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## **LETTERS: Forget the rich, let's get Congress under control**

### **To the editor:**

Letters to the editor on Thursday from Gerry Hagama and Martin Benes just show where the American people get it wrong. Rich people's money doesn't belong to the government -- and neither does yours.

For the past 30 years we have been re-electing the same Idiots to Congress and now it's coming back to haunt every one of us. These people have no problems spending your money nor do they really care about you. They talk the talk, but none of them can walk the walk.

Let's take one guy, our friend Harry Reid. He now has \$9 million in the bank for re-election and this could go to \$25 million. Is he hurting in this economy? No. If you multiply him by 500 plus, this is what your Congress is built on.

Stop it with the "rich people need to pay their share." It's the Congress of the United States that has to pay its share. They need to stop all this stupid spending and instead of making new laws repeal the old ones. Your kids and grandkids are getting screwed by Washington and everybody sees it, but nobody wants to stop it. Shame on us.

**DAVE MESKER**

LAS VEGAS

**Sworn in**

### **To the editor:**

Regarding the July 3 article, "New citizens get welcome from Obama; Ceremony salutes 102 immigrants." I welcome them too. They went through the long and involved process of naturalization legally, rather than merely crossing our border when they feel like it -- and expecting the benefits of citizenship.

**Kent H. Wilcoxson**

LAS VEGAS

**Rail bird**

### **To the editor:**

Jim Day's July 8 political cartoon seemed to ignore the facts regarding the DesertXpress high speed

rail corridor to Southern California. Lost, was the simple fact that the proposed maglev project would only extend from Las Vegas to Primm at the state line, using roughly \$2 billion of our tax dollars -- not to Anaheim. They even trademarked it as "the first 40 miles."

Even if they receive \$2 billion, they still would have no funds to build it beyond Primm: no real engineering, no environmental clearance. The only funds they hope to get for Primm to Anaheim would be \$45 million more in federal study money that could not be used for construction, and their publicly released spending plan shows that \$42 million of that tax money would go to the contracted "private partner": the American Magline Group made up of lobbyists and consultants. Now there's a boondoggle!

By comparison, DesertXpress is a privately funded, 200-mile, \$4 billion, electric high speed (150 mph) train that takes only 84 minutes to reach Las Vegas, fully extendable and compatible with the California high speed rail system. The first phase to Victorville is within an hour's drive of roughly 10 million people -- less than the time required to catch a flight -- and two hours for more than 20 million. The second phase to Palmdale connects with the state-wide high speed rail network and is just 50 miles from Victorville.

More than two years ago, Sen. Harry Reid, along with members of Congress from both parties, requested the Government Accountability Office conduct a high speed rail study, because after nearly 30 years of tax-funded studies, the maglev project still has not advanced beyond the initial planning stage. The GAO study referenced public agency cost estimates that pegged a maglev line to Anaheim at between \$26 and \$52 billion, making it the most expensive transportation project in the nation's history -- yet the technology is incompatible with California's high speed rail network. With only one potential supplier of that technology, taxpayers would be held hostage to whatever price they would demand for any extension beyond Primm.

The time is now for DesertXpress to become the nation's first true interstate high speed rail line, providing high quality jobs, tremendous environmental benefits, and a needed economic boost to both states.

Supported by local, state and federal leaders from both sides of the aisle, DesertXpress will be ready to break ground early next year without any federal grants. This is an unprecedented win-win scenario for Southern California, Nevada and the country.

**Thomas J. Stone**

DENVER

THE WRITER IS PRESIDENT OF DESERTXPRESS ENTERPRISES.

**Stop digging**

**To the editor:**

We have TARP, a stimulus package, the cash for clunkers, cap and trade, government sponsored health care, another stimulus package of up to \$12 billion for community colleges ...

Our politicians are out of their cotton pickin' minds. They think we taxpayers can afford all of the above? With nearly 10 percent unemployment and the cost of living escalating just how much more can we afford?

It was not long ago we were amazed when politicians mentioned costs in the billions. Now we are discussing costs in the trillions. It is said that when you are in a hole, stop digging. Time has come to just stop, period.

As government entitlement programs continue to grow and government continues to grow, just where is the breaking point? What happens when the majority of employed are government employees? Where will the funds come from to manage their more than adequate retirement and health plans? Will the government employee be asked to contribute more to his benefits? Or will the rest of us just send our paychecks, Social Security checks and pension checks to Washington in hopes they will provide us with a debit card with a big enough balance to buy food and groceries and pay the rent/mortgage? We are heading in that direction.

Yes, it is time to stop digging.

**Louis Phillipine**

LAS VEGAS

**Bag job**

**To the editor:**

Perhaps I'm missing the nuance here, but it appears that congressional Democrats are miffed that they weren't informed about a CIA plan to kill al-Qaida leaders after the 9/11 attacks. According to current agency chief Leon Panetta, the program -- never implemented -- was meant to minimize civilian casualties by utilizing small teams instead of indiscriminate rocket attacks.

Leaving aside the convenient timing of Mr. Panetta's leak -- which both gives cover to Nancy Pelosi's earlier claim that the dog ate her briefing papers, and provides a momentary diversion from the debate on cap-and-trade and the costs of "free" health care -- it should be asked: What part of this, exactly, upsets Congress?

Is it the word "assassination"? Gerald Ford, by executive order, outlawed the assassination of foreign politicians; but the killing of enemy combatants has never been off the table. Indeed, congressional outrage would be justified only if the CIA did not have plans to kill bin Laden, et al.

Is it that they weren't briefed on the proposal? If so, the petulance is both selective and misguided. The CIA is mandated to report to Congress and the White House only if a plan is proposed for implementation -- which illustrates the disingenuous nature of Ms. Pelosi's earlier "waterboarding" protestations -- and this one, sadly, never was. Otherwise, minutes of every brainstorming session at the agency regarding "black ops" would be forwarded immediately to the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. They might just as well be posted on Facebook.

**Bob Ashman**

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