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Editorial | Letters

Give some of surplus back to taxpayers

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The state Constitution provides that in the event of a general fund surplus, the Legislature is given the choice of authorizing a tax refund or tax credit to the taxpayers of the state, or make a deposit into a “rainy day” fund (“State ends fiscal year with record \$1 billion surplus,” Star-Advertiser, Aug. 24).

Since the Legislature already appropriated \$200 million for the “rainy day” fund, the balance of \$800 million should be refunded to taxpayers of the state of Hawaii.

Dennis Kohara*Kaimuki***TRO for hospital law was right thing to do**

Circuit Judge Jeannette Castagnetti did the right thing by issuing a temporary restraining order against implementing Senate Bill 2077 (“Maui County hospitals law is blocked,” Star- Advertiser, Aug. 24).

Lawmakers were aware that this law would detrimentally affect the state Employees’ Retirement System. That is why the governor vetoed this bill.

The lawmakers went ahead and overrode his veto. What on earth were they thinking? Anything that affects retirees’ income after at least 25 years of faithful service to the city or state is just wrong.

Randy Perreira, executive director of the Hawaii Government Employees Association, says this package is most fair for his HGEA workers.

It's not fair to the ERS or its retirees. If the state needs money to fund this foolhardy idea, pay for it out of the "record \$1 billion surplus" that was front-page news Wednesday morning.

Dave Chabriel

Kailua

Brazil did fine job hosting Olympics

I want to congratulate Brazil for hosting the 2016 Olympic Games. Parabéns!

Although many media outlets chose to focus on negative aspects of the country leading up to the games, Brazilians were able to showcase its overwhelming beauty to millions. Having lived in Brazil myself for some time, I know firsthand that it is a truly remarkable place.

The people are warm and welcoming, much like in Hawaii, and the food is amazing. I was honored to be in Brazil during the 2014 FIFA World Cup so I had no doubt that Rio would be able to successfully host these games.

It seems that too often the media and people look forward to failure. This time, however, despite their issues, the people of Brazil were ready to host the millions of visitors and ensure they experienced the true culture and passion for life that is Brazilian.

James Logue

Nuuanu

Article on Title IX left out Patsy Mink

Jeré Longman is correct in his assessment of the rise of American women in sports as a direct result of Title IX ("Access due to Title IX brings medal success for U.S. women," Star-Advertiser, Aug. 23).

As a former president of U.S. Water Polo and a 16-year member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, I was able to see the rise in our women's teams after Title IX began to have its effect.

However, there was one missing aspect in the article. We need to thank our own U.S. Rep. Patsy Mink for Title IX legislation, as she was the driving force behind the bill, which is now named for her. We should never forget the legacy of Patsy Mink as we enjoy the U.S. women's achievements in the world of sports.

Ralph W. Hale

Kailua

Voter fraud potential actually very small

Cal Thomas is really just whining about the recent repeal of strict voter ID laws in Texas and Wisconsin, which judges noted were targeted at certain minority groups ("Unless bias can be proved, voter ID laws should stand," Star-Advertiser, Aug. 23).

Regarding actual voter fraud: The U.S. Department of Justice reported that out of 197 million votes cast in federal elections between 2002 and 2005, only 40 voters were indicted and 26 resulted in convictions (.00000013 percent). Also, for fraudulent voting to make a significant difference, it would require a large enough group of conspirators organized in some sort of mass fraud for a particular candidate on election day.

The fact is that 17 states have enacted new voting restrictions including roll-purging, ID requirements, and shortening and ending of absentee or mail-in voting. For example, Alabama closed 31 DMV/registration offices, including in every district having more than 75 percent black registered voters. Demographics affected by barriers to voting include minorities, immigrants, the poor and the elderly.

William E. Conti

Waikiki

Try voting in Hawaii without personal ID

Democrats like to rail against the 10 or so "backward" states that require some sort of ID to vote. But try voting here in Hawaii without showing a photo ID.

It does not matter whether it is the first time or the 20th time. Officially, an ID is requested, though not required, to prove you can vote.

Test that theory next time you vote in person. You will discover the de facto standard is that you must show an ID.

Charles Kerr

Kalama Valley

Road repaving work lacks coordination

After enduring the obstacle course and traffic jams in Liliha for over a year, I totally disagree with Jesse Broder Van Dyke's letter describing a glowing smooth future for Beretania Street ("Shallow utilities ran interference," Star-Advertiser, Letters, Aug. 19).

The reason is simple. The utility contractors seem incapable of a coordinated approach, so various areas get dug up and re-covered over and over again.

The result, until final paving, is a washboard surface capable of breaking the best suspension on any vehicle.

Is it possible to plan ahead?

Paul Tyksinski

Kailua