



SUSAN CLARKE SCHAAR, CLERK OF THE VIRGINIA SENATE SINCE 1990, was honored for her years of outstanding public service by the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University. The school recognizes exceptional individuals who are an inspiration to others through their contributions to the state with the Excellence in Virginia Government Awards. Schaar received the Lifetime Achievement Award, and is “nationally recognized for her state government experience and leadership ability.” In the Senate, she is responsible for the parliamentary process, management and operation of the chamber. She has been appointed to six state commissions by governors from both parties and served as staff chair of the National Conference of State Legislatures from 2005 to 2006.



SOUTH DAKOTA LAWMAKERS AGREED TO SEND THE VOTERS a proposed constitutional amendment for the November ballot requiring a balanced budget. Senate Republican Leader **Russ Olson** said the measure is necessary because last year a financial rating agency believed the state’s constitution did not clearly require a balanced budget. “We have a long tradition in South Dakota of a balanced budget,” Olson said. “It cements our hard working South Dakota values into the constitution.”

A FRESHMAN LAWMAKER WANTS TO MAKE THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE part-time and cut legislators’ salaries from \$95,000 to \$1,500 a month. Assemblywoman **Shannon Grove** (R) is one of the organizers of a proposed constitutional amendment to limit sessions to 30 days each January and 60 days beginning each May and to slash salaries. Sessions would be devoted to budget issues in odd numbered years. Supporters got approval to circulate petitions to qualify for the ballot in late February and have 150 days to collect 807, 615 signatures. “Since switching to a full-time body in the 1960s, the Legislature has steadily deteriorated, infiltrated by professional politicians, beholden to special interests, and has sunk to a ‘whatever it takes’ gang—where anything goes to remain

in power,” Grove said. But for now, at least, it seems voters want their lawmakers at the Capitol fulltime. A recent Field poll indicated that 45 percent of voters oppose Grove’s idea, while 39 percent favor it. And a group called Californians for an Effective Legislature want to know if Grove will put her money where her mouth is. They’ve asked her to return her salary and the per diem payments she’s received as a legislator, totaling more than \$100,000. No word on the request from Grove.



FORMER NEVADA SENATOR BILL RAGGIO WAS REMEMBERED as the Lion of the Legislature,

an icon of Nevada history and a respected statesman who valued compromise above partisan politics. Raggio served in the Nevada Senate for 38 years—28 of them as Republican leader—before he resigned in 2011. He died in February while on a vacation in Australia. He was 85. The Nevada Senate honored Raggio in 2011 by electing him to the Senate Hall of Fame. Raggio had recently published “A Man of His Word,” a book about his life. “Besides his brilliant intellect and remarkable political skills, the thing I’ve thought about is the remarkable humanity that was the essence of his character,” said former Senator **Randolph**

Townsend, who served with Raggio for 28 years. “One of the great lights in the world of Nevada politics has gone out,” Governor Brian Sandoval said of Raggio’s death and ordered the state flag to be flown at half staff during the funeral. “If there was a Mount Rushmore of Nevada politics, Bill Raggio’s image would forever be carved there,” Sandoval said.



REPRESENTATIVE BILL DEWEESE (D), A 35-YEAR VETERAN OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE and former speaker, was convicted in February on felony counts of conspiracy, conflict of interest and three counts of theft. DeWeese’s conviction is part of a five-year investigation

of political corruption in the so-called Bonus Gate case that has seen 11 other Democrats and nine Republicans, including former Speaker **John Perzel**, either convicted or pleading guilty. DeWeese proclaimed his innocence and went from the court room to the House chamber and has vowed to continue his re-election campaign. A Commonwealth Court judge ruled in March that DeWeese’s continues to be eligible to serve in the legislature until he is sentenced. That date is set for April 24.