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Lisi Misa
being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that she is a representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

Mar. 10, 17, 24/ 2023

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals.

Signed Lisi Misa

Subscribed and sworn to before

me this 7th day of Apr.

2023 Jada L. Nowling

Notary Public in and for
The State of Alaska.
Third Division
Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
7/14/2024

Jada L. Nowling
ELECTRONIC NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF ALASKA
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 07/14/2024

Anchorage Daily News - 03/24/2023

FROM PAGE A1

SHELTER

Members took up the items on Wednesday night in a continuation of the prior night's regularly scheduled meeting.

Asked repeatedly by Assembly members about his intentions during the meetings, Bronson would not say whether he planned to follow through on the settlement payment by the Friday deadline.

But on Thursday afternoon, his office released a statement from the mayor saying his hands were tied.

"Based on the decision last night by the Assembly … I am unable to pay the claim submitted by Roger Hickel Contracting, Inc for this project," Bronson wrote. "I hope the Assembly will work with us to settle this dispute as quickly as possible."

Assembly members have said they need to be part of discussions of any potential settlement with the construction company.

Wednesday's meeting was acerbic, with several Assembly members ripping into the mayor and administration over what they said was a "shocking" lack of detail or analysis on the legal liability involved in transferring millions of dollars for unapproved work. In the process of questioning where the March 24 deadline came from, no one from the administration knew whether it stemmed from an invoice or a formal demand letter.

"I expect more analysis and depth of thinking when we are presented with an invoice. I would want to see a demand letter laying out why they think they should be paid," Zaletel said. "This seems like very little rational basis for the purpose of cutting an over $2 million check."

Assembly Vice Chair Christopher Constant said he has major concerns about separation of powers if work can be green-lit by the executive branch and public money disbursed without the legislative branch ever weighing in.

"(Then) whoever is the mayor gets to write checks to his friends," Constant said. "We cannot allow the code to become dead letter."

For his part, Bronson said the settlement is a legal issue.

"This is a bill we have to pay. I'm kind of agnostic on the whole thing myself. I worry about the credibility of the city," Bronson said at the meeting. "We've been dealing with this for more than a month, and the lawyers are quite clear I'm obligated to pay this."

The administration's acting municipal attorney, Anne Helzer, who has been in the role for just four weeks, said Wednesday she had not yet had the "opportunity to review the historical side of things" on the proposed settlement.

"We've given notice that we'd like to pay the bill, and we don't want to turn this into a political event, if at all possible," Helzer said. "I wouldn't want to see the city incur unnecessary legal fees."

Both measures passed 9-2, with members Kevin Cross and Randy Sulte the lone votes against in both cases.

"It just kinda feels like it's more, 'How do we stick it to the mayor,' " Cross said of the resolutions. "I really wish we were focused on a solution. It feels like this is a step in the wrong direction."

But the majority of other members did not share that view.

"Frankly, I think the credibility of the municipality is at stake if the law is not followed," said Chair Suzanne LaFrance. "And the law says … that the Assembly must approve the settlement before any payment is made."

An injunction was not a given: The measure created the mechanism for taking action in the courts, but would still need to be formally initiated by Assembly leadership. As of Thursday, no such injunction had been filed in court.

CAMPBELL CREEK SLICES ITS WAY THROUGH WINTER'S GRIP

LOREN HOLMES / ADN

The mouth of Campbell Creek cuts its way through frozen mud, with mountains on the Kenai Peninsula visible beyond, on Thursday in Anchorage.

FROM PAGE A1

WILLOW

runway" for the ConocoPhillips Alaska-backed Willow project to get to the development and production stages. Australia-based Santos is working with Repsol to advance the Pikka project.

State tax officials on Thursday provided lawmakers an analysis of potential revenue impacts and benefits from Willow for the state treasury but noted uncertainty around the estimates, including when the project ultimately might begin, oil price volatility and industry costs.

North Slope oil prices, which were around $115 a barrel this time last year amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, are currently in the $70-per-barrel range.

Dan Stickel, chief economist with the state Department of Revenue's tax division, told the Senate Finance Committee the oil and gas industry is a high-risk industry that requires considerable capital. He said the ability for companies to recover costs is a key consideration when they decide whether to invest, and that Alaska's tax structure has elements that support cost recovery. For example, the tax system allows for deductions related to investments and incentives for new production areas.

The state tax division's modeling indicated Willow could lead to billions of dollars in revenue for the state, North Slope communities, federal government and the company over the project's life, said Owen Stephens, a tax division analyst.

Oil has long been the state's economic lifeblood. Alaska political leaders — including Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy, the state's bipartisan congressional delegation and the Legislature — have pushed for Willow, in part seeing it as a way to boost the flow of oil through the trans-Alaska pipeline. Many leaders on the remote North Slope or with ties to the region have cast the project as economically vital for their communities. Unions have also spoken in support.

Environmentalists, however, have argued the project is at odds with President Joe Biden's climate pledges and worry it could lead to further development in the region.

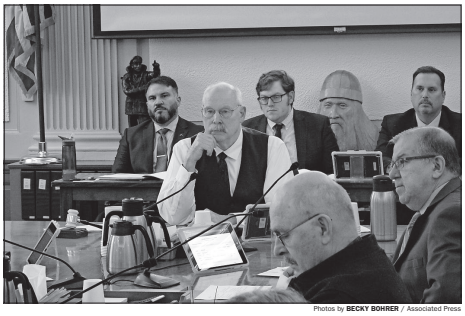
Environmental organizations and an Alaska Native group have filed lawsuits challenging Willow's approval, arguing in part that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management failed to consider an adequate range of alternatives. A federal judge is expected to decide by early April whether to halt construction activities related to the project pending resolution of the cases, something the groups are requesting.

The approved project is smaller than what ConocoPhillips Alaska had earlier sought but the company said it welcomed the decision.

Rebecca Boys, a company spokesperson, earlier this week said the company was building ice roads for construction work but agreed to delay gravel mine activities until April 4, unless the judge issues a decision earlier than that denying the injunction requests filed by Willow opponents.

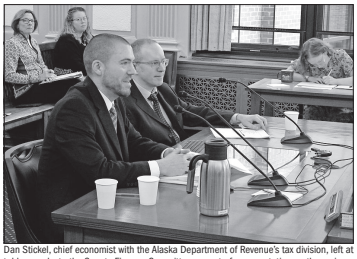
ConocoPhillips Alaska is intervening in the litigation in support of the federal agencies being sued over the approval. Arctic Slope Regional Corp., an Alaska Native regional corporation; the North Slope Borough; Kuukpik Corp., an Alaska Native village corporation; and the state have also intervened in support of the approval.

Willow could produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil a day and more than 600 million barrels over its 30-year life, according to the company.



Photos by BECKY BOHRER / Associated Press

Alaska state Sen. Bert Stedman, center, a co-chair of the Senate Finance Committee, listens to a presentation on the major North Slope oil project known as the Willow project on Thursday in Juneau. The committee heard an update on the project from the state Department of Natural Resources and the state Department of Revenue.



Dan Stickel, chief economist with the Alaska Department of Revenue's tax division, left at table, speaks to the Senate Finance Committee as part of a presentation on the major North Slope oil project known as the Willow project on Thursday in Juneau. Seated next to Stickel is Owen Stephens with the tax division.

FROM PAGE A1

TRUMP

"Neither fact is a legitimate basis for congressional inquiry."

The Republican chairmen of three House committees on Monday sent a letter to Bragg seeking information about his actions in the Trump case. The Republicans criticized the grand jury investigation as an "unprecedented abuse of prosecutorial authority."

The chairmen requested testimony as well as documents and copies of any communications with the Justice Department to be turned over by Thursday. The request came as Republicans in the House quickly rallied around the former president as a grand jury in New York weighs whether to bring an indictment against him.

"If a grand jury brings charges against Donald Trump, the DA's Office will have an obligation, as in every case, to provide a significant amount of discovery from its files to the defendant so that he may prepare a defense," Dubeck wrote.

The five-page response from Bragg's office provides a rare insight into what has remained a secret grand jury process, marking one of the first public acknowledgments that there is a sitting grand jury currently investigating Trump. The DA's office has adhered closely to centuries-old rules that have kept grand juries under wraps to protect the reputations of people who end up not being charged and to encourage reluctant witnesses to testify.

In proceedings closed to the public and members of the media, grand jurors listen to evidence presented by prosecutors and hear from witnesses. There is no judge present nor anyone representing the accused, and prosecutors do not have to offer any evidence favorable to the defense.

The disclosure comes as the grand jury appears close to finishing its work, after hearing last week from Trump's former lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen, but the timing of a possible decision on whether to charge the ex-president remains uncertain. Prosecutors canceled a scheduled grand jury session Wednesday and planned to hear testimony on other matters Thursday, according to a person familiar with the matter. But law enforcement in New York has been making preparations for any unrest, should Trump face charges.

The case revolves around hush money payments during Trump's 2016 presidential campaign to women who alleged sexual encounters with him. Bragg's team appears to be looking at whether Trump or anyone committed crimes in New York state in arranging the payments, or in the way they accounted for them internally at the Trump Organization.

On Thursday, one of the GOP chairmen, Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, expanded his probe into the handling of the Trump case by demanding testimony and documents from Mark Pomerantz and Carey Dunne, two former Manhattan prosecutors who had been leading the Trump case before quitting last year in a clash over the direction of the probe.

"Last year, you resigned from the office over Bragg's initial reluctance to move forward with charges, shaming Bragg in your resignation letter — which was subsequently leaked — into bringing charges," Jordan, an Ohio Republican, wrote in the letter to Pomerantz late Wednesday. "It now appears that your efforts to shame Bragg have worked as he is reportedly resurrecting a so-called 'zombie' case against President Trump using a tenuous and untested legal theory."

Requests for comment from Pomerantz and Dunne were not returned.

Vital Gardens LLC is applying under 3AAC 306.400(a) (2) transfer of a Limited Marijuana Cultivation Facility–License #13503 dba Alaska Greenworks LLC located at 10263 Night Rd #7 Anch. AK 99515 United States.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501.

Cannabis 49 LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.300 for a new Retail Marijuana Store license, license #35633, doing business as Coastal Cannabis Company, located at 1900 Mineral Creek Loop Rd, Valdez, AK, 99686, UNITED STATES.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501.

Baltazar Holdings, LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.300 for a new Retail Marijuana Store license, license #35490, doing business as Sensimilla, located at 1431 Muldoon Road, Anchorage, AK, 99504, UNITED STATES.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq at jana@jdwcounsel.com or 901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor, Anchorage, AK 99503.

Anchorage Daily News - 03/17/2023

NATION

Big banks will put $30B into beleaguered First Republic

Emergency intervention may help quell panic in the financial sector.

MARY ALTAFFER / Associated Press

A television screen displaying financial news is seen Thursday inside one of First Republic Bank's branches in the Financial District of Manhattan, N.Y.

Ken Sweet
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Eleven of the biggest banks in the country announced a $30 billion rescue package for First Republic Bank on Thursday, in an effort to prevent the California-based bank from becoming the third bank to fail in less than a week.

First Republic serves a similar clientele as Silicon Valley Bank, which failed Friday after depositors withdrew about $40 billion. It appears that First Republic, which had deposits totaling $176.4 billion as of Dec. 31, was facing a similar crisis.

In a statement, the group of banks confirmed that other unnamed banks had seen large amounts of withdrawals of uninsured deposits, which are those that exceed the $250,000 level insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. First Republic's shares dropped more than 60% Monday, even after the bank said it had secured additional funding from JPMorgan and the Federal Reserve.

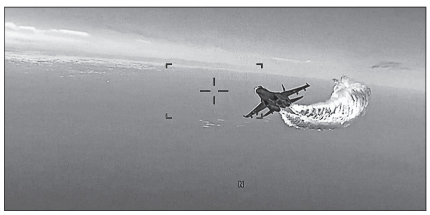
Thursday the bank's shares were down as much as 36%, but rallied after reports the rescue package was in the works, and closed up nearly 9%.

JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Citigroup and Wells Fargo have agreed to each put $5 billion in uninsured deposits into First Republic. Meanwhile Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs would deposit $2.5 billion each into the bank. The remaining $5 billion would consist of $1 billion contributions from BNY Mellon, State Street, PNC Bank, Truist and US Bank.

"The actions of America's largest banks reflect their confidence in the country's banking system," the banks said in their statement.

The nation's banking regulators also issued a statement in support of the bank rescue package.

"This show of support by a group of large banks is most welcome, and demonstrates the resilience of the banking system," said Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Acting Comptroller of the Currency Michael Hsu, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and FDIC Chairman Martin Gruenberg.



US Department of Defense via Associated Press

This photo taken from video released on Thursday shows a Russian Su-27 approaching the back of the MQ-9 drone and beginning to release fuel as it passes over the Black Sea, the Pentagon said.

WORLD

Video shows Russian jet dumping fuel on US drone

Karl Ritter and Dino Hazell
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — The Pentagon on Thursday released video of what it said was a Russian fighter jet dumping fuel on a U.S. Air Force surveillance drone before the warplane clipped the drone's propeller in international airspace, leading to its crash in the Black Sea and raising tensions between Moscow and Washington over the war in Ukraine.

Poland, meanwhile, said it's giving Ukraine a dozen MiG-29 fighter jets, becoming the first NATO member to fulfill Kyiv's increasingly urgent requests for warplanes.

The U.S. military's declassified 42-second color footage shows a Russian Su-27 approaching the back of the MQ-9 Reaper drone and releasing fuel as it passes, the Pentagon said. Dumping the fuel appeared to be aimed at blinding the drone's optical instruments to drive it from the area.

On a second approach, either the same jet or another Russian fighter that had been shadowing the MQ-9 struck the drone's propeller, damaging a blade, according to the U.S. military, which said it then ditched the unmanned aircraft in the sea.

The video excerpt released by the Pentagon does not show events before or after the apparent fuel-dumping confrontation and does not show the Russian warplane striking the drone.

Russia said its fighters didn't strike the drone and claimed the unmanned aerial vehicle went down after making a sharp maneuver.

Asked Thursday if Russia would try to recover the drone debris, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters the decision was up to the military. "If they consider it necessary to do so in the Black Sea for the benefit of our interests and our security, they will do it," he said. Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of Russia's Security Council, said Wednesday that an attempt would be made.

U.S. officials have expressed confidence that nothing of military value would remain from the drone even if Russia managed to retrieve the wreckage. They left open the possibility of trying to recover portions of the downed $32 million aircraft, which they said crashed into waters that were 4,000 to 5,000 feet deep, although the U.S. does not have any ships in the area.

Russia and NATO member countries routinely intercept each other's warplanes, but the drone incident marked the first time since the Cold War that a U.S. aircraft went down during such a confrontation, raising concerns it could bring the United States and Russia closer to a direct conflict.

Moscow has repeatedly voiced concern about U.S. intelligence flights near the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014 and illegally annexed.

NATION

Senate takes first step in repealing authorization of Iraq War

Mary Clare Jalonick and Ellen Knickmeyer
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate took a first step Thursday toward repealing two measures that give open-ended approval for military action in Iraq, pushing to end that authority as the United States marks the 20th anniversary of the Iraq War.

Senators voted 68-27 to move forward on legislation that would repeal the 2002 measure that greenlighted that March 2003 invasion of Iraq and a 1991 measure that sanctioned the U.S.-led Gulf War to expel Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. Nineteen Republicans joined Democrats in supporting the measure.

The bipartisan effort comes at a time when lawmakers of both parties are seeking to reclaim congressional powers over U.S. military strikes and deployments, arguing that the war authorizations are no longer necessary and subject to misuse if they are left on the books. President Joe Biden has backed the push, and the White House issued a statement Thursday in support.

"Repeal of these authorizations would have no impact on current U.S. military operations and would support this administration's commitment to a strong and comprehensive relationship with our Iraqi partners," the White House said.

It's unclear whether leaders in the Republican-controlled House would bring the bill up for a vote. Forty-nine House Republicans supported the legislation when then-majority Democrats held a vote two years ago, but current House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., opposed it.

Senate Republicans are also split on the legislation. While the 19 GOP senators voted for it, opponents argue that the repeal could project weakness to U.S. enemies. They have pointed out that President Donald Trump's administration cited the 2002 Iraq war resolution as part of its legal justification for a 2020 U.S. drone strike that killed Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani.

The October 2002 votes to give President George W. Bush broad authority for the invasion — coming just a month before the midterm elections that year — became a defining moment for many members of Congress as the country debated whether a military strike was warranted.

MORNING BRIEFING

OHAD ZWIGENBERG / Associated Press

Israeli mounted police officers disperse demonstrators Thursday during a protest against plans by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to overhaul the judicial system in Tel Aviv, Israel.

ISRAEL

ISRAELIS STEP UP PROTESTS AFTER NETANYAHU REJECTS COMPROMISE

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israeli protesters pressed ahead on Thursday with demonstrations against a contentious government plan to overhaul the judiciary, pushing back against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after he rejected a compromise proposal that was meant to defuse the crisis.

Despite the effort by the country's figurehead president, Isaac Herzog, to seek a way out of the stalemate, the sides appeared to be digging in. Netanyahu and his allies were set to barrel forward with their original plan despite weeks of mass protests and widespread opposition from across Israeli society and beyond as well as warnings by Herzog that Israel was headed toward an "abyss."

Protesters were kicking off a third day of disruption since the crisis began, with roads set to close to make way for demonstrators. Protesters in Jerusalem drew a red streak on the streets leading to the country's Supreme Court and a small flotilla of boats was blocking the shipping lane off the coast of the city of Haifa.

Last week, Netanyahu had to be airlifted to the country's main international airport for an overseas state visit after protesters blocked the road leading there, holding signs that read "don't come back!"

VIRGINIA

FAMILY: VIDEO OF MAN'S DEATH SHOWS 'ABSOLUTE BRUTALITY'

DINWIDDIE, Va. — Video from a state mental hospital shows a Black Virginia man who was handcuffed and shackled being pinned to the ground by deputies who are now facing second-degree murder charges in his death, according to relatives of the man and their attorneys who viewed the footage Thursday.

Speaking at a news conference, the family and attorneys condemned the brutal treatment they said Irvo Otieno, 28, was subjected to, first at a local jail and then at the state hospital where he died March 6. They called on the U.S. Department of Justice to intervene in the case, saying Otieno's constitutional rights were clearly violated.

Otieno's case marks the latest example of a Black man's in-custody death that has law enforcement under scrutiny. It follows the the fatal beating of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tenn., and the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

FRANCE

MACRON RISKS HIS GOVERNMENT TO RAISE RETIREMENT AGE

PARIS — French President Emmanuel Macron ordered his prime minister to wield a special constitutional power on Thursday that skirts parliament to force through an unpopular bill raising the retirement age from 62 to 64 without a vote.

His calculated risk set off a clamor among lawmakers, who began singing the national anthem even before Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne arrived in the lower chamber. She spoke forcefully over their shouts, acknowledging that Macron's unilateral move will trigger quick motions of no-confidence in his government.

The fury of opposition lawmakers echoed the anger of citizens and workers' unions. Thousands gathered at the Place de la Concorde facing the National Assembly, lighting a bonfire. As night fell, police charged against the demonstrators in waves to clear the Place, but hundreds remained nearly an hour later.

The unions that have organized strikes and marches since January, leaving Paris reeking in piles of garbage, announced new rallies and marches in protest. "This retirement reform is brutal, unjust, unjustified for the world of workers," they declared.

Macron has made the proposed pension changes the key priority of his second term, arguing that reform is needed to keep the pension system from diving into deficit as France, like many richer nations, faces lower birth rates and longer life expectancy.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

COVID-19 PILL PAXLOVID MOVES CLOSER TO FULL FDA APPROVAL

WASHINGTON — Pfizer's COVID-19 pill Paxlovid won another vote of confidence from U.S. health advisers Thursday, clearing the way for its full regulatory approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

The medication has been used by millions of Americans since the FDA granted it emergency use authorization in late 2021. The agency has the final say on giving Pfizer's drug full approval and is expected to decide by May.

A panel of outside experts voted 16-1 that Paxlovid remains a safe and effective treatment for high-risk adults with COVID-19 who are more likely to face hospitalization and death due to the virus.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FBI: NEWSPAPER EDITOR INTERFERED AT CAPITOL RIOT

A former top editor of an Orthodox Jewish newspaper in New York City was arrested Thursday on charges that he interfered with police officers who were trying to protect the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6 riot.

Elliot Resnick, 39, was chief editor of The Jewish Press when he joined the crowd of Donald Trump supporters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, according to an FBI agent's affidavit.

Videos show Resnick grabbing and holding the arm of a Capitol police sergeant who was spraying a chemical irritant to prevent rioters from entering the building, the affidavit says. Another officer tried to remove Resnick's hand from the sergeant's arm, the agent wrote.

The FBI arrested Resnick in New York City on charges including civil disorder and assault of or interference with law enforcement. Clay Kaminsky, an attorney representing Resnick in New York, declined to comment on the charges.

UNITED KINGDOM

NURSES, PARAMEDICS REACH PAY DEAL TO END ENGLAND STRIKES

LONDON — Unions representing hundreds of thousands of nurses, ambulance crews and other health care workers in England reached a deal Thursday to resolve months of disruptive strikes for higher wages, though the pact didn't include doctors.

The announcement came as early-career physicians spent a third day on picket lines and the day after U.K. Treasury chief Jeremy Hunt announced a budget that included no , additional money for labor groups that have staged crippling strikes amid a punishing cost-of-living crisis and double-digit inflation.

Under the deal negotiated by government officials and union leaders, workers would get a lump sum payment for the current year and a 5% raise next year. Any strike actions will be halted while rank-and-file members vote on whether to accept it.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the pact would reward hardworking National Health Service staff who persevered through the pandemic, and prevent further work stoppages.

— Daily News wire services

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First National Bank Alaska

FORECLOSURE SALE

03/21/2023 at 10:00 AM
Boney Courthouse
303 K Street, Anchorage, Alaska

Property Type: Single Family Residence
5 Bedrooms / 3 Baths / 3,882 Sq. Ft.
Property Address: **775 Griffin Avenue, Soldotna, AK 99669**
Kenai Peninsula 2022 Assessed Value: $691,900.00
Minimum Bid: $118,481.94

PROPERTY SOLD AS IS, WHERE IS.
Call (907) 777-3392
Sale date and bid amount are subject to change

April 11, 2023 11:07 am (GMT -8:00)

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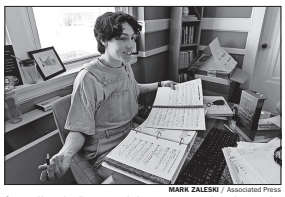
Anchorage Daily News - 03/10/2023

NATION

Jaded with education, more Americans are skipping college

Collin Binkley
Associated Press



MARK ZALESKI / Associated Press

Grayson Hart, who directs a youth theater program, reviews sheet music at the Ned R. McWherter West Tennessee Cultural Arts Center in Jackson, Tenn., on March 4. Hart is among hundreds of thousands of young people who came of age during the pandemic but didn't go to college.

JACKSON, Tenn. — When he looked to the future, Grayson Hart always saw a college degree. He was a good student at a good high school. He wanted to be an actor, or maybe a teacher. Growing up, he believed college was the only route to a good job, stability and a happy life.

The pandemic changed his mind.

A year after high school, Hart is directing a youth theater program in Jackson, Tennessee. He got into every college he applied to but turned them all down. Cost was a big factor, but a year of remote learning also gave him the time and confidence to forge his own path.

"There were a lot of us with the pandemic, we kind of had a do-it-yourself kind of attitude of like, 'Oh — I can figure this out,' " he said. "Why do I want to put in all the money to get a piece of paper that really isn't going to help with what I'm doing right now?"

Hart is among hundreds of thousands of young people who came of age during the pandemic but didn't go to college. Many have turned to hourly jobs or careers that don't require a degree, while others have been deterred by high tuition and the prospect of student debt.

What first looked like a pandemic blip has turned into a crisis. Nationwide, undergraduate college enrollment dropped 8% from 2019 to 2022, with declines even after returning to in-person classes, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse. The slide in the college-going rate since 2018 is the steepest on record, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Economists say the impact could be dire.

At worst, it could signal a new generation with little faith in the value of a college degree. At minimum, it appears those who passed on college during the pandemic are opting out for good. Predictions that they would enroll after a year or two haven't borne out.

Fewer college graduates could worsen labor shortages in fields from health care to information technology. For those who forgo college, it usually means lower lifetime earnings — 75% less compared with those who get bachelor's degrees, according to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce. And when the economy sours, those without degrees are more likely to lose jobs.

"It's quite a dangerous proposition for the strength of our national economy," said Zack Mabel, a Georgetown researcher.

In dozens of interviews with The Associated Press, educators, researchers and students described a generation jaded by education institutions. Largely left on their own amid remote learning, many took part-time jobs. Some felt they weren't learning anything, and the idea of four more years of school, or even two, held little appeal.

At the same time, the nation's student debt has soared. The issue has loomed large in the minds of young Americans as President Joe Biden pushes to cancel huge swaths of debt, an effort the Supreme Court appears poised to block.

As a kid, Hart dreamed of going to Penn State to study musical theater. His family encouraged college, and he went to a private Christian high school where it's an expectation.

But when classes went online, he spent more time pursuing creative outlets. He felt a new sense of independence, and the stress of school faded.

"I was like, 'OK, what's this thing that's not on my back constantly?' " Hart said. "I can do things that I can enjoy. I can also do things that are important to me. And I kind of relaxed more in life and enjoyed life."

He started working at a smoothie shop and realized he could earn a steady paycheck without a degree. By the time he graduated, he had left college plans behind.

It happened at public as well as private schools. Some counselors and principals were shocked to see graduates flocking to jobs at Amazon warehouses or scratching together income in the gig economy.

The shift has been stark in Jackson, where just four in 10 of the county's public high school graduates immediately went to college in 2021, down from six in 10 in 2019. That drop is far steeper than the nation overall, which declined from 66% to 62%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Jackson's leaders say young people are taking restaurant and retail jobs that pay more than ever. Some are being recruited by manufacturing companies that have aggressively raised wages to fill shortages.

"Students can't seem to resist sign-on bonuses and wages that far exceed any that they've seen before," said Vicki Bunch, the head of workforce development for the area's chamber of commerce.

Across Tennessee, there's growing concern the slide will only accelerate with the opening of several new manufacturing plants. The biggest is a $5.6 billion Ford plant near Jackson that will produce electric trucks and batteries. It promises to create 5,000 jobs, and its construction is already drawing young workers.

Daniel Moody, 19, was recruited to run plumbing for the plant after graduating from a Memphis high school in 2021. Now earning $24 an hour, he's glad he passed on college.

"If I would have gone to college after school, I would be dead broke," he said. "The type of money we're making out here, you're not going to be making that while you're trying to go to college."

America's college-going rate was generally on the upswing until the pandemic reversed decades of progress. Rates fell even as the nation's population of high school graduates grew, and despite economic upheaval, which typically drives more people into higher education.

In Tennessee, education officials issued a "call to action" after finding just 53% of public high school graduates were enrolling in college in 2021, far below the national average. It was a shock for a state that in 2014 made community college free, leading to a surge in the college-going rate. Now it's at its lowest point since at least 2009.

Searching for answers, education officials crossed the state last year and heard that easy access to jobs, coupled with student debt worries, made college less attractive.

"This generation is different," said Jamia Stokes, a senior director at SCORE, an education nonprofit. "They're more pragmatic about the way they work, about the way they spend their time and their money."

Most states are still collecting data on recent college rates, but early figures are troubling.

In Arkansas, the number of new high school graduates going to college fell from 49% to 42% during the pandemic. Kentucky slid by a similar amount, to 54%. The latest data in Indiana showed a 12-point drop from 2015 to 2020, leading the higher education chief to warn the "future of our state is at risk."

Even more alarming are the figures for Black, Hispanic and low-income students, who saw the largest slides in many states. In Tennessee's class of 2021, just 35% of Hispanic graduates and 44% of Black graduates enrolled in college, compared with 58% of their white peers.

There's some hope the worst has passed. The number of freshmen enrolling at U.S. colleges increased slightly from 2021 to 2022. But that figure, along with total college enrollment, remains far below pre-pandemic levels.

Amid the chaos of the pandemic, many students fell through the cracks, said Scott Campbell, executive director of Persist Nashville, a nonprofit that offers college coaching.

Some students fell behind academically and didn't feel prepared for college. Others lost access to counselors and teachers who help navigate college applications and the complicated process of applying for federal student aid.

"Students feel like schools have let them down," Campbell said.

In Jackson, Mia Woodard recalls sitting in her bedroom and trying to fill out a few online college applications. No one from her school had talked to her about the process, she said. As she scrolled through the forms, she was sure of her Social Security number and little else.

"None of them even mentioned anything college-wise to me," said Woodard, who is biracial and transferred high schools to escape racist bullying. "It might be because they didn't believe in me."

She says she never heard back from the colleges. She wonders whether to blame her shaky Wi-Fi, or if she simply failed to provide the right information.

A spokesperson for the Jackson school system, Greg Hammond, said it provides several opportunities for students to gain exposure to higher education, including an annual college fair for seniors.

"Mia was an at-risk student," Hammond said. "Our school counselors provide additional supports for high school students in this category. It is, however, difficult to provide post-secondary planning and assistance to students who don't participate in these services."

Woodard, who had hoped to be the first in her family to get a college degree, now works at a restaurant and lives with her dad. She's looking for a second job so she can afford to live on her own. Then maybe she'll pursue her dream of getting a culinary arts degree.

"It's still kind of 50-50," she said of her chances.

If there's a bright spot, experts say, it's that more young people are pursuing education programs other than a four-year degree. Some states are seeing growing demand for apprenticeships in the trades, which usually provide certificates and other credentials.

After a dip in 2020, the number of new apprentices in the U.S. has rebounded to near pre-pandemic levels, according to the Department of Labor.

Before the pandemic, Boone Williams was the type of student colleges compete for. He took advanced classes and got A's. He grew up around agriculture and thought about going to college for animal science.

But when his school outside Nashville sent students home his junior year, he tuned out. Instead of logging on for virtual classes, he worked at local farms, breaking horses or helping with cattle.

"I stopped applying myself once COVID came around," the 20-year-old said. "I was focusing on making money rather than going to school."

When a family friend told him about union apprenticeships, he jumped at the chance to get paid for hands-on work while mastering a craft.

Today he works for a plumbing company and takes night classes at a Nashville union.

The pay is modest, Williams said, but eventually he expects to earn far more than friends who took quick jobs after high school. He even thinks he's better off than some who went to college — he knows too many who dropped out or took on debt for degrees they never used.

Saturday's crossword: Answers to this puzzle and Saturday's New York Times puzzle appear on **Page A18.**

Long-ago affair still haunts wife

AMY DICKINSON
ASK AMY

Q. Dear Amy: My husband had an affair eight years ago, but it feels like I found out yesterday. I hurt every day.

I filed for divorce when I found out. He begged for a second chance and ended the affair, and I took him back.

When I want to talk about my feelings, it ends up in a fight, with him saying that I should be over it and that he's not the same person.

I have so much anger inside that I am wondering if counseling would help me deal with my issues, or if it's even possible to move on from this.

What do you think?

— Still Hurting, Still Angry

A. Dear Hurting: Yes, counseling could help both of you to recover from this betrayal. Discussing this might lead you to also unpack aspects of other relationships, going back through time.

A well-matched therapist will guide you, and you will come to understand that you can actually feel your negative feelings and emotions, and then release them.

This episode has engulfed many years of your life. It sits as a wedge in your marriage, interfering with your ability to regain intimacy and trust.

Your husband's reaction to your attempts to discuss this is unkind and unfair. He may be responding to his own fear of facing accusations — when for you, discussing your own feelings, and perhaps hearing an acknowledgment and bid for forgiveness would help you to heal.

If he expects you to "get over it," he should be brave enough to be with you every step of the way.

But you cannot count on your husband to respond in any particular way. Therapy can help you to recognize this reality — and face it.

There are many books relating to healing from an affair. My own long-ago experience taught me that after the anger and sadness, forgiveness would be my liberating path.

Q. Dear Amy: "Mom" wrote to you, explaining her worry about disclosing to her eldest son that he was conceived through "artificial insemination."

Nowhere does she state that she used a sperm donor, and yet you assumed that she had!

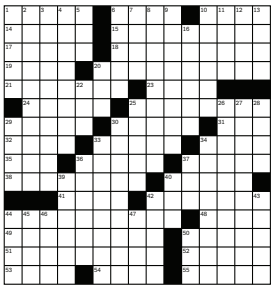
— Confused Reader

A. Dear Confused: You are right — I did make that assumption, which was based on the mother's extreme concern about disclosure.

You can email Amy Dickinson at askamy@amydickinson.com or send a letter to Ask Amy, P.O. Box 194, Freeville, NY 13068. You can also follow her on Twitter @askingamy or Facebook.

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 0203



PUZZLE BY BARBARA LIN

ACROSS

1 Finishing-line cry?
6 Guinness with an Oscar
10 Thigh muscle, informally
14 Beginning to happen
15 Result of a normal distribution
17 Tickets
18 Long ones can be measured in centuries
19 Is short
20 "Fingers crossed!"
21 Recruit
23 Outbuilding that's sometimes converted into a dwelling
24 Capacious
25 Minds one's own business
29 Things a mysophobe is afraid of
30 Some bonds, for short
31 Tiny messenger
32 Ending with electro-
33 Quack grass and others
34 Award quartet
35 "Wow!"
36 College figures
37 Onetime Swedish exports
38 Begins to believe
40 Extra-crispy, to put it nicely
41 IBM component: Abbr.
42 Midweek milestone
44 Crush cans, maybe
48 Give an edge to
49 Perseverance, e.g.
50 Gandhi, longest-serving president of the Indian National Congress
51 In science fiction, suspended animation of a body at a very low temperature
52 Kind of office tray
53 Name written with an accent in Irish English
54 Estimating words
55 Heading in a contract

DOWN

1 Some striped strips
2 Lead-in to some unsolicited advice
3 Striking
4 Ends a vacation
5 Extra play opportunities, in brief
6 Hoffman who wrote "Revolution for the Hell of It"
7 Island rings
8 National dogs of Norway
9 Flowering plant such as "old man's beard"
10 Participates in a bee, maybe
11 Language that's mutually intelligible with Hindi
12 Opposite of "sans"
13 Secretary, e.g.
16 Families and waves might have them
20 Tongue-in-cheek
22 Quick notes, quickly
25 Good, in Guadalajara
26 Driver's license designation
27 Mined compound in the "Avatar" universe
28 Ink spots, for short
29 Lump
30 "Where's the beef?" inquirer?
33 Broke up a band, say
34 Modern meeting aid for many
36 Greasy spoons
37 Word with dim
39 Nurses
40 Part of an urban fleet
42 Sofia's husband in "The Color Purple"
43 Poet who wrote "I have spread my dreams under your feet / Tread softly because you tread on my dreams"
44 Some pickups
45 Like a Buffalo nickel
46 Maisie Williams's role on "Game of Thrones"
47 Edges of a diamond?
50 Pose

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

R	E	A	D		A	N	A	L		I	S	L	E	S
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D	E	C	K		C	H	A	I	R		S	T	O	U	T
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A	R	I	A		B	A	S	I	S		I	D	E	S
W	E	N	T	A	L	L	I	N		S	C	A	L	E
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Baltazar Holdings, LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.300 for a new Retail Marijuana Store license, license #35490, doing business as Sensimilla, located at 1431 Muldoon Road, Anchorage, AK, 99504, UNITED STATES.

Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq at jana@lpscounsel.com or 901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor, Anchorage, AK 99503.

FORECLOSURE SALE

3/16/23 at 10:00 A.M.
303 K Street, Anchorage, AK 99501

Property Address:
4161E CAREFREE DRIVE
WASILLA Alaska 99654
3 Bdrm, 2 Ba, 2240. Ft.
This property is not available for viewing prior to sale

As-Is 2022 BPO Value: $360,000.00
Opening Bid Amount: $243,961.08
Cash or Certified Funds Only
Property is sold "as is, where is",
no warranties expressed or implied

For more information:
Alaska USA FCU (907) 786-2186, (907) 786-2122
servicing agent for AHFC
Sale date and bid amount are subject to change

April 11, 2023 11:06 am (GMT -8:00)

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