

## MADISON POLICY DIGEST

July 19, 2006

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ATTENTION READERS! After next week's issue (July 26), MPD will be on vacation until after Labor Day!

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- \*Gov. Bush, FCAT hang over race
  - \*New Law Could Prompt Expansion of Charter Schools
  - \*Water Act Heading to U.S. Senate for Debate
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### GOV. BUSH, FCAT HANG OVER RACE

While Gov. Bush remains a popular figure in Florida politics, polls show that the FCAT – a key feature of his school-reform program -- is not nearly as popular.

Both Democrats running for governor have criticized many of the education reforms that Gov. Jeb Bush initiated. Moreover, when the FCAT is brought up, both U.S. Rep. Jim Davis and state Sen. Rod Smith are extremely critical.

Meanwhile, both Republican gubernatorial candidates -- Attorney General Charlie Crist and Chief Financial Officer Tom Gallagher -- have promised to keep Gov. Bush's reforms alive. As *The St. Petersburg Times* reports, both positions entail political risks. For the complete article click here:

[http://www.sptimes.com/2006/07/18/State/Gov\\_Bush\\_FCAT\\_hang\\_o.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com/2006/07/18/State/Gov_Bush_FCAT_hang_o.shtml)

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### NEW LAW COULD PROMPT EXPANSION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

Gov. Bush has signed into law a bill that allows applicants who wish to open a charter school to circumvent local school boards and seek state-level approval.

The *Daytona Beach News-Journal* reports, "Supporters of charter schools are ecstatic about the development. They believe charters have been unfairly scrutinized by local school boards because board members view charter schools as competition for limited state education dollars.

"It's unclear whether the new law will free charter schools of local school boards' oversight, and under what circumstances charter schools might be able to sever ties with local officials who currently monitor charters' finances, enrollment and compliance with safety regulations."

For the complete article click here: <http://www.news-journalonline.com/NewsJournalOnline/News/Headlines/frtHEAD02071606.htm>

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## WATER ACT HEADING TO U.S. SENATE FOR DEBATE

Federal lawmakers said that the Water Resources Development Act should be brought before the U.S. Senate for debate on Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>.

The *Naples News* reports, “The legislation, which authorizes hundreds of water projects around the country, includes \$350 million for the Picayune Strand restoration project in eastern Collier County and is considered a major part of the 30-year, \$10.5 billion Everglades Restoration plan.

“The legislation allows the Army Corps of Engineers to begin work on water resource problems as well as construct projects and make major modifications to existing projects.

“The last time Congress passed the legislation was in 2000, and the reauthorization is three years overdue.” For the complete article click here:

[http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2006/jul/17/water\\_resources\\_development\\_act\\_be\\_debated\\_tuesday/?local\\_news](http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2006/jul/17/water_resources_development_act_be_debated_tuesday/?local_news)

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### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“The aim of education should be rather to teach us *how* to think, than *what* to think.”  
(James Beattie).

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### OPINION OF THE WEEK

“Running out of Oil?” by Walter E. Williams

“‘Proven’ oil reserves, oil that’s economically and technologically recoverable, are estimated to be more than 1.1 trillion barrels. That’s enough oil, at current usage rates, to fuel the world’s economy for 38 years, according to Leonardo Maugeri, vice president for the Italian energy company ENI. Mr. Maugeri provides a wealth of information about energy in ‘Two Cheers for Expensive Oil,’ published by *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2006) and reprinted on the same date in *Current*.

“There are an additional 2 trillion barrels of ‘recoverable’ reserves. Mr. Maugeri says these oil reserves will probably meet the ‘proven’ standard in a few years as technological improvement and increased sub-soil knowledge come online. Estimates of recoverable oil don’t include the huge deposits of ‘unconventional’ oil such as Canadian tar sands and U.S. shale oil, plus there are vast areas of our planet yet to be fully explored. For decades, alarmists have claimed we’re running out of oil. In 1919, the U.S. Geological Survey predicted that world oil production would peak in nine years. During the 1970s, the Club of Rome report, ‘The Limits to Growth,’ said that, assuming no rise in consumption, all known oil reserves would be entirely consumed in just 31 years.

“America stands alone in the world as the only nation that has placed a substantial amount of its domestic oil and natural gas potential off-limits. That reflects the awesome control that radical environmentalists have over Congress. With high fuel prices, Americans might be ready to put an end to that control.” For the complete article click here: [http://townhall.com/Columnists/WalterEWilliams/2006/07/19/running\\_out\\_of\\_oil](http://townhall.com/Columnists/WalterEWilliams/2006/07/19/running_out_of_oil)

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