

# Editorial Opinion

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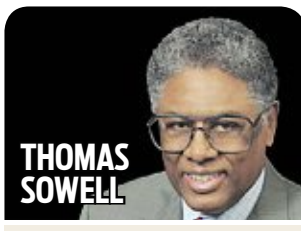
## Local elections will have great impact on nation

Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill once said, "All politics is local." That may have been true in O'Neill's day, but some elections are decisively on national issues — and the congressional elections this year are overwhelmingly national, just as the elections of 1860 were dominated by one national issue, namely slavery.

In 1860, some abolitionists split the anti-slavery vote by running their own candidate — who had no chance of winning — instead of supporting Abraham Lincoln, who was not pure enough for some abolitionists. Lincoln got just 40 percent of the vote, although that turned out to be enough to win in a crowded field.

But what a gamble with the fate of millions of human beings held as slaves! And for what? Symbolic political purity?

This year as well, there are third-party candidates complicating elections that can decide the fate of this nation for years to come. No candidate that



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COMMENTARY

irresponsible deserves any vote.

With all the crosscurrents of political controversies raging today, what is the overriding national issue that makes this year's congressional elections so crucial? That issue is whether, despite all the lawless edicts of President Barack Obama, threatening one-man rule, we can still salvage enough of the Constitution to remain a free, democratic nation.

Obama will be on his way out in two years, but if he can appoint enough federal judges who share his contempt for the Constitution's limits on federal government power in general, and presidential powers in particular, then the United States of America can continue on the path to

becoming another banana republic, even after Obama has left the White House.

Obama understands how high the stakes are, which is why he is out fundraising all across the country — seemingly all the time — even though he has no more elections to face himself. Obama came to power saying that he was going to fundamentally change the U.S. — and he intends to do it, even after he is gone, by giving lifetime appointments as federal judges to people who share his view that this country's institutions and values are fundamentally wrong, and need to be scrapped and replaced by his far-left vision.

If only Obama's critics and opponents understood this momentous issue as clearly as he does!

The issue is whether "we the people," as designated by the Constitution, continue free to live our own lives as we see fit, and to determine what laws and policies we want to live under.

Obama's vision is very

different. In his vision, our betters in Washington shall simply order us to live as they want us to live — telling us what medical insurance we can have, what doctors we can go to, what political groups shall be favored by the Internal Revenue Service, with more of the same coming in the years ahead, long after Obama has left the White House.

Critics who deplore Obama's foreign policies in general, and his weak response to the Islamic State threat in particular, as showing incompetence — and who see his incessant fundraising as just a weird distraction — fail to understand how different his priorities are from theirs.

Obama understands clearly that his ability to fundamentally remake what he has long seen as a deeply defective and corrupt America in the image of his far-left vision depends crucially on having control of the Senate that has the power to confirm his appointments of federal

judges with lifetime tenure. His fundraising is key to maintaining the Democrats' Senate majority.

Foreign policy is subordinated to Obama's overriding ideological vision. The president will not risk losing this year's congressional elections by taking military actions that will alienate his political base. Token military actions can minimize the political losses from other voters.

That people will die while he stalls on military action is a price he is willing to pay. His ordering thousands of American troops into Ebola-infested Liberia shows the same ideologically-driven callousness.

The big question is whether those who wish to preserve a free America see the issue and the stakes equally as clearly as Obama does — and see that this is the overriding national issue of our time, with our votes for senators not to be confused by local issues.

Creators Syndicate

## Guest commentary Marijuana amendment is wrong for Floridians

By state  
Sen. Garrett Richter  
R-Naples, District 23

Amendment 2 is not intended to help the sick; it is calculated to legalize pot in Florida.

The Florida Legislature created a law to allow for the prescribed use of non-euphoric strains of marijuana known as "Charlotte's Web." This new law will allow those who suffer from debilitating illnesses to have access to a legitimate form of treatment.

There are a number of ambiguities in the proposed amendment that present serious concerns for those of us who don't want recreational drug use to gain a foothold in Florida. First, no physician's prescription is required. A patient only needs a "physician's certification," which isn't a formal prescription used at a reputable pharmacy.

This is, instead, a written recommendation used to buy marijuana at storefront dispensaries. Physicians will be allowed to write a certificate for any illness for which they believe the use of medical pot will outweigh the potential risks for a patient. Writing a prescription for medical pot would violate federal law, which is why it must be downgraded to the lesser certification.

Amendment 2 also allows for "caregivers" to dispense medical pot. The only qualification for someone to be a "caregiver" is that the person is at least 21 years old. This means that someone with no medical training, who potentially can have a criminal record, would be eligible to dispense medical pot under this amendment.

Amendment 2 also fails to create criteria for where medical pot can be sold. Pot shops could open up on every corner with no prohibitions on proximity to schools or religious establishments.

I, for one, strongly oppose the idea of a pot dispensary opening across the street from my grandchildren's school. Taking that fact into account, Amendment 2 also has a loophole that would allow teens to purchase medical pot without parental consent. The authors of the amendment failed to create an adequate age restriction that would prevent this from occurring.

A qualified patient, as defined in Amendment 2, is any person who has been diagnosed with a debilitating medical condition who has a physician's certification and valid identification. The aforementioned "caregivers" could go to the pot shops on behalf of the teens and pick up their pot.

Amendment 2 is opposed by the Florida Sheriffs Association, the Florida Medical Association and the Florida Chamber of Commerce.

I believe that Amendment 2 is bad for families, bad for law enforcement and bad for business. Please consider voting "no" on Amendment 2.



Garrett Richter

## On this date

Today is the 287th day of 2014 and the 23rd day of autumn.

**Today's history:** In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt was shot in the chest and went on to deliver a campaign speech in Milwaukee.

**In 1926,** A.A. Milne's "Winnie-the-Pooh" was published.

**In 1962,** a U.S. reconnaissance plane photographed Soviet missile sites on the island of Cuba, setting off the Cuban missile crisis.

**In 1964,** Martin Luther King Jr. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

**In 1994,** Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for the Oslo accords.

**Today's birthdays:** Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969), U.S. president/general; Lillian Gish (1893-1993), actress; e.e. cummings (1894-1962), poet; C. Everett Koop (1916-2013), U.S. surgeon general; Roger Moore, actor, is 87; Ralph Lauren, fashion designer, is 75; Natalie Maines, singer-songwriter, is 40; Usher, singer-songwriter, is 36; Mia Wasikowska, actress, is 25.

**Today's fact:** Eight Major League Baseball teams have never won a World Series: the Colorado Rockies, Houston Astros, Milwaukee Brewers, San Diego Padres, Seattle Mariners, Tampa Bay Rays, Texas Rangers and Washington Nationals.

**Today's quote:** "War is mankind's most tragic and stupid folly; to seek or advise its deliberate provocation is a black crime against all men."  
— Dwight D. Eisenhower

**Today's number: 119,431** — altitude (in feet) of Felix Baumgartner's record-setting vertical sky-diving free fall during the Red Bull Stratos project, on this day in 2012. Baumgartner reached a maximum speed of 843.6 mph during his descent.

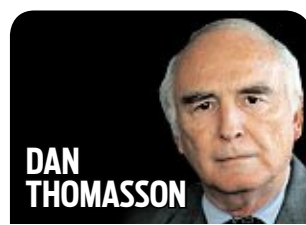
**Bible quote:** "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."  
— Matthew 6:20

## As women rise politically, pay still lags

WASHINGTON — With the prospect that one of their sex will occupy the Oval Office for the first time in history, women are bound to feel optimistic about achieving an equality with men they continue to be denied in the nation's commerce.

But should they? According to The Associated Press and any number of organizations that measure such things, women still trail their opposite sex badly in pay and position and influence and that probably will take some time to change. In fact, the gap between the sexes in pay and advancement in two of the most important endeavors, technology and finance, remains substantial.

For instance, a recent study by the American Institute for Economic research reveals that women in computer technology earn an average of \$6,358 a year less than men. And the penalty for also being a mom amounts to more than \$11,000. Add that to the fact that female engineers a year after graduation earn 88 percent of what their male counterparts are paid and the picture is bleak. The American Association of University Women, according to the AP, reports that women in computers and information sciences



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COMMENTARY

earn 77 percent of what men do with the same degree. That figure is based on a study of 15,000 graduates by the U.S. Department of Education.

Clearly women have made strides in politics, winning election to Congress as never before and with the prospect of increasing their numbers during next month's election. But being given a voice in running the nation doesn't seem to carry over to increased numbers in the leading technological companies whose diversity figures reveal that women comprise less than one-third of their workforce. At Microsoft, the AP says, women hold down only 29 percent of the jobs.

And it seems that while some women have managed to make it to the top in the information technology and social media networks, their overall participation is low. The AP noted that Facebook's Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg has been a leading voice in championing workplace advance-

ment for her sisters, yet her "sisters" make up only 31 percent of Facebook's total workers and only 15 percent of its technology employees, mainly engineers.

The pay gap is even larger it seems in the financial services industry where women earn a whopping \$14,000-plus a year less than men. And judging by figures from the American Institute for Economic Research, it pays to remain single. Brides, the institute reports, make \$16,491 less than single women and all men.

There are some areas in financial services where the number of women employees actually is declining. Since 1999, a Babson College survey shows, the number of women in venture capital firms has declined from 10 percent to 6 percent.

All this leads to conjecture whether the election of a woman to the top of the U.S. government either in the next presidential election or in one in the next decade will help women achieve what they have sought since suffrage gave them the vote and economic necessities forced many from total home emersion. Or, as one of my female acquaintances put it, will the Congress enact a pay cut for Madame President, whomever she might be?

Obviously, six years

ago when Barack Obama came out of nowhere to defeat front-running Hillary Clinton for the Democratic Party presidential nomination, voters decided that it wanted an African-American chief executive before a female one even one with far more experience than Obama. Many of those who felt that way appear to have decided it was a mistake if the polls are correct.

With Clinton now very much in the forefront of speculation once again, the odds seem to favor the glass ceiling against a woman achieving such a goal finally crashing down. Whether that translates into improved opportunities for females in the workplace generally is anyone's guess. As the statistics reveal, the gaps in crucial areas remain large despite increasing demands for diversity. Women count for an ever larger presence in law and medicine, where their numbers in training for these professions exceed men.

Hopefully, the idea of equal pay for equal work will take hold in the financial and technological world specifically and in the nation's workforce generally.

McClatchy-Tribune  
News Service

## LETTERS

Linda Oberhaus, Naples  
Executive director, The Shelter  
for Abused Women & Children

### Purple in October

In addition to October's pink and orange, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children urges the community to "go purple" in support of Domestic Violence Awareness month.

Although brought to the media forefront by high-profile incidents in the NFL, domestic violence has long been a national crisis affecting every American, either physically, emotionally or financially. Statistics show that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men are victims of domestic violence, and intimate partner homicides make up approximately 10 percent of all U.S. murders. In Collier County, there have been 39 domestic

violence-related murders over the past 10 years.

Children exposed to domestic violence are more prone to dating violence, delinquency and further victimization, continuing the cycle of violence into the next generation.

Domestic violence also impacts animals. Nearly 71 percent of pet-owning women entering abuse shelters reported that their batterer had injured, killed or threatened family pets for revenge or control.

Nationally, the medical cost burden associated with domestic violence ranges from \$2.3 billion up to \$7 billion, including lost days of employment.

You can make a difference. Join the shelter's mission to prevent, protect and prevail over domestic violence. Call 239-775-3862 or go to [naplesshelter.org](http://naplesshelter.org) to find out how you can help create a community

where every home is a safe haven for the family it shelters. If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence, call the shelter's crisis hotline at 239-775-1101.

Let purple prevail in October and throughout the year.

Michael Dedio, Naples

### Get real

The "Paradise Coast Wives" reality show is not what Naples is all about.

Naples has the distinction of being a place to visit and retire without showboating its beauty.

"Paradise Coast Wives" are not the real women of Naples but wannabes.

Residents of Naples are above the reality-show mentality.