

**MIDWEST DIGEST**

**Senate Investigating IHS Facilities**

**BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)** — The chairman of the Senate's Indian Affairs Committee says the group has launched an investigation into Indian Health Service facilities in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa.

North Dakota Democratic Sen. Byron Dorgan says the investigation is into alleged "mismanagement, malfeasance, retaliation against whistleblowers as well as potential criminal behavior" in the Aberdeen Area of the IHS.

There are 48 IHS facilities in the Aberdeen Area's four-state territory. Dorgan says the alleged problems have hurt health care for American Indians.

Dorgan says the IHS is cooperating with the committee and has launched its own investigation. But he says the Senate committee will use subpoenas if necessary.

**Sen. Johnson Says Bill Will Help Economy**

**PIERRE (AP)** — U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson says he believes a bill rewriting financial industry regulations will be an important step toward repairing the nation's economy.

The South Dakota Democrat says the Senate had hoped to vote on the measure later this week, but the vote will be delayed because of the funeral of Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia.

Johnson says the compromise version of the bill will hold Wall Street accountable, protect consumers and end bailouts of financial institutions. He says it also will level the playing field among different kinds of financial institutions.

Johnson was part of a House and Senate negotiating committee that removed proposed fees on large banks and instead would pay for the measure with money left from the bank bailout measure of 2008.

**Neb. Farmers Plant Less Corn in 2010**

**LINCOLN, Neb. (AP)** — Nebraska farmers planted 4 percent fewer acres of corn this year, and committed 13 percent more acres to soybeans.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said Wednesday that Nebraska farmers planted 8.8 million acres of corn and 5.4 million acres of soybeans.

Nationwide, farmers planted 87.9 million acres of corn, a 2 percent increase.

Roughly 521 million bushels of corn was being stored in Nebraska on June 1. That's up 7 percent over last year, and it's the highest level since 1989.

The USDA said 1.6 million acres of winter wheat was planted in Nebraska, down 6 percent from the previous year.

The amount of acres used for hay, sorghum, sugarbeets and oats also decreased, but those are smaller crops in the state compared to corn, soybeans and wheat.

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**S.D. 'Firearms Freedom' Law To Take Effect**

**BY DIRK LAMMERS**  
Associated Press Writer

**SIOUX FALLS** — A South Dakota law set to take effect Thursday exempts guns, accessories and ammunition manufactured and sold within the state from federal regulation.

Attorney General Marty Jackley nevertheless expected federal authorities to urge full compliance with their regulations as a Montana law that served as a template for South Dakota's version works its way through federal court.

Montana was the first state to pass a "firearms freedom" law, and several states followed suit.

Attorneys general in Montana, Utah, Alabama, Idaho, South Carolina, South Dakota, Wyoming and West Virginia subsequently signed on in support of the lawsuit, which was launched by gun advocates last fall.

The states claim that as long as the guns aren't involved in interstate commerce, the federal government should have no say over them.

"It is a fairly united front with those attorney generals that have felt the Second Amendment is important to their states," Jackley said Tuesday.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives sparked the legal fight when it wrote to all licensed gun dealers in Montana last year telling them they were still bound by federal gun regulations.

The Montana Shooting Sports Association and other

pro-gun groups then sued the federal government.

The states argue they should decide which rules, if any, would control the sale and purchase of guns and paraphernalia made inside their borders.

The state would then be exempt from rules on federal gun registration, background checks and dealer licensing.

The U.S. Justice Department has argued that the courts have already decided that Congress, with its power to regulate interstate commerce, can set standards on such items as guns.

Brandon Maddox, owner of South Dakota Silencer in Sioux Falls, is urging his customers to comply with federal law until the issue works its way through the courts.

Many South Dakota residents use silencers on the end of high-powered rifles for vermin hunting, he said, and quite a few have approached him at gun shows thinking they can now bypass all those federal regulations.

There's a four-month waiting period to buy a silencer while residents obtain an FBI background check and a sheriff's signature, provide fingerprints, pay a \$200 federal tax and have their names entered into a database.

**Gov. Rounds Critical Of EPA Delay On Ethanol**

**BY WAYNE ORTMAN**  
Associated Press Writer

**SIOUX FALLS** — Gov. Mike Rounds criticized the federal government for delaying a decision on allowing a 15 percent ethanol blend in gasoline during a conference Wednesday on using technology and research to expand South Dakota's agriculture economy.

Executives at the Governor's Ag Development Summit talked about scientific and biotechnological research that can be used to grow more grain and create new fuel sources.

In his welcoming address, Rounds said the world will need more food and fuel so breakthroughs in the laboratory allow the state's farmers and ranchers to produce more with less.

Rounds chastised the federal government for promoting the use of renewable fuels while the Environmental Protection Agency postponed for a second time a decision on whether the ethanol blend in gas can go from 10 percent to 15 percent.

"It's just ridiculous to have this kind of delay in that type of an important decision-making process," Rounds said.

He noted that annual ethanol production in South Dakota has grown 600 percent since 2002. The 15 percent level would assure a continued and expanded market for ethanol, he said.

The EPA, which had been expected to decide by this month if U.S. car engines can handle the higher concentration, has said initial tests "look good" and should be completed by the end of September. The ethanol industry says the 15 percent blend will not hurt engine performance, while the refining industry, small engine manufacturers and some environmental groups have argued against an increase.

Monsanto Co. executive David Fischhoff said the world population is growing and wants more animal protein in its diet, something that will drive up the demand for grains to be used as livestock feed. That will require higher yields because the amount of land available for crop production is shrinking, said Fischhoff, vice president of technology strategy and development at Monsanto.

Average corn yields in the U.S. have doubled in the past 40 years to around 165 bushels per acre last year. The same growth rate could mean 200 bushels per acre by 2030 but perhaps even more because of expected advancements in farming practices, plant breeding and biotechnology.

"I think the possibility exists, and really it's a credible possibility ... that we could get yields to go up close to 300 bushels an acre in that same time frame," Fischhoff said.

Mark Matlock, senior vice president of research for Archer Daniels Midland Co., said biofuels such as ethanol will help fill a growing need for energy in developing coun-

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