

# THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



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# THE BUSINESS MAN

Pinkett, the first African-American to win the competitive reality series, *The Apprentice*, served as the keynote speaker during the MUES Winners' Reception held as a special recognition of the five emerging businesses at the Miller-Coors Corporate Headquarters in Chicago.

Demonstrating their commitment to economic development, MillerCoors has provided over \$1.5 million in business grants to more than 100 urban businesses across the country through the MUES program.



PHOTO BY JULIE KEEFE

# Labor, Biz Push Agendas

### As Legislative Session Ends, Labor, Biz Push Agendas

By Manuel Valdes  
*Associated Press*

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Home care and mental care workers will be among scores of union members and backers expected to march and rally in Olympia next week as organized labor mounts a four-day show of force in the final weeks of the Legislature's contentious session.

"We have the goal to show over the course of the week the Legislature and the wider community, that we not only have a revenue deficit, but a social services deficit and we have a jobs deficit in this state as well," said Jeff Johnson, president of the Washington State Labor Council.

Meanwhile, a prominent business group has launched a new, long-term campaign to try to chip away at labor's key strongholds in Washington, and to improve certain sectors — such as transportation, patents and education — they see key to advance the state's economy.

"In the work of an individual legislative session sometimes we lose sight of the big picture and what we're trying to get in this state," said Steve Mullin, president of the Washington Roundtable, a business group that includes big hitters like Boeing, Microsoft, Alaska Airlines and other corporations with significant presence in the state.

Calling it "Benchmarks for a Better Washington," the group rolled out the campaign this past week. In 12 points, the Roundtable measured the state's standing compared to the rest of the nation in various sectors.

It wants to keep Washington in the top-10 states in patents granted and low electricity rates. But in the student performance in math and science, bachelor's degrees per capita, road conditions, commuting time and useful bridges, the group says Washington has a lot of work.

Mullin said business leaders are worried about "disproportionate" cut to higher edu-

# Watch Out for Utility Bill Scammers

### Seattle: Watch Out for Utility Bill Scammers

Seattle City Light reminds all its customers to guard against telephone con artists posing as utility bill collectors.

In the past week, the utility received at least two reports of phone calls from con artists claiming to be electric utility employees who were ready to disconnect their electricity. The scammers appear to be targeting residents with Asian surnames and similar businesses.

"Sadly, there are criminals out there who will try to take advan-

tage of another with the false threat of cutting off their electricity," Customer Service Director Kelly Enright said. "Seattle City Light wants to help its customers protect themselves from scam artists and the best way to do that is to be informed."

In the scam, the callers claimed there were problems with payment of the customers' bill and asked for a credit card payment to resolve the matter. In one instance, the caller claimed to work for a different

utility. This is similar to incidents reported to City Light during the past several years.

"If someone asks for your credit card number or Social Security number over the phone, don't give it to them," Enright said. "We never demand immediate payment to avoid a shutoff for one late payment or use Social Security numbers as part of our billing process."

If a customer is behind on his or her bill and at risk of having the power turned off, City Light sends at least two written warn-

ings asking the customer to contact the utility directly to make a payment.

City Light also wants to remind customers:

Seattle City Light accepts credit card payments at a customer's request, but never demands or solicits credit card information to pay a bill.

Seattle City Light does not call customers on weekends about their utility account.

Seattle City Light employees carry identification with the

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# Small Business

### An invitation to a Tour

The U.S. SBA Seattle District Office invites small business owners, entrepreneurs, and small business resource providers to attend the Small Business Jobs Act (SBJA) Tour on Wednesday, April 13th at the Holiday Inn at Seattle – SeaTac International Airport. The SBJA has 19 provisions which will directly impact how small businesses receive the contracting, financing, and technical assistance available

through the Federal government. On Sept. 27, 2010, President Obama signed into law the Small Business Jobs Act (SBJA), the most significant piece of small business legislation in over a decade. The new law is providing critical resources to help small businesses continue to drive economic recovery and create jobs. The new law extended the successful SBA enhanced loan provisions, offered billions more in lending

support and tax cuts, and expanded other opportunities, such as government contracting, access to capital, and exporting, for entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Accordingly, SBA will be hosting a Small Business Jobs Act Tour that will cover 13 cities. The objective of the tour is to provide information and receive input on SBJA pro-

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