

## NATION/WORLD DIGEST

## Dems Repeal Health Insurers' Antitrust Exemption

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to repeal the health insurance industry's exemption from federal antitrust oversight, giving Democrats an easy win on health care a day ahead of President Barack Obama's bipartisan health summit.

The 406-19 vote was part of a multipronged attack by Democrats Wednesday against the unpopular industry. At a contentious House hearing, Democrats confronted executives of one company that has sought rate increases of up to 39 percent in California and accused them of purging their sickest customers while spending millions on exorbitant salaries and retreats at ritzy resorts for executives.

And Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius wrote to the heads of five major insurance companies asking them to meet with her to justify their pricing policies.

All three moves were more symbolic than substantive, but together they underscored how Democrats view attacks on the widely disliked health insurance industry as one way to revive support for their health care drive, both with the public and among their own lawmakers, who have so far failed to rally behind a bill that Congress could send Obama. Democrats also hope Thursday's summit will jump-start the debate.

## Trainer Killed By Whale At SeaWorld Orlando

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A killer whale attacked and killed a trainer in front of a horrified audience at a SeaWorld show Wednesday, with witnesses saying the animal involved in two previous deaths dragged her under and thrashed her around violently.

Distraught audience members were hustled out of the stadium, and the park was immediately closed.

Veteran trainer Dawn Brancheau, 40, was one of the park's most experienced. It wasn't clear if she drowned or died from the thrashing.

SeaWorld spokesman Fred Jacobs confirmed the whale was Tilikum, one of three orcas blamed for killing a trainer who lost her balance and fell in the pool with them in 1991 at Sealand of the Pacific in Victoria, British Columbia.

Tilikum was also involved in a 1999 death, when the body of a man who had sneaked by Orlando SeaWorld security was found draped over him. The man either jumped, fell or was pulled into the frigid water and died of hypothermia, though he was also bruised and scratched by Tilikum.

## Panel Recommends Annual Flu Vaccinations

ATLANTA (AP) — A government panel is now recommending that virtually all Americans get a flu shot each year, starting this fall.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices had gradually been expanding its recommendation for flu shots — 85 percent of Americans were already included.

On Wednesday, the panel voted to recommend a seasonal flu vaccination for everyone except babies younger than 6 months and those with egg allergies or other unusual conditions.

The panel's recommendation now goes to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC usually follows the panel's advice and spreads the message to doctors and hospitals across the country.

"Now no one should say 'Should I or shouldn't I?'" said Dr. Anthony Fauci, a CDC flu specialist.

CDC vaccination recommendations tend to be influential with the doctors who give the shots and the health insurers who pay for them.

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## Toyota Chief Blasted By Lawmakers

President Repeatedly Apologizes To Congress, American Car Owners In Testimony

WASHINGTON (AP) — Under blistering criticism, Toyota President Akio Toyoda personally and repeatedly apologized to Congress and millions of anxious American car-owners Wednesday for deadly defects in popular models produced by his Japanese company. But angry lawmakers forcefully declared it was hardly enough.

"Where is the remorse?" scolded Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio. And Republican John Mica of Florida held aloft what he called an "absolutely appalling" Toyota report bragging of defusing a safety investigation.

Of Toyota's apology, Kaptur said, "I do not think it reflects significant remorse for those who have died." Federal safety officials have received reports linking 34 deaths in the United States to safety defects in Toyota cars and trucks over the past decade.

"I extend my sincerest condolences to them from the bottom of my heart," responded Toyoda, grandson of the founder of the world's largest auto company. "I'm deeply sorry for any acci-

dent that Toyota drivers have experienced."

But what's most important to American drivers — and what lawmakers pressed Toyoda and a top aide to provide — was a better explanation for slow actions to deal with the defects and believable assurances the problems that led to sudden unintended accelerations will be fixed. Toyoda said those changes are being made nearly around the clock, but he repeated the company's insistence that there is no link to the cars' electronic systems.

Many drivers filing complaints with Toyota and the government say their acceleration problems had nothing to do with floor mat interference or sticky gas pedals — the culprits the company is pointing to. Outside experts have suggested electronic problems.

Toyota has recalled 8.5 million vehicles, more than 6 million of them in the United States, mostly to fix problems with floor mats trapping gas pedals or with pedals getting stuck. Toyoda said great strides were being taken by



OLIVIER DOULIERY/MCT  
Toyota President and CEO Akio Toyoda is sworn in before testifying at a hearing on Capitol Hill regarding the federal government's response to the recall of millions of Toyota vehicles due to reports of malfunctioning gas pedals in Washington DC.

his company to put "safety first" and it was working hard to refit the millions of cars and trucks that have been recalled.

The company also said Wednesday it will offer free at-

home pickup of vehicles covered by the national safety recall, pay for customers' out-of-pocket transportation costs and provide drivers free rental cars during repairs. The deal was initially announced as part of an agreement between Toyota and New York state.

Toyoda also said that new systems to allow brakes to override gas pedals were being put on new models.

Toyoda, 53, remained calm when some Democratic and Republican lawmakers scolded the company for the recalls and safety problems.

He stood firm on many points, including saying he was "absolutely confident" the causes of runaway acceleration were mechanical, and not a design flaw in the company's electronic throttle control system. Many safety experts and lawmakers have suggested that the electronics systems should not be ruled out.

Toyoda testified for a little over three hours.

## Senate Votes To Extend Patriot Act

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate voted Wednesday to extend for a year key provisions of the nation's counterterrorism surveillance law that are scheduled to expire at the end of the month.

In agreeing to pass the bill, Senate Democrats retreated from adding new privacy protections to the USA Patriot Act.

The Senate approved the bill on a voice vote with no debate. It now goes to the House.

Three important sections of the Patriot Act are to expire at the end of this month.

## School Set To Fire All Its Teachers

CENTRAL FALLS, R.I. (AP) — The blue-and-white banner proclaiming "anticipation" on the front of Central Falls High School seems like a cruel joke for an institution so chronically troubled that its leaders decided to fire every teacher by year's end.

No more than half those instructors would be hired back under a federal option that has enraged the state's powerful teachers union, earned criticism from students, and brought praise from U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and some parents.

The mass firings were approved by the school district's board of trustees Tuesday night after talks failed between Superintendent Frances Gallo and the local teachers union over implementing changes, including offering more tutoring and a longer school day. The teachers say they want more pay for the additional work.

"If it's only an hour or two a week, I think teachers can afford to do that," said Robert Rivera, 40, who worries about sending his 13-year-old daughter to the troubled high school next year. He

dropped out of school as a teenager and works more than 60 hours a week as an appliance repairman.

He's determined his daughter will go to college, although he sometimes feels her teachers have a nonchalant attitude when he seeks help.

The shake-up comes as Rhode Island's new education commissioner, Deborah Gist, pushes the state to compete for millions of dollars in federal funding to reform the worst 5 percent of its schools, including in Central Falls. State law requires schools to warn teachers by March 1 if their jobs are in jeopardy for the following school year.

To get the money, schools must choose one of four paths set under federal law, including mass firings. Gallo has said she initially hoped to avoid layoffs by adopting a plan that would have lengthened the school day and required teachers to get additional training and offer more tutoring.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan applauded the plan, saying students only have one

chance for an education.

The U.S. Department of Education does not play a role in deciding which model schools choose and did not know Wednesday whether Central Falls was the first to opt to get rid of its teachers, said Sandra Abrevaya, a department spokeswoman.

The decision won praise from Republican Gov. Don Carcieri, a former math teacher who supports Gist.

"We can no longer stand by as our schools underperform," Carcieri said in a written statement. "While we have some excellent individual teachers, our students continue to be held back by a lack of a quality education and by union leadership that puts their self-interests above the interests of the students."

The school board decision came after a rally Tuesday of more than 500 union members and teacher supporters. The American Federation of Teachers also sent a representative with a message of support from the union's 1.4 million members. The Providence Journal reported.

## OBITUARIES

## Lucina Amelia Sudbeck

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Lucina Amelia Sudbeck, age 99 of Hartington, Nebraska, died on Tuesday, February 23, 2010 at the Golden Living Center in Hartington.

Mass of Christian Burial will be on Friday, February 26, 2010 at 10:30 am at the Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Bow Valley, Nebraska with Rev. Eric Olsen officiating. Burial will be in the Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery in Bow Valley. Visitation will be on Thursday from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm with a rosary at 3:30 pm and a vigil service at 7:00 pm at the Wintz Funeral Home in Hartington. Visitation will be one hour prior to services on Friday at the church. To send on-line condolences, please visit [www.wintzfuneralhome.com](http://www.wintzfuneralhome.com) or <http://www.wintzfuneralhome.com/>.

Pallbearers will be Robert Sudbeck, Scott Sudbeck, Debbie Sudbeck, Chris Sudbeck, Mike

Sudbeck, Daniel Bruening and Brian Sudbeck. Honorary pallbearers will be the Christian Mothers and all those that assisted Lucina through the years.

Lucina was born on February 8, 1911 at St. Helena, Nebraska to Carl and Matilda (Lammers) Bruening. She grew up in the St. Helena area and prior to her marriage she worked in Norfolk as a housekeeper and worked for the Dryers family in Yankton as a housekeeper. She married Otto Sudbeck on February 5, 1941 at St. Helena. They farmed near Crofton, Nebraska from 1945 to 1950 and then moved to a farm just west of Bow Valley. She had been a resident of the Golden Living Center since October 1, 2008. She was a member of the Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, the Altar



Sudbeck

Society and the Christian Mothers.

Lucina is survived by two sons, Dean and Elaine Sudbeck of Tyndall, SD; Daniel S. Sudbeck of Yankton, SD; 6 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren, and a sister, Anna Marie Hegge of Crofton, Nebraska.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Otto, on November 10, 1990 at the age of 84, a great grandson, Draven Novak, one daughter-in-law Julie Sudbeck; five brothers, Ignatius, Hans, Art, Edmund, and Bernard Bruening; two sisters Hilda Rainey and Hilaria Bender.

Yankton Press & Dakotan  
February 25, 2010

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## Lorraine Ann Wudel

HOLLY, Colo. — Lorraine Ann Wudel, age 91 of Holly, CO and formerly of Yankton, Parkston, and Rapid City passed away Thursday, (Feb. 18, 2010) at the Juniper Village Nursing Home, Lamar, Colo. Funeral services will be 11 a.m., Friday at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Chapel, Yankton, with Rev. Paul M. Opsahl officiating. Burial will be in the Garden of Memories. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Pallbearers will be Vernon (Skip) VanDerhule, Ross VanDerhule, Gordon Brown, DJ Sabo, Bob Braunesreither, and Dennis Braunesreither.

## Gerald A. Jepsen

MECKLING — Gerald A. Jepsen, 84, of Meckling, passed away Monday, (Feb. 22, 2010) at his residence. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m., Saturday, March 6 at United Church of Christ Congregational, Vermillion with burial to follow at Trinity Danish Lutheran Cemetery, rural Gayville. Visitation will be from 5-7 p.m., Friday, March 5 with a prayer service at 7 p.m., all at the church. Iverson-Steeke-Kober Funeral Home, Vermillion is in charge of arrangements.

## Harold Daniel Snoozy

CENTERVILLE — Harold Daniel Snoozy, 66, of Centerville, formerly of Yankton, passed away Friday, (Feb. 12, 2010). Funeral services were held Feb. 16 at the Scandia Lutheran Church, Centerville. He was buried at the Riverview Cemetery in Centerville.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

## Lucina Sudbeck

10:30 AM, Friday  
Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church  
Bow Valley, NE

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