NACo’s Western Interstate Region Elects New Officers, Plans for Bigger Role

Envision the Western United States. You may first see in your mind wide, open spaces filled with grazing land, wheat fields, forests, mountains, and national parks. Then, you might envision the urban places: Seattle, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco. There are two very different, but interconnected geographies of the West.

Last week, in Billings, Montana, the Western Interstate Region (WIR) of the National Association of Counties (NACo) held its annual meeting and took action toward increasing its role and influence. The WIR represents and focuses on issues unique to counties from the western half of the United States. Like most WIR states, Washington has traditionally sent as its representative a commissioner from a rural county. The current WIR Board member from Washington is Klickitat County Commissioner Joan Frey.

Wishing to increase the involvement of the urban areas of the West, the WIR Board of Directors voted to increase its membership to two members per state. This will allow, but not require, each state to place an urban and rural representative on the WIR Board. The WIR Board also directed its staff and the executive directors of each state association to work toward a closer relationship with the Western Governor’s Association.

The newly elected WIR President is John Howard, from Union County, Oregon. The WIR Vice-President, Don Davis, is from Colorado and the Secretary-Treasurer, Donna Ruffing, is from Wyoming. Both candidates for NACo Second Vice-President also are from the West: Bill Hansell from Umatilla County, Oregon and Bill Dennison from Plumas County, California.

Letter From the WSAC President
LeRoy Allison

Over the last month, I have written to county commissioners, councilmembers and county executives asking that you come to Bellevue June 18-21 to participate in our WSAC Annual Convention. The Convention is now less than a month away and your response has been great! We will have great representation from across the state to begin a new era of working together with other levels of government, including the development of our 2003 legislative agenda.

We have a wealth of experience in county government and many friends and allies elsewhere in government and the private sector who are familiar with the issues and problems counties encounter on a daily basis. Two of those friends - state Senator Alex Deccio and former Representative Gary Chandler - will join us for the first session of the Convention. Along with King County Councilmember Carolyn Edmonds, they will share their perspectives on the state-county relationship drawing upon their experiences both as state legislators and as county legislative officials. This session will set the stage for further examination of state and local roles throughout the Convention.

(Continued on page 2)
Eastern Washington Counties: Submit Bids for WSAC Summer Convention

If your county would like to present a bid for Summer Convention 2005, please submit a letter of interest to the Association signed by your board of commissioners. The letter should be accompanied by a bid from the main convention hotel and include projected meetings and sleeping room rates. Although a bid from your county in no way obligates you to plan the convention, WSAC will call upon the host county for some assistance. WSAC staff manages the convention planning and details.

Room requirements are a minimum of 200 guest rooms and six meeting rooms. The Annual Convention is held in June, opening on a Tuesday and ending mid-day on Friday. The convention alternates between east and west, in accordance with Association bylaws.

(Continued from page 1)

Governor Gary Locke, of course, spent several years as King County Executive before his election as governor. On Thursday, at the luncheon keynote address, he will also speak about state and local relations. I hope he will share his thoughts about how counties and cities can be assured sufficient resources to provide the basic services that citizens need.

Please join us in Bellevue at our WSAC Annual Convention June 18-21 to learn more about our state and federal partners and discuss ways to work together with them to better serve our public.
Tobacco Industry Spending More on Promotions
According to an article appearing in The News Tribune the increased effort on tobacco promotions is seen as an effort to offset the impact of marketing restrictions brought about by the Master Settlement with the states. When the participating tobacco companies agreed to limit their advertising as part of their settlement with the states, it was thought they would cut promotional expenditures. But tobacco companies are spending more than ever to promote their brands – a record $9.57 billion in 2000, when they managed to step an historic slide in cigarette consumption, according to a new Federal Trade Commission report.

The industry’s increased promotional expenditures reflect a trend away from traditional advertising to more point-of-purchase displays in stores and giveaways to smokers. Promotional spending by the six top manufacturers rose 16 percent above the 1999 total and the 1999 total had represented a large increase over expenditures prior to 1998, when tobacco companies settled with state attorneys general. Given cigarette sales in 2000 of more than 20 billion packs, promotional spending came to nearly 50 cents a pack.

“The increase is just unbelievable,” Matthew L. Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids said in the News Tribune article. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is an anti-smoking group based in Washington, D.C. “What you’re seeing here is a very concerted effort to offset the impact of the marketing restrictions, price increases and anti-smoking programs,” Myers said.

Cigarette consumption has fallen in nearly each of the past 20 years, but the promotional efforts might interrupt that decline at least temporarily. Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death. Loss of loyal tobacco users to death means that in order for tobacco companies to stay viable, they are not only competing for existing tobacco users, but also must attract new tobacco users. Unfortunately, the best and easiest way to strengthen the tobacco market is to entice children to use tobacco. Studies have shown that a child that does not smoke before the age of 18 is less likely to become a smoker as an adult. Additionally, children become more addicted to tobacco use and have a much more difficult time quitting than do people who do not begin smoking until adulthood. Plus, the health affects of tobacco use are cumulative over time. From a public health perspective, continued effort must be made to protect children from the health impacts of tobacco.

Senator Murray Tours Public Health Lab and Hears from Public Health Officials About Use of Bioterrorism Funding
U.S. Senator Patty Murray joined King County Councilmember and King County Board of Health Chair Carolyn Edmonds, state Secretary of Health Mary Selecky, and WSALPHO Chair M. Ward Hinds, health officer from the Snohomish Health District for a presentation and discussion about the use of federal bioterrorism funding in Washington state. The state public health laboratory is a critical element of Washington’s response to a bioterrorism event. Some of the funding coming to Washington will increase the capacity of the state public health laboratory, which was the site of the May 30 meeting. Secretary Selecky talked about the joint process between state and local public health that was utilized to develop the grant application for the first round of bioterrorism funding. Councilmember Edmonds and Dr. Hinds talked about the interdependence of state and local public health in Washington. They stated that local public health could not do its job without the state and the state could not do its job without local public health. The goal of the bioterrorism funding is to increase and enhance the public health capacity in every state, not to replace state and local funding for public health. An added benefit is that the system needed to respond to an event of bioterrorism is the same system needed for the investigation and response to other infectious diseases so any enhancement resulting from the bioterrorism funding will enhance public health protection statewide.
Plan Review for Fire Protection Assistance
The office of the Washington State Fire Marshal has established a program offering assistance to local jurisdictions for fire protection plan review. The Fire Marshall is offering assistance for plan review, site inspections, and acceptance testing.

The assistance could include underground water systems for fire protection, site plans, pre-construction meetings, fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems and other fire protection systems. This program will assist in the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) in the review and inspection process, and provide service if there is no AHJ.

The Washington State Patrol and the Fire Protection Board have developed an inter-local agreement along with the local entities that will identify the scope of work and fee for the project. The fee for the project will be in the form of a pass through fee for the system plan review as allowed in the Uniform Building Code.

More information will be provided upon request.

Smaller cities and counties that do not have the personnel or expertise to provide this service benefit from the project. Those who wish to take advantage of this service should send a letter of request to Mary Corso, State Fire Marshal, Office of the State Fire Marshal, P.O. Box 42600, Olympia, WA 98504. For further information, please call Deputy State Fire Marshal Lance Talley at (360) 705-5767.

Courthouse Ramblings

Former Grays Harbor County Auditor Mary Birdwell-Moyer, 96, passed away May 23. Mary served four terms as Grays Harbor County Auditor in the late 1950s and 60s, followed by a stint at the Aberdeen Police Department. She retired in 1970. Current Auditor Vern Spatz invited former Grays Harbor County auditors to a Christmas party in 1989, and met Mary at that time. She had retired to Puyallup.

Dale Brandland, Whatcom County Sheriff, has announced that he is running for the state Senate seat currently held by Georgia Gardner (D) in the 42nd District. Brandland is running on the Republican ticket. As a charter county, the Whatcom County Sheriff’s position is nonpartisan. Brandland is in his third term as county sheriff.

King County Sheriff Dave Reichert and his two-decade search for the Green River killer is the topic of a story in this week’s Time magazine (May 28 issue at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101020603-250023,00.html). If you have a chance, pick it up and read it. The in-depth article begins with then-Detective Reichert’s investigation of the first bodies found in and around the Green River in August 1982, to his heading up the Green River Task Force, to his promotion to sergeant and assigned other duties in 1990, and to his election as sheriff in 1997. At least 49 women were murdered during the 1980s (and possibly longer) and some investigators think the number of victims could be as high as 90. Last April, Reichert called a meeting of 30 detectives who had worked on the Green River case over the years and asked them to once again look at the evidence and make use of new technology. Time magazine’s excellent chronology of the case and the “obsessive personal quest” of Sheriff Reichert to find the killer speaks to the arrest of one long-time suspect, Gary Leon Ridgway, last November. Ridgway was charged with four counts of aggravaated murder, connected to the cases by DNA evidence taken 14 years ago - before the new technology was developed that has currently revolutionized DNA analysis. Last month, King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng said that he will seek the death penalty in the upcoming prosecution of Ridgway.
### Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 10–13</td>
<td>International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners and Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners Joint Conference, West Coast Hotel, Seattle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators certification testing, 8:00 a.m.–noon, Room 2605, Mt. Hood Community College, Gresham, OR.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 16–19</td>
<td>Government Finance Officers’ Association (GFOA) Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>WSALPHO Meeting in conjunction with WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17–20</td>
<td>Washington State Association of County Assessors Annual Conference, Rosario Resort, Orcas Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>WCIF Board in conjunction with WSAC Summer Conference, 4:30–6:30, Hilton Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>CPO Financial Management: Understanding County Government Financing, Bellevue—Cost: $120, CPO Credits: 4 (Core Course). An additional elective course will also be offered at the Summer convention, topic TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18–21</td>
<td>WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18–21</td>
<td>Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Annual Conference, Yakima</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19–21</td>
<td>Washington State Association of Prosecuting Attorneys’ (WAPA) Summer Training Program, Campbell’s Lodge, Lake Chelan, Civil &amp; Criminal Tracks, 15 hrs of CLE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 22–26</td>
<td>National Sheriffs Association’s Annual Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 24–28</td>
<td>Washington State Association of County</td>
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<td>June 24–28</td>
<td>Clerks’ Annual Conference, Best Western Suites, Walla Walla</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 24–28</td>
<td>Washington State Association of County Treasurers’ Annual Conference, Lakeway Inn, Bellingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 9–12</td>
<td>Northwest Regional Election Conference 2002, Jantzen Beach Doubletree Hotel, Portland</td>
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<td>July 12–16</td>
<td>NACo Annual Conference, New Orleans Parish, New Orleans, LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 17–19</td>
<td>ACHS, Clark County</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19–21</td>
<td>WAPA Summer Training Program—Campbell’s Lodge, Lake Chelan. Civil &amp; Criminal Tracks, 15 hours of CLE.</td>
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<td>August 22</td>
<td>WCIP Board/Rate Setting Session, 9–3 pm SeaTac</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 4–6</td>
<td>WAPA Drug Training Program—Icicle Inn, Leavenworth. 15 hrs of CLE.</td>
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<td>WAPA Drug Training Program—Icicle Inn, Leavenworth. 15 hrs of CLE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8–10</td>
<td>WAPA Juvenile Training Program—Icicle Inn, Leavenworth. 15 hrs of CLE.</td>
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<td>September 10–13</td>
<td>City/County Planning Directors, Lake Chelan</td>
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<td>September 12</td>
<td>WSALPHO Meeting, Spokane</td>
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<td>September 18–20</td>
<td>ACHS, Leavenworth</td>
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<td>September 19</td>
<td>WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee (All Day Meeting), SeaTac</td>
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<td>September 30–October 4</td>
<td>WACO/WSAC Annual Conference, WestCoast Hotel &amp; Convention Center, Wenatchee</td>
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<td>October 1</td>
<td>CPO Personnel/Human Resources—Understand the Laws; Maximize Your Personnel System, Wenatchee—Cost: $120, CPO Credits: 4 (Core Course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>CPO The Class-Act County Government Official—Building Courthouse Partnerships, Wenatchee—Cost TBD, CPO Credits: 2 (Elective Course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>WCIF Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m.–noon, Eastern Washington Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 18–21</td>
<td>WASPC Annual Fall Conference, Red Lion Hotel at the Quay, Vancouver</td>
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<td>November 20–22</td>
<td>ACHS, Seattle</td>
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<td>December 3–4</td>
<td>WAPA Newly Elected Prosecutor Course—WAPA Conference Room, Olympia</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>WSALPHO Meeting, SeaTac</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10–13</td>
<td>CPO Newly Elected Officials Training—Understanding Your New Job at the Courthouse, Olympia—Cost: TBD, CPO Credits: All newly elected officials must attend to become certified.</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 12–13</td>
<td>WAPA Winter Meeting &amp; Banquet Crowne Plaza Hotel, Seattle.</td>
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### 2003 MEETINGS

- **May 19–22**: WASPC Spring Conference, WestCoast Grand Hotel, Spokane
- **June 24–27, 2003**: WSAC Summer Convention, Spokane
Calendar of Events

2005 MEETINGS
May 23–26
WASPC Spring Conference, West Coast
Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee

July 15–19, 2005
NACo Annual Conference, City & County
of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

DOUGLAS COUNTY - Planning Manager & Associate Manager
(Transportation & Land Services) East Wenatchee office. Planning Manager. Responsible for coordinating and supervising the advanced planning and permitting functions of the Land Use section of the department. Plans, organizes, manages and conducts long range comprehensive planning projects affecting land use, transportation, capital facilities, utilities and other plan elements required by the Growth Management Act. Knowledge of land use planning and regulatory concepts and practices. Experience in supervising professional and technical employees. Bachelor degree in planning/related field and five years public agency planning experience. Salary range: $3,497/mo. to $3,966/ mo. Placement DOQ.

Associate Planner. Supports the development permit processing functions of the department. Responsible for processing applications for land use permits and associated activities. Provides support for the hearing examiner process and customer service to applicants and citizens. Knowledge of land use planning and regulatory concepts and practices. Bachelor degree in planning/related field and one year experience working for a local government or private entity dealing with land use applications. Salary range: $3,115/mo. to $3,451/ mo. Placement DOQ.

A county application form and resume are required for applying for these positions. Additional information, forms and complete position descriptions are available on the Internet at the employment opportunities link on our web site at www.DouglasCountyWA.net or by contacting our Human Resource Assistant at 509/884-7173. Posting for both positions closes at 5:00 PM on Friday, June 21, 2002.

KLICKITAT COUNTY – Public Health Nurse, Public Health Department. Applications may be obtained by contacting Lynn Cooper, Klickitat County Personnel, 205 S. Columbus, MS-CH 15, Goldendale, WA 98620, (509) 773-7171 or lynnc@co.klickitat.wa.us.

Definition: Performs a variety of professional nursing duties in a generalized community health nursing program or specialty area including sexually transmitted disease, maternal and child health programs, clinics, communicable disease, and family planning and prenatal programs.

Distinguishing Features: Positions in this class are responsible for providing both general and specific nursing services which emphasize prevention, intervention, control or treatment of disease and health related problems of individuals or families with the Health District. Work involves assessment, counseling, screening, treatment and referral of high risk patients. Nursing services provided may require comprehensive nursing care of individuals or families with multiple health and socialization problems. Other services may involve investigating, tracking and reporting potential cases of communicable disease.

Essential Job Functions: Makes home visits to assess client needs. Develops intervention plans, determining the type and scope of services needed. Refer client to other Health District Services or private physicians. Evaluates intervention results as indicated. Provides direct nursing services including physical assessment, history, diagnostic and screening tests, performing or preparing patients for examinations, and administering medication. Instructs and counsels patients and family members concerning the patient’s medical and health care needs, and interpreting and understanding laboratory test results, diseases, and physicians’ recommendations. Investigates reports of communicable diseases, contacting persons and groups with potential exposure to the disease about transmission, treatment and prevention. Preps written reports of cases investigated. Performs professional nursing in clinics conducted by the Health District, taking patient histories, performing exams, providing treatment and tests, charting records, and advising or counseling patients. Maintains equipment and orders supplies. Prepares and labels specimens for laboratory analysis. Prepares reports and statistical data as indicated. Coordinates services and exchanges information with physicians, co-

(Continued on page 7)
Employment Opportunities

(Continued from page 6)

workers, other agencies and health care providers as appropriate for more effective patient care. Serves on special committees or task forces at the local or state level, representing the Health District. Serves the community and the County through the provision of positive internal and external customer service. Responds to telephone and walk-in requests for medical advice. Assesses the situation, gives advice and refers the caller to appropriate resources within established guidelines. Records the interaction in a log book. Participates in health education classes or group meetings with specific program content for parents, teens, other health care professionals, clients, teachers, industrial groups, expectant parents, or the general public as appropriate to the program. Drafts or reviews and comments on proposed health care protocols as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications:
Knowledge of:
- The principles and practices of professional nursing, and the principles underlying modern nursing techniques.
- Professional nursing ethics.
- Interviewing and counseling techniques.
- Communicable disease control measures.
- Acute care nursing as required by the position.
- Child assessment techniques and practices as required by the position.
- Sexually transmitted diseases as required by the position.

Ability to:
- Communicate with people from various socio-economic levels, utilize excellent oral communication skills to explain policies and procedures and to deal with other employees, agencies and the general public using courtesy, tact and good judgment.
- Work with dysfunctional parents and children at risk with long term problems.
- Readily grasp the principles underlying the operation of specific Health Department programs assigned.
- Identify and assess individual and community health needs, and to provide comprehensive and specialized nursing services.
- Use independent judgment and work as a team member.
- Work with individuals who may be emotionally upset.
- Understand and carry out technical instruction regarding patient care.
- Know when to seek additional authority or approval before taking action.
- Deal courteously and tactfully with patients, co-workers and the public.

Education and Experience - Any equivalent combination of education and experience which provides the applicant with the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the job. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be: Graduation from an accredited school of nursing. Graduation from an accredited four year college or university with a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Two years of increasingly responsible work experience which provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the position. Any satisfactory equivalent combination of experience and training which ensures the ability to perform the work may substitute for the required experience.

Licenses, Certificates, and Other Requirements: Valid Washington license as a registered professional nurse. Valid Washington State Driver’s License or ability to obtain one as required by the position.

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE COMMITTEE SERVICES - Fiscal Analyst to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Senate Committee Services assists Senators in developing and evaluating policy alternatives to achieve their policy objectives. These are full-time, non-partisan positions, exempt from civil service.

Application procedure - Interested applicants should submit: (1) a letter of interest describing specific qualifications for the position; (2) a current resume detailing experience and education; and (3) a minimum of three references with current telephone numbers. Please send to: Stan Pynch, Director, Senate Committee Services, PO Box 40466, Olympia, Washington 98504-0466, Phone contact: Judy Rus (360) 786-7417. Applications must be received by 5:00 PM, June 21, 2002.
They Give, but They Also Take: Voters Muddle States' Finances
By Timothy Egan, New York Times, March 2, 2002

The voters of Arizona have spoken. They want lower taxes. They also want higher taxes -- but only if they go to the state's beleaguered public schools, consistently ranked among the worst in the nation.

The people of Colorado have spoken as well. They passed a constitutional amendment that limits how much state government can spend or take in, even in flush times. But then a few years later they passed another amendment, calling for guaranteed annual increases in education spending. Pay for it however possible, the voters seemed to be saying, but do not raise our taxes.

In Washington State, the voters have sent a similar mixed message. By a sizable majority, people voted in 1999 to cut taxes. But the next year an even bigger majority voted to spend $800 million to give teachers annual raises and reduce class size, without also offering any new money to pay for the initiatives.

Call them unfinanced mandates from the people. Now all three states are facing crushing deficits and may have to close parks, delay road construction, close hospitals and reduce police officers in rural areas. Standard & Poor's has warned Colorado that its credit rating may be downgraded. Still, the voter message seems to be, Deal with it.

As state legislators struggle to find ways to adhere to the popular will, some are now wondering whether it was a good idea to let people shape big chunks of the budget by voter initiatives, leaving the messy details to lawmakers.

Some state politicians have even coined a term for their new diminished role. They call themselves the Bypass Legislature. In the last 10 years, the number of states where voters have put budgetary strictures on their elected officials has practically doubled, to 13.

At the same time, in the 24 states where lawmaking by ballot is permitted, voters went on a spending spree of their own, mandating money for drug treatment, schools, parks and roads.

Voter initiatives have never been particularly popular with state lawmakers, who see their job as taxing and spending. But most of what voters did was largely inconsequential in the prosperous 1990's. Now, in the midst of a lingering recession and increased cost for domestic security, the bill is coming due, and in a growing number of states, expenses and revenues do not add up.

More than 40 states have a budget shortage. And unlike the federal government, these budgets are required by law to be balanced.

"This makes my job very difficult," said Nancy McCallin, the budget director for Colorado. "But the voters pay the taxes, and if they are telling us this is how they want us to run things, we have to do it."

Voter moods can vary. Colorado is now trying find a way to make up a two-year budget shortage of about $700 million, in part because of new voter-mandated spending programs. But the state is also scouring for a way to give about $1 billion back to taxpayers in voter-mandated refunds, which was deferred.

In the West, where taxing and spending by initiative has a strong tradition, the balancing act is particularly difficult.

"I wouldn't say voters are stupid," said Phil Talmadge, a former Washington Supreme Court judge and legislator. "But the same voter who wants unlimited services also does not want to pay for it. There's a disconnect."

Voter initiatives, Mr. Talmadge said, were created nearly a hundred years ago because people did not trust their legislators to act for the public good. But in recent years, such initiatives have grown in popularity and importance.

"What happened in the 1990's is that special interests decided it was a lot cheaper to buy initiatives than buy legislators," Mr. Talmadge said.

The result, he said, is that Democrats used the initiative process for new spending programs on education, health care and the environment, and Republicans used it to cut taxes or limit states' ability to raise taxes. Many voters punished yes for both sides.

"This puts us in somewhat of a civic death spiral," said Richard Davis, president of the Washington Research Council, a nonpartisan public policy research group in Seattle. "You give the voters an up or down without any nuance. They are reacting to a line item, and they never have to deliberate, as legislators do."

The message in the states where voters can basically do the job that elected officials were once primarily charged with doing, Mr. Davis said, "is not liberal or conservative -- it's reactive." Others who have studied the initiative patterns agree.

"Where direct democracy becomes a more dominant force than representative government the result is a whipsaw, without any long-term coherence," said Brian Weberg, an official with the National Conference of State Legislatures.

People on both sides of the political spectrum say the system has gotten out of control. Lawmakers in some states have called for hearings on the initiative process. Still, these states with strong initiative powers have populist traditions, and lawmakers are loath to mess with the majority sentiment, however contradictory that can seem.

"Legislators don't want to do anything because it may be viewed as tinkering with the will of the people," said Daniel A. Smith, a professor of political science at the University of Denver.

Washington State legislators, for instance, now seem cowed by the initiative, Mr. Davis said. When people voted to cut the annual car-registration fee to a flat fee of $30 from $500 or more, depending on the year and model of the car, officials argued that the measure would increase the state's deficit. But when the State Supreme Court threw out the measure, legislators, with the aid of Gov. Gary Locke, a Democrat, resurrected the issue, made the $30 car-registration fee the law and said it was the will of the people.

Now Washington is struggling to finance road construction to ease Seattle's chronic traffic congestion. But legislative leaders from both parties say they are afraid to raise gasoline taxes to pay for new roads without first putting it to a vote of the people.

Here in Arizona, voters passed a 1992 constitutional amendment making it almost impossible for the Legislature to raise taxes. But in the late 1990's, during boom times, voters started mandating by initiative more money for health care and education.

To make sure state politicians got the message, voters passed another measure that said the lawmakers could not undo what the voters had just decided to do.

In the 2000 election, Arizona voters decided to raise the amount of money spent (Continued on page 9)
News Clippings

(Continued from page 8)

on schools every year. They also said lawmakers could not use school money for other purposes. But, several legislators say, the fund created for the schools does not have enough money to satisfy the law that says schools must be given a certain amount every year.

In part because of the dual mandates from voters, Arizona is now facing a deficit of up to $2 billion over this year and next. Washington's shortage is about $1.6 billion, and Colorado has a $700 million hill to climb.

"It's a mess," said Panfilo Contreras, executive director of the Arizona School Boards Association. "What's happening now is we're getting our comeuppance for what we've been doing over the last 10 years."

Mr. Contreras says voters realized that voting to restrict taxes and revenue 10 years ago was a mistake, because schools and health facilities in the state fell apart. Now the voters are more educated, he said, and are trying to undo piecemeal what they did earlier.

Others have a different interpretation, saying voters are inconsistent.

So Arizona legislators continue meeting here, now in their third special session over the last year, trying to figure out exactly what the voters intended while having to make large, unpopular cuts. Nearly 60 percent of the budget cannot be touched, under orders from the people.

"We have become somewhat of a Bypass Legislature state," said Francie Noyes, a spokeswoman for Gov. Jane Dee Hull, a Republican. "We have very little flexibility, particularly in hard times, to make budget decisions because of all the demands from voter initiatives."