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July 2, 2009

SECTION: EARLYBIRD PUNDITS EDITORIALS**LENGTH:** 620 words**HEADLINE:** Pundits & Editorials**BODY:**

"That some highly vulnerable Democrats in the House were willing to face tens of thousands of dollars worth of Republican attack ads as the price of supporting a bill to curb global warming is the untold story of what, so far, is the year's most dramatic legislative showdown," **E. J. Dionne Jr.** declares.

"In contrast to the global-warming issue, there could be serious consequences if Congress fails to act responsibly on health care," **Rick Santorum** argues.

"General Motors can survive bankruptcy far more easily than it can survive President **Barack Obama's** ambitious fuel economy standards, which mandate that all new new vehicles average 35.5 miles per gallon by 2016," **Cato Institute** senior fellow **Alan Reynolds** maintains in the **Wall Street Journal**.

"The wild and wacky Facebook thread accurately captured public sentiment when it comes to health-care reform," **Dana Milbank** remarks, recounting Obama's virtual townhall meeting Wednesday. "Americans are passionate and confused about it -- and their opinions are all over the lot."

"Corporate America's cheerleading for more government involvement in health care now includes Wal-Mart, that liberal paragon of social irresponsibility," the **Wall Street Journal** scoffs.

"If Americans hope to discuss health care, climate change, green economics or public infrastructure with any degree of realism, then the time has come to acknowledge that hearing someone say 'a trillion dollars' is no reason to panic," columnist **Joe Conason** contends on RealClearPolitics.com.

The **Washington Post** is "disappointed" by the news that Sen. **Daniel Inouye**, D-Hawaii, funneled bailout money to a hometown bank he founded.

Bernie Madoff's conduct was "indefensible and he deserved what he got," **John Gapper** writes, but he insists that this case "was exceptional and should remain an outlier."

"Before everyone finishes piling on Gov. **Mark Sanford**, let me say that all of us in New York were happy to learn that he has been scheduling his assignations in our state," **Gail Collins** quips.

"Is there something about Sanford's puppyish comportment, not to mention the fact that, unlike many adulterous politicians, he seems to be truly in love with his mistress... that's making him less a pariah and more a symbol of the male midlife crisis?" **Meghan Daum** asks.

Margaret Carlson examines the happiness of politicians (Sanford) and bankers (Madoff) in the context of a new report that analyzes what makes people happy.

"We're brilliantly programmed to act on the risks that confronted us in the Pleistocene Age. We're less adept with 21st-century challenges," **Nicholas D. Kristof** remarks.

David Broder believes that "as Obama has the opportunity over time to reshape the Supreme Court, there will be more Sotomayors -- and more of a challenge to those who wish to dispute the continuing damage that segregation has done to this country and the continuing need for race-conscious remedies."

On RealClearPolitics.com, columnist **Michael Barone** says the Supreme Court's ruling in **Ricci v. DeStefano** is "a riveting lesson in political sociology, thanks to the concurring opinion by Justice **Samuel Alito**."

The **New York Times** supports the Supreme Court's recent decision "that federal regulators cannot prevent the states from enforcing consumer protection and fair lending laws against national banks."

Steve Chapman says the recent high court's ruling on strip searches in schools draws only a small distinction between the rights afforded children in schools and rights afforded inmates in prison.

"With no other timely option, the already compelling logic for an Israeli strike" against Iran's nuclear weapons program "is nearly inexorable," **John R. Bolton**, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., contends in the **Washington Post**.

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