

UNIMAS NEWS BRIEFS

FEBRUARY 1, 2014 - FEBRUARY 28, 2014

02/01/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: THE COLDEST SUPERBOWL EVER?

Time: 10:38 pm

Synopsis:

Super Bowl XLVIII, which pits the Denver Broncos against the Seattle Seahawks on Feb. 2, will take place at the MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. It will be the first NFL title game held outdoors in a city where it snows. As a result, this year's game may be the coldest Super Bowl in history, with predicted temperatures possibly reaching as low as 22 degrees Fahrenheit, according to Bloomberg. The coldest Super Bowl game to date was in 1972 - the Dallas Cowboys versus the Miami Dolphins at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans - at a crisp 39 degrees.

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02/03/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: MORE WINTER! GROUNDHOG PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL SEES SHADOW

Time: 11:27 pm

Synopsis:

Punxsutawney Phil, the world's most famous fuzzy forecaster, popped out of his burrow Sunday morning and predicted six more weeks of winter, much to the disappointment of the crowd gathered at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pa. According to folklore, if it's cloudy when the groundhog emerges, the critter will leave his burrow, signifying that winter will soon end. If it's a sunny day, Phil will supposedly see his shadow and, frightened, retreat back into his burrow, and winter will continue for six more weeks.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: SNOW STORM LATEST

Time: 4:22 pm

Synopsis:

The latest in a series of winter storms hit the United States dropping wet, heavy snow in the Northeast states that disrupted travel and threatened supplies of salt needed to keep roads clear. Officials in New York and New Jersey warned they were starting to run short of the rock salt used by road crews to keep ice from building up on highways and local roads, the result of the season's repeated storms

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02/04/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: IMMIGRATION REFORM LATEST

Time: 2:24PM

Synopsis:

Conservative Republicans ruled out any immigration legislation in the House this year, insisting that the GOP should wait until next year when the party might also control the Senate. House GOP leaders unveiled their broad immigration principles last week that gave hope to advocates and the Obama administration that the first changes in the nation's laws in three decades might happen in the coming months. Immigration legislation is one of the top priorities for Obama's second term. But several of the conservatives were adamant that the House should do nothing on the issue this year, a midterm election year when the GOP is angling to gain six seats in the Senate and seize majority control. Democrats

currently have a 55-45 advantage but are defending more seats, including ones in Republican-leaning states.

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02/05/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: OBAMACARE AND JOBS

Time: 4:22PM

Synopsis:

One of the best arguments for health-insurance reform is that our traditional employer-based system often locked people into jobs they wanted to leave but couldn't because they feared they wouldn't be able to get affordable coverage elsewhere. This worry was pronounced for people with preexisting conditions, but it was not limited to them. Consider families with young children in which one parent would like to get out of the formal labor market for a while to take care of the kids. In the old system, the choices of such couples were constrained if only one of the two received employer-provided family coverage.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: CVS WILL SUSPEND THE SALE OF TOBACCO

Time: 5:21PM

Synopsis:

In the short-term, CVS's decision to stop selling tobacco will cost the nation's second-largest pharmacy chain more than it will cigarette manufacturers. In the longer term, it may increase the number of people who quit smoking and provide an opportunity to e-cigarette makers. Walgreen spokesperson Emily Hartwig said in an email, Drugstores account for only 4 percent of cigarettes sold in the U.S., whereas nearly half come from gas stations. Dollar discount stores may make up for whatever sales are lost because of the CVS move. Last year Dollar General said it was doing an "aggressive rollout" of tobacco products and now sells them in about 10,000 stores.

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02/06/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: OLYMPIC SECURITY

Time: 2:24PM

Synopsis:

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration is temporarily banning all liquids, aerosols, gels and powders on flights between Russia and the United States. The items can still be carried on checked luggage, the network said, citing an official with the Department of Homeland Security, the TSA's parent agency. Spokesmen for the department and the TSA did not respond immediately to requests for comment. The United States issued a warning on Wednesday to airports and to some airlines flying to Russia for the Olympics to watch for toothpaste tubes that could hold ingredients to make a bomb on a plane, a senior U.S. security official said.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: CUT BACK ON FOOD STAMPS

Time: 4:22PM

Synopsis:

When the President signs the Farm Bill on Friday, he'll be enacting a huge set of policies including an \$8.6 billion cut to food stamps over the next decade. But the cuts are concentrated: they will only affect individuals in about a third of states and Washington, D.C. The reason is that it closes what many consider a loophole utilized in some states - one which hunger advocates argue is necessary in light of underfunding. CBO projects it affects about 850,000 households, or 4 percent of beneficiaries of food stamps, formally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Total SNAP spending had been projected to be \$764 billion over the next decade, according to the nonpartisan Congressional

Budget Office's baseline estimate. The \$8.6 billion is just a fraction of that, but its impact is limited to 15 states.

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02/08/14

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: RAIN HELPS DROUGHT-STRICKEN CALIFORNIA
Time: 5:23 pm
Synopsis:

Drought-stricken California got some help Thursday from the weather - a prelude to a bigger storm for parts of the state over the weekend that could dump as much as 2 feet of snow in the northern Sierra and 6 inches of rain on Bay Area Mountains. While the overdue wet weather is welcome and may be a sign of things to come, forecasters say California needs much more rain and snow to make up for one of the driest rainy seasons so far.

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO EXPAND RECOGNITION OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE
Time: 6:53 pm
Synopsis:

In a new milestone for gay rights, Atty. Gen. Eric H. Holder Jr. will issue a directive Monday expanding government recognition of same-sex marriages to all federal courtrooms and prisons, and some federal benefits programs. The new policy, which Holder plans to announce Saturday night at a gay rights dinner in New York City, means the Justice Department will not object if gay or lesbian partners refuse to testify against their spouses in federal criminal and civil cases, and will push for them to be accorded the same rights in Bankruptcy court as other married couples.

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02/09/14

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: POLL RESULTS FOR CATHOLIC SURVEY
Time: 10:38 pm
Synopsis:

According to a new poll, which was conducted by the U.S. Spanish-language network Univision, Catholics break most sharply from Church teaching on the issue of contraception. Seventy eight percent of Catholics across all countries surveyed said they support the use of modern birth control. That number rises even further among residents of European and Latin American countries, where Catholics tend to be more liberal than their counterparts in African countries. Over 90 percent of Catholics in France, Brazil, Spain, Argentina, and Colombia have no problem with birth control.

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02/10/14

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: DROUGHT RELIEF COMES TO CALIFORNIA
Time: 7:22PM
Synopsis:

The first major storm in more than a year swept through Northern California over the weekend, and the sound heard in the skies wasn't thunder, but a sigh of collective relief. Napa Valley and Sonoma County averaged about 8 inches in a few days, with some areas gaining as much as 12 to 15 inches. Central California wasn't as blessed, receiving no more than an inch or so. The drought is far from over even in Northern California-rainfall levels are still below the previous record drought year of 1977-but you won't hear any complaints right now.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: IMMIGRATION ON THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION CROSSHAIRS

Time: 7:22PM

Synopsis:

Conservatives with the Heritage Foundation gathered today in Washington to discuss issues of national importance, highlighting immigration reform. The head of the Heritage Foundation's political arm said Monday that the comprehensive immigration bill passed in the Senate last year is the result of "corporate cronyism" and blamed another group that often aligns with Republicans, the Chamber of Commerce.

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02/11/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: HEALTH-OVERHAUL-EMPLOYER-REQUIREMENT

Time: 4:22PM

Synopsis:

The White House has granted employers another concession on health care, but the details are buried in more than 200 pages of dense Treasury regulations. Medium-sized companies are getting a delay in a heavily criticized requirement to cover their workers or face fines. That may help Democratic chances of hanging on to the Senate in the midterm elections. The administration said Monday that companies with 50 to 99 employees will have an additional year to comply, until January 1, 2016. For businesses with 100 or more employees the so-called employer mandate will still take effect in 2015. The mandate for firms with 50 or more workers was originally supposed to be effective this year, until first delay was announced last summer.

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02/12/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: OBAMA INCREASED MINIMUM WAGE

Time: 2:23PM

Synopsis:

President Barack Obama has increased the minimum wage for a few hundred thousand federal contractors -- and he's pressing Congress to pass broader legislation that would apply to all workers. During his State of the Union address last month, Obama first announced that he would sign an executive order to boost the wages of some contractors. He signed it today in a White House ceremony, flanked by Americans who would make more money if lawmakers were to take more sweeping action. The executive order -- which raises the hourly wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 -- applies only to a small percentage of the more than 2 million federal contractors. But officials hope it will generate momentum for Obama's proposal for a broader increase in the minimum wage.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: GRACO RECALLS BABY SEATS

Time: 4:24PM

Synopsis:

Graco, the Atlanta-based maker of baby and children's products, said Tuesday it's recalling nearly 3.8 million car safety seats sold between 2009 and 2013 because children can get trapped by buckles that may not unlatch. Graco says the defect happens when food or drinks get stuck in the buckles. The company will send replacement buckles for free to customers who have registered their seats or who call the company's hotline (800-345-4109). They can also send an e-mail to [consumerservices\(at\)gracobaby.com](mailto:consumerservices(at)gracobaby.com)

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02/13/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: DEMOCRATS STILL BELIEVE IN POSSIBILITY OF IMMIGRATION REFORM

Time: 10:38pm

Synopsis:

Some Democrats are signaling that they could support an immigration-reform plan from House Republicans that could end the Obama administration's record number of deportations. The plan would give legal status, if not outright citizenship, to millions of immigrants who entered the country illegally. But first they want to see the substance of the legislation. In a press call hosted by the pro-immigrant group America's Voice on Friday, Rep. Luis Gutierrez, D-Ill., said the set of broad principles released by House leadership on Thursday is an "excellent starting point." In the one-page document, Republican lawmakers stated they will not support a "special path to citizenship" for undocumented immigrants. Given that clear but broad standard, Gutierrez now believes a pathway to citizenship can eventually be achieved. He just wants to see more details.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: MASSIVE GENERAL MOTORS RECALL

Time: 10:38pm

Synopsis:

General Motors is recalling more than 700,000 vehicles that have a big problem with the ignition switch. That means if you have a really heavy key chain, the weight of it can actually turn the car off, causing the air bags to fail to deploy. "It's very scary," said Regenia Paige from Auburn Hills, who owns a 2007 Cobalt. "I'm on the road all the time." General Motors is asking drivers who have 2005-2007 Chevy Cobalts and 2007 Pontiac G5's to remove anything heavy off their key chains as part of a massive recall.

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02/14/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: PRESIDENTIAL HELP FOR DROUGHT IN CALIFORNIA

Time: 10:37pm

Synopsis:

President Barack Obama drew a link between climate change and California's drought, and said the U.S. must do a better job of figuring out how to make sure everyone's water needs are satisfied. On a tour of central California on Friday, Obama warned that weather-related disasters will only get worse. "We can't think of this simply as a zero-sum game. It can't just be a matter of there's going to be less and less water so I'm going to grab more and more of a shrinking share of water," Obama said after touring part of a farm that is suffering under the state's worst drought in more than 100 years.

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02/15/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: WINTER WOES COST THE NATION BILLIONS

Time: 4:22pm

Synopsis:

A succession of winter storms that have walloped large swaths of the country since December have taken a \$15 billion bite out of U.S. businesses so far, according to one estimate, and the season has weeks still to go. In the short run, the impact of softer retail sales, property and crop damage and lost productivity at work is likely many times that amount. But since much of the hit will be offset by a pickup in sales and production later this year once temperatures rise, the lasting impact on the \$16 trillion economy will be minimal, say economists. "If the first quarter takes a little hit there's going to be some bounce back

to make up for it in the second quarter," said Chris Christopher, an economist who tracks consumer spending IHS Global Insight. "For the year as a whole this should not have much of an impact."
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02/16/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: COLD WEATHER STRIKES THE COUNTRY AGAIN

Time: 8:43pm

Synopsis:

The exceptionally cold and stormy winter battering the Midwest, South and Northeast has forced cities and states to put road crews on double shifts and step up purchases of asphalt, trying to keep up with an epidemic of potholes. They have also bought and spread so much salt that there is a shortage in the Mid-Atlantic States, with more storms expected. With revenues and staffing still below pre-recession levels, many local and state governments face a new financial strain from storm-related increases in spending on overtime pay, contractors and supplies. On Saturday, another snowfall covered the Northeast, a reminder that winter is far from over.

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02/17/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: POWERBALL JACKPOT

Time: 3:24PM

Synopsis:

In what's quickly becoming a quarterly routine, the Powerball jackpot for Wednesday night's drawing has climbed into the stratosphere. California Lottery officials project the jackpot to be around \$400 million, just two months after the Mega Millions game produced a \$648-million jackpot, and about five months since Powerball last produced a \$400-million jackpot. The bigger jackpots are drawing more players and excitement to the California Lottery after years of decline the turnaround is due to changes made to the lottery in 2010, when revenues were falling. The changes brought bigger prizes, but they also altered the formula for how much revenue schools receive.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: CAMPAIGN TO STOP DEPORTATIONS

Time: 8:42PM

Synopsis:

Immigrant rights advocates are urging President Barack Obama to use his executive authority to stop the deportations of illegal immigrants. Some arrests were made Monday when dozens of advocates rallied in Washington. Religious and civil rights activists chanted and prayed alongside illegal immigrants near the White House as they urged the president to stop the deportations, which they say are tearing families apart. Methodist Bishop Julius Trimble said he wants comprehensive, humane immigration reform that provides a pathway to citizenship.

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02/18/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: OBAMA AND POLLUTION

Time: 2:26PM

Synopsis:

President Obama gives plan to increase fuel-efficiency standards for trucks at a Safeway distribution center. Trucks will become more fuel-efficient if the President has his way. Today Barack Obama followed up on his State of The Union pledge to increase fuel standards for all vehicles...But specifically

trucks. Obama says the U.S. is already on its way to a more fuel efficient way of life...But still added some goals for the future.

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02/19/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: 7TH NORTH AMERICAN LEADERS' SUMMIT

Time: 2:24pm

Synopsis:

President Barack Obama on Wednesday touted the shared "commitment to trade" between the U.S., Mexico and Canada, while trying to reassure America's neighbors that he would seek to expand their economic alliances despite political resistance from his own Democratic Party. Obama spoke alongside Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who joined him in the industrial center of Toluca for the one-day North American Leaders' Summit. This year's meeting coincides with the 20th year of the North American Free Trade Agreement among the three countries, a deal that has vastly expanded cross-border commerce in the region but which remains a contentious issue in the United States over its impact on jobs and on environmental protections. Trade experts say the agreement is due for an upgrade to take into account the current globalized environment and to address issues not touched in the original pact. But rather than reopen NAFTA, the three countries are instead relying on negotiations underway to complete the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade bloc of 12 countries in the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: DATABASES FOR TRACKING LICENSE PLATES NATIONWIDE

Time: 8:24pm

Synopsis:

The U.S. said it's seeking to get access to or acquire commercial databases for tracking license plates nationwide to help find fugitives and undocumented immigrants, according to a government document. The Department of Homeland Security is asking companies for proposals to provide or allow access to a database to "track vehicle license plate numbers that pass through cameras or are voluntarily entered into the system from a variety of sources," and shared with law enforcement, according to the solicitation. The department's Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency will use the National License Plate Recognition database "to assist in the location and arrest of absconders and criminal aliens," according to the document. The agency said the technology will reduce surveillance man-hours and improve officers' safety.

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02/20/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: PAYCHECK PETITION

Time: 7:22pm

Synopsis:

Since October 1st, hundreds of thousands of middle-class federal employees have been furloughed due to irresponsible members of Congress who refuse to govern for the well-being of the American people. The GOP-controlled House of Representatives decided to shut down the government rather than pass a spending bill that funds the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as "Obamacare." Not only has the President's signature healthcare law been upheld by the Supreme Court, but it was a major issue in the last presidential election when Republicans were soundly defeated. Moveon.org has begun a petition to have members of congress receive no pay during a self-inflicted government shutdown.

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: H1N1 BACK IN THE UNITED STATES
Time: 8:43pm

Synopsis:
The H1N1 virus responsible for the 2009 global pandemic is back. State health officials from across the country say the resurgence is resulting in a dramatic rise in flu deaths in young and middle-aged adults and in children this season. While the reported death tolls so far are only a fraction of what they were four years ago, they are significantly higher than last year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the flu has been killing at epidemic levels since mid-January.

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02/21/14

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: ARIZONA DISCRIMINATION LAWS
Time: 5:24pm

Synopsis:
The Arizona Legislature gave final approval to legislation that allows business owners asserting their religious beliefs to refuse service to gays, drawing backlash from Democrats who called the proposal "state-sanctioned discrimination" and an embarrassment. The 33-27 vote by the House on Feb. 21 sends the legislation to Republican Gov. Jan Brewer and puts Arizona back at the forefront of a polarizing piece of legislation four years after the state enacted an immigration crackdown that caused a national furor.

02/24/14

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: NEW BUDGET DEFENSE DEPARTMENT
Time: 7:18PM

Synopsis:
Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel says the nation's military forces need to be more nimble to confront a more volatile and unpredictable world. In a speech at the Pentagon today, Hagel outlined a defense spending plan that would close military bases and shrink the Army from today's 522,000 soldiers to as few as 440,000. That would be the smallest number since 1940. Hagel says the nation can afford a smaller military so long as it retains a technological edge and the ability to respond on short notice to crises anywhere on the globe.

Duration: 30 seconds
Topic: ILLNESS SIMILAR TO POLIO IN CALIFORNIA
Time: 8:24PM

Synopsis:
A handful of children in California have come down with a paralyzing disease with symptoms very similar to polio. Since late 2012, California researchers have identified five children who experienced sudden paralysis in one or more of their limbs over a space of two days. Three of the victims had symptoms of respiratory illness before the onset. All of the children had been vaccinated against polio. So far, the paralysis appears permanent. The illness is thought to be caused by a virus. Two of the children tested positive for a rare virus called enterovirus-68, which has symptoms similar to polio. However, the other three kids tested negative for that, and the cause of their disease remains unknown.

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02/25/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: PREGNANCY AND OVER THE COUNTER DRUGS

Time: 2:24PM

Synopsis:

Children born to women who take acetaminophen during pregnancy may be at increased risk of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and similar behavioral problems, new findings suggest. The study does not show that prenatal exposure to the medication causes ADHD, and the increase in risk is small, Dr. Jorn Olsen, one of the study's authors, told Reuters Health. Acetaminophen, or paracetamol, has been available over the counter since the 1950s, Olsen and his colleagues note in their report in JAMA Pediatrics. While the medication is widely considered to be safe to use during pregnancy, they add, recent studies have shown it can disrupt hormone function in pregnant rats and mice. Given that hormones play a key role in guiding fetal development, the researchers decided to investigate whether acetaminophen exposure might be related to ADHD risk. They looked at 64,322 children and mothers enrolled in the Danish National Birth Cohort between 1996 and 2002.

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02/26/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: OBESITY DROPS AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN

Time: 2:23PM

Synopsis:

Michelle Obama says a sharp decline in obesity rates for some youngsters shows that small diet and lifestyle changes are making a difference. A report Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that obesity among children ages 2 to 5 dropped to 8 percent from 14 percent a decade ago. The findings aren't enough to say the nation has turned the corner. But the first lady and others who are working to reduce childhood obesity see progress. Mrs. Obama says in a statement Wednesday that there's still a long way to go before the problem is solved. But she adds that the findings make her more confident that today's children will have bright and healthy futures. The first lady heads a nationwide campaign to combat childhood obesity.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: CALIFORNIA DROUGHT LATEST

Time: 3:24PM

Synopsis:

Active weather has finally returned to the West Coast as the first in a series of storms has moved into California. The state has suffered through a very bad drought, so any precipitation to fall is very much welcomed news. Rain is expected to continue into evening, adding to the very slim snowpack in the Sierra Nevadas. Several inches of rain will fall from this first storm through Thursday morning, followed by a wetter storm on Friday and into Saturday. NASA scientists plan to use images shot from space and within the Earth's atmosphere to help California monitor one of the worst droughts in its recorded history, officials said on Tuesday. Scientists said they would deploy imaging tools to measure snowpack and groundwater levels and use a host of other technologies to help better map and assess the water resources in a state that produces half the nation's fruits and vegetables.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: ARIZONA ANTI-GAY BILL

Time: 4:24PM

Synopsis:

Facing intense pressure from political and business interests and a growing public outcry, Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer announced Wednesday that she had vetoed Senate Bill 1062, which would have allowed businesses to refuse service to gays and others based on religious beliefs. Brewer said the Arizona bill

was unnecessary legislation that threatened the state's recovering economy by driving away high-profile events such as next year's Super Bowl and corporations looking to relocate to Arizona. Brewer also said she hasn't heard of a single instance in which an Arizona business owner's religious liberty was violated. Her veto - coming two days after state lawmakers sent SB 1062 to her desk - capped a week of escalating furor over the bill. The state's Republican U.S. senators, John McCain and Jeff Flake, the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, hundreds of protesters and the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, which is preparing for the 2015 game, all urged the governor to veto the bill. Secretary of State John Kerry and 2012 GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney also urged Brewer to nix the measure. Supporters of the bill, who argued it provided needed religious protections, acknowledged defeat. Four Republican lawmakers who voted for SB 1062 walked back their votes this week, saying they hoped Brewer would veto it.

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02/27/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATES NUTRITION FACTS

Time: 5:23pm

Synopsis:

The Food and Drug Administration for the first time in two decades will propose major changes to nutrition labels on food packages, putting calorie counts in large type and adjusting portion sizes to reflect how much Americans actually eat. It would be the first significant redrawing of the nutrition information on food labels since the federal government started requiring them in the early 1990s. Those labels were based on eating habits and nutrition data from the 1970s and '80s, before portion sizes expanded significantly, and federal health officials argued that the changes were needed to bring labels into step with the reality of the modern American diet.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: FEWER RED LIGHT CAMERAS IN NATION'S ROADS

Time: 7:19pm

Synopsis:

Local and state governments are using fewer red-light cameras, the Wall Street Journal reports. After a decade of steady growth, the number of communities using cameras to catch drivers who run stoplights has fallen 6 percent since 2012, to 508, says the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Seven states ban them, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, and several more, including Ohio and Florida, are considering prohibitions. Studies of whether cameras improve traffic safety are numerous and point to contradictory conclusions. Many locations, including some big cities, have no plans to get rid of them.

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02/28/14

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: EVACUATIONS IN CALIFORNIA AS STATE FACES TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR

Time: 5:31pm

Synopsis:

California braced Thursday for the overnight arrival of a powerful Pacific storm expected to bring widespread rain and snow to the drought-stricken state desperately in need of water but also facing threats of flooding and mud flows into communities near areas scarred by wildfire. Despite sunny blue skies behind a short-lived smaller storm, mandatory evacuation orders were issued for about 1,000 homes in two of Los Angeles' eastern foothill suburbs beneath nearly 2,000 acres of steep mountain slopes left bare by a January fire. For days, the cities of Glendora and Azusa have made extensive preparations, including lining streets with k-rails. Residents built barriers of wood and sandbags to keep debris flows in streets and out of homes.

Duration: 30 seconds

Topic: EXCEPTION TO THE NO CELLPHONE WHILE DRIVING LAW: USE OF GPS

Time: 5:31pm

Synopsis:

Talk or text you may not, but looking at maps on your cell phone while driving is legal, a California appellate court ruled Thursday. The 5th District Court of Appeal sided with a Fresno man who received a \$165 ticket when he consulted a map application on his phone, looking for an alternate route around a traffic jam. Steven Spriggs unsuccessfully challenged the ticket in traffic court and later in Superior Court, arguing the law prohibited only talking on the phone, not looking at a map. Judges on the appellate court reversed the lower court, writing that the law was not intended to impose a blanket ban on any cell phone use. They noted that when the law was enacted in 2006, no one used their phones for much more than conversation.

=====END OF FEBRUARY 2014 REPORT=====