

## Auditor

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lying. Kelley paid an undisclosed amount to settle the suit.

As part of another lawsuit, in which Kelley sued for wrongful termination and defamation, his former employer accused him of stealing a painting from the office.

Kelley, meanwhile, has tried to turn the tables on Watkins, who has claimed in the voter's guide that he has done more than 150 performance audits. Kelley noted that the auditor's office hasn't even done that many

Kelley was never charged, denied the theft and said he was paid in a settlement.

In his voter's guide, Kelley lists himself as a past president of a Fortune 500 company. He later said he was not president of the entire First American company but served as president of two of its divisions.

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Watkins said the performance audits he's done go by different names and procedures in the private sector. But he said the work as a business consultant focuses on ways to improve performance and efficiencies.

He declined to provide names of his clients, citing non-disclosure agreements and fears that Kelley would attack the firms.

Both Kelley and Watkins have a range of experience in the private and public sectors. Watkins unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 2010. Kelley was first elected to the state Legislature in 2006.

Watkins won the August primary with 46 percent of the vote. The remaining votes were split among three Democrats, with Kelley narrowly beating state Sen. Craig Pridemore.

## Hemp

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Vermont and West Virginia — have passed laws allowing hemp cultivation or research, and supporters of the latest measures say they would be another shot across the federal government's bow.

Oregon's earlier law, passed in 2009, allows the state to regulate hemp production; the initiative on the ballot next month, Measure 80, would allow unregulated hemp production.

While medical marijuana patients and those who grow for recreational use have been willing to risk federal prosecution, a viable hemp crop would be much larger than many of those grow operations, putting farmers at risk of severe mandatory minimum sentences in federal court.

Hemp and marijuana are the same species, cannabis sativa, but are genetically distinct. Hemp has a negligible content of THC, the psychoactive compound that gives marijuana users a high. It's also grown differently, in tightly packed plots to maximize stalk height rather than widely spaced to maximize branching and flowering.

Marijuana growers generally don't want their plants anywhere near hemp fields because cross-pollination would create less potent marijuana, so the notion of farmers hiding marijuana plants among their hemp crop isn't much of a concern.

But Steve Freng, prevention treatment manager for the Northwest High Intensity

Drug Trafficking Area, a federally funded antidrug effort, said having legalized hemp would nevertheless make marijuana enforcement trickier.

"What comes to mind immediately is how difficult it would be to regulate and oversee an industry like that," he said. "At this point in states that have medical marijuana, a good amount of marijuana is overproduced. It's not unusual for growers to sell out of state."

Freng questioned whether there's a serious market for hemp in the U.S.

A Colorado corn farmer who serves in the state Legislature, Republican state Sen. Greg Brophy, suggested

hemp's commercial potential could be hampered by high prices for corn, wheat and soybeans. Growing corn right now is "like owning your own ATM," he said.

For most of U.S. history, hemp was an important agricultural product used for rope, fabric and even the paper Thomas Jefferson used to draft the Declaration of Independence.

But competition arose, first from the cotton gin, which made cotton easier to process, and then from synthetic fibers in the early 20th century. Americans became more concerned about the availability of marijuana, and the federal government

The passage of the measures would create the familiar clash with federal law, which prohibits growing the plant for industrial, recreational or medicinal purposes

imposed severe restrictions on hemp.

There was a brief resurgence during World War II, when the U.S. Department of Agriculture launched a "Hemp for Victory" campaign to replace Southeast Asian fiber sources cut off by the Japanese, but there has been no commercial hemp production in the U.S. since the 1950s, accord-

ing to a January report from the Congressional Research Service. Technically, the DEA is authorized to grant farmers special permits to grow hemp. It just never does.

At least 30 countries produce hemp commercially, and most of the hemp imported into the U.S. is grown in China, Canada and Europe.

Rough industry estimates suggest that a few hundred million dollars' worth of hemp products, such as soaps, body lotions and hemp granola, are sold in the U.S. every year.

All of it is imported, which maddens

David Bronner, chief executive of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap based in Escondido, Calif. His company uses 20 tons of hempseed oil in soaps every year and has contributed \$50,000 to Washington's campaign and \$50,000 to Colorado's.

"The Canadian farmers are laughing at us all the way to the bank," Bronner said. "We give \$100,000 a year to the Canadians. If American farmers could grow industrial hemp here, we'd recognize 25 percent savings, for sure."

That kind of talk intrigues farmers like Ted Durfey, who has a seed press at his Sunnyside, Wash., farm to help turn the canola and flax he grows into biofuel.

"If it's sanctioned, it would lend itself pretty well to enhancing our local economy," Durfey said. "But I'm definitely not going to grow a commodity that's illegal under federal law."

Another central Washington farmer, Tom Stahl, said that if the initiative passes, he'd likely grow it until federal authorities caught on and warned him not to.

## Pet Palooza

Musician Whitney Monge' performs at the Pet Treat Pantry Palooza, a celebration of a program that helps supply pet food to the Rainier Valley Food Bank. The event, which was held Oct. 6 at Genesee Park, was sponsored by Blue Dog Bakery which will donate a box of dog treats for every specially marked box purchased through December 2012. The celebration featured free hot dogs, live music, complimentary dog nail clipping and caricatures by artist Vincent Yee.



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

## Schools

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rates of \$10 to \$20 an hour for extra help, the requests have cost the district \$4,000 to \$8,000.

The deferred action program allows immigrants age 30 and younger to request a two-year reprieve from deportation risk. Applicants must have moved to the country before age 16; graduated from high school, enrolled in college or served in the military; kept a clean criminal record; and lived in the United States since 2007.

School records, both high school transcripts and cumulative elementary school

School districts in the Yakima valley have waiting lists of as long as a month to keep up with the crush of records requests

enrollment data, help prove some of those requirements.

The Obama administration announced the program in June and began accepting applications Aug. 15.

Nationwide, more than 82,000 people had

applied as of Sept. 13, according to the most recent statistics from the Department of Homeland Security. Only 29 had been approved, but officials warned that paperwork and background checks could take months.

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In Grandview, Romero calls the surge of requests exciting, exhausting and touching.

For example, she had to tell one 24-year-old graduate anxious to continue his college education that he would not receive his data in time for an upcoming meeting with his attorneys.

"He was almost in tears," she said. "It's quite heartbreaking. As excited as I am for him, it's really draining us."