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After COVID Aid, Homelessness Surges

By Kathleen Ronayne, Michael Casey and **Geoff Mulvihill**

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—In California's capital, massive tent encampments have risen along the American River and highway overpasses have become havens for homeless people, whose numbers have jumped a staggering nearly 70 percent over two years.

Among the 9,300 without a home is Eric Santos, who lost his job at a brewery and was evicted from his apartment in July. Now he carries a list of places where free meals are available and a bucket to mix soap and water to wash his hands, and to sit on.

"The bucket is part of my life now," the 42-year-old said, calling it his version of Wilson, the volleyball that becomes Tom Hanks' companion in the film Castaway. Cities big and small around the

country are facing a similar experience to Sacramento.

Fueled by a long-running hous-

the pandemic, the overall number usually rely on volunteer censusof homeless in a federal government report to be released in coming months is expected to be higher than the 580,000 unhoused before the coronavirus outbreak, the National Alliance to End Homelessness said.

The Associated Press tallied results from city-by-city surveys conducted earlier this year and found the number of people without homes is up overall compared with 2020 in areas reporting results so far.

Some of the biggest increases are in West Coast cities such as Sacramento and Portland, Ore., where growing homelessness has become a humanitarian crisis and political football over the past decade. Numbers are also up about 30 percent in South Dakota and Prince George's County, Maryland, and 15 percent in Asheville,

The data comes from the Point in Time counts the federal government requires communities to conduct to reflect how many ing shortage, rising rent prices people are without homes on a and the economic hangover from given winter night. The counts

takers and are always imprecise. This year's tallies were conducted amid the pandemic and advocates caution changed counting methods could have thrown off results.

Research has shown places seeing spikes in homelessness often lack affordable housing. Making matters worse, pandemic government relief programs-including anti-eviction measures, emergency rental assistance and a child tax credit that kept people housed who may have been on the streets otherwise-are ending.

Donald Whitehead Jr., executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, said the counts are generally rising more where housing costs are jumping the fastest-but the government's response makes a difference, too.

Some communities where numbers are down, he said, "are really looking at housing people versus criminalizing people and putting them in encampments."

In Sacramento, where rents are soaring and officials disagree on

(See AFTER COVID AID, P. 2)



THE PROBLEM HAS GOTTEN MUCH WORSE AFTER COVID AID ENDED

Tiana, 8, Hopes Book Will Inspire Others

Bv Danielle Desouza

An eight-year-old girl who wrote a book about her natural hair hopes others will be inspired to love who they are, amid calls for better black representation and more "identityaffirming" characters in children's literature.

Tiana Akoh-Arrey, from southeast London, wrote her first book at the age of seven, called My Afro: Twin Best Friends, which was published in December 2021 and is about her and her best friend who had the same type of hair as her, "while everyone else has straight, silky or curly hair".

Speaking during Black History Month, which runs in October in the UK, Tiana told the PA news agency: "I wanted to show that people who have my type of hair have challenges and sometimes find it hard to love their hair texing it look beautiful.'

While in year one, Tiana took part in a writing programme called Mrs Wordsmith which gave her the confidence to start writing her own "little books".

She gave her work to her mother Dorothy, 39, who contacted Conscious Dreams Publish-

With help from the publishing girls to find the courage to "fol-

By Hannah Schoenbaum

Associated Press/Report for America

North Carolina's two top Dem-

ocratic state officials are urging

By Michael Kunzelman and

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP)—

A North Carolina man pleaded

guilty Thursday to plotting with

other members of the far-right

Proud Boys to violently stop the transfer of presidential power

after the 2020 election, making

him the first member of the ex-

tremist group to plead guilty to a

Jeremy Joseph Bertino, 43, has

agreed to cooperate with the Jus-

tice Department's investigation

of the role that Proud Boys lead-

ers played in the mob's attack

on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, a

Bertino's cooperation could

ratchet up the pressure on other

Proud Boys charged in the siege,

including former national chair-

The guilty plea comes as the founder of the another extrem-

man Henry "Enrique" Tarrio.

federal prosecutor said.

seditious conspiracy charge.

Alanna Durkin Richer

Cooper Pushes To Legalize Pot Possession

in light of President Joe Biden's in 2024, shared their support for

pardon Thursday of thousands of the president's decision at a Fri-

Americans convicted of "simple day task force meeting on racial

four associates charged sepa- and violence if necessary to do

company, the book sold more low their passion". than 700 copies, which Tiana said "meant a lot to me", and she has plans to publish more.

ture plus all the struggle of mak- on social media and also little can get in life, even if you are a girls all around the world have been showing pictures of my book saying that they love it and feel empowered to wear their afro hair to school, so that makes me really happy," she added.

Despite being "surprised at first" that her book was published, because of her age, Tiana said she wanted other young

possession" under federal law.

to decriminalize the possession the state's top lawyer who is

hind bars.

thorities.

ist group, the Oath Keepers, and group was prepared to use force

court papers say.

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper

the Republican-led legislature and Attorney General Josh Stein, 2020 after George Floyd's mur-

of small amounts of marijuana considering a run for governor enforcement officers, attorneys,

NC Proud Boy Pleads Guilty

rately in the Jan. 6 attack stand

trial on seditious conspiracy—a

rarely used Civil War era offense

that calls for up to 20 years be-

with other Proud Boys in Decem-

ber 2020 and was stabbed during

a fight, according to court docu-

ments. He was not in Washington

for the Jan. 6 riot because he was

still recovering from his injuries,

Bertino participated in plan-

ning sessions in the days lead-

ing up to Jan. 6 and received

encrypted messages as early as

Jan. 4 indicating that Proud Boys

were discussing possibly storm-

ing the Capitol, according to au-

in court says that Bertino un-

derstood the Proud Boys' goal

in traveling to Washington was

to stop the certification of Joe

Biden's victory and that the

A statement of offense filed

Bertino traveled to Washington

"Follow your passion and just use your imagination as something that can help you in life be-"I've had a lot of comments cause you never know where you child," she said.

"More importantly... love yourself and be accepting of others - we're all unique.'

Enomwoyi Damali, an educational psychologist and author who lives in Lewisham, south London, spoke to PA about the importance of having diverse characters in children's books.

"A book should be like a mir-

equity and criminal justice.

Established by Cooper in June

On Jan. 6, Bertino applauded

the insurrection from afar and

sent messages encouraging other

Proud Boys to keep pushing to-

ON THE CUSP OF SAVING THE

CONSTITUTION," he wrote on a

social media account. That night,

he messaged Tarrio, "You know

Bertino also pleaded guilty to a

charge of unlawfully possessing

firearms in March 2022 in Bel-

mont, N.C. U.S. District Judge

Timothy Kelly agreed to release

Bertino pending a sentencing

hearing, which wasn't immedi-

Justice Department prosecutor

"DO NOT GO HOME. WE ARE

ward the Capitol.

we made this happen."

ately scheduled.

der, the 24-member panel of law

ror," the 59-year-old said. "When you hold up a book, you

should see something positive about yourself.

"Now, if day by day, week after week and year after year what you're doing is picking up books and seeing characters that don't look like you, that will consciously or unconsciously affect vour sense of wellbeing, your sense of identity and sense of what you believe you can aspire to achieve.

"And so it's really important that we have positive representation in books ... so when you, as a young black girl, pick up a book and you see that mirror reflected back to you as a young, black, positive character, it's affirming of you and your iden-

The author has published three children's books so far, which she was inspired to write after the death of her father, Cornelius Yearwood, aged 78.

The books feature a central young black female character called Nzingha and her diverse group of friends and explore themes including friendship, kindness, identity and loss, with the author adding she wanted to have a central character that "looked like me in terms of their skin colour and shared my culture heritage".

NC SENATE CANDIDATES TO MEET IN LIKELY ONLY TELEVISED DEBATE

(AP)—The two major-party candidates seeking to succeed retiring North Carolina Republican Sen. Richard Burr are meeting for what is likely their only televised debate.

Democrat Cheri Beasley and Republican Ted Budd agreed to a one-hour debate being held Friday night at a cable television studio in Raleigh.

Budd is a three-term congressman from Davie County who received the endorsement of former President Donald Trump over a year ago. Trump again campaigned on his behalf two weeks ago in Wilmington.

Beasley is a former chief justice of the state Supreme Court and would be the first Black senator for North Carolina if elected. The election outcome could decide which party takes a majority in the current 50-50 Senate.

Budd has said Beasley would push President Joe Biden's agenda that's led to inflation and unchecked immigration. Beasley says Budd would seek extreme abortion restrictions and has voted against efforts to rein in health care costs.

While Beasley's campaign has outraised Budd's, national Republicans have already spent over \$20 million on advertising opposing Beasley. Democrats in Washington haven't been as generous in fight-

DUKE ENERGY PROGRESS FILES NC RATE INCREASE PROPOSAL CHARLOTTE (AP)—Duke Energy Progress formally asked North

Carolina utilities regulators on Thursday to let it raise electric customer rates starting next year, with revenues generated used in part to toughen the electric grid and make it more flexible for renewable The general rate increase request, if approved by the state Utili-

ties Commission, would begin in October 2023. Smaller additional rate increases also are proposed for October 2024 and October 2025. Under the proposal, Duke Energy Progress would seek a cumula-

tive rate increase of 16 percent, with an 18.7 percent increase for residential customers, the company said. Duke Energy Progress is one of Charlotte-based Duke Energy's

two electric subsidiaries in the state. It serves 1.5 million customers in eastern and central North Carolina-including those in Raleigh, Fayetteville and Wilmington—as well as in and near Asheville. A typical Duke Energy Progress residential customer would see

their monthly bill rise from \$126.43 per month to \$141.15 in late 2023, with smaller increases in 2024 and 2025 to \$151.98, according to a news release. Retail sales net revenues would grow by \$615 million through the

proposal. Seventy-five percent of spending over the next three years consists of grid infrastructure improvements, according to the utility. Regulated utilities are permitted to earn a return on their business activity. The commission's Public Staff and customers can challenge the proposal.

Both Duke Energy Progress and Duke Energy Carolinas—which serves a swath of customers that includes those in Charlotte, the Triad and Durham, filed rate cases in 2019. The commission approved partial increases in 2021, with settlements to address costs to clean

Duke Energy Carolinas likely will propose its own new rate case in early 2023, spokesperson Bill Norton said.

Duke Energy Progress said the proposal would create a new program for low-income customers that could reduce their bills by \$42 per month. And new energy efficiency programs offered to all customers can help generate savings that "significantly offset" rate increases, the release said.

The Utilities Commission is currently weighing how it will permit the two subsidiaries to retool electric-generating capacity to comply with a law that demands carbon dioxide emission reductions by 2030 and 2050. Any approved plan will result in rate increases over time,

COURT: UNC STUDENTS CAN SEEK COVID SEMESTER REIMBURSEMENT

(AP)—Students at the University of North Carolina can continue their lawsuit seeking monetary damages for fees they paid before in-person fall 2020 classes were canceled due to COVID-19, a state appeals court ruled.

(See **STATE BRIEFS**, P. 2)

A three-judge panel of the Court of Appeals decided on Tuesday

civil rights advocates and state officials had recommended in a 2020 report that state lawmakers replace the misdemeanor charge for possessing up to 1.5 ounces of marijuana with a civil offense on

par with a traffic infraction. The General Assembly did not act on this recommendation.

"Conviction of simple possession can mar people's records for life and maybe even prevent them from getting a job," Cooper told the task force Friday. "The General Assembly didn't pass your recommendations on this last session, but I believe they should. North Carolina should take steps to end this stigma.'

Acknowledging that drug charging practices disproportionately impact people of color, Biden called on governors Thursday to issue similar pardons for those convicted of state marijuana offenses, which reflect the vast majority of possession cases. Although no one is currently in federal prison solely for "simple possession" of the drug, according to the White House, Biden said the pardon could help thousands overcome obstacles to renting a home or finding work. His pardon excludes those convicted of possessing marijuana with intent to distribute.

Cooper, who is term-limited and cannot seek reelection in 2024, said he has asked lawyers to examine state law and deter-

Erik Kenerson said sentencing guidelines for Bertino's case recommend a prison sentence ranging from four years and three months to five years and three mine whether North Carolina

(See **LEGALIZE POT,** P. 2)

(See NC PROUD BOY, P. 2)

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After COVID Aid, Homelessness Surges—continued from page 1

homelessness has jumped 68 percent from 2020 to 2022—the most among larger cities reporting results so far.

The surge has been driven in part by the city's legacy of being more affordable than other California cities, which has attracted new residents, overwhelming the housing market. People moving out of the San Francisco Bay Area, 90 miles to the southwest, have flooded Sacramento with more potential homeowners and renters,

A Zillow analysis found the average rent in July was \$2,300—a 28 percent increase since July 2019, before the pandemic began. Sacramento County's median income was about \$70,000 in 2020. according to the U.S. Census Bu-

The crisis has deepened even as things have improved in other California cities that have contended for years with homelessness. Sacramento's efforts to address the problem have been marred by

STATE BRIEFS

Continued from page 1

that a trial judge correctly last year refused to dismiss litigation filed by two students against the UNC Board of Governors. The students—Landry Kuehn at UNC-Chapel Hill and the Joseph Lannan at North Carolina State University—also sued on behalf of other students at the two schools who paid similar fees.

The lawsuit alleged a breach of contract occurred when the students who registered for the fall 2020 semester paid health service, campus security and parking fees among others with an understanding that services and benefits would be provided, but they weren't. The students alleged they failed to receive proper refunds when campuses like N.C. State and UNC-Chapel Hill moved in-person classes online, "evicted all students from on-campus housing" and curtailed health services.

Lannan is due about \$1,500 and Kuehn about \$1,125, the lawsuit alleges, while other students at their schools at that time should be recompensed, too. The board's lawyers have written previously that students had been informed that the instruction format during the semester could change and that fee refunds would not be forthcoming if that occurred.

The Board of Governors argued on the appeal in part that the lawsuit should be dismissed on grounds of sovereign immunity, which blocks such litigation against state government unless an agency

Writing for the panel, Court of Appeals Chief Judge Chris Donna Stroud said the plaintiffs adequately alleged the existence of an implied contract, which can waive such immunity. Judges Chris Dillon and Darren Jackson joined in Stroud's opinion. The UNC board could ask the state Supreme Court to take up the case, but the justices aren't obligated to do so given that the opinion was unanimous.

North Carolina campuses similarly eliminated online classes and closed dormitories during the spring 2020 semester, but the General Assembly passed a law that year giving public and private colleges immunity from pandemic-related legal claims for tuition and fees. But it didn't apply to claims in future semesters.

JUDGE: ITG IS LIABLE FOR FLORIDA TOBACCO SETTLEMENT **PAYMENTS**

DOVER, Del. (AP)—Cigarette manufacturer ITG Brands assumed liability for tobacco settlement payments to the state of Florida when it acquired four brands from Reynolds American in 2015, a Delaware judge has ruled. Vice Chancellor Lori Will ruled Friday that, as a result, ITG must

compensate Reynolds American for losses due, granting summary judgment in favor of Reynolds.

Reynolds sold the Kool, Winston, Salem and Maverick brands to ITG in 2014 to gain federal regulators' approval of its acquisition of Lorillard Inc.

Before the sale closed, Reynolds American affiliate R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. was making payments under a preexisting settlement agreement with Florida for reimbursement of smoking-related health care costs. After closing, Reynolds stopped making payments for the four brands it no longer owned.

The asset purchase agreement required ITG to use reasonable best efforts to join the Florida settlement and make annual payments to Florida for sales of the brands it acquired from Reynolds. ITG has yet to join the settlement agreement with Florida or make any pay-

Florida sued Reynolds and ITG and obtained a judgment requiring Reynolds to continue making payments based on ITG's brands, unless and until ITG joined the Florida settlement agreement.

"That judgment on Reynolds amounts to over \$170 million to date and tens of millions of dollars more each year into perpetuity," Will noted. The "unambiguous terms" of the asset purchase agreement support Reynold's arguments that ITG agreed to assume the liability imposed by the Florida judgment and must indemnify Reynolds, she

The ruling comes in a long-running legal battle between Reynolds and ITG, both based in North Carolina. In 2017, a different Court of Chancery judge concluded that ITG's obligation to use its best efforts to try to reach a tobacco settlement agreement with Florida did not end when the sale closed.

Last year, Reynolds asked ITG to compensate Reynolds Tobacco for what it had paid and will pay due to the Florida judgment, but ITG refused. In subsequent litigation, ITG argued unsuccessfully that it had fulfilled its reasonable best efforts obligation and was not required to indemnify Reynolds for the payment liability to Florida.

Last year, in the settlement of a lawsuit brought by the state of Minnesota, ITG agreed that it had assumed obligations under that state's tobacco settlement agreement to make payments for sales of the four brands it acquired from Reynolds. ITG agreed to make payments to Minnesota for 2021 and all future years, while payment liabilities for the period from 2015 to 2020 were split between ITG and Reynolds.

city and county governments.

Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg has made reducing homelessness a priority since taking office in 2017. The city now has more than 900 beds in shelters and motels, compared to about 100 five years ago and has moved to ban single-family zoning, a move that could make it easier to build more housing.

But so far, it hasn't been enough. "People are becoming homeless much faster than we are getting them off the street," Steinberg told the AP.

Santos is among them. He's been able to sign up for food assistance but is still on a waiting list to access other benefits, he said. Each night he hunts for a park bench that feels safe to sleep on. When he lost a suitcase to broken wheels, he got rid of some of his warmer clothing, a decision he regrets as the fall evenings get colder.

"Luckily I've been able to keep afloat with what I have," he said.

Steinberg has advocated for adopting a legal right to shelter and a legal obligation for people to accept it when offered. The approach has drawn some criticism from advocates who say it's just a means of taking the problem out of the public eye without providing meaningful help for those who need it.

County officials voted in August to ban camping along Sacramento's American River Parkway, with a misdemeanor charge for people who don't comply. City voters will decide in November on a

years of squabbles between the ballot measure requiring the city was able to get a subsidized apartto open hundreds more shelter beds. But it would only take effect if the county agrees to pony up money for mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Still, the rise in homelessness is not uniform across the country.

In Boston, the number of people sleeping on the streets and in shelters has dropped 25 percent over two years as advocates focused on finding permanent housing for those on the streets the longest.

In some cities, "housing first' policies intended to move the homeless into permanent homes have paid off. And while the pandemic brought economic chaos. an eviction moratorium, boosted unemployment payments and family tax credits prevented some people from becoming homeless at all.

Along with Boston, numbers have fallen by about 20 percent or more in Houston, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Even in California, homeless counts are down in San Francisco, and growth has slowed significantly in Los Ange-The numbers have also dropped

in California's Orange County, where there have been extensive efforts to remove encampments—though some advocates there question the accuracy of the In Boston, Steven Hamilton

moved into a new apartment in September after decades staying on a friend or relative's couch or in a homeless shelter.

With the help of a program run by the Boston Medical Center, he

ment in a public housing development. His portion of monthly rent is \$281—or about 30 percent of his Social Security payments.

'I'm grateful," he said. "I am not looking to move nowhere else. I am going to stay here until eternity. I lost a lot of stuff. I'm not going through that again."

After what he called a "horrible nightmare" in a shelter with residents injecting drugs in the bathroom, the studio apartment has changed his outlook. He's planning to get furniture, save money for a car and hopes to invite his family for Thanksgiving.

"I have a place I can call my own," he said.

Hamilton's studio apartment is the result of a Boston strategy whereby the city and area nonprofits use extensive outreach to get people who've been on the streets for over a year into apartments and then provide services such as drug treatment and lifeskills training like budgeting with the help of case managers.

Since 2019, annual funding in Boston for homeless programs has jumped from \$31 million to over \$51 million.

Those efforts were bolstered last year by a city program that pulled together a list of homeless individuals to target for housing and other services. The city also moved to shut down one of its biggest homeless encampments, going tent-to-tent to assess the needs of those living there and referring more than 150 to shelters and other housing.

The efforts have not been Angeles contributed.

seamless. There have been reports of a cleared-out tent city re-emerging. And family homelessness numbers, though down from 2020, have ticked up in the

Still, the city has been able to reduce the numbers of homeless people to about 6,000, down 25

percent since 2020. Boston's shelters have become less crowded even as Zillow found the city's average rent rose to \$2,800 this summer—up 13 percent from three years ear-

Housing advocates say prioritizing chronically homeless people ensures funds have the greatest impact, since the longterm homeless spend so much time in shelters. It also costs less to provide permanent housing than temporary shelter.

Lewis Lopez is among the success stories.

After cycling in and out of Boston shelters for several years, Lopez finally secured keys to his own apartment. No longer fearing his possessions would be stolen or he would get into fights over food, the 61-year-old felt he had finally gotten his life back.

"I felt so free, like a ton of bricks were lifted off my shoulders," Lopez said of the studio apartment he has lived in for five years, paid for partly with federal funds.

"I felt like part of society again," he said.

Casey reported from Boston. Mulvihill reported from Cherry Hill, N.J. Kavish Harjai in Los

Cooper Pushes To Legalize—continued from Page 1

can and should take further action to pardon these convictions. The clemency provision of the state constitution grants the governor near-absolute pardoning power.

While federal law still classifies cannabis as a Schedule I drug, 19 states and the District of Columbia have legalized its recreational use, and 37 states and the District of Columbia have legalized its medical use, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. North Carolina, however, has been slow to follow suit.

The Republican-led state Senate passed a bill earlier this year with strong bipartisan support that would have legalized jail and up to \$1,000 in fines, marijuana for medical use with a physician's prescription, if purchased through dozens of tightly regulated dispensaries.

But the bill idled in the House, where many Republicans held reservations about legalizing cannabis in any form. Opponents of the bill warned the health benefits remain uncertain and may not outweigh the health

House Speaker Tim Moore said in June that the chamber would wait until 2023 to reconsider legalizing medical marijuana.

Current state law makes possession of more than 0.5 ounces marijuana at approximately the

without exemptions for medical use. Possession of more than 1.5 ounces is classified as a felony. "People should not have a fed-

eral criminal record for something that is legal in an increasing number of states," Stein said Thursday. "Let's act, and let's get it right. That means decriminalizing adult use, expunging past convictions for simple possession, and including strong protections for kids, no advertising, state controlled sales and putting N.C. farmers first."

Although Black and White North Carolina residents use punishable by up to 45 days in same rate, the task force found

that people of color make up a disproportionate percentage of those convicted of simple possession, paralleling nationwide concerns of racial bias. Roughly 60 percent of North Carolinians convicted for possessing up to half an ounce of marijuana in 2019 were non-White, according to the most recent report.

Hannah Schoenbaum is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow her on Twitter at @H Schoenbaum.

NC Proud Boy Pleads Guilty—continued from Page 1

A trial is scheduled to start in December for Tarrio and four seditious conspiracy: Ethan Norcase names those five defendants and a sixth Proud Boys member as his co-conspirators.

Tarrio's case is among the most serious charged in the attack, which sent lawmakers running and left dozens of officers bloodied and bruised.

Nayib Hassan, one of Tarrio's attorneys, said Bertino's cooperation doesn't change the landscape for his client's case. He described Bertino as "just another individual who is going to be testifying." Tarrio is "still looking forward to his day at

The indictment in Tarrio's case alleges that the Proud Boys held other members charged with meetings and communicated rested Tarrio in Washington two charging document for Bertino's riot, authorities say Proud Boys dismantled metal barricades set up to protect the Capitol and mobilized, directed and led members of the crowd into the build-

Video testimony by Bertino was featured in June at the first hearing by the House committee investigating Jan. 6. The committee showed a clip of Bertino saying that the group's membership "tripled, probably" after Trump's comment at a presidential debate that the Proud Boys should "stand back and stand by."

Tarrio wasn't in Washington

Black church during a protest in December 2020. Tarrio was released from jail on Jan. 14 of this year after serving his five-month sentence for that case.

More than three dozen people charged in the Capitol riot have been identified by federal authorities as leaders, members or associates of the Proud Boys. Two—Matthew Greene and Charles Donohoe—pleaded guilty to conspiring to obstruct an official proceeding, the Jan. 6 joint session of Congress for certifying the Electoral College vote.

Proud Boys members describe

on Jan. 6, but authorities say the group as a politically incorhe helped put into motion the rect men's club for "Western violence that day. Police ar- chauvinists." They have brawled with antifascist activists at ralover encrypted messages to plan days before the riot and charged lies and protests. Vice Media dean, Joseph Biggs, Zachary for the attack in the days leading him with vandalizing a Black co-founder Gavin McInnes, who Rehl and Dominic Pezzola. The up to Jan. 6. On the day of the Lives Matter banner at a historic founded the Proud Boys in 2016, sued the Southern Poverty Law Center for labeling it as a hate group.

Nordean, of Auburn, Wash., was a Proud Boys chapter president and a member of the group's national "Elders Council." Biggs, of Ormond Beach, Fla., is a self-described Proud Boys organizer. Rehl was president of the Proud Boys chapter in Philadelphia. Pezzola is a Proud Boys member from Rochester, New York.

For full coverage of the Capitol riot, go to https://www.apnews. com/capitol-siege/.

Planned Parenthood Pours \$5M Into Vital Race

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Planned Parenthood's political arm announced a \$5 million investment Thursday in North Carolina's battleground races as Democrats fight to preserve the governor's veto power in one of the last abortion access points in the Southeast.

Just 32 days from Election Day, with absentee voting now underway, Planned Parenthood Votes and Planned Parenthood Action PAC North Carolina are targeting 14 legislative swing districts with ads, mailings, phone banks and canvassing. The investment is part of an existing \$50 million national campaign to protect reproductive rights in nine target states — the largest-ever electoral program in its history. Abortions are legal in North

Carolina until 20 weeks of pregnancy, as of an Aug. 17 federal court ruling. But with Republicans just five seats shy of a supermajority in the General Assembly three seats shy in the House and two in the Senate — Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's power to veto more stringent abortion restrictions hinges on the November outcome.

As its neighboring states slash abortion access in the months following the June U.S. Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade, North Carolina has become one of the South's few safe havens for the procedure.

Emily Thompson, deputy director of Planned Parenthood Action

Hundreds of demonstrators rally and march in downtown Raleigh, N.C., June, 24, 2022 in opposition to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision overturning Roe v. Wade. Travis Long Photo

PAC North Carolina, said several of the state's races play a critical role in cementing access to lifesaving care for patients in the Tar Heel state and those traveling from other Southern states where abortion is already banned. The committee's chief priority,

she said, is preventing a Republican supermajority in the General Assembly by focusing attention state Senate races.

and resources on five battleground "If we don't elect reproductive rights champions in five key state

permajority will have the votes to ban abortion in North Carolina," Thompson said. "And if we don't defend two critical North Carolina Supreme Court seats, we will lose our last line of defense against restrictive state laws designed to rob us of our right to make our own health care decisions.'

In an interview this week, GOP state Senate leader Phil Berger said Democrats' accusations that Republicans would fully ban abortion in North Carolina if they obtain veto-proof majorities are Senate races, an anti-abortion sumisguided.

Berger said he is not aware of a General Assembly GOP leader who has said they personally support legislation outlawing abortion outright, with no exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the pa-

"They've not been able to point to anybody because it doesn't exist," Berger said Wednesday. He recently said he preferred approving restrictions on abortions after roughly the first three months of pregnancy.

tient.

House Speaker Tim Moore has said he personally supports restricting abortions once an ultrasound first detects fetal cardiac activity — typically about six weeks after fertilization and before many patients know they're

pregnant. In addition to state legislative races, Planned Parenthood is funneling resources into North Carolina's high-profile U.S. Senate contest and two state Supreme Court races, which have become recent magnets for Democratic groups working to protect abortion rights nationwide.

Democrats currently hold a 4-3 majority on the panel, but with two Democratic seats up for grabs this November, Republicans need to win just one to retake control of the high court for the first time in six years. The candidates have largely avoided the topic of abortion, instead pitching themselves as the neutral solution to an increasingly politicized judiciary.

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of the newspaper.

Business & Finance

Can Biden Save Our Democracy One Factory At A Time?

By Josh Boak

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP)-President Joe Biden is working to create a manufacturing revival—even helping to put factory jobs in Republican territory under the belief it can restore faith in U.S. democracy.

The latest development came Tuesday, when chipmaker Micron announced an investment of up to \$100 billion over the next 20-plus years to build a plant in upstate New York that could create 9,000 factory jobs. It's a commitment made in a GOP congressional district that Biden and the company credited to the recently enacted \$280 billion CHIPS and Science Act.

"Today is another win for America, and another massive new investment in America spurred by my economic plan," Biden said in a statement. "Together, we are building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out, where we lower costs for our families and make it right here in America."

Biden has staked his presidency on what he has called "a historic manufacturing boom," hoping to succeed where past presidents, governors and hordes of other politicians have struggled for a half-century. His goal is to keep opening new factories in states such as Ohio, Idaho, North Carolina and Georgia-where Democrats' footholds are shaky at best. Administration officials say they want to spread the prosperity across the entire country, rather than let it cluster in centers of ex-

By Matt O'Brien and

AP Technology Writers

Barbara Ortutay

the middle class and a sense of pride in the country itself.

The push comes at a precarious moment for the global economy. High inflation in the U.S. has hurt Biden's popularity and prompted recession concerns. Much of Europe faces a possible downturn due to the jump in energy prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, while the International Monetary Fund just downgraded growth in China. The world economy is defined by uncertainty just as Biden has called for investments in clean energy and technology that could take years to pay off.

The president is hopeful that whatever good manufacturing can do for the U.S. economy also turns out to yield political benefits for himself and other Democrats in 2022 and beyond. He told Democratic donors on Friday that the manufacturing and technology investments mean "we have an opportunity" to strengthen the U.S. if Democratic governors and lawmakers are elected this year.

Going into the midterm elections, Biden is telling voters that a factory renaissance has already started because of him. The administration sees its infrastructure spending, computer chip investments and clean-energy incentives as helping domestic manufacturing in unprecedented ways.

Recent academic studies suggest that decades of layoffs due to offshoring contributed to the rise of Republican Donald Trump, with his opposition to Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—immigration and global trade. three states that were key to

Judge Delays Twitter Trial Start

treme wealth, in a bid to renew But many of the authors of the studies doubt that Biden can make these demographic trends disappear through the promise of jobs for skilled workers.

Democratic Rep. Ro Khanna of California would like to see the president make a national tour of factory openings, so that his policies could stick better in voters' minds. Khanna recently attended the groundbreaking of a \$20 billion Intel plant in Ohio and laid out his belief that factory job losses helped cause today's political schisms.

The Silicon Valley congressman reasons that too many Americans have lost faith in a government that seemed indifferent to their own well-being, leading them to embrace hucksters and authoritarians who thrive by exploiting and widening divisions in society.

"How do you get rid of people's jobs and expect them to believe in democracy?" Khanna asks.

Factory jobs have risen during Biden's tenure to the most since 2008 at 12.85 million, yet the task of steadying the country's middle class and its democratic institutions is far from complete. The industrial Midwest has yet to recover the factory jobs shed in the pandemic, let alone decades of layoffs in which the economic challenges evolved into political tensions.

Labor Department data show that Ohio is still 10,000 factory jobs shy of its pre-pandemic level and 350,000 jobs below its total in 2000. The numbers are similarly bad in Michigan,



TOUTING NEW MANUFACTURING—President Biden speaks with IBM Chairman and CEO Arvind Krishna, second from right, and New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D), right, during a tour of an IBM facility in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. [AP Photo/Andrew Harnik]

in November's elections.

The White House says Biden cans solely as consumers inter-

help decide control of Congress as workers and the identity that working gives them.

eschews thinking about Amerithis year's factory groundbreakings is progress, even ested only in the cheapest pric- if the total number of manues and thus promoting outsourc- facturing jobs is unlikely to ing. Instead, his speeches are return to the 1979 peak of 19.55

Biden's 2020 victory and could woven with talk about people million. Intel's computer chip plant being built in New Albany, Ohio, would add 3,000 jobs. What Biden can show with Hyundai would add 8,100 jobs with its electric vehicle plant in Georgia. Wolfspeed, with plans to produce silicon carbide wafers in North Carolina, would

Mich. OKs \$400 Mill For Batteries

By Joey Cappelletti

Associated Press/Report for America

LANSING, Mich. (AP)—A Michigan economic development board approved more than \$400 million in state incentives Wednesday for two battery fac-

tories estimated to cost \$4 billion

and bring 4,500 jobs to the state. Pending approval by state lawmakers, the incentive packages would draw from a fund created less than a year ago to help the automotive state land major business expansions in the wake of news that Dearborn-based Ford Motor Co. would begin building electric vehicle battery plants in

other states.

"We are in global competition to make sure that Michigan stays on the cutting edge of auto manufacturing. Investments like the ones that we've announced today are game changers," Michigan The Associated Press.

A Michigan energy-storage company, Our Next Energy, would be allocated \$236 million in the agreement for an up to \$1.6 billion project in Van Buren Township outside of Detroit. An allocation of \$175 million in incentives will go to a \$2.4 billion factory planned by Chinese manufacturer Gotion for Big Rapids ries would produce components will cost \$1.6 billion and create News Initiative.

used for electric vehicle batter-President Joe Biden showcased

his administration's efforts to promote electric vehicles during an appearance at the Detroit auto show last month when he said Michigan is "building the future of the electric vehicle.

Under his Inflation Reduction Act, the batteries must be built in North America for electric vehicles to be eligible for a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation board passed the incentives Wednesday but legislative approval will need to come through the House and Senate appropriations committees. A timeline for the committees' approval is unknown, according to a spokesman.

The \$2.4 billion Gotion project, which is planned on a 523-acre site in Big Rapids, would create eral Motor projects and another Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said 2,350 jobs with average wages \$101 million in July for Ford Wednesday in an interview with of \$29.42 per hour, according to the company's proposal. The factory will produce cathodes and anodes, two components that are key to electric vehicle batteries. The board also approved a 30year Renaissance Zone that was approved last week by county officials and will save the company an estimated \$540 million.

Our Next Energy says it's 59,000-square-foot factory in northern Michigan. The facto- planned in Van Buren Township

2,112 new jobs making "battery packs for commercial and consumer Electric Vehicles."

Quentin L. Messer Jr., CEO of the state economic development corporation, said the \$400 million in incentives are performancebased, in case targets aren't met.

"If the company performs but then subsequently has nonperformance, and if that nonperformance isn't subsequently remedied, then those state tax dollars will be returned back to the taxpayers of Michigan," Messer said during an interview with the AP.

The Strategic Outreach and Attraction Reserve fund was passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature last year with a \$1.5 billion budget.

To date, \$794 million in incentives have been used from the SOAR funds, including a \$666 million allocation in March for Genprojects. Lawmakers approved an additional \$846 million last week

to replenish the fund. "Michigan has to compete for the jobs of tomorrow and the only way to do that is to be in the game," Curtis Hertel, the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, told the AP last week.

Joey Cappelletti is a corps member for the Associated Press/ Report for America Statehouse

needed time to get the financing merit. Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick, head of the Del-

A judge has delayed a looming

trial between Twitter and Elon

Musk, giving the Tesla CEO more

time to close his \$44 billion deal

to buy the company after months

Musk had asked to halt the

upcoming Delaware court trial,

where the Tesla billionaire was

expected to fare poorly against

Twitter's lawsuit to force him to

complete his April merger agree-

ment. Musk revived the takeover

offer on Monday but said he

spent fighting to get out of it.

aware Chancery Court, said Thursday that Musk and Twitter now have until Oct. 28 to close the deal. A trial originally set for Oct. 17 will happen in November if they don't, she said.

Twitter had asked McCormick earlier Thursday to proceed with refuses to accept the "contractual obligations" of his April

DUBAI, United Arab Emir-

ates (AP)—The U.S. Navy held a

joint drone drill with the United

Kingdom on Friday in the Persian Gulf, testing the same un-

manned surveillance ships that

Iran twice has seized in recent months in the Middle East.

The exercise comes as the U.S.

Navy separately told commercial

shippers in the wider Mideast

that it would continue using

Associated Press

By Jon Gambrell

agreement to buy the social media company and take it private.

Twitter disputed Musk's claim that the San Francisco-based company is refusing to accept his renewed bid. Musk told Twitter earlier this week he's ready to buy the company once again after trying to back out of the deal over the summer, accusing it of refusing to give him information about "spam bot" accounts on the service.

Twitter described Musk's move to delay the trial as "an invitation to further mischief and delay" after his arguments for terminating the agreement haven't had

But after the judge's ruling, that it was ready to close the deal on the share price agreed upon in April: "We look forward to closing the transaction at \$54.20 by October 28th," referring to the price Musk originally offered for each Twitter share.

Brooklyn Law School profesthe trial, saying the billionaire ter wants to be certain that the on Tuesday after Musk made his deal will get done and not allow renewed offer to buy the com-"wiggle room for Musk to walk pany.

against interfering with their op-

American pledge to keep sailing

them—also comes as tensions

between the U.S. and Iran on the

seas remain high amid stalled

negotiations over its tattered nu-

clear deal with world powers and

Republic.

as protests sweep the Islamic

Friday's drill involved two

American and two British war-

The drone drill—and the

away again." Musk attorneys argued that

drones in the region and warned as three Saildrone Explorers,

ships in the Persian Gulf, as well Drones used by the Navy in-

Twitter was disagreeing with the trial delay "based on the theoretical possibility" of Musk not coming up with the financ-ing, which they called "baseless

They said Musk's financial backers "have indicated that they are prepared to honor their commitments" and are working to close the deal by Oct. 28. Musk attorney Alex Spiro said

in a statement Thursday that 'Twitter offered Mr. Musk billions off the transaction price" but Musk "refused because Twitter attempted to put certain selfserving conditions on the deal." Twitter reiterated in a statement He didn't elaborate on what those conditions were. Twitter hasn't described the talks beyond what its attorneys have said in court.

Twitter's shares fell \$1.91, or 3.7 percent, to close at \$49.39 on Thursday. It was the stock's second day of declines following sor Andrew Jennings said Twit- a surge of more than 22 percent

said Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins, a

spokesman for the Navy's Mid-

The drones searched for a tar-

get on the seas, then sent the still

images its cameras captured back

to both the warships and the 5th

Fleet's command center in the is-

land kingdom of Bahrain. There,

an artificial intelligence system

The 5th Fleet launched its un-

manned Task Force 59 last year.

worked through the photos.

east-based 5th Fleet.

U.S., UK Hold Sea Drone Drills In Persian Gulf After Iran Seized Two clude ultra-endurance aerial sur- Saildrones involved in the Red veillance drones, surface ships Sea incident went missing.

drones that resemble torpedoes. But of particular interest for the Navy has been the Saildrone Explorer, a commercially available drone that can stay at sea for long periods of time. That's crucial for a region that has some 5,000 miles of coastline from the Suez Canal, down the Red Sea to the Gulf of Oman, the Strait of Hormuz and into the Persian Gulf.

like the Sea Hawk and the Sea

Hunter and smaller underwater

It's a vast territory that stretches the reach of the Navy and its allies and has seen a series of attacks amid the atomic accord's collapse. It also remains crucial to global shipping and energy supplies, as a fifth of all oil traded passes through the Strait of Hormuz.

"No matter what forces you have, you can't cover all that,' Hawkins told The Associated Press. "You have to do that in a partnered way and an innovative way."

But Iran, which long has equated America's presence in the region to it patrolling the Gulf of Mexico, views the drones with suspicion. In August and September, Iranian regular and paramilitary forces seized Saildrones in both the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, alleging without providing evidence that the drones posed a danger to nearby ships.

Iran ultimately released the drones after the U.S. Navy arrived to the sites. Cameras on the

Iranian state-run media did not acknowledge the drill Friday. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"Recent events notwithstanding, we have been operating these systems safely, responsibly and in accordance with international law and will continue to do so," Hawkins said.

The Navy underscored its plan to keep operating the drones in notices sent to shippers and sailors in the region beginning Thursday. It said that the drones would continue to broadcast their location via their Automatic Identification System trackers.

Ships are supposed to keep their AIS trackers on, but Iranian vessels routinely turn theirs off to mask their movements as Tehran faces international sanctions over its nuclear program and human rights abuses.

"U.S. Navy (drones) are U.S. government property and will lawfully operate in international waters and through straits in accordance with internationally recognized rights and freedoms, the Navy said in the notice. "Any interference with U.S. Navy (drones) will be considered a violation of the norms of international maritime law.'

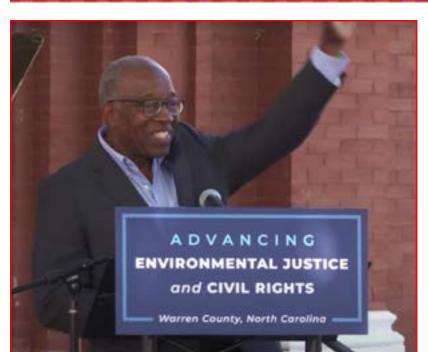
Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongam-



A SAILDRONE EXPLORER IN THE PERSIAN GULF. © AFP / US CENTRAL COMMAND

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The City of Raleigh will accept sealed, written proposals for Property Demolition (as per specifications) of City of Raleigh owned property located at 2000-06 Hawkins St. on October 24, 2022 at 4:00 pm. A mandatory pre-proposal meeting will be held on-site on Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 1:00 pm. Information is also posted on the City's Housing and Neighborhood's website. The City of Raleigh reserves the right to reject all propos-



EPA Launches New National Office Dedicated To Advancing Environmental Justice And Civil Rights

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

For the better part of a month, National Newspaper Publishers Association President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. traveled back and forth to North Carolina.

Chavis helped spearhead plans and events in observance of the 40th anniversary of the Warren County protests.

The 1982 protests occurred after officials dumped polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in predominately Black communities.

On Saturday, Sept. 24, Chavis welcomed U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan, formally introducing him as he announced the establishment of a new national office charged with advancing environmental justice and civil rights.

The creation of the new Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights delivers on President Biden's commitment to "elevate these critical issues to the highest levels of the government and solidifies the agency's commitment to delivering justice and equity for all," EPA officials stated.

Chavis not only introduced Regan to a large crowd in Warrenton that included local and national media, but he also championed the

'When I first coined the term environmental racism, our communities were being deliberately targeted for toxic waste and hazardous materials," Chavis informed the crowd.

"I'm so happy that the administration had the good sense to put a brother over the EPA," he continued.

"This brother not only represents historically Black colleges and universities but the community—a community in Wayne County with a history like Warren County of standing up for justice.

"Thank God we have a freedom fighter at the EPA. Thank God Michael Regan is the administrator of the EPA at a time where we not only connect civil rights with environmental justice, but we will

Regan said the new office plans to dedicate more than 200 EPA staff members across ten regions.

The administrator asserted that their mission is to solve environ-

mental challenges in underserved communities that have been occurring for far too long.

Staffers will engage with communities about environmental justice concerns to understand their needs and Tribal, state, and local

The staff also will manage and disburse "historic levels of grants and technical assistance; work with other EPA offices to incorporate environmental justice into the agency's programs, policies, and processes, as allowed by law; and ensure EPA funding recipients comply with applicable civil rights laws," Regan promised.

The Biden-Harris administration will seek Senate confirmation of

an assistant administrator to lead the new office. 'President Biden and I have been clear: we must ground our work

to address the climate crisis and our greatest environmental challenges in justice and equity," said Vice President Kamala Harris. The establishment of a new office dedicated to advancing en-

vironmental justice and civil rights at EPA will ensure the lived experiences of underserved communities are central to our decisionmaking while supporting community-driven solutions.

From day one, Regan said Biden and EPA had been committed to improving environmental justice and civil rights.

Ensuring that underserved and overburdened communities are at

the forefront of our work," Regan insisted. With the launch of a new national program office, we are embed-

ding environmental justice and civil rights into the DNA of EPA and ensuring that people who've struggled to address their concerns see action to solve the problems they've been facing for generations.'

The new office will oversee the implementation and delivery of a \$3 billion climate and environmental justice block grant program created by the Inflation Reduction Act, a critical component of the law's historic \$60 billion investment in environmental justice.

The office also will ensure EPA's implementation of other funding programs provided by the Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and regular appropriations meet or exceed the President's Justice40 Initiative.

Administration officials said the new office counts as the latest significant action under Biden's aggressive approach to embedding environmental justice, civil rights, and equity across the government.

It follows the launch of several initiatives designed to address the impacts of those living in underserved communities overburdened by pollution.

Initiatives include the establishment of the first-ever White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council (WHEJAC); the launch of the Justice40 Initiative, which aims to provide 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments relating to climate change, clean energy, and related areas to disadvantaged communities; and more than 200 policy actions to move Biden's ambitious environmen-

tal justice and civil rights agenda forward. The EPA created the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights Office by merging three existing programs at the agency—the Office of Environmental Justice, the External Civil Rights Compliance Office, and the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Cen-

Officials said the new office would:

Improve and enhance the agency's ability to infuse equity, civil rights, and environmental justice principles and priorities into all EPA practices, policies, and programs.

Support the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people concerning the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies regardless of race, color, national origin, or income.

Engage communities with environmental justice concerns and increase support for community-led action through grants and techni-

Enforce federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (including limited-English

proficiency), sex; disability; or age by applicants for and recipients of federal financial assistance from EPA. Provide services and expertise in alternative dispute resolution, environmental conflict resolution, consensus-building, and collabora-

tive problem-solving. "This is a historic day. Not just for Warren County, North Carolina,

where the environmental justice movement began, but for the millions of Americans across this country who have been demanding and fighting tirelessly for environmental justice for decades," North Carolina Democratic Rep. G.K. Butterfield stated.

"I commend President Biden, Vice President Harris, and EPA Administrator Michael Regan on their work to create the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights.

Butterfield continued:

'Today's announcement, which comes on the heels of the historic climate and environmental justice investments in the Inflation Reduction Act, is another bold example that the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress will ensure every community has a voice and the investments needed to grow and thrive.

"Working together, we will solve the climate crisis and make America's clean energy economy the envy of the world."



The Left Needs To Leave Trump Behind On **Trade**

By Joel Schlosberg

William Lloyd Garrison Center

"GOP Needs to Leave Trump Behind on Trade" proclaimed the Wall Street Journal opinion page on October 3. The Cato Institute's Jeb Hensarling offered "a refresher course on the dangers of protectionism" to Republicans who have yet to reckon with the economic losses stemming from Trump's full-throated embrace of tariffs—or to reconcile their abandonment of Reagan's free-trade rhetoric with talking points about "freedom of speech, free enterprise and the freedom to bear arms.

I'm not holding my breath. The Bush administration's foreign policy blunders haven't impelled the GOP to rediscover the noninterventionism of its earlier Congressional leaders such as Robert Alphonso Taft Sr., Howard Homan Buffett and Mark Hatfield. (Hensarling cites Adam Smith's "national-security exceptions to the freetrade rule," making a concession to current Sinophobia. Hopefully a revived Adam Smith wouldn't take exception to Tetris, dubbed 'glasnost in a computer game" by AMIGA Plus magazine in 1989, as exemplary of the exchange across the Iron Curtain that thawed the

That conservatives would neglect their traditions worth preserving is at least understandable in the short-memory world of partisan politics. Far more puzzling is why the trade policies of the Trump Tower landlord live rent-free in the heads of those who purport to despise everything he stands for.

There have been some sharp jabs at Trump's views on trade: During his first month in office, Vox's "Zero-sum Trump" took a deep dive into Donald's deep obliviousness to the gains from trade in markets with more room to grow than NYC's tightly regulated real estate. Yet the issue barely registered in the contentious half-decade

Perhaps it was simply lost in the noise. Or the left-of-center may have gotten too used to demonizing Reagan to grasp the magnitude of the shift from "tear down this wall" to "build the wall." Bernie Sanders told Vox that immigration freedom was "a right-wing proposal" which "would make everybody in America poorer" a month into Trump's campaign.

Sanders should have taken a page from Noam Chomsky's 2007 tome What We Say Goes, which observed that "Cuba and Venezuela are doing exactly what we were all taught we're supposed to do in graduate courses in economics: they're pursuing their comparative advantage." Over a century earlier, Vilfredo Pareto had noted that "the workers of [England] enjoy much greater well-being than the workers of the European continent" due to free trade making food affordable, and Benjamin Tucker made a socialist case against "the tariff monopoly.

At the end of George W. Bush's first term, libertarian author James Bovard explained that "the notion of 'free trade'—but only with nationalities that American politicians bless—is a charade. This is like proclaiming freedom of the press, and then adding that people can buy books only from publishers specifically approved by the U.S. Congress." How many election cycles will it take for American voters to see through the sham?

New Yorker Joel Schlosberg is a senior news analyst at The William Lloyd Garrison Center for Libertarian Advocacy Journalism.



My Zero-Sum Hummers

By Tom H. Hastings

Portland State University

I adore "my" hummingbirds, arguably the best in-close flyers in the world, with reaction times so fast they zip in next to angry defensive bees to score a sip of sugar water despite the bees coming at them in a bee fury that would dissuade virtually any other critter, including me.

Two feeders full of sugar water hang not 40 inches from me, just outside my home office window. Who needs Netflix when I can turn to the Hummingbird Channel?

dart backwards and hover, waiting a human heartbeat for the bee to either peel off or charge toward it, and if the bee is serious, the bird

might wheel and bug out, or might zigzag into another port of the feeder to see what the bee will do then.

Of course during that human heartbeat the little hummer's heart beat some 200 times. They must perceive even the quickest human or bee as operating in slo-mo. No bee has ever caught any hummer at my feeders.

Watching the bird feeders is observing nature as endless metaphor for our human foibles.

Like hyper-intelligent humans with big cerebrums, hummingbirds fall for the zero-sum approach to sharing with others—at least the hummers who come to my feeders do. They seem to be convinced that whatever sips another hummer can take means that much less for them. Classic zero-sum thinking. There are two feeders there, each accessible to them equally, with

four ports on each. Eight hummingbirds could easily share all those. They never do. They expend enormous energy chasing each other in wild aerial acrobatics that make the Blue Angels, or the Olympic gymnastic events, look staid and clumsy.

Gosh, I guess their little brains can't seem to learn what should be obvious. Human beings are at the top of the intelligence pyramid because we learn so much, so quickly, and advance so easily. We wouldn't fall for the same sort of wasteful error that the hummingbirds do.

We barely survived four years of a regime led by the quintessential zero-sum thinker, Trump, who reminds me of a hog guarding a rotting carcass, chasing off other scavengers to keep all that delicious filth for himself. No matter what the comparator, he boasted that he was at the top, smarter about national defense than "his" generals, more intelligent than the U.S. intelligence services, able to more brilliantly analyze the "China flu" problem than world-renowned virologists, and just generally a "very stable genius."

But we can all fall into similar—if less world-stagey—logic traps. Overcoming our amygdala reaction to seeing someone else doing well is our daily challenge.

My zero-sum White man reaction to immigrants or refugees coming into "my" country might be, "You will not replace us!"

My evidence-based response would be closer to, "Welcome. Like any ecosystem, our diversity is our strength. Work, study, learn, be productive, pay taxes, create a future for your family here. Help us repair and improve our nation's image around the world and with our homeland. We are glad to make this your new homeland.

My zero-sum White man reaction to a person of color, possibly an immigrant, being hired by my employer might be, "Stealing our obs! I gotta figure out how to undermine this one."

My evidenced-based response would be more like, "Welcome. The most successful work teams are those that can operate well in a complex world economy. Let's learn from each other and perform at our top potential."

The hummers are fun to watch chasing each other. It's like an old Bugs Bunny cartoon, with Elmer Fudd chasing him and Daffy and the perspective showing a long hallway with many doors and all of them suddenly popping out of random doors with no idea of how they got there, all to the tune of Infernal Gallop (aka the Can-Can). The hummers go streaking past my window, then suddenly sprint downwards from above my window, and it's pure entertainment for me.

But our human zero-sum analysis tendencies have a more malevolent outcome and show us often at our worst. From white nationalists to Vladimir Putin to anyone who feels like someone else's misfortune is their gain, those stories are ugly.

Can we show that we are even smarter than a bird that weighs about the same as a penny? One wonders.

Dr. Tom H. Hastings is Coördinator of Conflict Resolution BA/BS degree programs and certificates at Portland State University and on occasion an expert witness for the defense of civil resisters in



Presidents Should Avoid Disaster Areas

By Thomas L. Knapp

William Lloyd Garrison Center

As surely as day follows night, a presidential visit follows any major disaster in the United States, so it's no surprise that U.S. President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden plan, as reported at Politico, to personally "survey storm damage" from Hurricanes Fiona and Ian, and "meet with officials," in Puerto Rico and Florida.

That's always how it goes, and it's always a bad idea.

I understand WHY it happens. It doesn't happen because a president thinks a disaster area is a great place to campaign for re-election or for his party's candidates. It happens because a president's opponents will paint him as callous, uncaring, and out of touch if he doesn't get on a plane and go through the motions of comforting the afflicted.

But presidential visits to disaster areas don't comfort the afflicted, they afflict the afflicted.

How many planes full of urgently needed cargo and people will be delayed by the security measures around Air Force One's arrival, presence, and departure?

How many cops and other first responders will spend their time providing motorcade security and so forth when they could have been helping displaced and distressed Puerto Ricans and Floridians get back on their feet? How badly will essential traffic get delayed by the presidential circus?

Whatever you think about federal disaster aid, it's also worth considering how many destroyed homes could be replaced with the money spent to fly in a political sight-seer and his entourage.

Joe Biden doesn't need to personally "survey the damage." Plenty of other people are doing that right now, and producing reports on it for him to read.

If he needs to "meet with officials," he has numerous telephone/ Internet conferencing options at his disposal—options that don't require those officials to deal with a real emergency AND a presidential visit emergency when they owe their full attention to the real

Unlike many, I don't normally associate politicians with words like "leadership" and "courage." But if Joe Biden wanted to put those

qualities on display, he'd issue a statement along these lines: "I won't be visiting Puerto Rico and Florida this week. They're busy. They've got work to do. Anything I could do for them would best be done from the Resolute desk in the Oval Office. I'm going to stay out of their way, wish them well, and help from here. If that's bad politics, so be it.'

Thomas L. Knapp (Twitter: @thomaslknapp) is director and senior In virtuoso demonstrations of maneuverability, a tiny hummer can news analyst at the William Lloyd Garrison Center for Libertarian Advocacy Journalism (thegarrisoncenter.org). He lives and works in north central Florida.