

Student ID chips lead to bigger problems

Supposedly, it's the next wave in school security and finance: electronic chips embedded in student IDs that allow officials to track where a student is every minute of the day while on campus.

The movement apparently started in Texas, where school budgets are based on average daily attendance, rather than a "count day" like in Kansas. A San Antonio-area district started with a middle school and a high school to test the system, justifying the expense by estimated it might recover \$1.7 million a year in state money.

And while it's always about the money, officials talked about being able to pinpoint students' locations, say, during a lockdown, with ease. Or, presumably, while smoking in the boys' room.

The Orwellian implications are obvious, but the first opposition came from an odd couple: The family of a girl who belong to a conservative Christian sect, who drew support from the liberal American Civil Liberties Union. They sued the district.

The girl's parents maintained that just having to wear the ID, chip or no chip, was against their religious beliefs and marked her as owing obedience to "a false god." The district offered to move her to another school, but the suit ensued.

The remarkable thing here is, given the religious objection, the district didn't just give in. The chip system has much broader implications, however. If a government (a school district) can force students to be tracked on campus, what would stop bigger governments (like states or Uncle Sam) from requiring similar chips in driver's licenses or, as one wag commented, just having them imbedded under our skin?

Like the school district, the benefits to the government would be many. School officials

envisioned faster cafeterias where the chips would report who ate what, for instance. And similar radio-frequency responders already report movements of trucks and train. Why not drivers and cars?

Perhaps its inevitable, in a world were increasingly, everything we do is caught on camera or recorded somewhere in a computer. Or are we allowed to ask ourselves, is this the world we want to live in?

Someone will say, "What harm can come from being tracked if you're not doing anything wrong?"

The problem with that kind of thinking is that, for our own good, of course, government gets to define "wrong." Today, it might be terrorism. Tomorrow, maybe voting for the "other" party.

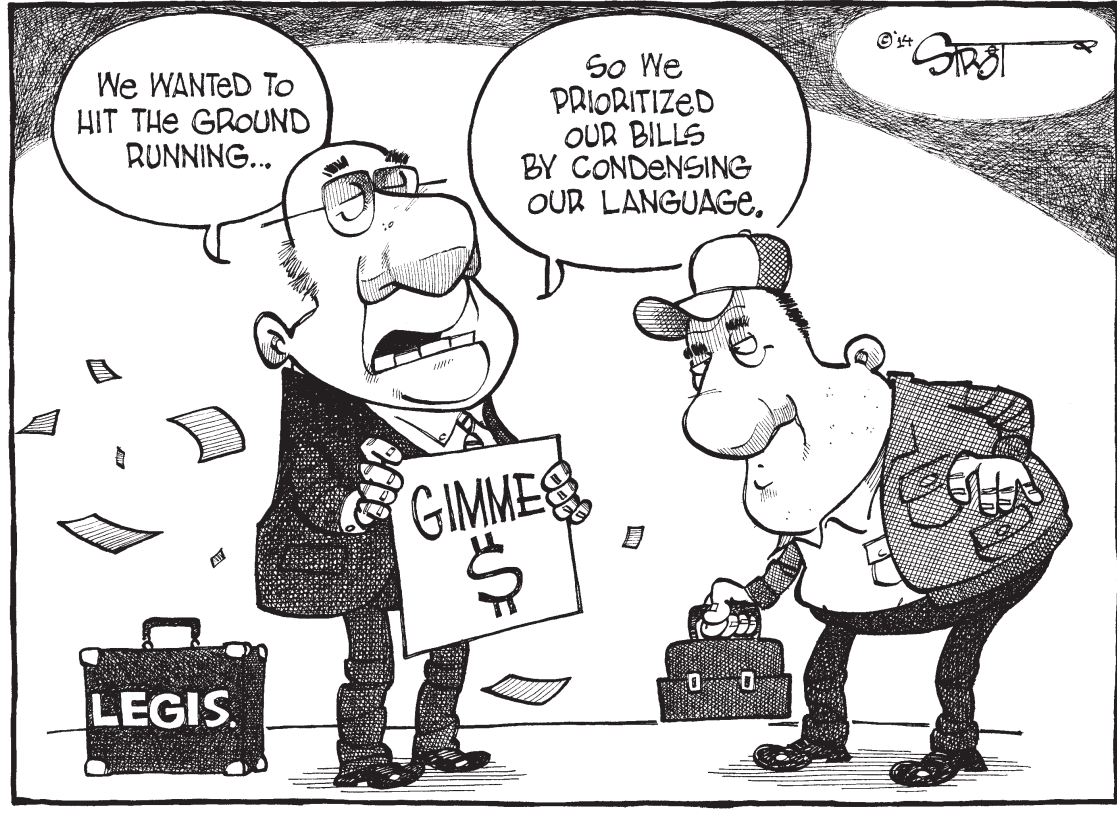
If you don't believe that could happen, just recall President Nixon's desire to sic the Internal Revenue Service on those on his "enemies list," or the more recent flap about IRS mistreating conservative "tea party" groups.

You probably don't believe the National Security Administration is tracking all our phone calls, either. Just to look for terrorists, of course. Or criminals. Or, some day, hooligans (meaning anyone the government doesn't like).

Technology does offer great benefits, but any surveillance system presents the opportunity for abuse. When everything is done in secrecy, it's hard to know when an agency has crossed the line. You just know it will happen.

Already we are tracked by our phones, recorded by the phone company and every business with cameras, and watched by the government. We need to talk about it, set some guidelines. The nation needs to have this conversation now, before it's too late.

By then, chips in our arms may be the least of our worries. — Steve Haynes



To the Editor,

I whole heartily agree with Mr. Mike Callicrate's letter about healthier farm crops. I like to know what is in my food so I purchase the meat I eat from a organic farmer. I wish corporations would label their food so I would know which ones contained

Letter to the Editor

GMOs. As consumers we should push our legislators to pass laws that require corporations to label their food products that contain GMOs.

"GMO OMG" is a very good

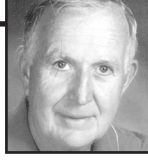
documentary that explains what GMOs are doing to our crops, farmland and our health.

Sincerely,
Diana Brunswig-Bosso
Arnold, Mo.

Legislative News

Budget adjustments for the year ahead

By Ward Cassidy



120th State Representative

The third week of the session began Jan. 27. There have been sixty-three bills filed so far. My personal belief would be that we should now find that many bills to repeal. It is hard to believe that year after year there are so many new laws we have to consider. Last year, we voted over three hundred times on proposed new legislation.

I was home last weekend and was visiting with a good friend, Steve Jenkins, a social studies instructor from St. Francis. He told me of a quote he once heard: "People that like sausage and politics should never watch either being made." I did not get his quote exactly, but you get the point.

My appropriations committee is now working on the governor's budget adjustments for this year. His proposal is a \$30.7 million increase for 2014 and \$429.8 million for next year.

There was about \$31 million in under-spending that was captured from last year, but that will be balanced with \$17.8 million for school finance consensus (there are more pupils enrolled in Kansas than were budgeted for last year), \$11.7 million for social welfare program caseloads, \$9.3 million for technical education students, and \$5.2 million to restore the college salary caps that were made last year.

The key to this year's budget adjustments will be the Corrections Budget. The request is for \$362.9 million for 2015. I strongly believe public safety should be a top priority and will

support the governor's request.

Other additional governor requests, which I support, are improving our veteran's home in Kansas, Moderate Income Housing in Western Kansas, and technical education incentives.

I have been working with the governor and the Department of Wildlife and Tourism for increasing tourism in Northwest Kansas. There is a survey online www.rdgusa.crp.kansasbyways and there is a website to learn more ksbyways.org. If you are interested in this, please look at the site and take the survey.

We are a diverse state, and I thank God every day that I live in Northwest Kansas. Today in education, we learned that there are 2,200 homeless children in Wichita.

We have our share of problems but not that one.

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GOD SAYS
The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?
It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.
Psalm 118:6, 8

Casey's Comments

Marijuana legalization a sticky issue

By Casey McCormick



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Boy, I would sure hate to be an adolescent growing up in Colorado these days. My recollections of my childhood through teen years were generally positive, however they were also confusing times of trying to make sense out of the world around me. Imagine how much more confusing that experience will be with the legalization of pot?

Before, it was very cut and dry. Marijuana was lumped together with cocaine, heroine, metham-

phetamine and whatever other drugs available that were illegal and bad for you to take.

The D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program is a big part of bringing this awareness to kids in many states, and I'm sure it still is. Students come away knowing that drugs are something they are better off without.

I wonder how this message will have to change. Something like, "Alright guys, all drugs are bad for you, except marijuana, which should only be used recreationally when you're old enough...."

To make matters worse, now we have the president saying that pot is no more dangerous than alcohol. Only heaven knows how many lives and families have been destroyed by that stuff. Is this attitude somehow supposed to make us feel better about what's happening?

Anyway, I feel for the parents and children of our sister state to the west. These can not be easy times.

Church of Christ 332-2380, Pars. 332-3424 502 W. Spencer Norman Morrow - Minister Bible Class 9 a.m. Morning Worship 10 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church 625 S. River • 332-2680 Fr. Carlos Ruiz Santos 1st Sunday of the month Morning Mass 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m. Weekday Mass 8:00 a.m. Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Baptist Church 2nd & Scott • 332-3921 J.W. Glidwell, Pastor Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m., Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

United Methodist Church Office 332-2292, Church 332-2254, 512 S. Scott Pastor Warren Cico Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church 332-3002 Pastor Chris Farmer Morning Worship 10:30 a.m. Communion 3rd Sunday

Solid Rock Baptist Church 412 S. Denison Welcomes You! Pastor Allen Coon Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church 423-650-5663 • 3rd & Adams Pastor James McCurdy Sabbath School 9:30 Morning Worship 10:45

First Christian Church Pastor Jeff Landers 332-2956 • 118 E. Webster Bible Fellowship 9:15 a.m. Church Service 10:15 a.m.

St. Francis Community Church 332-3150 204 N. Quincy Street www.sfccfamily.com Pastor: David Butler Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Potluck & Communion - Every 2nd Sunday Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC 202 N. College Pastor Randy Nelson Church 332-2928 Parsonage 332-2312 Worship 9:30 a.m. Communion 1st Sunday

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