

Federal Reserve Raises Rates For 11th Time

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve raised its key interest rate Wednesday for the 11th time in 17 months as part of its ongoing drive to curb inflation. But it provided little guidance about when — or whether — it might hike rates again.

Wednesday's move raised the Fed's benchmark short-term rate from roughly 5.1% to 5.3% — its highest level since 2001. Coming on top of its previous hikes, the Fed's latest action could lead to further increases in the costs of mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and business borrowing.

Speaking at a news conference, Fed Chair Jerome Powell was non-committal about any expectations for future rate hikes. Since it began raising rates in March 2022, the Fed has often telegraphed its upcoming action. This time, though, Powell said the Fed's policymakers may or may not raise rates again at their next meeting in September.

"It is certainly possible that we will raise rates again at the September meeting," he said. "And I would also say it's possible that we would choose to hold steady at that meeting."

Powell sent a mixed message about whether he thinks the Fed will

eventually need to further raise rates or instead just keep the current level of rates in place for a prolonged period.

"It was about as clear as mud, and I think that was the point," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at accounting giant KPMG. "They don't want to declare victory too soon. They know inflation moves in fits and starts."

Powell acknowledged that the economy has proved surprisingly resilient despite the Fed's rapid rate hikes, with growth continuing and companies still adding jobs. He also revealed that the Fed's staff economists no longer foresee a recession. In April, the minutes of the central bank's March meeting had said that staff economists envisioned a "mild" recession later this year.

And he said he still thinks that a "soft landing" — in which inflation would fall back to the Fed's 2% target, without causing a deep recession — is still possible.

"My base case is that we will be able to achieve inflation moving back down to our target without the kind of really significant downturn that results in high levels of job losses," the Fed chair said. "We do have a shot at a soft landing."

Though inflation has reached its slowest pace in two years, Wednesday's hike reflects the concern of Fed officials that the economy is still growing too fast for inflation to fall

back to their 2% target. With consumer confidence hitting its highest level in two years, Americans keep spending — crowding airplanes, traveling overseas and flocking to

concerts and movie theaters. Most crucially, businesses keep hiring.

Year-over-year inflation in June was 3%, according to the government, down sharply from a peak of

9.1% in June 2022. Yet a "core" inflation measure that is preferred by the Fed, which excludes volatile food and energy costs, was still up 4.6% in May from a year earlier.

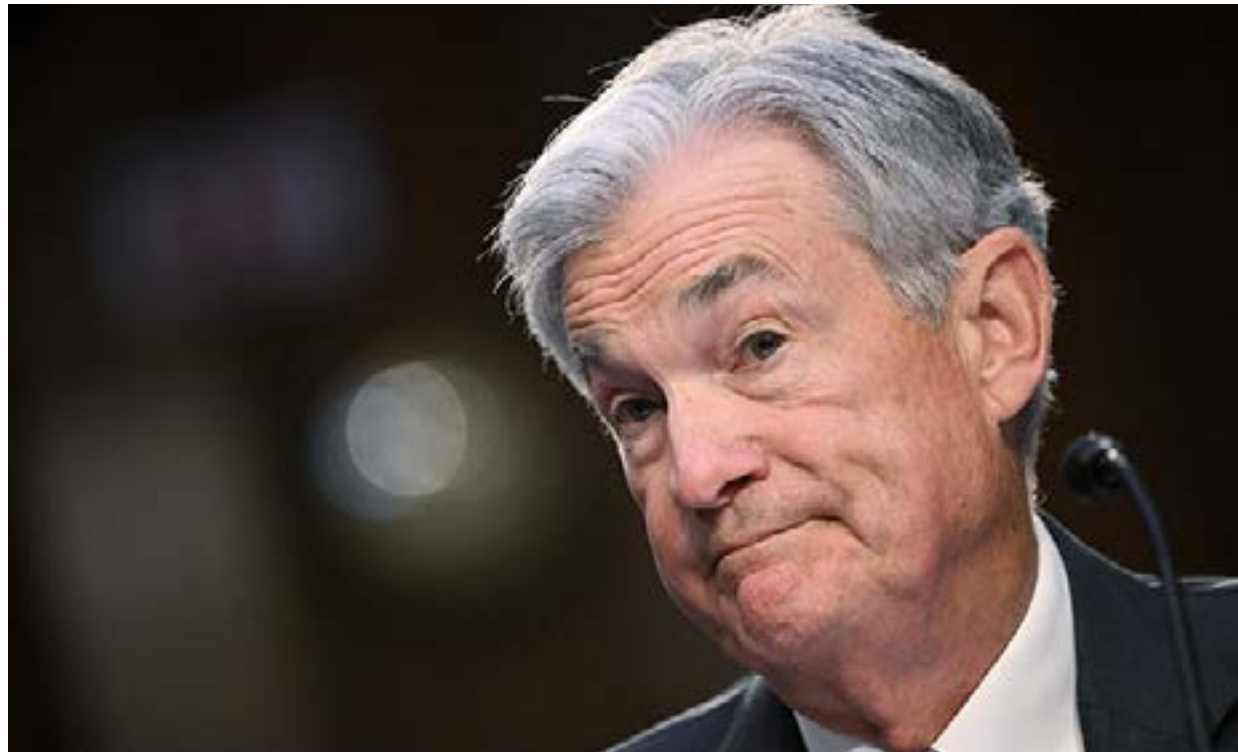
Powell said he welcomed, in particular, a milder-than-expected report on inflation for June. But he said additional such data would be needed to show that inflation is declining in a sustained way.

"We're going to be careful about taking too much signal from a single reading," he said.

The key question swirling around the Fed is whether Wednesday's increase will or won't be its last. Powell made clear that the fight against inflation isn't over. The Fed's rate hikes, he said, have "not been restrictive enough for long enough" to exert their full effect.

"We want core inflation to be coming down," Powell said. "Core inflation is still pretty elevated. And so we think we need to stay on task."

He stressed that the Fed's policymakers will assess a range of incoming economic data in determining what action, if any, to take at their next meeting. When the officials last met in June, they signaled that they



(See RAISES RATES, P. 2)

Extreme Climate Change Is Exacerbating Racial Inequities

By Jesús Marrero Suárez,
Melena Rodriguez, Emily
Stevenson, Michael Walsh and
Younna Sukkar

Boston Globe

Judith Foster has always enjoyed the warm weather. She used to spend long days basking in the sun's comforting glow as a child in Jamaica. But when she moved to Boston's Dorchester community in 1975, that glow didn't feel the same.

"From the second I got here, I always noticed this heat," Foster said. "It's different, it feels manufactured."

Lucas Pinto, 32, who has lived in the Ashmont Street area for eight years, plays his regular outdoor basketball tournaments in Harambee Park, located on Blue Hill Avenue where Dorchester meets Mattapan. On summer days, when it's so hot his hair feels like it's burning, he said he thinks to himself, "I can't keep doing this, I'm gonna fucking die."

Dacey Jackson used to take a 1.5 mile walk from her home on Dorchester's Taft Street to UMass Boston, where she works as a program manager for the Civic Action Fellowship Program. But the streets she'd take lacked trees and greenspace. The walk was uncomfortable at best, blistering at worst. So, she stopped walking.

"I couldn't do it anymore," Jackson said during an interview, waiting for the "walk" sign as cars roared by on Columbia Road. "I just Uber to work every day; I have no choice."

Boston is a city of hotspots. Certain parts of the city reach higher temperatures in the summer than



areas that have tree-shaded streets, little air pollution, and wide open parks. And a growing body of research has found that historically marginalized communities are much more likely to be hotspots.

Indeed, neighborhoods in Boston that were redlined — labeled risky investments because its residents were Black, immigrants, or Jewish — are "7.5°F hotter in the day, 3.6°F hotter at night, and have 20% less parkland and 40% less tree canopy than areas designated as A: Best," according to the city's 2022 Heat Resilience Plan.

Over 11 months, The Emancipator, in collaboration with Boston University's Justice Media Computational Journalism co-Lab, examined data on Boston's surface temperature, tree canopy, housing violations, 311 complaints and neighborhood demographics.

The analysis drew comparisons

between public datasets to illustrate how redlining created the conditions that lowered tree cover, raised temperatures and made homes harder to cool down in minority communities in Boston.

In 20 interviews with city officials, experts, community activists and residents, The Emancipator looked into how that legacy plays into someone's day-to-day life and the plans to make the city more resilient to the effects of extreme weather.

Decades of racist policies and practices have created hotspots around Boston where residents — mostly people of color — can't escape the heat.

The city is taking steps to redress the damage that's been done over decades. Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, Boston's chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space, is leading a set of initiatives that seek to prepare Boston's most vulnerable

for the effects of extreme heat. And she's not using the old playbook.

"The reality is if we address climate by the same rules that we made other historic decisions, the same communities that have been left out before will be left out again," White-Hammond said.

It's a pattern seen across the country: Years of racist policies and practices have made it so people of color are more likely to live in communities with higher air pollution and little greenspace, and sleep in unimproved homes lacking air conditioning.

"Old housing stock, no cooling, ever-increasing heat," said Adam Chapdelaine, deputy director of Green Ribbon Commission, a public-private partnership aiming to help the city become climate resilient. "That's the recipe for danger."

Heat doesn't only come from the sun in a city like Boston. It's created by people, cars, buses and trains. It gets trapped in the dark asphalt used to pave the roads and the concrete used to build the buildings, ultimately warming the surrounding air.

An urban heat island, as researchers call it, is partly the result of urban infrastructure that displaces trees and greenery, which otherwise would clean the air and provide valuable shade. In 2021, climate researchers found that on average within the city, Boston was about 7 degrees hotter than outlying areas.

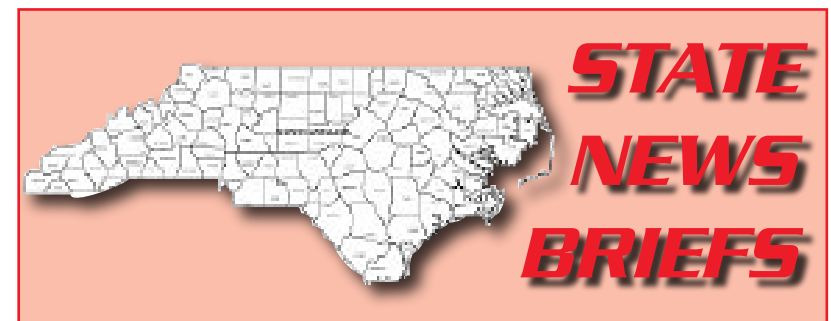
That's less of a problem during Boston's famously cold winters than during a heat wave, which last year saw some of the city's hottest recorded temperatures. These hot spells can be dangerous without

proper prevention or intervention. During the 2022 heatwaves, Boston EMS said they saw a 15-20% rise in 911 calls. "Extreme heat makes the body work harder," said Dr. Britta Lundberg, infectious diseases expert and Founder of Lundberg Health Advocates.

Combined with high levels of air pollution, Lundberg said extreme heat increases the incidence of heart attacks, strokes, and asthma exacerbations. It can also induce seizures in children and disrupt sleeping pat-

terns. And dehydration, she added, does "exacerbate all of those things."

Some of those effects are quantifiable: Neighborhoods with the highest temperatures see higher rates of impact among socially vulnerable groups, according to an analysis of census tract-level heat metrics from July 2019 and social vulnerability data collected by the city. About 28,000 people with medical illnesses that worsen during heat waves live in Roxbury, which sees temperatures 1 degree higher than the city's median.



WITH VOTER ID REQUIREMENT LOOMING, A LOOK AT THE DMV

Some rural residents looking to obtain driver's license or state ID before voting this year will have to cross county lines to obtain them.

Seventeen North Carolina counties don't have DMV offices, according to Carolina Demography. Of those 17 counties, 11 have proportions of Black voting-age residents that are higher than the state average. Three western counties without a DMV have higher proportions of white voting-age residents than the state average, and two counties without DMV offices have larger percentages of Latinos of voting age than the state average.

Thirteen of the 17 counties without a DMV have poverty rates higher than the state average.

North Carolina has 116 DMV offices. Some counties have more than one. But about half have no open appointment slots for people who want licenses or state IDs. DMV schedules morning appointments and accepts afternoon walk-ins.

A DMV spokesman did not respond to voicemail or email this week.

Driver's licenses, state ID cards, passports or passport cards, photo ID cards that county elections offices are preparing to offer, or university student and government employee IDs the state Board of Elections has approved can be used for voting. Tribal enrollment cards. US military or veteran ID cards or cards issued by the state or US government for assistance programs are also good.

People who don't have one of these forms of ID because they couldn't get to a DMV office, for example, will be able to vote after filling out an ID Exception form.

Four of the five fastest-growing counties, Brunswick, Pender, Franklin and Lincoln, each have one DMV office, according to Carolina Demography. The other — Currituck County — does not have any.

North Carolina voters will be asked to show photo ID for the first time since the 2016 primary.

\$17 MINIMUM WAGE BILL FROM SEN. BERNIE SANDERS AND REP. BOBBY SCOTT WOULD KILL 98,000 NORTH CAROLINA JOBS

Arlington, Va. — On Tuesday, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.) introduced legislation to increase the federal minimum wage to \$17 per hour and eliminate the tip credit. The Employment Policies Institute is warning lawmakers and the public that the proposal would cost 98,316 North Carolina jobs and 1.7M jobs nationwide, according to a new EPI report.

The report, released in July, finds that a \$17 regular minimum wage would result in over 1.2 million jobs lost across the country, and further eliminating the federal tip credit would slash another 447,000 jobs nationwide.

The analysis, conducted by economists Drs. William Even (Miami University) and David Macpherson (Trinity University), utilizes nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office methods to estimate future employment trends and the impact of Sanders' proposal.

This is a first-of-its-kind analysis for Sanders' new proposal for a \$17 federal minimum wage that provides an in-depth look at state-level impacts and the harmful effects of tip credit elimination on employment.

Key national findings include:

- 62% of losses will be jobs held by women
- 63% of losses will be jobs held by 16-24 year olds

(See STATE BRIEFS P. 2)

Alphas Pull Convention From Orlando

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The oldest historically Black collegiate fraternity in the U.S. says it is relocating a planned convention in two years from Florida because of what it described as Gov. Ron DeSantis' administration's "harmful, racist and insensitive" policies towards African Americans.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity said this week that it would move its 2025 convention from Orlando to another location that is yet undecided. The convention draws between 4,000 and 6,000 people and has an economic impact of \$4.6 million, the fraternity said.

The decision comes after the NAACP and other civil rights organizations this spring issued a travel advisory for Florida, warning that recently passed laws and policies are openly hostile to African Americans, people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Willis Lonzer, the fraternity's general president, said in statement on Wednesday that the decision was motivated in part by Florida's new education standards that require teachers to instruct middle school students that slaves developed skills that "could be applied for their personal benefit."

"Although we are moving our



convention from Florida, Alpha Phi Alpha will continue to support the strong advocacy of Alpha Brothers and other advocates fighting against the continued assault on our communities in Florida by Governor Ron DeSantis," Lonzer said.

An email seeking comment on Saturday about the fraternity's decision was sent to Jeremy Redfern, the governor's press secretary and the governor's office.

DeSantis, who is running for the 2024 GOP presidential nomination, has come under fire this week over Florida's new education standards.

Among those criticizing the Florida governor on Friday was a rival for the Republican nomination, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, the sole Black Republican in the Senate.

Responding to the criticism, DeSantis said Friday that he was "defending" Florida "against false accusations and against lies. And we're going to continue to speak the truth."

In May, the NAACP joined the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), a Latino civil rights organization, and Equality Florida, a gay rights advocacy group,

in issuing travel advisories for the Sunshine State, where tourism is one of the state's largest job sectors. The groups cited recent laws that prohibited state colleges from having programs on diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as critical race theory, and the Stop WOKE Act that restricts certain race-based conversations and analysis in schools and businesses.

They also cited laws that they say made life more difficult for immigrants in Florida and limited discussions on LGBTQ topics in schools.

At least nine other organizations or associations have pulled the plug on hosting conventions in Orlando and Fort Lauderdale, two of the state's most population convention cities, because of Florida's political climate, according to local media reports.

Florida is one of the most popular states in the U.S. for tourists, and tourism is one of its biggest industries. More than 137.5 million tourists visited Florida last year, marking a return to pre-pandemic levels, according to Visit Florida, the state's tourism promotion agency. Tourism supports 1.6 million full-time and part-time jobs, and visitors spent \$98.8 billion in Florida in 2019, the last year figures are available.

STATE BRIEFS

Continued from page 1

•60% of losses will be jobs in the hospitality industry, including restaurants and bars

States with the highest incurred losses include: Texas (up to 337,088 jobs lost), Pennsylvania (up to 130,059 jobs lost), North Carolina (up to 98,316 jobs lost), Georgia (up to 97,375 jobs lost), and Indiana (up to 76,998 jobs lost).

For more information on how tip credits work and past experiments with tip credit elimination, see our tip credit primer here.

Commenting on the new legislation from Sanders and Scott, Employment Policies Institute research director Rebekah Paxton said:

"This bill mirrors Sanders' ill-conceived \$15 wage proposal, which was killed by members of his own party in 2021. This radical new wage bill from Sanders and Scott would kill 1.7 million jobs, including over 98,000 jobs in North Carolina because it fails to account for varying regional impacts. Nobody should support this proposal that only stands to hurt North Carolina businesses and their employees."

\$2M To Protect 238 Acres At Seven Civil War Battlefields



WASHINGTON — The National Park Service (NPS) awarded \$2,218,056 in Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants through the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) today to protect 238 acres, including seven battlefields in Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina and Virginia.

State and local governments spearhead projects funded by ABPP grants to protect significant battlefield landscapes that are vital to the shared history of their communities and the nation. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, which reinvests revenue from offshore oil and natural gas leasing to help strengthen conservation and recreation opportunities across the nation, makes these awards possible.

"We are proud to help these state organizations and their partners to preserve and protect the irreplaceable historic and cultural landscapes in their communities through local stewardship of these hallowed grounds," said NPS Director Chuck Sams.

During the Civil War, the mountainous terrain of southern Tennessee and northern Georgia was a landscape of concern for both armies of the North and the South as they competed for access to supplies, reliable communication, as well as control of the rail hub and iron works of Chattanooga. Nestled in the mountains of Georgia, Chickamauga Battlefield's legacy is one of bravery and courage. Farmers, merchants and other regular folk comprised the troops that fought valiantly in the name of patriotism. Nearly 160 years later, the preservation of these lands honors their lives and sacrifice. The property preserved today remains wooded as it was during the Civil War. The conservation easement will ensure the land will remain hallowed and honored by the bravery and commitment to patriotism shown by those who fought.

The awards are to: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, \$172,133.16 for preservation of 4.08 acres at Chickamauga Battlefield in Catoosa County, Georgia.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, \$367,926.00 for preservation of 94.5 acres at Brice's Cross Roads Battlefield in Prentiss County, Mississippi.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, \$231,805.00 for preservation of 1.5 acres at Chickasaw Bayou Battlefield in Warren County, Mississippi.

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, \$257,605.00 for preservation of 86.36 acres at Wyse Fork Battlefield in Jones and Lenoir Counties, North Carolina.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, \$429,372.50 for preservation of 7.36 acres at Cedar Mountain Battlefield in Culpeper County, Virginia.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, \$605,750 for preservation of 41 acres at Malvern Hill Battlefield in Henrico County, Virginia.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, \$153,464.87 for preservation of 3 acres at Reams Station Battlefield in Dinwiddie County, Virginia.

The NPS ABPP's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants empower preservation partners nationwide to acquire and preserve threatened battlefields on American soil. In addition, the program administers three other grant programs: Preservation Planning, Battlefield Interpretation and Battlefield Restoration grants. Financial and technical assistance support sustainable, community-driven stewardship of natural and historic resources at the state, Tribal and local levels.

Adidas To Release Second Batch Of Yeezy Shoes After Breakup With Ye

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Adidas said Friday that it is releasing a second batch of high-end Yeezy sneakers after cutting ties with rapper Ye, formerly known as Kanye West, as the German sportswear brand seeks to unload the unsold shoes while donating to groups fighting antisemitism.

The online sale, to start Wednesday through Adidas smartphone apps and its website, follows an earlier set of sales in May. Models that will be available include the Yeezy Boost 350 V2, 500, and 700 as well as the Yeezy Slide and Foam RNR.

The company cut ties with Ye in October after he made antisemitic and other offensive remarks online and in interviews. That left Adidas holding 1.2 billion euros (\$1.3 billion) worth of unsold Yeezys and searching for a responsible way to dispose of them.

Adidas CEO Björn Gulden said in May that selling the popular sneakers and donating some of the profits was the best solution to deal with the unsold inventory and make a difference. He said the company spoke with nongovernmental organizations and groups that were harmed by Ye's comments and actions.



Part of the profits from the sales of the Yeezy shoes will go to the Anti-Defamation League and the Philonise & Keeta Floyd Institute for Social Change, run by social justice advocate Philonise Floyd, the brother of George Floyd.

Shoes sold directly by Adidas in North America will include blue square pins established by Robert Kraft's Foundation to Combat Anti-Semitism as a symbol of solidarity in rejecting antisemitism, the company said.

The Anti-Defamation League calls the sale "a thoughtful and caring res-

olution" for the unsold merchandise and that "any attempt to turn the consequences of (Ye's) actions into something that ultimately benefits society and the people he has hurt is most welcome."

Adidas declined to give details on numbers of shoes that would be released for sale and how much of the proceeds would be donated. Asked if Ye would receive royalties from the sales, the company would only say that "we will honor our contractual obligations and enforce our rights but will not share any more details."

The company said Monday that the first sale of Yeezy shoes helped its preliminary second-quarter financial results and contributed to it raising its outlook for the year — from a high single-digit decline in revenue to a mid-single digit decline.

That would still amount to an operating loss of 450 million euros (more than \$494 million) this year, instead of a loss of 700 million euros.

Adidas, which reports its earnings for the first half of the year on Thursday, said it expected future Yeezy sales to further boost its results.

Fed Raises Rates For 11th — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

expected to raise rates twice more. By the time they meet again Sept. 19-20, Powell noted, they will have much more data in hand: Two more inflation reports, two reports on hiring and unemployment and updated figures on consumer spending and wages.

Some economists think the Fed might decide to forgo a rate increase in September before weighing a possible hike at its meeting in November.

In recent weeks, several Fed officials have said they worry that the still-brisk pace of job growth will lead workers to demand higher pay to make up for two years of inflationary prices. Sharp wage gains can perpetuate inflation if companies respond by raising prices for their customers.

At the same time, the steady easing of inflation pressures has lifted hopes that the Fed can bring down inflation without a recession.

Durable consumer spending has been a key driver of growth. Many Americans still have savings stemming from the pandemic, when the government distributed stimulus checks and people saved by spending less on travel, restaurants and entertainment.

And hiring has remained healthy, with employers having added 209,000 jobs in June and the jobless rate reaching an ultra-low 3.6%. That's about where it was when the Fed began raising rates in March 2022 — a sign of economic resilience that almost no one had foreseen.

Some Fed officials, including Christopher Waller, an outspoken

member of its Board of Governors, and Lorrie Logan, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, have said they think the cumulative effects of the previous rate hikes have already been baked into the economy. With inflation still above the Fed's target, they think additional hikes may be needed to further slow price pressures.

Some analysts caution that the drop in year-over-year inflation from roughly 9% to 3% was the relatively easy part. Getting it down to the Fed's 2% target will be harder and take longer.

Other experts say they think the recent mild inflation readings can be sustained. Rental cost increases, which have already fallen, should drop further as more apartment buildings are completed.

Though the Fed began tightening credit before central banks in many other developed countries did, most others are now following suit. The European Central Bank is expected to announce its own quarter-point rate hike on Thursday. Though inflation has declined in the 20 countries that use the euro, it remains higher there than in the United States.

The Bank of Japan is expected to keep its policies unchanged when it meets next week even though prices there are creeping higher after roughly two decades of declining prices. The Bank of England has been among the most aggressive in Europe, having raised its key rate last month by a half-point to a 15-year high of 5%. Year-over-year inflation in the U.K. reached a painful 8.7% in May.

All-Black Softball Team Dominated The All-Star Jennie Finch Classic



SEATTLE — This year, MLB held its fifth All-Star Jennie Finch Classic, named after Olympian and All-American pitcher Jennie Finch, as a part of the MLB All-Star week festivities. This year, Toni's Promise, a team made up of the most talented African American high school softball players in the country, was created to compete at the classic.

On Monday, Toni's Promise won the Jennie Finch Classic 7-1 against the Compton MLB Youth Academy after its first appearance in the tournament.

"It's incredible [to see] the sisterhood that is created from this," Finch told Andscape. "This is the first of so much to come. Seeing [Olympic medalist] Natasha Watley — being a sister to her — and her not having the representation, but now because of her these girls are the first all-African American team [at the All-Star Jennie Finch Classic]. What is a platform if you can't use it for good? It's a joy to see the fruition of it all."

Toni's Promise outscored its competition this past weekend 76-4, run-ruling every opponent up until the championship game when Compton fought for seven innings with the toughest competition Toni's Promise saw all weekend.

Toni's Promise was led by Tiffany Johnson, a Florida A&M and Georgia Tech softball alumna, and Dana Stephens, head coach of the Georgia Bombers Premier travel softball team.

Dominating the competition, Toni's Promise used the MLB All-Star

weekend as a bonding opportunity and enjoyed the rare experience of sharing the dugout with a team full of Black women.

"The team is amazing, the way they just learned from each other and came together so graciously — not only the team but the parents," Stephens said. "They are easy to coach."

The Players Alliance, a nonprofit focused on leveling the playing field between baseball/softball and the Black community, led the creation of Toni's Promise — named after Toni Stone, the Negro Leagues legend and the first woman to play pro baseball.

Many teams that competed in the Jennie Finch Classic belong to MLB Youth Academy, based in Compton, California, and there are also academies in Washington, and Kansas City, Missouri, among other cities. Toni's Promise's roster was composed of girls from all over the U.S.

"Toni's Promise is a passion for a lot of us because many [of the girls] are from small towns. This team proves that talent can come from anywhere. Unlike the other teams, our girls will play together for the first time to compete at the highest level." The Players Alliance founder Edwin Jackson told prnewswire.com.

The alliance also used Minority Softball Prospects and its expertise in Black college softball to help create Toni's Promise and field a roster. The group is a product of Minority Baseball Prospects, which was started in 2021 during the coronavirus pandemic when founder and former

baseball player Alex Wyche decided to create an initiative that would provide Black athletes with a community to help them achieve their athletic goals.

Minority Softball Prospects has been busy this year, launching the inaugural HBCU Softball All-Star Game, where 40 of the best women's softball players from historically Black colleges and universities were invited to showcase their skills in Georgia. The HBCU Softball All-Star Game was just one of many events that the organization spearheaded, with the success of Black athletes in mind.

"Players Alliance has been, for lack of better terms; our 'big brother' in this industry," said Osburn "Ty" Wyche, Alex Wyche's brother and vice president and creative director of Minority Baseball Prospects. "We've been along with Players Alliance for a couple of years, and they know that we have a creative and talented portal of players. When they were thinking about doing the Jennie Finch Classic this year and putting the team in there, we had some ideas and we said we would just get all the players from our portal and create a team."

Given its continuous involvement with Black athletes, working with the alliance to create Toni's Promise was a rewarding task that aligned with their mission and goals.

"The girls are just more exciting to watch honestly. I love watching the girls play. They play with so much energy and they make the game that fun," said Cameron Hollins, vice

president of Minority Softball Prospects.

The players met in person for the first time when they stepped off the plane in Seattle. Although they just met, their team chemistry would lead you to believe that this wasn't the first time the championship team was on the diamond together.

"Our team has meshed really well from the start," said rising senior Precious Bross, a University of Georgia commit. "We all came from similar situations and backgrounds. It's just a very relatable and healthy environment, honestly."

The two common denominators for all the young women are being Black and extremely talented at softball. The roster was composed of 14 players, all committed to Division I universities and several Power 5 schools.

Catcher Corri Hicks and infielder Tia Milloy are both rising seniors committed to the University of Oklahoma, winner of the last three Women's College World Series. These two both have older sisters who played in college and inspired them to play for the best team in the nation.

"I say my sisters [inspired me] — Amriah at the University of Washington and Kiki's at the University of Tennessee right now and also in Ireland for the World Games on Team USA," Malloy said. "Both of them did a really good job of holding me accountable when I was younger. They always made sure that I was doing my work. They're showing me good examples and stuff like that. I always wanted to be exactly like them."

The Carolinian newspaper subscription information, including contact details, rates, and logos for Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover.

Business & Finance

Supreme Court Lifts Stays On Mountain Valley Pipeline

By Charles Paullin

NCNewline

Work on the Mountain Valley Pipeline project will be allowed to continue after U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts on Thursday lifted two stays, or pauses, imposed by a lower court in response to challenges from environmental groups.

The lifting of the stays was issued while the Richmond, Virginia-based U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals was hearing oral arguments on whether provisions of the federal Fiscal Responsibility Act ordering the pipeline's completion were constitutional.

Mountain Valley Pipeline, which got initial approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in 2017, has been embroiled for years in legal challenges from environmental groups like the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society and Appalachian Voices over issues including impacts to endangered species and waterways.

The over 300-mile project is intended to deliver natural gas from the Marcellus and Utica shale



fields through West Virginia to southern Virginia. The legal challenges have stymied completion of the project, which the company says is 94% done. Environmental groups dispute that figure.

The U.S. 4th Circuit Court of

Appeals has consistently overturned permits issued to Mountain Valley Pipeline by the federal government over threats to wildlife and erosion and sediment harms.

But in June, Congress passed the Fiscal Responsibility Act with

a provision, introduced by West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, that directed federal agencies to approve the pipeline's permits within 21 days. The law also stripped jurisdictional authority from the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals and transferred any legal challenges to the D.C. Circuit.

Following passage of the FRA, Mountain Valley filed a motion to dismiss the legal challenges pending in the 4th Circuit, citing the authority given in the federal law.

Numerous environmental groups then challenged the motion to dismiss, arguing the provision in the Fiscal Responsibility Act was unconstitutional because its stripping of authority from the courts breached the principle of the separation of powers of government.

On Thursday, MVP attorney Donald B. Verrilli, Jr. argued before a three-judge panel on the 4th Circuit that precedent set in Klein v. United States allowed Congress to alter a court's jurisdictional

authority if there is a substantive change in the law.

Verrilli argued that the Fiscal Responsibility Act provision granting Mountain Valley the permits irrespective of current law was such a substantive change.

"It said it is approved," Verrilli said.

But the environmental groups argued that Klein found that Congress cannot dictate the winner of court cases.

"There has to be a line, and, respectfully, that line has been crossed," said Kym Meyer, litigation director at the Southern Environmental Law Center.

The judges, Roger L. Gregory, James Andrew Wynn and Stephanie D. Thacker, questioned attorneys about where the line delineating the court's authority should be drawn, noting that after the pipeline is complete, there could be future challenges against the project that arise.

"We have to know when we can be judges again," said Gregory.

The three judges will now decide whether to issue an order to dismiss the case or not. Before adjourning from the courtroom Thursday, Wynn acknowledged that the gathering of court officials and attorneys, who have been arguing the case for years, may have happened for the last time.

NC Cancels Incentives Deal With Allstate For Lack Of Jobs

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Allstate won't receive financial incentives from North Carolina that were part of a plan six years ago to add more than 2,200 workers in Charlotte. The insurance giant said rapid expansion of remote work made reaching that in-person jobs requirement impracticable.

The state Economic Investment Committee agreed on Tuesday to end a 2017 incentives agreement with Allstate, which could have received up to \$17.8 million in cash grants had it met job-creation goals, The News & Observer of Raleigh reported.

To great fanfare in 2017, Allstate pledged to add at least 2,250 new employees by 2020 at its operations center. It was considered at the time one of the largest job-

creation projects in recent state history.

The surge in remote working, which took off during the COVID-19 pandemic, made it challenging to meet the company's hiring commitment, an Allstate executive wrote the committee earlier this month.

At the end of 2022, only 213 of Allstate's North Carolina employees were physically working at the existing Charlotte campus, said Eric Steffe, the company's director of global corporate real estate.

"We've concluded that our new workplace model is incompatible with (the grant program) rules," Steffe wrote. "Under our policies, the vast majority of our North Carolina employees are no longer directly associated with a physical

work location and are therefore ineligible to be counted as project site or (grant) remote employees."

North Carolina paid nothing to Allstate from the initial incentives agreement through the Job Development Investment Grant program. Local governments have paid cash grants of \$1.4 million, the newspaper reported.

Steffe said the company continues to view North Carolina "as a strategic market to attract talent, and an excellent place for our employees to reside."

Since North Carolina began awarding Job Development Investment Grant incentives 20 years ago, grants that terminated early have outnumbered completed grants by a more than 3-to-1 margin, according to an analysis by the newspaper.



Mt. Hope Exhibit At Top Greene

Cemeteries hold a sacred place in the lives of many—the final resting places of cherished loved ones. Mount Hope Cemetery is that place for Raleigh's African-American community. Established in 1872, the cemetery was the first municipal burial ground for the newly freed in North Carolina. Many of these individuals, born into slavery, created a thriving and diverse

community. Those interred in the cemetery owned shops and businesses, became pioneers in education, and were skillful entrepreneurs. There were also many who fought for their country and led the struggle for equality.

Despite the dizzying pace of modern Raleigh life, Mt. Hope provides a peaceful retreat to reflect and remember. Almost 1,500

monuments mark only a few of the 7,000 burials in the historic portion of the cemetery. The identities of many more who rest here have been lost over time.

The stories of those men and women in Mt. Hope span three centuries and weave a vibrant mosaic of how Raleigh, and the nation, grew.

You-Pick Farms Lose Customers And Crops Through Heat, Haze

BRIGHTON, Iowa (AP) — You-pick farms are struggling through heat, drought and haze as customers cancel picking appointments and crops across Iowa refuse to grow.

These farms offer visitors the chance to harvest their own produce straight from the tree, bush or ground.

But this summer marks Iowa's third year in a row of drought. And that is hurting farmers who grow water-intensive crops like blueberries and strawberries that are particularly sensitive to heat and drought, the Cedar Rapids Gazette reported.

Kim Anderson told The Gazette that her well started faltering during

last summer's heat and drought at her 5-acre Blueberry Bottom Farm near Brighton in southeastern Iowa.

Many of her blueberry bushes became parched. And recently, for the first time in the farm's five-season history, she had to cancel a day of picking appointments because there weren't enough ripe berries.

"I just never anticipated something like this, that the well wouldn't have enough water," she said.

Similarly, Dean Henry told The Gazette that these are the worst conditions he has seen in his 56 years of operating the Berry Patch Farm in Nevada in central Iowa.

Henry said the Iowa Department

of Natural Resources restricted his well water usage from 20 acres a day to 1 acre a day. But his strawberry plants need lots of water.

This year, his entire crop failed.

The heat has affected customers too. Some you-pick farms reported a decrease in customer visits, according to The Gazette. If people do come, they aren't staying as long as normal to take in the entertainment at the farms, like picnic tables or games.

Smoke from Canadian wildfires also caused Iowa skies to grow hazy and air quality to be poor several times this summer. Customers canceled their appointments on especially hazy days, Anderson said.



Car Maker Begins Build For N.C. Electric Vehicle Plant

MONCURE, N.C. (AP) — A Vietnamese company planning an electric vehicle plant in central North Carolina that would employ 7,500 workers met a milestone Friday as its top executive joined Gov. Roy Cooper and others for a groundbreaking ceremony.

VinFast announced last year that it would build its first manufacturing facility outside Vietnam in Chatham County, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) southwest of Raleigh.

The planned \$4 billion investment also would create North Carolina's first car manufacturing plant and North Carolina's largest-ever, state-backed economic development project as far as job creation, according to news outlets. North Carolina had missed out on car plants over the years to other Southeastern states.

(For) "decades we've wanted an

automaker in North Carolina, and you know, somebody was looking after us. We were just waiting for that EV market," Cooper said at Friday's event.

VinFast, which makes fully electric SUVs, aims to open in 2025 a manufacturing and assembly plant with initial production capacity of 150,000 vehicles annually.

The company has submitted site plans to Chatham County government and received county and environmental permits to begin work.

The state and Chatham County offered VinFast up to \$1.25 billion in incentives that can be reached if it meets hiring and investment thresholds. The amount includes \$450 million that the General Assembly set aside for infrastructure around the plant.

A car company that was only formed in 2017, VinFast pivoted

two years ago toward electric SUVs and targeted foreign markets. The company says it's so far delivered 350 of its five-seat model to U.S. customers since shipping their first batch late last year.

"Our project represents a significant investment and we're proud to create thousands of jobs here in North Carolina, but we believe the recognition that we receive here goes beyond the figures and reflects the mutual ambition that we all are pursuing," VinFast CEO Le Thi Thu Thuy said at the ceremony.

Earlier this year, the company announced it would delay the production start in Chatham County from 2024 to 2025. A company executive acknowledged that their original timeline had been aggressive but reaffirmed the company's commitment to build.

