

Other State Health Care Better Than SD

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Public employees in South Dakota receive more valuable coverage than their privately- and federally-insured counterparts on average, but a new study says most other states in the nation have richer plans for their civil servants.

The report by Pew Charitable Trust shows the richness of health care plans in each state by looking at the "actuarial value," or the average percentage of health care costs paid for by the plan.

State health plans nationwide paid 92 percent of a typical enrollee's health care costs last year on average. In South Dakota, health plans paid 89 percent of health care costs.

While better than plans offered by most private employers, public employees in only eight other states had to pay a greater share of their health care costs on average.

Compromise Struck For Omaha killer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A judge has allowed a compromise that will see the state's psychiatric hospital staff treat a man found too mentally unfit to undergo sentencing for killing four people.

But Nikko Jenkins will not be housed at the state's psychiatric hospital. Instead, the *Omaha World-Herald* reports, Lincoln Regional Center doctors will treat Jenkins at a Lincoln prison, where he will be housed.

Douglas County District Judge Peter Bataillon said at a hearing Tuesday that the hospital staff will be solely responsible for restoring Jenkins to competency so he can participate in a hearing before a three-judge panel that will determine whether he receives the death penalty.

Bataillon allowed the compromise after officials testified Tuesday that the Lincoln Regional Center lacked proper security to house a dangerous killer.

Mom Pleads Not Guilty Of Meth Charge

RAPID CITY (AP) — A Rapid City mom arrested for methamphetamine possession in her home where her three children lived has pleaded not guilty.

Thirty-six-year-old Mandy Scott is charged with a half-dozen counts, including aggravated child abuse and felony possession of a controlled substance. Christopher Wright, a co-defendant in the case, is facing similar charges.

The *Rapid City Journal* reports that Scott's three children were removed from the house after the arrest.

Scott's attorney, Thomas Diggins, could not be reached for comment Tuesday afternoon.

Judge Wally Eklund denied Scott's request to grant her visitation of her children. She is free on \$25,000 bond.

Report: Some Police Policies Lacking

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Most Nebraska law enforcement agencies fall short of providing the public with a simple, unimposing way to file complaints against officers and departments, according to a new report by a Nebraska civil liberties group.

The report issued Tuesday by the American Civil Liberties Union of Nebraska said the group looked into the practices of the 31 largest law enforcement agencies in Nebraska.

Of them, only eight provide information about filing complaints online. They are the Alliance, Bellevue, Lincoln, Omaha and Scottsbluff police departments, the Douglas County and Sarpy County sheriff's departments and the Nebraska State Patrol.

But only one, the Lincoln Police Department, received praise from the ACLU for closely adhering to national and expert guidelines, allowing people to file complaints by phone, email, mail or in person, providing a copy of its complaint brochure online and using the least intimidating language in its policy.

Amy Miller, legal director of the ACLU Nebraska, said the ACLU undertook the study after receiving many individual reports of intimidation or difficulty making a complaint to a local law enforcement agency.

"Whether witnessing an officer driving poorly or excessive force, the public should be able to easily make comments about local law enforcement without feeling intimidated," Miller said.

Among the report's findings are that some departments, like the Nebraska State Patrol, don't outline a clear policy of how the complaint will be processed and what information must be provided. Other agencies deny anonymity in filing complaints, and some issue seemingly arbitrary time limits — like 30 days — to file a complaint from the time of the incident, the report says.

SF Police Arrest Boy For Vandalism

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Sioux Falls police say an 11-year-old boy has been arrested for allegedly causing \$10,000 in damage to a construction site.

Police says the incident was reported Monday morning after the discovery of damaged doors and windows and cans of paint splattered onto several different surfaces.

The *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* says neighbors near the site identified the boy as a suspect, and he was found with dry paint on his arms and legs.

Police believe the boy did not act alone and are working to find another suspect.

Huron Man To Give Money For 4-H Hall

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — A Huron businessman who four months ago donated \$1 million toward a new 4-H exhibit hall at the South Dakota Fairgrounds is chipping in more money.

KOKK radio reports that Earl Nordby will match donations by the state's 4-H clubs and leaders who are looking to raise up to \$500,000 for the nearly 47,000-square-foot \$4 million exhibit hall.

Nordby, who made his money in the soft drink bottling industry, has given multiple donations to higher education, recreational facilities and health care efforts in South Dakota. In 2011, Gov. Dennis Daugaard proclaimed May 6 as Earl Nordby Day.

Couple Charged With Kidnapping In SF

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Police say a Sioux Falls couple attacked a woman at a mobile home park and kidnapped her by putting her in the backseat of an SUV after she blacked out.

Thirty-two-year-old Robert Wise, of Crooks, and 30-year-old Heather McBeth, of Sioux Falls, are charged with aggravated assault and kidnapping.

The incident happened Monday morning. The victim told police the pair strangled her until she was unconscious and she eventually woke up in the back of an SUV.

Authorities say a witness gave police a description of the vehicle and a license plate number and the two suspects were pulled over after a brief chase.

The 30-year-old victim received medical treatment for scratches and bruises.

It wasn't immediately clear if Wise and McBeth had lawyers.

Omaha Teacher Wins National Award

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — An Omaha teacher is one of 17 nationwide to receive an EPA award for environmental education.

The Environmental Protection Agency says Kristine Denton won a presidential innovation award for her work at Omaha's King Science and Technology Magnet Middle School.

The honor comes with \$2,000 for Denton's professional development and \$2,000 for environmental education at her school.

Denton has worked with King students to build indoor aquaponic farming systems and used those systems to raise produce to donate to a local homeless shelter.

Besides the 17 award winners, the EPA also named 15

US Attorneys Host A Human Trafficking Forum In SD

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS— Law enforcement officials fighting human trafficking and sexual assault cases in the Dakotas want to increase the help they receive from medical professionals and the public in general to identify victims of these crimes.

The message was stressed Tuesday during the first day of a conference sponsored by U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson from South Dakota and U.S. Attorney Timothy Purdon from North Dakota that was meant to raise awareness of these crimes.

The discussions emphasized how medical professionals can help identify victims, the way they should talk to survivors and the kind of assistance they can provide to people in distress. Doctors and nurses were encouraged to look closely at possible signs of abuse that victims visiting emergency rooms or doctors' offices may show: lack of eye contact, untreated STDs, inability to say the city or state they are in.

A senior adviser at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Katherine Chon, cited a study conducted among 107 human trafficking survivors that showed that almost 88 percent of victims had at least one interaction with a medical professional while they were still being victimized.

"Change happens at a community base level," Chon said. "It's all hands on deck. We need local authorities, federal authorities, parents, educators, health care providers, school nurses, anyone and everyone in the community who has some interaction with potential victims of human trafficking."

Johnson said members of the community can help by reporting to authorities any suspicious activities they believe could lead to these crimes, such as men frequently coming in and out of a house at odd hours of the day where young women are also present.

"Any place where you have a large community, you have a demand and the pimps will find a way to find the supply," Johnson said. He added that many people believe human trafficking origi-

nates in other countries and don't realize there are homegrown victims.

He described to the audience — mostly medical professionals — how some victims whose traffickers have now been prosecuted were forced into commercial sex operations: A woman with a developmental disability in Sioux Falls was picked up by a trafficker while she was biking down the street; a 13-year-old met her pimp at a party where he was serving alcohol; and another person was lured into sexual trafficking after meeting a man who bought her cigarettes.

At least 20 people have been indicted by federal authorities on human trafficking charges in South Dakota in the last four years, including three who received life sentences.

The event, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice and Avera Health, will run through Thursday in Sioux Falls. Purdon is scheduled to participate in discussions Wednesday and Thursday.

Lodging Hike Will Cost Nearly \$450K A Year On State Employee Trips

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — State government will pay higher rates for overnight lodging for its employees under a change that received final clearance Tuesday.

The \$50 rate will be replaced Jan. 1 by a new system that pays \$55 per night for check-ins September through May and \$70 per night for check-ins June through August.

The state Board of Finance proposed the changes. The Legislature's Rules Review Committee gave its green light Tuesday.

The panel voted 4-0 in favor. "I think this is good," Sen. Jim Bradford, D-Pine Ridge, said. "Sometimes the hotels can't host us because our rates are too low."

Bradford mentioned that a daughter works for a hotel chain in Rapid City. "I wish some of this would filter down to her," he said.

The state Bureau of Finance and Management estimates the additional cost will be \$189,962 for the final six months of the 2015 fiscal year that ends June 30, 2015.

BFM said the full-year additional cost would be \$448,991.

Omaha Schools See Influx From Central America

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Omaha Public Schools has seen an increase in new students born in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, according to district records.

Thousands of children from those countries have streamed into the U.S., saying they are fleeing gang violence and poverty.

District records show that last year the Omaha district enrolled 100 students from those three countries who had not enrolled in the district before and had been in the U.S. less than a year. That figure is quadruple the amount of students reported in the 2011-12 school year, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported.

The number of students born in Mexico who are new to the district has also increased in the past two years in the school district. Eighty-three children born in Mexico enrolled last year, which is up 21 students from 2011-12.

District officials said they do not know whether the children entered the U.S. legally. They cannot say if they are among the 214 unaccompa-

nied minors that federal officials said came to Nebraska between Oct. 1 and June 17.

"By law we can't ask who's here legally and who's not," said Justin Wayne, president for the Omaha Public Schools' education board. "The United States Supreme Court has said many times that we have to educate all those who come to our doors."

Justices with the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a 1982 case that public schools cannot deny enrollment to immigrant students.

Susan Mayberger coordinates education for immigrant, refugees and non-English-speaking students at the Omaha Public Schools. Mayberger said the district generally can accommodate students who speak Spanish as opposed to other languages, because there are 12,500 students who speak Spanish already.

Mayberger also said the district has teachers and programs to help Spanish-speaking students.

Johnson

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tion, transportation, health care and recreation," Hunhoff added.

Johnson drew praise from Tuesday's audience for his success in winning support for regional projects.

Greg Henderson, executive director of the District III Planning and Development office in Yankton, credited Johnson and his staff with securing the funding for a number of initiatives in south-central and southeastern South Dakota.

Henderson couldn't resist the opportunity to make one final funding pitch before Johnson retires in January.

"Before you are done (in office), I want to talk to you about one last project," Henderson joked, drawing laughter from the audience.

Yankton resident Jay Williams told the audience how he had hosted a 1992 fundraiser at his residence for Johnson's campaign.

Williams, who recently left the Yankton school board, praised Johnson's commitment to education funding.

"I want to commend you — you've been a great friend to education, and I wish you well," Williams told the senator.

Jake Hoffner, who won reelection this spring to the Yankton City Commission, spoke of Johnson's role in helping Chan Gurney Airport in Yankton.

"I served from 1996 to 2006 as the (Yankton) airport manager, and from early on you were a supporter of the EAS (Essential Air Service) program," Hoffner told the senator, referring to the federal program which assists small airports.

The EAS funding helped keep the Yankton airport alive through tough financial times for small air terminals, Hoffner said. While Chan Gurney no longer schedules regular commercial flights,

the airport continues to serve an important function for the Yankton region, he added.

"Our airport wouldn't be what it is today without Senator Johnson," Hoffner said.

Hunhoff, the publisher of *South Dakota Magazine*, agreed. "Yankton is a better place, Vermillion is a better place and South Dakota is a better place because of all that you've done," he told the senator.

Johnson reassured the audience that he wasn't straying far from his southeast South Dakota roots.

"I'll be around," he said, smiling and drawing laughter and applause.

Johnson then took to the podium, offering his thanks to the audience.

"When you've been around as long as I have, you feel you have done every kind of event," he said. "But I haven't done something like this event. I have one simple message: Thank you to all of you."

Johnson said he has received respect and consideration throughout public life from even his political opponents.

"When you have been in office as long as I have, I would be shocked if someone didn't disagree with me at some time or place," he said jokingly.

His career has included four years in the state House, four years in the state Senate, five terms (10 years) in the U.S. House and three terms (18 years) in the U.S. Senate.

After winning the tough U.S. Senate against Pressler in 1996, Johnson won reelection in 2002 with a 524-vote victory over then-Rep. John Thune (R-S.D.) in another race drawing national interest. Thune would return in 2004 to defeat Democratic incumbent Tom Daschle in a U.S. Senate race with even greater national implications because of Daschle's role as Senate Majority Leader.

Johnson won his third term in 2008 with a victory over Republican Joel Dykstra.

In recent years, Johnson and his wife, Barbara, have overcome health challenges.

Tim was detected with prostate cancer in 2004. After surgery, all tests have found him free of the disease. In December 2006, he suffered an intracerebral bleed. Following surgery and rehabilitation, he worked from home until returning to his Senate office in September 2007.

Barb, a two-time breast cancer survivor, has been considered crucial in his recovery both times.

Tim Johnson told the *Press & Dakotan* he also appreciated the support shown by South Dakotans and others during those difficult times.

"People have been compassionate," he said.

ENTERING A NEW CHAPTER

With his decision to retire from office, Johnson said the time has come to enter a new chapter in his life. He said he looks forward to spending time with his children, Brendan and Kelsey in Sioux Falls and Brooks in Boston. In turn, he wants to spend more time with his grandchildren.

Tim and Barbara Johnson plan to live in South Dakota, but the senator said the couple may spend the winters in a warmer climate.

"I get to be a grandpa full-time, but I'll truly miss getting to work with the people of Yankton and the rest of the state on matters to improve our communities and way of life," he said.

Johnson pointed in particular to the construction of the Discovery Bridge over the Missouri River at Yankton and the conversion of the 1924 Meridian Bridge for pedestrian traffic.

"I'm very proud of the work we have done together on the Discovery Bridge and in opening the Meridian Bridge back up for traffic," he said.

Johnson also pointed to achievements with the Gavins Point fish hatchery, Chan Gurney airport and

Missouri River restoration.

Appropriately, Hunhoff presented Johnson with a framed picture of the Meridian Bridge and other local scenes.

Johnson told the *Press & Dakotan* he appreciated the reception he received from Yankton residents, particularly on a weekday afternoon.

"This is a beautiful community with so many wonderful people," he said.

Johnson noted his family's roots run deep in the southeastern South Dakota soil.

"I am the fourth generation, my kids are the fifth generation and their kids are the sixth generation," he said.

As he leaves office, Johnson hopes that Congress — and politics in general — can regain a civil tone now lacking.

"You can always hope for bipartisanship," he said. "We can find ways to be more bipartisan, but unfortunately, it's more of a wish than reality."

What was the key to his completing a political career undefeated, particularly as a Democrat in a deeply Republican state?

"There is luck," he admitted, but he added that he thought South Dakotans always believed he was doing what was best for the state and nation.

At the conclusion of Tuesday's program, Johnson said he cherished the relationships built with Yankton residents and other citizens through the years.

"I thank you for all that you have done over the years to make South Dakota the wonderful place we all know it to be," he said.

"Regardless of politics, we have traveled this road together."

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