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# OPINION

To Build A Better World, Start In Your Own Community

## EDITORIAL

# Elect Suthers attorney general

John W. Suthers has a remarkably strong professional background that should be a major factor in persuading Colorado voters to elect him to a full four-year term as Colorado's attorney general.

Suthers has held the office since January of 2005 following his appointment to the post by the governor and confirmation by the state Senate.

As attorney general, Suthers has the responsibility of representing the state as a whole and state agencies, boards and commissions.

Suthers, in addition to his public service in government, has a background as a civic volunteer. He is a former U.S. attorney for Colorado having been unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate. He is a former executive director of the Colorado Department of Corrections and is a former elected district attorney in Colorado Springs.

Previously, he had significant experience in the private practice of law.

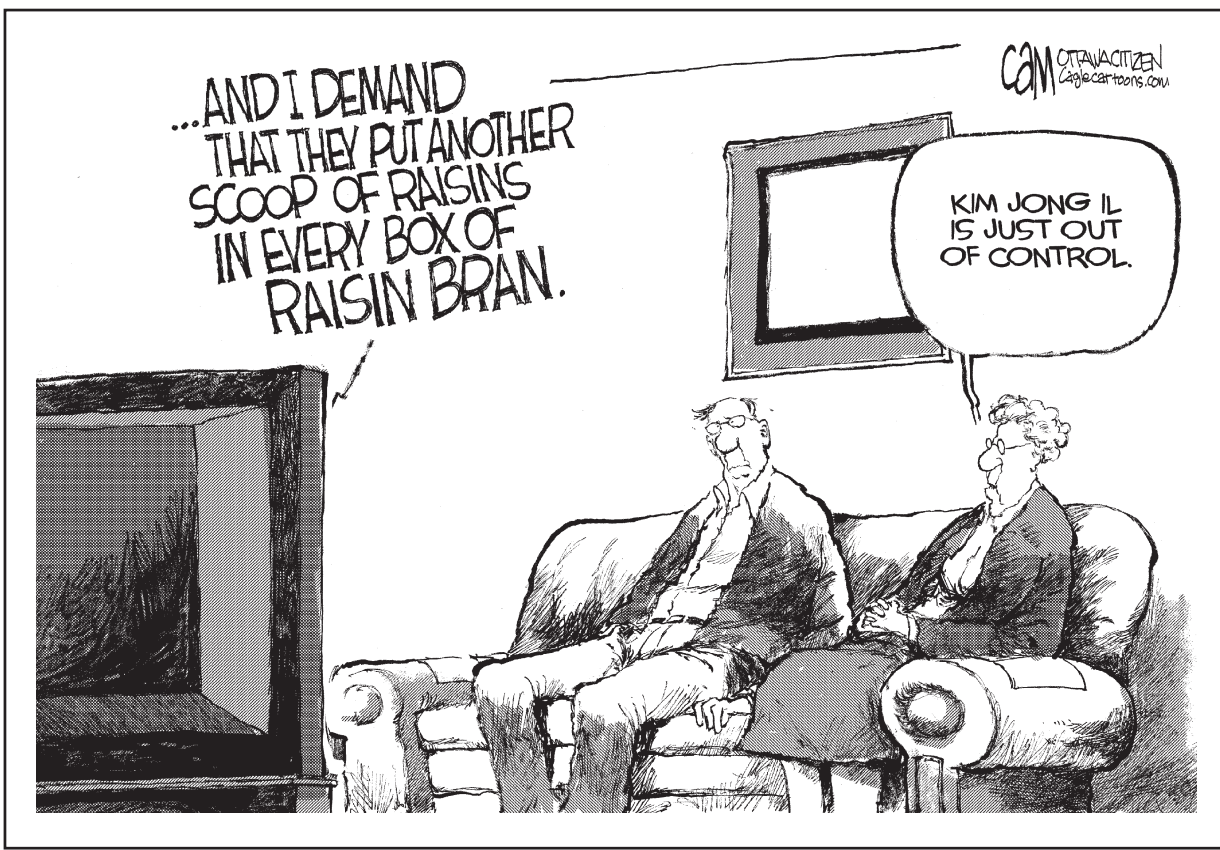
Suthers has a background in fighting consumer fraud and white-collar crime. Suthers, a Republican, in appealing for voter support, has written the following: "... my office has done good work in pursuing criminals who defraud the public, in deterring scams on the elderly and I protecting Colorado's water and other natural resources for the benefit of future generations. I've also led legislative efforts to protect children from Internet predators, to strengthen our laws against sexually violent predators and to deter mortgage and foreclosure fraud."

The attorney general wants to continue in office to help deter illegal immigration and to "fight the methamphetamine scourge."

Democrat Fern O'Brien of Gunbarrel also has a healthy record as a civic volunteer. She is in private legal practice with a Boulder firm and her emphasis in that role is on business, real estate and finance law.

Libertarian Dwight K. Harding of Longmont, a wry observer of current events, too, has done his share of community work. While it is unlikely that Harding would be elected, he is among the highest vote-getters in his party judging from past performance at the polls. He feels there is far too much government.

Based on his knowledge of the state and his successful past performance in a variety of important positions, voters should elect John Suthers as Colorado attorney general.



# Skid row's PR problem

By **Patt Morrison**  
*Los Angeles Times*

Suddenly, finally, there's some real money finding its way to the homeless.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors — the Five Little Kings — has ponied up \$80 million for the cause. The Bush administration, which has been busily creating homelessness in Baghdad, has put another billion or so into the home-front homeless kitty.

What's missing? Advertising. The WD-40 of commerce, and philanthropy too. "A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste." "The Toughest Job You'll Ever Love." But the homeless are a harder sell than the United Negro College Fund or the Peace Corps.

The county has put \$800,000 toward what it calls "the development and implementation of comprehensive community outreach and collaboration strategies to address anticipated averse community reaction to proposed new construction projects and services through a proactive approach, including the preparatory work of building relationships, collaborative alliances, judicious planning/action and education efforts." PR, to you and me.

The way the county is spending that money acknowledges that the homeless aren't just a downtown matter, and they're no more homogeneous than, say, Whittier, a city about the size of the county's homeless population of 88,000. It won't be an easy sell. Five "stabilization centers" in different parts of the county will be an especially difficult sell, judging by reaction to the Union Rescue Mission's plan to open a residence for homeless women and children near Sylmar; from the outcry, you'd think they were trying to set up a nudist camp for child molesters who work at nuclear waste dumps.

A PR campaign for the homeless could tip so wrong so many ways —

## Helping the homeless not an easy sell

from lame to patronizing to evasive. I can't see humor working either: "The Homeless: Not as Smelly as You Think."

"We Are the World" comes close to true, but it's been tried. Would yet another billboard of a ragged family, and a legend like "We were a couple of paychecks away from you," make a dent in anybody's attitude or help get another shelter built?

So I decided to ask the homeless: How would they make their own case?

James was at Third and Main, wearing a cap from a sheet-metal company. Maybe he once worked there; I couldn't bring myself to ask. James wasn't sure that PR would change anything: "Each individual is gonna think what he wants anyway. Just because you put (a billboard) up doesn't mean it'll do any good."

On Spring Street, leaning against the iron fence next to the Ronald Reagan State Office Building, was Conrad. Unusual name, I said. "Like Joseph Conrad," he said.

Surprised? Me too. Shame on me. As Conrad thought about what the PR message should be, a fat guy with a shaved head walked by and made a disgusted-sounding noise. Conrad didn't look at him. Finally, he said, "That we're nice. That we want mutual respect. Honesty. Brotherhood."

Help the homeless? Great. But help them to do what?

The intractable core of the chronically homeless has drawn the federal courts, cops, the ACLU and business people into a paper-scissors-rock game to find the pressure

point of rights and care and lawlessness. The Lanterman-Petris-Short Act will turn 40 next year. It's the revolutionary California law that emptied the state's mental wards, fired the Nurse Ratcheds, trashed the Thorazine and gave mental patients a bill of rights, but not much else to guide them or the people they live among.

The people who draw just one or two of the short straws — no work, no medical care, no home — are easier to help. Families can be resettled, workers can be matched to jobs, even some mental problems can be treated. It's the hard-core heart of the homeless, those with criminal records and addled senses as well, that seem beyond help, winding up classified as colorful urban fauna.

Al could be the poster boy for the best-case ad campaign. I met him on Fifth Street, "the nickel." Sixty-nine years old, 14 years in the Army, who knows how many in a wheelchair. A genial character with a downtown hotel room to call home.

Not five minutes later, I watched a young man come out of a spiffed-up building, his two dogs straining at their leashes. He saw a homeless person's packed cart out in traffic. "That's someone's life, right there," he said, pulling it back onto the sidewalk. Then a ranting homeless man rushed toward him, screaming obscenities and threats.

"Leave the homeless alone!" and "I'll come over and grab that leash out of your hand. How would you like that?"

The man with the dogs moved off. "I love my space," he said, "but not out here." No amount of PR could convince anyone that that's peaceful coexistence.

Patt Morrison is a Los Angeles Times columnist and frequent commentator on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition."

## Open Forum

Weld County District 2 will have the chance to elect a breath of fresh air to the board of county commissioners.

The present commissioners have constantly favored profiting large landowners at the expense of the general public — you and me. By approving large, scattered, dense residential developments outside of towns that will not pay for themselves and without providing for adequate services, the commissioners have been putting an additional tax and personal burden on all of us.

Sharon Socher is committed to supporting growth that will pay its own way, provide employment for Weld County residents, respect the environment and retain the quality of life that we should enjoy in the county. Although Socher is an Independent, running against a Republican candidate in Weld County who wants to continue the destructive land-use policies of the present commissioners, she is getting a lot of support.

In addition, it is about time that we had another female representative of the quality of Barbara Kirkmeyer representing our interests as a commissioner. I urge you, whatever your political party affiliation to vote for yourself by voting for Socher in the November election.

**JOHN FOLSOM**  
Longmont

## Term-limiting judges a bad idea for Colorado

I was privileged to serve the state of Colorado on the Supreme Court Nominating Commission for six years under Govs. Romer and

Owens. This bipartisan commission is composed of one lawyer and one non-lawyer from each of the congressional districts. During the time I served, we sent three nominees to the governor to fill six seats on the Supreme Court and four on the Appeals Court. In each case, the governor chose among the three nominees for each court appointment.

Having heard that our Supreme Court selection process was a fair one, I was still surprised that during those 10 sessions of deliberation and interviews, there was NEVER a word spoken about partisan politics. It was an incredibly fair and balanced process.

If Colorado supports Amendment 40, Term Limits for Judges, we will set back our judicial process in several ways:

■ A qualified lawyer is unlikely to give up a lucrative practice to be appointed to a 10-year term at a lower salary;

■ Whoever is governor next is able to appoint five of the seven justices;

■ We will then lose the experience and expertise of five of our present justices in 2009.

Do we really want justice in the highest courts of our state to become backed up with work loads and contaminated with partisan politics?

Amendment 40 is opposed by three former governors and Gov, Owens, as well as respected citizens of both parties across the state. Vote NO on Amendment 40!

**MARY BLUE**  
Longmont

# Foley's enablers should quit

By **Tom Fitton**  
*Judicial Watch*

It is going to take more than a nuclear bomb going off in North Korea to get the Foley scandal off the front pages.

By now, you most likely know some of the gritty details. Foley is accused of sending salacious e-mails to teenage boys — and possibly much worse. The FBI is investigating. So, too, is the House Ethics Committee. Foley, for his part, is attempting to take the coward's way out. He implied his behavior was caused by alcoholism and checked himself into rehab. At least he resigned from Congress in disgrace.

Foley's reported behavior is despicable and deserves prosecution. No thinking person could read any of his e-mails and come to the conclusion they are innocent or appropriate. Even the supposedly "overly friendly" e-mails show Foley was attempting to manipulate and seduce the teenagers, who had served as congressional pages. And the more graphic e-mails are beyond description. If Foley's contacts rise to the level of criminal activity, and it appears they do, then Foley must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

While Foley is ultimately responsible for his own behavior, however, it appears his friends in Congress turned a blind eye to the flashing warning signals that something was amiss. If press reports are to be believed, according to congressional staff, the leadership in the House of Representatives was warned over three years ago about Foley's predatory homosexual behavior, and they did little to stop it.

For example, House Majority Leader Dennis Hastert and Rep. John Shimkus, who heads the board that oversees the page program, seem to have known about e-mails Foley sent to one former congressional page, requesting the boy's photo. What was done about this obvious red flag? Foley was told to stop contacting the boy. No reports were made to authorities. No investigation was initiated. A verbal request, and that's it.

The fact is, under Hastert's watch, few congressmen accused of ethical misconduct have undergone serious investigations. To be sure, the Democratic leadership and Hastert were full partners in the evisceration of the ethics process on Capitol Hill. Congressman Foley had good reason to believe he could get away with his behavior — at least with respect to his congressional colleagues. Why should he be any different from Democratic Congressman Condit, Conyers, and Jefferson, all of whom benefited from lackadaisical ethics enforcement?

Democrats, predictably, are falling all over themselves to make political hay of this situation, but they are far from blameless. How can we take seriously moral grandstanding on the part of congressional Democrats given their ardent defense of an admitted perjurer, accused rapist, and all-around masher Bill Clinton? Not to mention the tawdry skeletons Democrats have in their closet.

Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank fixed his boyfriend's parking tickets — the same boyfriend who ran a male prostitution ring run out of Frank's home. Frank is now an honored senior member of his party's caucus. Former Democratic Congressman Gerry Studds was reprimanded in 1983 for having sex with a 17-year-old male page. Studds was unapologetic and continued to serve in the House until the 1990s.

And does anyone seriously believe congressional Democrats had no inkling of Foley's "overly friendly" interest in House pages?

The criminal investigation of the Foley scandal will likely never produce any satisfactory public accounting about who knew what and when about the former congressman's behavior. And as for the House Ethics Committee investigation, I do not hold out much hope. Previous investigations have been half-hearted and politicized and have left many House members unaccountable for egregious misconduct. I tend to think that not much will change with this investigation, although I hope I'm wrong. Perhaps public pressure will force more diligence.

Any congressman — Democrat or Republican — who knew about Foley's improper communications with House pages and took no meaningful action to stop them should resign. Of course, that would require a bit of intestinal fortitude, which has been in short supply on Capitol Hill.

Tom Fitton is president of Judicial Watch, a non-partisan educational foundation that fights government corruption. Visit [www.judicialwatch.org](http://www.judicialwatch.org) for more information.

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