

London, Sarah

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**From:** Wengroff, Ariel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2012 12:54 PM  
**To:** Trombley, Shana  
**Cc:** Allen, Susan; EXE  
**Subject:** Re: GPS national media:

Haha I agree!

Ariel Wengroff  
Special Assistant to the Governor  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609

Office: 802-828-3333

Cell: [REDACTED]

On Feb 27, 2012, at 12:48 PM, "Trombley, Shana" <[Shana.Trombley@state.vt.us](mailto:Shana.Trombley@state.vt.us)> wrote:

I love that GPS is defining the national message! And in an effort to stay on message back home I think we should all sport smiley face buttons when he gets back. -S

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**From:** Allen, Susan  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2012 12:43 PM  
**To:** EXE  
**Subject:** GPS national media:

### Washington Times

Photo: Gov. Bob McDonnell, Virginia Republican, and Gov. Peter Shumlin, Vermont Democrat, (right) speak with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Thomas J. Vilsack during a panel discussion at the National Governors Association meeting in Washington on Sunday. (Associated Press)

### **Governors weigh in on presidential race**

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"These Republicans that are running for president, they're so depressing. Cheer up!" Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin said after Democratic governors left a White House meeting with Mr. Obama. "We've got some good news: a great president creating jobs, and governors who are seeing revenues rebound."

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"In a purple state people want to see results and they also want to see a level of collaboration and teamwork. I think he is going to win Colorado," the state's governor, John Hickenlooper, said.

Meanwhile, virtually no Republican governors were willing to predict their party's nominee would prevail in November.

Many lamented the drawn-out nature of the nominating process, in which the early front-runner, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, has been weakened by the intense scrutiny of his wealth, business practices and shifts on issues as well as the unwillingness of conservative voters to rally behind his candidacy. Many conservatives have coalesced recently around former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, Mr. Romney's latest rival as the contest moves to primaries in Arizona and Michigan on Tuesday and 10 contests on March 6.

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Another Republican, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett said he wasn't concerned that social issues had become part of the presidential campaign, saying such topics are top concerns for many Republican voters. But Mr. Corbett, who hasn't endorsed a primary candidate, said the discussion would shift once a nominee is chosen.

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## **HUFFINGTON POST:**

### **Democratic Governors Tell Republican Governors To 'Cheer Up'**

**The Huffington Post | By John Celock**

WASHINGTON -- The nation's Democratic governors have been telling their Republican counterparts to "cheer up" Monday morning, as the states' chief executives head to the White House for a meeting with President Barack Obama.

Democratic governors were wearing buttons labeled "cheer up" during the National Governors Association closing session on Monday and kept them on as they boarded buses for their group meeting at the White House. The buttons come out of Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin's message to Republican governors which he delivered during a press conference following a meeting that Democratic governors had with Obama this weekend.

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Shumlin and his Democratic colleague, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, said that they are tired of the "doom and gloom" that the Republican presidential candidates have been referencing during the campaign and they wanted Republicans to look at what they term as the Obama administration's accomplishments. This includes the creation of 3.5 million new jobs during Obama's term, they say.

The buttons were created by Shumlin over the weekend and distributed to Democratic governors during a breakfast meeting Monday morning, prior to the National Governors Association's closing session. The Democratic governors could be seen sporting the buttons during the quick session during which the governors adopted new policy statements for the group.

"We're trying to keep the Republican governors happy," Quinn said.

Republican governors at the meeting appeared to be in a good mood, with many seen smiling and engaging in upbeat conversations with their Democratic and Republican colleagues.

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## **SACRAMENTO BEE:**

**As economy improves, governors debate who deserves the credit**

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By MICHAEL A. MEMOLI  
Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON -- When the nation's governors gathered in Washington a year ago, state budget gaps and tough decisions loomed.

A year later, there is a broad sense among the state executives that they have stepped back from the precipice. What is being fiercely debated here in this political year is just how much credit the federal government, and President Barack Obama in particular, deserves for the turnaround.

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**From:** Spaulding, Susan  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2012 1:05 PM  
**To:** Trombley, Shana; Allen, Susan; EXE  
**Subject:** RE: GPS national media:

GREAT IDEA!

Susan M. Spaulding  
Director, Appointments to Boards and Commissions  
The Pavillion - Fifth Floor  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609-0101  
(802)-828-3333 fax 828-3339

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**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2012 12:49 PM  
**To:** Allen, Susan; EXE  
**Subject:** RE: GPS national media:

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Meanwhile, virtually no Republican governors were willing to predict their party's nominee would prevail in November.

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A year later, there is a broad sense among the state executives that they have stepped back from the precipice. What is being fiercely debated here in this political year is just how much credit the federal government, and President Barack Obama in particular, deserves for the turnaround.

Emerging from a meeting with the president and his economic team at the White House on Friday, one Democratic governor called the Republicans' tone "depressing."

"Cheer up!" Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin implored. "We've got some good news - a great president creating jobs. And governors who are seeing job creation and, therefore, revenues."

"I'm cheerful," Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, a Republican, responded on Saturday. "As an American, I'm delighted to see the unemployment rate going down. But I'd suggest to you that it has more to do with Republican governors."

McDonnell and Republican Chris Christie of New Jersey were elected in 2009, replacing Democrats. In 2010, Republicans picked up six additional governorships to claim the majority. The political gains were attributed in part to the lingering unease about the economy, and dissatisfaction with the president's response.

But now the economic news is improving. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in January that the unemployment rate had declined in 37 states during the month of January, and held steady in 10 more -

continuing a long-term improvement trend. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, budgets enacted in states last year closed a cumulative shortfall of \$91 billion, and through the fall, new gaps were "practically nonexistent."

Democrats say the foundation for that improvement was laid by the aggressive federal response to the problem in the form of the economic stimulus package.

"I think it's fair to say that the president and his administration kept this country from going off the cliff," Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear said Sunday. "We wouldn't have made it in nearly as good a shape through this recession if we had not had the stimulus money to support our education efforts, to support infrastructure efforts so that we could keep people working."

Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels of Indiana, serving the final year of his second term, countered that the so-called recovery is the weakest ever from a serious recession.

"And his policies are manifestly part of the problem," he said of the president. "A budget and a State of the Union (address) that doesn't even mention debt. He's really left the field wide open on the issues that ... people will insist be central."

"There's a real disconnect between the states and the federal government," said McDonnell, who chairs the Republican Governors Association. "Governors have to balance budgets on time without excuses, without delay, are held directly responsible for jobs and energy policies in their states. And yet we see, at least I see, from this president a lack of leadership on jobs, on spending, on debt, on the economy."

Governors of both parties have taken dramatic steps to balance their budgets, but Republicans triggered some of the most high-profile battles. Scott Walker of Wisconsin now faces a recall election after joining with the Republican Legislature to curtail the rights of state unions to collectively bargain. Ohio voters overturned similar legislation last fall. Christie has become a conservative sensation for the successful fight in his state to rein in the powerful teachers union.

Some of those fights will work to the president's benefit next fall, Democrats contend.

"All of them took a hard right turn. You've seen the people's reaction. They wanted more jobs, they didn't want unions banned. They wanted more jobs, they didn't want teachers and police officers and firefighters to lose their pensions," Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, who chairs the Democratic Governors Association, said in an interview. "We've all had to make tough reforms, including on pensions, but the people aren't going to reward these guys for their right-wing ideology. And it's become so apparent, I believe, to voters."

To say the economy is improving in spite of Obama "is not a compelling message," added Delaware Gov. Jack Markell, a Democrat

"They basically thought they could get away with a totally negative message. That's not a very good place to be as the economy is getting better."



London, Sarah

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From: Allen, Susan  
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2012 6:36 AM  
To: EXE  
Subject: FW: The Daily Beast Must Read Column today, and other national GPS clips from yesterday:

## **THE DAILY BEAST**

### **Gov.: GOP Field 'So Depressing'**

"These Republicans that are running for president, they're so depressing. Cheer up!" Democratic Gov. Peter Shumlin of Vermont said Saturday night as Republicans and Democrats alike gathered in Washington for the National Governors Association, an annual four-day conference of top state executives. To be fair, Shumlin wasn't talking about the quality of the candidates, but that they ought to be giddy about President Obama's chances at winning a second term, which seemed to be the feeling among Democratic governors. "We've got some good news: a great president creating jobs and governors who are seeing revenues rebound." On the other hand, Republican governors said they are concerned that the prolonged primary race has exposed deep divisions within their party, alienated independent voters, and badly damaged the eventual nominee.

Read it at The Associated Press

(note from Sue: Among the 40 comments by readers -- a mix of 'like this' and 'don't agree' -- is this one:

This guy must be tapping one too many maple trees, or something.)

**ASSOCIATED PRESS STORY GETTING NATIONAL SPIN** (I just found it on, among mainstream papers, the Jewish paper Haartz and Gannett's The Daily Advertiser):

Democratic governors are bullish on President Barack Obama's re-election prospects, citing the improving economy and a Republican nominating contest that has exposed deep divisions in the party's base.

Republican governors insist Obama is vulnerable, but they say they are concerned the prolonged primary race has alienated independent voters and may have badly damaged the eventual nominee. Democratic enthusiasm and Republican apprehension were both on display at the winter meeting of the National Governor's Association, an annual four-day conference where states' top executives gather to discuss policy and trade ideas on best practices but where politics is always close to the surface.

In interviews, many Democratic governors seemed almost giddy about Obama's chances of winning a second term.

They pointed to the improving employment figures, which have helped raise state revenues after years of painful budget cuts. The national unemployment rate stood at 8.3 percent in January, down from a high of 10 percent in October 2009.

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Even Democratic governors of some typically toss-up, or "purple," states in presidential elections, said they like Obama's chances.

"In a purple state people want to see results and they also want to see a level of collaboration and teamwork. I think he is going to win Colorado," the state's governor, John Hickenlooper, said. Meanwhile, virtually no Republican governors were willing to predict their party's nominee would prevail in November.

Many lamented the drawn-out nature of the nominating process, in which the early front-runner, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, has been weakened by the intense scrutiny of his wealth, business practices and shifts on issues as well as the unwillingness of conservative voters to rally behind his candidacy.

Many conservatives have coalesced recently around former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, Romney's latest strongest rival as the contest moves to primaries in Arizona and Michigan on Tuesday and 10 contests on March 6.

"I don't know anybody who thinks if you started out to design a good process to pick a president you'd choose exactly what we have now," said Indiana Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels, a former White House budget director who explored a presidential candidacy but ultimately decided against a run.

Daniels said he would not consider jumping into the race even if Romney were to lose Michigan. Some Republican leaders have said privately that if Romney does not prevail in Michigan - a state where he was born and grew up and where his father served as governor - the defeat could serve as an opening for a party heavyweight like Daniels to join the field.

Daniels, who has not endorsed a candidate, said he didn't believe a potential Romney loss in Michigan indicated unrelenting problems with his candidacy.

"The problem I would worry about, and have all along, is that our side might not offer a bold enough and specific enough and constructive enough and, I would say, inclusive enough alternative to America," Daniels said.

Some Republican governors voiced concern that social issues like contraception and gay marriage had at times eclipsed discussion of the economy in the presidential primary race.

"I do agree those social issues are not as significant as some of the economic and fiscal issues that really threaten our way of life," South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard said, saying he was worried the debate over such issues might alienate uncommitted voters.

Contraception emerged as a hot button issue last month after the Obama administration announced it would require church-affiliated employers to include birth control as part of an employee's health insurance coverage. The decision drew outrage from Catholic bishops and other religious leaders, and Obama eventually retooled the requirement to say health insurers, not the religious groups themselves, must pay for the coverage.

Many Republicans, including the leading presidential candidates, slammed Obama for what they called government infringement on religious liberty. But their hard line risked making the candidates look as though they were anti-birth control ... particularly Santorum, a Roman Catholic who has said he believes contraception is harmful to women.

The problem was further compounded when Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, a rising Republican star widely considered a contender for the vice presidential nomination, backed a controversial bill that would have required women undergo a vaginal ultrasound before receiving an abortion.

McDonnell backed down this week, asking the bill's sponsors to require a less invasive ultrasound procedure instead. But the controversy drew national attention and scorn from women's groups.

Pennsylvania Republican Gov. John Corbett said he wasn't concerned that social issues had become part of the presidential campaign, saying such topics are top concerns for many Republican voters. But Corbett, who hasn't endorsed a primary candidate, said the discussion would shift once a nominee is chosen.

"It will be the economy, the economy, the economy and it will be jobs, jobs, jobs. And I think that's exactly where it should be," Corbett said.

**POLITICO** (FROM 7:30 THIS MORNING; THREE PHOTOS -- Schweitzer, O'Malley and Shumlin)

By DAVID CATANESE

The nation's Democratic governors are gleeful at the heavy play social issues are suddenly getting in the Republican presidential primary.

In Washington, D.C., for the annual National Governors Association meeting, the Democratic governors agreed that while the 2012 election would likely turn on the economy, the current attention being paid to flashpoints like contraception is good news for their party. Meanwhile, their Republican counterparts were eager to turn talk back to the economy.

"I think we're returning to the dark ages. What? We're discussing the legitimacy of birth control in this country? That discussion, I thought, had ended 30 years ago," said term-limited Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer, who dubbed the four Republican presidential candidates "Christmas packages under the tree."

The Democratic governors pushed a message of job creation at the conference. But not far under the surface, they were basking in the hard right turn the presidential debate has taken in recent weeks with the surging candidacy of Rick Santorum. Santorum's candidacy has surfaced issues like his personal opposition to contraception coverage, abortion rights and gay marriage.

"Their party has shown a great propensity to head into social issues and to take hard right-wing ideological turns, and I think that propensity has hurt them badly," argued Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, the chairman of the Democratic Governors Association.

On Friday, it was O'Malley, a second-term governor widely seen as a 2016 presidential prospect, who was forcefully confronting Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell during a POLITICO forum about the Virginia legislature's push for a bill that would require women to take an ultrasound before having an abortion.

Meanwhile, O'Malley is set to sign a bill this week to make Maryland the eighth state in the country to recognize gay marriage.

"If the Republicans continue to be against diversity, continue to be against civil rights, I think they will continue to be the party of yesterday," said Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin. "If the Republican Party continues to say no to equality, to diversity and to dignity, they will be a dinosaur party."

While President Obama's initial — it has since been revised — order to require religious groups to cover birth control in health insurance packages initially sparked a political firestorm, it also resurrected a much more divisive debate that polls now show favors Democrats.

A Quinnipiac University survey released late last week found that more than half of Americans support the president's revised plan and that more than two-thirds think birth control should be covered under insurance plans.

"The way it's sort of unfolding on the GOP side, it's actually good for the Democrats," said Delaware Gov. Jack Markell, the prior DGA chairman.

Added California Gov. Jerry Brown: "I think the Republicans are hurting themselves. But worse, they are hurting the country."

Washington state Gov. Christine Gregoire suggested that the lurch to the right at the top of the ticket will hurt Republican candidates down ballot, including Attorney General Rob McKenna, a moderate who is striving to become the first GOP governor in the Evergreen State in 30 years.

"In sharp contrast to the president coming a week ago, going to the Boeing Company, talking about manufacturing, jobs, getting people back to work ... they're talking about setting women's health care back years, so they're out of touch with where my state is," she said.

When questions about these same hot button social issues were posed to Republican governors, their inclination was to quickly pivot to the economy and blame Democrats for distractions.

"These are Democrats that are just blowing smoke because they can't defend the actions of this administration," said Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, when asked about his colleagues' critiques. "The most important issue is jobs and so they want to put the focus on other issues. But I can tell you as governor, my focus is jobs."

Asked whether social issues could have a bigger-than-expected role on the presidential race, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker demurred.

"I think those are sideshows on any of those issues, be it Democrat or Republican. I think the real issue is about the economy," he said. "I think the most powerful message that whoever the nominee is, will ultimately have is, that the current status of this country, and many of our states, is focused too much on empowering the government to try to get involved in economic development."

Maine Gov. Paul LePage cut off discussion on the topic of social issues immediately after it was broached.

"I'm not part of that debate. I only want to talk about jobs. If they want to talk about jobs, I'm interested," he said. "If they want to talk about something else, they've got the wrong guy. I don't care about it. It's not my issue."

## **VOICE OF AMERICA:**

### **Economy to Top Obama Meeting With Governors**

BY KENT KLINE

The U.S. economy will likely be the main topic as President Barack Obama meets Sunday and Monday with most of America's 50 state governors. Many of the state leaders are reporting progress.

Some state executives have brought a sense of optimism to the National Governors Association meetings in Washington.

After several years of job losses and state budget crises, a number of states, including some of those hit hardest by the recession, are showing signs of a rebound.

Governors from President Obama's Democratic Party came to the White House Friday to meet with the president about these and other issues.

Not surprisingly, the Democratic governors credited Mr. Obama's policies for the improving economic outlook.

Governor Martin O'Malley of the Eastern state of Maryland said gains in manufacturing jobs are fueling the economic comeback, and he backs the president's push to boost U.S. exports.

"Manufacturing is adding jobs. We know that there are jobs that are now starting to come back to the United States, and we know that there are more jobs to be created if we increase exports," he said.

Mr. Obama recently visited a Boeing airliner factory in the Northwestern state of Washington, as part of his campaign to promote his economic plan.

Washington Governor Chris Gregoire agreed that manufacturing and exports will help advance America's economic recovery.

Most state constitutions require balanced budgets, and falling state revenues have forced many governors to make difficult and unpopular choices.

However, Governor Peter Shumlin, of the Northeastern state of Vermont, says that in many states, unemployment is down and revenues are up. "We have got some good news-a great president creating jobs, and governors who are seeing job creation and therefore revenues rebound," he said.

Some Republican governors also say the economic picture has brightened, including Governor Dave Heineman, of the Central state of Nebraska. "I get a sense that most governors are feeling a little bit better, that their budget pictures have improved. I will say this, because I have gone through it for seven years: Controlling spending is critical, but invest in the most important priorities," he said.

Many Republicans say it was cost-cutting by Republican governors that has caused the economic resurgence in their states.

And some states are still struggling, including the most populous state, California. Democratic Governor Jerry Brown has projected a \$9 billion deficit this year, although the economy appears to be showing signs of revival there too.

If California were an independent nation, it has been estimated that its economy would be the ninth-largest in the world.

President Obama will host a formal dinner for the governors on Sunday, and will hold meetings with the state executives on Monday.

From: Allen, Susan  
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2012 3:01 PM  
To: Allen, Susan  
Subject: AFTERNOON MEDIA CLIPS FOR TUESDAY, FEB. 28 (FINAL):

**BURLINGTON FREE PRESS:**

**Report: Worms in Vermont women's prison**

A scathing report by a group of women's advocates describes worms in shower stalls, an insufficient number of toilets and an inadequate number of jobs available for inmates at the South Burlington prison.

Among the complaints: "There are worms in the shower."

The report also cited inadequate heat and hot water at times.

The report was issued by eight women who represent various organizations that work with female inmates. The report comes six months after the state moved the female inmates from a prison with too much space in St.

Albans to one with not enough in South Burlington.

Gov. Peter Shumlin, responding to the report Tuesday, said some of the information was inaccurate or outdated and the other issues are being addressed.

State officials admitted, though, that there are larvae from sewer flies in the showers, a problem that has plagued the prison for years.

"The issue of insects is not new for this building and does occur in other buildings in our system," Corrections Commissioner Andy Pallito told legislators in an e-mail response to the report.

Pallito said the state Buildings Department has a system for cleaning the shower drains and has ramped that schedule up. Plans are in the works to remove old tile and resurface those areas, he said.

"Is it a perfect facility? No," said Susan Bartlett, the governor's special assistant for Corrections issues and a leading driver of moving the women to South Burlington. "The work on the maintenance issues is ongoing."

Bartlett said the state will replace the spotty heating system in the summer, but it didn't make sense to do so in the winter. She said plans are also in place to give up two jail cells to make room for more toilets.

The report raises a broad spectrum of issues that the authors say were generated by the move to South Burlington, where there is less space for programs, jobs and facilities.

Alongside the physical issues with the facility, the report cites a lack of work for the women. The St. Albans facility offered 80 full-time jobs and 31 training positions, the report said, while at South Burlington the 145 women have access to just 30 jobs.

(Page 2 of 2)

The work that is available lacks the long-term educational benefits of the work in St. Albans, the report said.

"Six months into the transition, there are disturbing signs that we're not only falling short of the Governor's vision, but are on track to erode a decade's worth of progress in our work with incarcerated women," the report states. "Immediate steps must be taken to ensure the health, safety and human dignity of Vermont's incarcerated women."

Bartlett responded that the women are being offered work on outside crews that they were not offered at St. Albans.

Clearly miffed at the report, Bartlett said, "I felt like we've been working with these groups in good faith. I didn't feel like there were a lot of suggestions that they were trying to be helpful with."

The report was the work of Susan Onderwyzer of the Lund Family Center, Dolly Fleming of Mercy Connections, Wendy Love of the Vermont Commission on Women, Karen Tronsgard-Scott of the Vermont Network Against Domestic Violence, Tiffany Bluemle of Vermont Works for Women, Jane Van Buren of Women Helping Battered Women and Marybeth Redmond and Sarah Bartlett of writinginsideVT.

**No injunction for Franklin County Town Meeting prayer**

ST. ALBANS — A Vermont Superior Court judge in St. Albans said Tuesday it is unlikely he'll rule on whether a religious invocation at the annual Franklin town meeting is constitutional.

The woman, Marilyn Hackett, says the prayer at the start of the annual meeting violates the Vermont Constitution's protection against forced participation in religious worship.

Just a week before the annual town meeting, lawyers for Hackett and the town made their respective cases to Superior Court Judge Martin Maley

Dan Barrett, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer representing Hackett, said a religious prayer violates the Vermont Constitution and violates her rights to public accommodations because the prayer discriminates on the basis of creed.

Jim Carroll, an attorney for the Town of Franklin, said the prayer does not compel Hackett or anyone else to attend a religious ceremony, since she and others can leave the room during the brief prayer, then return to fully participate in Town Meeting. Plus, the invocation has a secular purpose: To encourage participants to reflect on the gravity and solemnity of the proceedings.

Barrett asked for an injunction preventing the prayer at this year's town meeting, since a ruling on the entire case won't come until later this year.

However, Maley said he would be out of town from tonight through Monday, and won't have the time to decide whether an injunction is necessary.

After the hearing, Hackett said she would go to Town Meeting this year, regardless of whether the injunction was granted.

### **Database debate: House bill differs with Shumlin on who can access opiate prescription records**

Gov. Peter Shumlin's proposal to give law enforcement direct access to a confidential Health Department database as part of an effort to confront the prescription opiate abuse crisis has hit a stumbling block in the House.

Shumlin, in his State of the State address in January, said he wanted the Legislature to pass a bill that would allow a select team of three Vermont State Police investigators access to the Vermont Prescription Monitoring System, which tracks the dispensing of medications like OxyContin and other opiates around the state. Instead, the bill sponsored by Rep. Ann Pugh, D-South Burlington, chair of the House Human Services Committee, would limit access to the state's Public Safety commissioner, who would seek the data via a request to the Health commissioner in cases where there was a "serious and imminent threat to a person or to the public."

"The Prescription Monitoring System was originally developed as a tool for health care," Pugh said Monday. "It was not developed to be a public safety instrument. We will continue to take testimony on the bill this week and then vote on it."

By law, the database cannot be accessed by police. Public Safety Commissioner Keith Flynn and others have argued that access to it would help speed up criminal investigations of "pill shoppers" and doctors improperly prescribing the medications. At present, police can obtain prescription data by going from pharmacy to pharmacy.

Flynn said Monday that the plan as outlined in Pugh's bill was cumbersome. He said if it became law, the change could result in him and Health Commissioner Harry Chen being subpoenaed into court on a case-by-case basis to explain the reasoning for their sharing of database information.

"It doesn't sound like we'll have all that much direct access with this bill," Flynn said. He also said he's had a hard time convincing lawmakers that the information in the database does not violate privacy protections.

"When you get a prescription, it's not written out to you," Flynn said. "It's written to the pharmacist, who then give the medication to you. That record is subject to disclosure under the law."

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Pugh said she was aware of Shumlin's desire to give police access to the database but said she had decided to approach the issue from a health care perspective.

"He's the governor of the state of Vermont, and that's a separate branch of government," she said. "We put the bill in and it opens the conversation on how to balance this tool for physicians and for health care with the epidemic we have in prescription misuse."

A spokeswoman for Shumlin did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday.

The bill also seeks to require that all physicians check the database before prescribing controlled drugs and make them subject to disciplinary measures if they purposely ignore checking the database. Consulting the database under the present law is voluntary.

"I've got the physicians mad at me for that," Pugh said.

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## **VTBUZZ:**

### **Sununu to stump for Romney in Vermont**

Posted on February 28, 2012 by Terri Hallenbeck

The Republican presidential primary race will show its face in Vermont after all. It will be in the form of former New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu.

Sununu is due to appear Wednesday at an 11:45 a.m. news conference at the Statehouse in Montpelier to campaign for former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney. Vermont's primary is next Tuesday.

Sununu will appear with state Sen. Randy Brock, who is a Republican candidate for governor, and Sen. Vince Illuzzi, R-Essex/Orleans, according to a news release from the Romney campaign.

## **TIMES ARGUS/RUTLAND HERALD:**

### **With buttons, Shumlin tells GOP to 'cheer up'**

Posted on February 27, 2012 by Thatcher Moats | 0 comment

MONTPELIER — Democratic Gov. Peter Shumlin is down in Washington, D.C. meeting with fellow governors from around the country and the president, and he's getting a bit of national press attention at the expense of Republicans.

According to the Huffington Post, Shumlin had buttons made that said "cheer up," a reference to what he and another governor referred to as the doom and gloom espoused by Republican presidential candidates. Here are links to the Huffington Post article and a related article from USA Today.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/27/democratic-governors-republican-governors-cheer-up\\_n\\_1303979.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/27/democratic-governors-republican-governors-cheer-up_n_1303979.html)

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/theoval/post/2012/02/democratic-governor-to-gop-cheer-up/1#.T0v24s3wGkJ>

### **Sorrell seeking re-election**

Posted on February 27, 2012 by Thatcher Moats | 0 comment

MONTPELIER — Vermont Attorney General Bill Sorrell announced last fall at a Democratic Party fundraiser he would seek another term and try to retain control of an office he has occupied since 1997.

Since then, however, the state lost the Vermont Yankee case, leading some to see Sorrell as vulnerable. (Sorrell has decided to appeal the VY decision).

That has led to chatter about Sorrell facing a primary from another Democratic opponent, along with the possibility that a strong Republican candidate would see a chance to become AG, though no challengers have emerged.

None of this has dissuaded Sorrell.

Asked Monday if was running this year, he said: "I definitely am."

Sorrell said he has never faced a primary challenger in his seven previous races and said he doesn't know if he will this time.

"Oh, you know, there are rumors," he said.

Whether it's consumer protection, criminal enforcement, environmental law or civil rights, Sorrell believes he has served Vermont well.

"I'm proud of my record," he said

But voters will ultimately decide, either in a general election or a primary, Sorrell acknowledged.



"If I have a primary then Democratic voters will have a chance to decide whether they want me to continue in office or not," he said.

## **NEWPORT EXPRESS:**

### **Starr Wants ID Cards for Immigrant Workers**

By

Christopher Roy

NEWPORT CITY – Vermont lawmakers are working on an identification card for legal immigrant workers. That's the word Sen. Robert Starr of North Troy, who serves on the Senate Committee of Appropriations and Senate Committee of Agriculture, brought to Monday's Legislative Breakfast at the Eastside Restaurant.

"These are for people who came here legally but they are constantly harassed when they go to the store shopping, when they go for medical help or even when they congregate and they have a day off to visit each other," said Starr. "The law enforcement people seem to give them a hard time about their residency and all that."

There are about 1,500 immigrants working on dairy farms in the state, Starr said. "We don't need to have people come here, work hard and be abused by anybody," said Starr.

The card will be similar in format to a driver's license.

The card doesn't sit well with Pam Ladds, who identifies herself as part of the 99 percent and an immigrant.

"If you give an immigrant an ID card, it is a bit like giving a feather to a chicken and saying wave this in front of the fox and it won't hurt you," said Ladds.

"Instead of looking at the immigrant, how about looking at the law enforcement who are over zealous, who frequently can be abusive."

Immigrants are stopped frequently, said Ladds, who doesn't carry identification when she is walking and questions what will happen if she gets stopped without her card.

"I think we're on the same page on this issue," answered Starr. "Most of the law enforcement people that are giving these folks a hard time are federal employees."

This is something federal legislation has to deal with, said Starr, who said he agrees with Ladds.

"The problem is not with our immigrants that come here, it's basically with our police and the way they're trained to handle these situations," said Starr. He said legislators have been told police treated an American citizen badly when she was transporting some immigrants to medical appointments. However, it's not the local or state police that are the problem. "It's mainly federal law enforcement people that are giving these people a hard time."

Rep. Sam Young of Glover, who serves on the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, said his committee passed a bill that allows recipients of a Workers' Compensation claim to receive their payments on an electronic pay card. Testimony revealed that 30 percent of Vermonters don't have a bank account, Young said.

Last week lawmakers debated a healthcare bill that sets up a healthcare exchange, something the state is required to do as part of the federal Affordable Care Act.

"If we don't do it, the federal government will do it for us and we'll have to use their system," said Young.

"We'd rather have our own system."

Chet Greenwood asked Young how his party could pass a bill when it doesn't know what it will cost or what it will cover, as in the case of the healthcare exchange. He said there are 40,000 uninsured Vermonters.

Greenwood also said not everyone who goes through the exchange would be eligible for a tax credit.

In the exchange, said Young, private insurance carriers would offer their services. The cost would be about the same as it is now. Young also said three quarters of Vermonters would get a reimbursable tax credit.

Starr said he didn't support the healthcare bill when lawmakers started to set it up last year because he didn't know much about it.