

DAVID G. HAMPTON Editorial Director

LETTERS | TO THE EDITOR

The vulnerable need protection

What party should be held accountable for the death of the lady who was left to freeze in a "personal care home?"

It is no excuse that budgets don't allow agencies responsible for protecting vulnerable children and adults from the harmful vultures eager to exploit them to do so. Yet we hear little until such an event as death occurs to reach the media.

No dependent person of any age should be placed in the care of a non-relative without state or local monitoring.

Agencies that are unable to fulfill their responsibility effectively should close down and be replaced.

On the other hand, if you don't have enough caseworkers to do the job, I'm sure you have plenty of highly paid supervisors and administrators right up to the director himself who may need to fill in and get out of the office to ensure that such tragedies don't happen in our state.

If the law needs to be tightened up, that's what we have a Legislature for.

Patrick Gregory
Jackson

Road building is 'stimulus' boost

A national Associated Press story ("Stimulus failing to produce jobs") appearing in *The Clarion-Ledger* on Jan. 12 was very misleading. To say the stimulus "had no effect on local unemployment rates" certainly does not ring true in Mississippi, and is downright false in the case of road building.



Pepper

Mississippi received stimulus payments that included

\$247 million going directly to road and bridge construction and maintenance. I have seen firsthand how road and bridge contractors were able — thanks to stimulus funding — to keep workers employed who otherwise would have been laid off due to budget shortfalls and other effects of the down economy.

Whether the stimulus created new jobs or not, it did preserve existing jobs. That in itself impacted unemployment rates, since it kept workers off the unemployment rolls. This also allowed individuals to keep their health insurance and benefits. Moreover, this funding supported local economic activity such as banking, equipment dealers and truckers — all of which factor into road building.

A day after the AP story was published, a *Clarion-Ledger* editorial lamented the condition of the Jackson water system. Infrastructure such as water systems, roads and bridges get little thought until they fail. A solid infrastructure requires long-range planning, vigilance and funding that does not get shoveled into another political trough along the way.

Whether state or federal funds go to road building in Mississippi, this is money invested in the safety of our motorists, and it plays a vital role in our economic development.

Mike Pepper
Executive director
Mississippi Road Builders
Association
Jackson

See no benefit from stimulus

I just don't see any evidence of the stimulus helping anywhere.

I do know that there is a lot of waste going on that needs to be addressed.

Wade Morrison
Jackson