

lawsuit abuse in medical liability cases. Subsequently, medical liability insurance costs are down 42 percent, and doctors have received an average rebate of 20 percent of their annual paid premium. The number of lawsuits against South Carolina doctors fell almost 90 percent one year after tort reform went into effect. Doctors have stopped leaving the state and no longer limit their practices to avoid lawsuit abuse.

Likewise, eliminating the interstate purchasing restrictions for insurance would create a bigger market for insurance, thereby giving consumers more options and driving down the price. A national market for health or life insurance means that South Carolinians can purchase whichever policy best fits their needs—whether the policy is from South Carolina, New York or California.

With all the issues surrounding a government-run health care system, I wanted to bring to your attention the increased taxes that South Carolinians might shoulder on top of the federal tax increases in the proposed bills.

Everybody agrees that there should be reforms to our health care system, but it should be done thoughtfully. I look forward to working with you on this and other issues.

Sincerely,

MARK SANFORD,
Governor, South Carolina.

JUNE 5, 2009.

Hon. JOE L. BARTON,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BARTON: As Congress continues to grapple with the daunting challenge of enacting significant health care reform measures before the August recess, I urge you to contemplate the effects of certain policy considerations on our great state.

Government-run health care is not the solution to fix a broken health care system, and is financially unsustainable. At today's costs, extending Medicaid benefits to uninsured citizens at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level would cost Texas an additional \$4.6 billion in general revenue per year (equal to a 2.3 cent, or 27 percent, sales tax increase), on top of the \$19 billion in general revenue the state expects to spend on Medicaid in the 2010-11 biennium. This type of federal government spending mandate would erode the state's economic viability without containing health care costs or improving health care quality and access.

Health and human services general revenue spending in Texas for the 2010-11 biennium is projected to grow almost 13 percent, to \$25.3 billion. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission already projects a Medicaid-related shortfall of more than \$1 billion in general revenue in the coming biennium, and combined Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program caseloads will exceed 3 million people. The number of uninsured Texans also continues to grow, and the state continues efforts to address a critical primary care physician shortage in many areas of the state.

In 2007, I set forth a comprehensive plan to transform health care in Texas. This reform waiver has been languishing before the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for more than a year. My plan would provide more people with insurance, reduce expensive emergency room visits for basic care, and make it easier for the working poor to buy into employer-sponsored insurance. I am pleased to note that many of the policy proposals in this waiver are surfacing in Congressional discussions on health care reform, including programs that emphasize quality preventive care and reforms that promote a robust, competitive private insurance market centered on consumer choice and affordability.

The Texas waiver proposal reflected strong bipartisan acknowledgement of the need for reform. Improving quality of care, controlling escalating health care costs and addressing access-to-care issues requires collaboration among federal, state and local governments. A one-size-fits-all federal government mandate will not achieve significant reform. Rather, allowing states and local governments the flexibility to restructure the way health care is financed and delivered is critical to significant reform.

Texas just concluded its 81st Legislative Session, which was marked by the passage of a biennial state budget with less than 1 percent growth in general revenue spending, leaving intact the state's Rainy Day Fund, which will provide an expected balance of \$9.1 billion to address future state needs. However, despite the many legislative accomplishments that will continue to position Texas as an economic leader in this country, the state faces significant financial burdens ahead due to rapidly increasing Medicaid caseload and health care cost growth.

I urge you to ensure that the momentum surrounding the current health care reform debate is informed by the effect on Texas in a way that protects state flexibility and innovation while guarding against growing federally mandated programs that will be financially unsustainable, not only for Texas, but for most other states and the federal government, as well. No government has ever taxed, or borrowed, its way to prosperity, no matter how laudable the spending goal may have been. I hope you will resist the temptation to finance an item as basic as health care with deficit financing that cannot be maintained.

Sincerely,

RICK PERRY,
Governor, Texas.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2009.

Hon. MAX BAUCUS,
Chairman, Committee on Finance,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BAUCUS: Last week, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said he was concerned that the health care legislation you have proposed will expand the Nevada Medicaid population beyond what his state can afford. Speaking as governor of a state with a significantly larger caseload than Nevada—a caseload that could double under your proposed Senate Finance plan—let me respectfully say I am troubled by the financial impact on Texas taxpayers and our budget.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission estimates that the various federal health care proposals circulating around Congress could add as much as \$60 billion to the state budget over the next 10 years, creating twice the number of Texas Medicaid recipients.

Additionally, these bills place a new tax burden on certain businesses and provide for the federal takeover of some current state insurance functions. These one-size-fits-all government mandates are both unsustainable and unable to fix our broken health care system.

Instead of government mandates and more deficit spending, successful health care reforms can only be achieved by providing states with the flexibility to develop state-specific solutions.

For example, in 2003, I signed into law medical liability reform that has improved access to medical care in Texas, particularly in underserved areas. Prior to these reforms, Texas doctors were being sued at twice the national average, and many were giving up practicing in Texas altogether. Today, doctors are coming to Texas as fast as they can, with record numbers applying to practice

medicine in the Lone Star State. Tort reform is the sort of state-specific, market-driven reform measure that will help provide effective, affordable solutions to our health care woes.

In addition, as you may know, last month, I wrote to Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to again urge approval of the Texas Medicaid reform waiver, which was originally submitted in April 2008. This waiver—which would promote preventive care, improve quality and access to care, and enable more low-income working Texans to purchase private health insurance—continues to languish at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

I urge you to support our right, as a state, to further explore these approaches, rather than forcing us to implement federal mandates that promise financial hardships for the states and little in the way of benefits for our economy and all of our constituents.

Sincerely,

RICK PERRY,
Governor, Texas.

HONORING THE STUDENTS AND STAFF OF DEVINE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I commend your hard work and dedication in the pursuit of academic excellence. Through your efforts, you have garnered the prestigious honor of being named a National Blue Ribbon School by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, the highest distinction a school in the United States can achieve.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program was established in 1982 by Secretary of Education Terrell Bell. The program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools that demonstrate academic superiority or dramatic gains in student achievement. Only 3.9 percent of all schools in the United States have received this award.

As your Member of Congress, I am proud of your ambition and inspired by your success. I have always believed that our future prosperity is predicated on our present commitment to education. You are lighting the way as a beacon for those not only in our district, but also in our nation. I applaud you for your efforts and encourage you to keep up the excellent work.

IN HONOR OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARTICIPANTS OF "PEDAL FOR PEACE" OCTOBER 7, 2009

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I want to commend the Santa Cruz County Participants of "Follow the Women—Pedal for Peace". This year's participants are Jane DeJarnette, Janet Fogel, Lilly Ann Popken, JoAnn Smith, Marilyn Marzell, and Elizabeth Schwartz. The objective of the ride is to raise awareness of violence in the Middle East and its affects on women and children, who suffer the most as a result of the

conflict. The women from Santa Cruz County will be joining women from 40 other countries.

Created in 2004, the "Follow The Women" annual bicycle ride is the brainchild of 2001 European Woman of the Year and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee Detta Regan. In April 2004, she gathered together 270 women from all over the world, including the United States, Palestine, Britain and Iraq, to bike across Lebanon, Syria and Jordan to campaign for peace and an end to violence in the region. Traditionally throughout the Middle East, women do not ride bicycles making the "Follow the Women—Pedal for Peace" ride extraordinary. It brings much attention to the worthy cause of promoting good relations between different cultures and ethnicities.

"Follow the Women" has held several different events in addition to the annual bike ride. In 2007, they distributed medical kits in Gaza throughout the conflict. That year, they also held a youth exchange to explore and share the experiences between different cultures. The participants gained a better understanding of themselves and others.

"Follow the Women" has also helped fund a counseling project in Ramallah. The aim of this project was to offer support to children and their families who were suffering following the conflict in the Middle East. This year, "Follow the Women—Pedal for Peace" hopes to raise enough funds to build a playground or possibly two for the children of Gaza.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Follow the Women and especially wish to recognize the riders from Santa Cruz. I wish them much luck in their annual bike ride.

REMEMBERING JACK ALLEN STONE

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Jack Allen Stone. Sadly, Jack passed away on July 28, 2009 in Bay City, Michigan. I have known Jack since the early 1960s and will deeply miss him.

Jack Stone moved to Michigan from Missouri in 1930. He was the Class President at Beecher High School when he graduated in 1944 and this began his dual interests in education and politics. He joined the U.S. Army and served as a Corporal E4 during the Korean War. Returning to Flint, Jack worked for Chevrolet and became a committeeman for the UAW. During this time he married, had three daughters and attended the University of Michigan-Flint. He graduated with a B.A. degree in 1961 and began teaching that same year.

Teaching US Government and Michigan History at Grand Blanc High School for 27 years, Jack was a moving force in starting the Grand Blanc chapter of the National Honor Society. During this time he also was active with negotiating teacher contracts. He negotiated the first teacher contract with Grand Blanc Schools and played a major role in negotiating contracts for many years. He was an advisor for MEA PAC and sat on the interview board for school board candidates. Active in the Genesee County Democratic Party, Jack worked on my first campaign and successive

campaigns. He also helped elect Senator Don Reigle and State of Michigan Speaker of the House Bobby Crim.

After retiring in 1988, Jack moved to Gladwin, Michigan and built his dream home on Sugar Springs Lake. He is survived by his wife Joan, and his daughters: Janine Wallace, Rebecca Tereau and Leslie Stone.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the memory of a dear friend, Jack Allen Stone. Over the years I have respected his wisdom, enjoyed his friendship, heeded his advice and I am saddened by his passing.

RESOLUTION TO HONOR OUR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution supporting October 2009 as National Principals Month. This designation will honor and recognize the critical role that school principals play in the lives of our students.

One of the principle reasons behind a school's success is often a strong principal.

Elementary, middle and high school principals consistently provide the vision, dedication, and mobilizing force behind successful schools.

Principals set the academic tone for their schools and work collaboratively with teachers to develop performance goals and objectives, all in an effort to improve student achievement.

Today's principals are expected to fill a variety of roles, each complex in its own right.

On any given day, they are likely to be everything from educational visionary, to community builder, to budget analyst, to facility manager, to counselor.

This means that principals often work long hours. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that one in three principals works more than 40 hours per week and often works additional time supervising school activities at night and on weekends.

During my time on the San Diego School Board, I worked with many of these remarkable individuals. I witnessed how their commitment and energy can inspire an entire school—from the youngest student to the most senior teacher.

In the end, it is principals who are responsible for creating and managing the environment where our students learn and grow.

This month, let's honor this important role, which they dedicate themselves to year-round.

I am pleased to introduce this bipartisan resolution with my colleague from the Education and Labor Committee, Congressman TODD PLATTS.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "WATER TRANSFER FACILITATION ACT OF 2009"

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, today with Congressman COSTA, I introduced the "Water

Transfer Facilitation Act of 2009." the measure should reduce unnecessary delays in water transfers at a time when Central Valley farmers have been hard hit by a three-year drought. It would allow new water transfers of roughly 250,000 to 300,000 acre-feet of water per year. The bill would grant authority to the Bureau of Reclamation to approve voluntary water transfers between sellers and buyers in the San Joaquin Valley. The measure also would streamline environmental reviews for Central Valley water transfers by ensuring that they occur on a programmatic basis, instead of the current project-by-project basis.

Transferring water between and within counties for water districts is a critical tool during periods of drought. While the best solution would be to fully operate the federal and state pumps, this change in the law provides us some relief. This legislation makes permanent the ability to transfer water to our Valley's farms when it is most needed, therefore, allowing our farmers a lifeline to continue to grow crops and help our local economy. More will need to be done to protect the Valley's water, and I will continue that fight.

The bill is supported by a great number of water users across the Central Valley, including the following: Friant Water Users Authority, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Authority, Delta-Mendota Canal Authority, Westlands Water District, Metropolitan Water District, Glen Colusa Irrigation District, Northern California Water Association, Banta-Carbona Irrigation District, Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority, Association of California Water Agencies, Placer County Water Agency, Conaway Preservation Group, and the Reclamation District 2035.

I have submitted several of these support letters here for the record, and I understand that Mr. COSTA will submit additional letters as well.

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
WATER AGENCIES,
October 6, 2009.

Re ACWA support for Water Transfer Legislation.

Representative CARDOZA,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Representative COSTA,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES CARDOZA AND COSTA: Thank you for introducing water transfer legislation for the Central Valley Project (CVP) which ACWA is pleased to support. As California's water supply challenges multiply, this legislation can provide greater flexibility for management of CVP water supplies. As you know, ACWA's 450 public agency members are collectively responsible for 90 percent of the water delivered in California for residential and agricultural uses.

California's water supply situation is dire and worsening. Three years of below average precipitation along with heavy regulatory restrictions through the ESA and Biological Opinions, have seriously diminished California's water supplies. Under these conditions, it is essential that short term actions, such as provided by your legislation to flexibly enable water supplies to move across the San Joaquin Valley, be pursued.

Again, thank you for introducing water transfer legislation. ACWA looks forward to working with you to secure its passage in an expedited manner.

Sincerely,

TIMOTHY QUINN,
Executive Director.