

The **Madison Policy Digest**

Friday · February 29th · 2008
Presented by: **The James Madison Institute**

Featured Topics

**REMEMBERING BUCKLEY
EXPANDING TAXATION'S NET
TIEING UP LOOSE ENDS
BLOWING HOT AIR**

Special

Remembering the Mentor

By David Brooks
New York Times
February 29, 2008

When I was in college, William F. Buckley Jr. wrote a book called "Overdrive" in which he described his glamorous lifestyle. Since I was young and a smart-aleck, I wrote a parody of it for the school paper.

"Buckley spent most of his infancy working on his memoirs," I wrote in my faux-biography. "By the time he had learned to talk, he had finished three volumes: 'The World Before Buckley,' which traced the history of the world prior to his conception; 'The Seeds of Utopia,' which outlined his effect on world events during the nine months of his gestation; and 'The Glorious Dawn,' which described the profound ramifications of his birth on the social order."

The piece went on in this way. I noted that his ability to turn water into wine added to his popularity at prep school. I described his college memoirs: "God and Me at Yale," "God and Me at Home" and "God and Me at the Movies." I recounted that after college he had founded two magazines, one called The National Buckley and the other called The Buckley Review, which merged to form The Buckley Buckley.

For original article click here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/29/opinion/29brooks.html?ref=opinion&pagewanted=print>

Panel Crafts Tax Initiatives for November Ballot

The Tampa Tribune
By Catherine Dolenski
February 26, 2008

TALLAHASSEE - Proposals that would trim 25 percent from your property tax bill or give you a new homestead exemption moved a step closer on Monday toward the November ballot.

A panel of Taxation and Budget Reform Commission members approved a plan that would make the 25 percent portion of property taxes that pay for schools a thing of the past. Lawmakers would

have to restore that \$8 billion for schools by raising the sales tax by a penny and eliminating some of the state's 246 sales tax exemptions, cutting the state budget, substituting new revenue or some combination of those.

The same panel also approved a proposal to give all residential and commercial property owners a 25 percent tax exemption. In exchange, the state would boost the sales tax by a half penny for three years.

For complete article click here: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2008/feb/26/me-panel-warms-to-property-tax-cut/?news>

Legislature Looks to Tweak Tax Amendment

Palm Beach Post

By Michael C. Bender

February 23, 2008

TALLAHASSEE — The grandiose political battles waged during the property tax revolt last year are expected to be replaced in the upcoming session by debates over less dramatic changes such as how divorced couples should divide portability benefits and whether to provide breaks for deployed soldiers.

Even House Speaker Marco Rubio, who led an unsuccessful attempt to eliminate property taxes on homesteads last year, says the property tax issue has "transcended itself."

The West Miami Republican instead is exploring a cap on all government revenue, a controversial idea that has some Senate leaders wary.

"I am starting to get angry at the irresponsible politicians who know better but couldn't care less if it gets them a good headline at home," said Senate Democratic leader Steve Geller of Cooper City. "We have to stop pandering and recognize that Florida is already one of the lowest taxed states in the country, and we're in at the bottom of the nation in spending as well."

For complete article click here:

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/state/content/state/epaper/2008/02/23/a18a_proptax_0223.html

Opinion

Carbon Copies

By Patrick J. Michaels

The Cato Institute

February 27, 2008

The Kansas Legislature has wisely written a proposed tax on carbon dioxide emissions out of this year's energy legislation. That's the good news: As originally written by the Committee on Utilities, the Sunflower Energy bill's CO2 tax would have been a first, and a very bad precedent. The bad news is that the original bill will be copied and wind up before other legislatures that are more likely to pass it, like those of California and Oregon.

A CO2 tax will largely be levied on utilities that exceed modest limits on their carbon dioxide effluent, so consumers won't "see" it — except in their electric bills. They'll send in their monthly checks, quite unaware that the new tax revenues are likely to be shoved into a slush fund for solar energy, windmills, biodiesel, ethanol and other green gadgetry boondoggles.

Never mind that even the New York Times now acknowledges that biofuels add more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere than the equivalent amount of conventional fuels, or that the diversion of a third of the U.S. corn crop to ethanol production has driven world food prices up so much that we are now witnessing riots, including a major one in Jakarta last month.

For original article click here: http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=9242

Quote of the Week

“It is not strange . . . to mistake change for progress.”

~Millard Fillmore

Cartoon of the Week



Jake Fuller, *The Gainesville Sun*

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 Leanna at 850-386-3131 or Leanna@jamesmadison.org

ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY WITH A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TO JMI!

JMI accepts no government funding so we rely on contributions from people like you. Giving to the Institute is now easier than ever with our secure, online system powered by *PayPal*. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law; your greatest benefit will be a freer and more prosperous Florida. For more information about becoming a JMI member, visit our [Membership](#) page or contact Francisco Gonzalez at 850-383-4625 or FGonzalez@jamesmadison.org.

Log onto our web site for additional resources and more public policy information:
www.JamesMadison.org

The Madison Policy Digest is a free, weekly e-newsletter that summarizes Florida's top public policy headlines from around the state, complete with topical research and comment by The James Madison Institute. Suggestions and feedback are welcome at Thomas@JamesMadison.org.