

# HPV vaccine, Social Security

## *Comments from readers*

Updated: 7:13 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, 2011

Published: 7:01 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, 2011

### **HPV vaccine order justified**

I am amazed that Republicans have taken exception to the 2007 executive order by Gov. Rick Perry that would require all public school girls as young as 11 and 12 to receive a vaccination for HPV, a sexually transmitted disease that can lead to cervical cancer. It's one of the few things that I know of on which I agree with Perry.

This is good scientific and safe use of medical intervention that would save thousands of female lives. It's not enough to make me want to vote for Perry for president, but it shows just how far off-base Republicans are in the use of modern science.

Jim Clark

Sunrise Beach

### **Shedding light on vaccine dangers**

The Associated Press' Chris Tomlinson's Sept. 13 article "Perry facing new criticism for Texas vaccine order" clearly demonstrates the need for the media to stop being the mouthpiece of prevailing opinion and instead do independent research on important issues such as vaccines.

Tomlinson asserted, "Studies have found no serious side effects, with the most common reactions being redness or swelling at the injection site." A quick glance at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website reveals significant side effects from the HPV vaccine. The CDC received a total of 18,727 reports of adverse events following Gardasil HPV vaccination, with 1,498 of them (8 percent) considered serious — such as blood clots, the neurological disorder Guillain-Barré Syndrome and 68 reports of death.

Though the most common reactions might be redness or swelling at the injection site, to omit the existence of serious side effects — including death — speaks either to the reporter's inability to conduct research or to a lack of journalistic integrity.

Like any medical procedure, decisions about vaccines must be made with the consumer's informed consent and a complete disclosure of the dangers as well as the potential benefits.

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### **No crime in Social Security**

Re: Charles Krauthammer's Sept. 17 commentary, "How do we fix this Ponzi scheme?"

Krauthammer states that Social Security is a Ponzi scheme, just like Gov. Rick Perry said. A real Ponzi scheme is a crime because of the intent to defraud clients while skimming off a percent for personal gain. Can you imagine FDR and Congress in 1937 passing the Social Security Act with the intent of not paying benefits 74 years in the future? I would rate Krauthammer's article "pants on fire," since he knows there was no malicious intent or crime involved.

It may be true that Social Security's creators were naive about what would happen in 2020 or so, but being naive is not a crime. No one can predict the future, especially involving evolution of demography and business cycles.

John Voltin

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### **Look everywhere for cuts**

Sen. Jon Kyl of Arizona was recently quoted in the American-Statesman as saying that he would leave the congressional "supercommittee" for reducing our nation's spending if there was any talk about cutting defense spending.

I wrote to ask him, "Is this the type of open mind we need from leaders like yourself, Senator? Shouldn't you be willing to look at ALL options?"

If ministers could bet, I'd bet that there are wasteful items in the Department of Defense budget that could be cut without damage to the security of our country.

Please approach these reductions with an open mind, senator — or else be true to your own words and leave the committee if defense spending comes up, OK?

The Rev. Gus Browning

Cedar Park

### **Taxes and the economy**

One thing Republicans do well is speak with certainty. Perhaps it is a tactic; perhaps it is a reflection of the personality types who choose these ideological positions.

In any case, Republicans, intoning "job-killing taxes and regulations," announce that the cure for unemployment is lower taxes. These talking points are spoken with the same certainty that Republicans used 20 years ago when they declared that higher taxes would destroy the economy. Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton raised taxes and put the nation on course to a balanced budget, something conservatives say they want.

The same was said about the first rise in the minimum wage in many years, that it would destroy the

economy and cause a depression. Of course, the 1990s were a time of peace and prosperity. The economy was so successful even folks at the bottom started to get jobs and raises.

The Republicans were wrong then. They are wrong now. Taxes do not suppress hiring.

Tom Cuddy

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### **No more greed**

I hope Texas winds up without a conference and loses every game it plays until the Longhorn Network dies. It is bad enough that greed has priced the average fan out of any hope of attending a game live, but now greed is taking away watching on TV. I, for one, will not support anyone or anything connected to the Longhorns as long as the network exists. Fifty years of support wasted on a bunch of greedy jerks. How sad.

Dennis Schultz

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### **GOP supporters scary**

As an independent-leaning Democrat, my support for President Barack Obama has become shaky lately, as I have to agree with the critics who say he so far has failed to show results in moving our country toward economic health.

Any thought I might have had, however, of voting Republican next year was laid to rest after this month's first two Republican debates. Though the positions of the candidates were predictable, it was the response of the audience that horrified me. This was not staged, but real: People cheered at the large number of executions in Texas; people cheered at the hypothetical death of a hypothetical uninsured patient. These people profess to be Christians? God help us if a heartless, callous, fanatic segment of our society succeeds in electing its candidate president!

Obama might have disappointed in not yet achieving the goals he promised when elected, but at least he has his heart in the right place. He deserves another chance.

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