



Grassley Questions Holder About Hiding New Fast and Furious Murders



APN Staff, July 19, 2013

Townhall's Katie Pavlich reported in a column dated July 17th that Senator Chuck Grassley wrote a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder reminding him that the Department of Justice has an obligation to inform Congress when Fast and Furious weapons are found at scenes. According to Pavlich just last week, the [Los Angeles Times](#) reported Mexican Police Chief Luis Astorga and his body guard were killed by cartels using guns from the lethal operation. This seems to be a repeat of the previous murder of one of our border guards who was killed by the same lot of guns.

Further Pavlich reported in her article that "Since the beginning of this investigation, we have followed the link between Fast and Furious weapons and crimes committed on both sides of the border. On numerous occasions we have asked the Department to keep us apprised of Fast and Furious weapon recoveries -- especially as they relate to violent crimes," Grassley wrote.

The letter details not only the killings reported last week, but murders uncovered by Univision in October 2012, and by CBS News in November 2012, linked to the weapons trafficked into Mexico during the operation. On both occasions, one of which included the murder of a Mexican beauty queen who was used as a human shield, Grassley pressed the Justice Department for information.

"Despite our repeated requests, it has been over a year since we last heard from the Department on this issue. The Department kept from Congress this recent internal trace record showing a link between the murder of a police chief and Fast and Furious. Such actions do little to promote trust between the Department and Congress, and only provide further evidence that the Department is actively trying to conceal all information pertaining to Fast and Furious from Congress," the letter states.

Senator Grassley serves on the Judiciary Committee. He has served on the committee every year since elected to the Senate. Today he is in a leadership position as the committee's Ranking Member. According to Grassley's letter Holder has until July 25th to comply. For additional details go to [www.townhall.com](#).

Christine O'Donnell's Tax Records Breached During Her Run For Senate



By Lonely Conservative, July 18, 2013 [lonelyconservative.com](#)

I'm sure that the [breaching of former US Senate candidate Christine O'Donnell's tax records](#), and a bogus lien being placed on a property she used to own was just a big misunderstanding. At least that's how the Democrats will probably

describe it. She didn't even find out about it until earlier this year when she received a message on her answering machine.

"Ms. O'Donnell, this is Dennis Martel, special agent with the U.S. Department of Treasury in Baltimore, Md. ... We received information that your personal federal tax info may have been compromised and may have been misused by an individual," he said in the January message left on her cellphone.

For Ms. O'Donnell, the message immediately raised red flags.

On March 9, 2010, the day she revealed her plan to run for the Senate in a press release, a tax lien was placed on a house purported to be hers and publicized. The problem was she no longer owned the house. The IRS eventually blamed the lien on a computer glitch and withdrew it.

Now Mr. Martel, a criminal investigator for the Treasury Department's inspector general for tax administration, was telling her that an official in Delaware state government had improperly accessed her records on that very same day.

Beyond that, Ms. O'Donnell and Senate investigators who have tried to help her, have run into a wall of silence, leaving more questions than answers about whether abuses of the IRS system extend to private individuals and not just the tax-exempt groups already identified as victims.

"I don't know. And I'd like to know," Ms. O'Donnell told The Washington Times in her first interview about the case. "Because whether it's one, eight or 80 [cases], it's an abuse of power at the IRS. It's using the IRS as a political weapon, and that shouldn't be done." O'Donnell isn't the only candidate whose records were breached by state officials, but oddly enough, none of the cases have been prosecuted by the Justice Department. Gee, I wonder why.

Colorado Town Considers Licensing Bounty Hunters to Shoot Down Drones



By Greg Campbell, July 16, 2013, [dailycaller.com](#)

The tiny town of Deer Trail, Colo.—barely more than a wide spot on Interstate 70 about 55 miles east of Denver, population 546 — is considering an ordinance that would authorize licensed bounty hunters to shoot down unmanned aircraft violating its "sovereign airspace."

A six-page petition circulated by a resident says that the threat of surveillance from drones — regardless of who is piloting them—is a threat to "traditional American ideas of Liberty and Freedom" enjoyed by Deer Trail's "ranchers, farmers, cowboys, and Indians, as well as contemporary citizens."

For more information go to [dailycaller.com](#).

Obama Defends NSA Spying on Americans as "Transparent," Respecting "Privacy"



By John Lott, June 18, 2103, [johnlottblogspot.com](#)

Possibly the NSA spying on Americans can be rationalized by the need to provide security. But that claim is quite different than saying that the operation was "transparent" and that it respected Americans' "privacy." Could

someone please explain to me how the spying on Americans was "transparent" if it wasn't even public knowledge that it was occurring? If it was "transparent," what new information could Snowden have possibly revealed? I am not even sure how it was "transparent" to the secret court that oversaw this operation since there was no alternative viewpoint provided to the court,

no adversarial debate where information could be produced that called into question Obama administration claims. An adversarial approach would be more likely to reveal to the judges information that the Obama administration might not have offered to them on its own. From Fox News:

... [Obama also defended the National Security Agency spying programs and called them "transparent."](#) "That's why we set up the FISA court," he said, referring to the secret court set up by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act that authorizes two recently disclosed programs: one that gathers U.S. phone records and another that is designed to track the use of U.S.-based Internet servers by foreigners with possible links to terrorism. . . .

As to the claim that this respected people's privacy, could someone please explain how keeping track of who you talk to, how long you talk to them, and where you are when you make the calls respects people's privacy?

Obama, who repeated earlier assertions that the programs were a legitimate counterterror tool and that they were completely noninvasive to people with no terror ties, said he has created a privacy and civil liberties oversight board. . . .

Congressman: Benghazi Survivors Forced to Sign Non-disclosures



By Michael Dorstewitz, July 18, 2013

Ever wonder why information on the deadly attack on our foreign mission in **Benghazi, Libya**, seems to come in drips? It turns out that the survivors of the raid were forced to sign **non-disclosure agreements**.

Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Vir., announced on the House floor Thursday that he learned that eyewitnesses to the attack that took the life of Amb. Chris Stevens as well as three other Americans were told to sign an agreement to not reveal the events of Sept. 11.

Wolf indicated that on Tuesday, he first "raised the question of why none of the Benghazi survivors" were coming forward.

"According to trusted sources that have contacted my office, many if not all of the survivors of the Benghazi attacks along with others at the Department of Defense, the CIA have been asked or directed to sign additional non-disclosure agreements about their involvement in the Benghazi attacks," Wolf said. "Some of these new NDAs, as they call them, I have been told were signed as recently as this summer."

Apparently the Obama administration took steps in addition to the non-disclosure statements to keep information from Congress and the American public.

"It is worth noting that the "Marine Corps Times" yesterday reported that the Marine colonel whose task force was responsible for special operations in northern and western Africa at the time of the attack is still on active duty despite claims that he retired, and therefore could not be forced to testify before Congress."

All of which confirms what most Americans have long suspected — that the White House wants to keep those events secret.

"If these reports are accurate, this would be a stunning revelation to any member of Congress that finds this out and also more importantly to the American people. It also raises serious concerns about the priority of the administration's efforts to silence those with knowledge of the Benghazi attack in response."

Detroit Files For Bankruptcy, Largest City In US History To Do So



By Nathan Francis, July 18, 2013, inquisitr.com

Detroit filed for bankruptcy on Thursday, the largest city in American history to do so, as officials cited population drain and bad management.

The state of Michigan had hired bankruptcy expert Kevyn Orr to lead the city out of a fiscal valley, but the factors against the city were too strong and on Thursday afternoon Orr filed for Chapter 9 protection for the city.

Detroit's bankruptcy filing gives it a 30 to 90 day period to determine if it is eligible for Chapter 9 protection and determine how creditors will split up the city's resources, which will likely be liquidated. That period could be extended however if creditors attempt to fight the city's eligibility to file for bankruptcy. Two other recent municipalities to file for bankruptcy — Stockton, California, and Jefferson County, Alabama — saw protracted fights from creditors.

The city of Detroit had been in dire straits in recent years, losing close to 1 million residents in the last decade and struggling with its employment base. Detroit peaked at 1.8 million residents in the 1950s, but today has just a little more than 700,000. As people fled the city, so too did businesses, with layoffs at automakers and an exodus of manufacturers.

"Only one feasible path offers a way out," Gov. Rick Snyder said to Orr and state Treasurer Andy Dillon in a letter approving the Detroit bankruptcy filing.

Snyder had predicted the Detroit bankruptcy filing before hiring Orr, saying the city was in need of "radical" restructure in order to remain solvent.

"The citizens of Detroit need and deserve a clear road out of the cycle of ever-decreasing services," Snyder wrote. "The city's creditors, as well as its many dedicated public servants, deserve to know what promises the city can and will keep. The only way to do those things is to radically restructure the city and allow it to reinvent itself without the burden of impossible obligations."

As Detroit files for bankruptcy, the city carries somewhere between \$17 billion and \$20 billion in debt.

Larry Grathwohl R.I.P. "Their way of life is not mine"



By Tina Trent, July 18, 2013, tinatrent.com

Larry Grathwohl has passed away.

When I was in high school, I read Larry's book, *Bringing Down America: An FBI Informer With the Weathermen*. I got it out

of the Poughkeepsie public library.

And it changed the way I felt about the Sixties radicals that my teachers, and much of society, wanted me to admire.

Many years later, I was honored to meet Larry at a conference sponsored by Cliff Kincaid of America's Survival.

I was also honored to re-release Larry's book this year, and we spent some time on the road in Florida introducing the book, and Larry, to new audiences.

Here is the last paragraph of Larry's book:

The Weathermen's government will be one of total control over each individual in the society. In Weathermen terminology, this new society will be "one people working in total unity." This means an elimination of all the individual freedoms we are accustomed to having; it was my absolute belief in the freedoms offered by our form of government that drove me to fight the Weathermen in the first place. Even though I am no longer in the underground movement where I could help prevent violence before it happened, as in Dayton, Detroit, Madison, and Buffalo, while creating as much disunity as possible, I am still working against Weathermen and other radical conspiracies. Their way of life is not mine.

Larry was a sweet, decent and very wise man. He risked his life to protect us from murderous adolescent Marxists like Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn. Doubtlessly there would be family members of police and soldiers who would be without their loved ones tonight if Larry had not infiltrated the Weather Underground and exposed their crimes.

Many of us are in shock tonight.

APN Staff:

We recently attended a meeting in Ocala where Larry Grathwohl was a speaker. He told how he infiltrated the Weather Underground at a young age (his early twenties) and was working with the FBI. His stories were riveting and our country truly owes this patriot a debt of gratitude.

Where Have Our Heroes Gone?



BY BELL RINGER
JULY 10, 2013

I ran across a fascinating article on *World Net Daily*, asking the rhetorical question, "Do We Really Need that 'David and Goliath' Stuff?" It was the musings of some psychoanalytical sociologist who questioned the need for society to

revere superheroes; some malarkey about it engendering divisiveness and violence.

She seemed to think it wrong to elevate the heroic exploits of David's defeat of Goliath, or Joan of Arc leading the French army in victory over England; that it "divides life into a black and white picture of good and evil, and in doing so, it justifies violence." And that, my friends, is at the heart of what is wrong with today's culture!

Pointy-headed elites such as this want to paint our world in shades of gray, where everything is relative, on the same plane, and where no one stands out above others. In other words, we are all the same and no one aspires to greatness. But does that really mean that there will be no disagreements, alienation, or hostilities? The reality of this world is that it IS black and white; good and evil; light and dark. *And that is why we need heroes!*

It used to be that heroes possessed certain character traits that made this world a better place. Some of these were: courage in the face of personal perils; the ability to care about others; determination and endurance to overcome obstacles; cleverness and inventiveness; a confident belief in oneself, and a positive outlook on circumstances. But our culture has nearly demonized individuality and changed the image of what a hero is.

A study at Santa Clara University revealed that a couple of years ago the administrators of the Barron Prize for Young Heroes polled American teenagers and found only half could name a personal hero. Superman and Spiderman were named twice as often as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, or Lincoln. The study made it clear that our media make it all too easy for us to confuse celebrity with excellence; of the <http://www.salvationandsurvival.com/> who gave an answer, more than half named an athlete, a movie star, or a musician. One in ten named winners on *American Idol* as heroes. How sad is that? Which caused me to question how we could have let this happen.

I know that I had my childhood heroes, and I found them through the books I read and the stories I was told by my elders. I sat at the knees of my parents and aunts and

uncles, and I heard the stories of my ancestors and the hardships they had overcome in their lives. I was painted mind pictures of long sea voyages across the Atlantic and lonely arrivals on <http://www.salvationandsurvival.com/>. I was told stories of burying the family silver, along with other treasured possessions, in the yard as my great-grandmother fled before the advancing Yankee army. I was told how my grandmother suffered through a debilitating childhood disease, the death of her young husband, and poverty in the Great Depression to become a symbol of courage, dedication and persistence to an entire town on the plains of eastern Colorado.

And I gobbled up the legends of early American heroes and heroines through countless pages of books that fueled my hunger for tales of daring and fearlessness. Were some of those stories embellished? Probably. Nevertheless, they made me want to aspire to the noble characteristics of these normal human beings who found it within themselves to become more than average and for all the right reasons. They embodied moral courage and a daring boldness that I wanted to emulate.

But I fear that our youth today have become both cynical and deceived. In my day, we applauded the bravery of astronauts who flew to the moon, and recognized the courage it took for Martin Luther King to stand up for his civil rights. And we honored the memories of those heroes who contributed their lives to the ongoing freedom of our nation. But today, our kids see the steroid scandals in Major League Baseball, the shocking series of lies and misconduct from within our government at the highest levels, and the glee and triumph with which our media seek to tarnish anyone who reaches for a higher rung. So who are they left with for heroes? Movie stars, musicians and reality show celebrities. And none of that contributes to an effective role model for a successful ... let alone heroic life.

And that's where I think we've failed. We should be encouraging them to become heroes; not just another ribbon-receiver with everyone else on the team. We need to feed their imaginations with the stories of their ancestors and this nation's pioneers, groundbreakers, and trailblazers. They need to know that it is OK to be more than average; to want to excel; and to dare to be a David or a Joan of Arc. We need to expand their ideas and sense of possibility and encourage them to be leaders and to reach for the stars!

1 Corinthians 16:13 *Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.*

Know Your Constitution

The 10th Amendment

The **10th Amendment** to the United States Constitution is a guarantee of States' rights. The Constitution designed the federal government to be a government of *limited* and *enumerated*, or listed, powers. This means that the federal government only has powers over the things that are specifically given to it in the Constitution. All other powers are reserved to the States. The 10th Amendment in the **Bill of Rights** reads like this:

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Purpose of the 10th Amendment

Why did the Founding Fathers put the **10th Amendment** into the Bill of Rights? The explanation is that they did not want the central government to become too powerful. They didn't want a government that was located far away from their homes dictating how they lived their daily lives. They wanted as much power as possible to be retained in their local state legislatures.

Today, the **10th Amendment** idea of limiting the federal government's power has been severely weakened by many years of gradual changes in the view of what *is* and what *is not* a federal power. The main culprits in this weakening of the **10th Amendment** have been the Supreme Court and Congress itself.

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DEPARTMENT OF INJUSTICE: OBAMA GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED PROTESTS AGAINST GEORGE ZIMMERMAN



By Matthew Burke, July 10, 2013, tppn.com

Document: DOJ Community Relations Service was deployed to Sanford, FL, “to provide technical assistance for the preparation of possible marches and rallies related to the fatal shooting of a 17-year-old African American male.”

Washington, D.C. – Judicial Watch announced today that it has obtained documents in response to local, state, and federal records requests revealing that a little-known unit of the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Community Relations Service (CRS), was deployed to Sanford, FL, following the Trayvon Martin shooting to help organize and manage rallies and protests against George Zimmerman.

JW filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requested with the DOJ on April 24, 2012; 125 pages were received on May 30, 2012. JW administratively appealed the request on June 5, 2012, and received 222 pages more on March 6, 2013. According to the documents:

- March 25 – 27, 2012, CRS spent \$674.14 upon being “deployed to Sanford, FL, to work marches, demonstrations, and rallies related to the shooting and death of an African-American teen by a neighborhood watch captain.”
- March 25 – 28, 2012, CRS spent \$1,142.84 “in Sanford, FL to work marches, demonstrations, and rallies related to the shooting and death of an African-American teen by a neighborhood watch captain.
- March 30 – April 1, 2012, CRS spent \$892.55 in Sanford, FL “to provide support for protest deployment in Florida.”
- March 30 – April 1, 2012, CRS spent an additional \$751.60 in Sanford, FL “to provide technical assistance to the City of Sanford, event organizers, and law enforcement agencies for the march and rally on March 31.”
- April 3 – 12, 2012, CRS spent \$1,307.40 in Sanford, FL “to provide technical assistance, conciliation, and onsite mediation during demonstrations planned in Sanford.”
- April 11-12, 2012, CRS spent \$552.35 in Sanford, FL “to provide technical assistance for the preparation of possible marches and rallies related to the fatal shooting of a 17 year old African American male.” – expenses for employees to travel, eat, sleep?

From a Florida Sunshine Law request filed on April 23, 2012, JW received thousands of pages of emails on April 27, 2012, in which was found an email by Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board Program Officer Amy Carswell from April 16, 2012:

“Congratulations to our partners, Thomas Battles, Regional Director, and Mildred De Robles, Miami-Dade Coordinator and their co-workers at the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service for their outstanding and ongoing efforts to reduce tensions and build bridges of understanding and respect in

Sanford, Florida, following a news article in the Orlando Sentinel about the secretive “peacekeepers.”

In reply to that message, Battles said: “Thank you Partner. You did lots of stuff behind the scene to make Miami a success. We will continue to work together.” He signed the email simply Tommy.

Carswell responded: “That’s why we make the big bucks.”

Set up under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the DOJ’s CRS, the employees of which are required by law to “conduct their activities in confidence,” reportedly has greatly expanded its role under President Barack Obama. Though the agency claims to use “impartial mediation practices and conflict resolution procedures,” press reports along with the documents obtained by Judicial Watch suggest that the unit deployed to Sanford, FL, took an active role in working with those demanding the prosecution of Zimmerman.

On April 15, 2012, during the height of the protests, the Orlando Sentinel reported, “They [the CRS] helped set up a meeting between the local NAACP and elected officials that led to the temporary resignation of police Chief Bill Lee according to Turner Clayton, Seminole County chapter president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.” The paper quoted the Rev. Valarie Houston, pastor of Allen Chapel AME Church, a focal point for protestors, as saying “They were there for us,” after a March 20 meeting with CRS agents.

Separately, in response to a Florida Sunshine Law request to the City of Sanford, Judicial Watch also obtained an audio recording of a “community meeting” held at Second Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Sanford on April 19, 2012. The meeting, which led to the ouster of Sanford’s Police Chief Bill Lee, was scheduled after a group of college students calling themselves the “Dream Defenders” barricaded the entrance to the police department demanding Lee be fired. According to the Orlando Sentinel, DOJ employees with the CRS had arranged a 40-mile police escort for the students from Daytona Beach to Sanford.

“These documents detail the extraordinary intervention by the Justice Department in the pressure campaign leading to the prosecution of George Zimmerman,” said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. “My guess is that most Americans would rightly object to taxpayers paying government employees to help organize racially-charged demonstrations.”

High Noon in Missouri and Arkansas!



By A. J. Cameron, June 14, 2013, canadafreepress.com

Contributors Doreen Hannes & Joyce Riley
(Power Hour Radio)

There are so many spinning plates of corruption, fraud, malfeasance, terrorism and treason originating within the District of Corruption that it is easy for many assaults to go unnoticed. Given the fact that the traditional media moguls are members of the puppeteer cabal attacking our republic from within, wouldn’t it be nice to have national, supposed “top tier” talk radio hosts carve a portion of the time on their shows for self-adulation and/or petty attacks upon competitors within their industry to allow for reporting on the ‘below-the-radar’ assaults upon our rights and freedoms? One such assault is the White River National Blueway in Missouri and Arkansas. High Noon is rapidly approaching, not just for the more than 1.2 million people living within the boundaries of this watershed, but also for every red-blooded American citizen living within the U. S. High Noon is July 8, 2013, so acting upon this assault is URGENT!

This 17.8 million acre watershed is part of the National Blueways System, which is part of the America’s Great

Outdoors Initiative. The global elites, including notable U. S. citizens, who are orchestrating the controlled demolition of our republic and way of life, use words as weapons in a manner similar to how a professional assassin uses his/her weapon of choice in eliminating the intended target. In this case, the intended target is the law-abiding, patriotic and faith-filled U. S. citizen. The following amalgam of a paragraph is an example of their verbal treachery:

The National Blueways System is a program created to conserve natural amenities, enhance recreational opportunities, and foster **sustainable** economic activities within significant river systems across the country. The America’s Great Outdoors Initiative establishes a community-driven conservation and recreation **agenda** for the **21st** century. Blueways are extremely important resources for filtration of fresh water supplies, conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat, sustainable economic activities and outdoor recreational outlets for millions of Americans.

These are just more lies within a lengthy litany of lies from the global elites, through their puppets, the Lying King and his court of hood rat anarchist collectivists. As troubling as these lies are, it is equally troubling that most people, including the 1.2 million who will be immediately impacted by this unlawfully imposed dictate, have never heard a word about this assault. This is a unilateral assault upon all residents within the watershed, regardless of political affiliation or leanings.

As you may have noticed, the words ‘**sustainable**’, ‘**agenda**’ and ‘**21**’ were highlighted within the elites’ verbiage above to draw attention to the not-so-subtle, in-our-face attack being perpetrated by those within our government against us. It is obvious this is a surreptitiously imposed phalanx of U. N. Agenda 21/sustainable development.

I have been aware of the nefarious activities involving federal, state and local agencies, in and around the Lake of the Ozarks, but I was unaware of this clandestine assault until I heard Doreen Hannes being interviewed by Joyce Riley on ‘The Power Hour’ radio program. Instead of highlighting the key points from this interview, I believe Doreen and Joyce offer a more compelling call-to-action, based upon their comments throughout their interview. You can hear their interview in its entirety on www.thepowerhour.com Go to June 11 archives at the 8-minute mark to catch the program coming out of a commercial break.

July 8th is fast approaching. It is the last day of a 180-day period before this ominous program ‘goes live’. People need to act decisively and authoritatively. Residents within the 21 counties in Missouri and 39 counties in Arkansas, who will be severely impacted by this clandestine assault, need to be in contact *immediately* with their local, state and federal elected officials, Representatives and Senators. If you know of someone who lives within the area affected, contact him/her to alert him/her of what is going on under the radar within his/her backyard. This is one time when ‘Not in my backyard’ should be the rallying cry for **everyone** within this targeted zone.

If you don’t live within this area, use this as a warning that you need to be proactive in working their...responsibility to bring about the collapse of

the industrialized countries.” Soon after that, NAFTA was passed by Congress with the stated goal of “Promoting **Sustainable Development**,” which is the **Agenda 21** implementation plan. Mr. Strong was also involved in creating the Kyoto Protocol, which on its own would fulfill his desire to collapse our economy. with your local, state and federal elected officials, Representatives and Senators, to prevent a Blueway from ever being designated within your immediate area, throughout your state, and throughout all contiguous areas within the watershed area in which you live. It is time to pray for divine intervention and begin acting with the belief that the Holy Trinity is engaged with us in our endeavor to rescue our republic from the controlled demolition being orchestrated by

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global elites and their lapdogs within all levels of our government.

APN Editor's Note:

Since this article was written the White River portion of this Blueway has been scrubbed because of citizen outrage. Florida has several Blueways including the Peace River Blueway, The Great Calusa Blueway and the Northeast Florida Blueway. All of these programs will put tens of thousand of acres of private land under some form of government control. Remember this program covers the entire watershed not just the width of the river.

Currently the government already controls at least 28% of all the land in Florida and has extensive plans to control more by a recently approved wildlife corridor running from the Everglades to Georgia enacted by Governor Scott.

Florida Legislature Recommends AGAINST Common Core Assessment, PARCC



By APN Staff, July 19, 2013

The Florida Legislature has just released a letter signed by Senate President Don Gaetz and Speaker of the House Will Weatherford addressed to Florida DOE Commissioner Tony Bennett. The

letter recommends that Florida **withdraw immediately** from the assessment portion of PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) and implement a **Florida Plan** of assessments. PARCC is the driver behind Common Core State Standards implementation in the State of Florida.

The letter expresses several concerns about PARCC. It will be interesting to see how Mr. Bennett responds since Florida is the "fiscal agent" making the final decisions on behalf of the other PARCC states and Washington, D.C. On paper it is Florida, but in reality it is Tony Bennett who decides. Indiana was designated as the "fiscal agent" when Mr. Bennett was the Commissioner of Education there, before losing his re-election bid for Commissioner of Education. He brought his title with him to Florida.

Mr. Bennett and other former and current Educational Commissioners, PARCC, and Pearson Corporation, are involved with former Governor Jeb Bush's **Chiefs for Change**. Pearson has been a corporate sponsor of Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education (FEE) for some time.

Below is the letter in its entirety:

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

DON GAETZ

President of the Senate

WILL WEATHERFORD

Speaker of the House of Representatives

July 17, 2013

Mr. Tony Bennett

Commissioner

Florida Department of Education

325 W. Gaines Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

Thank you for your leadership and ongoing commitment to Florida's students.

As we recently discussed, Florida is at a decision point regarding the direction our state will choose in implementing assessments proposed by the national academic consortium, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Like you, we, along with our fellow legislators, have gathered information and heard constituent questions and concerns about national standards and assessments and their impact on students, teachers, schools and our state's competitiveness.

After consulting with bipartisan leadership of the Senate and House committees on education

policy and appropriations, we are troubled by serious issues in connection with PARCC:

· According to information provided recently through PARCC and earlier by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE), the complete PARCC assessments will consume approximately twenty days of testing for elementary, middle and high school students. Further, FLDOE and PARCC both highlight additional, yet undetermined, time will be needed for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills. This is more, not less instructional time devoted to testing than is currently the case.

· The value of student assessment is (a) to provide teachers with valid, reliable information on how to customize and focus effective teaching methods to address individual student learning needs; (b) to determine whether a student has mastered the skills necessary for promotion or to design a remedial learning plan; (c) to supply student performance data that can be used as part of a teacher's evaluation. Currently, PARCC does not have a plan for the timely return of assessment data to achieve the foregoing three objectives during the academic year the tests are administered.

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· PARCC assessments are to be performed on computers. No district in the state has every one of its schools at the minimum 2:1 student to device ratio called for in the PARCC administration plan. Our current state average is approximately three students to each device. PARCC has not finalized bandwidth requirements, but tentatively recommends approximately 100kbps. Per the recent independent load testing of three Florida school districts, 50 percent of the schools were not equipped for basic testing activities. In short, neither districts nor the state can realistically achieve the minimum bandwidth and a 2:1 ratio by the anticipated 2014-2015 school year full implementation of PARCC. If some PARCC testing is to be done on computer and some by pencil, we are concerned about the prospect of further delays in getting results as well as accuracy and validity.

· To date, the cost of the full implementation of PARCC assessment materials is indeterminate, let alone the costs for the technology and professional development infrastructure necessary to effectively administer a valid assessment program.

· We remain concerned about the security of student data and consequences for the misuse of that data. Even PARCC reports final test security policies will not be released for another calendar year.

Consequently, it is our view that Florida should withdraw immediately from PARCC in favor of a Florida Plan for valid, reliable and timely testing of student performance, including assessments for the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Our selection of assessments should take advantage of all available options such as state approved end-of-course exams, proven templates of other states modified to meet Florida's needs, and well-established alternative assessment options such as the ACT/SAT. A strong technology infrastructure is the backbone that supports the success of efforts moving forward. It is therefore imperative that we take the time necessary to build a reliable and realistic, yet visionary, technology infrastructure. It is critical that we do not undermine the integrity of the entire system due to the unreliability of any one part.

Florida has a rich history of student-centered education reform. Florida's strong education policies have made us a model for the nation and have resulted in extraordinary gains in student achievement. Too many questions remain unanswered with PARCC regarding implementation, administration, technology readiness, timeliness and utility of results, security infrastructure, data collection and undetermined cost. We cannot jeopardize fifteen years of education accountability reform by relying on PARCC to define a fundamental component of our accountability system. Our schools, teachers, and families have worked too hard for too long for our system to collapse under the weight of an assessment system that is not yet developed, designed nor tested.

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Moving forward with a plan that is centered on technology but includes flexibility and diversity in the delivery and measurement of outcomes in education is critical. It would be unacceptable to participate in national efforts that may take us backward and erode confidence in our accountability

system and our trajectory of continued success. The Legislature is committed to students, parents, and taxpayers of Florida. By ensuring decisions are uniquely tailored to our state, we reinforce our dedication to providing Floridians with an education that directly leads to success in the opportunities and challenges of our

economy. Florida must do what it has always done in the field of assessments, which is to lead. Please know we are committed to building on our strengths and current infrastructure by crafting our own Florida Plan of assessments for the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

In summary, please let us know at your earliest convenience your position on the following recommendations: move forward with a Florida Plan by immediately withdrawing from the assessment portion of PARCC; provide a transition timeline phasing in a Florida Plan of assessments that begin no sooner than 2015-2016; enhance professional development for educators; establish a practical plan to integrate technology in education; and report the costs associated with a Florida Plan.

Respectfully,

Don Gaetz

President

The Florida Senate

Will Weatherford

Speaker

The Florida House of Representatives

cc: The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor, State of Florida

Question For Readers

Why are some county websites copyrighted as the taxpayers own them? Generally the law doesn't permit government websites to be copyrighted. Should we be free to use the material as we see fit? Below is a chart for a few Florida County websites. Remember there are more.

Copyright Status for Typical Taxpayer Funded Government Websites

County	Supv. Elections	Prop. Appraiser	Clerk of Courts	Tax Collector	School Board
Taylor	N	©	ARR ©	N	N
Dixie	N	ARR	ARR ©	N	N
Madison	N	© ARR	ARR	N	N
Jefferson	N	N	N	© ARR	N
Leon	ARR	N	N	N	©
Suwannee	N	N	©	N	©
Lafayette	N	N	ARR	N	©
Marion	N	N	N	©	N
Washington	N	N	ARR	©	N
Pinellas	N	N	N	N	©
Charolette	N	© ARR	N	ARR	ARR
Columbia	N	N	N	N	N
Brevard	N	N	N	N	N
Miami-Dade	© ARR	© ARR	ARR	© ARR	©
Orange	N	© ARR	©	N	N
Duval	N	N	N	N	N
N	N	N	N	N	N

N = No ARR = All rights reserved © = Copyright

Islander Green Beans

from MIPC Cookbook

4 slices bacon
1 small onion, chopped
1 tomato, peeled and diced
1 (16 oz) can cut green beans, drained
½ teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper



Cook bacon in heavy skillet until crisp; remove bacon & crumble. Add onion to bacon fat; cook until tender. Add tomato, green beans, salt & pepper. Cover and cook 3-4 minutes. Uncover; stir & cook a few minutes longer. Add bacon, mix lightly

Taylor County Commission Meeting
July 23, 2013 Workshop, 5:30 PM
August 5, 2013 Board Meeting, 5:30 PM
Perry City Council Meeting
July 23, 2013, 5:30 PM
August 13, 2013, 5:30 PM
Taylor County School Board
July 23, 2013, 6:00 PM
July 30, 2013, 6:00 PM