

NEWS CLIPS

PRESSURE MOUNTING ON GOV. SHAHEEN TO RECONSIDER DEATH VETO

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Special to NNPA) — The National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty urged the New Hampshire State Senate and Gov. Jeanne Shaheen to erase capital punishment from the Granite State's law books. The move comes at a time when the momentum of the national agenda seems to be moving toward moratorium on the death penalty. The presidential bid by Gov. George Bush, R-Texas, has further pushed the matter into the national spotlight since Texas executes convicted lawbreakers in higher numbers than any other state in the nation. "We are asking New Hampshire lawmakers to recognize the historical significance of their position," said Steven Hawkins, the group's executive director. "The countries of the world are turning away from capital punishment in droves. Fifty years from now, when the death penalty exists only in U.S. history books, New Hampshire could be remembered as the state that set the precedent in the U.S." The effort to abolish the death penalty in New Hampshire has been a target of the abolition movement since last year, when the House of Representatives not only firmly rejected an effort by the governor to expand the death penalty, but fell 40 votes short of sending an abolition bill to the Senate. Last March, the New Hampshire House passed a bill that would eliminate capital punishment by a vote of 191 to 163.

BILL WOULD GIVE INTERNET TELECOMMUTERS TAX BREAKS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (NNPA) — U.S. Reps. John Lewis, D-GA., and Jerry Weller, R-Ill., both members of the House Ways and Means Committee, announced they have introduced bi-partisan legislation that would give tax relief to workers given home Internet access by employers. The legislation, known as the DATA (Digital Divide Access to Technology) Act, for tax purposes treats the Internet access and first \$1,260 of the value of a computer and equipment (monitors, keyboards), including software, tech support and Internet access as a working benefit ~~one not subject to income tax.~~ The current tax code exposes workers to higher taxes if they accept computers and Internet access as tax-free contributions like health and pension benefits. "The object of the DATA act is to ensure that no one is left behind in the new economy," said Ben Fallon, a Weller spokesman. Fallon pointed out one-third of the jobs created in the last five years have been technology based. Fallon says the bill would encourage employers who would like to give computers to their employees, but are hesitant because of the tax burden. Over the past several months, four major companies — Delta Airlines, Ford Motor Company, American Airlines, and Intel have announced programs to provide home computers to their employees.

LEADERS URGE BLACKS TO JOIN PEACE CORPS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (NNPA) — National Summit on Africa CEO Leonard Robinson and University of the District of Columbia President Julius Nimmons have spent their lives serving others. While their careers differ greatly, they share a common starting point: the Peace Corps. Now both distinguished leaders are encouraging African-Americans to jumpstart their professional lives by helping people in developing countries as Peace Corps Volunteers. "It would take a young African-American 15 or 20 years to get the kind of experience and the kind of credibility that they can get from the Peace Corps," says one executive from a private corporation. Peace Corp volunteer Tameka Salis agrees, saying that "Prospective employers look at Peace Corp volunteers as being creative, hardworking and dedicated." The Peace Corps ranks second on The Black Collegian Magazine's list of "The Top 100 Employers for the Class of 2000" up two spots from last year. The number of people of color in the Peace Corps has more than doubled over the past decade, from six percent in 1989 to 15 percent today. The agency is committed to recruiting a more ethnically diverse volunteer corps. Atlanta Peace Corps recruiter Leslie Etienne says: "Highly motivated people with an interest in community service make good Peace Corps volunteers and the Peace Corp offers its volunteers the opportunity to have a broader world view and build valuable conflict resolution skills."

Census sampling debate resurfaces

WASHINGTON (AP) — Partisan bickering in Congress resurfaced Friday over Census 2000 and the use of sampling, a statistical method that could affect the way Congressional and state legislative district boundaries are redrawn next year.

At a hearing of the House Government Reform Committee's census panel, Democrats said sampling would help account for those people who did not, or refused, to return a census form. Republicans charged that using the statistical method could introduce more error into the national population count, adding people who do not exist while deleting real people who filled out a form.

The Census Bureau favors sampling. In the last count in

1990, Census officials estimated a net undercount of 1.6 percent of the population. Many of those undercounted were minorities or inner-city residents who tend to vote Democrat.

Redistricting will be based on Census 2000 results and in general, the GOP opposes sampling, fearing it could redraw political lines to their disadvantage.

For now, the Census Bureau intends to release both sampled and non-sampled population figures. A 1999 Supreme Court decision required reapportionment of Congressional seats to be based on unadjusted data. States will have the option of using either set of numbers for redistricting.

"I have said previously

that the Census Bureau currently expects that the corrected numbers using (sampling) will be the more accurate numbers," Census director Kenneth Prewitt told the subcommittee on Friday. "If the Census Bureau does not have confidence in the (sampled) results, we will not release it."

The sampled data will be based on the Census Bureau's Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation of 314,000 households. At-home visits for the evaluation begin in June.

By law, the Secretary of Commerce in the next president's administration has the option of telling the Census Bureau not to release the sampled results. Commerce oversees the Census Bureau.

The presumptive Democratic presidential candidate, Vice President Al Gore, supports sampling; his GOP counterpart, Texas Gov. George W. Bush, has said he favors an "actual count."

As in 1990, more lawsuits are expected over the issue once census results roll out, which could further test the constitutionality of using sampled numbers.

Subcommittee chairman Rep. Dan Miller, R-Fla., said his opposition goes beyond the political consequences. It was not until two years after the 1990 census that a review of sampling procedures revealed there were errors, he said.

"Once states draw their district lines, you can't come (See Census, Page 5)

Alaska: Approve state redistricting plan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alaska has asked the Justice Department to approve changes to the way it redraws state legislative lines, including a state law that calls for the use of actual, rather than sampled, Census 2000 population figures.

The Justice Department has up 60 days to respond to the May 4th letter from the Alaska Department of Law.

If the Justice Department does rule definitively on the Alaska regulations, it would be the first ruling it has issued related to this year's census and the statistical method known as sampling.

A definitive ruling on the

Alaska changes could set a precedent for other states seeking federal approval for their redistricting plans, said Phil Sparks, spokesman for the watchdog group Census 2000 Initiative, which supports sampling.

Justice officials can rule on all or part of the legalities of the changes, or can put off a decision until after Census 2000 data is released early next year, assistant state attorney general James Baldwin said Wednesday.

Justice Department lawyer Steven Pershing, who is involved with the case, declined to comment.

The Alaska regulations

took effect last year, but under the federal Voting Rights Act, the state must win Justice Department approval before actually going through with redistricting. The act orders states with a history of voting rights discrimination to obtain prior approval from the Justice Department before changing affected state laws.

Arizona submitted its plan earlier this year, but withdrew it before Justice officials could rule. Meanwhile, Virginia is asking a federal court to rule that the state does not have to go through the Justice Department to gain pre-approval for a similar law

calling for the use of non-sampled data.

The Census Bureau estimated a net undercount of 1.6 percent of the population in 1990, including minorities and inner-city residents who tend to vote Democratic. They favor sampling to account for the missing people.

In general, the GOP opposes sampling, fearing it could put them at a disadvantage when political boundaries are redrawn.

A 1999 Supreme Court ruling mandated that raw data must be used when reapportioning seats in Congress. It is up to states to decide (See Redistricting, Page 5)

Journal: Race may play role in who gets test

CHICAGO (AP) — Decisions by doctors about whether to use a common heart-monitoring procedure might be based in part on race and insurance status, suggests a study published last week in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

White patients and those with private insurance were nearly 1 1/2 times more likely to undergo pulmonary artery catheterization than blacks or patients with other types of insurance, according to a study led by health economist John Rapoport of Mount Holyoke College.

The findings, based on data from 10,217 patients hospitalized nationwide in 1998, suggest that a patient's condition isn't the only factor involved in determining whether the procedure is used.

Catheterization helps doc-

tors monitor vital signs in critically ill patients and provides information that determines treatment.

The procedure involves inserting a balloon-tipped catheter into a vein near the neck or groin and guiding it through the heart into lung vessels. It may remain there for days.

Previous research found a higher death rate among patients who underwent the procedure.

Some theorize that the insertion of a foreign object deep into the body could make patients prone to deadly infection.

Dr. Jesse Hall, a critical-care specialist at the University of Chicago, said in an accompanying editorial that efforts are under way to ensure that the procedure benefits the sickest patients and isn't used just because it is available.

The efforts could lead critical-care specialists to adopt a new approach "per-

haps described as 'don't just do something, stand there,'" Hall wrote.

ABC
Insurance Agency

BRANCH & ASSOCIATES
Insurance & Financial Services

With 2 locations to serve the Las Vegas Valley

2041 N. Jones Blvd. #105

944-5360

1700 Civic Center Drive

649-1029

Auto • Home • Business • Life • Health

SAFECO

