

## MADISON POLICY DIGEST

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- \*House Lawmakers Near Gulf-drilling Deal
  - \*Bush Signs Babcock Ranch, Alternative Fuel Bills
  - \*Wetlands Ruling Won't Affect Florida
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### HOUSE LAWMAKERS NEAR GULF-DRILLING DEAL

The United States may finally be nearing a deal to begin additional oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. Key lawmakers in Washington have seemingly reached a deal that would allow drilling as close to 100 miles off the coast -- and closer to shore if the state permits.

The House Resources Committee was to vote on the bill Wednesday. If the bill passes, the entire House could vote on it next week. For the complete article click here:  
[http://www.sptimes.com/2006/06/19/Worldandnation/House\\_lawmakers\\_near\\_.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com/2006/06/19/Worldandnation/House_lawmakers_near_.shtml)

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### BUSH SIGNS BABCOCK RANCH, ALTERNATIVE FUEL BILLS

The Associated Press reports, "Floridians will get rebates on energy-efficient appliances, a new commission will chart the state's energy future and a 74,000 acre nature preserve in southwest Florida is set for purchase under bills signed Monday by Gov. Jeb Bush.

Standing in the way of this development plan is the Sierra Club. It is asking a judge to scale down the development plan to half of the proposed 45,000 residents.

Governor Bush commented on the legal action taken by the Sierra Club. He stated, "I'm really disappointed. "The net effect of this is the ranch, all of the ranch, could be sold for private development." For the complete article click here:  
<http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060619/APN/606190835>

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### WETLANDS RULING WON'T AFFECT FLORIDA

On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the government is allowed to block the development of wetlands. This ruling, however, may have little if any impact on Florida.

*The Gainesville Sun* reports, "Anthony DeLuise, spokesman for state Department of Environmental Protection, said that the Supreme Court's decision will also have no effect on the state's regulations, which are among the stiffest wetlands protection policies in the country. What gives Florida the upper hand in deciding its own wetlands policies, DeLuise said, is the difference between how the federal government and the state define wetlands. The government defines wetlands by three categories: isolated, contiguous (or wetlands that connect to a water system) or adjacent. But Florida defines its wetlands as

either isolated or contiguous, DeLuise said, making it easier for regulators to identify wetlands here than elsewhere in the country.

“‘Florida is one of the very few states that has independent state laws to regulate wetlands and define them,’ DeLuise said. ‘We have a unique delineation of our wetlands; that's why we have our own rules and regulations.’” For the complete article click here: <http://www.gainesville.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060620/LOCAL/206200342/1078/news>

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#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“The government is merely a servant -- merely a temporary servant; it cannot be its prerogative to determine what is right and what is wrong, and decide who is a patriot and who isn't. Its function is to obey orders, not originate them.” (Mark Twain).

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#### OPINION OF THE WEEK

“Is Freedom Just another Word for Falling on Your Face?” by Jacob Sullum

“The day after Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger crashed his motorcycle, while he was still recovering from surgery to repair his fractured face, The Cincinnati Post scolded the Ohio native for not wearing a helmet. ‘Riders should wear helmets,’ the paper proclaimed, ‘and if they're not going to, perhaps the government should step in and make them.’

“The Post pined for the days when ‘all states required helmets,’ bemoaning the fact that 30 states now let adult motorcyclists decide for themselves what, if anything, to wear on their heads. The laws were changed, the editorial explained, because of ‘pressure from those who advocate ‘freedom.’ ”

“Notice the scare quotes. According to The Cincinnati Post, the freedom to take a risk is not really freedom at all; you are truly free only when you make the right choices -- those that minimize the chance of injury. It's a depressingly common attitude nowadays, when health promotion is routinely accepted as a justification for meddling in what used to be considered our private lives.”

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