

The Weekly Press

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Congressman Troy Carter's Statement Celebrating Black History Month 2023

"Black History Month is about reflecting on our past and uplifting one another to support our communities."



Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr. (D-La.) released the following statement recognizing the start of Black History Month 2023:

"Today marks the start of Black History Month – a time to honor and celebrate the accomplishments, culture, history, and essence of the Black experience in the United States of America.

"Black History Month is about reflecting on our past and uplifting one another to support our communities. I'm grateful to be from Louisiana, where we know the importance of reaping what we sow. Community service has always been a central part of my mission as a Black man, a public servant, an advocate, a legislator, and most importantly – a father.

"We also must ensure that young people know our history and use it as the driving force behind their passions. I want to expand education opportunities for students because learning is key to unlocking their potential. I wouldn't be the man I am today without my experiences at an HBCU.

"This February, I recommit to advancing policies that defend civil and voting rights, promote racial justice, educate our children, and invigorate our local economies. I will be at the forefront of the work we still need to do to guarantee equality for everyone."

WEATHER

MON. 02/06 Sunny High 74°.

TUE. 02/07 Cloudy High 77°.

WED. 02/08 Cloudy High 75°.

THUR. 02/09 Rain High 69°.

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THE BATTLE FOR BLACK HISTORY CONTINUES!

Unveiled: Revised African American Studies Curriculum Despite Controversy

BATON ROUGE, La — Revisions Made to African American Studies Curriculum by College Board Amid Controversy Baton Rouge, Louisiana is one of the sixty schools across the country participating in a pilot program for a new African American Studies course. The course has received national attention due to the threat by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis to ban it in his state. The revised curriculum, released by the College Board, which oversees Advanced Placement (AP) exams, has downplayed certain aspects that had previously drawn criticism from DeSantis and other conservatives.

The official curriculum for the course no longer includes topics such as Black Lives Matter, slavery reparations, and queer life, which were included in the original curriculum. These topics will only be a part of a sample list that states and school systems may choose from for student projects. The College Board stated that the revisions to the course were mostly complete prior to DeSantis' objections.

Despite DeSantis' objections, the course is expanding to hundreds of high schools in the next academic year, guided by the revised curriculum. The College



A group of students at Baton Rouge Magnet High School in Louisiana were taught AP African American studies on Monday, Jan. 30, 2023 by an instructor. The school is one of 60 across the country testing the new course, which has received nationwide attention after being banned in Florida.

Board stated that developers consulted with over 200 colleges, including several historically black institutions, and took input from

teachers participating in the pilot program.

Senior Kahlila Bandle, who is enrolled in the course

at Baton Rouge Magnet High School, stated that she doesn't feel that the course is attempting to indoctrinate students. Bandle

also stated that in contrast to the African American Studies course,

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Joyce Beatty reintroduces Black History is American History Act



The Congressional Black Caucus held a press conference to discuss the dangers of erasing Black History. #BlackHistory is American history, & we cannot erase the past because it was painful. We must educate ourselves & our children to ensure that we are not doomed to repeat our mistakes.

Washington — Rep. Joyce Beatty (D), on Wednesday, the first day of Black History Month, reintroduced the Black History is American History Act, which would require Black history to be part of the American History and Civics Academies' competitive grants.

The grants are administered by the Department of Education and used to help improve student achievement in elementary school subjects such as American history.

The legislation would make it so educators and stu-

dents would learn about Black history in workshops related to American history, promote resources available from the National Museum of African American History and Culture and pressure the National Assessment of Educational Progress to include Black history in their tests, according to a statement from the congresswoman.

"Black history is American history, and it is under unprecedented attack," Beatty said. "Black history is crucial to understanding the complexity of our nation's past, present and fu-

ture — not just slavery and civil rights. By incentivizing schools and educators to teach Black history in the classroom, we can all learn important lessons in our country's ongoing journey toward creating a 'more perfect Union' for all Americans."

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) recently rejected the pilot Advanced Placement African American studies course for its inclusion of Black queer history and promotion of authors associated with critical race theory. This academic framework involves looking at how racism

has historically been embedded in American law and institutions.

The College Board released a revised version of the course on Wednesday that was decried by activists who said the organization bowed to DeSantis' demands.

The College Board said it had been working on changes to the course before DeSantis voiced his complaints and contends the final version is "an unflinching encounter with the facts and evidence of African American history and culture.

Debate Erupts Over Florida's Rejection of African American Studies Course

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has rejected the College Board's Advanced Placement African American Studies course, claiming that it pushes a political agenda and constitutes "indoctrination" rather than education.

The Florida Department of Education has told the College Board that the course will be barred unless changes are made. The state issued a chart on Friday that claims that the course promotes the idea that modern American society oppresses Black people, other minorities and women and includes a chapter on "Black Queer Studies" that is deemed inappropriate by the administration.

DeSantis claimed that the course violates the Stop WOKE Act that he signed into law last year. The act prohibits instruction that defines people as necessarily oppressed or privileged based on their race. Some of the writers cited in the course argue that modern U.S. society endorses white supremacy while oppressing racial minorities, gays and women.

Florida House Democratic Leader Fentrice Driskell criticized the rejection of the course as "cowardly" and said it "sends a clear message that Black Americans' history does not count in Florida." The College Board, which has been developing the African American

See DEBATE, on page 3



Florida Governor Ron DeSantis



LOCAL & STATE

News Briefs

■ The Shreveport Police Department has resolved a lawsuit

The Shreveport Police Department has resolved a lawsuit brought by 37-year-old Black man, Brandon Kennedy. Kennedy claimed an officer, Montrell Jackson, violently assaulted him outside a Family Dollar store after he expressed his support for the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. A second officer, Justin White, witnessed the assault but did not intervene, according to court documents. Kennedy was taken to a psychiatric hospital for a mental health evaluation but was not arrested. The terms of the settlement are unknown as the ACLU of Louisiana, which represented Kennedy, declined to discuss them, and the Shreveport Police Department did not respond to a request for information. The police department stated it did not admit liability in the settlement and that both officers remain employed following a cleared investigation. The lawsuit was part of the ACLU of Louisiana's Justice Lab, which has filed 51 cases on excessive force, racial profiling, and other issues against law enforcement in the state.

cal practices.

■ Facial Recognition Tool Led to Mistaken Arrest, Lawyer Says

Louisiana authorities' use of facial recognition technology led to the mistaken-identity arrest of a Georgia man on a fugitive warrant, an attorney said in a case that renews attention to racial disparities in the use of the digital tool.

Randall Reid, 28, was jailed in late November in DeKalb County, Georgia.

His attorney, Tommy Calogero, said authorities erroneously linked Reid to purse thefts in Jefferson Parish and Baton Rouge. Reid, arrested on Nov. 25, was released Dec. 1.

Reid is Black, and his arrest brings new attention to the use of a technology critics say results in a higher rate of misidentification of people of color than of white people.

"They told me I had a warrant out of Jefferson Parish. I said, 'What is Jefferson Parish?'" Reid said. "I have never been to Louisiana a day in my life. Then they told me it was for theft. So not only have I not been to Louisiana, I also don't steal."

■ "LSU President Holds Closed-Door Meeting with Tigerland Bar Owners Following Underage Drinking Tragedy"

LSU President William Tate held a closed-door meeting with bar owners in the Tigerland area on Friday, following the loss of Reggie's liquor license after the death of Madison Brooks. Brooks was believed to have been served alcohol at the bar and her blood alcohol content was four times the legal limit, despite her being underage.

Tate declined to reveal the details of the meeting, but acknowledged that they still have work to do to combat underage drinking. He stated that the meeting was critical as many students frequent the area, and the goal is to minimize risk by securing the area.

All business owners in the area were reportedly in attendance, and Tate reported that everyone seemed open to working together to improve the situation. The meeting was not open to the public.

■ The Louisiana Department of Health has added a new medical condition, acrania, to its list of exceptions

The Louisiana Department of Health has added a new medical condition, acrania, to its list of exceptions for the state's abortion ban. The emergency rule, which came into effect on Jan 27, now includes 25 medical diagnoses that allow a person to terminate a pregnancy. Acrania, a disorder where a fetus develops without a complete skull, was added to the list after a Baton Rouge resident was denied an abortion for the same diagnosis last year. The emergency rule was released last month as the previous one was lapsing, but it's unclear when a permanent regulation might be put in place. The current and proposed rules have received criticism from both anti-abortion advocates and doctors for different reasons. Anti-abortion advocates want the list of exceptions to be abolished, while doctors find the state's rules on medical exceptions confusing and not reflective of the medi-

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her European History course does not address the experiences of black people.

DeSantis, who may run for president in 2024 as a Republican, stated that he is blocking the course in Florida because it promotes a political agenda. He also stated that Florida's education standards require teaching black history as part of the core curriculum and that he wants education, not indoctrination. A spokesperson for DeSantis stated that the state education department is reviewing the revised curriculum to ensure compliance with Florida law.

Despite the College Board's assurances, the notion that the course was changed due to political controversy has generated fresh outrage. David Johns, the executive director of the National Black Justice Coalition, stated that it was "infuriating" to hear that parts of black history were

being traded for political reasons.

The course has been well-received by students at schools where it has been introduced. In Baton Rouge, the high demand for the course has led to Emmitt Glynn, a teacher at Baton Rouge Magnet High School, having to teach the course to two classes instead of just one. Glynn's students read selections from "The Wretched of the Earth" by Frantz Fanon and had a lively discussion about the text, connecting it to topics like the conflict between colonizers and Native Americans and police violence in Memphis, Tennessee.

Glynn stated that he is proud of the connections his students are making between the past and present and that they are not only learning history, but also making history. Glynn believes that by providing his students with information, he is able to see light bulbs go off in their minds and that they are able to understand how the information affects them.

Louisiana lawmakers OK funding to draw insurers to state



Storm-damaged furniture an debris sit outside the Galliano home of Paula Bermudez on Oct. 5, 2021 — six weeks after Hurricane Ida. (Wes Muller/Louisiana Illuminator)

BATON ROUGE, La. — A \$45 million funding bill to address soaring homeowner insurance rates in hurricane-battered Louisiana was overwhelmingly approved by Louisiana lawmakers Friday and sent to Gov. John Bel Edwards for his signature.

The Senate approved the House-passed bill 37-1 after a debate Friday afternoon. It then went back to the House for quick final approval of Senate amendments, bringing a close to a five-day special session Edwards called at the urging of Insurance Commissioner Jim Donelon.

The measure, backed by Donelon, will fund an incentive program to provide grants to qualified

insurance companies as an incentive to have them write policies in the state. Edwards' office said he will sign the bill when he officially receives it — possibly as early as Monday.

Sen. Barrow Peacock, a Bossier City Republican, cast the only vote against the bill in the Senate. He noted similar expenditures following Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and questioned whether the vulnerable state should let the free market take care of the situation.

"Are we going to have to do this every time we have several storms hit our state in a two- to three-year period?" Peacock asked the bill's Senate sponsor, River Ridge Republican Kirk Talbot.

Talbot said the bill is badly needed by many families and that Louisiana has moved to avert future insurance catastrophes, including with the adoption of stronger building codes.

"We need to pass this bill and get relief to people who need it," Talbot said.

The bill was approved 90-8 by the House earlier in the special session.

Gov. John Bel Edwards, a Democrat, had called the session at the urging of Donelon, referring to the effort as a "first step in addressing Louisiana's ongoing insurance issues."

The state's insurance crisis, similar to one in Florida, followed rough hurricane seasons in 2020 and 2021 when the state was hit by Delta, Laura, Zeta and Ida. Some companies went insolvent and others stopped writing policies in the state following a deluge of claims.

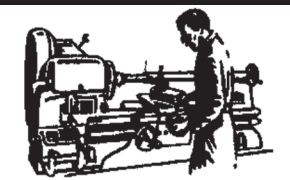
Lawmakers last year passed the incentive program but did not put any significant money behind it, hence the \$45 million funding bill. Under the program, qualified rough hurricane seasons in 2020 and 2021 when the state was hit by Delta, Laura, Zeta and Ida. Some companies went insolvent and others stopped writing policies in the state following a deluge of claims.

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Correction Policy

The Baton Rouge Weekly Press strives to be fair and accurate. The newspaper corrects any significant errors of fact brought to the attention of the editor. If you think an error has been made, call 225-775-200

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Democrat Introduces Anti-White Supremacy Bill, Schools Republican on Hate



The Department of Justice's Uniform Crime Reporting Program would keep track of white supremacist-inspired hate crimes and other related actions, and Justice Department officials would have the authority to prosecute those responsible for them.

BY STACY M. BROWN
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

That's enough of racism and bigotry, says Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee.

The Democratic representative from Texas has introduced House Resolution 61, which would amend Title 18 of the United States Code to broaden the definition of hate crimes, with the goal of preventing and prosecuting hate crimes motivated by white supremacy and conspiracy to commit such crimes.

The text of the bill reads as follows: "A person commits a white supremacy inspired hate crime when white supremacist ideology has motivated the planning, development, preparation, or perpetration of actions that constituted a crime or were undertaken in furtherance of activity that, if effectuated, would have constituted a crime."

With respect to any information or evidence obtained by the Department of Justice of any unlawful action specified in Jackson-Lee's bill, the DOJ shall have the authority to conduct operations and activities pursuant to such crimes.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) would also be authorized to conduct investigations, intervene, and take any other measures it deems necessary and appropriate to prevent, mitigate, or stop any potentially violent action.

The Department of Justice's Uniform Crime Reporting Program would keep track of white supremacist-inspired hate crimes and other related actions, and Justice Department officials would have the authority to prosecute

those responsible for them.

Jackson Lee has requested that the DOJ report its findings annually to the relevant Congressional committees.

Rep. Lauren Boebert, a Republican from Colorado, claimed the legislation "makes a mockery of the First Amendment."

While Boebert, a right-wing leader, misrepresented the legislation after reading a misleading news article, Jackson Lee schooled her on Twitter.

"First of all, it took me about 32 seconds of reading the article you cited to understand that none of you know what you are talking about," Jackson Lee scolded.

To be convicted of a hate crime in some jurisdictions, "H.R. 61 simply deals with adding white supremacy to a list of reasons," the Texas Democrat explained.

She elaborated: "So, when the article states that 'only white people can be charged with' this crime, that's flagrantly false."

"Your argument assumes that only white people can hold white supremacist views and that only certain groups of people can perpetrate violence motivated by white supremacy."

"I would hope now that your argument would not shift to 'why is white supremacy being added to this law?' That would be egregious."

"Yes, white supremacy should be added to this law. Why? Because as Director Wray testified, it's a major domestic terrorist threat."

the state came from an interview about his book "One-Dimensional Queer," which he said is a discussion of issues such as employment discrimination and police violence against minority communities.

UCLA history Professor Robin D.G. Kelley, another author criticized by the state, said that his 2016 piece "Black Study, Black Struggle" is a challenge to student activists to move their efforts beyond the campus and to fight for justice for all people, including those who may once have been oppressors. He added that his piece is based on thorough research.

Congressional Black Caucus meets with Biden to push for police accountability



Sen. Raphael Warnock (D-Georgia), center, and fellow members of the Congressional Black Caucus meet with U.S. President Joe Biden in the Oval Office at the White House on Feb. 2, 2023. Members of the caucus encouraged the administration to push for national law enforcement reform in the wake of several high-profile killings of unarmed Black men, most recently the beating death of Tyre Nichols by Memphis, Tennessee, police officers. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA
Courtesy of Louisiana Illuminator

WASHINGTON — The Congressional Black Caucus met with President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris Thursday evening to urge the administration to use its executive power for law enforcement reform, following criminal charges for police officers in the killing of a Black man in Memphis, Tennessee.

"My hope is this dark memory spurs some action that we've all been fighting for," Biden said.

Tyre Nichols, a 29-year-old Black man, was beaten by five Memphis police officers during a traffic stop on Jan. 7 and died three days later. The five police officers have been fired and indicted in connection with his death.

After the city released video footage of the beating last week, protests against police brutality have continued, along with calls from Democratic lawmakers to reform policing. Some would like to change qualified immunity, legal precedents that protect government officials, such as law enforcement officials, from many lawsuits stemming from accusations of violations of constitutional rights.

Biden said he hopes there can be progress on police reform.

"We gotta stay at it as long as it takes," Biden said.

Members of the Congressional Black Caucus who visited the White House included Democratic Reps. Steven Horsford of Nevada, James Clyburn of South Carolina, Joe Neguse of Colorado and Sheila Lee Jackson of Texas and Democratic Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey and Raphael Warnock of Georgia.

"The death of Tyre Nichols is yet another example of why we do need action," Horsford said to Biden in the Oval Office. "We need your help to make sure we can get the legislative actions that are necessary to save lives and to make public safety the priority that

it needs to be for all communities."

Any legislation relating to police reform would likely originate in the Senate, as House Speaker Kevin McCarthy has not said much about such legislation since Nichols' death, and voted against the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which the House passed in 2020.

George Floyd was a Black man murdered by Minnesota police officer Derek Chauvin in 2020, who was filmed kneeling on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes. It sparked national outrage and protests against police brutality and racism.

Talks between Booker and

Republican Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina about a policing accountability bill, such as the George Floyd bill, fell apart in the Senate.

Scott on Thursday wrote on Twitter that the House's George Floyd bill is a nonstarter.

"I've been working toward common ground solutions that actually have a shot at passing," Scott wrote on Twitter. "Solutions to increase funding and training to make sure only the best wear the badge."

The House last year did pass, on a bipartisan basis, four bills that provided grants to small law enforcement agencies, funding for

mental health professionals to respond to calls in which people are in distress and funding for crime-solving technology.

Those bills were the Invest to Protect Act, the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, the Mental Health Justice Act and the VICTIM Act.

Biden also signed into law late last year the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act of 2022, which directs the Justice Department to develop training situations for de-escalation tactics and responding safely to a mental health crisis. A \$124 million grant was provided for law enforcement agencies to develop those de-escalation practices.

DEBATE from page 1

Studies course for a decade, is currently testing it at 60 high schools nationwide, though no school or state is required to offer it after its scheduled rollout.

The College Board has not responded to requests for comment since Friday but issued a statement last week saying that it encourages feedback and will consider changes. The state criticized five living authors, three of whom responded to an email from the Associated Press. One of the authors, Yale University Professor Roderick Ferguson, claimed that the quote cited by

THIS MONTH

[FEBRUARY]

@ BREC

BLUEBONNET FOREST PLANTING VOLUNTEER PROJECT

Bluebonnet Swamp Conservation Area
Feb. 4 | 9 a.m.-noon

SWEET TOOTH DESIGN

Ben Burge Park
Feb. 9 | 6-7 p.m.

ART UNWIND: CLAY SWEETIES!

Drusilla Lane Park
Feb. 10 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

I HEART MY ZOO DAY

Baton Rouge Zoo
Feb. 11 | 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

SWEETHEART NIGHT

Independence Event Center
Feb. 11 | 5:30-8:30 p.m.

PLUS NIGHT

Highland Road Park Observatory
Feb. 11 | 7-10 p.m.

ART INTENSIVE WORKSHOP: MONO PRINTING

Baringer Art Center
Feb. 13 | 9:30-11:30 a.m.

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ZOO & ME MORNINGS

Baton Rouge Zoo
Feb. 14 | 9:30-11:30 a.m.

ARTIST'S STUDIO: PAINTING — ACRYLIC OR WATERCOLOR

Baringer Art Center
Feb. 17 | 9:30 a.m.-noon

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Cedar Ridge Drive Park + North Street Park
Feb. 17 | 6-7:30 p.m.

SUNSHINE SOCIAL: CAJUN CARNIVAL

Milton J. Womack Park
Feb. 17 | 6-9 p.m.

SOLAR VIEWING

Highland Road Park Observatory
Feb. 18 | noon-2 p.m.

MARDI GRAS MASK PAINTING

Independence Community Park
Feb. 18 | noon-2 p.m.

GLOW IN THE PARK: KICKBALL

Baker Park + Independence Community Park
Feb. 24 | 6-7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY MORNING STUDIO: OVER THERE! A LANDSCAPE IN THE ART OF COLLAGE

Milton J. Womack Park
Feb. 25 | 10:30 a.m.-noon

GEAUX FISH! CATFISH RODEO

Central Sports Park
Feb. 25 | 7:30-11:30 a.m.

INCLUSIVE ARCHERY

Milton J. Womack Park
Feb. 28 | 6-7 p.m.

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RELIGION



The Power Of The Renewed Mind

BY CREFLO DOLLAR

Our minds are amazingly powerful tools. What we think and believe influences the choices we make and the actions we take. Our success in life directly correlates to the degree we change our mindset to line up with God's Word. If we want to change for the better and see measurable progress, letting Him renew our minds is the key.

Our confessions are a vital component in this process. Confessing the wrong thing blocks our progress, which is why it's so important to confess in agreement with what God has said. However, to even know what to confess, we need to learn to think differently. We mustn't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our mind; this opens us up to learn God's good and perfect will concerning us.

God's Word is eternal and true and has been forever settled in heaven. By His grace, He has given us the authority to speak it over situations in our lives to change things. We can call into existence things that be not as thou they were; the authority to bring dead things

back to life is in our mouth. Jesus did it when He spoke to Lazarus and brought him back to life; we have the same ability to speak life into dead situations.

It's impossible to continue along a train of thought when we open up our mouth and speak something else, because our words interrupt our thoughts and redirect them elsewhere. This is how we renew our minds when a thought contradictory to God's Word pops into our head. Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Consistently speaking life puts us on the right track to bringing our thoughts into alignment with God's thoughts.

PRAYER:

God, learning to think like you puts us in a powerful position. You gave us all a mouth and a tongue to enable us to speak Your Word and declare Your thoughts out loud. We're grateful for this. In Jesus' name, amen.

- Scriptures:
- Romans 12:2
- Psalm 119:89
- Romans 4:17
- John 11:1-44
- Proverbs 18:21

Creflo Dollar is a founder and senior pastor of World Changers Church International (WCCI). He's a world-renowned Bible teacher, sought-after conference speaker, and bestselling author with hundreds of books, CDs, and DVDs in distribution worldwide.

Patti Labelle, Kierra Sheard And Tye Tribbett To Headline Super Bowl Soulful Celebration



Headliners Patti LaBelle, Kierra Sheard, and Tye Tribbett will lead the charge, accompanied by other talented artists like Israel Houghton and the NFL Players Choir, celebrating its 15th anniversary.

Get ready for a night of soul-stirring inspiration and electrifying gospel music! The 24th Annual Super Bowl Soulful Celebration is here and bringing some of the biggest names in gospel to the stage for an unforgettable night of faith, hope, and joyful inspiration. Headliners Patti LaBelle, Kierra Sheard, and Tye Tribbett will lead the charge, accompanied by other talented artists like Israel Houghton and the NFL Players Choir, celebrating its

15th anniversary.

Radio personality Willie Moore Jr. will emcee the event, bringing his infectious energy to the stage as the only inspirational music event sanctioned by the NFL. With Philadelphia Eagles Quarterback and Super Bowl LVII contender Jalen Hurts being honored with the "Faith In Action" award, recognizing NFL players making a difference off the field, this promises to be a night to remember.

Join us at Mesa Arts Center on Feb. 8th at 7:30 pm MT for this uplifting celebration, and be a part of the legacy that Melanie Few, founder of the Super Bowl Soulful Celebration, is proud to have built with the NFL over the past 24 years. As she states, "It's an honor and a privilege!" Don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind evening that promises to bring faith, hope, and joyful inspiration to the biggest game on earth.

Priorities Shape Life Outcome

"Make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths." (Psalm 25:4)

Much of your life, whether it shows up in successes or failures, will be determined by your priorities. What you put first in your thoughts, desires, and choices will affect the fruit or consequences you then face.

Jesus spoke about our priorities in the longest sermon He ever preached while on earth, which is recorded in Scripture as the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon, He addressed believers, originally His disciples, and primarily spoke about the kingdom. The centerpiece of the kingdom revolves around one verse in Matthew 6:33, which states, "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

The word "first" is the key in this passage. A diminishing of the value of this word has led to a diminishing of the experience of God in many people's lives. To live life to its fullest and to accomplish and experience all that God has created you to do, God and His kingdom must be first. God cannot be just one among many, but must be first.

However, the problem in most people's lives today is that God is merely in the vicinity and not first. People often say they don't have enough time for God, which means that God is not first place in their lives. A person will always make time for what is first and what matters most.

Reflection: Consider what it means for God to be first in your life and what it looks like. Think about where God comes in second or later in your life and how you can put Him back in first place. Pray for the strength to make God first in your life and experience all that He has created you to do.

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Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. - Hebrews 10:25

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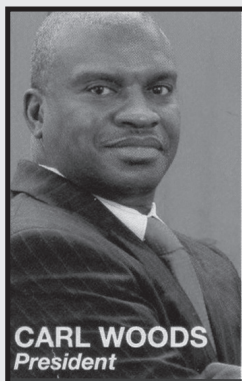
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BUSINESS

Gulf Wind Energy Delayed for Oil and Gas Drilling

President Joe Biden's administration recently slowed down the development of offshore wind energy in the Gulf of Mexico to prioritize oil and gas drilling. The move was made to pass the Inflation Reduction Act, which would help secure the support of Sen. Joe Manchin, a Democrat who often sides with Republicans and receives financial backing from the oil and gas industry. The act requires the government to offer new drilling opportunities across a vast area of the Gulf and mandates that wind energy projects take a back seat to oil and gas projects. This decision has received criticism from environmental groups who see it as a hindrance to Biden's own climate and renewable energy goals.

Wind energy companies were previously looking to bid on the two lease areas in the Gulf of Mexico that had the potential to generate power for almost 3 million homes. The delay will last at least six months and potentially until this



A lift boat installs the base of a wind turbine at the Anholt Offshore Wind Farm off the coast of Denmark in 2013. Courtesy of Orsted

summer. The Biden administration's goal of generating 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030 will require a new and complex regu-

latory process for offshore wind energy. Currently, only two offshore wind farms are operating in the US with several more planned for the

East Coast.

The two lease areas in the Gulf could produce enough electricity for the combined populations of Houston, New Orleans, and Baton Rouge. Louisiana business leaders welcome the prospect of wind projects as it would bring good-paying engineering and construction jobs to coastal communities. A study conducted by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory predicted that a 600-megawatt wind project near Lake Charles would create 4,470 construction jobs and generate about \$450 million in goods and services.

The wind industry was never counting on the government to stick to its initial auction schedule, which they viewed as more hopeful than realistic. They see the recent delay as a bump in a planning and construction process that can sometimes take more than a decade. Despite the delay in the Gulf, the pace of wind development has been fine elsewhere.

Can I Buy a Home with an LLC?

If you're buying an investment property, it may make sense to buy it using a limited liability corporation (LLC). While there are certain hurdles you'll have to clear, buying a house with an LLC can have many legal and financial benefits. Here's how to buy a house with an LLC, as well as what to know before doing it.

You can work directly with a financial advisor to help you choose the best tax route for your business that will have a positive impact on your personal taxes.

The Basics of Buying a House With an LLC LLCs are used for real estate because they protect the property owner from a lawsuit. For instance, if you form an LLC to own your rental properties, if there's an issue and a tenant sues, they won't be suing you. They'll be suing the LLC, leaving your name out of it. There are also some tax benefits to owning a property with an LLC, depending on the type of LLC.

To start buying a house with an LLC, you need an LLC. If you don't have one, you can research how to set one up in your state or hire a service to set one up for you. LLCs are governed by states, so each state will have different requirements and fees for setting one up.

Once you have an LLC set up, you will need to finance the purchase. Unfortunately, many mortgage lenders don't give out mortgages to LLCs. LLCs are ineligible for many types of residential mortgages, such as FHA and conventional loans. Still, there is specific financing available for LLCs. It just may come with more costs associated.



mortgage has a due-on-sale clause that would be triggered by the transfer, you would have to pay the full remaining mortgage.

The Benefits and Drawbacks of Using an LLC to Purchase Real Estate

BENEFITS

Privacy: If you own a real estate investment business, having an LLC is beneficial to you because it allows you to separate your personal life from your business. Instead of your name and info on the paperwork, it's the LLCs.

Tax benefits: LLCs remove the possibility of double taxation. This is also known as a pass-through tax structure. This means the LLC will pay the taxes on profits and you'll only pay taxes on your allocated share.

Make it easier to partner with other investors: LLCs make it easier for people to partner together for investments. This could be with a single partner, or the LLC can be structured to sell shares to distribute profits.

Limited liability: This is the big reason to form an LLC. As the owner of the LLC, you're not personally liable. The LLC can go into debt or be sued without you having to fear that it will affect you personally.

Another route you can go is to buy the house personally and transfer it to the LLC. There could be extra fees and taxes that come with this. For example, you may have to pay a deed transfer tax. Also, before considering this option, talk to your mortgage lender. If the

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Invitation to Bid (REBID) North Transfer Center Construction
Solicitation #2023-NorthtransitCenter-003

The Capital Area Transit System (CATS), a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana, operating the public transit system in EBR Parish is accepting Proposals for North Transfer Center Construction. Sealed bids are due to CATS Procurement Department by April 10, 2023 at 10:00 am (local time) at 2250 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Acopy of this ITB can be found on CATS and State Procurement websites at: <http://www.brcats.com/page/procurement> and <https://www.cfprp.doa.louisiana.gov/osp/lapac/deptbids.cfm>

Bidders may submit written questions to: catsprocurement@breats.com until Friday, March 10, 2023. Bidders are reminded to check CATS website and State Procurement websites often for addendums issued to this ITB. CATS is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

A mandatory pre bid conference and job site visit will be held 9:00 am, February 24, 2023 at 350 N. Donmoor St, Baton Rouge, La. 70806.



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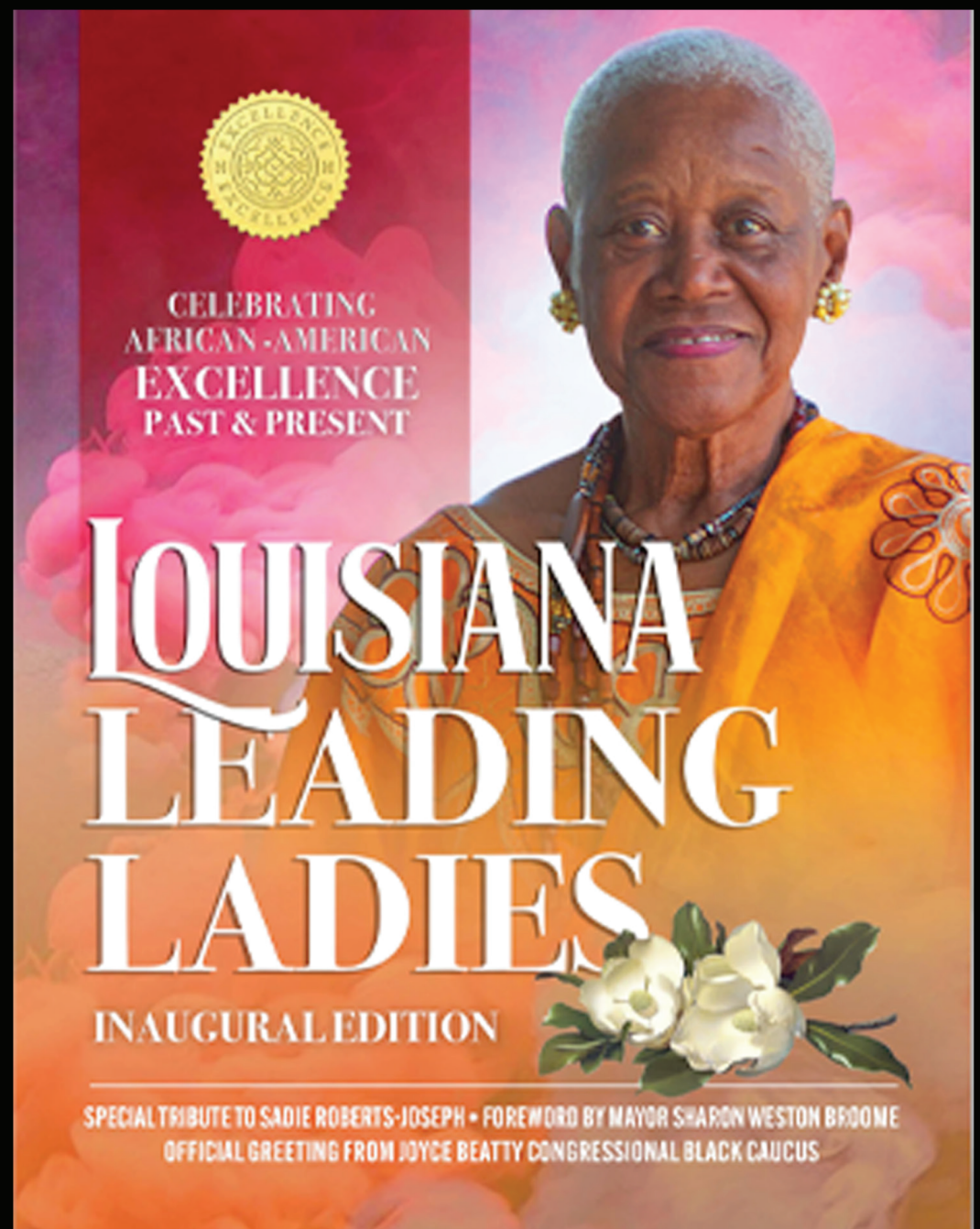
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