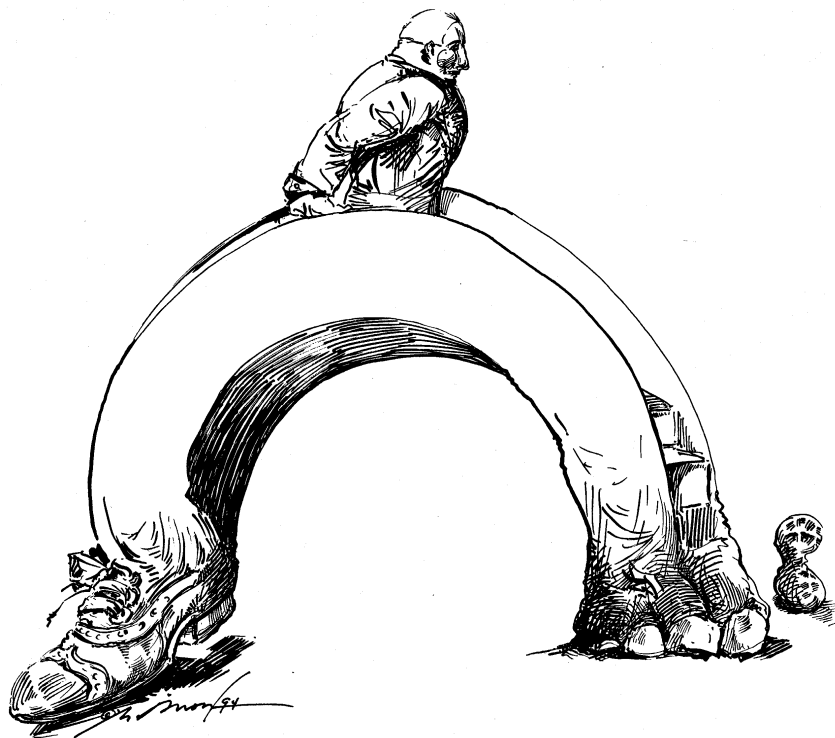


November 21, 2005

## Lawmaker to lobbyist: how soon is too soon?



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### Top Story

*In the first of a series of reports on some "under the radar" issues lawmakers will be facing in 2006, we look at state efforts to regulate how soon former lawmakers can become lobbyists — and begin influencing their former colleagues.*

## SNCJ Spotlight

### Issues 2006: Slowing the Revolving Door

**H**ow long should a former lawmaker be out of office before he or she begins lobbying the house of government they just left? It is a tricky question, one states have been trying to answer for years — with questionable success. At issue is how to balance the rights of former legislators trying to make a living in their area of expertise with the interests of a skeptical voting public that tends to view "government ethics" as an oxymoron.

To date, 27 states have varying “revolving door” laws that restrict how soon former lawmakers can begin lobbying their old haunts. MARYLAND, for example, prohibits legislators from becoming lobbyists for a minimum of a year or “until the conclusion of the next regular session that begins after the member leaves office.” Twenty other states have one-year limits, while a handful have very strict laws with two-year waiting periods, including ALABAMA, FLORIDA, IOWA, KENTUCKY, LOUISIANA and NEW YORK.

In ALASKA and KANSAS, legislators can’t apply for a job if the government contract for it was approved in the previous term. OKLAHOMA has a similar provision, but the waiting period is two years. ARIZONA says you can’t disclose privileged information for two years. Some states also have revolving door exceptions, such as the WASHINGTON statute that allows former lawmakers to immediately offer their services as long as they do so on a strictly volunteer basis.

A few more joined the fray this year, as earlier this spring GEORGIA Governor Sonny Perdue signed “arguably the strongest ethics bill in Georgia history” which included a provision barring former lawmakers, state constitutional officers and agency heads from becoming lobbyists for one year. Perdue was followed in October by TENNESSEE Governor Phil Bredesen (D) who, in response to a “crisis of public confidence” after nine current or former state and local officials were indicted in the wake of the “Tennessee Waltz” investigation, announced he will ban senior administration officials from lobbying state government for one year after leaving their state jobs. All senior level state employees will also participate in an ethics program.

“This is not an exhaustive list, and by no means a ‘be all, end all’ in our ethics reform effort,” Bredesen said. “But it’s a start. To put it simply, trust must be earned. And by going ahead and implementing these recommendations for the Executive Branch, we’re taking that very important first step toward earning back the trust of the Tennessee people.” Bredesen will also ask the legislature to enact a series of its own reforms when it convenes its regular session in January.

## *The Week in Session*

States in Regular Session: DC, MA, MI, OH, PA, US, WI

States in Special Session: PA "a"

States in Recess: CA, IL, NH, NJ, NY

Special Sessions in Recess:  
CA "a", CT "c", CT "d", DE "a", DE "b",  
OK "a"

States in Special Session  
Projected to Adjourn: LA "a"

States Adjourned in 2005: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY

States in Special Session  
Adjourned in 2005: AK "a", AL "a", CT "a", CT "b", GA "a", KS "a", ME "a", ME "b", MN "a", MO "a", MS "a", MS "b", MS "c", MS "d", MS "e", NM "a", NV "a", SD "a", TX "a", TX "b", UT "a", UT "b", VT "a", WI "a", WV "a", WV "b", WV "c", WV "d", WV "e"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

Source: State Net, 11/18/05

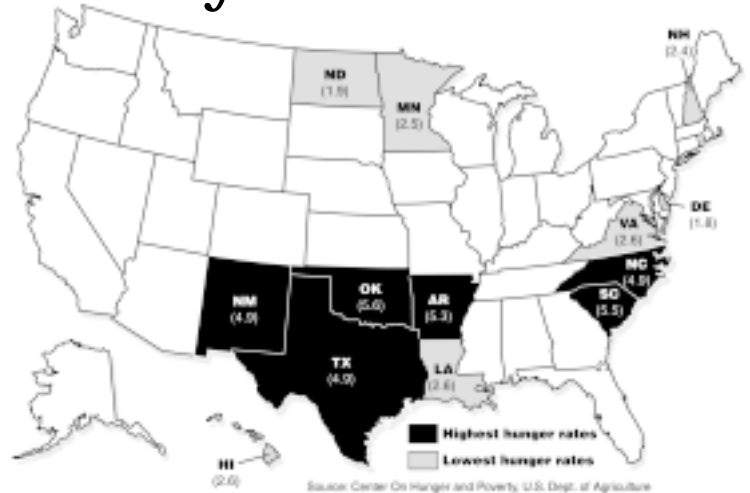
In NEW JERSEY this fall, Democratic governor-elect Jon Corzine made “restoring trust” in government a focal point of his campaign. He often derided the Garden State’s previously enacted lobbying statutes, saying that “current laws that restrict former government employees from lobbying on issues they ‘substantially’ worked on in government have proven ineffective and have been abused by those who want to profit from their government service.”

Corzine wants to enact a one-year ban on former senior-level executive branch government workers personally profiting from a decision made during their tenure. Senior staff, including paid members of public commissions, would also be banned from becoming lobbyists for a year. Like Bredesen, Corzine also hopes to see state lawmakers enact their own reforms as well.

But revolving door legislation was not popular everywhere this year. In MONTANA, Governor Brian Schweitzer (D) also pushed hard for lobbying controls, throwing his weight behind House Bill 363, which featured a two-year ban on legislators and public officials elected to statewide office from becoming lobbyists or participating in a business that directly benefited from their activities. Schweitzer prompted lawmakers to go along, declaring, “I’m dead serious about this ethics stuff,” but to no avail — the bill died a quiet death in committee.

Peggy Kerns, director of the National Conference of State Legislatures’ Center for Ethics in Government, says it is very difficult to determine if revolving door laws really work, but says the princely sums of money being tossed around state-

## Bird’s eye view



### *Hunger a growing problem in many states*

OKLAHOMA has the nation’s highest rate of hunger, according to a recent survey by the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture. That study, Household Food Security in the United States 2004, indicated that 5.6 percent of Sooner State households regularly experience hunger — defined as a “recurrent or involuntary lack of food.” Other states with high hunger rates included SOUTH CAROLINA (5.5 percent) and ARKANSAS (5.3 percent), well above the national average of 3.9 percent. States faring best in the survey were DELAWARE (1.8 percent) and NORTH DAKOTA (1.9 percent). The survey said over 3 million children lived in households that experienced hunger in 2004, something the Center On Hunger and Poverty at Brandeis University in MASSACHUSETTS says can impede cognitive development and cause social and health problems. The accompanying map shows the states with the highest and lowest rates of hunger. The full report can be viewed at <http://www.centeronhunger.org/index.html>.

houses these days often make lawmakers feel compelled to do something to show the public they are trying to stay above board.

“I think the reason it has become a real issue is the amount of money that is in place to influence public policy, through campaign contributions, through grass roots lobbying, through other means like wining and dining,” Kerns says. “Legislatures are responding to the public concern about the large amount of money that is in play here.”

And a large amount it is. According to a recent report from the Washington D.C.-based Center for Public Integrity, a nonpartisan group that researches and reports on public policy issues, lobbyists spent \$953 million in statehouses in 2004. At close to a billion dollars a year in business, those within the lobbying arenas question whether laws restricting only certain members of the lobbying fraternity will have any real effect on how the industry does business.

“We manage issues in all 50 states. I have noticed no impact [from revolving door laws] in our ability to hire good firms and get things done,” says Constance Campanella, President and CEO of the VIRGINIA-based Stateside Associates. “It’s not like we’re dying of thirst on a desert island and only one person has a glass of water and we have to wait two years to get a drink.”

Kerns agrees that revolving door laws are not perfect, but says they are often better than nothing at all.

“I do think that any period of time that restricts a public official from coming back to lobby the same public entity they just came from is a good thing,” says Kerns. “I do think that tends to weaken their influence. Obviously states must think they work, otherwise they wouldn’t be doing it.”

“Revolving door laws are real, [not just window dressing],” agrees Steve Swatt, a former political reporter/analyst and senior counselor of public relations giant NCG Porter Novelli’s Sacramento branch. “Preventing individuals from lobbying their previous employers has an impact and would appear to prevent the potential quid pro quo scenario.”

But Swatt also acknowledges that all revolving door laws have at least one significant loophole.

“Certainly, you cannot stop someone from earning a living,” he says. “That’s why it’s difficult to have ironclad laws that are 100 percent effective.”

Swatt also says states will likely continue trying to slow the revolving door, if for no other reason than because “[Elected officials’] approval ratings are in the tank. So, in that effort to improve the public’s perception of legislators, legislatures increasingly are trying to boost accountability to the public.”

But Kerns says that no amount of legislation will ever get lawmakers or lobby-

ists to behave if they wouldn't do so on their own anyway.

“The revolving door laws are good because they do establish a great baseline for regulating behavior. That’s what all laws do,” she says. “But you can’t really legislate ethics. Ethics are how someone lives their life. No law will ever make someone more ethical.”

— By DON LIPPER

*State Net Capitol Journal editor Rich Ehsen contributed to this report.*

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# Budget & taxes

**S**CHWARZENEGGER PLOTTING COLOSSAL COMEBACK: Looking for a way to recover from his crushing defeat at the ballot box two weeks ago, CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) is apparently again thinking big. The governor has directed his staff to come up with a plan to address the state’s “highways, freeways, bridges, ports, the levees — everything that has to do with the infrastructure that will upgrade the state.” Such a plan might find greater bipartisan support than the governor’s failed reform agenda, but its price tag could be prohibitive. Schwarzenegger hasn’t let that deter him. In a recent interview, he said he told his team to “Give me the whole plan and all the options of how to finance that.... Let’s not Mickey Mouse around here and try to introduce a \$5-billion bond to fix transportation. It’s bogus. Or \$10 billion. It’s bigger than that.” Groups that have been working with the administration on the plan say its cost could top \$50 billion. A bill that high would not only require the state to borrow far more than the record \$15 billion approved by voters in 2004 to help balance the budget, but also likely necessitate some form of tax increase; neither prospect is likely to endear Republicans to the plan. But even Democrats, who have proposed \$40 billion in borrowing for various infrastructure projects in recent months, were a little dismayed at the idea of doing everything all at once. “We have to put this in the context of everything else we need,” said Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez (D). At the very least, though, the plan would get Schwarzenegger’s Election Day loss out of the news for a while. As Tony Quinn, co-editor of the California Target Book, a nonpartisan election guide, put it, “This will dominate what goes on at the Capitol for the next several months.” (LOS ANGELES TIMES)



**VOTERS' TAX AVERSION WANING?** This month, voters in CALIFORNIA, COLORADO and WASHINGTON rejected ballot measures that would have either limited state spending or rolled back a tax increase. And in NEW JERSEY, the state with the highest property taxes in the country, voters chose Democrat Jon S. Corzine as their governor, even though he promised them less of a reduction in their property taxes than his Republican challenger, Douglas R. Forrester. Some see those votes as a sign that voters' decades-old opposition to taxes, starting with California's passage of Proposition 13 — sharply limiting increases in property taxes — in 1978. "People are still concerned about spending, but it's not a front-burner issue for them," said John G. Matsusaka, president of the Initiative and Referendum Institute at the University of Southern California Law School. Matsusaka believes the recent hurricanes in the Gulf Coast may have raised the value Americans place on government spending for infrastructure and public safety. But tax opponents say there is no pro-spending trend. "I don't see it," said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. "I would be very sensitive to it and sweating over it if it were happening." Norquist said the recent election results were the product of factors specific to each state. In California, he said, voters were sour about the whole idea of the special election, while in Washington voters believed warnings that the state's roads and bridges were falling apart. In Colorado, according to Norquist, voters were taken in by a "traitor" Republican governor, Bill Owens. Norquist also pointed out that while Coloradans had voted to suspend the state's government spending cap, they rejected a \$2.1 billion bond measure to fund transportation projects at the same time. Kim Reuben, a public finance economist at the Urban Institute's Tax Policy Center, agrees that this month's votes are not enough to constitute a trend. But Reuben says that over the past several years, voters have shown more willingness to approve tax increases and bond issues for specific projects likely to produce tangible benefits. What voters still aren't willing to do, she says, is "just turn over money to the state and let officials decide how to spend it." (NEW YORK TIMES)

**BUDGETS IN BRIEF:** Last Tuesday, MISSISSIPPI Gov. Haley Barbour (R) submitted to lawmakers a \$4.7 billion budget plan for next fiscal year. The proposal, which includes raises for state workers and more funding for higher education, is largely contingent on how much federal money the state receives for hurricane relief and how well the state's economy performs (ASSOCIATED PRESS, COMMERCIAL APPEAL [JACKSON], CLARION-LEDGER [MEMPHIS]). • COLORADO Gov. Bill Owens (R) unveiled a spending plan last week that allocates roughly two-thirds of the \$440 million the state expects to





ents...and second to the members of the Republican caucus. You all trusted me to exercise good judgement, and I did not. I am sorry,” said Senate Majority Leader David “Chip” Brightbill (R). But even for lawmakers, there’s a silver lining. They are scheduled to receive a cost-of-living increase that will be unaffected by the repeal measure. The 3.8 percent adjustment will boost the old, pre-raise salaries for most of them from \$69,647 to \$72,182, which will make them the fourth-highest paid legislators in the nation, behind CALIFORNIA (\$110,880), MICHIGAN (\$79,650) and NEW YORK (\$79,500). (PATRIOT-NEWS (HARRISBURG), PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER)

**OH RULINGS HIGHLIGHT ELECTION LAW UNCERTAINTY:** A little over a week ago, the OHIO Elections Commission issued a pair of rulings declaring that an issue advocacy group called Citizens for a Strong Ohio transgressed the state’s election law back in 2000 when it ran ads claiming that a state Supreme Court justice seeking re-election sided with her campaign contributors in 70 percent of her votes. While issue advocacy groups are not subject to Buckeye State election law, the commission ruled that in advocating the defeat of a specific candidate, Citizens for a Strong Ohio had behaved as a political action committee and, in that capacity, had violated the state’s prohibition against making false statements in political ads. Despite originating five years ago, the Ohio case reflects the uncertain state of campaign finance law right now, says Candice Hoke, a professor of election and constitutional law at the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law at Cleveland State University. According to Hoke, campaign finance rules have been in flux since the passage of the federal McCain-Feingold Act. The Supreme Court upheld that law on a 5-4 decision, she said, but retiring Justice Sandra Day O’Connor was a swing vote in campaign finance cases, and the new court may go in a different direction. Hoke pointed out that the court has already agreed to hear cases from VERMONT and WISCONSIN dealing with the issue. “Campaign finance is an evolving area. To say we have much-settled law here is a mistake,” she said. William Todd, an attorney for Citizens for a Strong Ohio, concurs. Confirmation of Samuel Alito as O’Connor’s replacement, Todd says, will probably turn the court away from limits on campaigning and towards free speech. “I think you’re going to see an extreme backlash in the U.S. Supreme Court against the states,” Todd said. (ASSOCIATED PRESS, BEACON JOURNAL [AKRON])

**A TALE OF TWO AGs-ELECT IN VA:** Last Monday, Democrat R. Creigh Deeds announced his transition team for taking over the office of attorney general for the state of VIRGINIA. The unusual thing about the news was that it

came a week after Republican Robert F. McDonnell announced his transition team for the same post. In fact, Deeds actually trails McDonnell in an ongoing tally of the Nov. 8 vote. But McDonnell's lead — slim to begin with at only 1000 votes out of 2 million cast — shrank by more than half in the week between the dueling transition team speeches; at the time of Deeds' address, the State Board of Elections Web site showed the two candidates separated by only .03 of a percentage point. "Since the margin is so close and could go either way as we move through the process, I am preparing to transition into office to become the next attorney general of Virginia," Deeds said at his news conference in Richmond. At this point, a recount looks virtually certain, meaning the situation will probably not be resolved anytime soon. In acknowledgment of that fact, Gov. Mark R. Warner (D) provided state office space for both candidates, appropriately enough, on separate floors of the same building that houses the State Board of Elections. (VIRGINIAN-PILOT [NORFOLK], TIMES-DISPATCH [RICHMOND], ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**AT THE POLLS:** Bridgeport City Councilman Ed Gomes (D) defeated five other candidates in a special election last Monday to fill the District 23 seat in CONNECTICUT's Senate vacated by Ernest Newton II, who resigned in September over a bribery scandal. Although Gomes had his party's official endorsement, four of his opponents in the heavily Democratic district were also Democrats, yet he still managed to garner 49 percent of the vote. (ASSOCIATED PRESS, HARTFORD COURANT).

**POLITICS IN BRIEF:** Last week, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to review a challenge of a Civil War-era **FLORIDA** law barring felons from voting for life, effectively ending a five-year legal battle waged by civil-rights groups that alleged the law is racially discriminatory. The court's decision leaves Florida one of only three states — the other two are **KENTUCKY** and **VIRGINIA** — that impose lifetime bans on felons which can only be lifted by an appeals process (MIAMI HERALD). • A group of white voters in Noxubee County, **MISSISSIPPI** has filed a lawsuit alleging that the county's black election officials have systematically discriminated against white voters and candidates, in violation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, passed to combat discrimination against blacks in the South. The U.S. Justice Department is pursuing the case (NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*





also a big part of *Time's* veneration of Virginia's Warner, who appears to be on everybody's "best" list at the moment. The outgoing governor, who is widely thought to be planning a presidential run in 2008, was chosen primarily for his ability to convince the Republican-controlled Old Dominion Legislature to go along with \$1.4 billion in tax hikes in 2003, the largest increase in state history. Virginia was also named (along with UTAH) this year as the best-managed state in the country by the Government Performance Project. Ironically, South Carolina's Sanford is a neighbor of John Huey, *Time's* editorial chief. Huey contributed \$250 to Sanford's 2002 gubernatorial campaign, a fact Sanford said contained "more than a little irony." Conspicuously absent on the "worst" list are ILLINOIS Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) and KENTUCKY Gov. Ernie Fletcher (R), both of whom are currently mired in their own ethics scandals that have drawn a plethora of state and federal investigations, and CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R), whose disastrous "year of reform" agenda went down to a spectacular defeat earlier this month in a special election he called — an election that cost the perpetually cash-strapped Golden State more than \$50 million. (POST & COURIER [CHARLESTON], TIME, STATE [COLUMBIA], TOLEDO BLADE, ASSOCIATED PRESS, LAS VEGAS SUN.

# Quoteable

"I have read the *NEW YORK Times*, I will still read the *New York Times*. I have read *Time*. I will still read *Time*. They may be left-leaning, but it's good to check in with what the left is thinking."

—**SOUTH CAROLINA Mark Sanford (R) after *Time* magazine named him as one of the three worst governors in the nation. (STATE [COLUMBIA])**

**RELL PUSHING AWAY FROM BUSH:** CONNECTICUT Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) made it clear last week that she is not expecting — and doesn't necessarily want — any help in her re-election campaign from President George W. Bush. "I don't think President Bush would want to campaign particularly for me," said Rell. "I'm campaigning right now...with individuals who wish to campaign with me. I don't mean that to be disrespectful in any manner, but I think over the last year there have been many initiatives that I have put on the table where I differ very much with the Republican administration." Those areas of disagreement include, according to Rell, stem cell research, social policies like gay marriage and abortion, environmental issues and planned military base closures in the Constitution State. Left unsaid was the president's plummeting popularity, which was widely considered a factor in recent Democratic gubernatorial victories in NEW JERSEY and VIRGINIA. One of the loudest critics in that regard has been Republican Doug Forrester, the man defeated by Democrat Jon Corzine in New Jersey.

Forrester said the public's growing dissatisfaction with Bush, exacerbated by the fallout surrounding Hurricane Katrina, made it impossible for him to win as a Republican in a traditionally blue state. "If Bush's numbers were where they were a year ago, or even where they were six months ago, I think we would have won," Forrester said. "Katrina was the tipping point." Connecticut Republican Chairman William A. Hamzy acknowledged that a connection to Bush is not such a good thing right now, noting that "As we sit here today, obviously it would not be helpful to have Bush campaigning in Connecticut for GOP candidates" in 2006. (BRISTOL PRESS, STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK])

## Upcoming Elections (11/17/05 - 12/01/05)

11/22/2005 Minnesota Special Election  
Senate 043, 019

11/22/2005 Mississippi runoff if needed  
House 096

11/29/2005 Tennessee Special Primary  
House 022

**GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: ARIZONA** Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) dropped her plans to ask the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help pay for more law enforcement along the state's border with Mexico. Napolitano cited FEMA's current fiscal responsibilities to the relief efforts for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as the reason for her decision (ARIZONA DAILY STAR [TUCSON]). • **WISCONSIN** Gov. Jim Doyle (D) issued subpoenas to the nation's five largest oil companies to appear at a hearing to answer questions about rising gasoline and natural gas prices in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The companies, Chevron Corp., ExxonMobil Corp., ConocoPhillips Co., BP America Inc., and Shell Oil Co., have not said if they will obey the order (JANESVILLE GAZETTE). • **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) and **NEW YORK** Gov. George Pataki (R) led a group of 28 governors in requesting Congress to extend a federal terrorism insurance program before it expires. Under the plan, the federal government would help pay part of the insurance bill after a major terrorist attack in an effort designed to keep premiums affordable to businesses. Both the Senate and House passed extension bills last week, which must now be debated on each chamber's floor (REUTERS). • **INDIANA** Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) bars state employees from smoking cigarettes anywhere on the Indiana Government Center Complex grounds. Workers wishing to light up must now walk across the street to city-owned property to do so (JOURNAL-GAZETTE [FORT WAYNE]).

— Compiled by RICH EHISEN

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# Hot issues

**B** **BUSINESS:** In an effort to reduce alcohol abuse, **WEST VIRGINIA** alcohol control officials ask liquor retailers to stop carrying 190-proof grain liquor. The Mountain State Alcohol Beverage Control Administration also stops stocking 190-proof grain alcohol at its warehouse, which provides all liquor sold in the state (BOSTON GLOBE). • **OHIO** Gov. Bob Taft (R) signs legislation that halts for a year the use of eminent domain for economic development. The Buckeye State Legislature will use the moratorium to examine state eminent domain laws to determine if those statutes need to be made more protective of private property owners (CINCINNATI ENQUIRER). • **CONNECTICUT** Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) vetoes a measure that would have barred state agencies from soliciting bids for privatization until they performed a cost-benefit analysis, including the unemployment compensation costs for any state employees laid off as a result of that privatization. Rell, who also vetoed a similar measure last month, said the bill would protect state employees, but restrict nonprofit contractors that provide state services (HARTFORD COURANT).

**CRIME & PUNISHMENT:** The **MASSACHUSETTS** House rejects a bill that would have revived capital punishment in the Bay State. Massachusetts is one of only 12 states without the death penalty (BOSTON GLOBE). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs legislation requiring retailers to place pseudoephedrine-based cold medications behind store counters. Purchase amounts are also limited to no more than two packages at a time. Pseudoephedrine is one of the key ingredients in making illegal methamphetamine, also known as crank (CHICAGO TRIBUNE).

**EDUCATION:** The U.S. Supreme Court rules that parents who disagree with a school system's special education plan for their disabled child must prove that the plan does not meet federal guidelines for such an education. The decision upholds an earlier ruling from a **MARYLAND** court (NEW YORK TIMES). • **NEW MEXICO** Gov. Bill Richardson (D) announces new regulations that bar the selling of any junk food in elementary school vending machines. Middle school vending machines can carry food but not sodas, while high school venders can only sell sugar- and caffeine-free drinks. The regulations must undergo a public comment period before they can be finalized

(SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN). • A **NEBRASKA** court places on indefinite hold a new Cornhusker State law requiring all elementary-only schools to merge with larger districts. Voters will ultimately decide whether to retain the law in next fall's general election (GRAND ISLAND INDEPENDENT). • The **LOUISIANA** Legislature approves SB 49 and HB 121, measures that would allow state education officials to take over 102 of the 117 New Orleans public schools. They head to Gov. Kathleen Blanco (D), who pushed for the bills in the current special session. The House simultaneously passes HB 93, a separate bill that grants the Pelican State authority to take over every school in that city. The measure heads to the Senate. Blanco is expected to await its fate there before deciding which bills to sign or veto (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW

ORLEANS]). • Acting **NEW JERSEY** Gov. Richard Codey (D) issues an executive order that bars college and university board members from doing any kind of business with their respective institutions. The order also applies college presidents. It takes effect immediately (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK]).

**ENVIRONMENT:** Wildlife officials in **NEW JERSEY** authorize the Garden State's second black bear hunt in the last three years. The state held a similar hunt in 2003 — the first time they had done so in 33 years — but bypassed the hunt last year when officials decided the bear population was sufficiently under control. Officials say they have received more than 1,000 complaints about bears so far this year (NEW YORK TIMES). • Amidst protests from environmental groups, **MONTANA** opens its first bison hunting season since 1990. A total of 50 licenses have been issued for the hunt, which is aimed at thinning the bison population near Yellowstone National Park. State and federal officials say the hunt will help manage a population that has grown to an estimated 4,900 animals, more than some fear the area can support (ASSOCIATED PRESS). • Yellowstone's grizzly bear population is also set for change as federal officials

## *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: 397

Number of 2005 Intros last week: 739

Number of bills enacted/adopted last week: 162

Number of 2005 prefiles to date: 37,094

Number of 2005 Intros to date: 162,689

Number of enacted/adopted overall in 2005: 39,926

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS  
(Measures current as of 11/17/05)  
Source: State Net



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# Once around the statehouse lightly

**P**ARTY HOUNDED: Consider what it must have been like to be a lobbyist in TEXAS last week — besides expensive. As the *Austin Statesman-American* reports, no fewer than 10 politicians, including Gov. Rick Perry, held fund raisers between 4 and 5:30 p.m. on the same day. One lobbyist complained that it was difficult to make the rounds, given the sheer number of sites to be “dropped in” on. The total take won’t be known for some time because the next reporting period doesn’t roll around until January.

**DUFAULT, DEAR BRUTUS...**was definitely not in the stars. It was, as they say, in Guy Dufault himself. One of RHODE ISLAND’s most celebrated political operatives, Dufault is out of any number of jobs these days after boasting that he had salacious information that could severely damage the re-election campaign of Republican Gov. Donald Carcieri. Unfortunately, notes the *Providence Journal*, Dufault did this bit of blustering in front of an open mike during what he thought was a pause in his weekly Sunday morning TV show, “The Real Deal.” A Democrat by trade, Dufault lost several high-profile sponsors, forcing him to cancel his show. He also lost a \$10,000-a-month gig as lobbyist for a proposed casino.

**BEAT IT OVER THE HEAD:** They don’t blanket the prairie in the millions any more, but bison are making something of a comeback. As a result, MONTANA now plans to hold its first bison hunt in over 15 years. More than 6,000 wanna-be hunters applied for 24 licenses, which were granted by random lottery. But according to the Associated Press, there may yet be hope for one additional lucky recipient. Seems Daniel Marshall of Helena had his name drawn. Three years ago, however, Marshall was convicted of writing a bad check -- a felony -- and is still on probation. Under Montana law, he can’t carry a gun. Unless Marshall gets creative about how he plans to slaughter his buffalo, he’ll have to give up his permit.

**A SLIGHT HITCH** developed around the seating of a newly elected board for the Romoland School District in southern CALIFORNIA. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Randy Hale, who finished first among all candidates in the November 8 election, can’t take the oath of office with other colleagues on December 13. That’s because the 40-year-old Riverside County resident has to remain in the city



of Chino until February. Well, not exactly in Chino; more specifically, at the California Institution for Men just outside Chino. Hale, serving prison time for parole violations, is due to be released February 15. That probably explains why he was a no-show at candidate forums.

**FOR HIS FIRST EFFORT AT FOREIGN RELATIONS:** It's no secret that MASSACHUSETTS Gov. Mitt Romney wants to be president. If so, the Republican chief exec needs a primer on how not to insult foreign governments. Last week, reports the *Boston Globe* and *Boston Herald*, Romney ended a speech by warning that, without a significant focus on education, the U.S. could "end up being the France of the 21st century." The governor amplified his less-than-gracious remark by saying that the French had "no economic capability." No truth to the rumor that Romney also said Dutch art died with Van Gogh.

**SELLING THE STATE:** The Garden State needs a new slogan, so NEW JERSEY Gov. Dick Codey sent out the word for citizens to submit ideas. As the *Newark Star-Ledger* reports, many of the proposals reflected New Jersey — but not necessarily what Codey had in mind. Among the more poetic: "We Don't Need No Stinkin' Slogan," "Most of Our Elected Officials Have Not Been Indicted," "If Living Here Were Easy, It Would Be Another State," and "New Jersey: You Got a Problem With That?"

— By A.G. BLOCK



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State Net Capitol Journal is published 40  
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