Democratic primary for the state's 10th Senate District, former Sen. Leonard Anderson, who was defeated by former Sen. Frederick Parker by 13 votes (HERALD-DISPATCH [HUNTINGTON]). • MISSOURI's GOP-controlled Legislature — over vigorous opposition from the Democratic minority — passed a bill requiring a government-issued photo ID to vote, and excluding other currently acceptable forms of identification, such as a utility bill. Only GEORGIA and INDIANA have voter ID laws that are as restrictive (ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH). • George "Doc" Gunther, the CONNECTICUT General Assembly's longest-serving member, announced last week that he will not seek another term — his 21st. The 87-year-old was first elected to office in 1966, and has served with seven different governors. "I never thought I'd stay more than a couple of years," he said (ASSOCIATED PRESS, HARTFORD COURANT).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Upcoming Elections

(05/18/06 - 06/08/06)

05/23/2006 Arkansas Primary Election
House (All)
Senate (All)
Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, State Land Commissioner
US House (All)

05/23/2006 Idaho Primary Election
House (All)
Senate (All)
Constitutional Officers:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction; State Controller

05/30/2006 North Carolina special runoff if needed
Senate 031

06/06/2006 Alabama Primary Election
House (All)
Senate (All)
Constitutional Officers:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, State Auditor, Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries
US House (All)

06/06/2006 Alabama Special Election
House (All)
Senate (All)

06/06/2006 California Primary Election
Assembly (All)
Senate (Even)
Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner
US House (All)
US Senate (1)

06/06/2006 California runoff
Senate 035
US House (CA 50)

06/06/2006 Iowa Primary Election
House (All)
Senate (Odd)
Constitutional Officers:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Treasurer, Attorney General, State Auditor
US House (All)

06/06/2006 Mississippi Primary Election
US House (All)
US Senate (1)

06/06/2006 Montana Primary Election
House (All)
Senate 1, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 23, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31,
32, 35, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48, 49
US House (All)
US Senate (1)

06/06/2006 New Mexico Primary Election
House (All)
Constitutional Officers:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, State Auditor
US House (All)
US Senate (1)

06/06/2006 South Dakota Primary Election
House (All)
Senate (All)
Constitutional Officers:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, State Auditor
US House (All)

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Governors

B ORDER GOVS PRAISE, QUESTION BUSH IMMIGRATION PLAN: Governors from the four U.S. states that border Mexico — CALIFORNIA, NEW MEXICO, ARIZONA and TEXAS — expressed both hope and serious concerns last week about President Bush’s proposal to deal with their states’ immigration problems. That plan calls for the deployment of as many as 6,000 National Guard troops to support agents patrolling the 2,000 mile border, a guest worker program and an as-yet-to-be-defined system for offering some undocumented workers U.S. citizenship.

The gubernatorial quartet had mixed opinions on the President’s proposals, with ARIZONA Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) and TEXAS Gov. Rick Perry (R) in favor, and NEW MEXICO Gov. Bill Richardson (D) and CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) expressing the most skepticism. But even the show of support came with a bit of condemnation from some quarters. Napolitano, who has been pushing the White House and Congress to use the Guard to help with border security since last year, said the administration has ignored the immigration issue for years.

“They allowed this problem to fester for far too long,” Napolitano said. “This should have been dealt with years ago.”

That delay, she said, has allowed immigration to morph from being a serious state problem into a national crisis that has spawned both anti-immigration civilian groups like the Minutemen Project and millions of immigration supporters marching through U.S. cities.

Richardson also complained that nobody asked the governors for their input before the President announced his plans via a nationwide speech last Monday. “There has been no consultation. Zero, zero, zero, none,” said Richardson, who called the proposal “a stopgap” measure that would not deter anyone from trying to cross the border.

Schwarzenegger also noted the lack of information, saying, “So what if they have 6,000 National Guards at the borders and we find out that the same amount of people are coming across? Does it mean he will increase it to 12,000, to 15,000, to 50,000? We don’t know. I have no idea. We were not consulted on that, and we have not really been included in the decision making process, so I cannot tell you.”

Schwarzenegger later said in a letter to Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff that he would like to cooperate with the administration, but asked for assurances that the Bush administration will commit to fully funding the cost of the Guard’s deployment and provide a rundown of specific criteria for ending the



mission. A follow-up phone call with Chertoff and White House advisor Karl Rove did not produce those answers, Schwarzenegger said afterward.

Cost is expected to be the major sticking point for all of the states affected by the President's plan. For governors, that price tag includes not only the potential cost of the border patrols, but of also providing education, medical care and other public services for the millions of illegal immigrants already in the United States. (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, NEW YORK TIMES, LOS ANGELES TIMES)

Quoteable

"I've got a map of 7-11's, a bunch of blue-steel revolvers and ski masks. We're going to go all over the country and raise money in a very unique way."

— **ARKANSAS Gov. Mike Huckabee (R)**
laying out his tongue-in-cheek plan for raising campaign cash should he decide to run for president in 2008.
(ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT GAZETTE [FAYETVILLE])

HUCKABEE SAYS RACISM FUELING IMMIGRATION DEBATE:

ARKANSAS Gov. Mike Huckabee (R) said last week that he believes racism is fueling much of the anti-immigration feeling in the U.S. "If I were to say some of it is driven by just sheer racism, I think I would be telling you the truth," Huckabee, a potential 2008 presidential candidate, said during a lunch meeting in Washington DC with a collection of regional and national media members. "That is not to say that everybody who is really fired up by immigration is racist. They are not," he added. Huckabee also questioned what he called the "irrational anger" of some anti-immigration advocates, saying "What some people want is unrealistic, unreasonable and undoable." He also praised President Bush's immigration proposal, saying that "This is an issue that's not going to satisfy everyone no matter what he proposes." (ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT GAZETTE [FAYETVILLE])

OWENS URGES CHURCHILL TO QUIT: COLORADO

Gov. Bill Owens (R) again called on embattled University of COLORADO professor Ward Churchill to step down last week after a school investigative committee found him guilty of numerous academic infractions, including plagiarism. Churchill made headlines around the world for an essay he wrote in 2001 that blamed America for the 9/11 attacks and called the victims of those attacks "little Eichmanns." Owens and several members of the Centennial State Legislature called on Churchill to quit when the story first came to light in 2003, but the tenured professor has refused, even vowing to sue if terminated. But the hoopla inspired the school to launch its own internal investigation into allegations that much of Churchill's work had violated multiple academic canons. The report they issued last week claims

that Churchill stole the work of others, twisted facts to bolster his own theories and repeatedly violated the most basic standards of scholarly research. One of the five CU committee members recommended Churchill be fired, while two said he should be suspended without pay for two years. The other two recommended a five-year suspension without pay. (ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS [DENVER])

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: PENNSYLVANIA Gov. Ed Rendell (D) said his administration has had discussions with private companies about the possibility of leasing some state highways and railroads to those organizations as a way to raise money for transportation and other infrastructure projects. **INDIANA** and **ILLINOIS** have recently agreed to lease deals with foreign companies to run state toll roads. Rendell said any such agreements are at least a year off (JOURNAL GAZETTE [FORT WAYNE]) • **OREGON** Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) easily defeated two Democratic challengers in his bid to win a second term as the Beaver State governor. He will face Republican challenger Ron Saxton in November (CORVALLIS GAZETTE-TIMES). • Former four-term **WISCONSIN** governor Tommy Thompson said he will not seek the GOP nomination to challenge Gov. Jim Doyle (D) this fall. Thompson did not rule out running for the U.S. Senate (WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL [MADISON]). • **GEORGIA** Gov. Sonny Perdue (R) said he would offer the use of some of Georgia's National Guard troops if the President follows through on his plan to send 6,000 Guard members to help patrol the U.S.-Mexico border. But Perdue also warned of overextending the Peach State's 4,300-strong Guard unit, which just returned last week from an 18-month tour of duty in Iraq (ASSOCIATED PRESS).

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 2006 prefiles last week: 748

Number of 2006 Intros last week: 1,947

Number of bills enacted/adopted last week: 1,266

Number of 2006 prefiles to date: 18,544

Number of 2006 Intros to date: 87,948

Number of enacted/adopted overall in 2006: 21,010

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(Measures current as of 05/18/06
Source:State Net)

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Hot issues

BUSINESS: A **CALIFORNIA** court rules that the Golden State cannot force tuna companies to place mercury-warning labels on their packaging. The ruling stated that mercury levels in the tuna are not high enough to require the labels, and even if they were, the state's law requiring the extra warnings conflicts with federal law (SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS). • The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to consider a challenge of a **NORTH DAKOTA** law that bars telemarketers from calling residents on the state's "Do Not Call" list. Plaintiffs said the law hampered their fundraising activities. The decision upholds an earlier ruling from a lower court (FORUM [FARGO]). • The **MINNESOTA** House and Senate endorse legislation that dramatically toughens the standard for eminent domain takeover. Under the proposal which now goes to Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R), an area could be taken only if it is urban and more than half of the buildings in it are deemed "structurally substandard" (MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE). • The **LOUISIANA** House approves HB 421, which bars retailers from selling violent video games to anyone under 18. It now goes to the Senate (ADVOCATE [BATON ROUGE]). • **KANSAS** Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signs legislation that, among other things, requires that future use of eminent domain powers for economic development in the Sunflower State will receive legislative approval (KANSAS CITY STAR).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: **KANSAS** Gov. Kathleen Sebelius (D) signs a measure that creates a new investigative unit in the Sunflower State attorney general's office that will prosecute the abuse of people with disabilities (WICHITA EAGLE). • **MARYLAND** Gov. Robert Ehrlich Jr. (R) signs legislation that will require Old Line State drivers who test twice for the legal blood-alcohol limit, or who refuse to take a breath test, to get an ignition lock device installed in their car. Ignition locks prevent drivers from starting their car until they have passed an in-car breathalyzer test (CAPITAL [ANNAPOLIS]). • The **OHIO** House approves Senate Bill 262, which would permanently restore an expired law that allows some inmates to request state-paid DNA tests to try to prove they are innocent. It returns to the Senate (CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs into law legislation that prohibits disruptive gatherings within 200 feet of all funeral services from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after. Violators face jail time and fines up to \$1,500. Repeat violations could result in up to three years in prison and fines of \$25,000 (DAILY HERALD [ARLINGTON-HEIGHTS]).

• **OHIO** Gov. Bob Taft (R) signs legislation barring “wrongful birth” claims, which seek money to raise a severely disabled child who would have been aborted if the disorder had been diagnosed before birth (AKRON BEACON-JOURNAL).

HOMELAND SECURITY: The **ARIZONA** Senate approves legislation that would make it a crime under the state’s trespassing law for undocumented immigrants to be in the Grand Canyon State. The measure would also impose economic penalties on businesses that knowingly hire undocumented workers. It moves to the House (ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]).

SOCIAL POLICY: A **GEORGIA** court overturns the Peach State’s ban on gay marriage. The judge ruled that the measure, which was approved by voters in 2004, violated the state constitution’s single-subject requirement for ballot questions. State officials are weighing an appeal (USA TODAY). • A **NEW JERSEY** Assembly committee endorses a proposal to require the Garden State to develop a plan that would ensure developmentally disabled people living in a state institution have the economic support to move to community housing. It moves to the full Assembly (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK]). • The **UTAH** Supreme Court rules that the state’s law banning polygamy is not unconstitutional. The decision stemmed from the case of a man who claimed the statute violated his right to practice his religion (ASSOCIATED PRESS). • The **LOUISIANA** House votes 102-0 in favor of HB 1382, a bill that would require a doctor to tell a woman seeking an abortion what kind of painkiller may be administered to lessen “organic pain to the unborn child.” It moves to the Senate (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW ORELANS]). • **KANSAS** Gov. Kathleen Sebelius (D) signs legislation that sets 15 as the Sunflower State’s minimum age for marriage. Anyone wishing to marry at that age, however, must first receive court approval (LAWRENCE JOURNAL-WORLD).

POTPOURRI: The **MICHIGAN** House approves HB 5633, which would make English the Wolverine State’s official language. If the measure ultimately becomes law, state agencies would no longer have to provide official documents in other languages. It moves to the Senate (DETROIT NEWS).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

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Once around the statehouse lightly

NOW THEY'VE SEEN IT ALL: Longtime political observers in CALIFORNIA thought they had seen every idiotic attack ad known to man — until last week. That was when Republican Assembly candidate Bill Conrad low-balled primary opponent Tom Berryhill by reminding voters that Berryhill had a heart transplant six years ago. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Conrad's mailer declared — in blood red ink — that “Tom Berryhill doesn't have the HEART for State Assembly,” explaining that transplant patients usually survive only seven years beyond surgery. It also called attention to stress associated with elective office, and that stress significantly shortens the life of transplantees. And just to make sure Central Valley voters got the message, Conrad suggested that Berryhill might cost taxpayers money if he didn't survive the two-year term because they would have to pay for a special election. Although both candidates are Republicans, the subsequent outrage — directed at Conrad — was bipartisan.

ON THE CHEAP: As U.S. Senate candidates go, Democrat Paul Richards is cash poor — even in low-budget MONTANA. So, notes the *Billings Gazette*, Richards is running an unusual ad campaign. For \$129 a week, he has inserted an ad in the personals column of every Montana weekly. His two primary opponents — better known elected officials — went up on both TV and radio last week. “Weeklies are read devoutly,” Richards told the paper, also noting they have a long shelf life. They have other uses as well, but house pets can't vote.

EGOS R US: He holds great sway in NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY and other spots along the East Coast, but The Donald isn't having as much luck at the other side of the continent. Trump has converted a modest golf club in Rancho Palos Verdes into a \$250-million oceanfront paradise. And now he wants the tony Southern CALIFORNIA community to show its gratitude by changing the name of a street — “Ocean Trails Drive” — to “Trump National Drive.” Locals might have been willing to go along had Trump not evicted a local charity tournament from the club and sued a school district over the lease of school-owned land on the course. Local officials also are grumped out over the name of the new enterprise: Trump National Golf Club Los Angeles. Rancho Palos Verdes, they point out, is NOT Los Angeles.



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