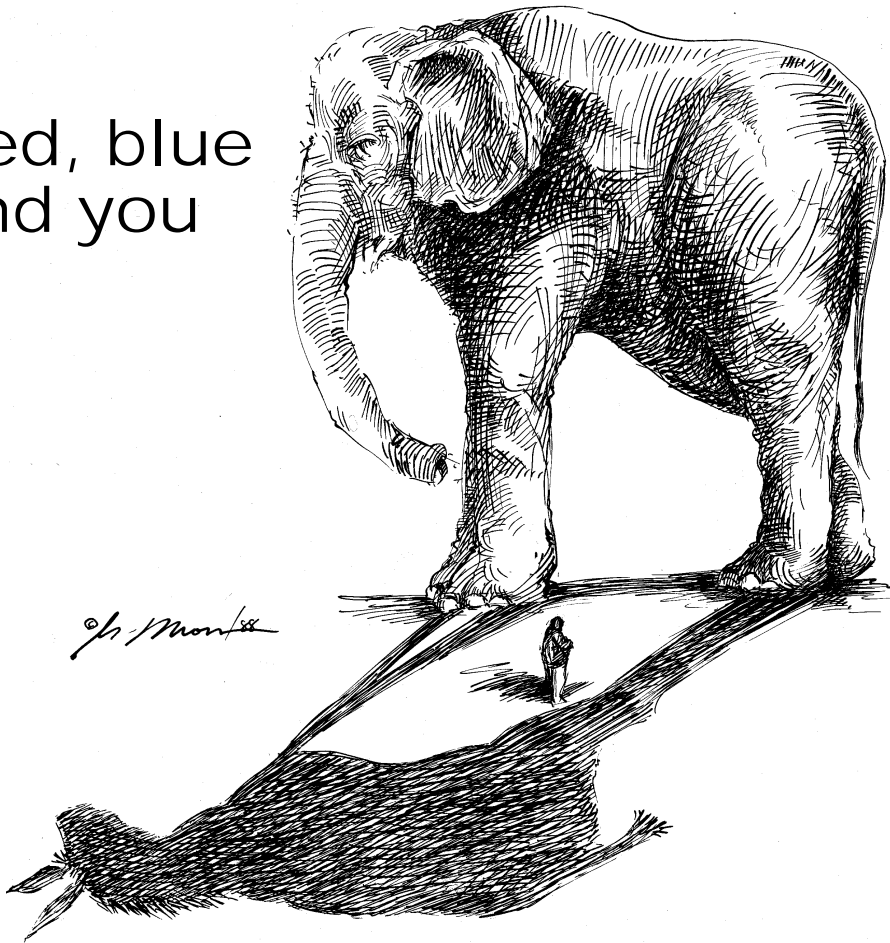


May 23, 2005

Red, blue
 and you



Budget & taxes	
Budget stalemate sends IOWA lawmakers home	5
Governors	
Govs target public employee pensions	7
Birds eye view	4
Hot issues	10
Once around the statehouse lightly	13

Top Story

These days, it seems everything is broken down into red state-blue state stereotypes. But new research suggests that our traditional images of Republicans and Democrats may not be so accurate after all.

SNCJ Spotlight

America's electorate in shades of red and blue

Throughout last year's election season, America's partisan divide was repeatedly depicted in the stark terms of red states and blue states. But a major new study paints a picture of the nation's political landscape using a slightly more varied palette. The more detailed view of the U.S. electorate offers some useful insights into last year's election results, and also highlights some major shifts in traditional voting patterns that could have a significant impact on future races.

The study, released a couple of weeks ago by the nonpartisan Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, was based on a survey of 2,000 Americans last December and follow-up interviews last month with more than half of the original respondents. The study was the fourth such effort by Pew researchers in the past two decades, the last conducted in 1999. Pew divides the electorate into nine groups, based on values and political beliefs, as well as party affiliation. Their political typology includes three categories of Republicans:

Enterprisers, staunch conservatives, highly patriotic, pro-business and anti-big-government; **Social Conservatives**, highly religious but distrustful of business; and

Pro-Government Conservatives, lower-income social conservatives; as well as three varieties of Democrats: **Liberals**, secular, anti-war, pro-environment and pro-social-welfare;

Disadvantaged Democrats, low-income, social welfare loyalists; and **Conservative Democrats**, religious, socially conservative and moderate on foreign policy issues. There are also two groups that occupy the political middle: the **Upbeats**, relatively moderate voters who have a fairly positive outlook on the world; and the **Disaffecteds**, working class voters who tend to have a very cynical view of government. A final group, the **Bystanders**, consists of those who play no active role in the political process.

One of the principal findings of Pew's researchers was that the issues which have traditionally divided Democrats and Republicans, such as wealth and religious belief, are not as critical as they once were. On the basis of income, for instance, Republican Enterprisers aren't much different from Democratic Liberals; about 40 percent of each group have household incomes of \$75,000 or more. At the opposite end of the economic scale, nearly half of both Pro-Government Conservatives and Disadvantaged Democrats said they earn \$30,000 or less. And while Republican-leaning voters generally range from the religious to the very religious, Democrats include not only atheists and agnostics, but highly religious voters as well.

In the post-9/11 world, the issue that most clearly separates the two major parties is foreign policy. Republicans are overwhelmingly unified in their belief

The Week in Session

States in Regular Session: CA, CT, DC, DE, IL, LA, MA, MI, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OR, RI, SC, TX, US, VT, WI

States in Special Session: CA "a", ME "a", MS "b"

States in Recess: KS, PA

States Projected to Adjourn: IA, KS, MN, OK, TN

States Adjourned in 2005: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, KY, MD, ME, MO, MS, MT, ND, NM, SD, UT, VA, WA, WV, WY

States in Special Session Adjourned in 2005: MS "a", UT "a", WI "a", WV "a", WV "b", WV "c"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

Source: State Net, 5/20/05

opinion, as House Minority Leader Joe Stengel (R) called it “the worst session in seven years.” Clearly, the new Democratic majority had some wins, including passage of bills to curb underage drinking, stem identity theft, protect gays and lesbians against job discrimination and hate crimes, and allow the Centennial State to join a multistate drug-purchasing pool to lower the cost of prescription drugs. But Democrats had at least as many losses, such as their abortive attempts to reduce funding for charter-school construction, approve tougher clean-air regulations, create a backup health insurance plan for small businesses, prohibit the state from contracting with overseas companies and grant working parents unpaid leave to attend their children’s school events. The Dems’ efforts were stymied not only by Republican Gov. Bill Owens’ threatened vetoes but also by the slimness of their majority — five seats in the House and just one in

the Senate. Indeed, the most significant victory of the session was a bipartisan one: passage of a plan to seek voter approval to suspend about \$3 billion in TABOR-mandated tax refunds to provide money for road repair, higher education, health care and other vital services. According to some observers, the Dems’ biggest achievement was something a little more subtle: a shift in the Legislature’s agenda; Republican issues like school vouchers and the licensing of abortion clinics didn’t even make it to the floor for debate (DENVER POST).

Bird’s eye view



Source: Statelins.org ■ States with minimum wage above the federal level

Bringing up the bottom

Raising the minimum wage has become a hot topic of late in both Congress and statehouses. Congress has rejected two such proposals this year, leaving the federal standard at the same \$5.15 per hour level it set in 1997. Hikes fared better at the state level, where six states — HAWAII, CONNECTICUT, MINNESOTA, MARYLAND, NEW JERSEY and WISCONSIN — have approved increases. The measures in Connecticut, Maryland and Hawaii are pending gubernatorial signatures, but all are expected to be approved. NEVADA could also soon join the party. Silver State voters approved a \$1-per-hour hike in 2004, but state law requires the measure to pass a second popular vote in the next election before it can become law. If so, that would bring to 19 the total number of states (shown in the accompanying map) that have adopted minimum wage levels higher than the federal standard.

Note: NV statute must be approved again by voters





AT THE POLLS: Former county councilman Wayne Fontana (D) soundly defeated state Rep. Michael Diven (R) in a bitter and expensive battle for PENNSYLVANIA 42nd Senate District seat. Fontana’s victory, despite the well-financed campaign of Diven, a Democrat, himself, until this year, keeps the 42nd — long regarded as a “safe” Democratic seat — under the Dems control (PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Budget & taxes

BUDGET STALEMATE SENDS IOWA LAWMAKERS HOME:

B Already two weeks past their scheduled adjournment date, the IOWA House and Senate both suspended debate on the state budget and sent their members home while the leadership tries to work out a compromise. Differences between the House, which wants to cut business taxes, and the Senate, which wants to double the cigarette tax and cut property taxes, have been exacerbated by narrow partisan divisions in the two chambers — Republicans holding a slim 51-49 majority in the House and the Senate tied 25-25. The stalemate has some talking about the possibility of a government shutdown if an agreement isn’t reached by the start of the new fiscal year July 1. House Speaker Chris Rants (R) rejects that notion, noting that it’s only May. But Senate Democratic Leader Michael Gronstal counters that lawmakers have been arguing about the same issues for weeks, and there’s little reason to expect that to change any time soon. (OMAHA WORLD-HERALD)

SCHWARZENEGGER’S REVISED BUDGET GETS MIXED

REVIEW: CALIFORNIA’s nonpartisan legislative analyst’s office had some nice things to say last week about Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s (R) revised budget plan for 2005-06, which was released on May 13. Analyst Elizabeth G. Hill called the governor’s \$115.7-billion proposal, which relies heavily on program cuts, a “sensible” plan for dealing with the state’s chronic budget problems. But Hill’s remarks weren’t all rosy. She also noted that the plan relies on as much as \$2.5 billion in revenue the state may never actually receive. “The revised plan continues to face significant risks in several areas,” she said. Those risks include the possibility that Schwarzenegger will not be able to get government employees to agree to the \$400 million in pay cuts he’s recommending and that his proposal to take money from schools might be unconstitutional. Hill added that even if the Democrat-controlled Legislature adopts every budget cut the

governor proposed — and all of the money he’s counting on actually comes in — the state has so many debts coming due that it could start the 2006-07 fiscal year \$5 billion in the hole. (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

MS GOV SETS BUDGETLESS AGENDA FOR SPECIAL SESSION:

MISSISSIPPI lawmakers weren’t at all surprised when Gov. Haley Barbour (R) announced a special session two weeks ago, considering that they ended the 2005 regular session last month without passing a budget for next year. Some were a little shocked, however, to learn that the governor did not include the 2006 budget on his agenda for the session, which began last Wednesday; instead, the governor directed lawmakers only to address deficits in the 2005 budget. House Speaker Billy McCoy (D) said, “It’s a mistake on his part, an absolute mistake not to include the budget as the No. 1 thing to be considered.” McCoy suggested that Barbour might be withholding the budget in an effort to force passage of his economic development program, Momentum Mississippi. He also pointed out that keeping the budget off the agenda will prevent lawmakers from being able to debate it on the floor. But a spokesman for Barbour said the governor only wants to make sure the ‘05 budget is put to bed before addressing the 2006 budget, and that the governor intends to expand the agenda to deal with next year’s budget when the time comes. Senate President Pro Tem Travis Little (R) was a bit less diplomatic about the issue. “We all know the [2006] budget is the reason we’re being called back,” he said. “From the minute we get there, I don’t think any of us can hide from the fact that it’s not in [the agenda].” Rep. Philip Gunn (R) was even more blunt, stating that it was Barbour’s “turn to lead,” and adding, “If anyone in the Legislature did not want this to happen, they had their chance in the regular session. I don’t think they’ve got much ground to complain.” (CLARION-LEDGER [JACKSON])

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: With only a week left in their spring session, **ILLINOIS** lawmakers are facing a \$1 billion hole in next year’s budget. If they don’t come up with a fix by June 1, they could be forced into a summer overtime session for the second year in a row (CHICAGO TRIBUNE). • After two hours of debate last Monday, the **NEW JERSEY** Assembly passed a measure calling for a constitutional convention to address property taxes. The bill now moves to the Senate (ASSOCIATED PRESS, STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK]). • A **CONNECTICUT** Senate committee rejected Gov. M. Jodi Rell’s (R) plan to fund \$1.3 billion in transportation improvements through a 6-cents-per-gallon increase in the gas tax over the next eight years. Instead, the Democrat-led committee amended the governor’s proposal to bankroll the improvements through



an increase in the gross earnings tax on petroleum companies (HARTFORD COURANT). • The ALASKA House rejected a pair of bills Gov. Frank Murkowski (R) and the Senate have been pushing to end pensions for public employees and rewrite the state’s workers’ compensation laws. The two issues stalled the 121-day regular session and forced lawmakers into special session two weeks ago. By law, the session can only continue for another two weeks (ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Upcoming Elections

(05/19/2005 - 06/09/2005)

05/21/2005 Louisiana
Special Election
Senate 003

05/24/2005 Florida
Special Primary
House 007

06/04/2005 Louisiana
Special Primary
Senate 006

Governors

GOVNS TARGET PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSIONS: Although California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s (R) efforts to alter public employee retirement benefits have drawn the lion’s share of media notoriety this year, “The Govenator” is far from the only chief executive looking to cut back on the public pensions. Governors in ALASKA, ILLINOIS, RHODE ISLAND, MARYLAND and MASSACHUSETTS are among those that have also stated their desire to reduce the amount of money their states are spending on retirement benefits.

Among the most vocal has been Rhode Island Gov. Don Carcieri (R), whose state has seen its contribution to the pension fund rise from \$184 million in 2004 to an anticipated \$278 million this year. That figure is expected to hit \$400 million by 2010. To combat the situation, Carcieri wants to hike the Ocean State’s minimum retirement age to 60 and tie annual cost-of-living raises to the consumer price index. That has public employee unions fuming.

“We’re appalled by this proposal,” said Marcia Reback, president of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals. “It gouges retirees.”

But governors like Carcieri and MASSACHUSETTS Gov. Mitt Romney (R), who come from the corporate world, don’t see it that way. (Massachusetts will spend \$1.2 billion on retirement benefits this year, more than it spends on higher education.) In their view, public employee benefits vastly exceed those offered in the private sector because they offer both traditional pensions and retiree health benefits, a combination rarely seen these days in the business world. They call the situation unfair to those workers not in government service.

Washington to testify at a House hearing on school reform, told Congressional leaders that American students are lagging behind other nations because “parents are often reluctant to have students take more rigorous courses.” Vilsack was joined in testifying by MASSACHUSETTS Gov. Mitt Romney (R), who noted that about 4,400 American citizens earn doctoral degrees in physical science and engineering every year while students from Asian countries earn almost 25,000 such degrees annually. Vilsack contended that parents are often concerned that tough classes will conflict with students’ part-time jobs, sports and other activities. He also said parents fear that harder classes will lead to lower student grades, perhaps making it more difficult to get college scholarships. “That’s a legitimate concern because college is expensive,” he told lawmakers. “But ignorance is more expensive. (DES MOINES REGISTER)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: The latest tabulations in the ongoing court battle over the 2004 WASHINGTON governor’s election show that Republicans have spent \$2 million in their efforts to overturn the results. Democrats have spent \$2.2 million defending the case, with state party Chairman Paul Berendt saying he expects the Party to ultimately fork over around \$3.5 million to see the case through to the end. Democrat Christine Gregoire, the eventual winner, and Republican Dino Rossi, who lost out by 129 votes on a third count, each spent about \$6 million in the election campaign (SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER). • **NEW JERSEY** Gov. Richard Codey (D) announced plans to remove toll plazas from two Garden State highways. The removal of the tolls is scheduled for July, two years earlier than originally called for (NEW YORK TIMES). • **IDAHO** Gov. Dirk Kempthorne (R) called on **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R)

... unquote

“I’m sorry, Mr. Vilsack, but that hasn’t been my experience with parents. Maybe he’s talked with more of them than I have.”

— **IOWA PTA president Sherry Brown responding to Vilsack’s testimony. (DES MOINES REGISTER)**

to exempt french fries from a California list of foods that would require warnings that they could cause cancer. Kempthorne wants potatoes — Idaho’s No. 1 agricultural product, accounting for \$2 billion of the state’s economy — off the table in revisions of California’s list, fearing a listing could further hurt potato sales already diminished by low-carbohydrate diet trends (IDAHO STATESMAN [BOISE]).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Hot issues

B **USINESS:** The U.S. Supreme Court strikes down state laws in **NEW YORK** and **MICHIGAN** that bar out-of-state wineries from shipping vino directly to consumers. The high court says such laws are discriminatory because they do allow direct shipment from in-state wineries. About two dozen states will now have to revise similar laws (**NEW YORK TIMES**). • **MICHIGAN** lawmakers also address state wine statutes by sending Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D) a measure that would allow Wolverine State diners to take an opened bottle of wine home with them. Bottles would have to be securely sealed by restaurant staff and kept in the driver's trunk while being transported. Granholm is expected to sign the measure into law (**DETROIT NEWS**). • **WASHINGTON** Gov. Christine Gregoire (D) signs HB 1561, which bars Evergreen State life insurers from denying coverage to people traveling to lawful but sometimes volatile foreign destinations (**SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER**). • The **ARIZONA** Supreme Court rules that people injured in dangerous activities don't necessarily relinquish their right to sue the company providing the service, even if they sign a waiver promising not to. The court said the state constitution requires juries to decide whether someone has knowingly agreed to accept the risks of certain activities (**ARIZONA DAILY STAR [TUCSON]**). • **MONTANA** Gov. Brian Schweitzer (D) signs a bill that prevents courts from sealing information about consumer products that have harmed people. Courts previously had the power to issue gag orders in product liability cases that prevented the parties involved from revealing information about the defective product to the public (**BILLINGS GAZETTE**).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: Authorities in Washington D.C. announce a free service that allows the nation's estimated 180 million cell phone users to receive Amber Alert notices as text messages on their phones and other wireless devices. The system, which broadcasts news of missing and kidnapped children, began in **TEXAS** in 1997 before going national in 2003 (**ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]**). • The **CONNECTICUT** House approves a measure that raises the crime of intentional cruelty to another person to a felony. Under current Constitution State law it is only a felony to be cruel to animals. The measure heads to Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R), who is expected to sign it (**HARTFORD COURANT**). • The **OREGON** House overwhelmingly okay's a bill that would impose a mandatory seven-day jail sentence on motorists convicted of driving with a blood alcohol content of .20 percent or higher. It moves to the Senate (**GAZETTE-TIMES [CORVALLIS]**). • An **ILLINOIS** Senate committee kills a measure that would have required a judge or



jury to determine a defendant is guilty beyond all doubt before sentencing that person to death (CHICAGO TRIBUNE). • Still in **ILLINOIS**, the Senate unanimously endorses a bill that would require lifetime supervision of dangerous sex offenders. The measure heads to Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D), who has said he will sign it (DAILY HERALD [ARLINGTON]).

EDUCATION: The **TEXAS** House approves HB 3563, which requires education officials to survey high school athletes over the next two years in order to gauge steroid use. The proposal would also call for the creation of a steroid education program for students. It moves to the Senate (HOUSTON CHRONICLE). • The **CONNECTICUT** House signs off on legislation that would bar the sale of soft drinks and certain junk foods from public school cafeterias, vending machines and stores. The measure heads to the Senate, which passed a similar bill last month (NEW YORK TIMES).

ENVIRONMENT: The **ALASKA** House approves HB 130, a measure that would transfer about 250,000 acres of state-owned land to the state university system. More than half of that land is earmarked to create a research area the university can use to study ecology and wildlife management. The measure heads to Gov. Frank Murkowski (R) for review (JUNEAU EMPIRE). • The **NORTH CAROLINA** Senate endorses a bill that would rewrite a law that automatically gives the federal government jurisdiction over land it acquires in the Tar Heel State. The legislation was spawned by environmentalists' opposition to the Navy's plan to build an airstrip in a rural area near a national wildlife refuge. The measure heads to Gov. Mike Easley (D) for review (NEWS & OBSERVER [RALEIGH]).

HEALTH & SCIENCE: The **OREGON** Senate approves SB 849, which would allow specially trained pharmacists to offer emergency "morning after" contraceptive pills to women without a prescription. Six other states currently allow such prescriptions. The measure heads to the House (GAZETTE-TIMES [CORVALLIS]). • A **LOUISIANA** House committee approves HB 392, which would allow nursing home residents to sue for damages under the Pelican State's Nursing Home Bill of Rights. That statute lists 23 specific rights for nursing home residents, including being able to pick a personal doctor. HB 392 would allow suits for violations of about half of those rights. It moves to the full House (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW ORLEANS]).

Upcoming Stories

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

Opting out - the battle over No Child Left Behind

The move to stop credit card solicitation on college campuses

Will phone companies soon be moving into cable TV?

The brave new world of Wi Max, and how states want to control it

And many more...



HOMELAND SECURITY: A **WISCONSIN** Assembly committee endorses a measure that would require driver's license applicants to prove they are in the country legally before receiving the document. Wisconsin currently does not require applicants to prove their legal status. That policy is now in direct conflict with a new federal law requiring states to ensure those seeking a driver's license are in the country legally. The bill now heads to the full Assembly (LA CROSSE TRIBUNE).

SOCIAL POLICY: The **TEXAS** Senate approves legislation that would require minors to get parental consent before having an abortion. That measure heads to the House. Meanwhile, a similar bill adopted in the House heads to the Senate (DALLAS MORNING NEWS). • The **OHIO** House overwhelmingly okay's a measure that would guarantee women the right to breastfeed their babies in public. It moves to Gov. Bob Taft (R), who has not indicated whether he will sign it (DAYTON DAILY NEWS). • A **DELAWARE** House committee endorses a bill that would require service stations to offer at least one pump with a signaling device to inform staff that a disabled person needs to have gas pumped. It will next be heard in the full House (NEWS JOURNAL [NEW CASTLE-WILMINGTON]).

POTPOURRI: **OREGON** Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) signs a bill that gives the state 45 days to issue a death certificate when a person is lost at sea. Without an official certificate, survivors are unable to collect death benefits (CORVALLIS GAZETTE-TIMES). • The **MINNESOTA** House approves a measure that would allow any adult who has taken a training course and passed a background check to get a permit to carry a handgun in public. The measure is a revision of a 2003 law that has been tied up in the courts. It shoots off to Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R), who says he will sign it (MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE). • The **TEXAS** House adopts a bill that would bar new drivers from using cell phones and other electronic devices during the first six months of having a driver's license. The proposal drives off to the Senate (HOUSTON CHRONICLE).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

slope lurking around this bill — if you prevent me from setting fire to my cat today, who knows what you'll do to me tomorrow?

HIGHWAY CLUTTER. Not long after taking office, Governor Mitt Romney of MASSACHUSETTS banned public officials' names from appearing on highway signs, saying that he wanted "no monuments to egos." As an example, notes the *Boston Herald*, Romney took his own name off signs welcoming visitors to the Bay State. Apparently, the state Turnpike Authority does not come under the purview of the governor, because Turnpike Chairman Matthew Amorello's name appears on no fewer than 15 signs between Boston and New York. Not only that, but his picture — in full color — graces rest stops along the road. His name is plastered everywhere — at the entrance to the Ted Williams Tunnel at Logan International Airport, on a welcome sign at Stockbridge (where Romney had his name removed), on a sign reminding motorists that the Red Sox won the 2004 World Series, even on construction signs. Amorello's office says his name remains so folks know whom to contact "if they have a problem." And, of course, Amorello responds personally to every one of those "problems."

COURTING DISASTER? John Roach may have a suspect resume, but Roach *does* have strong connections. As *The Louisville Courier-Journal* reports, Roach is under consideration for a soon-to-be-vacant seat on the KENTUCKY Supreme Court. In fact, he is one of three nominees submitted by the Judicial Nominating Commission to Republican Governor Ernie Fletcher, who is required to select one of the three. Roach's resume does not include any bench time because he has never served as a judge. It does include his current job, however: Fletcher's general counsel. The other two nominees are both experienced judges. Commissioners say Roach was a "strong applicant." Democrats grump that a Roach appointment would be one more example of Fletcher packing the court with cronies.

— By A. G. BLOCK

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 2005 prefiles last week: 127

Number of 2005 Intros last week: 2,266

Number of bills enacted/adopted last week: 1,170

Number of 2005 prefiles to date: 32,394

Number of 2005 Intros to date: 143,390

Number of enacted/adopted overall in 2005: 23,569

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(Measures current as of 5/19/05)
Source: State Net



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