



May 3, 2011

Tuesday's letters to the editor

Faith-based schools should be part of educational reform

Former state Superintendent of Schools Tom Watkins argues that the only adjective that should be placed in front of a school is "quality." Michigan Catholic Conference couldn't agree more. Quite regrettably, however, Watkins fails to recognize those faith-based schools that annually perform at a higher level of excellence than most charter and public schools in the state.

Rethinking the educational system should include recognition of the vital role faith-based schools play. To be an "innovation state" certainly should not mean ignoring the successful school choice initiatives pursued across the nation, especially when nearly 100,000 students are enrolled in faith-based schools here in Michigan.

Those families are saving taxpayers more than \$675 million annually while still supporting local government schools through taxes. With high test scores and high graduation rates, faith-based schools serve the common good of our communities and our state.

Their inclusion in school reform efforts are needed. If not, to borrow a phrase, the next generation of 2-year-olds will be asking - "why?"

Tom Hickson
Vice President, Public Policy
Michigan Catholic Conference

Covering Kilpatrick is a waste of space on LSJ's front page

So former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's new cellmate is a convicted murderer (LSJ, April 8). Poor baby!

I am quite sure those incarcerated would love to be able to pick and choose a "room" mate.

The article goes on to say that the Michigan Department of Corrections will conduct an investigation as to whether Kilpatrick is guilty of "groping his wife's left breast." What a waste of valuable time and resources.

The same is true with the LSJ's decision to give this story front-page coverage. Was this article worthy of front page news? Another waste of valuable space.

Robin Lee Rice

Lansing

Climate change should encourage better policies

Horrific tornadoes down south, drought and wild fires in Texas, floods in Pakistan, drought in China and many other weather-related disasters through the world remind me of the predictions in "Hell and High Water," Joseph Romm's 2007 book. These predictions are backed by numerous reliable authorities over the past 20 years. The number of such events has steadily increased in the decades since 1980; the number for the decade 2000-2009 was roughly twice the number in the decade 1980-1989, and the financial cost more than doubled.

These predictions prompted James Hansen, one of the foremost researchers in the area of global warming, to publish his 2009 book, "Storms of My Grandchildren." This was an appeal to the public and the politicians to take global warming seriously and, while there is time, act to reduce the agony of future generations including his grandchildren. Actions taken by the public and some industries are praiseworthy, but more drastic action to reduce CO2 atmospheric pollution is essential. Encourage your legislators to produce a strong national energy policy!

Peter Schroeder
East Lansing

Don't risk state resources on a new bridge to Canada

Recently, Michigan politicians have been talking about New International River Crossing.

The new bridge that would connect Detroit and Canada is two miles from the Ambassador Bridge and in the words of its supporters "would not cause any harm to taxpayers."

The bridge is supposedly going to create some temporary jobs and some "spin-off" jobs to give Michigan's economy a face lift.

The truth behind this bridge is not positive or uplifting. The bridge will force Michigan to take a \$550 million loan from Canada, adding to the state's budget crisis and plunging Michigan further into economic chaos.

Lou Cascarelli
Lansing

Legislature, reconsider cuts; don't devastate our schools

When voters approved Proposal A they wanted the School Aid Fund to be protected for kids. In the past it has worked, but not this time. School districts are facing cuts of at least \$700 per student which would be one of the largest proposed cuts of education in history.

These cuts are only being made so School Aid Fund money can be used to balance the general fund budget. In our Grand Ledge Public Schools district, despite significant budget reductions over the past decade, four closed schools, and more than 50 teachers, staff, and administrators cut, this would leave our schools vulnerable to even more layoffs, larger class sizes and fewer opportunities for kids.

If this proposed K-12 education budget is enacted, the ramifications will be severe and directly impact our children and our state. Please hear our cry in Lansing and reconsider what you're about to do.

Larry Schrauger
Lansing

Don't let Obama serve second term in the White House

"Debt fail-safe?" The president's campaign speech on April 13 was not a plea to raise taxes, but will raise the national debt. Democrats are skilled at electing the biggest con artists in politics and on a silver platter! A second term? The Independents may not go there. Please put our country first! President Barack Obama may be too smart for his own good. Maybe he will wise up to the facts - we are not all imbeciles or progressives.

Eve R. Ranney
Eaton Rapids

GOP negotiates, doesn't play Democrats' games on budget

The GOP goes too far, said one recent letter (Letters, April 17), refusing to compromise and only accepting their issues to pass a budget.

The writer called that a dictatorship! Did that writer just call the Obama administration a dictatorship? I remember in 2009 the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives locked out all Republicans in the House for debate and would not consider any of their issues on national health care!

The GOP a dictatorship? They did not lock out Democrats or the president to debate on the budget. In fact they negotiated with the Democrats and President Barack Obama. And in fact a compromise was reached! And the budget passed a Republican controlled House.

No compromise and a dictatorship? Not quite!

Robert Brown
Lansing

Cut the Legislature before cutting anyone else

Gov. Rick Snyder wants to cut everyone's benefits except for the Michigan Legislature's. Why? They receive the highest wages with the most benefits, for the least work done of any Michigan person. Why shouldn't their wages and perks be cut before anyone else's?

Eunice Wirth
Fowler
