

THE

# EDUCATION FOCUS

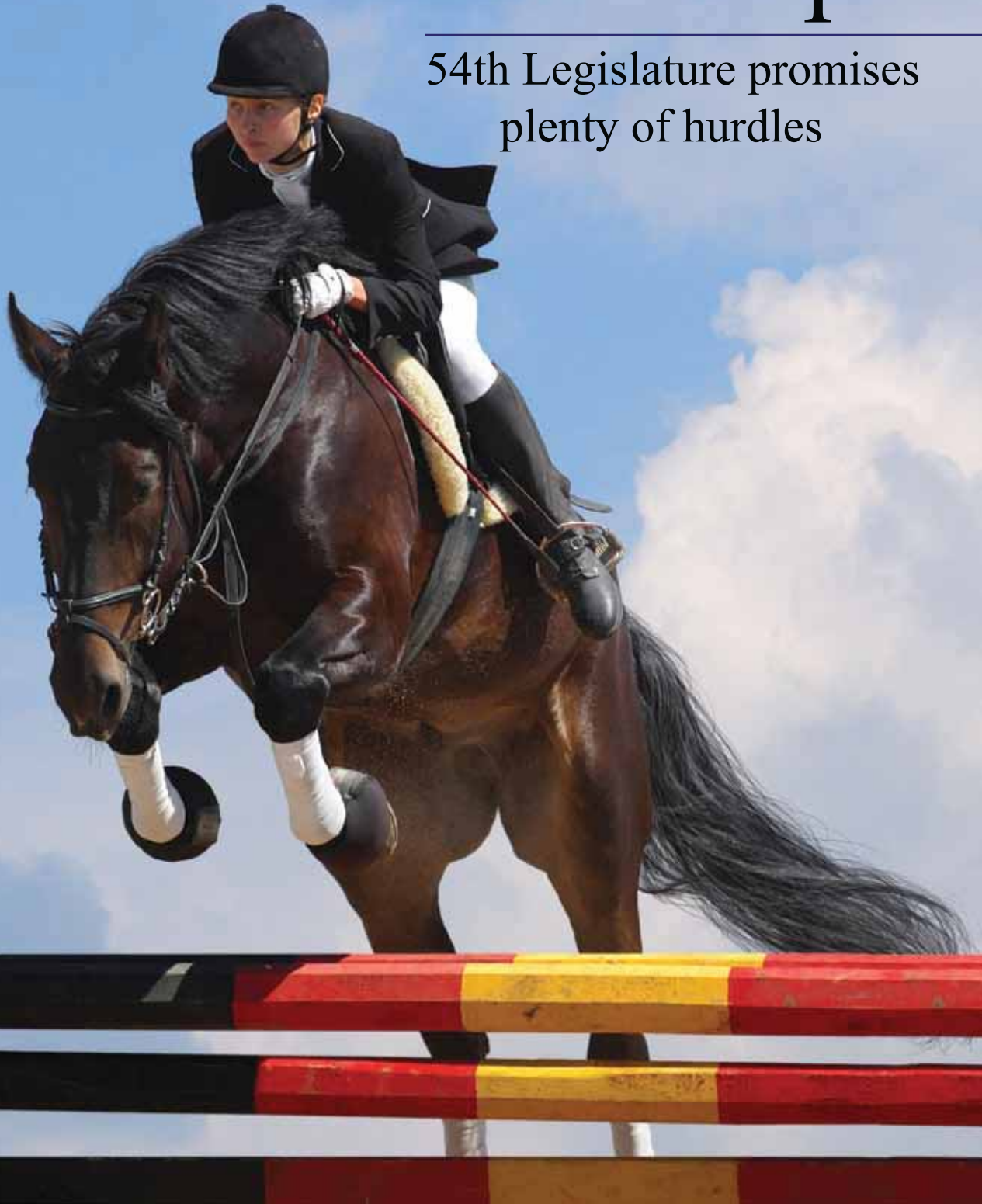
FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE OKLAHOMA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

February 2013



## Saddle up!

54th Legislature promises  
plenty of hurdles



# Legislative preview

The 54th Oklahoma Legislature convenes February 4 and education promises to be a hot topic. This issue gives you a look at what to expect and how to stay connected to the process with your professional association.

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## Join the conversation with OEA!



On Facebook –

- Oklahoma Education Association
- Student Oklahoma Education Association
- Oklahomans for Great Public Schools

On Twitter –

- [twitter.com/okea](https://twitter.com/okea)

## Need help? Call us.

Do you need assistance with a personnel matter? Would you like OEA to bring top-notch professional development to your building? Does your Association need organizing help? Call your regional office and ask for help, or visit [okea.org](http://okea.org) for details on our programs and services.

### Oklahoma City Metro, Southeast and Southwest Teams

800/522-8091 or 405/528-7785

### Northeast and Tulsa Metro Teams

800/331-5143 or 918/665-2282

### Northwest Team

800/439-0393 or 580/256-0071

# The Education Focus

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## Join today!

Membership in the OEA provides security, symbolizes professionalism and brings with it a wealth of benefits.

Visit [okea.org](http://okea.org)

for more information, and call 800/522-8091 to find out how to join today.



# Education needs you to take a role

*By Linda Hampton  
OEA President*

Ah, 2013! It began with January, the month which signals new beginnings – a new year, new resolutions and, for schools, a new semester. As with all new beginnings, there's always that encouraging feeling of hope and the resolution that we will make a difference.

Now it's February and another new beginning – the 2013 Legislative session. From February 4 to May 31, decisions will be made which will impact our students, public education, how our schools operate and how we are treated as professionals.

There will be decisions which are too important for us to remain silent about – discussions regarding education funding, salaries, standards and accountability, deregulations, payroll deductions and a host of other issues. With each vote there is the potential to change your profession either for the good or for bad.

This is the time of year that we need you to be prepared to respond. You are the experts about public education. Who better than you to tell what is needed in our schools, how our students will be impacted by proposed legislation, or why we need more funding for common education?

OEA's role will be to keep you informed and represented. OEA will have staff at the Capitol to keep you up-to-date. Each week we send our electronic newsletter, the OEA Legislative Update, to home email addresses. We also post real-time updates from committee meetings and debates on the House and Senate floors on our Facebook page and Twitter profile. If we don't have your home email, please send it to Erin

Madden at [emadden@okea.org](mailto:emadden@okea.org).

Your role will be to take a brief time each day or so to read our messages. If there is an issue that you have an opinion about please be willing to write, e-mail or call your representative or senator. We are a phone call or e-mail away if you need any help in doing this. We need you to make phone calls when we see a need to 'flood' the Capitol with teacher and support professional voices.

Finally, come spend a day at the Capitol. Our staff will brief you about the issues and see that you are completely armed with the information you need before you go. We know you are busy, but this is the



*President Linda Hampton*

time of year that we have to have our thousands of voices heard.

Together we can make a difference for public education, our students and our profession. Our voices can make that difference a positive one.

Thanks for all you do!

## **Registration deadline nears**

Friday, February 8 is the registration and lodging deadline for the OEA Advocacy Conference, which is set for February 15-16 at Oklahoma City's Marriott Waterford Hotel.

Conference registration is \$35 per person for active certified members and \$15 for education support professional members. The registration fee covers continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday the 16th as well as all conference materials.

Allison Beck, deputy director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for National and International Programs, will provide the keynote address on Saturday morning, February 16. She replaces her colleague, FMCS Deputy Director Scot Beckenbaugh, who had to cancel his planned appearance at the conference.

Breakout session topics will include a session on how to respond to the new evaluation system and personal development plans (PDP), school finance and basic bargaining.

Participants can find the online registration link on the OEA's homepage, [okea.org](http://okea.org).

The Waterford has set aside a block of rooms for Advocacy Conference participants at the special per night rate of \$82 (plus tax), single or double occupancy. Conference participants should call the Waterford directly at 800/228-9290 or 405/848-4782. Mention that you want the "OEA special rate" when reserving rooms for the conference. The rate is good only for reservations made by Friday, February 8.

For more information, contact Melanie Engh at [mengh@okea.org](mailto:mengh@okea.org), 800/522-8091 or 405/528-7785.



# Long and winding road

## *Bills have several hurdles to clear before becoming law*

*By Amanda Ewing  
OEA Chief Lobbyist*

As February arrives so does Oklahoma's 54th legislative session, which officially begins on Monday, February 4. At noon on that day, Gov. Mary Fallin gives her State of the State address, outlining her priorities for the coming year. The speech often guides the priorities of the Legislature and can be an indication of what types of bills or which issues and agencies will receive the greatest focus.

By that day, each of the nearly 2,500 bills authored this session will have either been assigned to a committee based on their subject, or will have failed to make it past

that first hurdle in the process and will likely remain dormant for the remainder of session.

There are a number of steps a bill must maneuver before the end of the session to become law. The staff of OEA's Legislative and Political Organizing Center (LPO) follows all education-related measures through every step of the process, and keep our members up-to-date on their progress.

Once a bill is assigned to a committee, the chair has the option of whether to give it a hearing. This is often the first opportunity for advocacy on a bill. If, for instance, a bill OEA feels strongly about has been assigned to the House Common Education Committee, we contact committee chair Rep. Ann Coody (R, Lawton) and ask that she allow the bill to be heard in committee. If she agrees, we begin to meet with committee members to educate them on the bill and advocate for a "Do Pass" vote upon its consideration.

If it seems as though we may not have the necessary votes, that's when we call on OEA's greatest asset: our members. A legislator's committee vote can often be swayed by a friendly request from several of his or her own constituents. Near the end of February, any House bill must have passed out of a House committee – and Senate bills out of Senate committees – in order to be eligible for a hearing on the floor of the respective house.

Passing out of committee doesn't guarantee our bill will be heard on the floor. Keeping a bill moving along requires diligent advocacy at every step of the process. The majority floor leader decides which of the eligible bills are actually considered for a full vote. If we successfully acquire her or his consent, we begin contacting large numbers of legislators to gauge how much support the bill has, educate those who might be willing to vote in our favor, and again call on OEA's members to tell your personal legislators why you hope you'll have their support.

If all that effort is successful, a majority of legislators will vote in favor of the bill by March 14, the deadline for a bill to pass out of its house of origin. Then, it's on to the other side of the building, where House bills are heard in the Senate and vice versa.

Once again, we'll work to get a bill assigned to committee, get it a hearing, passed in committee, and passed on the floor of the house. By April 25, a bill must have passed both the full House and Senate. If a bill is amended in one house but not the other, or different versions pass each house, either the house of origin must consent to accept the new version, or the bill goes to conference committee where members of both houses will work to compromise on a final version.

*Continued on the next page*



Photo by Doug Folks

# Gentry makes time to meet legislators

By Kandis West

**P**am Gentry doesn't get extra hours in the day. The unfunded mandates and extra demands placed on teachers in the last few years affect her too. However, she makes time to communicate regularly with her legislators – no excuses.

"I go visit my legislators 3 or 4 times a year at the Capitol. I don't make an appointment. I just drop by. I want them to know that education simply needs more funding," said Gentry, a first grade teacher at Sooner Rose Elementary and a member of Mid-Del ACT.

Gentry has been teaching for 32 years and her main message to the legislators is that unfunded mandates have to stop.

"When they make mandates, they need to fund them. They left no funding for things like Common Core. I understand the need to change, but we are investing time and money we don't have to meet mandates we aren't ready for," Gentry said.

The veteran teacher said she doesn't stop with visits to her legislators.

"I call and leave messages, email them and speak with their assistants about education issues and what's going on in my classroom," Gentry said.

Her concerns about decreasing education funding in Oklahoma are confirmed in national studies. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, Oklahoma has suffered the third largest cuts in the country to student spending. Per-pupil expenditures have been cut nearly 21 percent since 2008. That's about \$300 million

from 2008 to 2012.

Gentry says while many important programs have been eliminated because of budget cuts, she would like to see the statewide mentoring program restored.

"New teachers need help. They are not getting the help they need and they don't even know who to ask. Veteran teachers are leaving and there is no one to transfer that knowledge," she said.

In fact, new teachers are leaving the profession just as fast as baby boomers are retiring. According to the New Teacher Center, a national think tank and policy institute, more than half of all new teachers leave the profession citing a lack of support as the main reason.

"We need to be there for our new teachers and it takes funding to do it," Gentry said.

Although she sometimes questions whether her communication with legislators is truly making a difference, Gentry says she feels like it is her duty as a teacher and an American citizen to advocate for her children and public education – the real future of this nation.



Mid-Del's Pam Gentry

The resulting conference report is sent back to both floors for a final vote. Then we reach the final obstacle, at which point we make every effort to ensure the governor signs the bill into law before *sine die* on May 31, which is the constitutionally proscribed final day of session.

As you can see, ushering a single piece of legislation through the legislative process means successfully navigating dozens of potential pitfalls. And each bill may require your engagement and participation several times in the four months of session.

Sometimes, it takes a bill more than a year to become law. For some ideas, simply making it past several of those hurdles can be a success. The next year we can generally count on the support of those same legislators and committees and can work to push it further through the process.

As you can see, our system of government wasn't designed to make it easy for any person to get any law passed on a whim!

Leadership in both houses and the governor have ex-

**See "De-reg, due process" on Page 11**

## OEA plans weekly lobby days

When it comes to influencing the legislative process, nothing is more effective than face-to-face conversations with your legislators. OEA has a strong tradition of helping its members visit with legislators, but this session the Association is taking a slightly different approach by hosting weekly OEA Days at the Capitol.

Each week, LPO staff will arrange meetings, lunches and other capitol activities between a small group of members and their legislators.

"Weekly lobby days will allow us to target certain legislators and specific topics while also providing a constant voice of education at the capitol throughout the session," said OEA President Linda Hampton.

Members need to register to participate in a Weekly Day at the Capitol by filling out a simple form, which can be accessed at [okea.org/legislative/oea-day-at-the-capitol](http://okea.org/legislative/oea-day-at-the-capitol). Once completed, fax the form to 405/524-0350 or mail to the OEA LPO Center, PO Box 18485, Okla. City, OK 73154.

# School funding, pay raises top OEA's 2013 Legislative Agenda

**R**estoring funding cuts to the Oklahoma schools and pay raises for certified and support employees top the Oklahoma Education Association's 2013 Legislative Agenda.

The document serves as a guide for the Association's work during the legislative session. OEA's annual legislative agenda is developed by the Legislative Committee and submitted to the Board of directors for approval.

## Education Funding

1. Restore funding cuts to Common Education (total restoration approximately \$300 million).
2. Maintain current tax structure to ensure proper education funding (anti-tax cuts).
3. Request an interim study regarding the Education Lottery funds in order to provide transparency on funding allocation.

## Recruitment and Retention – Quality Teachers and Support Professionals

1. Increase teacher salaries by \$3,000 across the board.
2. Provide a 20% increase to the state minimum salary lanes for higher level degrees.
3. Increase education support professional salaries by \$1,500 across the board.
4. Provide National Board Certified Teachers an annual \$5,000 salary increase.
5. Provide previously committed funding for National Board Certified

Teacher scholarship program.

6. Provide every teacher a \$500 allocation for supplies.

## School Culture

1. Provide alternative school settings to help deal with chronic classroom discipline issues at all grade levels.
2. Provide counseling and other strategies to eliminate bullying and change disruptive and violent behavior.

## Classroom Instruction – Standards and Accountability

1. Complete the student data tracking system designed to inform instruction and provide needed data to teachers and other school personnel regarding the instructor's and school's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Implement a student evaluation and testing system that focuses on the growth of individual student learning and can be also used to inform instruction.
3. Require virtual education schools to follow the same rules

## OEA Legislative Committee

**Rene Allen**, Putnam City, Committee Chair

**Linda Ogle**, McLoud, Board Liaison

**Selma Belts**, Panhandle State University, Student OEA representative

**Maschelle Brakefield**, Yukon

**Lisa Cobb**, Seminole

**Teri Gray**, Choctaw-Nicoma Park

**Patti Green**, Ardmore

**Lawrence Lane**, Checotah

**Lynn Stockley**, Tulsa

**Cristi Thomson**, Hilldale

**John Waldron**, Tulsa

**Amanda Ewing**, Associate

Executive Director,

Legislative and Political

Organizing Center, Staff

Liaison

and be held to the same standards as public schools.

4. A-F remedy (a change in rules or legislation).
5. Delay implementation of Teacher Leader Effectiveness by two years.
6. Eliminate moratorium regarding class size requirements. Require class sizes that are small enough to allow for the individual attention students need and provide support professional assistance to all classes that exceed state limits.



*A mural in the Oklahoma State Capitol rotunda. (Photo by Doug Folks.)*



# Stay connected for the latest info

Oklahoma's legislature has only four months each year to conduct its business. The session opens on the first Monday of February and must adjourn by the last Friday of May. That means things happen very fast and if you aren't connected, you just might miss something.

The Oklahoma Education Association helps you stay up on the latest developments of education legislation through different channels. Here is how you can stay connected:

## **Legislative Updates and Alerts**

– At least weekly during the session (and throughout the year as news happens) we send an e-newsletter to home email addresses and post the update in the Members Only section of our website, okea.org. When your immediate involvement is needed to push for or against an issue, we'll send a Legislative Alert with our message and links to your legislators.

If you aren't receiving Legislative Updates and Alerts and would like to, send your home email address to Erin Madden at [emadden@okea.org](mailto:emadden@okea.org) and ask to start receiving the Legislative Update.

**Members Only Section** – All updates and alerts are posted in this section of our website. In addition,

we list OEA's priority bills and post exclusive analysis of hot issues, all intended for our members' eyes only.

To register for this section, click the green Members Only button at the top the okea.org home page. You will need your OEA ID number to register the first time. It is located on your current OEA membership card and on any mail you receive from the NEA. (Call us at 800/822-8091 and we'll look it up for you). As you register, you will choose your own username and password.

**Facebook** – OEA's Facebook page is never more active than during the legislative session. Members discuss specific issues and compare notes of what their legislators are talking about at home. We also post real-time comments on the page from committee meetings and from the gallery of the Senate or House during debate.

**Twitter** – Another social media outlet (@okea) where we post about current legislation and issues throughout the year.

**Text messages** – On occasion, we need members to call their legislators as quickly as they can. For this purpose, we send texts to members who have specifically opted into the service. We realize that most teachers are not allowed to have phones out and turned on during class time, but if you check message during lunch or at the end of the school day, you should be able to participate.

It's free to register, but normal text rates for your cell phone plan will apply. We will be able to add names to the texting program beginning in late February. To sign up, email Erin ([emadden@okea.org](mailto:emadden@okea.org)) and ask to join the OEA Legislative Texting program.

## **Contact info for your legislators**

**State Senate**, 405/524-0126, [www.oksenate.gov](http://www.oksenate.gov)

**State House of Representatives**, 405/521-2711 or 800/522-8502, [www.okhouse.gov](http://www.okhouse.gov)

**Governor Mary Fallin** – [www.ok.gov/governor](http://www.ok.gov/governor)

For individual legislator email addresses, visit [okea.org/legislative](http://okea.org/legislative) and click on "Contact Your State Legislators."

## **Ewing joins OEA's LPO Center**

Amanda Ewing has joined the Oklahoma Education Association as associate executive director for the Legislative and Political Organizing Center. She will manage OEA's lobbying efforts at the State Capitol.

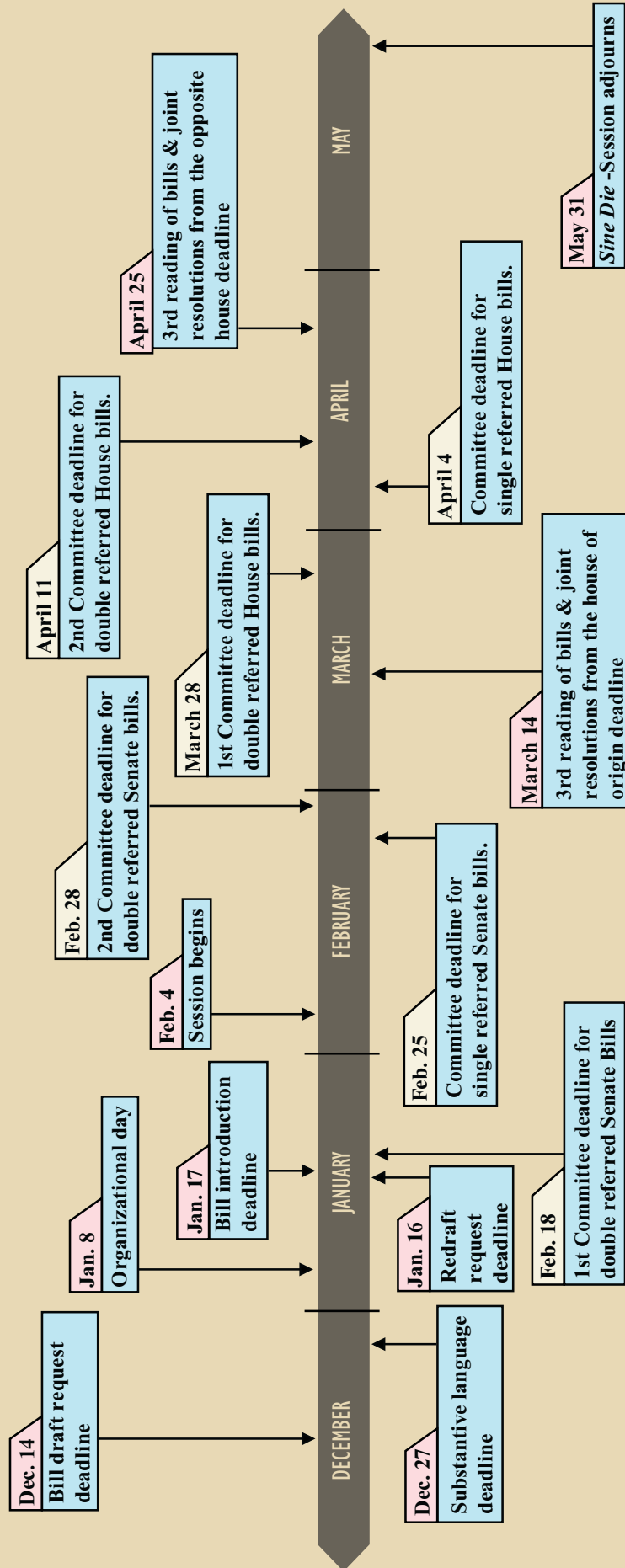
Ewing comes to the OEA after serving as the executive director and lobbyist for the Oklahoma Corrections Professionals, a nonprofit association representing corrections employees. She previously worked as general counsel and program director at the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts. She also worked in civil litigation for the Edmonds Cole Law Firm in Oklahoma City.

A native of Lexington, Ewing received a bachelor's in criminology from the University of Oklahoma in 2003 and a Juris Doctorate from Hastings College of Law at the University of California in 2006. She is a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association.



*Amanda Ewing*

# 2013 Legislative Timeline



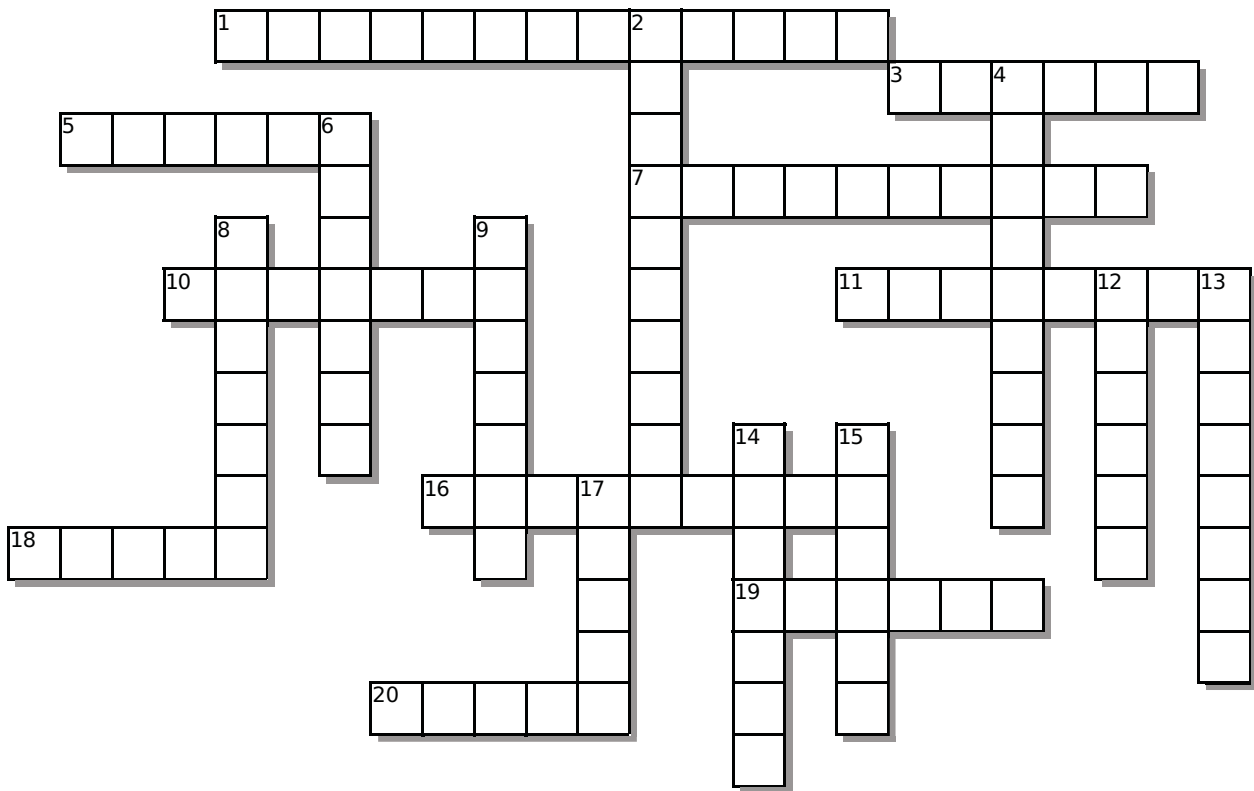
**Legend**

- Full legislature dates
- Senate committee dates

House committee deadlines were not available at press time, but are expected to be similar to Senate deadlines.



# Test Your Legislative Knowledge!



## ACROSS

- 1 a legislative authorization for the expenditure of funds for a specific purpose
- 3 required number of members present to transact business
- 5 grouping of members for a common interest
- 7 when a measure is presented to the Governor
- 10 a bill or resolution
- 11 to take up a motion for action
- 16 the process by which a measure becomes law
- 18 relinquish the floor to another member to speak
- 19 a proposal offered by a member for action
- 20 area of the chamber reserved for members

## DOWN

- 2 any alteration to a proposed bill
- 4 review of state agencies
- 6 period that the legislature meets
- 8 annulment to a previous action
- 9 committee meetings to get testimony on legislation
- 12 discussion according to parliamentary rules
- 13 send back to committee
- 14 amendments that are relative to a measure
- 15 location of a measure in the legislative process
- 17 presiding officer of a committee or chamber

*Answers on Page 10*

# Candidate filing opens February 1

**F**ive positions on the Oklahoma Education Association Board of Directors are open for candidates in this year's Association elections. Filing is open February 1-15 for those spots as well as delegate at-large spots to the OEA Delegate Assembly and the NEA Representative Assembly.

The elections, to be held in March, will be conducted with online voting, which will be accessible from our home page at [okea.org](http://okea.org).

The OEA Board of Directors is designed to represent members at the grassroots level. Each zone is made up of at least 1,000 Association members who elect their representative on the board. The newly elected Zone Directors will take office on July 7.

At-large delegates to the Delegate Assembly and NEA RA will serve at this year's meetings. The OEA annual meeting is April 26-27 at the Reed Conference Center in Midwest City and the RA is set for July 1-6 in Atlanta, Ga.

Filing forms are available at [okea.org](http://okea.org).

org, OEA Headquarters in Oklahoma City or at the OEA regional office in Tulsa.

For more information on the elections or filing forms, contact Rheta Kennedy at 800/522-8091, 405/528-7785 or [rkennedy@okea.org](mailto:rkennedy@okea.org).

## Zone Director positions

All five open OEA Board positions are for three-year terms that expire in 2016. These board members will serve as NEA Delegates in 2014 and 2015.

**Southwest C**, representing Bryan, Carter, Garvin, Grady, Jefferson, Love, Marshall and Stephens Counties.

**Southeast A**, representing Lincoln, Murray, Pontotoc, Pottawatomie and Seminole Counties.

**Tulsa Metro C**, representing Creek and Tulsa Counties.

**Northwest C**, representing Blaine, Canadian and Kingfisher Counties.

**Northeast B**, representing Osage, Pawnee, Rogers, Wagoner and Washington Counties.

## Statewide Openings

### Delegate Assembly Positions

OEA/NEA Retired Delegate(s)-at-Large to OEA/DA.

OEA Administrator Delegate(s)-at-Large to OEA/DA.

OEA Ethnic Minority Delegate(s)-at-Large to OEA/DA.

*(Should the Bylaws requirement in this election category be met by local associations, no OEA Ethnic Minority Delegates-At-Large will be seated.)*

### NEA Representative Assembly Positions

NEA Retired Delegate(s)-at-Large to the NEA/RA (successor delegates only).

## Regional Positions Open

Category I Delegates-at-Large, 2013 NEA Representative Assembly. (The zones and exact number of delegates involved in this election were not determined by press time. This information will be posted in the Election Filing Forms section of the Local Association Forms page on [okea.org](http://okea.org) by February 1.

# Poster contest sparks creativity

Reading can paint a vivid picture in our minds, and Oklahoma students annually share their creativity in the Oklahoma Education Association's Read Across America poster contest.

Entries for the contest are due by Monday, March 4. First place in each division will receive a \$75 VISA gift card, second place will receive a \$50 VISA gift card, and honorable mention winners will receive a certificate.

The rules are simple – students should draw a picture inspired by a favorite book. The winners will be featured in the April-May issue of the *Education Focus* and on our website, [okea.org](http://okea.org).

- All students of OEA members are eligible to enter the contest.

- Pictures will be judged on creativity, use of color and content.

- Entries must be submitted on white, unlined 8 ½ x 11 paper. DO NOT FOLD.

- On the back of each entry, list the book that inspired the drawing, student's name, age, grade, name of school and teacher, and a school phone number.

- First, second and honorable mention awards will be chosen in four categories: kindergarten through 2nd grade; 3rd -5th grade; 6th-8th grade; and 9th-12th grade.

- All entries will become the property of the OEA and must meet all contest rules to be eligible for prizes.

- All entries must be received by Monday, March 5. Mail them to OEA Focus on Reading, PO Box 18485, Okla. City, OK 73154; or hand-deliver over overnight entries to OEA Headquarters at 323 E. Madison, Okla. City, OK, 73105.

- Late entries or entries from non-OEA members will not be judged.

For more information, contact Editor Doug Folks at 800/522-8091, 405/528-7785, or [dfolks@okea.org](mailto:dfolks@okea.org).

# Easy money

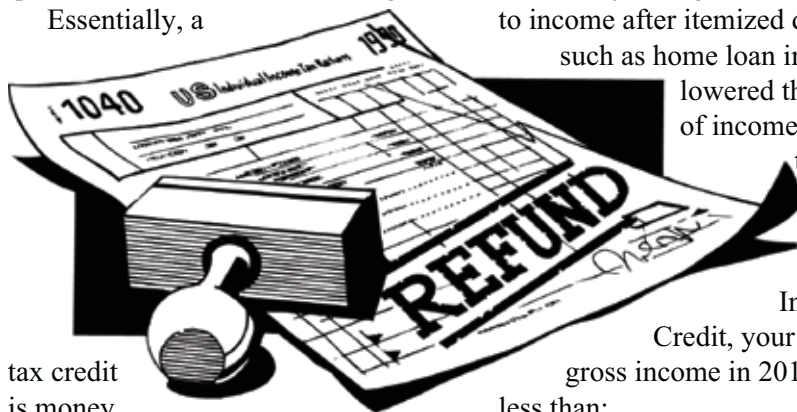
## Are you taking advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit?

By John Mahoney

Associate General Counsel

According to Internal Revenue Service estimates, 20 percent of eligible taxpayers fail to take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit. In 2011, the average credit received by Oklahomans who qualified was \$2,337. No kidding.

Essentially, a



tax credit is money

deducted from the amount a taxpayer owes in taxes as opposed to a tax deduction which merely reduces the amount of income subject to taxation. The earned income tax credit applies to money received through personal effort such as salary or wages.

The Earned Income Tax Credit is meant to assist individuals or couples with moderate incomes, especially those with children. Reportedly, the idea came from economists who suggested it would help people offset the cost of necessities.

Both federal and Oklahoma law provide for an earned income credit. The Oklahoma credit is calculated as five percent of the taxpayer's federal credit. These earned income tax credits are also "refundable" credits. This means that if the amount of the credit is greater than the taxes owed, the government will actually pay the difference to you.

The amount of credit varies with income and number of dependents. To be eligible, your earned income and adjusted gross income need to be within certain ranges. Gross income is other sources of money in addition to pay, such as investment income or interest you earn in a bank account. Adjusted gross income refers to income after itemized deductions, such as home loan interest, have

lowered the amount of income subject to taxation.

To qualify for the Earned Income Tax

Credit, your adjusted gross income in 2012 must be less than:

- \$45,060 single or \$50,270 married filing jointly, with three or more qualifying children
- \$41,952 single or \$47,162 married filing jointly, with two qualifying children
- \$36,920 single or \$42,130 married filing jointly, with one qualifying child



John Mahoney

- \$13,980 single or \$19,190 married filing jointly, with no qualifying children

Also, for those with college-age children, other credits may be available such as the Lifetime Learning Credit and the American Opportunity Tax Credit, which is scheduled to expire after the 2012 tax year. To find out more visit the IRS website at [www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html).

For free assistance in tax return preparation, contact the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. VITA offers tax preparation assistance by IRS-certified volunteers to people with annual incomes of \$50,000 or less. To find the VITA site nearest you, call 800/906-9887.

*This article is dedicated to my friend Jeff Romine, CPA, fellow lawyer and one fine human being.*

### Most of your dues are tax deductible

Members who itemize deductions and meet the two percent requirement for additional miscellaneous deductions are able to deduct most of their membership dues.

Following is a chart of how much can be deducted (all but the 8.2 percent attributed to lobbying). Members should also check with their local associations for the amount of non-deductible local

dues spent on lobbying.

For additional help, contact your tax professional.

Full-time active certified	\$430.70
Halftime active certified	\$225.35
Full-time active support	\$233.31
Halftime active support	\$126.90
Substitute	\$140.35
Reserve certified	\$205.35
Reserve support	\$106.67



# No simple answers

## Improving school safety will require multi-pronged approach

By Doug Folks

The conversation about gun violence and school safety has risen sharply in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook tragedy. Many people from all walks of life have offered what they believe to be quick fixes, and the debate on whether there should be guns in the classroom has passionate supporters on both sides.

Legislators have filed 39 bills concerning guns and schools for the coming legislative session. For instance, State Rep. Mark McCullough is offering HB 1062, which would allow teachers and administrators to carry a firearm at school if they complete a basic police academy course for reserve deputies and are approved by their local school board.

In several interviews with the media since McCullough's announcement, OEA President Linda Hampton and Vice President Alicia Priest have said the OEA believes teachers should not be saddled with that type of responsibility.

"No teacher ever became a teacher to carry a gun," said Hampton. "Our teachers have more than enough to do. They shouldn't have to worry about taking on the role of law enforcement."

Schools are a microcosm of America. Too often community violence flows onto our school campuses. And it will continue until adults and leaders in our society address the issues, everyone has a role to play, both in and out of the classroom.

The solution, Hampton says, is not simple and many factors have to be considered to improve school safety.

"We must not only take steps to respond to gun violence, but we also must have meaningful action to prevent gun violence, including greater focus on bullying prevention. We must make a commitment to invest in the mental health of our school children. Our counselors need to be allowed more time to work with children one-on-one," she said.

The National Education Association conducted polling of its members in mid-January and found that 68 percent oppose a proposal that would allow teachers and other school employees to receive firearms training and carry firearms in schools. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) support stronger laws to prevent gun violence and 90 percent favor background checks before people can buy guns at



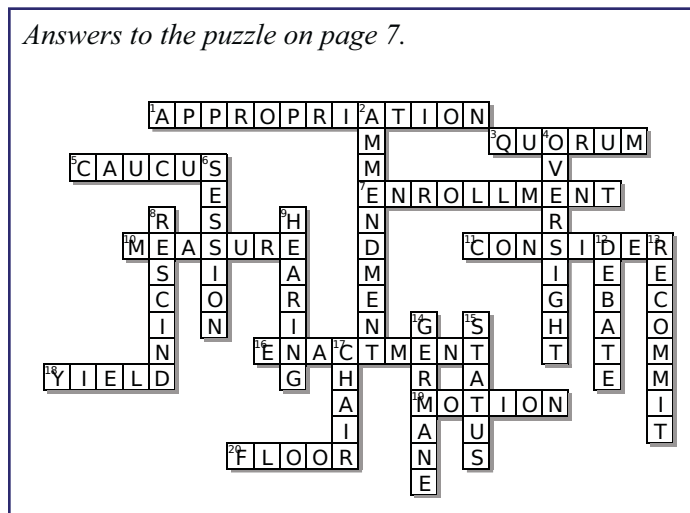
gun shows or from other private sellers.

In early January, NEA President Dennis Van Roekel sent an eight-page letter to Vice President Joe Biden offering policy ideas to the Administration's efforts to address issues brought to light after the shooting in Newtown, Ct.

You can read more results from the NEA Poll at [www.nea.org/home/54056.htm/](http://www.nea.org/home/54056.htm/), and you can see Van Roekel's letter to Biden at [www.nea.org/home/54026.htm](http://www.nea.org/home/54026.htm).

What do you think the answer is to safer schools? Join the discussion on OEA's Facebook page.

Answers to the puzzle on page 7.



# Oklahoma ranks 9th in number of NBCTs

Oklahoma's ranks of National Board Certified teachers grew by 73 professionals with the announcement of the Class of 2012, according to results released in early January by the sponsoring National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

In addition, 36 Oklahoma NBCTs renewed their certifications in 2012. While the number of new NBCTs was fewer than in recent years, Oklahoma remains ninth nationally with 3,056 total NBCTs.

Nationally, 4,980 teachers made up the Class of 2012, bringing the total number of NBCTs to 102,236.

New findings from Harvard University's Center for Education Policy Research affirm the strong positive impact of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs)

in the classroom. A recent report by Harvard's Strategic Data Project on the nation's second-largest school district found that, on average, NBCTs in Los Angeles public schools significantly outperformed peers with the same level of experience.

A nearly identical level of NBCT success in advancing student performance was measured in a study last year – also by Harvard's Strategic Data Project – in Georgia's Gwinnett County Public Schools. Both studies echo a 2008 national study by the National Research Council, which found that students taught by National Board Certified Teachers score better on achievement tests than students whose teachers are not Board certified.

## OEA members in the NBPTS Class of 2012

### Newly Certified

**Bartlesville** – Kristin Flick, Wayside El

**Broken Arrow** – Melinda Schanck, Leisure Park El;  
Charlene Vogel, Hoover El

**Comanche** – Christopher Dobbins, Comanche MS

**Guthrie** – Marsha Todd, Central El

**Heavener** – Matthew Houston, Heavener El

**Jenks** – Shari Stone-Fredericks, Jenks MS

**Lawton** – Susan Hohstadt, Whittier El; Mary Kwneda,  
Eisenhower HS; Erin Mull, Pat Henry El

**Lexington** – Sherri Bonner, Lexington El

**Norman** – Janet Whitworth, Instructional Service Center

**Oklahoma City** – Angela Sholar, Prairie Vale El

**Okay** – Stephanie Lomax, Okay El

**Peavine** – Patricia Goldman, Peavine El

**Pryor** – Janet Green, Lincoln El

**Putnam City** – Shelly Thompson, Putnam City HS

**Sand Springs** – Chasity Tedeschi, Clyde Boyd MS

**Tahlequah** – Heather Willis, Tahlequah HS

**Tulsa** – Carla Lopez-English, Centennial MS; Melissa Menagh, Celia Clinton EL; Robyn Osman, Eliot EL; Lisa Wrest, Celia Clinton EL

**Skiatook** – Barbara Bardin, Skiatook HS

**Union** – Susan Henderson, Boevers EL

### Renewed Certification

**Broken Arrow** – Rebecca King, Highland Park EL

**Catoosa** – Connie Wilsey, Helen Paul Learning Center

**Edmond** – Debbie Reichert, Memorial HS

**El Reno** – Karen Jennings, El Reno HS; Julie True, El Reno HS

**Justus-Tiawah** – Jennifer Admire, North Campus

**Midwest City-Del City** – Wendi Ramsey, Townsend EL; Tamara Woodring, Highland Park EL

**Norman** – Glenda Cook, Monroe EL; John Nolan, Norman North HS

**Piedmont** – Amy Bixler, Northwood El

**Wilburton** – Lisa Baker, Wilburton HS

## De-reg, due process expected again this session

### *Continued from Page 3*

pressed that education will be a primary focus in 2013. We in the LPO Center are optimistic that it will be a good session, but not without significant challenges.

There are many proposed bills to further deregulate public schools and expand the scope of charters. There are bills to erode due process for teachers and support professionals and take away voluntary payroll deduction for employee associations all together.

We will be grappling with many tough issues, such as how to improve the A-F grading system, trying to delay the

implementation of TLE until a clearly defined system is in place with time to test it before it takes effect, and the many bills aiming to protect our citizens from gun violence.

OEA's efforts with respect to funding such as an increase in teacher and ESP pay, appropriations for classroom supplies, and an overall increase in education funding will be of the utmost importance. OEA staff will work to provide you every opportunity to be informed and participate in this process.

With a strong, united effort, we look forward to a successful 54th session of the Oklahoma Legislature.

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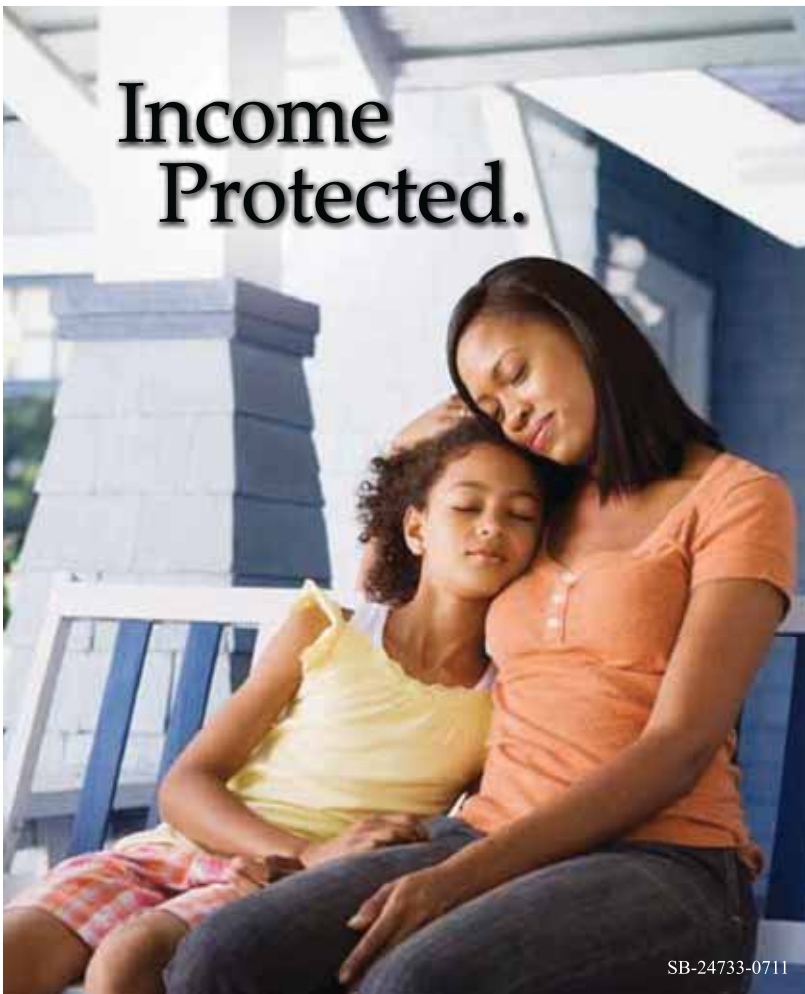
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