

# OPINION

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## The LEADER

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### OTHER VIEW | SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

## Privacy, technology facing off again

The tension between new technology and individual privacy is as old as Silicon Valley. Each advance that allows or impels us to share information or seek windows into others' lives is scary at first. Often the fears blow over as benefits become clear - but there will be limits to the degree that privacy and civil liberties will be given up, and individuals should have a right to make the choice for themselves.

The latest frontier is facial recognition technology, which tech companies such as Facebook hope will help ramp up profits. And well they should - as long as users' participation is an option.

Facebook announced Friday that it would switch off its facial recognition feature in Europe by Oct. 15, and it is deleting facial recognition data it has compiled there. Countries including Germany expressed concerns that Facebook was breaking European privacy laws.

A Facebook spokesman told the Los Angeles Times that the company is committed to "best practice in data protection compliance." But it's clear that not all European users were aware of how or even whether their data was being collected and used.

Millions of people are willing to share practically every detail of their private lives with their on-line friends and family, if not the entire world. Others find that stunning. Some would love it if a company took their picture as they walked into a store, used facial recognition technology

to identify them and then instantly offered them store discounts through their smart phones, based on their buying habits. Others abhor the thought that businesses and individuals have the ability to stalk their every move.

The most worrisome aspect of facial recognition technology isn't personal or business use, in our view. It's the potential for government to use cameras and satellites to track citizens' whereabouts.

At a Senate hearing in July, Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., expressed concern that the federal government could use facial recognition technology to identify and potentially jail peaceful protesters.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has reportedly compiled a database of more than 13 million photographs of criminals. It isn't far-fetched to envision an FBI has a database with the photo of every American so each could be tracked at will.

The Federal Trade Commission has promised to issue a best practices guide this year for companies using facial recognition technology. It should include the ability for Americans to opt out of the feature.

And Congress should be writing law to protect individuals' privacy. Law enforcement agencies have accepted limitations on the use of wiretaps and GPS information. Individuals should have the same reasonable protections against abuse of facial recognition technology.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Ginalski just too expensive

To the editor | I wish to thank the school board for the consideration given the taxpayers in turning down the utility tax. It would have been a great burden for those of us that are on fixed incomes and are already taxed to death.

However, the thought of Barry Nicholson that the tax should be implemented no matter the cost to the taxpayer is beyond comprehension. This act should be remembered by the voters when he is up for re-election.

You school district voters who voted out of office the only person that was working for the taxpayers, Tom O'Brien, should be ashamed. Mr. O'Brien should be encouraged to run in the next election.

I do not understand the 5.5 percent raise in pay for Mr. Ginalski which other have voiced their disapproval about. Mr. Ginalski was hired five years ago for a salary of \$150,000. He will be making a total of \$241,452 this year. That is an increase of \$91,452.

Under his tenure we have seen several schools closed, dozens of C-PP employees' jobs terminated, athletic programs canceled, a drop in student enrollment and a \$97.7 million palace being built on the former Houghton Plot dump.

Mr. Wexell stated that Mr. Ginalski has accomplished much during his watch. He sure has, but I don't consider it for the good. I might add he lives in Chemung County - no C-PP taxes to pay.

I have stated Mr. Ginalski's salary is \$241,452. The Chief Justice of the United States has a salary of \$223,500; that is \$17,952 less. And the salary of the Vice President of the United States is \$230,700; that is \$10,752 lower than Mr. Ginalski.

I would wager that the burden of work for the Vice President and the Chief Justice is far beyond that of our superintendent.

**Lester H. Betts**

Painted Post

### GUEST VIEW | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA

## An abundance of fall tourism

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo recently brought together a group of state tourism experts, Cabinet members and newspaper reporters to spend a day canoeing, fishing and hiking in the state's vast Adirondack Park.

One of the many great facts about the Adirondack Park that I've always found most striking is this one: Its 6.1 million acres constitute a land area greater than Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Glacier and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks combined. Amazing.

And an amazing New York state resource that we would like to see become even better. Of course the governor's gathering wasn't really about a day of fishing at its heart. It was about promoting New York state tourism, one of our premiere assets and strengths.

We're fortunate in the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions to hang our collective hat on tourism as a cultural and economic anchor. From the Corning Glass Museum to Watkins Glen State Park, from Hammondsport, America's Coolest Small Town, to Mark Twain Country, and from cheese-making to a world-class wine industry, tourism is big business around here - and we're lucky for it.



SEN. TOM O'MARA

We can never do enough to promote it.

The opportunities are endless.

In late summer, for example, my father and I visited Sunset View Creamery in Schuyler County to sample a few locally made cheeses and help bring attention to an important sector of New York state's agricultural industry. (As a brief aside, it was also an opportunity for both of us to reflect on our own family's history in New York state cheese making. My grandfather John O'Mara was a cheese maker who owned and operated the Colosse Cheese Factory in Oswego County in the early 20th century. My father, also named John, grew up working in the factory throughout his high school and college years. Colosse Cheese is still produced in Pulaski although our family's no longer involved in the business.)

But back to Sunset View Creamery ([www.sunset-viewcreamery.com](http://www.sunset-viewcreamery.com)). It's a farmstead and artisan cheese production facility that's operated on

Hoffmans Dairy, a century farm located in Odesa, just south of Watkins Glen. Fourth- and fifth-generation Hoffmans operate the farm, and all the milk used in their cheese making comes from their predominantly Holstein herd.

My father and I appreciated the recent hospitality of Ron Hoffman and his family, as well as the opportunity to sample their great cheeses. It was also an occasion, like I said, for my father to remember his father, for me to recall my grandfather, and for all of us to reflect on how far the industry's come since the first half of the 20th century.

Cheese making has long played an important role in so many upstate New York communities, including Schuyler County. The great news is that it's still going strong and has an exciting and promising future. For more information on local cheese makers, including dates for open houses being held during the upcoming Columbus Day weekend and other fall events, visit the Finger Lake Cheese Trail online at [fcheesetrail.com](http://fcheesetrail.com).

Remember it's a great complement to the wine trails of the Finger Lakes ([www.fingerlakeswinesociety.com/trails/index.html](http://www.fingerlakeswinesociety.com/trails/index.html), or [www.fingerlakes.com/wine](http://www.fingerlakes.com/wine)). Or the

Finger Lakes Beer Trail, which helps to show off our growing and vibrant craft beer industry ([www.fingerlakesbeertrail.com](http://www.fingerlakesbeertrail.com)). Evidence of the success - and especially the future promise - of these two industries came with last week's announcement that the governor will convene a "Wine and Beer Summit" at the Capitol in late October. It'll be an opportunity for regional leaders and industry representatives to share ideas and suggestions for how the state can help strengthen the industries, similar to New York's first-ever and well-received "Yogurt Summit" in August.

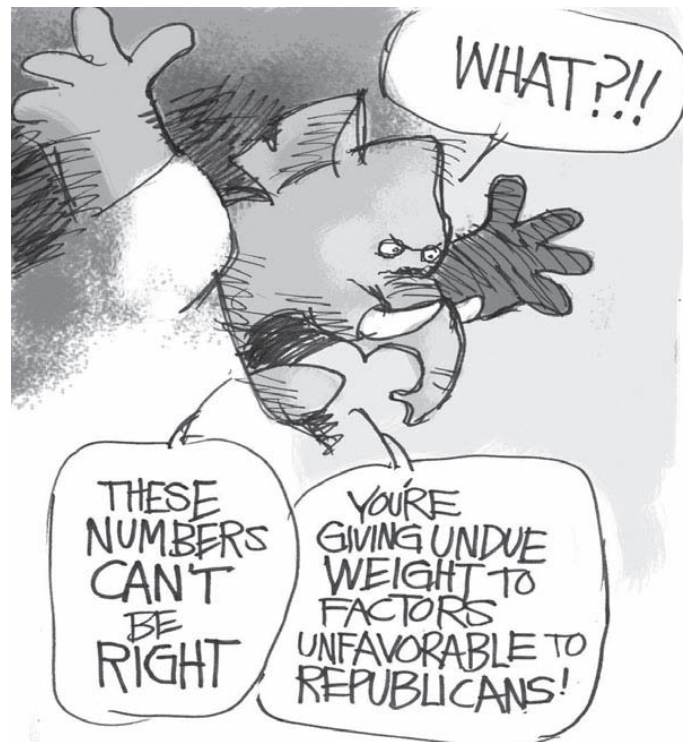
While you're out and about this autumn, keep in mind that many of the region's farmers' markets continue to operate into October. For more information, visit [www.ilovethefingerlakes.com/basics/agriculture-farmersmarkets.htm](http://www.ilovethefingerlakes.com/basics/agriculture-farmersmarkets.htm)

Don't forget our apple growers ([www.nyapplecountry.com](http://www.nyapplecountry.com)). It's apple picking season!

In other words, we offer an abundance of fall tourism opportunities and you can read all about them through the state's official tourism website, [www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com), or [www.fingerlakes.com](http://www.fingerlakes.com).

*Tom O'Mara is a Republican state senator from Big Flats.*

### ANOTHER VIEW



### OTHER VIEW | LOS ANGELES TIMES

## Medical marijuana policy remains hazy

Late last year, U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. affirmed the Obama administration's long-standing policy of taking a hands-off approach to states that had legalized medical marijuana, saying federal resources wouldn't be expended on enforcement actions as long as purveyors obeyed state law. On Tuesday, Los Angeles got a taste of the current interpretation of that policy - which is that our dispensaries are out of bounds.

Federal officials started their first major operation in L.A. by raiding dispensaries, filing court papers to seize properties rented to medical marijuana sellers and sending letters to property owners and operators of 67 dispensaries warning them to shut down within two weeks or face similar treatment.

More such actions are promised.

Holder and his boss, President Obama, almost never discuss the politically poisonous topic of medical marijuana unless pressed, but in June, Holder was pressed. Under questioning from the House Judiciary Committee, he explained the reason for the recent crackdowns in California and the 16 other states that allow medicinal cannabis. Some operators, Holder said, have "come up with ways in which they are taking advantage of these state laws and going beyond that which the states have authorized."

But in California's case, how can he tell? The medical marijuana laws in this state are such a muddle that we're in a haze about who's in compliance and who isn't. That situation - which stems directly

from a failure by both the Legislature and Attorney General Kamala Harris to better define the law - has produced a fiasco in Los Angeles, where the City Council passed an ordinance to dramatically pare the number of medical marijuana dispensaries, abandoned it after a court decision indicated such limits were illegal, attempted to ban dispensaries entirely, and now must decide how to address a ballot measure to overturn the ban.

In the face of this chaos, the federal crackdown is, to some, good news - finally, definitive action is being taken to stem the uncontrollable expansion of medical marijuana franchises. But the raids are likely to drive away businesspeople who want to run clean, safe storefronts serving sick people, sending the trade further

underground and into the hands of a more criminal element. That's why we urge Holder to rein in the four California U.S. attorneys spearheading the aggressive new stance, at least until we have some clarity on what's allowable and what isn't.

The silence from Sacramento as this mess worsens is inexcusable. Federal law bans marijuana, and U.S. attorneys don't have to take guidance from state officials. But if California's attorney general issued guidelines that clearly separated legitimate distributors from lawbreakers, and the Legislature passed laws on licensing and regulating medical marijuana shops, it would probably focus their attention only on operators who are violating state laws. That is, after all, still the official Obama administration policy.

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