

Bills Would Stop Release of Gun-Owner Information

Written by Joe Collins

Tuesday, 20 February 2001 18:00

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• Bills have been introduced in the Iowa legislature that would prohibit to varying degrees the inspection of public records concerning permits to purchase handguns and concealed weapons. A bill introduced by Representative Bob Brunkhorst, R-Waverly, would make private all information gathered from those who receive such permits. Three Iowa legislators have introduced another bill that would not allow the release of Social Security numbers, dates of birth, addresses, and reasons for requesting a handgun permit. This bill would also require those requesting information on permits to state a reason for the request and would subject them to a background check. These bills come as a result of an investigation into access to public records by 13 Iowa newspapers last year in which the newspapers requested information on permits to carry a concealed weapon. About 23,000 Iowans have nonprofessional permits to carry concealed weapons. Increasing instances of identity theft and the right to privacy are among that arguments for passing these bills, along with another recently introduced proposal that would make private virtually all Social Security numbers held by local government.

• Illinois Governor George Ryan has announced a contest to design the state's quarter and is strongly encouraging youth from kindergarten to 12th grade to participate. A quarter-design Web site can be accessed by selecting the quarter icon on the State of Illinois home page at (<http://www.state.il.us>) and offers a quarter template for those who would like to print out an outline of a quarter or submit an idea electronically. The governor will call on a special committee, including students, to assist him in the selection process. Mail ideas to Attn: Illinois Commemorative Quarter Program; Governor's Office of Citizens Assistance; 222 S. College, Room 106; Springfield, IL 62706. Or you can e-mail it to (ilquarter@gove.state.il.us). Entries should include a drawing and short description of the design. Students showing a noteworthy effort and talent will be invited to the state-quarter release ceremony. The top three to five designs will be sent to the U.S. Mint. You have until March 2, 2001, to submit your entry.

• John Deere Davenport Works and Alcoa, Inc., are funding a full-tuition pre-engineering scholarship for minorities and women at Scott Community College. The scholarship includes a summer internship with one of the companies. To be eligible, you must be a graduating high school senior living in the Illinois or Iowa Quad Cities, have a composite ACT score of 18 or

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better with a math and science score of 20 or better, maintain an overall high school GPA of 3.0 or better with a minimum of 2.75 in math and science; and have a strong recommendation from a high-school math and/or science teacher. This scholarship is offered specifically for women and members of minority groups historically discriminated against. For an application and more information, call (319)441-4063.

- From the desk of Iowa Senator Maggie Tinsman comes information concerning a 4-percent increase in state funding for schools for fiscal year 2002-3. The money will be provided in the form of allowable growth for the school year beginning July 1, 2002, and will increase educational funding an estimated \$63 million.

- A new security service business has begun operation in Davenport. Secure Document Destruction is a locally owned service that destroys records — including financial documents, medical records, legal documents, and other confidential information — on-site at your facility. All shredded material is recycled. The company received financial assistance from the Waste Management Assistance division of the Department of Natural Resources through the Solid Waste Alternative Program, which funds projects diverting waste from landfills. You can learn more about this new company by calling (319)884-8123.

- Iowa and Illinois both received “F”s in a recently released study rating child-occupant-protection laws in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Conducted by the National Safe Kids Campaign, the study reveals that 24 states received “F”s for laws that failed to properly protect children in motor vehicles. Each year, nearly 1,800 children ages 14 and under die in motor-vehicle crashes, and more than 274,000 children are injured. Riding unrestrained is the greatest risk factor for death and injury among child occupants of motor vehicles. Children who are not restrained are far more likely to suffer severe injuries or even death in motor-vehicle crashes. Yet approximately 30 percent of children ages four and under ride unrestrained, and of those who do buckle up, four out of five are improperly secured. Only 5 percent of four- to eight-year-olds ride in booster seats. The National Safe Kids Campaign has an excellent Web site at (<http://www.safekids.org>) that shows safety tips, links, resources, and other important information for keeping your children safe.

- Researchers at the University of Iowa are looking for problem gamblers to participate in a study of the effectiveness of a new drug in treating pathological gambling. Participants must be 18 years or older, cannot be clinically depressed, be abusing alcohol or other drugs, or have an eating disorder or a history of seizures. Women cannot be pregnant or planning to get pregnant during the course of the study. Participation involves five visits to Iowa City over two months with the first visit involving a physical examination. For more information, call (319)353-4431.

- Point your Web browser to (<http://www.childabuseqc.org>) for your very own copy of the 2001 edition of the Parenting Resource Directory listing more than 250 Quad City area classes and support groups for children and their parents. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to properly read the directory. For those who are Web-impaired, you can get a copy for \$5 by calling the Helpline for Parents at (309)757-8555 or (800)433-6644.