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INTERVIEW WITH CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE DR. AKIL KHALFANI

By Lev D. Zilbermints

Lev D. Zilbermints: What motivated you to run for Congress?

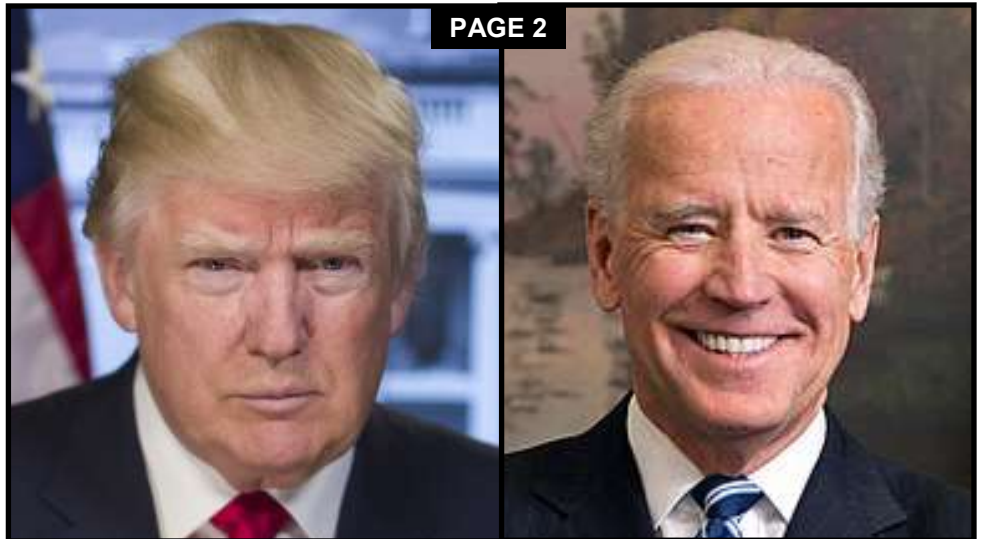
Dr. Akil Khalfani: I have been fighting to create a more fair, just, and equitable American society for most of my life. As a sociologist, I have written and taught about inequality and injustices in our society. I am striving to put my expertise and training to use in a practical and broader fashion for the 10th district and for American people. My family and community instilled in me the necessity for community service. People died for me to be where I am today, and I am striving to give back for their sacrifices.

I and many others are extremely disappointed with our current representation in Congress. We need someone to represent us who has a progressive agenda for positive change. I am not satisfied with the status quo. We must step outside our comfort zones to create spaces for courageous and possibly difficult conversations about the path forward for all Americans.

I am running because we are living in a time that is both dangerous and full of great potential. Donald Trump's actions to undermine the last 60 years of this country's movement forward, requires the activism of every person of good conscious to put their

(Continued on page 3)

HOW TO RUIN A DEBATE



PAGE 2

CANDIDATES AND STATE QUESTIONS ON THE NOV. 3 BALLOT

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - That the registered voting "Local Talk News" electorate has political and nonpartisan candidates and public questions to determine before the end of Nov. 3 here may be the most consistent or normal aspect of Election 2020.

The Nov. 3 General Election is - from picking the next President of the United States to Board of

Education members - the third straight where the polling is predominantly done with Vote-By-Mail ballots.

There will be at least one traditional Nov. 3 polling station with a machine and poll workers -here at the Essex County Hall of Records. The Essex County Board of Elections, as of Sept. 30, have not yet said whether they will deploy more

(Continued on page 11)



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Turn to
PAGE 9



Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The most anticipated debate from all over the world became a disaster thanks to both candidates. Usually, both teams claim their candidate as the debate winner. This time, no one was in position to claim victory. I sent a text to my son that it was a teenager's debate. My son replied, "no dad it was a third grader's debate." He also added that the debate was not for the most acclaimed democratic country, but for a third world country.

Moderator Chris Wallace was neutral, but did not handle the debate well. Trump was the most difficult person in the room, stopping and disturbing Biden or Wallace when they were speaking. Maybe Wallace was afraid of insulting the president, but the president was serving as a candi-

date then, not as the president, and he must follow the rules of the debate. As Wallace said, the rules were accepted by both parties before the debate. He was extremely late when stopping Trump's interruptions. One of my customers said that Wallace should have told Trump that if he doesn't keep his mouth shut, he will turn off his microphone.

Trump had a great chance to be a winner of the debate. When Joe Biden was talking about his son (the late Beau Biden), Trump switched it to Hunter Biden's drug problem. Instead of doing that, Trump should have saluted Beau Biden's service. People would have loved it. If Trump would have done that, it would have been a win.

Another thing that Trump screwed up was not giving a strong statement against white supremacists. He said stand down and stand by. That means he is telling them to be ready if the mail-in balloting is a problem. No matter what side wins, there will be riots all over the country. Right now, the country is divided into three groups. Two

groups have strong beliefs towards Trump and Biden, and the third group is not committed to either party. The only way to avoid a disaster is if someone has a landslide victory.

Biden wasn't lying when he said that 4 trillion dollars in taxes will be raised for people making \$400,000 or more. However, this will be only 97% of the tax increase. About 3% of the tax increase will be paid directly or indirectly by people making under \$400,000. Biden claimed that 7 million more jobs will be created by raising taxes. However, while Biden might raise employment in the government or government-controlled non-profits, he will lose open market private companies' jobs. So, the net result might be zero.

Biden's plan is for a centralized economy. Trump believes in a decentralized economy. Both economies have advantages and disadvantages. I do not support a centralized economy. We have seen locally that a centralized economy gives too much power to the mayors, county executive and the governor. Biden has not

proved that his tendency of forgetfulness has changed. In my opinion, no one won the debate, but the people who spent their valuable time are the losers. Due to bad habits of the Democratic anti-Trump slogans, I would not be surprised that Trump gets more votes than he deserves.

Five of the six largest fires this year are in California. Trump suggested about three years ago to have better forest management and take off some trees. But the attitude of the Democratic administrators in the country is whatever Trump says is wrong and do not follow the same route. When it comes to a natural disaster, it should be one team. The Republicans and Democrats all should be united as Americans when handling the situation. That has never happened in four years since Trump became President, and even a little before that.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Sunny	Morning Showers	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Rain	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy
HI 74	HI 66	HI 68	HI 66	HI 64	HI 68	HI 71
LO 56	LO 49	LO 49	LO 53	LO 48	LO 52	LO 53

AKIL KHALFANI INTERVIEW

(Continued from page 1)

skills to the best possible use so they can do stabilize and move this country forward again.

We are in danger of our nation becoming a fascist oppressive regime. I refuse to sit back and watch this without creating a movement of the masses who will fight for the integrity of our country.

We need to face and combat the danger of the current administration and the Republicans while taking advantage of the possibilities inherent in this moment in time. To do this, we need someone who is actively engaged in the political process, who will join with the progressive caucus to form a likeminded unit. Someone who will have the difficult discussions necessary to create progressive change with the needs of the people in mind. This is a mission I willfully accept.

LZ: Could you tell us about your background? Education, work experience?

AK: I am a Change Agent, Author, Professor, and Motivational Speaker. I earned my Ph.D. degree in Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, from which I also earned a Graduate Certificate in African Studies. My areas of expertise are, social stratification, developing solutions to social problems, Africana Studies, and race relations.

I am currently the Director for the Center for Global Education and Experiences, Director of the Africana Institute and Associate Professor of Sociology at Essex County College. In 2019, I was selected as a Presidential Elevate Fellow for the Council on International Educational Exchange. I received a Citation Award from the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa in 2017, for my "outstanding contributions in the field of education and my humanitarian deeds." I became the Pan African Diaspora Ambassador to the Ooni of Ile Ife, Nigeria in 2016 and was awarded The Chair Academy's 2016 International Exemplary Leadership Award.

I am the author of, *The Hidden Debate: The Truth Revealed*

about the Battle over Affirmative Action in South Africa and the United States, which was nominated for the national Oliver Cromwell Cox Award of the American Sociological Association (ASA). I am co-author of *Introduction to Sociology: Understanding Our Complex World*, 4th edition. I am a contributing author to several books including the *W.E.B. Du Bois Encyclopedia* and *White Logic, White Methods, Racism and Methodology*, which won the ASA's 2009 Oliver Cromwell Cox Award.

I was the Host and Executive Producer of *The Pulse*: a televised talk show that explores the diversity of the African global experience and I appeared in several documentaries including: *Searching for Shaniqua* and *Black Eagle of Harlem*. I have given keynote addresses at the United Nations and for various corporate and government organizations such as KPMG and the Transportation and Security Administration (TSA). Additionally, I have given graduation and keynote addresses at various secondary schools and universities. He sits on the editorial board for the Association of Black Sociologists' journal entitled *Issues in Race & Society: An Interdisciplinary Global Journal*.

I have been recognized for my community service work by the United States Congress, the California State Senate, the New Jersey State Assembly, and several municipalities in New Jersey. I served as Vice President of the West Orange African Heritage Organization and am a Commissioner on the West Orange Human Relations Commission. I was an Advisor to the UNESCO Center for Global Education and previously served as Co-Chair for the Education Committee for the City of Newark's African Commission and as a member on the Essex-Newark Coalition to End Homelessness.

LZ: What does you plan to do for the community? What kind of issues need to be addressed?

AK: First, I plan to be present and engaged both in congress and in my community. I will meet regularly with my constitu-

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ents to determine the needs of the communities I serve. As to issues, my top three issues are Economic/Pandemic Recovery, Criminal Justice/policing, Reparations and racial Justice. (healthcare National Education, Climate Change and Labor are also part of my platform.

The Economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic has had a rippling effect on world economies and the U.S. is no exception. We must take bold steps that look holistically at the impact of the pandemic. We must consider the financial impact to employees and employers. We must look at the health care system. We need to better understand the pandemic's impact on all levels of education from preschool to college. We need to look at the economic toll on state and municipal governments. Congress's response must be holistic.

Fifty-one-point four percent (51.4%) of the 10th Congressional District is black, twenty-one-point one percent (21.1%) is Latinx. Criminal Justice and Policing Reform are critical issues in this district which includes the City of Newark. We need to develop better more humanistic relationships between the citizens and the police. The senseless murders of African American citizens must end. I will support the development of Civilian Review Boards in the communities I serve, that are charged with the responsibility of helping to ensure humanizing police practices in our country. Also, African Americans get more prison time than their white counterparts for the same crimes. I will also seek to bring an end to for-profit private prisons. and there should be no profit motives for prisons or

on the backs of prisoners. We must come together as a collective to solve these issues.

Reparations - American society has begun to face our historical racist past that has provided the foundation for our present social clash. Asheville, NC has set the bar in our consideration for providing reparations for African Americans, who are the descendants of the brutally enslaved in America. The federal government, via Congress and the Executive branches of government, can do no less. As for Racial Justice: We will take this moment in American history to develop the legislation, regulations and conscience of the citizens to transform our country. We will strive to create inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-discrimination policies that are clear departures from the past.

LZ: How does you see the community in New Jersey working together during the dual crises of the coronavirus and the ongoing BLM/Antifa protests?

AK: I believe that the protests whether physical, virtual, letter writing, signing petitions and other means. We cannot let this moment in American history pass without taking full advantage of the potential for change. We must also ensure that our political leaders take the virus seriously and ensure that American's are safe. Our worsening economy is indeed a crisis which must be addressed as best we can, but not at the cost of putting people at risk. The safety of our nation's people must come first. Congress must find new and creative ways to adjust or remodel the economy so that it

(Continued on page 13)



UNITED STATES

Barrett Nominated to Replace Ginsburg

After the heartbreaking death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, President Trump nominated a replacement - to the joy of some, and the fury of others.

On Sept. 26, Trump nominated 7th District Court of Appeals Judge Amy Coney Barrett to fill the seat vacated by the death of "RBG" on the Supreme Court. Barrett is a conservative, and if appointed, would create a 6-3 majority on the court in favor of conservatives over liberals. It is strongly suggested that Barrett's appointment could jeopardize abortion rights as well as the Affordable Care Act, aka "Obamacare."

Barrett is a native of New Orleans, is married, and a mother to seven children - including two adopted children from Haiti. They currently live in South Bend, Indiana.

Right now, the GOP-led Senate has 51 members in favor of a vote, which is enough to confirm Barrett. Democrats meanwhile have urged lawmakers on the other side to abide by Senator Mitch McConnell's actions when President Obama wanted to confirm Merrick Garland. McConnell dismissed Obama's efforts to have Garland fill the seat vacated by the death of Antonin Scalia, saying that an appointment should not come so close in an election year.

Garland's potential appointment had 11 months to spare, whereas Barrett's potential appointment is less than two months. Ironically, Barrett served as a clerk under Scalia.

EUROPE

Organized Crime Takedown

Tackling illegal immigration and the trafficking of firearms and drugs was the focus of an operation supported by INTERPOL and Europol to combat organized and serious international

crime originating from Southeast Europe.

The four-day operation (Sept. 24-27), coordinated by the European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats (EMPACT) and led by the Spanish Guardia Civil, saw 33 countries team up during joint action days (JADs).

Nearly 9,000 law enforcement officers were involved in the operation and included police officers, land, sea and air border guards and customs agents. INTERPOL played a key role in the Southeast Europe JADs, leveraging expertise from Project Millennium - aimed at combating organized crime in the Balkans among other regions - as well as resources from the INTERPOL Criminal Data Management Department and INTERPOL Firearms Program.

During the span of the action week, more than 390,000 individuals and 44,000 vehicles were checked at cross border locations and suspected illicit trafficking hotspots.

In total, countries participating in the JADs performed nearly 14 million searches on INTERPOL databases during the four days, resulting in more than 5,000 hits.

These controls and investigations have led to a number of arrests in several European countries on the following charges:

- Firearms trafficking or illegal possession of firearms: 17
- Migrant smuggling or illegal immigration: 73
- Drug trafficking: 37
- Firearms and drug trafficking: 7
- Document fraud: 12
- International arrest warrant: 1
- Other crimes not related to the JAD: 19

In addition, investigators seized 51 weapons of different types and 47 kilograms of a variety of drugs.

"These results demonstrate that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, INTERPOL and our partners continue supporting our member countries by enhancing their capabilities and strengthening international and regional law enforcement cooperation,"

said Jose de Gracia, Assistant Director of INTERPOL's Criminal Networks division.

"The successes in Southeast Europe will strengthen police cooperation for future operations around the world," added de Gracia.

AFRICA

Death Sentence Over a Song

Independent UN human rights experts have called on the Government of Nigeria to immediately release a singer sentenced to death over an allegedly blasphemous song he performed and shared on social media.

Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, 22, was sentenced to death on August 10 by a Sharia court in Nigeria's northern Kano province. He was convicted for sharing a song he had written and performed through a group on WhatsApp, which prompted some local politicians to call for his execution.

A mob burned down his family home in March and he has received death threats.

The human rights experts called for the death sentence to be overturned and for authorities to guarantee his safety and right to due process, while he appeals the verdict.

"We are deeply concerned over the serious lack of due process in Mr. Sharif-Aminu's case so far, especially reports that he has been held incommunicado, and that he did not have access to a lawyer during his initial trial, a trial that was not open to the public," said the experts in a news release on Sept. 28.

The experts added that artistic expression of opinion and beliefs, through songs or other media - including those seen to offend religious sensibilities - is protected in accordance with international law.

UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Karima Bennouna, one of the experts sounding the alarm, said that the application of the death penalty "for artistic expression or for sharing a song on the Internet, is a flagrant violation of international human rights law, as well as of Nigeria's constitution."

"We are also gravely concerned about Mr. Sharif-Aminu's safety, in light of the

death threats against him", said the rights experts. "Nigeria must take effective measures to protect Mr. Sharif-Aminu, in detention as well as after his release."

CARIBBEAN

A Plea for Cooperation

Leaders from the Caribbean, in pre-recorded addresses to the UN General Assembly, stressed that their small economies are largely dependent on one or just a few industries, and called for strengthened global cooperation and financing mechanisms to overcome the health crisis sparked by the coronavirus pandemic and recover from its massive socio-economic fallout.

Speakers also highlighted the importance of gender equality, improving access to technology and closing the digital divide, addressing inequalities within societies, strengthening climate action, and, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring no one is left behind.

Nations have to re-imagine the ways they cooperate as they respond to COVID-19, said Andrew Holness, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the first of the Caribbean leaders to speak, adding that "persistent global problems require consistent cooperation to achieve strategic global solutions."

An excellent example of such effective multilateral cooperation is the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, he said. The Fund supports low- and middle-income countries overcome the health and development crisis caused by the pandemic and support those most vulnerable to economic hardship and social disruption.

The inclusion of middle-income countries "recognizes the reality," added the Prime Minister, referring to the development challenges faced by this group of countries.

Through ensuring middle-income countries are able to access support they need will allow the entire international community to reap benefits, he said.

The Prime Minister of the smallest nation in the Western Hemisphere, Saint Kitts and Nevis, also underscored the mo-

(Continued on page 7)

GOVERNOR MURPHY SIGNS FY 2021 BUDGET INTO LAW

Budget Plan Reinstates Controversial Millionaires Tax

TRENTON - On Sept. 29, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 2021) Appropriations Act into law, working together with legislative leadership to enact a revised spending plan that manages to protect core priorities and deliver middle-class tax relief during the historic fiscal crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The budget plan also fully reestablishes the millionaires tax that expired in 2010, instituting the existing 10.75% rate on income over \$5 million to income earned over \$1 million.

“As we continue to grapple with the effects of the pandemic, building a stronger New Jersey requires us to continue to bolster the middle-class families who are the backbone of our state,” said Governor Murphy. “This revised budget not only recognizes the realities of the pandemic, offering much-needed tax fairness, including tax relief to the middle class, but also maintains our core principles so that we can emerge from this crisis stronger, fairer, and more resilient.”

Governor Murphy originally laid out his FY 2021 budget proposal on February 25, 2020. Less than two weeks later, the COVID-19 pandemic took root, ravaging New Jersey from both a public health and an economic standpoint. The crisis prompted the State to follow the federal government in moving important April tax filing deadlines to July and extending the fiscal year from the traditional June 30th end date to September 30th. As a result, the budget signed addresses spending for only the nine-month period from October 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

The revised budget the Governor unveiled last month laid out a series of solutions to help close a roughly \$5.28 billion budget gap and protect many shared priorities. Together,

Governor Murphy and legislative leaders reached an agreement that builds upon that proposal while securing a significant victory for middle and working-class taxpayers by restoring the full millionaire’s tax and delivering sizable tax rebates to approximately 800,000 New Jersey families.

“The pandemic has challenged people and government in unthinkable ways. This budget responsibly answers the calls for economic relief and recovery while simultaneously building up our middle class,” said Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs. “By providing significant tax relief through updated tax codes and keeping the programs people need in place, the Murphy Administration and the legislature are demonstrating good governance by prioritizing working people, veterans, seniors, young adults and children in this budget.”

The final Appropriations Act signed maintains funding for a wide range of critical programs, including K-12 education, municipal aid, direct property tax relief (including the Homestead Benefit and the Senior Freeze), the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and postsecondary tuition assistance. It also makes new investments in the Clean Water and Drinking Water programs, the Children’s System of Care, Regional Coordinator Hospitals and Federally Qualified Health Centers, extraordinary special education, early voting, and the State’s Emergency Feeding Organizations.

Governor Murphy also signed legislation to increase Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) eligibility to assist tens of thousands of more young adults and to exclude combat zone pay from the Gross Income Tax to assist soldiers serving abroad.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Orange Board of Education Public School District

The Orange Board of Education will in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13, has scheduled to **conduct a Superintendent contract hearing during its scheduled Virtual Public Meeting on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.** The hearing is for purpose of renegotiating, amending or otherwise altering the terms of the employment contract with the Superintendent of Schools.

At this hearing, members of the public are invited to submit public comments regarding this topic. The Board, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b), the “Open Public Meetings Act,” shall not publicly discuss personnel matters and shall not respond to comments made by members of the public. The Board will give all comments appropriate consideration.

Please be aware that the subject of this hearing retains the right of privacy and shall retain all rights regarding defamation and slander according to the laws of New Jersey. The Board shall not be held liable for comments made by members of the public.

As part of the Governor’s continued focus on tax fairness, the existing 10.75% rate on income over \$5 million will now be extended to income earned over \$1 million, which is expected to generate \$390 million for the nine-month budget. All told, the Appropriations Act includes \$750 million in revenue derived from new tax policy changes, including restoring the 2.5 percent corporation surtax on corporations with taxable net income in excess of \$1 million,

which will yield an estimated \$210 million during FY 2021; and increasing the current annual assessment on net written premiums of HMOs from three percent to five percent, raising an estimated \$102.7 million in FY 2021

The budget also includes a nearly \$4.8 billion contribution to bolster the state pension system, which represents the largest percentage of the Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC) contributed in 25 years. Addi-

(Continued on page 7)

TOWN WATCH

DISCLAIMER: The following items are primarily drawn from first responders. Responders' accounts may not be their full activity range. Grand juries hand down indictments when evidence presented them warrant a trial. Named suspects/defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

NEWARK - A visitation and funeral for education advocate Ronnie Eugene Kellam, 28, has been respectively set for 10 and 11 a.m. here at Cotton Funeral Service, 1025 Bergen St., Oct. 6.

Kellam, said ECPO spokeswoman Katherine Carter Sept. 26, had died in University Hospital 12:30 that morning from injuries suffered from a crash between the vehicle he was driving and a pole along Irvine Turner Boulevard between Hawthorne Avenue and West Peddie Street around midnight.

Kellam and his passenger were in a car provided by Iron Rock Security, of Lakewood, when he lost control and struck the pole at high speed, entrapping them both. Both were freed but Kellam was declared dead at the scene while the passenger was rushed to University Hospital. It is not known whether they were on duty or were going to or from an assignment.

Kellam, when not on security duty, had last run for a Newark Public Schools Board of Education seat April 21. He ran then and in 2018 on his own "Power for Change" platform.

Born here May 13, 1993, the lifelong Newarker came to Malcolm X. Shabazz High School via George Washington Carver and Peshine Avenue elementary schools. The Class of 2011 President - for all four years - had meanwhile joined the Youth Media Symposium arm of Rutgers' Abbott Leadership Institute.

Kellam was a parent advocate in Parents Educating Parents, the Journey 4 Justice Alli-

ance and at McKinley Avenue School, where his eight-year-old son is enrolled. The Roseville resident was a 32BJ SEIU shop steward, an Anti-Crime Partnership lieutenant a FEMA Hazmat Task Force/Strike Team leader and a constable for the City of Newark (2016-19) and Essex County - among other titles and qualifications.

"Local Talk News" remembers Kellam as a regular ALI class attendee, a well-prepared NPS BOE meeting public speaker, a local bus rider plus having an aimable and professional presence at the Board and Market McDonald's and the 1 Ferry St. 7-Eleven.

IRVINGTON - A township man was among a local four-some arrested and charged by federal authorities Sept. 17 for running a fraudulent check cashing ring involving the U.S. Mail, man, 41, high school students and bank ATMs 2019-20.

Jeffrey Bennett, 28 plus Newarkers Jahaad Flip, 21 and Janel Blackman - who was a USPS employee - and Tashon Ragan, 21, of Hillside, were each charged with conspiracy to commit back fraud. Bennett and Ragan were also charged with aggravated identity theft; Flip and Ragan were charged with passing counterfeit Economic Impact Payment checks.

The quartet, said U.S. Attorney-New Jersey District Craig Carpenito, had run their Members ring Feb. 1, 2019-May 31, 2020. The Members would solicit postal workers to steal mail containing checks, checkbooks, debit and credit cards for cash.

The leaders would forge account holders' signatures and make them payable to individuals - some of whom were high schoolers. The students and other accomplices would then deposit and cash the checks on ATMS before the banks could discover and decline the checks.

Flip and Ragan developed a sideline, since the U.S. CARES Act was enacted March 29, in depositing phony EIP checks. Each check carried at least \$1,200 in credit for individual taxpayers or up to \$2,400 for

married couples who jointly file their income tax returns and up to \$500 per qualifying child.

Carpenito thanked members of the Newark Police Division, South Orange Police Department, and police in Little Falls, New Providence, Piscataway and Summit - where the checks were deposited and cashed in bank ATMs. The USPS Inspector General's Office and the IRS were also involved in the investigation.

EAST ORANGE - A city man, said authorities, has been arrested on Sept. 23 for a July 25 car crash, before a public school here, which has left his passenger disfigured.

Charles D. Sloan Jr., 33, said Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II and East Orange Public Safety Director Domingos Saldida, is being held in the Essex County Correctional Facility on a count of second degree DWI assault by auto, causing serious bodily injury, within 1,000 feet of a school crosswalk.

Sloan has also been charged with fourth-degree counts of assault by auto and causing SBI while operating a car on a suspended drivers license.

City first responders came to 120 Central Ave., better known as the Dionne Warwick Institute of Economics and Entrepreneurship, at 11:34 p.m. July 25. They found a white 2009 Honda Civic against a tree by the corner of South Maple Avenue - and driver Sloan and his 19-year-old front seat passenger trapped inside.

City firefighters extricated the pair and contracted medics rushed them to a local hospital. While both were admitted with serious leg injuries, the passenger underwent the partial amputation of one of his legs.

EOPD officers' records check revealed that Sloan had a suspended MVC license. They also found "a nearly empty bottle of Hennessy cognac near the vehicle." Sloan's blood alcohol test came in at twice the legal limit.

ORANGE - Former State Assemblyman and high City of Or-

ange official Willis Edwards III woke up Wednesday morning to having five more indictment charges against him by the U.S. Department of Justice overnight.

U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito unsealed a superseding indictment, recently handed down by a federal grand jury in Newark, against Edwards, 49, Sept. 29. These five counts are of wire fraud, conspiracy to commit thereof and taking kickbacks while as an official of a federal-funded municipality.

The counts are in addition to the 28 handed down July 7 - including his 2015 dealings with self-employed computer consultant Jeanmarie Zahore. Zahore, of New Providence, was indicted Aug. 18.

Edwards and Zahore remain accused of concocting a \$350,000 "emergency" computer system replacement contract for the Freddie Polhill Law and Justice Complex in August-September 2015. Zahore, while working on the system into 2016, allegedly sent a cut of that contract back to Edwards from either his JZ Nettech checking account or in cash on or by Nov. 15, 2015.

Edwards, among other new Tuesday indictment revelations, did not tell the City Council at their Sept. 15, 2015 meeting that he had talked with Zahore the previous month. The Council approved the contract, as a late agenda item addition, 4-3.

Tuesday's indictment account also included Edwards making "multiple demands and solicitations for payment" to Zahore. The contractor responded with two \$10,000 cash paybacks, as "Gift WE," Nov. 20 and 23, 2015.

Edwards allegedly conspired while as Orange's "Deputy Business Administrator," a post Mayor Dwayne Warren created after the council denied Edwards' appointment as BA. in 2012. A court, citing the job title as not existing on Orange records, disbarred Edwards in 2016 and ordered him to pay the city back his \$287,000 salary.

The new indictment is the latest development of the DOJ/ (Continued on page 7)

WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 4)

ment of global reckoning wrought by the pandemic “demands a renewal of purpose and promise” through multilateralism, and stronger international cooperation.

Prime Minister Timothy Harris said that the time for mutual reliance was now.

He congratulated the UN World Health Organization (WHO) for its stewardship of the international response, adding that Caribbean Community (CARICOM) states strongly back the COVID-19 Tools Accelerator initiative for an equitable vaccine: “Instead of nationalism, we need global cooperation in the fight to defeat COVID-19,” he said.

Lauding his islands’ “considerable success” combat-

ing the virus, he said multilateral assistance was essential for small island nations like his, calling for greater access to “concessional financing” and debt relief to help reshape the economy, battered by everything from a record-breaking hurricane season to the collapse of tourism revenue.

“Climate change for us, is not something to be postponed for tomorrow. It must be addressed like yesterday,” Prime Minister Harris said, calling on small island nations to champion the cause of preserving biodiversity, at next week’s summit-level meeting of the General Assembly.

“For Saint Kitts and Nevis, the ocean is our lifeblood. Let us protect it, to preserve a stronger and safer future,” he added.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 6)

FBI-Newark’s four-year-old investigation of Orange City Hall, public library and former YWCA financing and contracts. A former OPL director had pleaded guilty and a fourth person has been indicted as a result.

WEST ORANGE - A local Italian American advocacy group has taken the township government to court to get the latter’s Christopher Columbus monument reinstalled.

Returning the Columbus marker to its Valley neighborhood traffic island is part of the Italian American One Voice Coalition suit against Mayor Robert Parisi and the Township Council filed in U.S. Federal Court-Newark Sept. 15. Parisi’s order to remove the monument, asserts IAOVC Founder and President Dr. Manny Alfano, was a denial of Italian Americans’ equal protection under the law as stated in the Constitution’s 14th Amendment.

“The suit against West Orange serves as a warning to elected officials in every town, city and state that we’ll not stand by while they consider removing an important symbol of their heritage,” said Alfano, of Bloomfield. “We’ve tried every-

thing we could to stop local officials from removing the Columbus statues. When they turned a deaf ear to our pleas, we were forced to defend our heritage by going to federal court.”

Parisi, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and Maplewood’s Township Committee were among those local officials who removed their respective Columbus statuary and/or monuments as a precaution. Other Columbus markers in other locales had been defaced and/or toppled by crowds in the wake of Black Lives Matter protests since George Floyd’s May 25 murder by a Minneapolis police officer.

A second Newark Columbus statue was also taken down as a pre-emptive move. Petitions to remove or retain Columbus markers have been circulated in Orange, Bloomfield and Nutley.

“One Voice,” whose aim is to defend Italian American contributions and heritage while fighting stereotypes, has been around for at least 20 years. It publishes newsletters highlighting advances and controversies.

“Local Talk News” remembers going to several of its functions either at Bloomfield College or Bloomfield Civic Center in town. One event was the airing of a documentary of World War Two internment camps in

(Continued on page 10)

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**GOVERNOR MURPHY SIGNS
FY 2021 BUDGET INTO LAW**

(Continued from page 5)

tionally, it includes a robust \$2.5 billion surplus, which represents 6.2 percent of appropriations over the 12-month period. This surplus is critical to addressing the very real possibility of another resurgence of the novel coronavirus.

The Appropriations Act also relies on the ability to issue up to

\$4.5 billion in General Obligation bonds to help address the massive economic fallout created by COVID-19 and better position the State to weather any future public health and economic uncertainties. The type of borrowing facility that will be utilized, interest rates, and repayment schedules will all be determined based on market conditions when the state is ready to issue the bonds over the next several months.

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*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

Being Smart

The ongoing discussion concerning the \$750 that the President of the United States paid in cooperate taxes for two consecutive years (2016, 2017) has gotten extensive media attention. It has caught my interest, too. The taxes became a part of the latest presidential debate, with the president touting himself as being "smart" for making use of tax loopholes, as provided within the tax code.

Other individuals have substituted other words for the word "smart," that I am not using here. But the word "smart" caused me to think of one of Jesus' great parables on how the people of this world often think themselves "smart" by the ways in which they deal with their wealth. Allow me to crave your indulgence in quoting the whole parable as it is told in Luke 16, using the New International Version of the Bible.

Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. 2 So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.' 3 "The

manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg - 4 I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

5 "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 "'Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. 'The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.' 7 "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' "'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. 'He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' 8 "The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.

9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? "No one can serve two masters. Either

you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

Wow! What a parable? Every time I read it, I pause to observe all of the connivings that the servant used to accumulate wealth. His schemes remind me of what many individuals are doing in public and private spheres to secure wealth. Forgive my thought; there are only a few individuals, I think, who are working a fair day's pay or paying a fair share of their taxes according to the requirements. I have heard many, too many, commending the president for his "smartness" because they say they would behave exactly that way if they had the wealth.

For me, the most striking issue in the parable is how the manager commended the servant for his "smartness." By reading on, I saw that what Jesus was offering was not so much a commendation, but contempt. Notice what he said, "For the people of this world are more shrewd (smart) in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light."

Hear further what Jesus said: I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so

that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

This discussion has pushed me to raise the following questions: How do we handle wealth? How do we handle our possessions? How do we use what is allowed to us by God? Are we practicing all kinds of scheming to give the world the impression that we are "smart?"

I do not wish to go into word definition here, but what does it mean to be smart? Is it to be dishonest? Is it a way to trick people into believing that we have what we do not have? Or does smart mean using my wisdom to practice decency, honesty, and integrity toward God? Does smart not mean thinking in the long term that I must not only give account to the tax collectors or the government or the people who one serves, but that a person is responsible to God, for all their actions? Does it not mean that one's character must be able to pass the test at the judgment bar of God?

Friend, let me trust that you understand what it means to be "smart." I have come to learn that being smart means preparing how to live in this world and as well as in the world to come. I trust that you will also come to this realization.

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 7)

Montana. Another was an annual Mille Grazie (1,000 Thanks) praising and "Pasta-Tute" denunciation awards program

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - A two-town joint exploratory committee is to present an automatic fire response plan, the first step to the long-awaited joint fire department, before respective elders on Oct. 9.

The response plan, which members from each municipality have been collaborating on since Sept. 15, will direct which firehouse units of the Maplewood and South Orange fire departments respond when they get a call.

South Orange's Board of Trustees, following Maplewood's Township Committee's Sept. 1 approving vote, approved the exploratory committee Sept. 14. This is the first development

towards what is being called the "South Mountain Regional Fire Department" since the COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus pandemic froze the consolidation process in mid-March.

The regional department, to operate as a joint committee, has been formalized in the past two years - after some 20 years of discussion and evaluation.

The regional department, given the two towns' history, is a reconsolidation. South Orange

Township, to set itself apart from the Village of South Orange, was renamed Maplewood Nov. 7, 1922.

MONTCLAIR - The landlords advocacy group who had strived to get their public question referendum on the township rent control ordinance on the Nov. 3 ballot is regrouping for another petition drive in 2021.

The Montclair Property
(Continued on page 14)

NOV. 3 BALLOT

(Continued from page 1)

polling booths elsewhere.

The county's network of VBM drop boxes - first used for the combined nonpartisan municipal and school board elections and the July 7 major party primaries - have expanded to all 22 municipalities. Newark and West Orange have two each.

Drop boxes and VBM ballots are to keep physical contact to a minimum in this COVID-19 socially distant climate. Measures to curb and turn back the coronavirus outbreak have also affected how candidates campaign and meet prospective voters.

The annual General Election task remains the choosing of people to represent us and to approve or turn down public questions affecting the state budget and/or the 1947 State Constitution.

This article will serve as an overview of what completes the Nov. 3 ballot - including the "minor" party and/or independent candidates who made the July 7 petition deadline requirements and the three statewide public questions. It will also provide an entry for further personal inquiry.

The parties, other than Republicans and Democrats, and independents for President and U.S. Congress span the hews of the political spectrum. The candidates are referenced here by name, residency, incumbency or challenger and by party.

PRESIDENT / VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Incumbents: Donald J. Trump (R-Palm Beach, Fla.) / Mike Pence (R-Indianapolis, Ind.)

Challengers: Joseph Biden (D-Wilmington, Del.) / Kamala Harris (D-Sacramento, Calif.)

The Alliance Party candidate Roque "Rocky" De La Fuentes and running mate Darcy Rich-

ardson have drawn Line C on the ballot. De La Fuentes, of San Diego, ran in 2016 on a TAP-Reform Party fusion ticket. Richardson, of Wilkesburg, Pa., last ran for Governor of Pennsylvania.

TAP, according to politiics1.com, has made the ballot in at least 15 states and the District of Columbia.

The Party for Socialism and Liberation is found on the next line. Gloria Estella La Rivera, of Albuquerque, N.M. is PSL's candidate, running with Sunil Freeman, of Washington, D.C. PSL has made the ballot in at least 15 states. and D.C.

On the next line is the Green Party's Howie Hawkins-Angela Walker entry. Hawkins is a Syracuse, N.Y. native. Walker resides in Columbia, S.C. The Green Party has made the ballot in at least 29 states and D.C.

Following is Unity Party of America's Bill Hammons and Eric Bodenstal. Hammons, of Colorado Springs, Co., founded the party in 2005. Bodenstal is from Denver. The Unity Party is at least on the ballot here and may be in up to 13 other states and/or D.C.

The Constitution Party's Don Blankenship and William Mohr ticket landed on the next line. Blankenship resides in Charlestown, W.Va. Mohn is a Bryan Corners, Mich. native. The Constitution Party is on the ballot in up to 29 states and D.C.

The Libertarian Party's Jo Jorgenson and Spike Cohen round out the balloted POTUS field. Jorgenson and Mohr respectively reside in Columbia, S.C., and Boston. The Libertarian Party is on the ballot in all 50 states and D. C.

And then there are other candidates who are running for their own reasons. One of those candidates is Kanye West; the number of states that have him on the ballot is up for debate.

Please note that there is a Line I on the ballot. That line is where a voter can mark and write in his or her own personal candidate.

U.S. SENATE

Incumbent: Cory A. Booker (D-Newark)

Challenger: Rik Metha (R-Chester.)

Veronica B. Fernandez drew a place on Line C, but is running on her own "Of, By, For!" ticket. The self-employed electrical contractor is from Sussex County's Franklin Borough.

On the next line is Daniel Burke. Burke, of Princeton, is running under his own "LaRouche Was Right" banner but with LaRouche PAC support.

Madelyn Hoffman shares the Green Party line and ticket. Hoffman, of Flanders, last ran in 2018. Luis E. "Ed" Vergara, of New Providence, is running a write-in campaign.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Eighth Congressional District (Includes Belleville, Newark's East, North Wards.)

Incumbent: Albio Sires (D-W. New York.)

Challenger: Jason Todd Mushnik (R-Jersey City).

Dan Delaney, of Hoboken, is running on the Libertarian line.

10th CD (Incl. the Rest of Newark, Lower Thirds of Bloomfield and Montclair, East Orange, Glen Ridge, Irvington, Maplewood, Orange, South Orange and part of West Orange.)

Incumbent: Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-Newark)

Challenger: Jennifer Zinone (R-Bayonne)

Although Khaliiah Fichette was placed on the TAP line, the Newark native is running on her

own "Building Your Legacy" banner. West Orange's Akil Khalfani is on the next line but is running as an independent. John Mirrione, of Elizabeth, is running on the Libertarian line.

11th CD (Incl. the rest of Local Talk News territory)

Incumbent: Mikie Sherrill (D-Montclair)

Challenger: Rosemary Becchi (R-Millburn)

There are no other party or independent candidates on the 11th CD ballot.

ESSEX COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Most of the rest of these elections - Essex County At Large and Ward Freeholders County Clerk, and Municipal Council - are contests between Democratic and Republican party candidates. Several Democratic incumbents are running unopposed.

There are no "minor party" or independent candidates running at the county or municipal levels - until one considers the nonpartisan council races in West Orange and, maybe, Glen Ridge.

By nonpartisan, these candidates are not running or fielded by their local or county Democratic or Republican party committees. That partisan ban, however, does not prevent candidates here from running on their own slogans or team up under a common banner.

In WEST ORANGE, there are seven candidates vying for three Township Council seats - six of whom have their own slogans.

One could not tell who the incumbents who are seeking re-election are by their slogans alone. Michele Casilano calls herself "Always Working for West Orange". Jerry Guarino is

(Continued on page 15)

The Doctor Is In



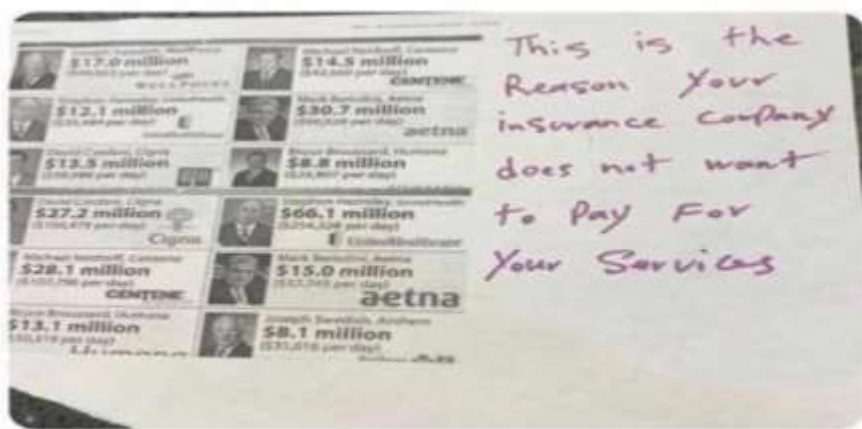
Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

Why Health Insurance Companies Don't Want To Pay For Your Services



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This was at the check in desk at a doctors office I just went to 🤔



long ago, and once you see it, you just cannot unsee it.

Brace yourself for some pretty shocking figures. CVS Health, the company that bought Aetna in 2018, paid its CEO, Larry Merlo, \$21.9 million in 2018. That estimates to about 618 times the average employee salary in the company. 618 times! Also in 2018, the total compensation the CEO of UnitedHealth Group, David Wichmann, received was \$21.5 million. The company, through its annual proxy statement, said that Wichmann makes close to 316 times the company's average employee salary. Those are disturbing figures and what is even more disturbing is that they aren't rare ones. That is the normal progression with health insurance companies.

The least paid CEO of all health insurance companies,

ridiculous amounts of money on health every year.

Americans borrowed \$88 billion to settle medical bills last year, while the health insurance companies that we have entrusted our healthcare to keeps increasing the money they pay their CEOs. So, to make it perfectly clear, we keep paying more and more in premiums every year, but this doesn't correspond to better healthcare, no, the healthcare services isn't even stagnated, it is getting worse. And at the same time, CEOs are getting richer. Can anyone make it make sense? Please, make it make sense to me.

The way I see it, the rich are getting richer, while the sick, well, are getting sicker. There have been talks of an Affordable Care Act, and these insurance companies are fighting vehemently against it. You know why? Who am I kidding, I'm sure you know why. They don't care about patients; they don't care about doctors, they only care about making more money.

Like I said earlier, I wouldn't be so bothered if our healthcare was actually getting better with the ridiculous amounts of money we pay to healthcare insurance companies. But, that is not the case, that is far from what the case is. We are paying more for worse. Let that sink in. The money for healthcare keeps increasing, while life expectancy is reducing. The money we are paying isn't improving the quality of healthcare because the insurance companies don't actually care about improving the quality of healthcare services; they only want to improve the quality of their bank accounts. I'd say prove me wrong, but you literally can't. I'm not just making things up; I have figures to support my arguments.

Since we are still on the topic of outrageous figures, consider this. It costs \$12,000 to have a baby in the United States. That seems like a lot just by looking at it, but when you compare it to Finland's, your perception of what is a lot will change. In Finland, it costs \$60 to have a baby. That's it, \$60. So, for every one baby born in America, 200 babies could have been born in

Finland for the same amount. This particular piece of information hurts my brain so much. I knew our healthcare system was a mess, but this is just crazy.

I have to wrap it up now. The discrepancy between our healthcare and that of other developed countries in the world is ridiculously wide. And that has to be like the tenth time I'm using the word ridiculous in this article, but what other word is there to describe what healthcare insurance companies are doing to our healthcare system. Ludicrous? Pathetic? Sickening? Far-cical?

Oh, I almost forgot, I haven't actually given a straight answer to the topic question - why health insurance companies don't want to pay for your services. The answer? Because they don't care about you as much as they care about making more money. You know what, scratch that last part. The answer? Because they don't care about you. Period.

This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board Certified Internist & Board Eligible Pediatrician, who works as a Hospitalist, and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless. He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice Mobile Medicine NJ..

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Look at the picture above. Take another look. And another look. I need to know I am not the only one angered by what I see; in fact, not angered, I am mad. It is absolutely ridiculous. America's healthcare system is a farce, and it's not hard to see why. Whenever the horrible state of the American healthcare is discussed, health insurance companies are always in the conversation.

I remember several years ago when I used to think insurance companies were the reason we were not worse off as a country health-wise. Those were far simpler times. But reality dawned

Kenneth Burdick of WellCare Health Plans, earned \$12.7 million in 2018, which was still about 156 times the company's average employee salary.

Citizens have to pay mighty money in premiums every year. The cost of getting quality healthcare is rising every day. One would think that the quality of healthcare rendered will also increase; well, anyone in a rational country will. Eleven wealthy countries were ranked by Commonwealth Fund, and in the quality of the healthcare segment, guess which position America ranked. Last! We came in at dead last despite spending

SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway

After a month's delay due to COVID-19, the New Jersey high school football season is ready to begin, with several games lined up for the weekend. The local area teams will play a six week regular season with two additional weeks regarding postseason play. Among the Essex County teams that will go head to head this weekend are Belleville traveling to Millburn and rivals Montclair and Bloomfield going at it. Newark's Central High will play Shabazz, while Livingston plays East Orange and Barringer hosts Orange.

The NBA Finals are finally set, as the Los Angeles Lakers will play the Miami Heat. The Lakers are the favorites to win the title, and LeBron James will play in his 10th Finals. Meanwhile, the Tampa Bay Lightning defeated the Dallas Stars to win the 2020 NHL Stanley Cup Finals.

In NFL news, both New York

teams put on disappointing performances. The Jets lost on the road to the Indianapolis Colts 36-7. Colts QB Philip Rivers threw his 400th TD pass in the win. As bad as that was, the Giants lost at home to a banged up San Francisco 49ers team 36-6. The Jets are scheduled to host the Denver Broncos at home on Thursday Night Football. Another bad performance could cost Jets coach Adam Gase his job. Meanwhile, the Giants will head out west to play the Los Angeles Rams.

In other news, The Tennessee Titans have shut down their practice facility, as at least eight people affiliated with the team, including at least three players, have tested positive for COVID-19. This prompted the Minnesota Vikings, their opponents from last week, to shut down activities as well as a precautionary measure.

UPDATE: Tennessee's Oct. 4 game against Pittsburgh has been postponed.

ESSEX COUNTY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Weekly Statistics from September 23-30, 2020

Municipality	9-23-2020	Deaths	9-30-2020	Deaths
Belleville	1132	66	1157	66
Bloomfield	1230	69	1245	69
Caldwell	134	11	138	11
Cedar Grove	499	113	500	113
East Orange	2102	231	2106	231
Essex Fells	35	2	34	2
Fairfield	166	17	169	17
Glen Ridge	51	9	51	9
Irvington	1586	162	1596	162
Livingston	538	70	551	70
Maplewood	369	27	370	27
Millburn	176	6	179	6
Montclair	523	52	528	52
Newark	8538	664	8643	666
North Caldwell	59	4	59	4
Nutley	570	36	576	36
Orange	1106	92	1114	92
Roseland	93	14	93	14
South Orange	129	5	129	5
Verona	161	14	162	14
West Caldwell	301	48	302	48
West Orange	1364	186	1386	186
Total	20862	1898	21088	1900

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of 9-30-2020)

NJ: 205,275 cases / 14,335 deaths (Plus 1,787 probable)
United States (approx.): 7.21 Million / 206,500 deaths
Worldwide (approx.): 33.8 Million / 1.01 Million deaths

Upcoming local COVID-19 testing in Newark includes:
Friday, October 2nd and 9th, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Essex County Weequahic Park, Meeker Avenue entrance
(Walk up appointments are available at this location.)
Additional dates will be announced.

KHALFANI (Cont. from page 3)

prioritizes the needs of the people and not that of business.

LZ: What priorities should Congress address, in your opinion?

AK: Congress must address the severe financial impact of COVID-19 on individuals, families, and the economy. The entire Nation is suffering, and I believe that congress must ensure that this Pandemic be taken seriously in all our states while seeking to minimize the financial crisis that Americans face. In addition, COVID-19, has further unmasked historical injustices and the impact of institutionalized racism.

The generationally compounded factors of racism, environmental and economic injustices, and political disenfranchisement have put poor people and people of color, who are at higher risks of chronic diseases such as asthma, heart attack, hypertension, and diabetes in a position where they have been more significantly impacted by COVID-19. African Americans have had higher mortality rates because of these compounded factors. Congress must push for greater inclusion and ac-

cess to health care including preventative care for all, as well as a greater financial safety net for People of Color and the working class.

In other areas, as I mentioned, African Americans get more prison time than their white counterparts for the same crimes. I intend to draft legislation to produce a commission on excessive, unfair, and unjust sentencing laws and practices. The planet itself is in serious condition and our government can no longer pretend that this problem does not exist. We must act quickly and effectively to address this problem in the limited time we have left to make a difference.

LZ: Is there any other information you wish to add?

AK: I support such programs as Medicare for All. I believe that access to quality healthcare is a right not a privilege. Everyone should have the ability to seek quality healthcare when needed. There should be no fear of going bankrupt as a result of obtaining serious or life-saving medical care. Healthcare should include dental, vision, hearing, mental health, and long-term care. Current insurance costs are too high

and force hardworking people to make the difficult decision to go without healthcare insurance or to be underinsured. The United States is the only major country in the world that does not provide comprehensive holistic care for its citizen's health.

I come from a family of union workers. I support the right for labor to develop and maintain unions to represent their interests. In February of 2020, the House approved the "Protecting the Right to Organize" or PRO Act that would make it easier for employees to form unions and bargain for higher wages, better benefits and improved working conditions. The act would add penalties to companies that violate employees' rights. This bill was referred to the Senate which is unlikely to pass it. And if it did pass, President Trump has threatened to veto it. These are

the kinds of laws we need to even the playing field between corporations and employees and to address income inequality. I strongly support and advocate for laws that promote unions, union membership and employees' rights.

I support immigration reform that will provide a reasonable road to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. In addition, I support the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") program that prevents deportation of undocumented immigrants who arrived in this country as children and have essentially known no other homeland than the US. I also support extending Temporary Protected Status ("TPS") for Haitian, Central American and other refugees until an appropriate immigration policy has been established and adopted.

Legally Speaking



Cassandra Savoy, Esq.
OP/ED

So, I'm Buying An Investment Property . . . Do I Need A Lawyer?

This serves as a postscript to my column entitled "Do I need a Lawyer to buy a house." The answer remains a resounding YES!!! The story from these two poor, unsuspecting Buyers should be written in Ripley's Believe It or Not!

If you are buying an investment property, you don't just need any lawyer, you really need a lawyer, and one who regularly handles real estate transactions.

Being a lawyer is a lot like being a doctor. While all doctors have the "MD" after their name, and all lawyers have "ESQ" after their name, all MDs, like all ESQs, are not alike. The best heart surgeon in the world may not be able to help you with a tickle in your throat. The best worker compensation lawyer in the world may not be able to help you transfer title in a real estate transaction where the real

estate purchase is an investment property. Ask before you hire! Get the lawyer you need. Here's an example of why this is important.

Two guys came to my office with a problem! They had purchased a three-family in East Orange in March 2019. The owner moved out when title transferred, leaving tenants on two floors. The realtor encouraged them to make a fast sale since they were pre-approved and could close quickly. He told them "Don't worry. You can always get the tenants out!" "You can get them out after you close."

The poor unsuspecting Buyers decided that it would be a good use of their funds to use a title company to be the settlement agent rather than retain an attorney, a cost of about \$2,000. Consequently, there was no one looking out for their interests. No one to ask for copies of the leases. No one to ask for monthly costs for the past two years. No one to ask for payment history of the tenants for the life of the leases.

The title company's sole and exclusive function is to make sure that there is nothing in the history of the property that will prevent the lender from foreclosing if it comes to that. The title company is only worried about "clouds on the title." The title company dotted every "i" and crossed every "t" when it came to properly transferring the title. No dead people still in title; no liens or judgements against the property; and the new lender secured in first-lien position.

No one told the poor unsuspecting Buyers that New Jersey is probably the most tenant friendly state in the country. The law relating to tenants in New Jersey is titled, "the Anti-Eviction Statute." And so... eighteen months later, the poor unsuspecting Buyers who thought it was a bargain to save \$2,000 by not hiring an attorney, have not collected a single dime in rent, and they have no earthly idea whether security deposits were collected, and if they were, where they are being held! Most importantly, they can't locate the Seller who has taken his profit, changed his mobile number, and moved on with life in the fast lane!

An attorney would have insisted that the Buyers inspect the leases in advance for closing. An attorney would have insisted that the security deposits be turned over to Buyers before the closing, and an attorney would have insisted that rent payment history for each tenant was made available as a contingency. In other words, if the tenants don't have leases or if they are not regularly paying the rent, I can decide by a given date not to go through with the purchase.

The Buyers told me that the realtor told them, "not to worry about the tenants. You can get them out after the closing," causing to think that removal of the tenants would not be too difficult. The Buyers tried "reasoning" with the tenants. When that failed, they offered money to get them to voluntarily vacate the premises. And, by the time that was not working, the

pandemic hit, and the Governor signed Executive Order #106 barring the removal of tenants for sixty days. Of course, the courts were closed so eviction was not possible anyway.

About a year after they purchased the property with the non-rent paying occupants, they seek legal counsel from an attorney who regularly practices workers compensation law. This attorney files an "ejectment" action in the Chancery Division of the court. An ejectment action asks the court to remove someone from your property when they do not have a lease. For example, if the bank forecloses on your house and you fail to get out, the bank might file an ejectment action. You were never a tenant, and you have lost ownership of the property. Consequently, you get ejected.

But, if the occupant has a lease, or if the occupant ever had a lease, in order to evict the occupant pursuant to the NJ anti-eviction statute, there is a strict process to be followed. The poor unsuspecting Buyers were stunned when they arrived in court to find the tenants with copies of their leases. The judge threw the matter out of his court and told them to file in Landlord Tenant. The buyers were dejected. It is almost two years since they purchased the three family, and they still have not collected a dime in rent.

The question relevant question now is "how exactly does the anti-eviction statute work?" What can our Buyers do now? We'll explore that information in next week's Legal News.

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 10)

Owners Association spokesman Ron Simoncini and Township Attorney Ira Karasick separately confirmed that the petitions were delivered to Township Clerk Juliet Lee's office Sept. 23.

Despite the petition having 1,530 electronic signatures - above the 15 percent of township registered voters' signature minimum of 1,020 - its bid to make

the Nov. 3 ballot was dead on arrival.

Karasick pointed out that municipal clerks need 20 days to verify the signatures and another 10 for the petitioners to "cure" any rejected signatures.

The up to 30-day process would therefore end on Oct. 23. Essex County officials have meanwhile posted and printed electronic sample and Vote By Mail Nov. 3 General Election

ballots on or by Oct. 1.

MPOA, given its legal and logistical work the past month, will most likely begin a new petition drive. The failed drive was aided by the list of residents' cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Beacham had ordered Montclair Township to turn over Sept. 3.

Karasick's appeal, citing that the list was only for reverse 911

notices, was dismissed by Beacham Sept. 6. Beacham had granted the MPOA a stay on the township enacting its April 7 rent control ordinance on April 15 so the measure could be put up to a public question referendum.

MPOA can target either the scheduled next election, the first Tuesday in May, or ask for a special election within a 60 day window.

NOV. 3 BALLOT (Continued from page 11)

running on his own, "Vision Leadership Results" flag.

Challenging are: Monica Perkowski, "Change Fuels Progress;" H. William (Bill) Rutherford, "People Before Politics,;" Susan Scarpa, "United We Stand, Divided We Fall;" Brent Scott (no slogan) and Tammy Williams, "Everything is Possible."

"The more things change, the more they stay the same," may apply in Nov. 3's GLEN RIDGE Borough Council election.

Returning Councilman David Lefkovits and incumbent Councilwoman Deborah Mans, on one hand, are running with Civic Conference Committee endorsement. The CCC, where the major borough party committee have non-majority voices, is a broad-based group who endorses mayor, council and board of education candidates here.

While gaining a post-interview CCC endorsement is sought-after, there have been candidates without the blessing whom voters have elected.

Lefkovits and Mans, however, are running unopposed on the ballot. They are shoo-ins barring an unforeseen write-in campaign.

There are nonpartisan BOARD of EDUCATION elections in Belleville, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Maplewood-South Orange, Nutley, Orange and West Orange. Their details were covered in Local Talk News' Sept. 24-30 edition.

STATE PUBLIC QUESTIONS

These three questions up for statewide public referenda are found on all ballots' second page - where some would also find their municipal council and/or their school board elections.

Space considerations, however, have placed the three questions' interpretive statements on a separately provided sheet. That sheet is not included among the 30 pages of essexclerk.com's sample ballots.

Question One: A Constitutional Amendment to legalize marijuana.

The question, if approved, would make the possession and use of small amounts of marijuana and cannabis-based products legal for people 21 years of age and older.

The proposal will be governed by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission. The six-year-old state body has been supervis-

ing the distribution of cannabis-based products and medicinal marijuana dispensaries.

One of the proposal's clauses include municipal taxing of said sales.

New Jersey, should voters approve, will become among several states who have decriminalized or legalized marijuana. Please note that marijuana possession, use and/or distribution remain federal offenses.

Question Two: Property Tax Deduction and Exemption for peacetime veterans.

This question would extend the initial \$250 property tax deduction and subsequent tax exemption on dwellings of veterans who became disabled during their peacetime military service.

A recent majority of statewide voters had granted the same deduction of home-owning veterans who became disabled while in service - and in combat. A further amendment extended the deduction to the same who are tenants.

Question Three: A Constitutional Amendment to change the legislative redistricting schedule if census data is delayed.

This question will determine when Congressional and Legislative districts are redrawn -- and perhaps who you vote for the rest of this decade.

Feb. 15, 2021 is currently when state legislators in Trenton start using Census 2020 data to redraw districts for even population. This is part of the decennial process that filters down to county and municipal districts since 1790.

The COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus outbreak, however, may be the main reason for the belief that the Census may arrive later than Feb. 15. (This proposal was made before federal administrators attempted to end census data collection from Oct. 31 to Sept. 30.)

The amendment, pending approval, will allow the State Legislature to set a deadline later than Feb. 15. Its effect may include retaining the current legislative maps into 2022.

Voter participation deadlines, starting with filing registration applications on or before Oct. 12, are starting to close.

Contact essexclerk.com regarding registration, voter roll changes and/or applying for a second or replacement VBM ballot.

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