

The  
**Madison Policy Digest**

Friday · March 2<sup>nd</sup> · 2007

Presented by: **The James Madison Institute**

**“CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AS FLORIDA’S PREMIER FREE-MARKET THINK TANK”**

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**JMI News Briefs**

\* Yesterday, best-selling author Peter Schweizer talked about his latest book, *Do As I Say (Not As I Do): Profiles in Liberal Hypocrisy*, to attendees at a JMI luncheon in Pensacola. Mr. Schweizer, a graduate of George Washington University and Oxford, is a Hoover Institution Fellow and author of *Chain Of Command*, *Reagan's War: The Epic Story of His Forty Year Struggle and Final Triumph over Communism*, and *The Bushes: Portrait of a Dynasty*.

\* Congratulations to Dr. Stanley Marshall, JMI's Founding Chairman, for winning a bronze metal in the nonfiction category of the Florida Book Awards. His book, titled, "The Tumultuous Sixties: Campus Unrest and Student Life at a Southern University" recounts a pivotal time in the history of Florida State University and how he handled the increasing amount of student unrest. The book was reviewed in the Summer 2006 issue of our Journal, which is posted on our website.

Click here for related article:

<http://www.tallahassee.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007703010376>

\* This week JMI intern and policy analyst, Amar Ali, is participating in a Model UN convention on the campus of UC-Berkeley. Representing the country of Sudan in this particular meeting, he will be taking part in international policy discussions with many other international affairs students from around the country.

\* **Madison Policy Digest 2-23-2007 CORRECTION:**

Yesterday, JMI President and CEO Bob McClure spoke to the **Highlands** County Republican Executive Committee (HCREC). The meeting was held in Sebring, FL.

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**Featured Topics**

**LAND TARIFF (CONT.)**  
**VOTERS DRIVE A FORD INTO THE LEGISLATURE**  
**SCANNING FOR SAVINGS**  
**WHEREVER THE WIND BLOWS**

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**Crist Wide Open On Property Tax Fix**

*St. Petersburg Times*

By Associated Press

February 28, 2007

TALLAHASSEE - Gov. Charlie Crist said Tuesday he's not committed to any property tax reform ideas, and even refused to defend his own proposals.

The centerpiece of Crist's reform package, which he also made a campaign promise last year, is a proposal to double the exemption on homesteads - an owner's primary home - from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

House Speaker Marco Rubio, R-Miami, criticized that idea last week, saying it would "wipe out entire counties." Small rural counties, where property values are low, would be hardest hit.

"I'm not in the push-back mood," Crist said Tuesday when asked about Rubio's comments. "My objective is to lower property taxes for the people of Florida, and it doesn't necessarily have to be my idea." He said he was confident that the Legislature would find a consensus among a variety of suggestions. "I'm not wedded to any of those proposals."

For complete article click here:

[http://www.sptimes.com/2007/02/28/State/Crist\\_wide\\_open\\_on\\_pr.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com/2007/02/28/State/Crist_wide_open_on_pr.shtml)

## Ford Wins District 3 House Seat Republican defeats Elizabeth Campbell

*Pensacola News Journal*

By Derek Pivnick

Republican C.V. "Clay" Ford is going to Tallahassee.

The former Gulf Breeze City Council member beat Democrat Elizabeth Campbell to be the next state representative for District 3.

Unofficial results from Tuesday's special election show Ford garnered 56 percent of the vote to Campbell's 44 percent.

"We worked until the very last minute," Ford said.

The results dashed Democrats' hopes of taking the seat in the special election.

Campbell got 37 percent of the vote in November against then-incumbent Holly Benson. Benson left after her re-election to become secretary of the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

For complete article click here:

<http://www.pensacolanejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070228/NEWS01/702280358/1006>

## Bargaining Down That CT Scan Is Suddenly Possible

*New York Times*

By Michael Mason

February 27, 2007

Patrick Fontana twisted his left knee last spring while hitting a drive down the fairway on a golf course in Columbus, Ohio. But what really pained him was the \$900 bill for diagnostic imaging ordered by his doctor.

Mr. Fontana, a 42-year-old salesman, has a high-deductible health plan coupled to a health savings account. Since he was nowhere near meeting his deductible, he was on the hook for the entire bill.

So he did something that insurance companies routinely do: he forwarded the bill to a claims adjuster, in this case My Medical Control, a Web-based company that reviews doctor and hospital bills for consumers.

After concluding that Mr. Fontana was not getting the best possible price, the company's representatives called the imaging facility and demanded a lower one, promptly saving him \$200 — minus a 35 percent collection fee.

For complete article click here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/27/health/27cons.html?em&ex=1172811600&en=d17a0a8ed7a4e40d&ei=5087%0A>

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### Opinion

## Beware State Insurance

*The Ledger*

By Cheryl Shell

February 27, 2007

Having been hit with hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, and with predictions of more hurricanes in the near future, Floridians should be terrified of the new insurance plan that Charlie Crist has forced through. The only thing that this plan will successfully do is run the insurance companies out of the state of Florida, leaving the government run Citizens Insurance as the only carrier.

Because Citizens Insurance is run by the government it is not regulated like all other insurance companies, as far as rate increases and claims service are concerned.

If the governor's plan is allowed to continue, when the next hurricane hits, we will all be paying out a lot more, not only for insurance coverage, but also for the assessments that will be passed on to all residents of Florida to supplement Citizens Insurance.

The only way to make insurance affordable is to increase the number of insurance carriers in the state. The more companies there are, the competition will become better and the rates will drop.

For original article click here:

<http://www.theledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070227/NEWS/702270604/1037/EDIT04>

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### Quote of the Week

Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't.

— *Margaret Thatcher*

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## Cartoon of the Week



Andy Marlette

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### Speakers' Bureau

Need a speaker for your next event? JMI's team and network of scholars are available to headline or participate in your organization's next gathering. JMI staff will help you match the topic with the appropriate speaker. To learn more contact Thomas at 850-386-3131 or [Thomas@JamesMadison.org](mailto:Thomas@JamesMadison.org)

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[www.JamesMadison.org](http://www.JamesMadison.org)

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