

More Storms Brewing



June 8, 2009

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● The next issue of
 ● Capitol Journal will be
 ● available on June 15th.
 ●

Top Story

States finally received some good economic news last week, but even if the recession actually is beginning to bottom out, states are only going to see more budget trouble in the years ahead.

SNCJ Spotlight

Recession only beginning of budget troubles for states

There was some good economic news for states last week: They could start seeing job growth by the end of the year (see *Bird's eye view*). But there was also the bad news that even if the recession which (officially) began 16 months ago is finally coming to an end, states are only going to see more budget trouble in the years ahead.

State budgets already look pretty bad. Together, states face a budget shortfall of at least \$230 billion through fiscal 2011, according to the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO). And last Tuesday, CALIFORNIA Gov.



Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) warned that if legislators there fail to close the state's projected \$24 billion deficit by June 15, it will be unable to borrow the money it needs to pay its bills next month (see *Budget & taxes*).

The budget troubles are wearing on state lawmakers. Last Sunday, the Democrat-controlled ILLINOIS General Assembly failed to pass a budget after rejecting tax increases Gov. Pat Quinn — also a Democrat — said were needed to close that state's \$11.6 billion budget gap. And the following day, the TEXAS Legislature adjourned abruptly — and acrimoniously — without approving a funding measure needed to keep the state's transportation and insurance agencies operating (see *Politics & leadership*).

As bad as things are now for states, however, they could be even worse in a couple of years. By 2011 states will have received the bulk of their federal stimulus allocations. But state tax revenues

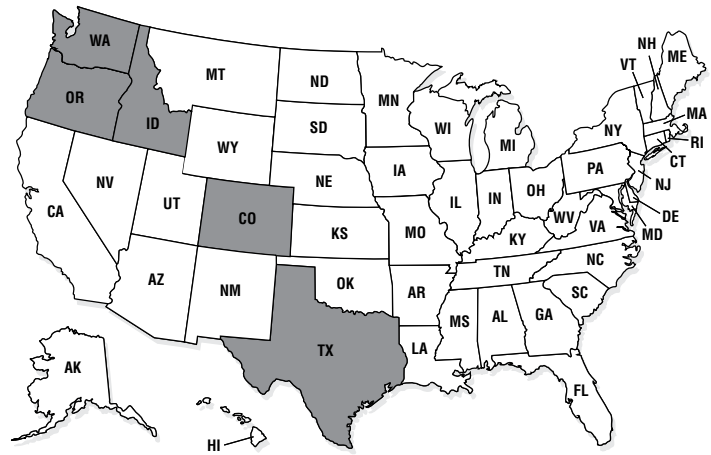
probably won't have recovered enough to replace the diminished federal cash stream.

Donald J. Boyd, senior fellow at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government

“There are so many issues that go way beyond the current downturn. This is an awful time for states fiscally, but they're even more worried about 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014.”

downturn,” said Scott Pattison, executive director of NASBO. “This is an awful time for states fiscally, but they're even more worried about 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014.”

Bird's eye view



Source: MSNBC, MOODY'S ECONOMY.COM

States predicted to recover from recession by third quarter of '09

Five Western states poised for economic recovery this year

COLORADO, IDAHO, OREGON, TEXAS and WASHINGTON will be the first states to recover from the recession, according to Moody's Economy.com. A forecast released this month by the financial research website predicted job growth would return to those five states in the last quarter of this year. Four of the states, Moody's said, are particularly well positioned to take advantage of pent-up demand for technology. The fifth state, TEXAS, wasn't heavily impacted by the housing collapse and was one of the last to go into recession, largely due to the strength of its energy industries. Moody's Economy.com predicted more states would begin seeing job growth in the first quarter of 2010, and all states would show signs of recovery by the third quarter of next year.



at the State University of NEW YORK, said state tax collections may not return to their pre-recession levels until 2012 or later. On top of that, states face, among other things, rising health-care costs and recession-ravaged pension funds.

“There are so many issues that go way beyond the current



Most states have been too busy trying to stop the current budget bleeding to worry about future problems. But one that has managed to look ahead is TENNESSEE. In April, the state’s sales tax collections were down nearly 10 percent from a year before, and its total tax revenue was about \$200 million less than forecast. The state actually expects tax revenues to rise about 4 percent next fiscal year, but higher education and Medicaid costs, and a pension system that has declined \$7 billion in value (from \$32 billion to \$25 billion), are expected to eat up all of that gain.

So Gov. Phil Bredesen (D) has laid out a four-year plan to balance the budget that includes eliminating 1,373 jobs and possibly some economic-development projects.

“This is not simply trimming around the edges,” said the state’s top budget officer, Dave Goetz. “This is entire programs.”

Some believe the best thing states can hope for is that the stimulus allows them to make such cuts gradually, by eliminating jobs more through attrition than layoffs, for example.

There is also the option of raising taxes and fees. But such levies may provide little additional revenue if Americans continue to restrict their spending. And MASSACHUSETTS state Treasurer Timothy P. Cahill, a Democrat and possible gubernatorial candidate next year, pointed out another downside.

“This is such a consumer-based recession that I think you’d be compounding the problem by increasing a tax on consumer spending,” he said. (WALL STREET JOURNAL)

– *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Budget & taxes

DESPERATE TIMES IN CA: CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) delivered a rare address to a joint session of the Legislature last week. But these are desperate times for the state, now staring into the abyss of a \$24-billion budget hole. And the governor has certainly called for some desperate measures: cuts to virtually every government program, including elimination of

“Our wallet is empty, our bank is closed, and our credit is dried up.”

the state’s SCHIP program, which provides health coverage for over 900,000 children, and the state’s main welfare program, CalWORKS.

The recession has brought a “transformation of what services Sacramento can provide,” he told lawmakers. “Our wallet is empty, our bank is closed, and our credit is dried up.”



Schwarzenegger pressed lawmakers for quick action on the cuts, saying, “we have run out of time” and “the people have run out of patience,” the latter remark undoubtedly prompted by voters’ overwhelming rejection of the budget ballot measures he and lawmakers submitted for their approval on May 19.

But there are people who don’t have much patience for the governor’s proposed cuts either. And lawmakers heard from some of them at public hearings held just hours after the governor spoke.

“It is a prescription for disaster,” said Paul Witt, a state parks commissioner whose department faces \$70 million in cuts that could close most parks. “We cannot make these cuts safely. We will spend more in litigating lawsuits against the state, even if we win them.”

Others took exception to the governor’s proposed hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts to prison rehabilitation and education programs.

“I work in the trenches with these convicted felons — I stand between them and your families,” said Susan Bruno, a vocational instructor at Pleasant Valley State Prison. “You can see the changes in these people — they are people just like us — and if we don’t help them now, we will pay for it, not just in dollars, but in flesh and blood.”

But while the Democrats who control the Legislature “fundamentally disagree” with Schwarzenegger’s plan to do away with welfare and SCHIP, preferring instead to make cuts to the programs, according to Assembly Speaker Karen Bass (D), they appear inclined to do what the governor has asked.

“We are committed to making sure it’s not a long, hot summer in Sacramento,” Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D) said at a press conference after last month’s special election. “We are going to cut... We’re not shying away from that.” (LOS ANGELES TIMES, NEW YORK TIMES)

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: The Obama administration said last week that the federal highway fund is \$17 billion short of what will be needed to maintain the nation’s roads and bridges over the next two years. The shortfall is due to the decline in tax revenue from gas and car purchases (WALL STREET JOURNAL). • The **ILLINOIS** House voted 42 to 74 against Gov. Pat Quinn’s (D) proposal to temporarily raise the individual income tax rate from 3 percent to 4.5 percent to avoid \$7 billion in budget cuts. The measure needed 60 votes to pass (CHICAGO SUN-TIMES). • Last Monday, **VERMONT** Gov. Jim Douglas (R) became the first Green Mountain State governor to veto a budget bill (HB 441). Lawmakers followed him into the history books the next day, overriding the veto (BURLINGTON FREE

<p style="text-align: center;">Upcoming elections 6/4/2009 - 6/25/2009</p> <p>06/09/2009 Alabama Special Election Senate District 07</p> <p>Virginia Primary Election Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General</p> <p>06/16/2009 Massachusetts Special Election House 3rd Suffolk</p>



Senate Democrats accused the Republican majority of refusing to work out the issue because they want a special session that would give them another shot at passing a voter ID bill Democrats had talked to death in the House over the course of a fortnight.

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Steve Ogden (R) denied that, placing the blame for the breakdown squarely on the House.

“By adjourning sine die without warning, the House basically wrecked the TxDOT budget, putting billions of dollars in highway projects in jeopardy,” he said. “The action by the House was a disaster.”

House Speaker Joe Straus (R) chalked the episode up to the differing chemistry of the two chambers, the 150-member House needing to be regimented, and the 31-member Senate able to reach consensus and change course quickly.

He said senators were coming over late in the day and asking him if he would suspend the rules to take up bills. They seemed unable to grasp that the chamber was in no mood to waive rules or deadlines, particularly after the voter ID talk-a-thon, he said.

“I don’t think they understand us very well sometimes, even though I tried to tell them repeatedly that we were going to...play by the rules of the House,” he said. (DALLAS MORNING NEWS, AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN)

ILLINOIS SESSION ENDS WITH FIZZLE: The ILLINOIS legislative session began in January with lawmakers banding together in an historic vote to impeach Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D). But the session ended last week just as it had many times before, with an abundance of political bad blood and unfinished business. Unable to approve either tax increases or deep spending cuts, the House passed a budget that only provides enough money for half the year. Gov. Pat Quinn (D) said he didn’t consider the plan to be a real budget. But he was also reluctant to veto it and risk shutting down the entire government next month.

“It’s a dire situation,” he said.

While he and legislative leaders try to work out a new deal, a road, bridge and school construction plan lawmakers approved earlier this month waits in limbo;

“Democrats are Democrats.”

Quinn said he won’t sign it until he has a balanced budget and an acceptable ethics reform package.

Lawmakers sent him a reform package, but it didn’t include a voter recall provision, which he considers a priority.

When asked to explain why things went so wrong despite the fact that Democrats control both houses of the General Assembly and the governor’s office, House Speaker Michael Madigan replied: “Democrats are Democrats.”

Some of Madigan’s fellow Democrats in the Senate accused him of leaving them hanging out to dry politically by failing to bring a vote on a temporary tax increase they approved to help close the state’s \$12 billion budget gap. But Madigan said only



42 members supported the tax hike in his 118-member chamber, all Democrats. Quinn had evidently been counting on at least eight Republican votes, but they failed to materialize, discouraging the chamber's other 28 Democrats from signing on to a Democrat-only tax increase.

Now the state faces an even tougher challenge: After May 31 any tax increase, budget bill or other measure requires a three-fifths majority (71 votes instead of 60) to take effect before June 1 of the following year. (DAILY HERALD [Arlington Heights])

Upcoming stories

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

- **National Education Standards**
- **Young Adult Health Insurance**
- **Free Choice/Card Check**

POLITICS IN BRIEF: Last week, the **MINNESOTA** Supreme Court took up the case of whether problems with absentee ballots justify overturning a lower-court ruling declaring Al Franken the winner over Republican Norm Coleman in the state's nearly seven-month-old U.S. Senate race. Court experts said a decision could take days or months (STAR TRIBUNE [MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL]). • Former **MASSACHUSETTS** House speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi was indicted by a federal grand jury for allegedly steering state contracts to a software company in exchange for tens of thousands of dollars. DiMasi, who resigned in January, faces up to 20 years in prison for each of seven counts of mail and wire fraud, and up to five years for conspiracy (BOSTON GLOBE). • The **MAINE** Senate voted 30-5 to trim the size of the House of Representatives from 151 seats to 131. Although the House also voted 86-58 in favor of the proposed constitutional amendment (HB 123), its prospects are still uncertain; in addition to winning voter approval, it requires a final two-thirds vote in both chambers, a mark the initial House vote fell well short of (BANGOR DAILY NEWS).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Governors

GIBBONS SETS VETO, OVERRIDE RECORDS: The often-testy relationship between NEVADA Gov. Jim Gibbons (R) and Silver State lawmakers was in full view last week as the governor set a state record for vetoes in a single session, totaling 41 as of last Tuesday. That was the highest number of gubernatorial rejections since the state's first governor, Gov. Henry Blasdel (R), vetoed 33 bills during the 1864-65 Legislature.

But lawmakers were in no mood to be outdone, setting their own record by overriding 25 of Gibbons' vetoes before the session ended. Lawmakers sustained another 12 vetoes and chose not to vote on four others. The overrides included bills

to allow gay and straight unmarried couples to enter into domestic partnerships (SB 283) and increases to the state's sales and payroll taxes (SB 429).

Gibbons' total, however, is almost certain to rise, as he was still reviewing at least 70 bills that lawmakers sent to his desk before adjournment. "I expect there will be more vetoes," said Josh Hicks, Gibbons' chief of staff. "I can't say how many, but there will be more." The measures Gibbons rejects now will stay dead for at least two years, as lawmakers are now adjourned until 2011.

Gubernatorial spokesman Dan Burns defended the vetoes, saying his boss was simply responding to poor legislation. "If the Legislature would stop sending over so many bad bills, the governor would not have to veto them." Burns also noted that Gibbons "takes no pride in breaking a record for vetoes...The governor takes pride

in standing up for what he believes in and in keeping the promises he made to the people who voted for him. If that means a veto, then so be it."

Gibbons also defended himself, arguing that his veto pen ultimately

saved taxpayers over \$1 billion on new taxes, claiming that many of the bills he vetoed were "clearly driven by special interests, by the trial lawyers and unions. They were not in the best interest of citizens."

But lawmakers and others argue that the real problem is a lack of communication between Gibbons and the Legislature. Danny Thompson, a former assemblyman and head of the state AFL-CIO, blames Gibbons for that breakdown, saying most governors make their agenda clear to lawmakers from the outset, something he says Gibbons has never done.

"I've been here 29 years, and normally a governor communicates with the Legislature during the session about what he likes and what he doesn't, and there's a compromise," Thompson said. "[Gibbons] is not engaged in the process. If you talk to anyone here, they've seen nothing like it. It makes no sense."

Gibbons conceded that he has had a tough relationship with the lawmakers, but said it was inevitable there would be conflicts given that he is the first Republican governor since Bob List in 1981 to govern with both houses of the Legislature controlled by Democrats.

"There is nothing wrong with vetoes. The system was designed for the process of vetoes," Gibbons said. (LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL, RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL, LAS VEGAS SUN)

PAWLENTY WON'T SEEK THIRD TERM: MINNESOTA Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R) announced last week that he will not seek a third term. The move was widely viewed as a precursor to Pawlenty seeking the 2010 Republican nomination for president. The governor denied he would be making a White House run, though

"If the Legislature would stop sending over so many bad bills, the governor would not have to veto them."

he coyly added that he was “not ruling anything in or out.” The announcement set off an immediate flurry of activity among Republicans looking to succeed him, starting with House Minority Leader Marty Seifert, who announced he was stepping down from his post to consider whether to launch a gubernatorial campaign. At least five other Republicans are thought to be considering stepping into the ring, including Senate Minority Leader David Senjem and his assistant, Sen. David Hann. A long list of Democrats are also poised to run, including Sen. Tom Bakk, chairman of the Senate Taxes Committee, House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher, former House Minority Leader Matt Entenza and former U.S. Sen. Mark Dayton. (MINNEAPOLIS STAR-TRIBUNE)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: Although the **TEXAS** Legislature adjourned without endorsing legislation to extend the lives of the state Department of Transportation, Department of Insurance and three others set to expire in 2010, Gov. Rick Perry (R) said he has no plans to call a special session. Perry said he is looking at several options for keeping the agencies functioning, but that it is “way too early to be talking about special sessions” (AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN). • **KANSAS** Gov. Mark Parkinson (D) pleaded for Sunflower State abortion activists to ratchet down inflammatory dialogue in the wake of the shooting death of a Wichita physician who performed late-term abortions. Parkinson called the rhetoric “not helpful,” adding that “People that are pro-life are not terrorists and people who are pro-choice are not baby killers. They are people that have a different view on a very controversial issue” (TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL). • **CONNECTICUT** lawmakers endorsed SB 913, a bill that would strip the Constitution State governor of the power to appoint a U.S. Senator in case of a vacancy. The bill heads to Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R), who opposes it (HARTFORD COURANT). • **WEST VIRGINIA** lawmakers endorsed all 15 proposals Gov. Joe Manchin (D) put forth in last week’s three-day special session. Approved measures include a tax break for parents of children with autism; a plan to expand the development of post-mining land use plans for mountaintop-removal sites; and three of the governor’s education initiatives that didn’t make it through the regular legislative session (CHARLESTON GAZETTE). • Former U.S. Attorney Chris Christie easily grabbed the **NEW JERSEY** Republican Party’s gubernatorial nomination last week. Christie will challenge incumbent Gov. Jon Corzine (D), who is seeking re-election (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK]).

— Compiled by RICH EHISEN

In the hopper

At any given time, State Net tracks tens of thousands of bills in all 50 states, the US Congress and the District of Columbia. Here’s a snapshot of what’s in the legislative works:

Number of Prefiles last week: 60

Number of Intros last week: 1,181

Number of Enacted/Adopted last week: 1,972

Number of Prefiles to date: 31,936

Number of Intros to date: 141,142

Number of 2009 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 28,356

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(measures current as of 6/3/2009)
Source: State Net database

Hot issues

B **USINESS:** The **CALIFORNIA** Senate approves SB 797, which would prohibit manufacture, sale or distribution of bottles, cups or containers containing more than 0.1 parts per billion of the chemical bisphenol-A, or BPA, which some studies have linked to diseases like cancer. It moves to the Assembly (**SACRAMENTO BEE**). • Also in **CALIFORNIA**, the Assembly approves AB 666, which requires local governments to ensure there are adequate local fire protection services before approving new subdivisions in fire-prone areas. The measure moves to the Senate (**STATE NET**). • **FLORIDA** Gov. Charlie Crist (R) signs HB 903, which restores a cap on fees for lawyers who represent Sunshine State workers in workers' compensation appeals for on-the-job injuries. The state Supreme Court removed those caps last year (**MIAMI HERALD**). • The **CONNECTICUT** House endorses SB 1080, legislation that would require most restaurants to post the calories contained in their menu items. The bill, which would apply to national chains with at least 15 restaurants and exclude small family-owned restaurants, local delicatessens, grocery stores, and sandwich shops, now moves to Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) for review (**HARTFORD COURANT**). • The **OREGON** Senate endorses HB 2726, which would also require chains with 15 or more outlets to post calorie information for their menu items. The bill heads to Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D), who is expected to sign it (**STATESMAN JOURNAL [SALEM]**). • The **MAINE** House and Senate also take on the calorie-count issue by approving HB 878, which would require chains with 20 or more outlets nationwide to post their menu items' calorie counts. The bill faces another vote in each chamber (**BANGOR DALY NEWS**). • **SOUTH CAROLINA** Gov. Mark Sanford (R) vetoes HB 3301, legislation to increase regulation on Palmetto State payday lenders by limiting borrowers to one loan at a time and instituting a one-day waiting period between a customer's first seven loans, and a two-day waiting period for subsequent loans. Sanford said he vetoed the bill because it did not place similar limitations on banks and credit card companies (**SPARTANBURG HERALD-JOURNAL**).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate endorses SB 484, which would make it illegal to obtain ephedrine, pseudoephedrine or related drugs without a prescription. Those drugs, which are commonly found in over-the-counter cold medications, are also used in the manufacture of illegal methamphetamine. The bill moves to the Assembly (**SACRAMENTO BEE**). • **ARIZONA** corrections officials announce they will no longer keep prisoners in outdoor holding cells until those units are retrofitted to provide shade and water. The decision came in response to the heat-related death of a female inmate who was left in an outdoor cell for four hours in temperatures that reached 107.5 degrees (**ARIZONA REPUBLIC**).

[PHOENIX]). • The U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals rules that the Second Amendment doesn't bar state or local governments from regulating guns. The decision upholds strict gun ordinances in two **ILLINOIS** cities, Chicago and suburban Oak Park. Gun advocates say they will appeal the ruling (LOS ANGELES TIMES).

EDUCATION: The **CONNECTICUT** Senate allows SB 939, legislation that would have removed a requirement that qualified professionals who are seeking to become teachers take content-area classes on subjects they already know, to die without a final vote. The bill, which would have still required applicants to obtain a teaching credential, was approved in both chambers but needed Senate concurrence on changes made in the House (HARTFORD COURANT).

ENVIRONMENT: FLORIDA Gov. Charlie Crist (R) signs SB 360, which allows developers in the most urban Sunshine State counties to add more housing developments without expanding roads, and permits local governments to designate new urban areas that would also be exempt from road-building requirements (MIAMI HERALD).

HEALTH & SCIENCE: The **OREGON** House approves SB 327, which would allow naturopath doctors to prescribe a broad class of synthetic drugs, including medications for hypertension and depression as well as antibiotics. Naturopaths are currently limited to drugs that can be "naturally delivered." The bill moves to Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D), who is expected to sign it into law (OREGONIAN [PORTLAND]). • **CONNECTICUT** lawmakers endorse HB 6200, a bill that would prohibit state health officials from disciplining doctors for prescribing long-term antibiotic treatment to patients with Lyme disease as long as the diagnosis and treatment are documented and the patient was clinically diagnosed or had symptoms consistent with a diagnosis. It moves to Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) for review (HARTFORD COURANT)

IMMIGRATION: Saying it would have let driver's licenses and ID cards be issued to people who are knowingly breaking immigration law, **MAINE** Gov. John Baldacci (D) vetoes SB 492, legislation that would have removed a requirement that driver's license applicants show proof of legal residence in the United States (BANGOR DAILY NEWS).

The week in session

States in Regular Session: AZ, CA, CT, DC, DE, IL, KS, LA, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, US, VT, WI

States in Recess: IL

States in Special Session: CA "c", CT "b" (Projected), IN "a", KY "b" (06/15/2009)

States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2009: AL, KY

States Projected to Adjourn: AZ, TN

States Adjourned in 2009: AK, AL, AR, CO, CT, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IN, KS, KY, MD, MN, MO, MS, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OK, SC, SD, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY

State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2009: AZ "a", AZ "b", CA "a", CA "b", CT "a", FL "a", MS "a", UT "a", VT "a", WV "a"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(session information current as of 6/4/2009)
Source: State Net database



SOCIAL POLICY: The **NEVADA** Legislature overrides Gov. Jim Gibbons' (R) veto of SB 283, which allows couples, both same-sex and heterosexual, to secure domestic partner contracts that essentially give them the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual married couples. The measure makes the Silver State the 17th to recognize the relationships of same-sex couples (NEW YORK TIMES). • Still in **NEVADA**, Gibbons signs SB 207, which prohibits discrimination in public places, such as restaurants and hotels, based on sexual orientation (LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL). • **NEW HAMPSHIRE** Gov. John Lynch (D) signs HB 436 and HB 310, which together legalize same-sex marriage. Lynch also signs HB 73, which clarifies the rights of religious organizations to refuse to participate in same-sex marriage ceremonies or celebrations and grants those groups exclusive control over doctrine, teaching and beliefs on who can marry within their faiths. The Granite State becomes the sixth to legally sanctify same-sex marriage. The law takes effect on January 1, 2010 (UNION LEADER [MANCHESTER]). • The **RHODE ISLAND** Senate endorses SB 195, which would allow domestic partners the right to claim the deceased body of their partner. It moves to the House (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • The **OREGON** House approves SB 786, which would require Beaver State employers to allow their workers to use certain leave for religious observance and bar restrictions on employees wearing religious clothing. It moves to Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) for consideration (STATESMAN JOURNAL [SALEM]).

In case you missed it

Under the Bush administration, the federal government took great pains to preempt state laws regulating everything from banks to car makers. But as we noted in the June 1 issue of SNCJ, that is all changing under President Obama.

In case you missed it, the article can be found on our Web site at http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/06-01-2009/html

POTPOURRI: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate first rejects and then endorses SB 250, which requires dog and cat owners to sterilize their pets or, in absence of that, to prevent them from roaming at large. The measure, which would exempt working and hunting dogs and indoor-only cats, would also require dog owners to obtain a permit should they choose not to sterilize their pets. It moves to the Assembly (SACRAMENTO BEE). • Still in **CALIFORNIA**, the Senate approves SB 38, which would implement a Silver Alert system to notify the public of missing senior. It moves to the Assembly (STATE NET). • The **CONNECTICUT** House and Senate each unanimously endorses HB 6552, legislation that adds gorillas, chimpanzees and orangutans to the list of exotic animals which may not be legally owned by private individuals. Current law already bars private ownership of a litany of exotic wild creatures, including wolves, bears and most large wild cats, such as lions, tigers and cheetahs. The measure moves to Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) for review (HARTFORD COURANT). • **OREGON** Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) signs HB 2135, which would require landlords to inform renters that they may be exposed to secondhand smoke if

● they are renting in a complex or house where smoking was or is allowed. Landlords
● must disclose a property's smoking status as a standard part of the lease agreement
● (STATESMAN JOURNAL [SALEM]). • Also in OREGON, the Senate sends
● Kulongoski HB 2470, legislation that would prohibit dog breeders from owning more
than 50 sexually intact canines at a time, if the dogs are 2 years or older and used
for breeding. The bill also bans breeders from keeping dogs kept in stacked cages
and requires them to maintain health records for each dog. Kulongoski is expected
to sign the measure into law (OREGONIAN [PORTLAND]). • COLORADO Gov.
Bill Ritter (D) signs HB 1094, legislation that prohibits Centennial State drivers
from sending cell phone text message while the wheel. The measure also bars anyone
younger than 18 from using a cell phone at all while driving (DENVER POST).

— Compiled by RICH EHISEN

Once around the statehouse lightly

TV LAND, TEXAS STYLE: While sine die rarely comes a moment too soon for most observers, the end of the TEXAS legislative session left Gov. Rick Perry wanting more. While the gov generally praised lawmakers, he chafed at the Legislature's inability to address the impending demise of several state agencies that will sunset in 2010 unless lawmakers say otherwise. As the *San Antonio News* reports, Perry thought the confusing close of the session looked familiar, saying "If I could tell you that I understood what happened last night, I would be an absolute genius. I thought I was watching an episode of 'Lost' for a moment." Perry wasn't the only one using TV metaphors, however. Reacting to the death of a favored bill, Sen. John Carona compared the session to an episode of "Seinfeld," a.k.a. the show all about nothing. Nobody referenced "Lost in Space," which may have been just as appropriate.

ALL, UH, MOST BETS ARE OFF: With both men distracted by serious budget matters right now, neither CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger nor his FLORIDA counterpart, Gov. Charlie Crist, has gotten around to making the traditional gubernatorial wager on the NBA finals showdown between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Orlando Magic. But fear not: the Catholic Church is going where harried governors fear to tread. As the *Miami Herald* reports, Los Angeles Cardinal Roger Mahony thinks the Lakers are a shoo-in, and has bet a case of Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels-labeled wines to back it up. Au contraire, counters Orlando Bishop Thomas Wenski, who has put up three key lime pies — the



Sunshine State’s official pie — four pounds of fresh shrimp and a bottle of oxygen, a sly dig at LA’s notoriously foul air. For what it’s worth, the nation’s First Hoopster, President Barack Obama, has picked the Lakers in six.

ONE WAY TO GO ABOUT IT: Like most governors, one of Schwarzenegger’s major budget headaches involves how to control the escalating cost of housing and caring for the Golden State’s rapidly growing prison population. As always, potential solutions abound. Take, for instance, a new directive from Captain Moussa Tiegboro Camara, the West African nation of Guinea’s newly-appointed anti-crime chief. Faced with overflowing prisons, *Reuters* reports that Camara, who was appointed by the nation’s military junta government, has asked citizens to burn all the armed bandits they can catch. No, that is not some euphemism, but a call to literally set them on fire. “The prisons are full and cannot take more people, and the situation cannot continue like that,” Camara said. Human rights groups are more than a little concerned, particularly since reports claim that much of the crime Camara is complaining about is being performed by soldiers from his own government.

BRONX STADIUM BRAWL: When it comes to spending money, the New York Yankees are never shy. Well, almost never. As the *Albany Times Union* reports, the Bronx Bombers threw some high heat at NEW YORK Assemblyman Richard Brodsky last week over his request to hand over documents related to public money spent on their shiny new \$1.5 billion stadium. During court testimony, team executives said complying with Brodsky’s demand would entail sifting through over a million e-mails and cost upward of \$5.5 million. Brodsky countered with some chin music of his own, noting that a lot of public dough went into building their new stadium, so it ought to step up to the plate with the info he has asked for. Much shouting ensued, prompting the judge to warn both parties to keep their eye on the ball, uh, argument at hand. A written ruling will follow within the next few weeks.

— By RICH EHISEN

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