

California Crunch Time

September 1, 2014



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Budget & taxes States easing way for crowdfunding	5
Politics & leadership AK vote upholds new oil tax system	8
Governors Jindal sues over Common Core	11
Bird's eye view	3
Hot issues	14
Once around the statehouse lightly	17

● The next issue of
● Capitol Journal will be
● available on September 8th.

Top Story

California lawmakers plowed through over a thousand bills in August, including some of the most critical and complex issues of the year.

SNCJ Spotlight

Ridesharing, plastic bags, Hollywood dominate CA end-of-session rush

Early last month California lawmakers returned from summer recess to begin wading through over 1,000 bills that needed to be addressed before the end of session on August 31. A few weeks back we took a look at some of the most contentious of these measures. Although a number of bills remained at the time we went to press, here is a roundup of how



By Rich Ehsen

some of those measures and others — many of which have national import — faded as the session was winding down:

SB 962, a bill that would make California the second state (after Minnesota) to require all cell phones sold there to have so-called “kill switches,” internal technology that allows the owner to remotely render the phone useless if stolen. The Golden State measure, however, requires phones to come with the feature already activated as the default setting, while in Minnesota phone buyers will have to opt-in by manually activating the device. The measure initially drew fierce opposition from the wireless industry, leading to the Senate rejecting it in April. But author Sen. Mark Leno (D) made a few substantive changes — pushing back the effective date and exempting tablets — that satisfied all but a few opponents and the bill eventually worked its way through both chambers with relatively minor trouble. Gov. Jerry Brown (D) signed it into law on Aug. 25; it goes into effect July 1, 2015.

SB 270, a bill that would require grocery stores to charge customers 10-cents for each single-use plastic bag used in bagging up their items, with the ultimate goal of phasing plastic bags out entirely. The measure passed the Senate in April but struggled mightily in the Assembly, which rejected it on August 25 after a lengthy and at-times contentious debate. But the bill’s Assembly sponsor, Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D), asked for and received reconsideration. Somewhat surprisingly, much of the bill’s opposition came from Bonta and Senate author Alex Padilla’s Democratic colleagues. But after days of intense negotiations between grocery clerks unions and grocery retailers the measure was taken up again on Thursday, needing 41 votes to pass. The exact nature of those talks and what they agreed to wasn’t immediately clear — the bill was not amended at all before returning to the Assembly for another vote — but this time it garnered 44 ayes, sending it back to the Senate for concurrence before heading to Brown, who is expected to sign the bill into law.

AB 1839, a proposal to extend and grow the state’s expiring film tax credit incentive program. Extensive talks between Brown and lawmakers produced a bill that will not only keep the tax incentive plan in place for five more years, but will also more than triple its funding, hiking it from \$100 million to \$330 million annually. The bill also does away with the current system’s highly unpopular lottery system for choosing

The week in session

States in Regular Session: CA, DC, PR

States in Informal Session: MA

States in Recess: DE “c”, IL, MI, NJ, NY, PA, US, VA “a”

States in Special Session: CA “b”

States currently prefilng for 2015 Session: FL, KY, MT, NV, VA, WY

States adjourned in 2014: AK, AL, AR, AR “a”, AZ, AZ “a”, CA “a”, CO, CT, DE, DE “b”, FL, FL “a”, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL “a”, IL “b”, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MO, MS, MS “a”, MS “b”, NC, NE, NH, NM, OK, OR, PR “a”, PR “b”, RI, SC, SD, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WA “a”, WA “b”, WA “c”, WI, WI “c”, WV, WV “a”, WV “b”, WY

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By FELICIA CARRILLO
(session information current as of 8/28/2014)
Source: State Net database



AB 1014, a measure inspired by a shooting earlier this year at the University of California Santa Barbara that would allow family members to obtain a temporary restraining order that bars a loved one suspected of having mental health issues from buying a gun. As of press time, the measure was awaiting a concurrence vote in the Assembly. Gov. Brown is expected to sign the measure if and when it gets to him.

AB 2056, a proposal to make California the first state to regulate the mostly unregulated pet health insurance industry. This measure, which requires insurance carriers to clearly inform consumers of what specific conditions pet policies cover and which are exempted, faced no opposition. It passed unanimously in both chambers and was sent to Gov. Brown on Aug. 27.

AB 2293, which establishes standards for insurance coverage required of Internet-based ridesharing companies like UberX and Lyft, where drivers use their personal vehicles to transport riders for a fee. The bill originally called for drivers to carry as much as \$750,000 of liability coverage. That figure drew howls of protest from ridesharing companies, which claimed they would stifle the innovation such services offer to consumers who don't want to use a traditional taxi service. The two sides eventually agreed on a deal that requires drivers to carry at least \$200,000 of liability coverage when they are driving in search of a passenger and \$1 million when they have a passenger on board, or have even agreed to pick one up. The compromise was partially brokered by Brown's office, making the bill's signing inevitable. The agreement came days after Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn (D) vetoed a measure to impose statewide regulations on ridesharing companies in the Prairie State.

AB 1327, a bill to regulate the law enforcement use of drone aircraft. This proposal makes California the latest state in recent years to adopt statutes to regulate how police, other public safety agencies and even private sector companies use the unmanned aircraft. Some have even placed moratoriums on drone use. The bill lawmakers sent to Gov. Brown last week doesn't go that far, but it does require police to obtain a search warrant before using a drone for criminal surveillance.

AB 1522, a measure that would require employers to provide their workers with up to three paid sick leave days a year. Given the usually fatal "job killer" label by the California Chamber of Commerce, it nonetheless passed the Assembly in May. The bill's fate there, however, had not been determined by press time.

We will continue to update information on these and other critical bills as it becomes available.

— By *RICH EHISEN*

Budget & taxes

STATES EASING WAY FOR CROWDFUNDING: Over the past three years, a dozen states have enacted laws or regulations allowing startups to raise investment capital through crowdfunding without having to go through all the regulatory hoops companies with shareholders are required to go through.

“This is a relatively new phenomenon that’s happening on a state level,” said Anya Coverman, deputy policy director for the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA). “States are really attuned to what local businesses need.”

Coverman said startups in the states where such laws have been enacted are still required to fill out paperwork, disclose information to investors and pay a fee, but the

process is far less expensive and time-consuming than a full-blown securities registration.

“These state bills are focused on the local doughnut shop, the local movie theater, a new startup that two young kids at the local university are trying to get off the ground, and help them crowdfund to local investors,” she said.

On top of easing the way for startups, the laws also allow investors to support local businesses.

“This helps small businesses get going, with the assistance of folks here in Indiana,” said Sen. Travis Holdman (R), who sponsored crowdfunding legislation passed in the state earlier this year. “There’s a homespun twist to it.”

The laws have also been spurred by federal inaction on the issue. In 2012 President Barack Obama signed the Jumpstart Our Business Startups (JOBS) Act, which was supposed to allow small startups to use “equity crowdfunding,” which unlike donor-based crowdfunding popularized by websites like Kickstarter, gives the “crowd” ownership shares in the business venture, to raise up to \$1 million a year from investors nationwide. But two years later, the Securities and Exchange Commission is still working on rules needed to implement the law.

“A lot of [entrepreneurs] have become frustrated with the SEC at the federal level and they’ve gone to the state legislatures, and have been successful, to a degree, in getting bills passed or rules allowing intrastate crowdfunding,” said Bob Webster, communications director for the NASAA.

States in addition to Indiana that have passed laws or regulations allowing crowdfunding within their own borders include Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas,

“These state bills are focused on the local doughnut shop, the local movie theater, a new startup that two young kids at the local university are trying to get off the ground, and help them crowdfund to local investors.”

Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, Tennessee, Washington and Wisconsin. And according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, similar laws were introduced in at least 21 states this year.

But Minnesota has taken a more cautious approach on the issue. Lawmakers there tweaked the state's securities laws to allow equity crowdfunding, but they didn't provide the blanket exemption from legal hurdles that some other states did.

"It's an exciting area and one that we want to promote," said Minnesota Rep. Joe Atkins (D). "But we have to be cognizant of the potential for fraud and abuse of investors. They could fall prey to scams and certain unsavory characters who might want to take advantage of them. It's an area that is fraught with potential perils." (STATELINE.ORG, STATE NET)

TX POTENTIAL BULLET TRAIN TRENDSETTER: There are currently three major high-speed rail projects at an advanced stage of development in the United States. A privately funded project in Florida could begin providing service between Miami and West Palm Beach as early as 2016. But its trains will travel slower than 100 mph and run on 100-year-old right-of-way in some areas. A heavily government-subsidized project in California is expected to eventually connect Los Angeles and San Francisco, but not until 2029. Meanwhile, Texas is promising to link Houston and Dallas with 205 mph trains — the fastest of the three states — on a timeline roughly midway between that of the other two, with an operational target date of 2021.

The Texas Central High-Speed Railway, formerly Lone Star High-Speed Rail, is receiving "promotional and technical" assistance from Central Japan Railway Co., also known as J.R. Central, which shuttles 400,000 people the 300 miles between Tokyo and Osaka on its Shinkansen trains every day and hasn't recorded a single fatality since launching in 1964.

Texas may seem an unlikely location for J.R. Central's U.S. debut. The state's largest cities have a history of low public transportation use, despite expansion of their light-rail networks. But J.R. Central offered to sell its trains to all three of the high-speed rail states and Texas was the only taker.

A successful project in Texas would give the company a foothold in this country, which offers far more opportunity for expansion than Japan, where low population growth limits demand for new infrastructure. A project relying solely on private funding could also help Texas avoid the public finance-related legal battles that have held up California's project. And Texas public officials seem to relish the idea of being seen as trendsetters on the issue.

"As Texans, we take great pride in blazing a path for the rest of the country to follow," the mayors of Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth wrote in a letter in April endorsing the project. "This project will do just that." (TEXAS TRIBUNE [AUSTIN])



WA WOULD GAIN MOST FROM PACIFIC

TRADE PACT: According to U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, Washington is the state that stands to benefit the most from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an ambitious trade agreement the United States is negotiating with 11 other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia, Canada, Japan and Mexico, with the goal of removing tariffs and other trade barriers.

“Hundreds of thousands of Washingtonians owe their jobs to exports,” Froman said during a recent visit to Seattle to promote the agreement. “And being a gateway to the Asia Pacific, with all the ports here, it stands to benefit significantly from TPP.”

He added that although Boeing is Washington’s best-known exporter, TPP would help thousands of other businesses in the state, including manufacturers and farmers.

“Washington tends to export fruit, vegetables and wheat — all areas where they face tariffs in TPP countries,” he said. “On fruit, tariffs are 30 to 40 percent. On wheat, various restrictions, usually quotas. On vegetables, 20 to 30 percent. Those are all going away with TPP, and that will create more opportunity in the agricultural sector.” (PUGET SOUND BUSINESS JOURNAL, OFFICE OF U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE)

MARIJUANA TOURISTS FLOCKING TO CO AND WA? Public officials in Colorado and Washington maintain the legalization of recreational marijuana hasn’t attracted more visitors to their states. But travel websites tell a different story.

The number of shoppers on Hotels.com looking for rooms in Denver this past April for the city’s 4/20 celebration was up 73 percent over last year. And the number of shoppers on that site looking for rooms in Seattle in July, the first month recreational pot became available there, was up 68 percent compared to last year.

“We’ve seen that searches for both destinations have spiked dramatically,” said Taylor Cole, who handles public relations for Hotels.com North America.

Hopper.com, an airfare comparison site, showed similar, though considerably more modest, increases in traffic related to the two states, including a 10-percent rise in “interest” in flights to Tacoma between September and November compared to 2013 and a 20-percent jump in searches for flights to Denver since the start of the year. (NBC NEWS)

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 2014 Prefiles last week: 0

Number of 2015 Prefiles last week: 81

Number of Intros last week: 134

Number of Enacted/Adopted last week: 203

Number of 2014 Prefiles to date: 21,427

Number of 2015 Prefiles to date: 3,843

Number of 2014 Intros to date: 81,423

Number of 2013 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 40,747

Number of 2014 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 26,189

Number of bills currently in State Net Database: 170,725

— Compiled By FELICIA CARRILLO
(measures current as of 8/28/2014)
Source: State Net database

Governors

JINDAL SUES OVER COMMON CORE: Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) filed suit against the U.S. Department of Education last week, claiming the agency is unconstitutionally coercing states into accepting the Common Core curriculum standards. In a statement, Jindal said the federal government “has hijacked and destroyed the Common Core initiative” by offering states \$4.3 billion in “Race to the Top” grants that encourage them to adopt the standards. Jindal, who at one time enthusiastically supported those standards, called the federal incentives “the latest effort by big government disciples to strip away state rights and put Washington, D.C., in control of everything.”

Response predictably fell along political lines, with conservative groups lauding the effort while several state lawmakers and most of the state’s education leaders

blasted it. They contend the suit is more about Gov. Jindal courting conservatives for a possible 2016 presidential run than benefitting Pelican State students.

“Gov. Jindal has made his point 10 times over that he is no fan of Common Core, but at this point, he isn’t breaking any new ground,” Anne Hyslop, a senior policy analyst for Bellwether Education Partners, told Politico. “And it’s unlikely he’ll get anything out of this suit other than padding his conservative credentials — which may be the whole point.”

Maria Ferguson, executive director of the Center on Education Policy, a Washington-based research organization, told Businessweek that the suit was “very blatantly about politics,” saying it had “thrown education in his state into a tailspin.” The governor has also openly battled with education officials in his own state. Jindal recently issued an executive order seeking to block implementation of the standards, but that order was itself blocked by a Pelican State judge after the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education joined charter school groups in filing suit against it.

The Common Core standards, a project of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers, establish goals for students in math and English. Adoption of those standards is voluntary. To date, 43 states have done so. Five — Alaska, Texas, South Carolina, Nebraska and Virginia — never adopted them, while Indiana and Oklahoma initially did but then backed out earlier this year. (POLITICO, BUSINESSWEEK, HOUSTON CHRONICLE)

CORBETT, HHS REACH DEAL TO EXPAND PA MEDICAID: The Obama administration signed off last Thursday on Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett’s (R)

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proposed “Healthy PA Private Coverage Option” plan, an alternate Medicaid expansion plan that will extend health coverage to hundreds of thousands of low income Keystone State residents. The agreement makes Pennsylvania the 27th state under the Affordable Care Act (and the District of Columbia) to either expand its Medicaid program or to obtain permission to use an alternative plan of its own to provide health insurance to more of its working poor. Corbett is the ninth GOP governor to agree to do so.

As its name indicates, Corbett’s plan falls into the latter category, using federal dollars originally targeted to pay for expansion to fund subsidies to about 500,000 low-income Pennsylvanians so they can then purchase private insurance on the open market or through a health benefits exchange. He also made several concessions to the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, including dropping a requirement that unemployed enrollees prove they are searching for work. (WALL STREET JOURNAL, PITTSBURGHPOST-GAZETTE)

SCOTT PITCHES NEW FL EDUCATION INITIATIVES: Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R), facing intense criticism from Democratic gubernatorial rival Charlie Crist over major cuts made to education spending in recent years, announced last week he would ask lawmakers to approve an additional \$700 million in school funding next year. If approved, it would raise per-pupil education spending to the highest level in Sunshine State history. He further proposed spending an additional \$10 million on school-safety projects and \$80 million on digital learning initiatives, double the current amount.

Scott later said he would also call for a thorough review of the Common Core academic standards and a “thorough investigation of all standardized tests” used in the public school system. That drew claims from Democrats and Republicans alike — and even some tea party members — that Scott was merely pandering to his tea party base. Scott denied the accusations, saying he was merely applying “my experience in business” to constantly improve the way the state measures education success.

Upcoming elections

(08/29/2014 - 09/19/2014)

09/09/2014

Delaware Primary Election

House (All)

Senate Districts 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 21

Constitutional Officers: Treasurer,

Attorney General, Auditor

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Massachusetts Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor,

Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General,

Secretary of the Commonwealth,

Treasurer and Receiver-General, Auditor

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

New Hampshire Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

New York Primary Election

Assembly (All)

Senate (All)

Rhode Island Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor,

Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State,

Attorney General, General Treasurer

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Texas Special Election

Senate District 28



That didn't convince Crist, who also accused Scott of playing election-year politics.

“What did he say? He's going to spend billions and billions on education and set a record next year?” Crist told the Naples Daily News. “What we ought to do is judge him by his deeds — the fact that he cut education by \$1.3 billion when he first got in. If Rick Scott were to get re-elected he'd go back to old, bad Rick.” (MIAMI HERALD, NAPLES DAILY NEWS, FLORIDA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE)

Upcoming stories

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

- **State tax incentives**
- **Common Core**
- **Student loan debt**

NIXON APPOINTS FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN CABINET MEMBER:

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon (D) has nominated former St. Louis police Chief Daniel Isom to be the next director of the state's Department of Public Safety. If approved by the Senate as expected, Isom would become the only African-American in Nixon's cabinet and the first since former Commissioner of the Office of Administration Kelvin Simmons left that post in 2012. That possibility has gained greater significance — and national attention — in the wake of violent clashes between St. Louis County police and residents of the Ferguson suburb after a white police officer shot and killed an unarmed black teenager on Aug. 9. Nixon has been the target of much criticism since the unrest, both for the state's tepid response to the volatile situation and for a lack of racial diversity among agency leaders.

Nixon rejected the idea that Isom's appointment was connected to the ongoing situation in Ferguson, instead praising Isom's credentials and saying he is working to ensure “we have a government that reflects the citizens of the state.”

Missouri U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill (D) praised the decision, but also called Nixon's previous lack of diversity in his cabinet “unfortunate” and suggested he acted only after being repeatedly questioned about it in the aftermath of the Brown shooting.

“Last Friday he was asked if he had any African-Americans in his cabinet,” she told the Kansas City Star. “Five days later, we have an African-American in his cabinet.”

The appointment takes effect this week. (KANSAS CITY STAR, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, GUARDIAN)

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: ILLINOIS Gov. Pat Quinn (D) signed a measure (SB 3558) that will establish a fund to pay for specialized services to victims of human trafficking and prostitution, including community based drop-in centers and emergency housing (ENEWSARKFOREST.COM). • **IOWA** Gov. Terry Branstad (R) said he supports Hawkeye State police agencies having access to military-style hardware and weapons such as assault rifles and armored vehicles, saying “I trust our local law enforcement and our state public safety to use appropriate discretion” about when to use such technology and equipment (DES MOINES REGISTER). • **NEBRASKA** Gov. Dave Heineman (R) said he does not support a pending ballot



architects and engineers with an advanced degree from an accredited U.S. graduate program seeking to obtain a professional license in the Prairie State (ILLINOIS GOVERNOR’S OFFICE). • Staying in **ILLINOIS**, Gov. Quinn signs HB 8, which bars employers from firing, segregating or refusing to hire pregnant women and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for a pregnant woman’s needs (CHICAGO TRIBUNE).

In case you missed it
 Congressional failure to act on the crisis caused by tens of thousands of immigrant children fleeing to the U.S. from Central America has left states footing the bill. In case you missed it, the story can be found on our Web site at http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/08-18-2014/html#snj_spotlight.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to SB 1135, which bars female Golden State inmates from being involuntarily sterilized. It moves to Gov. Jerry Brown (D) for review (KQED.ORG). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to SB 1388, which would require adults convicted of soliciting sex from a minor to serve at least two days in jail and face a \$10,000 fine. It moves to Gov. Brown (STATE NET). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final endorsement to SB 505, which would require police called to check on a troubled person to review a gun-owners database to help determine whether that person might possess firearms. It is now with Gov. Brown (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to SB 1255, which would broaden the state’s anti-revenge porn bill to include banning nude or sexual pictures or videos taken by the victim as well as those taken by someone else. It moves to Gov. Brown for review (WASHINGTON POST). • Also in **CALIFORNIA**, Gov. Brown signs SB 1422, requiring that sexual assault allegations within the California National Guard, State Military Reserve and Naval Militia be investigated and prosecuted by civilian authorities (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • **MASSACHUSETTS** Gov. Deval Patrick (D) signs SB 2345, legislation that raises the maximum sentence for animal cruelty from five to seven years in prison, the maximum fine from \$2,500 to \$5,000 and increases the maximum prison sentence to 10 years for repeat offenders (STATE NET, BOSTON GLOBE).

EDUCATION: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to SB 850, which would allow 15 Golden State community colleges to temporarily issue four-year baccalaureate degrees in one subject each. The measure is now with Gov. Jerry Brown (D) for review (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly also gives final endorsement to AB 420, which would bar public schools from expelling students for “willful defiance” and bar suspensions for the same acts for students in kindergarten through third grade. It also is now with Gov. Brown (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to SB 1177, which would bar education companies from employing targeted advertising on K-12 websites, services and applications. The measure also prohibits operators from using any student information gained from those sites to target advertising on any other site,

service, or application; bars the creation of student profiles unless that profile is used for clear educational purposes; prevents companies from selling student data; and limits disclosure of student personal information. It moves to Gov. Brown for review (STATE NET). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Pat Quinn (D) signs HB 5431, legislation that requires the state High School Association to develop and implement an online training program on concussion awareness and reduction for all coaching personnel and athletic directors (ILLINOIS GOVERNOR'S OFFICE). • Also in **ILLINOIS**, Gov. Quinn (D) signs SB 2202, which bars smoking on the campuses of all state-supported colleges and universities as of July 1, 2015 (ILLINOIS GOVERNOR'S OFFICE).

ENVIRONMENT: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate declines to hear AB 69, which would have delayed by three years inclusion of vehicle fuels under the state's cap-and-trade program. Fuels come under inclusion next year (CAPITOL WEEKLY [SACRAMENTO]). • **CONNECTICUT** Gov. Dannel Malloy (D) signs SB 237, legislation which imposes a three-year moratorium on waste material produced in the hydraulic fracturing process from being deposited in the Constitution State. The measure also requires state environmental officials to develop a statewide regulatory framework for managing fracking waste in the future (FOXCT.COM [HARTFORD]).

HEALTH & SCIENCE: The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly gives final approval to AB 2616, which would allow health care workers who contract a MRSA infection on the job to be eligible for workers compensation for that illness. It moves to Gov. Jerry Brown (D) for review (STATE NET). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives the final okay to SB 1299, which would require Golden State hospitals to develop comprehensive workplace violence prevention plans. The measure moves to Gov. Jerry Brown (D) for review (STATE NET).

SOCIAL POLICY: A federal judge rules a **FLORIDA** ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. U.S District Judge Robert L. Hinkle ordered the Sunshine State to allow those unions to proceed and for the state to recognize same-sex unions performed in other states. The state is considering an appeal (MIAMI HERALD). • The U.S. Supreme Court stays a ruling from the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that struck down a **VIRGINIA** ban on same-sex marriage. The high court released their ruling without comment (RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH). • **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Jerry Brown (D) signs AB 1523, which requires all residential care facilities for the elderly to carry liability insurance (STATE NET).

POTPOURRI: The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly gives final approval to AB 2444, which would prohibit the state from displaying or selling merchandise that bears the Confederate flag. It moves to Gov. Jerry Brown (D) for review (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • U.S. District Judge Anthony Ishii rules that a **CALIFORNIA** law requiring



gun buyers to wait 10 days to pick up their newly purchased weapon even if they already own a gun or have a license to possess a handgun is unconstitutional. Ishii stayed his ruling for 180 days to give the state time to appeal to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Once around the statehouse lightly

SIGN, SIGN, EVERYWHERE A SIGN, part of the scenery right behind, from my biggest rival, can't you see the sign? Uh, no they apparently did not. You are confused so let me elaborate. As the Wichita Eagle reports, Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback has a new video campaign ad out. It has all the usual "boy, ain't I neat" platitudes such things always have, with one little extra element: a campaign sign for his Democratic gubernatorial rival Paul Davis can clearly be seen in the background for a few seconds. That kind of attention to detail could explain how Brownback is struggling in the polls even though he governs one of the reddest states in the nation. Oh, and my apologies to the Five Man Electrical Band for my lyrical liberties, but the song almost writes itself. And if you don't know what the Five Man Electrical Band is...ask your parents!

DOUBLE VISION: Alaska's GOP voters love them some Dan Sullivan. They love Dan Sullivan so much they voted for him twice in the recent GOP primary elections. What the what, you say? As the Wall Street Journal reports, the recent ballot featured two Dan Sullivans: one running for the U.S. Senate and the other looking to become Gov. Sean Parnell's running mate as Lt. Governor. Since neither man opted to add an initial or use his full first name, the whole thing was just a little confusing for voters and media alike. Some TV stations even ran pictures of one Sullivan when they were talking about the other one. Alas, the confusion didn't seem to hurt either candidate. Both won their primaries and will get to relive the whole experience in November.

LET ME REPHRASE THAT: By any standard, California state Sen. Holly Mitchell is a strong, imposing figure. But when recently asked by a reporter what she says to her teenage son about issues of race and the challenges faced by young black men in our society she became very emotional, almost breaking into tears. Now the cynical among us can say what they want — it felt genuine. What was also genuine



was the reaction of the person who asked it, long-time Ventura County Star reporter Timm Herdt. Herdt is a really good reporter and no shrinking violet, but he looked absolutely horrified at Mitchell’s reaction. It took her a moment to collect herself but she got it together, answered the question and all was well. Even so, I just couldn’t resist teasing him a bit afterward, telling him “Nice job, man — you almost made a state senator cry!”

BURGER, FRIES AND A SIDE OF KIBBLE: No, it’s not yet another fad diet, though in California anything is possible. This one refers to a bill signed last week by Gov. Jerry Brown that allows diners to have their dogs chow down with them at outdoor cafes. Some rules do apply: the restaurant has to allow it, Fido has to be on a leash and behave at all times, and it can’t be hanging out where the food is actually being made. And while this sounds like legislation straight out of the mind of California’s famous “First Dog” — Sutter, Brown’s seriously adorable Welsh Corgi — it was actually the brainchild of Assemblymember Mariko Yamada, who took to Facebook to wish everyone “bone-appetit” after Brown signed it into law.

— *By RICH EHISEN*



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