



A year ago, President Barack Obama peered into our economic future and saw foam sealant and weatherstripping.

In the midst of a punishing recession, Obama would wield that

incomparable jobs-creating tool, the caulk gun. What the Works Progress Administration was to Franklin Roosevelt, the government-funded weatherization of homes would be to Obama.

"If you allocate money to weatherize homes," Obama effused to an audience in Elkhart, Ind., "the homeowner gets the benefit of lower energy bills. You right away put people back to work, many of

whom in the construction industry and in the housing industry are out of work right now." And it's a step to "a new energy future."

Obama was hawking another one of his cost-free, best-of-all-worlds scenarios that has been exposed in all its self-deluding inanity in the space of a year.

Obama poured \$5 billion into weatherization as part of last year's stimulus and wanted to spend billions more in a second stimulus. The Department of Energy managed to get the money to the states, where it has swelled the coffers for weatherization and done little else.

According to a Department of Energy inspector general report last month, New York had completed 280 out of 45,400 planned units as of December, Texas had completed 0 of 33,908, and California 12 out of 43,400. That's 292 homes in three states with a total population of roughly 80 million. So much for the 87,000 jobs the administration promised "right away."

Meanwhile, according to a Government Accountability Office report, 90 percent of the homes slated for weatherization in Michigan were subject to historic preservation review; as of last fall, only two people worked in the state's historic preservation office.

Visions of grand Hoover Dam-style projects issuing from Obama's stimulus -- employing masses of laborers and benefiting the economy for decades -- have foundered on the realities of 21st-century government, which is run by halting bureaucracies hamstrung by regulations and at the service of favored interest groups.

Prior to the stimulus, weatherization funds were not subject to the Davis-Bacon Act, a union-friendly law that mandates government pay contractors the "prevailing wage." Slavishly committed to the unions, Democrats made Davis-Bacon apply to the new weatherization funds, and the Department of Energy spent the past year trying to determine the prevailing wage in thousands of counties. At least the program kept someone busy.

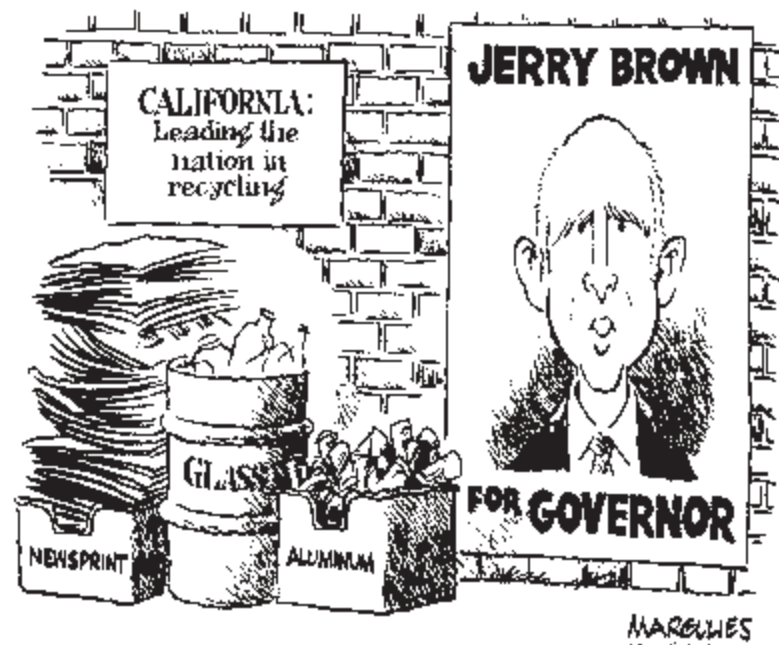
More homes will get weatherized over time, but even Obama admits the folly of the concept of "shovel ready" projects, a damning indictment of his own credulousness in overselling the stimulus. But he remains an enthusiast for the creation of "green jobs," a politically driven industrial policy sure to pile boondoggle atop boondoggle.

The stimulus devoted \$2 billion to wind power, creating an estimated couple of hundred jobs while permanent wind manufacturing employment still declined last year. The Department of Energy will hand out \$2.3 billion in tax credits for the creation of 17,000 "clean" jobs -- at a cost of \$135,000 per job, if they materialize.

This is the racket that Obama touts as a miraculous economic and environmental boon. Would you buy a health-care plan from this man?

*Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.*

# Editorial Page



## Education board proposes changes to school curriculum

AUSTIN — Changes to the social studies curriculum for public schools are in the hopper.

The State Board of Education on March 12 voted 10-5 in favor of a set of proposed revisions. The next step is for the proposed revisions to be posted in the Texas Register in mid-April, and then a 30-day public comment period will begin.

One of several points of contention arose over whether to require that students be taught the names of Tejanos, the Texans of Hispanic ancestry, who were among the 189 that fought for independence and died at the Alamo, but are not named in textbooks. The effort to include those names failed.

Comments with suggested changes to the proposed revisions may be sent to rules@tea.state.tx.us. The final steps in the process are for the board to consider additional updates and final adoption at its May meeting.

Also on March 12, the board adopted educator certification requirements and voted to enter into agreements with Mesa West Real Estate Income Fund II L.P. and Invesco Mortgage Recovery Fund. Each entity will be allowed to invest \$40 million of the multi-billion dollar Permanent School Fund in real estate. The Texas Education Agency said never before has the board entered into a real estate purchase agreement.

Projects to receive federal funds Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples on March 12 congratulated the recipients of tens of millions of federal dollars in broadband funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help bring high-speed Internet service to rural areas.

Projects in Texas to receive funding will improve broadband

service in the Texas South Plains region, the Dalhart and Stratford communities in the upper Texas Panhandle and in the Burkburnett and Iowa Park community areas in north central Texas.

The money is part of a \$7.2 billion appropriation through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act directing the USDA's Rural Utilities Service and the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration to expand broadband access to unserved and underserved communities across the U.S., increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure and provide long-term economic benefits.

### School fund increases in 2009

The fund that guarantees school district bonds and supports the purchase of student textbooks realized a 25 percent return in 2009, the Texas Education Agency reported March 12.



The Texas Permanent School Fund, the largest public endowment for public schools in the nation, was valued at \$22.2 billion on Dec. 31, 2009, up from \$18.1 on Dec. 31, 2008.

The fund's guarantee of school bonds allows Texas school districts to gain AAA ratings for their bonds, saving them millions in interest and insurance costs. The fund also provides textbooks free of charge to the state's 4.7 million schoolchildren and provides general financial support to the more than 8,000 Texas public schools, the Texas Education Agency said.

### Firm must provide restitution

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott, attorneys general from 34 other states and the U.S. Federal Trade Commission on March 9 resolved their investigation of Arizona-based LifeLock Inc. and reached an agreement with the private identity theft protection service.

Under the agreement, LifeLock Inc. must provide \$11 million in restitution to eligible customers and must not misrepresent that it: (1) protects against all forms of ID theft; (2) eliminates the risk of ID theft; (3) constantly monitors activity on each of its customers' consumer reports; and (4) always prompts a call from a potential creditor before a new credit account is opened in the customer's name.

### Grief named lottery chief

The three-member Texas Lottery Commission on March 9 announced the appointment of Gary Grief as executive director of the agency.

Grief, who had been leading the agency as deputy executive director since October 2008, was appointed on a unanimous vote.

An original member of the task force assigned to research and launch the Texas Lottery, he has been with the agency since 1992.

### Census 'ambassador' is named

Gov. Rick Perry on March 9 named Secretary of State Hope Andrade the "Texas Census Ambassador" to promote participation by Texans in the 2010 Census. Forms for the 2010 Census will be delivered to residents this month.

Andrade, U.S. Census officials and others joined in Austin on March 12 to encourage all who live in Texas to participate in the census. She will promote the Census statewide until the April 1 deadline.



## Clothes of the Decades Needed!

Bishop Centennial Style Show committee is in need of styles of the last ten decades-worn in Bishop- to be modeled or displayed at the Centennial style show on May 14, 2010.

Do you have a Bishop High School letterman jacket, cheerleading outfit, football jersey, prom dress, everyday work or school clothes, etc. that could represent one or more of the last ten decades? Look in an attic, closet, or trunk.

If you find something we could borrow for the day, please contact Kathy Lowman at klowman126@aol.com or call 361 584 2457. Only 2-3 outfits from each decade will be used so contact me early to have your clothing item included in the style show. Clothes needed by May 7. Forms needed ASAP.

Description of clothing: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate year clothing was worn: \_\_\_\_\_

Will provide model for clothing (yes/ no) \_\_\_\_\_

Will give permission for someone to model clothing (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing may be displayed only (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return clothing to \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of person)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### KINGSVILLE RECORD AND BISHOP NEWS

P.O. Box 951  
Kingsville, Texas 78364-0951  
Phone (361) 592-4304

Second Class Postage Paid at Kingsville, Texas

Published every Wednesday and Sunday in Kingsville, Texas, by the Kingsville Publishing Co., Inc., 1831 W. Santa Gertudis Ave.

Office Hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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