



# The agony of the revolution

The great Democratic revolution of 2008 is entering its pitiful stage. If Nancy Pelosi had a guillotine, Robert Gibbs' head would be rolling around in a basket. His offense? Uttering perhaps the most unassail-

ably accurate statement of his tenure as White House press secretary: that there is "no doubt" Republicans might take back the House. Theories abound for why Gibbs would say such a flatly true thing.

The simplest is that Gibbs was asked whether the House is in play on "Meet the Press" and in the flush of the moment slipped up with an honest answer. Whatever the explanation, Pelosi is enraged at his

counterrevolutionary backsliding. The more important question is: Why aren't Democrats mad at President Barack Obama (and Speaker Pelosi) for endangering their majority, rather than at Gibbs for acknowledging the fact it's at risk?

## Editorial Page

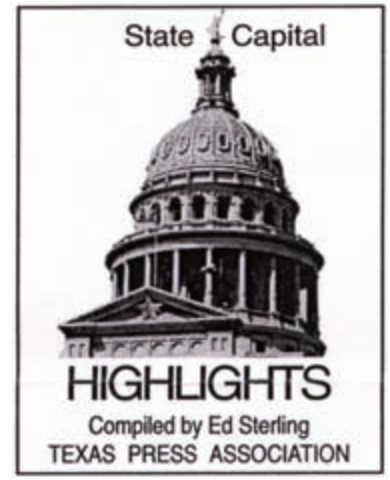
Page 2A The Kingsville Record and Bishop News July 28, 2010

### Congress' passage of unemployment benefits extension to help many Texans

AUSTIN — Out-of-work Texans will have until Nov. 27 to qualify for unemployment benefits, the Texas Workforce Commission reported July 23. This is thanks to passage of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2010 by Congress on July 22. President Obama signed the act into law without delay. About 150,000 Texans had exhausted their unemployment benefits, the Texas Workforce Commission said. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the federal govern-

ment's basic extended benefits program provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits when a state is experiencing high unemployment. The national unemployment rate was 9.5 percent for the month of June. Texas' unemployment rate was 8.2 percent that month. **Milestone arrest is made** Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott announced that as of July 13, his office's Fugitive and Cyber Crimes units had combined for more than 2,000 arrests in the last seven years. "Thanks to the hard work and per-

severance of these dedicated peace officers, more than 2,000 criminals have been taken off the streets and held accountable for their unlawful conduct," Abbott said on July 22. "We are grateful to the local, state and federal law enforcement officials from around the state who helped make this milestone possible and continue to work with us to protect Texas families." The 2,000th, Kirk Brandon Muller, 41, of Austin, was arrested in Travis County for having unauthorized contact with a child, a violation of his mandated parole require-



ments. In 1993 in Travis County, Muller was convicted on four counts of indecency with a child by sexual contact and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Muller's victims were four young girls ranging from nine to four years old, Abbott's office reported. **Vets' mortgage rates lowest** Mortgage rates for Texas veterans hit a record low last week of just 4.33 percent for a 30-year fixed rate loan, Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson announced July 22. Disabled veterans can borrow at even a lower rate of just 3.83 percent, he added. "This is great news for Texas veterans," Patterson said. "Rates this low help those who served buy homes now and keep them later." The record low rate was set July 16 by the Veterans Land Board, which Patterson chairs. Before, the lowest interest rate ever available to Texas veterans was 4.51 percent in June 2003. The highest rate ever offered by the Veterans Land Board was 10.145 percent in 1985. **Uninsured vehicles on decline** Since the launch of the TexasSure auto insurance verification program two years ago, the number of uninsured vehicles on Texas roads is showing signs of decline, the Texas Department of Insurance reported last week. Soon after its launch, the database showed that statewide, nearly one fourth of vehicles registered in Texas could not be matched to an insurance policy. By June 2010, the number of unmatched registered vehicles had declined to 21.65 percent. TexasSure "uninsured notices" are sent to the owners of registered vehicles that appear not to have auto liability insurance. Customers are provided with the vehicle registration information on file and instructions to resolve issues. Customers may respond by mail, phone or online. The program's database helps law enforcement confirm whether a Texas-registered vehicle has valid auto liability insurance. It is able to match nearly all reported auto insurance policies to a registered vehicle. The database has been available to all 254 county tax assessor-collectors since June 2008 and to Texas law enforcement since October 2008. **Vote would help charter schools** The State Board of Education on July 23 voted 7-6 to allow up to \$100 million of the Permanent School Fund to be used to build or buy buildings the state could lease to charter schools. But the funds could only be used that way with approval from the attorney general or after passage of a new legislation. Presently, the Permanent School Fund, which is currently worth about \$22 billion, may only be used to purchase textbooks and other instructional materials. **DPS celebrates 75th anniversary** The Texas Department of Public Safety celebrated its 75th year on July 25. To commemorate the anniversary, 20 motorcycle riders left the DPS office in Austin on a 2,376-mile tour of the state.



### Letter to the editor

#### Move by police association to amend city charter from five members to seven members does not have real purpose

Editor: Review the Facts: The Kingsville Record (July 17 issue) states that the Kingsville Law Enforcement Association headed by Sgt. Tamera Blackstock succeeded in obtaining the 500 signatures needed to place a charter amendment proposition on the next election ballot, which would be in November 2010. The issue of changing the city commission from five to seven members and for them to serve in single member districts and for the mayor to be chosen by the city commissioners, and therefore depriving the electorate from voting for a mayor, is an unfair and without doubt a poorly researched movement — a preposterous notion to say the least. A friend of mine told me Sgt. Tamera Blackstock came to his house one evening to solicit his signature for the change from five members on the city council to seven members made up of single member districts. My first question is why would a police union be so interested in changing the city commission from five members to seven single member districts? I would think that our local police union would be more interested in helping officer morale, helping with creative ideas to solve crime in Kingsville that without a doubt we have enough of, and basically be more interested in solving the criminal element in our community rather than on wild goose chases geared to change our city charter from a five member city council to a seven member city council. For what purpose and what price? As a voting citizen of Kingsville, I believe we should be able to vote for five members of the city commission versus just one in a single member district. To date, signatures have been gathered with citizens not really knowing what they were signing in terms of why

this change is being pursued by Sgt. Tamera Blackstock as president of the Kingsville Law Enforcement Association? In addition, what are the parameters involved in creating single member districts? Does this process mean that the City of Kingsville budget is going to be divided into seven districts? I have always understood that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, but that equation obviously was not considered in this idiotic movement? What is the purpose of breaking the Kingsville up into single member districts? Another member of the Police Association, Jesse Amador, is quoted as saying that the "single district representation would be a benefit as a whole and create fairness." What benefit and create what fairness? He goes on to say "As it is now, three commissioners live in the same area." This is absolutely idiotic thinking that commissioners that live in the same area are not going to be fair to the people in the other areas of the city. Does this mean, according to his thinking, that he will fight crime in the area where he lives, rather than in other areas? This kind of unstable thinking surely does not belong in the Kingsville Police Department. One important variable is that the total cost of the election and then setting up single member districts has not been fully considered. By a conservative estimation, the entire process will cost the city and taxpayers in excess of \$150,000. These are critical times where \$150,000 could be better spent on services to the citizens of Kingsville instead of on a whim of misinformed people. That \$150,000 could help us pave streets, could help hire more police officers and firefighters and more

public works employees, could buy much needed equipment, and many more useful purposes that would serve citizens much better than foolish spending on a concept that has no real purpose. Kingsville is a relatively small rural community and citizens are not overwhelmingly coming out to run for office, which says that the current commission is doing a good job as all have been reelected several times. I am no stranger to political agendas and the current move by the police association that should be tending to crime in the city instead of chasing a whim is surely some kind of political move, hidden agenda, or ulterior motive. That is what political agendas are all about, and we have a system in place that allows voting for five individuals in our city commission. Why are we trying to reinvent the wheel? The consequences of changing the structure of our city commission to seven single member districts will require the city to spend a considerable amount of money in designing the districts to meet U.S. Justice Department approval. There has been no public debate on this issue and a small percentage of the electorate in Kingsville have signed a petition with many unanswered questions. I suggest that the public should be well informed before such decisions are made, and now we will probably have an election with little information regarding the economic ramifications of changing the city council to seven-member district based on a whim. I ask all of you to vote no on this ridiculous city charter amendment and ask those of you who signed the petition to reconsider the many variables that you were not told about, which could affect our city in a very negative manner. A Concerned Citizen, Ben Figueroa

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. Bob Odum Publisher and Editor Sandy Alexander Dir. of Marketing and Sales Janie Odum Advertising Manager Tina Salinas Managing Editor Tracy Pena Account Executive Gloria Bigger-Cantu Reporter and Photographer Erika Hernandez Reporter and Photographer Carlos Saldana Production Manager Joel Silva Production Elisa Jimenez Circulation/Office Manager