

Presidential veto leaves kids behind

Republican Congressman Jerry Moran broke with President Bush when the House approved legislation this week to renew the State Children's Health Insurance Program, generally referred to as S-CHIP. The vote was 265-159.

Sen. Pat Roberts also voted for renewal. The Senate vote was 67-29.

Sen. Sam Brownback is recorded as not voting.

Unfortunately, President Bush vetoed the legislation. The battle to override the veto is expected sometime within the next two weeks.

This isn't the first time Congressman Moran crossed party lines to do what he believed was the right thing to do. He doesn't rubber stamp everything coming down the pike the president wants. He carefully weighs the issues and acts accordingly, even at the behest of the party's leadership on Capitol Hill.

Congressman Moran said he has received calls and letters about S-CHIP and while most are supportive of the program, others had specific objections. He said the most common complaint is the bill would provide health care for illegal immigrants. This, he said, is not true.

The legislation specifically prohibits illegal immigrants from receiving health care paid for by taxpayers. Since 1997, S-CHIP has helped states meet the basic health care needs of children from lower-income families. It limits eligibility to families that have incomes 200 percent above the federal poverty level. Once children turn 18, they are no longer eligible for benefits. The legislation, which is supported by physicians, hospitals and pharmacists, continues S-CHIP for at least five more years.

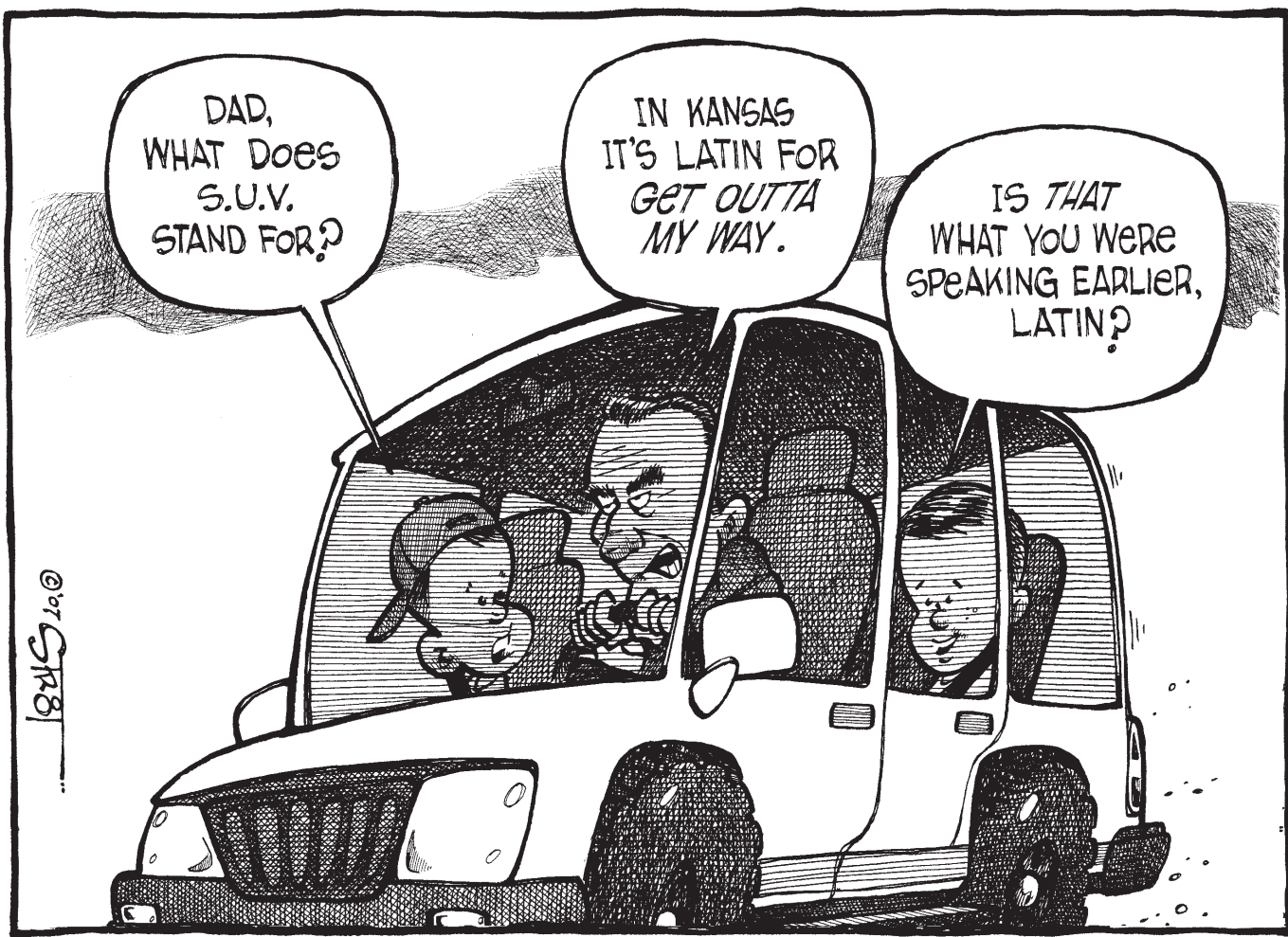
By providing health insurance to these youngsters, Congressman Moran said, "We help lower health care costs for other Americans," adding, "in the absence of health insurance, individuals typically receive care by visiting the emergency room. This is the most expensive way health care is administered. Hospitals are forced to provide this care for free and then recoup their costs by charging patients with health insurance more. By opening the door to doctors' offices, we eliminate these costly emergency room visits."

The congressman's comments about the legislation not providing health care for illegal immigrants, should put a lot of rumors to rest. This chatter has been amplified by forces opposed to renewing S-CHIP, including those who advise the president.

While we aren't experts on this specific issue, we did a lot of research and reading and feel Congressman Moran did the right thing. It's about kids and we shame those who tried to take this program away from them.

Politics many times is inconsiderate, mean and downright sickening.

—Tom Dreiling



Don't let them steal your children

There are some people I just won't dignify by using their names. They aren't news, they never have been and it is unfortunate media hype keep them alive. The latest has to do with a singer who is involved in a fight with her former husband over custody of their two young children. That's THEIR problem, not mine, nor yours.

To me it's insulting to turn to a cable news channel and among their top stories is this trashy life so-called role models embrace, and their "in your face" attitude. Then we wonder why so many kids today are nothing more than basket cases. When it's there for them to see 24/7, they begin to believe this is the real deal.

The real deal starts at home, or it should. And it should start very early in a child's life, not wait until they have reached the age where your influence no longer counts, allowing the headaches and heartaches to start.

Don't let these out of control, just-don't-get-it, stupidlebrities steal your kids from you. You've got to stay ahead of them.

Invoke "parenting" in your household, parenting like it used to be. That's the only protection available.

-td-

I was reading the weekend forecast, and noticed where they are calling for a rain-snow mixture, with temperatures in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Chill out, that's not our forecast, that's the forecast for a community in which I was the newspaper editor — Sheridan, Wyo. Located just miles from the Big Horn Mountains — and a stone's throw from the Montana border on I-90 — it's time for some white stuff to be showing up, if it hasn't already. And the mountains should be looking like a giant snow cone by now. I'm sure some of the cooler temperatures sweeping down from the north into our area are probably coming from Sheridan. Thanks, but no thanks!

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



-td-

Carolyn was talking in her column Monday about the windy conditions we have been experiencing. When it's like that people usually call it a "bad hair day." I don't have any of those.

I was reading a magazine a week or so ago and in it I found a comment made by a bald guy, who would answer when asked about his lack of hair, "I had a sudden growth spurt, and now I'm taller than my hair."

-td-

Ann Coulter tackles a host of topics in her new book, "If Democrats Had Any Brains, They'd Be Republicans." Ann's the kind of person you either love or hate, no middle ground there. And she seems to know what buttons to press to light up the Democrats' scoreboard.

You'd think the Dems would catch on and ignore her, but they continue their dialogue while she sits back and readies the next duffel bag of money for the bank.

I've read parts of her latest book and must confess there were times I laughed aloud. At other times I could have pulled her hair out or shortened her legs.

But she has a way, a very talented way, of keeping those of different thinking on their toes. Like her or not, she has a place in the political mix.

-td-

I see where the U.S. Senate, mostly Democrats, are now fighting with Rush Limbaugh over comments he made about some U.S. soldiers, or a particular soldier, or whatever the situation was but

continues to be hotly debated. When are they going to wake up and realize that is just what Rush wants!

I really believe the Democrats need new House and Senate leadership. Even though they have only slight majorities in both the House and Senate, Senate Majority Leader Reid and House Speaker Pelosi don't seem smart enough to put the right pieces in the right places to complete the puzzle. Their promises to change the course in Iraq — the only reason they have those slim majorities, thanks to the voters in the 2006 election — have been nothing but that, empty promises.

-td-

Rudy, as in Giuliani, might be in trouble, too. Seems his social agenda is rubbing the Christian Right the wrong way, and there is talk of supporting a third party candidate if he gets the nomination. Things just aren't well in GOPville. Even former Gov. Mitt Romney's flip-flops on gay rights and abortion, strongly supported in his drive for the governorship of Massachusetts some years ago, are coming back to roost. Many in the party don't know if he can be trusted.

And the much heralded Fred Thompson's laid back approach isn't bringing in the crowds he had hoped it would. Small screen star power is not always a sure bet in the political arena. And Mrs. Thompson (Jeri, 41), is trying to shake off the "trophy wife" label in an interview with People magazine. Husband Fred is 65.

If Elvis Presley were still alive, and surveying the political picture, he would probably sing, "Don't be cruel..."

-td-

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

-td-

Have a good evening. And despite any handicap you might have, you will feel comfortable in the church of your choice this weekend.

Ag research leads to high-yield farming

Without question, agricultural research is one of the most vital investments we can make for the 21st century. This research is necessary for feeding our increasing populations and protecting our planet.

Agricultural research has been helping people by fighting hunger and lowering food costs for years. It also aids rural America which has a higher wage structure than some of the developing countries and faces competition in the world marketplace.

High-yield farming is the result of agricultural research. Some would add high-yield farming is the greatest achievement of human civilization for the environment.

Increased crop yields since 1960 are saving millions of square miles of wildlife habitat around the world from being plowed down for low-yield crops. Latest estimates say these savings in land are equal to the United States, Europe and Brazil.

Farming cannot return to an earlier time period when new technology and research were not as much a part of the agricultural scene.

Insight

John Schlageck

If the United States farmer attempted to produce the crops we harvest in this decade with the technology that prevailed in the '40s, it would require an additional area of approximately 200 million hectares of land of similar quality, say those in USDA agricultural research. To find such land, most of the forests east of the Mississippi River would have to be chopped down and most pastures would have to be plowed up and planted to annual crops.

With the use of innovative practices, farmers have reduced soil erosion. Today, most farmers are using systems that leave at least 40 percent or more crop residue after planting. No till, ridge till and mulch till account for the reduction in soil loss.

The most sustainable farming in the world today is done with hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizer, pesticides used in integrated pest management and conservation tillage, according to the Soil and Water Conservation Society of the

United States.

Kansas farmers, and their counterparts across the United States, take responsibility for the conservation of valuable topsoil seriously. This country has as much of this planet's valuable cropland as any other nation. U.S. farmers also have the infrastructure needed to make this land productive.

Farmers can, and will, do more to improve their environment. They will conserve more water, monitor grassland grazing and continue to implement environmentally sound techniques that will ensure preservation of the land.

Farmers will change and adopt new techniques spawned by agricultural research. High-yield farming works, and will continue to work because it is flexible enough to accept and adapt to change.

No agricultural system, or any system, is perfect. Farmers must continue to search for better ways to farm through research and education.

(John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion. kfbcommunications@kfb.org)

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