

August 10, 2009

New Connectivity



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● The next issue of
 ● Capitol Journal will be
 ● available on August 17th.
 ●

Top Story

Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are all the rage with lawmakers these days. But some lawmakers are asking, "What's the rush?"

SNCJ Spotlight

Lawmakers learning pros and cons of social networking craze

Without question, social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook and MySpace have become a major part of today's political landscape. Spurred in part by the successful use of those mediums by Barack Obama in last fall's historic presidential election, lawmakers and government officials across the nation are now turning en masse to these and other "Web 2.0" social networking sites to communicate with their constituents. But while many political observers sing this trend's praises, not everyone is sold just yet.



Social networking sites have come a long way since arriving on the scene more than a decade ago. Once primarily the domain of college students, sites like MySpace and Facebook — which allow users to create a personal Web page that they can then connect to those of approved “friends” and “fans” — are growing exponentially in popularity among adults. According to the Web site *InsideFacebook.com*, there are now more than 70 million Facebook users in the U.S. alone, and over 200 million worldwide. While those age 18-25 still represent the largest single demographic (30 percent), users 26 and over now comprise fully twice that number, 60 percent, while 36 percent are over age 35. In all, the number of Facebook users over 45 has grown by 7.7 million since January.

Although MySpace has a similar number of total users, Facebook and Twitter — a “micro-blogging” site that allows users to send out messages of no more than 140 characters at a time — are clearly the social networking sites of choice for lawmakers. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 23 state legislative caucuses have a Facebook

page, while only the ILLINOIS Senate Democrats have a MySpace page (Prairie State Dems actually have both). Legislative bodies have also shown a strong affinity for Twitter, with NCSL reporting that at least 20 caucuses are “tweeting” messages to

their followers. Other social networking options growing in popularity include video and photo-posting sites like YouTube, Flickr and Picasa, among several others.

Dramatic growth has also been seen among individual lawmakers, with hundreds now possessing their own pages. For Web 2.0 advocate Ric Cantrell, chief deputy of the UTAH Senate, the avalanche of lawmakers getting into social networking comes not a moment too soon. In an interview, Cantrell told *SNCJ* that lawmakers everywhere have grown increasingly estranged from their constituents, which he says masks the reality that legislators “really are good people trying to solve problems.” In that regard, Cantrell believes social networking sites provide something critically important in modern society: an easy way for citizens to directly connect with the people they have sent to the statehouse to represent them.

“There simply is no better tool than Facebook for humanizing lawmakers,” Cantrell says. “In a time when legislators are increasingly seen as caricatures of

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: 77

Number of Intros last week: 415

Number of Enacted/Adopted last week: 412

Number of Prefiles to date: 32,988

Number of Intros to date: 148,182

Number of 2009 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 36,414

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(measures current as of 8/6/2009)
Source: State Net database

“In a time when legislators are increasingly seen as caricatures of real people, not using these tools really does border on political malpractice.”



real people, not using these tools really does border on political malpractice.”

He concedes, however, that their ultimate value is in how they are used.

“The same thing that makes you interesting at a neighborhood barbecue will make you interesting on Facebook,” Cantrell says. “Be friendly and informed. Talk with people. Be part of a community. Whatever you do, just be a human being and not the two-dimensional stereotype of a politician.”

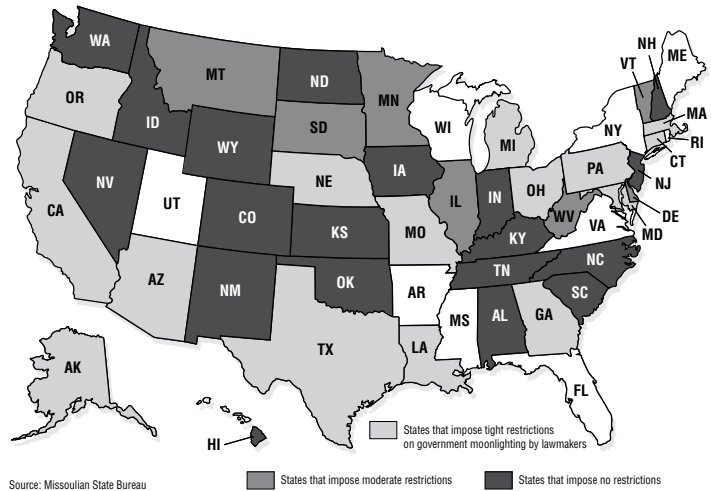
He also notes that the political benefits of Facebook, YouTube or Twitter go well beyond the humanizing of lawmakers. These mediums also offer a way for lawmakers to reach people with an unfiltered message in real time, one that allows lawmakers’ words to be absorbed in the context they are given rather than as just another TV

sound bite or snippet of a quote in a newspaper. Cantrell in fact believes so strongly in the impact social networking can have on citizen participation in the political process, he equates it to nothing less than an opportunity “to re-win the American revolution.”

That may or not be true, but the growing importance of social networking for lawmakers has definitely not been lost on the NCSL, which held three seminars on the topic during its annual meeting in Philadelphia in July. These included a session that walked lawmakers through the process of setting up their own Facebook page. All three sessions drew a large cross-section of participants, from those who already had blogs or Facebook pages to a plethora of those considering jumping into the fray for the first time. Most were enthusiastic. Others, such as MARYLAND Sen. Jennie Forehand (D), expressed serious concerns.

“There is not enough hours in the day to respond to all of the e-mails and other correspondence we already receive on a daily basis,” says Forehand, who attended two of the three seminars. “As a lawmaker, I want to carefully review all of the correspondence I receive and respond thoughtfully and carefully. So until I find four or five more hours a day, I will have to be very cautious about this.”

Bird’s eye view



States vary on moonlighting policies for lawmakers

States hold differing views on whether allowing legislators to hold second jobs in government service is a problem. Nine ban legislators from holding any other state or local government job, two forbid legislators from working a second job at the state level, and four limit legislators’ outside work to jobs in public schools. But seven states allow lawmakers to hold state or local government jobs as long as they aren’t paid for that work, six allow lawmakers to hold government jobs if they don’t conflict with their legislative duties, and 20 impose no restrictions on such moonlighting at all.



Forehand also worries about big issues like privacy, and even those that some people might think are inconsequential, like whether she may hurt someone's feelings if she rejects their "friend" request. "I'm just concerned this could get down to the junior high level," she says.

Overload is also a concern for MASSACHUSETTS Rep. Mark Falzone (D), who has a Facebook page. "There are times it can seem overwhelming," Falzone says. "But people like to talk through different media. In the end, Facebook is just

another tool for us to communicate with people." The bigger problem, he says, is overcoming the "false sense of immediacy" that some new media users bring into the communication process. He does not, however, share Forehand's concern over hurt feelings.

"The key with Facebook is filtering out the stuff that isn't coming from your constituents," Falzone says, noting that his

staff processes letters, e-mail and Facebook messages all the same, with constituents from within his district getting top priority for response. He notes that mass messages, regardless of the format they come in, rarely get through to him.

"The truth is, most lawmakers ignore mass e-mails and similar messages," he says.

Barbara O'Connor, a CALIFORNIA State University Sacramento professor and the director of the university's Institute for the Study of Politics and Media, says lawmakers and other government officials should heed that advice when it comes to their own messages and postings.

"Early adapters used Facebook and Twitter as it was intended, which was as a social networking tool," she says. "Many of the later adapters have handed these tools off to their consultants, who then use them as a burst event announcer. It's like telemarketing, and it really stinks."

O'Connor says she has begun to "de-friend" even close associates from across the political spectrum who "bury me with press releases or other political SPAM."

CALIFORNIA Assemblyman Roger Niello, a Republican, understands O'Connor's frustration. Niello, who has both Facebook and Twitter accounts, says he is always mindful of what people do and don't expect in digital interactions with him. He says that people who want more traditional political information can sign up for his e-mail newsletter through his legislative Web site.

"When you friend someone on Facebook, you're looking for a personal connection to that person," he says. "You're not looking for me to use it as a personal marketing tool."

Other pitfalls remain as well. Social networking sites can be addictive time consumers, particularly to new users. This often does not play well in a work

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setting. A recent report by the MASSACHUSETTS-based Nucleus Research Inc., for instance, showed that over 60 percent of workers accessed their Facebook pages at work and that one in 33 had built their entire profile during working hours. The study further noted that the average company which allows workers to access Facebook loses 1.5 percent of total employee productivity. While that figure is far from astounding, it does illustrate the potential for some observers to view social networking in a negative light.

New users must also understand the rapidly evolving nature of technology, says Meagan Doersch, Media and Public Affairs manager for NCSL. “What is new today could be completely obsolete by tomorrow,” she says. “Because of that, it may not be for everyone. You really must choose your own comfort level.”

But neither these nor other yet to be discovered drawbacks cause much worry for UTAH’s Cantrell, who says that the benefits of lawmakers using social networking sites far outweigh the drawbacks.

“You have to believe down to the core of your heart and soul that citizens have a critical role in government,” he says. “If you do, these tools are indispensable.”

— *By RICH EHISEN*

Budget & taxes

MIXED FINANCIAL NEWS FOR STATES: The flood of federal stimulus dollars into state and local governments offset their sharp drop in tax collections over the past few months, according to government data released last week. The Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that stimulus money, which has displaced sales and property taxes as the No. 1 source of revenue for state and local governments, lifted total revenues 7.5 percent in the second quarter, countering an 8 percent drop in tax collections. Stimulus cash also helped reverse a six month downward trend in state and local government spending, pushing expenditures up 4.8 percent.

“The money has caused a very sharp change in the path of the economy, which had been in steep decline,” said Chad Stone, chief economist at the left-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

But the Washington, D.C.-based think tank also delivered some negative state budget news last week, reporting that just two weeks into the new fiscal year, new shortfalls totaling \$24 billion have opened up in the adopted 2010 budgets of 12 states: CALIFORNIA, COLORADO, GEORGIA, HAWAII, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, MARYLAND, NEW MEXICO, UTAH, VIRGINIA, WASHINGTON and WYOMING.



And Joseph Henchman of the conservative Tax Foundation said with state revenues unlikely to bounce back quickly even if the recession ends soon, “I think we are more likely to see some broad-based tax increases” in the coming months. (USA TODAY, WALL STREET JOURNAL, CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES)

Upcoming stories

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

- **Pay to play**
- **Alternative energy**
- **State budgets**

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: While the federal deficit has ballooned to a record \$1.7 trillion this year, federal tax revenues have dropped nearly 18 percent, the biggest single-year decline since the Great Depression. In addition to declines in individual and corporate income tax receipts of 22 percent and 57 percent, respectively, Social Security tax receipts could drop for the second time since 1940, and Medicare taxes could drop for just the third time ever (MSNBC.COM). • In their increasingly desperate search for additional revenue, states across the nation are embracing the idea of making prison inmates pay their debt to society in cold, hard cash as well as hard time. For instance, **NEW YORK** Assemblyman James Tedisco (R) introduced a bill this session that would charge wealthy inmates \$90 a day for room and board, and officials in Des Moines County, **IOWA** considered charging prisoners for toilet paper (ASSOCIATED PRESS, BLOOMINGTON PANTAGRAPH). • **VIRGINIA** Gov. Timothy M. Kaine (D) said last week that state agencies will have to cut \$700 million to \$1.5 billion more this year. He’s requested proposals for cuts of up to 15 percent and will announce the specific trims by Labor Day (WASHINGTON POST). • **PENNSYLVANIA** Gov. Ed Rendell (D) has signed what he called a “bridge” budget to fund general government operations and health and safety activities while a six-member House-Senate conference committee tries to resolve a weeks-long budget impasse. The bridge budget is the skeletal remains of a spending plan advanced by Senate Republicans, which Rendell drastically trimmed using his line-item veto authority. He hopes its lack of funding for education and aid to local governments, among other things, will exert pressure for legislative action on a full budget (STATE NET). • Top House Democrats in **PENNSYLVANIA** publicly acknowledged last week that Rendell’s controversial proposal to increase the state’s personal income tax rate from 3.07 percent to 3.57 percent for three years was dead. The tax plan has been the central sticking point in budget negotiations (PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER). • The administration of **HAWAII** Gov. Linda Lingle (R) delivered formal layoff notices last week to about 1,100 state workers who will lose their jobs in November because of the state’s budget deficit. Lingle suggested additional layoffs might be necessary (HONOLULU ADVERTISER). • **NEW YORK** Gov. David Paterson (D) signed legislation authorizing extensions of several counties’ sales tax rates, mortgage recording taxes, and other local initiatives (POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL). • A federal judge denied an emergency request from **DELAWARE**’s professional



sports leagues and the National Collegiate Athletic Association to stop the state from launching sports betting at its three racinos while a lawsuit challenging the legality of that heads toward a December trial (NEWS JOURNAL [NEW CASTLE-WILMINGTON]).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Politics & leadership

NV LAWMAKERS KEEP GOV UNDER THUMB: During its regular session, which ended June 1, NEVADA’s Democrat-controlled Legislature was assertive in its dealings with Republican Gov. Jim Gibbons, overhauling the budget he proposed and then overriding his veto of its own spending and tax plans. Last week, lawmakers made it clear the governor wouldn’t have it any easier just because the regular session is over.

During a meeting of the Legislature’s Interim Finance Committee, lawmakers first questioned Gibbons’ request to add 10 positions to oversee the spending of stimulus money earmarked for energy, forcing him to pare down that number to three. Then they denied his request to create a new Cabinet-level “stimulus coordinator”

“They stuck their partisan political noses in the middle of it and screwed everything up.”

position, placing the job under the supervision of the state Controller instead. Finally they rejected his plan to spend \$10.5 million of the stimulus on home weatherization, maintaining

that more money needed to be directed to contractors than Gibbons had proposed.

Gibbons slammed the Democrats for their actions.

“They stuck their partisan political noses in the middle of it and screwed everything up,” he said. “It’s an absolute outrage.”

But Democratic lawmakers said their actions had less to do with partisan politics than with their lack of confidence in the first-term governor.

“There is very little trust in his judgment, his ability and his appointments,” said Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie (D). “This is a consequence of his actions during the session, when he completely disengaged. We don’t have confidence in him.”

Leslie added that under a different Republican chief executive, like former Gov. Kenny Guinn, the Legislature wouldn’t need to get so involved.

“If this was Guinn, this would not be happening,” she said.

Observers say there are other reasons for legislators’ increased activism, such as the fact that until last year, control of the Legislature was divided — with Republicans holding a majority in the Senate and Democrats having the edge in the

Assembly — often leading to compromises. With Democrats now controlling both houses, there's little incentive for compromise.

Another contributing factor is that there's a lot to fight over. A billion and a half federal stimulus dollars are headed NEVADA's way, a windfall for a state with very little money to spend right now.

"We've never gotten into this much detail," said Sen. Randolph Townsend (R), "but we've never seen these billions flying into the state." (LAS VEGAS SUN)

RECESSION EASY ON MID-ATLANTIC LOBBYISTS: Few industries have gotten through the last year and a half without taking a big financial hit. But one that appears to have done just that is statehouse lobbying, at least in a pair of Mid-Atlantic states.

Lobbyists in MARYLAND's capital made \$24.7 million during the six-month period that included the state's 90-day legislative session, according to official figures. Although that's about \$400,000 less than they made over the same period last year, Annapolis was considerably busier then, with a high-stakes special session in which lawmakers raised taxes and legalized slot machine gambling. Moreover, six of MARYLAND's top 10 lobbyists actually earned more than they did last year.

Lobbyists in VIRGINIA, likewise, say they didn't notice much of a drop off in activity this session, which featured tough battles over a ban on smoking in restaurants and regulation of payday lenders and energy companies.

"I'm not aware of any dilution," said Charles J. Davis III, a Richmond lobbyist whose clients include tobacco companies. "In fact, it wouldn't surprise me if it's gone up some."

Several lobbyists said that while overall spending may have been relatively steady, some lobbyists and clients experienced ups and downs.

"A couple of clients have had to cut back, while at the same time, we have also been fortunate enough to be retained by some new clients who had legislative needs, both related and unrelated to the budget," said Joel D. Rozner, the highest-earning lobbyist in Annapolis.

One of those new clients was FedEx, which paid Rozner \$67,913 to fight a bill dealing with the classification of workers as independent contractors.

But even some businesses and nonprofit groups that have been forced to make deep cost cuts haven't let go of their hired help in the state capitols. For instance, MARYLAND's State Medical Society, the largest organization representing doctors there, has had to lay off staff members and scale back social and networking events significantly. But the organization spent \$314,146 on lobbying in the six-month period that ended in April, nearly \$20,000 more than it spent the year before. And it maintains that such spending is more important now than ever.

"You need to be adequately represented when money is tight and the decisions are tougher," said Gene M. Ransom III, the organization's chief executive. "Advocacy is too important to cut." (WASHINGTON POST)



Corzine’s Executive Order No. 148 freezes state development approvals in areas where a sitting mayor has been charged with public corruption but refuses to step down. The order further directs state departments and authorities to review all development projects in those locales. Although it doesn’t specifically mention Suarez, who is charged with accepting a \$10,000 bribe from an FBI informant posing as a developer, the order came just one day after the mayor said he would fight the charges and not resign his position.

The order won’t impact the towns of Secaucus and Hoboken, whose mayors were also caught in the scandal and stepped down more than a week ago. It will,

“We will not tolerate any impropriety, or even the appearance of impropriety, regarding the conduct of elected officials in NEW JERSEY.”

however, ramp up the pressure on Carlstadt mayor William Roseman, who remains in office three months after he was charged with official misconduct, conspiracy and theft by deception in a separate case. Roseman is accused of allowing his former wife to stay on the town’s health and prescription drug plans after the couple divorced nine years ago.

“We will not tolerate any impropriety, or even the appearance of impropriety, regarding the conduct of elected officials in NEW JERSEY,” Corzine said in a statement regarding the order, adding that “If officials under this cloud refuse to do the responsible thing and resign, then we must take action to protect responsible government and the best interests of taxpayers.”

But Democrats and Republicans alike immediately accused Corzine, who is trailing GOP gubernatorial challenger Chris Christie by double digits in his bid for re-election, of using the situation to boost his own political fortunes.

“I unfortunately think it’s a bit of grandstanding, but if he wants to grandstand a tragedy in NEW JERSEY, I guess that’s his choice.”

“The (Republican) mayor of Carlstadt was indicted, and it didn’t bother Jon Corzine in the least,” said Stephen Pellino, leader of the local Democratic Party in Ridgefield. “He never called for a takeover. He never called for a resignation. But in Ridgefield, it becomes politically expedient because Suarez is a Democrat, and the governor believes he’s being tainted. He’s hurting the people of Ridgefield in the process.”

Christie was careful not to appear to be making his own political hay, but still accused Corzine of acting out of self interest. “I unfortunately think it’s a bit of grandstanding, but if he wants to grandstand a tragedy in NEW JERSEY, I guess that’s his choice,” Christie said.

In case you missed it

NEW JERSEY has long lived with the reputation as a state rife with political corruption. But a recent FBI sting that stretched from the Garden State all the way to Switzerland is shocking even by that standard.

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

http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/08-03-2009/html

William Dressel, executive director of the NEW JERSEY League of Municipalities, also voiced concern over the order, questioning the impact it could have on legitimate projects, noting “non-tainted projects should go through. We don’t want to penalize everyone for projects that have been done legitimately.”

Suarez also remained defiant after the order, saying “I’m still able to do the things I want to do as the mayor of Ridgefield.” (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK], PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER)

AK AG MULLS ETHICS OVERHAUL: New ALASKA Attorney General Dan Sullivan (R) said last week that the state Executive Branch Ethics Act needs to be reformed in order to prevent bad-faith misuse of the process. In a 19-page opinion, Sullivan advocated for several reforms, including no longer giving interim reports from investigators to people who bring complaints and allowing the state to cover legal bills for public officials who are exonerated. Sullivan also suggested charging the cost of “bad faith” ethics complaints to the people who file them, and barring those people from filing any future complaints. Sullivan’s opinion comes in the wake of the resignation of former Gov. Sarah Palin (R), who was the subject of numerous ethics complaints during her two-plus years in office. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Hollis French (D) and House counterpart Jay Ramras (R) were both lukewarm to the idea. French called complaining about government behavior a “bedrock principle,” while Ramras called it “premature and a reaction to a sensational circumstance.” (ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: Calling his state’s 46 percent high school dropout rate “unacceptable,” **NEW MEXICO** Gov. Bill Richardson (D) introduced a plan for the state to partner with local community groups to get as many as 10,000 high school dropouts back into school. It was the first of what is expected to be a package of eight proposals over the next six weeks aimed at decreasing the state’s high school dropout rate. Richardson said the project will be funded by \$9 million in federal stimulus money (ASSOCIATED PRESS, SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN). • **GEORGIA** Gov. Sonny Perdue (R) called on Congress to establish a national water policy, saying a recent federal court ruling that limits the Peach State’s ability to draw water from

The week in session

States in Regular Session: MI(House), NC, PA, US(Senate)

States in Recess: CA, DC, MI(Senate), NJ, NY, PR, US(House), WI

States in Special Session: AK “a”, AZ “c”

Special Sessions in Recess: CA “c”, CT “b”, DE “a”

States in Informal Session: MA

States in Skeleton Session: OH

States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2010: AL, FL, KY

States Projected to Adjourn: NC

States in Special Session Projected to Adjourn: AK “a”

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

State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2009: AZ “a”, AZ “b”, CA “a”, CA “b”, CT “a”, CT “c”, FL “a”, IL “a”, IL “b”, IN “a”, KY “a”, MS “a”, MS “b”, MS “c”, NV “a”, NY “a-o”, TX “a”, UT “a”, VT “a”, WI “a”, WV “a”, WV “b”

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(session information current as of 8/7/2009)
Source: State Net database

bars drivers from using two hands to operate a phone or other electronic device, allows motorists to dial a number on their cell phone while operating the vehicle. The measure takes effect January 1 (FOSTER'S DAILY DEMOCRAT [DOVER]).

- **ILLINOIS** Gov. Pat Quinn (D) signs HB 71, which bans Prairie State drivers from sending or receiving text messages, or from surfing the Internet while behind the wheel (CHICAGO TRIBUNE).
- Still in **ILLINOIS**, Quinn also signs HB 72, which bars the use of cell phones while driving in a school zone or in a highway construction zone. The measure exempts those using a hands-free device or calls made to report an emergency (STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [SPRINGFIELD]).

— Compiled by RICH EHISEN

Once around the statehouse lightly

DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN AND AGAIN: When KENTUCKY Gov. Steve Beshear signs a bill, he likes to be sure it is really, truly and completely signed. In that regard, the gov is definitely on track with House Bill 3. As the *Cincinnati Enquirer* reports, Beshear has inked his name to that measure at least seven times so far, including once again last week. His rationale? The bill covers a wide range of things, from economic development tax incentives to legalizing slot machines at race tracks, and he wants to be sure “we are educating the folks as to what we’ve done.” The Bluegrass State GOP, however, grumps that Beshear, a Democrat, is simply doing an extended bit of self promotion, all on the state nickel. They might want to gird up: the *Enquirer* says Beshear has at least two more signings in the works.

LOOSE LIPS sink ships, and they may also shoot a hole in KENTUCKY Attorney General Jack Conway’s bid for the U.S. Senate. As the *USA Today* reports, Conway wowed the crowd in the wrong way last week when he swore twice during the annual Fancy Farm Picnic, a fundraiser for the St. Jerome Catholic Church and the state’s traditional venue for kicking off such campaigns. Conway’s departures from the King’s English drew an audible response from the crowd, particularly the bit where he referred to himself as “one tough son of a b—.” He then exacerbated the matter by saying he was only quoting former U.S. Sen. Wendell Ford, a claim he later admitted was incorrect. Conway spent the rest of the week apologizing, first to St. Jerome’s and then to Ford. The church said it will formally bar candidates from swearing during future events.



A LUSTY PROPOSITION: Don't look now, but a lot of federal stimulus money is being spent on LUST these days. Hold your horses: we're not talking about yet another lawmaker's illicit entanglement with an intern. Rather, as the *New York Times* reports, this LUST refers only to the Leaking Underground Storage Tanks program in the federal American Relief and Recovery Act. The measure does, however, promise penalties for states that do not spend their portion of the \$200 million allotment quickly enough, officially dubbed a "failure to perform." We're sensing a theme here.

A BET'S A BET: Or is it? When LSU met up with the University of Texas in the College Baseball World Series a few months back, LOUISIANA Gov. Bobby Jindal was pretty confident the Tigers would walk away with the crown. Not surprisingly, TEXAS Gov. Rick Perry felt his Longhorns couldn't be beat. As gov's are wont to do, the two gov's made a friendly wager: a tray of Pelican State seafood if the Longhorns prevailed vs. some authentic Lone Star State barbecue if the Tigers came out on top. Jindal won the bet, but as the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* reports, it is six weeks down the road and he has yet to collect his feast. Perry's office says they are still "working out the details" but promises both to pay up soon and that it will be worth the wait.

— By *RICH EHISEN*

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