

**FAMILIAR FEELING**

Warm and humid today with mostly cloudy skies; lows in the 70s tonight.  
Forecast, A8

# The Providence Journal

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## Budget savings details absent

Six months after Governor Carcieri proposed saving \$67 million by seeking a global Medicaid waiver, no written plan has been released.

BY STEVE PEOPLES  
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — Half a year has passed since Governor Carcieri announced he could save state taxpayers \$67 million by transforming Rhode Island's health-care system for the elderly, poor and disabled.

The dramatic changes would require an unprecedented "global Medicaid waiver" from the federal government, but the plan would ultimately improve services for needy residents, the governor said, while allowing him to close a massive budget deficit without raising taxes.

But six months later — and a month after the General Assembly approved a state budget that depends on the Medicaid savings — lawmakers and Rhode Island's 186,000 Medicaid recipients have yet to see a written plan.

Administration officials have already missed at least two self-imposed deadlines to submit the global waiver application to federal authorities.

"Originally it was supposed to be [July] 12th, then the 15th, now it's the end of the month," said House Finance Committee Chairman Steven M. Costantino, who is closely monitoring the administration's progress. "Every day there's a delay I'm worried."

The stakes are extremely high,

SEE **WAIVER, A4**

## Debtors had help in piling up their bills

Some of the nation's major financial institutions profited mightily from their creditors' financial woes.

BY GRETCHEN MORGENSON  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The collection agencies call at least 20 times a day. For a little quiet, Diane McLeod stashes her phone in the dishwasher.

But right up until she hit the wall financially, McLeod was a dream customer for lenders. She juggled not one but two mortgages, both with interest rates that rose over time, and a car loan

and high-cost credit card debt. Separated and living with her 20-year-old son, she worked two jobs so she could afford her small, two-bedroom ranch house in suburban Philadelphia, the Kia she drove to work, and the handbags and knickknacks she liked.

SEE **DEBT, A4**

### CAMPAIGN 2008

## Obama: Afghans' needs 'urgent'



Accompanied by Rhode Island Sen. Jack Reed, left, and an unidentified Afghan official, right, Sen. Barack Obama arrives at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, yesterday, for a meeting with President Hamid Karzai.

The Democratic presidential candidate says additional U.S. forces are needed to combat the Taliban and al Qaeda.

JOURNAL WIRE REPORTS

KABUL, Afghanistan — Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai here yesterday and later reiterated his call for additional U.S. forces to deal with conditions in Afghanistan that he described as "precarious and urgent."

Obama joined Karzai for a "working lunch," marking the first meeting for the Afghan president and the presumptive Democratic nominee. Obama's colleagues in the congressional delegation visiting Afghanistan, Rhode Island's Sen. Jack Reed and Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., were also at the lunch, said Humayun Hamidzada, Karzai's chief spokesman.

Hamidzada said the heads of Afghanistan's ministries of defense and foreign affairs and Karzai's national security adviser also attended the nearly two-hour meeting.

In a joint statement issued after the meeting with Karzai, the three senators said that "we are talking to the leaders of Afghanistan about whether we have the right strategy and the right resources to defeat the Taliban and al Qaeda, and to support lasting stability."

"Our message to the Afghan government is this: we want a strong partnership based on 'more for more' — more resources from the United States and NATO, and more action from the Afghan government to improve the lives of the Af-

SEE **OBAMA, A5**

## Reinvention bred new influence for McCain in Senate

BY DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Sen. John McCain was all but a sworn enemy of Sen. Trent Lott, the former Republican leader.

Lott had quashed McCain's most cherished legislative goals. And, worse, McCain believed that in the 2000 Republican primaries, Lott had spread

rumors about his mental stability on behalf of McCain's rival for the nomination, George W. Bush.

But when President Bush turned on Lott in 2002, helping to push him out of the leadership over a racially insensitive remark, McCain saw a shared grievance and found an opportunity. He leaped to Lott's de-

fense, urging Republicans to stick by him.

"He said, 'I know how you are feeling; you have been treated unfairly,'" Lott recalled. "I am a grateful guy, and I will never forget it." A legendary dealmaker with a deep store of chits, Lott became a valuable ally to his former foe, backing him in public debates

and less visible Senate intri-

gues. Their alliance was just one step in the political reinvention of McCain, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. Previously a marginal player better known for heckling the Senate than for influencing it, McCain returned from the 2000 campaign with a new national

reputation and a new political sophistication.

Over the next eight years, he mastered the art of political triangulation — variously teaming up with Lott against the president or the new Republican leaders, with Democrats against Republicans, and with

SEE **MCCAIN, A5**

## CRUISIN' BACK TO THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS

BY LINDA BORG  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SMITHFIELD — On a hard-topped strip on Route 44, there's a place frozen in time between the *Ed Sullivan Show* and *Laugh-In*.

There, for a few hours every Tuesday night, families can forget that gas costs more than \$4 a gallon and that the house they bought for \$250,000 five years ago may be worth a lot less today.

### Adventures at Hand

A SUMMER SERIES

The action begins around 5 p.m., when the first of the classic Camaros and Corvettes pull into the lot next to the A&W Root Beer Stand, itself a throwback to a pre-Big Mac era. An hour later, Cruisin' Bruce, the disk jockey from 100-FM "The Pike," shows up in his 1969 Ford Torino. He starts by throwing on "Little Old Lady from Pasadena," a Beach Boys classic, as the crowd wanders from one up-turned hood to another.

Cruisin' Bruce, aka Bruce Palmer, says that cruise nights have replaced the neighborhood



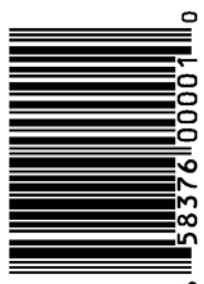
John Trivisonno, 12, of North Providence, sits in a 1957 Chevy Bel Air owned by Joe Bagaglia, of Providence — one of the many classic cars at the cruise night held at the A&W in Smithfield.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL /  
GLENN OSUMSDSON

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Extra: What are three of your can't-miss Rhode Island summer favorites? To respond, for a video of the Oakland Beach Tuesday Night Cruisers, and for more of this series, go to [projo.com](http://projo.com)

SEE **CARS, A3**



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### FOR CONSUMERS

From train fares to deals on low-cost mortgages, a summary of the latest news affecting consumers. **A6**

### HARRINGTON TAKES BRITISH OPEN

Ireland's Padraig Harrington wins his second straight British Open, overtaking Greg Norman with a 1-under-par 69 in the final round to finish with a 3-over 283, good enough to capture golf's oldest major championship. **B1**

### SUMMER SPIN

Summer in Rhode Island means it's time to take a spin on one of the many carousels, both old and new, located across the state. **D1**

