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OPINION

CO Detectors Are A Necessity

Nebraska lawmakers are about to consider something that seems like a really good idea, and one hopes that South Dakota's legislators do the same thing.

The lawmakers in Lincoln are scheduled Thursday to consider a bill that would require carbon monoxide detectors to be implemented in any home or apartment that is sold, rented or issued a permit after Jan. 1, 2017.

Unfortunately, this comes about after a rise in carbon monoxide calls was reported in Nebraska last year — a worrisome trend that has prompted the introduction of this bill.

Carbon monoxide is a stealth poison that can creep into any home or facility unnoticed. It cannot see, smell or taste the gas, but you could die from it. Such poisoning is a major concern during the winter months, since it can be generated by fuel-burning products such as furnaces and hot-water heaters, especially in poorly-ventilated places. It can also enter an interior environment by way of vehicular exhaust. A case in point occurred just last week in Vermillion when 15 people were treated for possible carbon monoxide poisoning in a manufacturing facility. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, more than 500 Americans die each year from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning, with more than 10,000 seeking medical attention due to the fumes.

So, yes, the threat from this odorless poison is quite real and more common than you may think.

If the bill passes, Nebraska would join a growing number of states that have some sort of statute on the books about the detectors. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 29 states had measures relating to carbon monoxide detectors. There are also several local building codes that require it. (In fact, Yankton is preparing to adopt 2015 fire code guidelines for certain residences.) And some states take the matter beyond dwellings. For instance, Texas requires detectors in certain day cares and group homes, as well as residential dwellings. In Connecticut and Maryland, the detectors are required in schools.

Frankly, we would love to see South Dakota follow suit and consider such a measure. It's something that makes a great deal of sense and would be well worth the investment of home owners, site operators and facility managers. (A typical carbon monoxide detector can range from \$10 to \$40 or more, although you obviously get what you pay for when purchasing these devices. Ask your local fire department about that.)

This is something very important to consider, and would be a fundamental step in promoting the public well being.

kmh

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IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 28, the 28th day of 2015. There are 337 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History: On Jan. 28, 1915, the United States Coast Guard was created as President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill merging the Life-Saving Service and Revenue Cutter Service. The American merchant vessel SS William P. Frye, en route to England with a cargo of wheat, became the first U.S. ship to be sunk during World War I by a German cruiser, the SS Prinz Eitel Friedrich, even though the United States was not at war.

On this date: In 1547, England's King Henry VIII died; he was succeeded by his 9-year-old son, Edward VI.

In 1813, the novel "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen was first published anonymously in London.

In 1909, the United States withdrew its forces from Cuba as Jose Miquel Gomez became president.

In 1939, Irish poet-dramatist William Butler Yeats died in Menton, France.

In 1945, during World War II, Allied supplies began reaching China over the newly reopened Burma Road.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made his first national TV appearance on "Stage Show," a CBS program hosted by Tommy Dorsey.

In 1962, the last of Washington, D.C.'s original streetcars made its final run.

In 1973, a cease-fire officially went into effect in the Vietnam War.

In 1977, actor-comedian Freddie Prinze, 22, co-star of the NBC-TV show "Chico and the Man," shot and mortally wounded himself at the Beverly Stock Hotel (he died the following day).

In 1980, six U.S. diplomats who had avoided being taken hostage at their embassy in Tehran flew out of Iran with the help of Canadian diplomats.

In 1985, the charity supergroup USA for Africa recorded the Michael Jackson-Lionel Richie song "We Are the World" at A&M Studios in Los Angeles.

In 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff from Cape Canaveral, killing all seven crew members, including schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe.

Ten years ago: Iraqis overseas began three days of voting in 14 nations. Senate Democrats criticized President George W. Bush's plan to add personal accounts to Social Security and accused

his administration of improperly using the Social Security Administration to promote the idea. Consumer products giant Procter & Gamble Co. and Gillette Co. announced a \$57 billion merger.

Five years ago: Major world powers opened talks in London seeking an end to the conflict in Afghanistan. President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden announced \$8 billion in federal grants for high-speed rail projects nationwide during a visit to Tampa, Florida. Embattled Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke won Senate confirmation for a second term.

One year ago: Seeking to energize his second term, President Barack Obama vowed in his State of the Union address to sidestep Congress "whenever and wherever" necessary to narrow economic disparities between rich and poor. Ukraine's prime minister, Mykola Azarov, resigned and the Ukrainian parliament repealed anti-protest laws in back-to-back moves designed to defuse the country's political crisis.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-dancer John Ronald Dennis is 90. Actor Nicholas Pryor is 80. Actor Alan Alda is 79. Actress Susan Howard is 73. Actress Marthe (cg) Keller is 70. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., is 68. Actress-singer Barbi Benton is 65. Evangelical pastor Rick Warren is 61. Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy is 60. Actress Harley Jane Kozak is 58. Movie director Frank Darabont is 56. Rock musician Dave Sharp is 56. Rock singer Sam Phillips is 53. Rock musician Dan Spitz is 52. Country musician Greg Cook (Ricochet) is 50. Gospel singer Marvin Sapp is 48. Singer Sarah McLachlan is 47. Rapper Rakim is 47. DJ Muggs (Cypher Hill) is 47. Actress Kathryn Morris is 46. Rock/soul musician Jeremy Ruzumna (Fitz and the Tantrums) is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer Anthony Hamilton is 44. Rock musician Brandon Bush is 41. Retired MLB All-Star Jermaine Dye is 42. Singer Joey Fatone Jr. (N Sync) is 38. Rapper Rick Ross is 38. Actress Rosamund Pike is 36. Singer Nick Carter (Backstreet Boys) is 35. Actor Elijah Wood is 34. Rapper J. Cole is 30. Actress Alexandra Krosney is 27. Actress Ariel Winter (TV: "Modern Family") is 17.

Thought for Today: "A self-taught man usually has a poor teacher and a worse student." — Henny Youngman, British-born American comedian (1906-1998).

FROM THE BIBLE

You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Wall Street's Threat To The Middle Class

BY ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune Content Agency

Presidential aspirants in both parties are talking about saving the middle class. But the middle class can't be saved unless Wall Street is tamed.

The Street's excesses pose a continuing danger to average Americans. And its ongoing use of confidential corporate information is defrauding millions of middle-class investors.

Yet most presidential aspirants don't want to talk about taming the Street because Wall Street is one of their largest sources of campaign money.

Do we really need reminding about what happened six years ago? The financial collapse crippled the middle class and poor, consuming the savings of millions of average Americans and causing 23 million to lose their jobs, 9.3 million to lose their health insurance and some 1 million to lose their homes.

A repeat performance is not unlikely. Wall Street's biggest banks are much larger now than they were then. Five of them hold about 45 percent of America's banking assets. In 2000, they held 25 percent.

And money is cheaper than ever. The Fed continues to hold the prime interest rate near zero.

This has fueled the Street's eagerness to borrow money at rock-bottom rates and use it to make risky bets that will pay off big if they succeed but will cause big problems if they go bad.

We learned last week that Goldman Sachs has been on a shopping binge, buying cheap real estate stretching from Utah to Spain, and a variety of companies. If not technically a violation of the new Dodd-Frank banking law, Goldman's binge surely violates its spirit.

Meanwhile, the Street's lobbyists have gotten Congress to repeal a provision of Dodd-Frank curbing excessive speculation by the big banks. The language was drafted by Citigroup and personally pushed by Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase.

Not incidentally, Dimon recently complained of being "under assault" by bank regulators.

Last year, JPMorgan's board voted to boost Dimon's pay to \$20 million, despite the bank paying out more than \$20 billion to settle various legal problems going back to financial crisis.

The American middle class needs stronger bank regulations, not weaker ones.

Last summer, bank regulators told the big banks their plans for orderly bankruptcies were "unrealistic." In other words, if the banks collapsed, they'd bring the economy down with them.

Dodd-Frank doesn't even cover bank bets on foreign exchanges. Yet recent turbulence in



Robert B. REICH

the foreign exchange market has caused huge losses at hedge funds and brokerages.

This comes on top of revelations of widespread manipulation by the big banks of the foreign exchange market.

Wall Street is also awash in inside information unavailable to average investors.

Just weeks ago, a three-judge panel of the U.S. court of appeals that oversees Wall Street reversed an insider-trading conviction, saying guilt requires proof a trader knows the tip was leaked in exchange for some "personal benefit" that's "of some consequence." Meaning that if a CEO tells his Wall Street golfing buddy about a pending merger, the buddy and his friends can make a bundle — to the detriment of small, typically middle-class, investors.

That three-judge panel was composed entirely of appointees of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

But both parties have been drinking at the Wall Street trough.

In the 2008 presidential campaign, the financial sector ranked fourth among all industry groups giving to then-candidate Barack Obama and the Democratic National Committee. In fact, Obama reaped far more in contributions from the Street than did his Republican opponent.

Wall Street also supplies both administrations with key economic officials. The treasury secretaries under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush — Robert Rubin and Henry Paulson, respectfully — had both chaired Goldman Sachs before coming to Washington.

And before becoming President Obama's treasury secretary, Timothy Geithner had been handpicked by Rubin to become president of Federal Reserve Bank of New York. (Geithner is now back on the Street as president of the private-equity firm Warburg Pincus.)

It's nice that presidential aspirants are talking about rebuilding America's middle class. But to be credible, the candidates have to take clear aim at the Street.

That means proposing to limit the size of the biggest Wall Street banks, to resurrect the Glass-Steagall Act (which used to separate investment banking from commercial banking), to define insider trading the way most other countries do (using information any reasonable person would know is unavailable to most investors) and to close the revolving door between the Street and the U.S. Treasury.

It also means not depending on the Street to finance their campaigns.

Robert Reich is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and Senior Fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies. His new film, "Inequality for All," is now out on iTunes, DVD and On Demand.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Three Feet

Beryl Olson, Yankton

The 90th Legislature of the State of South Dakota is now in session. One of the smaller items that is before the transportation board now is a bill that would require all motorists to give a bicyclist three feet when passing.

This may not seem like a big deal but three feet can be the difference between life and death for a bicyclist. That may seem a little dramatic, but if you look at the number of motorist/bicyclist accidents in South Dakota, you will see that in contact between a motor vehicle and a bicycle — the bicycle ALWAYS loses. Quite frequently this contact can be deadly for the bicyclist.

The three foot rule would not only protect the cyclist, but also raise awareness with the general public. Did you know that a motorist doesn't even need to actually touch the cyclist to send them off the road and into the ditch? Just the rush of wind from an automobile speeding past a cyclist can throw them off the road. Did you know that a bicyclist being star-

ted by a car that comes too close can cause an accident?

I didn't know this until my mother took up long distance cycling. The stories she told me would raise the hair on the back of your neck. Unfortunately, she died in a bicycling accident almost 10 years ago.

We need to protect our bicyclists. Those bicyclists are our mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters. We need them to come home to their families. I often think about my mom and all she has missed in my kids' lives ... and all they have missed without her. If someone had given her three feet — we might still have her with us.

So if this three foot law raises awareness and brings even one bicyclist home to his/her family — it will be worth it.

Please support this bill as it comes forward in the Legislature. I would encourage your readers to take the time to contact their senators and representatives to support this bill. You can email them very easily by going to www.legis.sd.gov/.

P & D LETTER POLICY

The PRESS & DAKOTAN invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask that a few simple guidelines be followed:

- Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.
- In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the PRESS & DAKOTAN will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

- Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.