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Juneteenth 2026:

California-Born Astronaut Victor Glover Honored at State Capitol After Historic Artemis II Mission



The California Legislative Black Caucus and Assembly Democrats invited Pomona native Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr. and his family to the State Capitol to honor his historic achievements as pilot of the Artemis II lunar flyby mission, which made him the first Black astronaut to travel beyond low-Earth orbit and into the vicinity of the Moon. Shown from left are Glover's daughter Joia Glover, his wife Dionna Glover, Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr., and his daughter Maya Glover. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr.'s visit to the California Legislature drew attention from lawmakers across the political spectrum. Asm. Jeff Gonzalez (R-Indio), right, poses for a photo with the Artemis II mission pilot on June 18, 2026. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr., left, poses for a photo with Asm. LaShae Sharp-Collins (D-San Diego) following Juneteenth activities on the Assembly floor on June 18, 2026. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

The California State Senate and Assembly welcomed U.S. Navy Capt. Victor Glover Jr., a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut, to the State Capitol on June 18, honoring his achievements in space exploration and his role in the historic Artemis II mission.

In a tribute presented in partnership with the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), lawmakers gathered in both chambers to recognize Glover's accomplishments, including his service as the pilot of the Artemis II mission, which completed a crewed flyby of the Moon in April.

A guest on the floors of both houses of the California Legislature, Glover spoke about the importance of inspiring the next generation.

Glover was also recognized during the reading of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 214 (ACR 214), the legislative measure commemorating Juneteenth in 2026.

Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle joined in celebrating Glover's achievements.

"Seeing them approve ACR 214 was amazing, overwhelming, and inspiring," Glover told California Black Media (CBM).

"To see them all come together like that about something they agree on, and are excited about, instead of things solely about me personally, shows what we are capable of as people," Glover said. "I hope that this is a small piece of this theme as we look forward to thinking about ways we can continue to serve and lead the nation and the state

by working together."

Glover added, "Let's focus on what brings us together rather than what tears us apart, and we'll get more done."

Accompanied by NASA colleagues and members of his family, including his wife, Dionna Glover, and daughters Maya and Joia, Glover also greeted throngs of cheering young people who gathered at the Capitol to meet him.

"Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr., a native of Pomona, Calif., has a story that reflects the very best of our state and our nation," said Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego), chair of the CLBC. "His journey from California to the stars is a testament to perseverance, service, leadership, and excellence."

Born on April 30, 1976, Glover graduated from Ontario High School in Ontario, California. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in general engineering from California Polytechnic State University in 1999 and received his Navy "Wings of Gold" in 2001. He also holds three master's degrees.

"In 2013, while serving as a legislative fellow in the United States Senate, Capt. Glover was selected by NASA as a member of its astronaut corps," Weber Pierson said. "He completed astronaut training and quickly became one of the agency's most respected leaders."

Before joining NASA, Glover served as a test pilot, flying aircraft such as the McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet, an all-weather, twin-engine, multirole combat aircraft.

The Artemis II mission was the first crewed flight of NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) rocket

and Orion spacecraft. It carried four astronauts around the Moon before splashing down safely in the Pacific Ocean on April 10, 2026.

Joining Glover on the mission were NASA Commander Reid Wiseman, NASA mission specialist Christina Koch and Canadian Space Agency mission specialist Jeremy Hansen. During the 10-day mission, the Orion spacecraft traveled more than 252,000 miles from Earth, marking the farthest distance humans have ever traveled into deep space.

Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez (D-Ontario) described Glover as an "extraordinary American," a "proud son of Pomona," and a true inspiration to residents of the 53rd Assembly District and Californians statewide.

"His journey to the stars is nothing short of remarkable," Rodriguez said.

Many of the lawmakers attending were accompanied by their children and young people from their communities, giving them an opportunity to meet Glover in person.

"Here's the thing, the little Black and Brown kids look at me and see someone with a face that looks like theirs. That's super important," Glover told CBM. "What else is important is that some of those kids are from Marin County, Orange County and other places."

Glover concluded, "They are surrounded by successful, affluent people who look nothing like me, but were excited by us and my whole family. That speaks to my heart."



Bentley Bowl and Bako Sweet® Launch Bakersfield Collaboration Celebrating Flavor, Community, and Central Valley Pride

BAKERSFIELD, CA — Bentley Bowl and Bako Sweet® have partnered to spotlight local collaboration, rising entrepreneurship, and the rich agricultural roots of California's Central Valley. The partnership brings together a fast-growing Bakersfield food truck favorite known for its bold flavors and strong local following, alongside Bako Sweet®, the leading California-grown sweet potato brand on a mission to sweeten your everyday®. Together, they are creating fresh food experiences rooted in locally grown ingredients, hometown pride, and community connection.

Founded by brothers Kadar and Bentley Waller while they were student-athletes at California State University, Bakersfield, Bentley Bowl has grown from a pop-up concept into a standout local brand recognized for vibrant flavor, culture, and community energy.

At the heart of the collaboration is a shared commitment to uplifting the Central Valley and creating opportunities for the next generation of entrepreneurs.

"This is bigger than food. It's about belief in what's possible," said Kadar Waller, founder of Bentley Bowl. "We want young people to see that an idea can grow into something real and create opportunities."

Through the partnership, Bentley Bowl will feature Bako Sweet® potatoes across a range of menu items, showcasing ingredients proudly grown in the Central Valley.

The collaboration also reflects Bako Sweet's continued investment in the communities where its sweet potatoes are grown and harvested. By partnering with a homegrown Bakersfield business, Bako Sweet is celebrating local talent, supporting small business growth, and bringing more visibility to the region's entrepreneurial spirit.

"At Bako Sweet, our mission is to sweeten your everyday®—through the food we grow and the communities we serve," said a Bako Sweet representative. "Bentley Bowl brings incredible creativity, momentum, and hometown pride to Bakersfield. We're proud to support a local business that is inspiring others and helping showcase the best of the Central Valley."

The collaboration will include signature menu items, storytelling campaigns highlighting local entrepreneurship, social media content celebrating Central Valley agriculture, and community engagement efforts designed to encourage future business leaders.

For the Waller family, the partnership represents continued growth and opportunity.

"This is Bakersfield showing who we are," said Dr. Arleana Waller. "When young people are supported, they create opportunity not just for themselves, but for others."

The collaboration will roll out through Bentley Bowl's food truck, catering, community events, and digital platforms throughout the year.

Trump Tells Maryland's Black Governor He's "Not Worthy" of Attending a White House Dinner

Maryland Governor Wes Moore, who is Black, said President Trump's claim that he was "not worthy" to attend a White House dinner would not affect his leadership. Moore called the snub disrespectful but emphasized that his worth comes from God and the people of Maryland, not from Trump.

Trump announced that all U.S. governors would be invited to a White House dinner during the National Governors Association meeting, except for Moore and Colorado Governor Jared Polis. On Truth Social, Trump criticized Moore's leadership, labeled him "foul-mouthed," and questioned his military Bronze Star.

In an interview with CBS News, Moore said he is willing to work with anyone but will not bow down to anyone. He said, "If the point of the meeting is to turn it into name-calling... I will not go."

Moore added, "Respectfully, you do not determine my worthiness. God determines my worthiness. The people of Maryland determine my worthiness. They are who I answer to. Not him."

Reports show the Trump administration initially considered excluding all Democratic governors from the formal meeting but ultimately only blocked Moore and Polis from attending the dinner.

Most Democratic governors said they would skip the dinner in solidarity. Polis also said that regardless of invitations, he would continue working with other governors to improve people's lives.

Museum Display Asks California to See Black Women "in Full"

By Staff
California Black Media

In Los Angeles, visitors attending a Juneteenth weekend event at the A.C. Bilbrew Library were welcomed by a museum exhibit featuring a wall of faces — filmmakers and freedom fighters, Olympians and lawmakers — honoring Black women's achievement and leadership.

For many of the Black women in the room, the moment landed like a long-held breath finally released.

"The Museum of California Black Women is an invitation to see Black women in full," said Kellie Todd Griffin, president and CEO of the California Black Women's Collective Empowerment Institute, who curated the exhibition.

Titled "A Field of Beauty and Brilliance," the cultural exhibition opened to the public June 22 and runs through Sept. 30 at the library's Black Resource Center in Los Angeles. Admission is free. Presented in partnership with the Black Resource Center, it uses artifacts, immersive installations and interactive displays to trace the political, artistic, athletic and civic contributions of Black women across generations.

The featured names span California's cultural landscape: filmmaker Ava DuVernay, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee, U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA-43), authors Maya Angelou and Octavia Butler, scholar Angela Davis, and athletes Allyson Felix (track and field), Venus and Serena Williams (tennis) and Cheryl Miller (basketball).

The exhibition also marks the launch of Black California Love Stories, an oral history project collecting the family histories, traditions and milestones of Black Californians for preservation on the library's website.

For the lawmakers who spoke, the wall was personal. State Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles) noted she is only the 21st Black woman elected to the Legislature in its 175-year history and the first to chair the Senate Labor Committee.

"Our ancestors didn't just survive history," she said. "They changed it."

Smallwood-Cuevas tied the exhibition to her push to build California's first designated Black historic cultural district, an effort she said could protect some 4,000 Black cultural assets across South Central Los Angeles.

"If we don't tell our stories, no one will," she said. "If we don't claim our space, others will come



From left: Angela L. Minniefield, chief operating officer of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science; Sharol Caw; California Black Media Executive Director Regina Wilson; state Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas; Lakewood Mayor Cassandra Chase; California Black Women's Collective Empowerment Institute President and CEO Kellie Todd Griffin, who curated the exhibition; state Sen. Laura Richardson; Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell; and Dr. Skye Patrick, director of the LA County Library, at the ribbon-cutting for the Museum of Black Women and Girls pop-up on June 20, 2026. (Photo by Karim Saafir Photography)

and claim it for themselves."

That theme of erasure and the work of resisting it anchored remarks by Dr. Donna Nichol, the first Black dean of the College of Liberal Arts at California State University, Long Beach.

She opened with the story of her grandmother, Catherine Tarpley, a USC-trained historian who helped open the first cooperative food market in Watts in 1980. When the Los Angeles Times covered the effort, Nichol said, every man in the room was named in the article. Her grandmother was not.

"My grandmother was not the exception," Nichol said. "She was the rule."

Nichol traced a lineage of California Black women who built institutions from nothing: Biddy Mason, who won her freedom in a Los Angeles courtroom and became one of the city's wealthiest landowners; Mary Ellen Pleasant, who funded John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry and sued to desegregate San Francisco's streets; newspaper publisher Charlotta Bass, the first Black woman nominated for U.S. vice president; and librarian

Miriam Matthews, who assembled one of the most important archives of Black California history.

The lesson, Nichol argued, is that records are never neutral. Historians, she said, are trained to read "against the archive" to ask not only what is preserved but what is missing and why.

"The archive is the foundation on which all future work rests," she said. "If we do not build it, no one else will build it for us."

Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell, the second Black woman to serve on the board after Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, said she took pride that the exhibition lives at a county facility in her district. She urged attendees to bring the next generation including young men reminding the crowd that honoring Black women is not work for women alone.

Black Resource Center librarian Cheryl Paul, a former history teacher, told visitors the collection belongs to them and pressed them not to keep it to themselves.

"We are the diaspora," she said. "Every corner of it is represented in these four walls."

The center, established in 1978, has long worked to preserve African American history and culture. County Librarian Dr. Skye Patrick said the museum and accompanying oral history project ensure those stories "remain accessible for future generations."



Portraits of celebrated California Black women line the wall of the Museum of Black Women and Girls pop-up, "A Field of Beauty and Brilliance," ahead of its June 20, 2026, opening at the A.C. Bilbrew Library Black Resource Center in Los Angeles. (Photo by Karim Saafir Photography)

Africa University Gets First AME Member on Development Board

By **Eveline Chikwanah**

United Methodist News Service The Christian Recorder
Monifa McKnight, 50, an entrepreneur and educator from Maryland, is the first non-United Methodist to sit on the executive board of Africa University (Tennessee) Inc.

The African Methodist Episcopal lay member, who spent 26 years working in kindergarten to grade 12 education, was excited to be appointed to the board of a tertiary institution.

"I am excited to be on the AU (Tennessee) board as the first non-United Methodist. I was the first female superintendent of one of the largest school districts in the U.S. I understand God's mission when you are the first; God has prepared me," McKnight said.

"When you are the first, you create a path. I believe that's God's way to help create a path that didn't exist," she added.

Africa University, a United Methodist-related school serving the continent, has three boards. Africa University (Tennessee) Inc.'s board is the oldest. Doing business as the Africa University Development Office, Africa University (Tennessee) raises, holds, invests and distributes funds in support of the school, which is based in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

McKnight was the first woman superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, which consistently ranks among the 20 largest school districts in the U.S. by enrollment. The district also includes multiple schools that have received national recognition for academic achievement.

She is bringing to Africa University years of experience in education, working with young people, leadership, governance, and strategic

planning — and possibly more gifts that she hasn't yet discovered, she told UM News.

"I am hoping to broaden my horizon around studies from an international lens. I've had experience working with international students who come to the U.S.; now I get to learn as a leader from students and how things work in a different country, in the continent of Africa," she said.

"This is my first time seeing what that looks like, so that's going to be a big learning experience for me. And I'm hoping to also gain knowledge of things that are working well here to help influence that in the United States."

James H. Salley, president and chief executive of Africa University (Tennessee) Inc., and associate vice chancellor for institutional advancement, said McKnight was recruited because of her skills, professionalism and experience in primary and higher education.

"She proved herself in the previous positions she has held," he said. "McKnight has already made an impact and brought certain skills where we needed to close the loop on some of the areas we were deficient in."

The Africa University (Tennessee) Inc., bylaws do not state that someone has to be United Methodist in order to serve on the board, Salley said.

He noted that Africa University has had a relationship with the African Methodist Episcopal Church for more than seven years and has provided scholarships to the 20th Episcopal District of the AME Church, which includes Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Botswana.

"We have more than 20 AME members currently enrolled who have been provided full

scholarships by an anonymous donor," he said. "So McKnight provides a bridge for us and our (AU Tennessee) Chair Bishop L. Jonathan Holston to interact with Bishop Gregory Vaughn Eason Sr. of the 20th District and research future possibilities."

The meetings held in March were the first to be chaired by Bishop Daniel O. Lunge of the Congo Central Episcopal Area, who took over from the Rev. Alfredo Zunguza of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries.

"This is a big responsibility which has been given to me at Africa University as the board chair," Lunge told UM News. "I am not considering it an honor, but it is a big task where God has added me to a group where others have started work, so that together we can drive Africa to where the Lord has planned."

He said his vision is to put in practice his passion and desire as a lecturer.

"Even after being elected a bishop, I didn't stop teaching."

Lunge has been a university professor since 2012 and is passionate about mission and evangelism.

"I would prefer that all of us — staff members, lecturers and students — should feel that we are called for a mission and go for the mission to bring people from the world and bring them to Jesus," he said.

Lunge is also chair of the board of the Protestant University in Congo, a member of the Faith and Order Committee in The United Methodist Church, an executive member of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, a member of the Central Conference Theological Education Fund under the United Methodist Board of Higher



Monifa McKnight (center) meets with some of the African Methodist Episcopal students studying at Africa University. McKnight, a lay member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is the first non-United Methodist to sit on the executive board of Africa University (Tennessee) Inc. The meeting held in the Kwang Lim Chapel enabled McKnight to interact with students who are members of her denomination. Photo courtesy of McKnight.

Education and Ministry, and president of the Mid-Africa Regional Conference College of Bishops. He is president of the Protestant community in Sankuru province in Congo and an executive member of a publishing house in Kinshasa.

Other new members serving on the Africa University (Tennessee) Inc. board include Bishop Emmanuel Sinzohagera of the Burundi-Rwanda Episcopal Area and the Rev. Candace M. Lewis, president/dean of Gammon Theological Seminary — the first woman elected to the role in the school's history.

California Controller Malia M. Cohen Turns to Annual Audit to Present "Clearer" Picture of State's Financial Health

By **Antonio Ray Harvey**

California Black Media

A week before the California Legislature was required to pass a balanced budget on June 15, and send it to Gov. Gavin Newsom, State Controller Malia M. Cohen urged lawmakers to exercise fiscal discipline to guard against ups and downs in state revenue and the risk of future budget shortfalls.

Speaking at the UC Student and Policy Center's California Economic Forum in Sacramento on June 9, Cohen pointed to the state's 2024-25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) as an essential tool for understanding California's true fiscal condition.

The ACFR is the state's official audited financial statement, providing a comprehensive snapshot of California's finances based on actual revenues, expenditures, assets and liabilities.

Cohen noted that this year's report marked the first time since 2019 that California received an unmodified auditor's opinion and completed the report before the release of the governor's May

Revision budget proposal.

"Revenues are high, higher than expected. Expenditures are also higher than expected, but we are in a structural deficit," Cohen said. "We do need to make some changes; otherwise, the (California) government we all know and love will no longer be able to sustain."

According to the ACFR, California reported \$595.5 billion in revenue and \$582.5 billion in expenditures during the 2024-25 fiscal year, resulting in a statewide surplus of approximately \$13 billion.

Cohen said the report serves as a critical accountability tool during budget negotiations because it relies on audited financial data rather than projections.

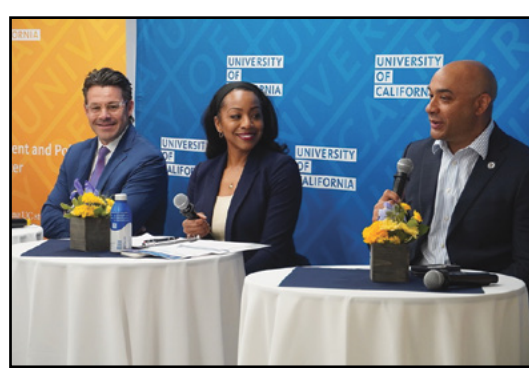
The controller also addressed California's economic outlook in the wake of the latest UCLA Anderson Forecast, the quarterly economic outlook produced by economists at the UCLA Anderson School of Management. The forecast provides analysis of economic trends affecting California and the nation, including employment, inflation and economic growth.

Cohen highlighted concerns about the state's dependence on high-income taxpayers, the sustainability of stronger-than-expected tax revenues and the risk that short-term financial fluctuations could worsen long-term budget challenges.

She also cautioned lawmakers against relying too heavily on internal borrowing to manage deficits, urging them to limit borrowing and preserve reserve funds.

"ACFR is important to the fiscal health and wellness of the state of California," Cohen said. "Think about how it impacts our bond rating. Think about the bond rating as your personal credit score."

Cohen added, "For us to be creditworthy, for people to loan us money, borrow money to balance out our debts, we need (ACFR) to be out on time



From left, Gabriel Petek, legislative analyst for the Legislative Analyst's Office; Malia Cohen, California state controller; and Joe Stephenshaw, director of the California Department of Finance, participate in the 3rd Annual California Economic Forum in Sacramento. The panel discussion focused on California's economic outlook, upcoming fiscal policy challenges and the state's overall financial condition. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

and to be clean."

The third annual California Economic Forum, organized by the UC Student and Policy Center in partnership with POLITICO, brought together economists and policymakers to discuss California's economic trajectory and the fiscal challenges facing the state.

Cohen participated in a panel discussion alongside California Department of Finance Director Joe Stephenshaw and Legislative Analyst Gabriel Petek of the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the Legislature's independent, fiscal and policy advisor.

Petek said timely completion of the ACFR is

critical because it provides policymakers, investors and bond markets with an accurate picture of the state's finances before major budget decisions are finalized.

"The lack of that information and analysis could have the effect of costing more interest on the debt when (states) go to the bond markets to borrow," Petek said. "I think it's a notable and important thing that the state (of California) has achieved in the document."

Stephenshaw, Newsom's chief fiscal policy adviser, said Cohen made completion of the ACFR a priority shortly after taking office.

While the Controller's Office compiles the report, state departments must reconcile their financial records with year-end figures submitted to the Department of Finance.

"The controller made this a priority when she took over. She met with me and expressed that task," Stephenshaw said. "I have to commend her for the work that was done over the last couple of years to have a timely reporting of our financial statement."

As controller, Cohen's constitutional responsibilities center on cash management, accounting and fiscal oversight. Her office issues monthly cash reports detailing actual General Fund revenues and expenditures, providing lawmakers with up-to-date information on the state's fiscal position.

California's fiscal year begins July 1. The governor must sign a final budget by June 30 to ensure the state can continue funding operations, employee salaries and vendor payments without interruption.

Cohen said the ACFR gives lawmakers and the public a clearer understanding of California's financial reality by grounding budget discussions in audited data rather than assumptions.

"ACFR should be a household name so that everybody knows about it," Cohen said.

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Black Alliance for Just Immigration Supports Black Voting Rights!

The Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI) condemns the continued gutting of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and the broader assault on Black political power unfolding across the United States.

Black immigrants in the United States — whether citizens or not — share a common condition with Black Americans. Our ability to access housing, healthcare, education, labor protections, safety, and political representation is deeply tied to the political power of Black communities in this country.

When Black communities lose political power, all Black people across the diaspora become more vulnerable to displacement, criminalization, disenfranchisement, and state violence.

The U.S. cannot claim to be a multiracial democracy while systematically dismantling Black political representation and participation. An attack on Black voting power is an attack on all Black people across the diaspora and on the very possibility of a just democracy.

Voting is more than a civic exercise. Voting is about representation, access to resources, and the ability of communities to shape policies that determine whether we survive, thrive, or are left vulnerable to harm. It is both a right and an expectation of participation in public life.

For generations, however, Black people in the United States were systematically excluded from that right through both legal and extralegal violence — especially across the Deep South. The Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 was won through bloodshed, sacrifice, organizing, and mass resistance led by Black communities demanding full participation in democracy.

The VRA sought to remedy generations of racial exclusion by requiring states with histories of racist voter suppression to receive federal approval before changing election laws or voting procedures, a process known as preclearance. Section 2 of the VRA also created protections to ensure that Black voters and other historically marginalized communities could elect candidates who would represent their interests.

Historically, white conservative forces have sought to suppress Black political participation because Black communities have consistently organized, voted, and fought for policies rooted in justice, equity, and collective survival.

For more than a decade, the Supreme Court has steadily dismantled the VRA protections.



The logo for Black Alliance for Just Immigration uses an image of Kwame Toure (Stokely Carmichael), who fought for Black civil rights in the 1960s. Courtesy image.

In 2013, the Court's Shelby v. Holder decision removed the federal preclearance requirement, opening the floodgates for states to pass voter suppression laws and redraw districts designed to dilute Black political power.

On April 29, the Supreme Court ruled that Louisiana's congressional map was unconstitutional because it included two majority-Black districts. In a state where more than one-third of the population is Black, the Court has effectively declared that Black political representation itself is suspect.

This is not simply about maps or district lines. Gerrymandering is one tactic in a much larger project to weaken Black political power, undermine multiracial democracy, and consolidate power away from working-class communities and communities of color.

What the Supreme Court has done is allow racial gerrymandering to exclude Black people from political power, while the effort to ensure Black communities have representation is now considered unconstitutional. Gutting of the VRA is simply the latest chapter in a long history of efforts to silence Black voices and roll back the gains of the Civil

Rights Movement.

At the same time, the rise of authoritarian, xenophobic politics under Pres. Donald Trump and the broader far right seeks to codify anti-Blackness, anti-immigrant policies, attacks on women, LGBTQ+ communities, and other marginalized groups into law. These attacks are interconnected.

"The United States cannot claim to be a multiracial democracy while systematically dismantling Black political power," said Nana Gyamfi, executive director of BAJI. "Black immigrants understand that our conditions are tied to the conditions of Black Americans; together then, together now. When Black communities lose political power, all Black people become more vulnerable to displacement, criminalization, disenfranchisement, and state violence. Protecting Black voting rights is not just about elections. It is about protecting the possibility of collective freedom and self-determination for our communities."

BAJI remains committed to defending Black political power, strengthening Black migrant civic participation, and building a future rooted in Black freedom, dignity, and collective liberation.

Entertainment

Malia and Sasha Obama Steal the Spotlight at Their Dad's Presidential Library Launch



Malia and Sasha Obama in grand opening of Barack Obama's library

Malia and Sasha Obama attended the grand opening of Barack Obama's presidential library in Chicago. They appeared alongside family as the high-profile ceremony drew global attention and major public figures.

The sisters appeared on stage with their parents during the ceremony at the new center in Jackson Park. They smiled, waved to the crowd, and shared a brief public moment as cameras captured the scene.

According to the Daily Mail, Malia Obama, 27, wore a gray plunging St Agni blazer priced at about \$780, paired with a leather mini skirt and

pointed heels. Sasha Obama, 25, wore an all-white outfit with an asymmetric top and matching skirt, styled with a statement belt and Miu Miu heels valued at around \$1,320.

The opening brought together several former U.S. presidents and their families, including the Bidens, Bushes, and Clintons. The group posed for a photo ahead of the dedication ceremony, highlighting the rare political gathering.

The guest list also included well-known entertainers such as John Legend, Chrissy Teigen, Stephen Colbert, Oprah Winfrey, Tom Hanks, Rita

Wilson, Tyler Perry, and Steven Spielberg. Their presence reflected the strong mix of cultural and political figures at the event.

Political leaders also attended, including California Governor Gavin Newsom, former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, and former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The White House did not invite Donald Trump, with Obama Foundation CEO Valerie Jarrett saying the focus remained on supporters of the project.

Jennifer Hudson opened the ceremony with

the national anthem, while other performers were scheduled throughout the program. Valerie Jarrett also spoke about the Obamas' early years, highlighting their shared commitment to public service before entering the White House.

The Obama Presidential Center, planned over several years after its 2017 announcement, spans 19 acres and includes a museum, library, public park, green spaces, and a full-size basketball court. The project cost around \$850 million and faced delays due to the pandemic and expanded design plans.



Clive Davis

Clive Davis Dies at 94 as Music Legend Who Built the Careers of Whitney Houston, Alicia Keys, Aretha Franklin, and More

Nationwide — The music industry is mourning the loss of Clive Davis, who died this morning at age 94, the legendary record executive whose influence helped shape the careers of some of the most successful and culturally significant Black artists in modern music history. Over a career spanning more than six decades, Davis played a pivotal role in discovering, developing, and elevating talent that transformed the sound of American music and reached audiences around the world.

Davis first rose to prominence at Columbia Records before going on to lead Arista Records, J Records, and other influential ventures. Throughout his career, he demonstrated a unique ability to recognize extraordinary talent long before it became mainstream. His vision helped launch and support the careers of numerous Black artists whose music became the soundtrack of multiple generations.

Among the artists whose careers were impacted by Davis were Whitney Houston, Alicia Keys, Aretha Franklin, Barry Manilow, Jennifer Hudson, Monica, Fantasia, OutKast, and many others. His work with Houston, in particular, is widely regarded as one of the most successful artist-development partnerships in music history. Under his guidance, Houston became one of the best-selling recording artists of all time.

Beyond commercial success, Davis helped open doors for Black performers at a time when opportunities within the music industry were often limited. He consistently invested in artists whose talent transcended barriers and whose work reflected the richness and diversity of Black culture. Through his leadership, countless musicians gained access to major platforms that allowed their voices and stories to reach global audiences.

Industry leaders credit Davis with helping bridge the gap between artistic excellence and mainstream success. His commitment to nurturing talent extended beyond chart performance. Artists frequently described him as a mentor who challenged them to achieve their full potential while remaining true to their creative vision.

The impact of Davis can be measured not only in awards, platinum records, and sold-out arenas, but also in the generations of artists who followed in the footsteps of those he championed. His influence helped shape R&B, soul, gospel, hip-hop, pop, and contemporary music, leaving an imprint on nearly every corner of the entertainment industry.

As tributes continue to pour in from around the world, Clive Davis is being remembered as more than a record executive. He was a visionary architect of modern music whose belief in Black artists helped change the industry forever. His legacy will live on through the timeless recordings, groundbreaking careers, and cultural milestones he helped make possible.



Whoopi Goldberg on the Knicks Accepting Trump's Invitation, "I Want Those Black Men to Stand in Our House"

Whoopi Goldberg comments about New York Knicks' invitation from the White House

After winning the NBA championship, the New York Knicks faced attention over a planned visit to the White House hosted by President Donald Trump. On "The View," co-host Whoopi Goldberg sparked debate after voicing strong support for the team attending.

Goldberg, a longtime Trump critic, said the players should go as a unified group and represent their journey as champions. She framed the moment as a chance to highlight Black athletes in a historic setting and what their success represents in public life.

During the discussion, she said, "I want all those Black men to stand in our house," and argued the visit could reflect resilience and achievement. She added that the appearance would connect

sports success with broader cultural visibility.

According to the New York Post, team owner James Dolan confirmed the Knicks had accepted the invitation after their title run. The team's visit would mark a notable moment, as it would be one of the first NBA championship teams during this period to accept such an invitation.

The invitation came after Trump attended Game 3 of the NBA Finals on June 8 at Madison Square Garden. However, individual players had not yet confirmed whether they would attend the White House event.

Center Trey Jemison III said he was still unsure when asked, noting the team would likely decide together. Other key players, including captain Jalen Brunson, had not publicly shared their final stance.

Goldberg continued to back the idea, saying the players represent more than basketball. She described them as athletes who overcame challenges and returned stronger, saying the visit would reflect that journey.

The conversation drew a strong reaction from the studio audience, with cheers following her

comments. Co-hosts then shared differing views on the situation.

Sara Haines said the invitation placed the team in a difficult position, while Alyssa Farah Griffin agreed it could make players uncomfortable.

Joy Behar said she felt divided, noting respect for the White House but uncertainty about its political context. Sunny Hostin added that several past NBA champions declined similar invitations, pointing to political concerns.

Hostin also said the decision could place pressure on team leadership and players as they weigh their response. She referenced how athletes often defer to team-wide decisions in situations like this.

The discussion later shifted to comparisons with a UFC event held at the White House, which included controversial remarks about former First Lady Michelle Obama. The panel used the example to highlight how public figures can become part of political debate during high-profile events.

Legal Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026-B3213
 Doing business as:
UNION AVE WIC at 600 UNION AVE STE D, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93307-1465
 Mailing Address: PO BOX 21810, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93390-1810
 County: Kern
 Full name of registrant(s):
CLINICA SIERRA VISTA at 9525 Camino Media, Bakersfield, CA 93311-1314
 State of incorp. or org.: CA
 The business is conducted by: Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: March 9, 2006
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Kern County on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

This fictitious Business Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the County Clerk's Office. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another to a trademark or trade name under federal, state, or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code). I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. This statement expires on: May 20, 2031

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026-B3565
 Doing business as:

OSORIO'S DETAILING at 1416 6TH STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93304
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Kern
 Full name of registrant(s):
KEITLYN ISELA TORRES PEREZ at 1416 6TH STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93304
 The business is conducted by: Individual
 SIGNED: **KEITLYN ISELA TORRES PEREZ**

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: May 6, 2026
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Kern County on: June 5, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: M VACA RAMOS, Deputy

This fictitious Business Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the County Clerk's Office. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another to a trademark or trade name under federal, state, or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code). I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. This statement expires on: June 5, 2031

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B5639
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA TAFT AFS**
 Street address of business: 915 NORTH 10TH STREET, SUITE 20, TAFT, CA 93268
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: 1430 TRUXTUN AVE SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVE, SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2021-B5133
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **COMPREHENSIVE CARE CENTER**
 Street address of business: 625 34TH STREET STE 100, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301-2307
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302-1559
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVENUE, STE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026-B3569
 Doing business as:

BAKERSFIELD BLOOMS & PICNICS at 3212 MT. VERNON AVE, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93306
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Kern
 Full name of registrant(s):
CHRISTINA MARIE MARTINEZ at 3212 MT. VERNON AVE, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93306
 The business is conducted by: Individual
 SIGNED: **CHRISTINA MARIE MARTINEZ**

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: N/A
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Kern County on: June 5, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: M HERNANDEZ, Deputy

This fictitious Business Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the County Clerk's Office. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another to a trademark or trade name under federal, state, or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code). I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. This statement expires on: June 5, 2031

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2025-B1081
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **PRIMOS TIRES & AUTO REPAIR SHOP**
 Street address of business: 2599 S UNION AVE, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93307
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: 8833 E AVE T14, LITTLE ROCK, CA 93543
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **ALFONZO NOLASCO** at 8833 E AVE T14, LITTLE ROCK, CA 93543
RICARDO OCEGUERA at 504 PRICE ST, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93307
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who

PUBLIC NOTICE

declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a General Partnership
 SIGNED: **RICARDO OCEGUERA, OWNER**
 This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: M VACA RAMOS, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2021-B5356
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **MULTILEVEL APPLICATIONS & POSITIVE SUPPORT SERVICES (MAPSS)**
 Street address of business: 2225 E. STREET, SUITE 100, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: same
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **MULTILEVEL APPLICATIONS & POSITIVE SUPPORT SERVICES (MAPSS) LLC** at 2225 E. STREET, SUITE 100, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Limited Liability Company
 SIGNED: **GERALD LAVARIAS, PRESIDENT**

This statement of abandonment filed on: June 3, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B5639
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA TAFT AFS**
 Street address of business: 915 NORTH 10TH STREET, SUITE 20, TAFT, CA 93268
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: 1430 TRUXTUN AVE SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVE, SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B5639
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 County: Kern
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 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B5639
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 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2021-B5133
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **COMPREHENSIVE CARE CENTER**
 Street address of business: 625 34TH STREET STE 100, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301-2307
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302-1559
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVENUE, STE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2025-B1081
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **PRIMOS TIRES & AUTO REPAIR SHOP**
 Street address of business: 2599 S UNION AVE, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93307
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: 8833 E AVE T14, LITTLE ROCK, CA 93543
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **ALFONZO NOLASCO** at 8833 E AVE T14, LITTLE ROCK, CA 93543
RICARDO OCEGUERA at 504 PRICE ST, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93307
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who

declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B4872
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 1508 GARCES HWY, DELANO, CA 93215
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302

Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B4872
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 Street address of business: 1508 GARCES HWY, DELANO, CA 93215
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302

Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B4872
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 1508 GARCES HWY, DELANO, CA 93215
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302

Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B4872
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 1508 GARCES HWY, DELANO, CA 93215
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302

Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **DELANO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

CA 93302
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at P.O. BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2023-B6407
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **FRAZIER MOUNTAIN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**
 Street address of business: 704 LEBEC RD SUITE B, LEBEC, CA 93243-0000
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: P.O. BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302-1559
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: M CEDENO, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NUMBER 26CUB02073

Superior Court of the State of California, for the county of KERN
 1215 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301
 Kern County Superior Court
 PETITION OF: **SANDRA PATRICIA HERNANDEZ**
 FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
 Petitioner: **SANDRA PATRICIA HERNANDEZ**
 Filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
 Present name **SANDRA PATRICIA HERNANDEZ**
 Proposed name **SANDRA CEJA**
 THE COURT ORDERS: that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING
 Date: August 6, 2026
 Time: 8:30 a.m.
 Dept: L

The address of the court is: same as noted above
 A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once a week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
 Date: June 2, 2026
Gina M. Cervantes, Judicial Officer
Vanessa Guerra, Deputy Clerk
 Petitioner: **Sandra Patricia Hernandez**
8324 Cha Cha Ct, Bakersfield, CA 93306
 Telephone: (232) 271-7272

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2026-B2947
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **KERN RIVER HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 67 EVANS ROAD, WOFFORD HEIGHTS, CA 93285-9640
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: P.O. BOX 21810, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93390-1810
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 925 CAMINO MEDIA, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93311-1314
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2025-B4968
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **LEXINGTON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 325 S. LEXINGTON STREET, DELANO, CA 93215-3693
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302-1559
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVE, STE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301-5220
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2025-B4968
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **LEXINGTON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER**
 Street address of business: 325 S. LEXINGTON STREET, DELANO, CA 93215-3693
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302-1559
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVENUE, STE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 20, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO: 2024-B3226
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **SOUTHWEST WIC**
 Street address of business: 4641 AMERICAN AVE UNIT A & B, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93309
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVE SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2026

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
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 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: PO BOX 1559, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93302
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLINICA SIERRA VISTA** at 1430 TRUXTUN AVE SUITE 400, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A) Registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **OLGA MEAVE, M.D., Chief Executive Officer**

This statement of abandonment filed on: May 7, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: D HINOJOSA, Deputy

Legal Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

NAME
FILE NO: 2024-83412
 Business Name you wish to abandon: **CN SIGNS**
 Street address of business: 2907 L STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 County: Kern
 Mailing address of business: same
 Registrant(s) who wish to abandon the business name: **CLIFFORD R WEBB** at 2907 L STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
JERAD C WEBB at 2907 L STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
JO ANN WEBB at 2907 L STREET, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
 I declare that all information in this Statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)
 Business was conducted by: General Partnership
 SIGNED: **JO ANN WEBB, General Partner**
 This statement of abandonment filed on: June 12, 2026
 AIMEE X. ESPINOZA
 County Clerk
 By: M HERNANDEZ, Deputy

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER

PUB: Jun 17, 24, Jul 1, 8, 2026

LIEN SALE

2012 FREIG M2 FOR SALE ON 7/05/2026
 VIN: 1FVACWDT5CDBD8961
 Lien Sale will take place at 10:00 AM at **CAMINO REAL BODY SHOP 24 E PACHECO RD BAKERSFIELD, CA 93304 (661)213-7392**

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER

PUB: Jun 24, 2026

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF BERTHA AZUCENA RAMIREZ-LOPEZ, ALSO KNOWN AS BERTHA AZUCENA RAMIREZ LOPEZ
CASE NUMBER: 26PRJ00668
 To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of **BERTHA AZUCENA RAMIREZ-LOPEZ, ALSO KNOWN AS BERTHA AZUCENA RAMIREZ LOPEZ** A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by **IVAN AGUILERA MERCADO** in the Superior Court of California, County of KERN 2100 College Avenue Bakersfield, CA 93305 Probate Division
THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that **IVAN AGUILERA MERCADO** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.
THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.
A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows:
Date: July 16, 2026
Time: 8:30 a.m. Dept: J-1
Room:
 Address of court: same as noted above
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.
IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) **four months** from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) **60 days** from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code.
Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.
YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER

PUB: Jun 24, Jul 1, 8, 15, 2026

SUMMONS (CRIMINAL JUDICIAL)

CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 25CL013867C
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): SHEILA GAIL JAQUETTE
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO) EL DEMANDANTE: WAWANESA GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY
NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
 You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
 There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE:** The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.
 Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. **AVISO:** Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.
 The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): Kern County Superior Court
 1773 Highway 58
 Mojave, California 93501
 The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Mark R. Nivinskus, Bar No. 195335
 Erin R. Peikes, Bar No. 325776
 Nivinskus Law Group, A Law Corporation
 134 W. Wilshire Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832
 Tel. (714) 533-8110
 nl9@califsburo.com
DATE (Fecha): March 18, 2025
 Clerk (Secretario) By C. Salas, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL)
NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served.
BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Jun 24, Jul 1, 8, 15, 2026

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

CASE NUMBER
26CUB01842
 Superior Court of the State of California, for the county of KERN
 1215 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301
 Civil - Metropolitan Division Justice Building
PETITION OF: TREV DOMINICK HAYES PULLIAM
FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
 Petitioner: **TREV DOMINICK HAYES PULLIAM**
 Filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
 Present name
TREV DOMINICK HAYES PULLIAM
 Proposed name
SABIR SIRAJ TALIB EL BEY
THE COURT ORDERS: that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING
Date: August 5, 2026
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Dept: L
 The address of the court is: same as noted above
 A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once a week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER
Date: June 11, 2026
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Dept: L
 The address of the court is: same as noted above
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Features

Doctors Seeing More Cases of Preventable Childhood Illnesses

By Stacy M. Brown

Doctors across the United States say they are treating children for illnesses that routine vaccinations once made increasingly uncommon, raising concerns that years of declining immunization rates are beginning to reverse decades of public health progress. Pediatricians have described seeing more cases of whooping cough, rotavirus infections, bacterial pneumonia and other potentially life-threatening illnesses that vaccines have long helped suppress. Some physicians reported treating conditions they had rarely encountered during their careers, while others said that growing vaccine hesitancy is changing how emergency rooms and hospitals care for children. The reports come as measles outbreaks continue to spread across multiple states and vaccination coverage remains below federal public health targets. Johns Hopkins University's International Vaccine Access Center reported 2,077 confirmed measles cases nationwide as of May 29. Researchers warned that outbreaks reported across the country have raised concerns about continued transmission, additional hospitalizations and deaths, and the possible loss of the nation's measles elimination status. Public health experts have long viewed measles as a warning sign because of its ability to spread rapidly through communities with lower vaccination coverage. The New York Times reported that physicians increasingly fear the resurgence of measles may be followed by the return of other vaccine-preventable diseases. Doctors say that is already happening. Dr. Meghan Hofto, a pediatric hospitalist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, said she has already treated roughly as many children with rotavirus this year as she saw during the previous decade. Rotavirus once caused tens of thousands of hospitalizations annually before vaccines

sharply reduced its spread. None of the children she treated this year had been vaccinated. Hofto also described caring for infants with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough. "It's hard to know when they're safe to go home," Hofto told The Times. The rise in whooping cough cases has been particularly striking. More than 28,000 cases were reported nationwide last year, compared with approximately 7,000 in 2023, according to figures cited by The Times. Many of the affected infants were too young to receive vaccinations themselves and relied on broader community protection to reduce their exposure. Other doctors described similarly troubling cases. Dr. Jessica Kirk, a pediatric hospitalist in Alabama, recently treated an unvaccinated toddler hospitalized with pneumonia caused by simultaneous infections of Haemophilus influenzae and Streptococcus pneumoniae. Vaccines exist to protect against both illnesses. The child required oxygen and antibiotics to recover. Researchers at Johns Hopkins have been tracking vaccination trends nationwide and found continuing signs of vulnerability. At the same time, vaccine policy has become increasingly contentious in state legislatures. Johns Hopkins researchers reported that lawmakers across the country continue to introduce bills affecting childhood vaccination requirements, vaccine access and non-medical exemptions. Researchers also noted that state policies governing exemptions remain a significant factor in vaccination coverage and disease transmission risks. Physicians have said vaccine skepticism has expanded beyond childhood immunizations. Doctors also reported growing resistance to other preventive treatments. For doctors confronting the return of illnesses that vaccines once pushed to the margins of American medicine, the challenge is becoming increasingly



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personal. "It just feels like you're a tiny little boat with a giant tidal wave coming at you," Dr. Erin Charles, a regional pediatric hospitalist at Seattle

Children's Hospital, told reporters. "And you might convince one family here and there."

California Legislature Approves \$356 Billion Budget — Rejecting Some of Gov. Newsom's Proposed Cuts

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

After a day of impassioned debate, the California Assembly voted 60 to 19 to pass a \$356 billion annual state budget on June 15 that includes \$253 billion investment in the General Fund.

Earlier that same day, the Senate voted to approve the spending plan.

The budget, which all members of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) voted in favor of, lays the groundwork for final negotiations with Gov. Gavin Newsom before the new fiscal year begins on July 1.

Members of the CLBC voiced concerns about pending social services cuts in Newsom's plan affecting seniors and disabled persons, healthcare, education, homelessness, and childcare.

"As a co-equal branch of government, we are rejecting the governor's recommendations (for funding cuts)," said Assemblymember Corey Jackson (D-Moreno Valley), a member of the CLBC.

According to the Overview of the Legislative Budget Plan presented by Sen. John Laird (D-Santa Cruz), chair of the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, the legislative package includes \$5.5 billion more in revenues than were reflected in the spending plan Newsom presented to the Legislature on May 15.

The Democratic majority in the Legislature overwhelmingly supported the budget proposal detailed in Assembly Bill (AB) 109, authored by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino). AB 109 addresses the structural shortfall by cutting the state's deficit in half and setting aside \$36.5 billion in state reserves.

Democrats say the Legislature's budget is a response to the anticipated effects of H.R. 1, the



One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which cuts federal health care and food assistance programs. Signed by President Donald Trump on July 4, 2025, the law also included major tax cuts and an increase in the federal debt limit.

"We know that affordability is a real issue that folks are feeling. They are feeling incredibly stretched financially right now," Gabriel told California Black Media (CBM). "We're looking at a lot of ways to continue to protect health care services and make sure everybody, including poor working families, the most vulnerable communities, and middle-class communities have access to healthcare."

Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles) said California does not have a revenue strategy "that speaks to the long-term sustainability of our Medi-Cal system."

"I want to make one thing clear today, we are not voting on a budget plan that includes a Fair Share proposal, a proposal built on the simple idea that when large profitable corporations depend on a workforce whose health care is subsidized by

taxpayers, those corporations should contribute their fair share to the public system that keeps their workers healthy," Smallwood-Cuevas said on the Senate floor before the vote.

Republican lawmakers argued that the budget includes too much spending and fails to fund critical priorities that are important to working Californians.

Senate Minority Leader Brian W. Jones (R-Santee) said the Democrats exhibit "tone-deafness" and seem unconcerned with "delivering real results with Californians' hard-earned tax dollars."

"This budget just goes to show that our once Golden State has become a playground for left-wing politicians, where \$2 billion green fleets are a better use of our gas tax money than safe roads, and suing the federal administration is more important than funding public safety," Jones stated.

AB 109 includes a record \$127 billion allocation to kindergarten through 12th grade education and community colleges.

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Salinas) said that the legislature is concerned about the historic surge in gas prices, persistent and rising inflation, and even higher costs for groceries, housing, energy bills, and health care affecting most Californians.

The legislative spending package targets healthcare infrastructure stability across several key areas. The budget authorizes up to \$190 million from the general fund in forgivable loans through the Distressed Hospital Loan Program to support struggling hospitals. The budget also provides \$250 million specifically to support California's public hospital systems.

AB 109 also rejects the governor's proposal to reduce the Medi-Cal asset limit for seniors and disabled individuals down to \$2,000.

Sen. Laura Richardson (D-San Pedro), the chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 5 on Corrections, Public Safety, Judiciary, Labor, and Transportation, explained that the Senate worked

diligently to ensure healthcare protection.

"While there are ongoing access issues around programs such as Medi-Cal, hospitals, and courthouses, we have created a plan that will ensure Californians have access to essential services," Richardson said.

Under the budget agreement, the Legislature included an overall package of \$375 million to support Proposition (Prop) 36 implementation, which covers court workloads, mental health treatment, victims' services, and public safety programs.

In addition, a distribution of \$50 million in one-time funding goes to counties strictly for behavioral health departments to handle substance use and mental health treatments under Prop 36.

Republicans insist that those allocations are not enough.

In November 2024, Californians approved Prop 36 because they were tired of watching repeat offenders cycle through a system that failed victims, communities, and law-abiding residents," Diane Dixon (R-Newport Beach) said. "Prop. 36 cannot work without funding, and we are seeing the results in increased crimes."

AB 109 rejects Newsom's proposed cuts to the In-Home Supportive Services program, maintains full-scope Medi-Cal for disadvantaged populations, and provides \$100 million for local food banks.


It also allocates \$900 million for the state's homelessness fund and \$700 million for affordable housing programs such as the Multifamily Housing Program. Newsom initially planned to reduce the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program to \$500 million for the 2026-2027 fiscal year—a \$500 million drop from prior \$1 billion funding rounds.

Newsom must sign off on the state budget on or before June 30.

"Though Republicans have tried to set us up for failure, this budget helps to set up Californians for success," Jackson said.

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Gov. Newsom Signs Election Security Bill; Asm. Bryan Praises Move

By Bo Tefu
California Black Media

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation on May 29 aimed at strengthening protections for California elections, arguing that the measure is necessary to guard against voter intimidation, election interference and unauthorized access to voting systems.

The new law, Senate Bill (SB) 73, authored by state Sens. Sabrina Cervantes (D-Riverside) and Tom Umberg (D-Santa Ana), expands existing safeguards for election workers, ballots, voter rolls and election infrastructure. The legislation comes amid ongoing national debates over election administration and voting security. "California will not allow our elections to be commandeered by political intimidation, abuse of power, or chaotic interference from extremists chasing conspiracy theories. This law protects voters, election workers, and the integrity of the democratic process from election-deniers who want to undermine democracy," Newsom said. Under SB 73, unauthorized access to voter rolls, voter lists and certified voting technology by law enforcement agencies — including federal authorities — is prohibited unless authorized by a court order or tied to a specific investigation under California election law. The measure also restricts peace officers from interfering with election administration, except during public safety emergencies, and requires the California Department of Justice to issue guidance to county election officials on responding to law enforcement requests regarding ballot-processing locations. Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (D-Ladera Heights), vice chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), praised Newsom for signing into law legislation that protects state elections, ballots, and election workers from political and federal interference. "We have seen Republicans steal ballots and intimidate voters. Here in California, we believe in the power of the people, and voter suppression efforts will not work here. We will fight to protect Democracy at all costs," Bryan told California Black Media



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(CBM). The law further increases penalties for the unlawful removal or seizure of voted ballots. Individuals who knowingly take voted ballots from election officials can face fines, imprisonment, or both. "Senate Bill 73 is a direct response to efforts by officials in the Trump Administration and local elected leaders to undermine our democracy piece by piece," Cervantes said. "The enactment of SB 73 protects Californians' sacred right to vote free from fear of intimidation or interference, and safeguards the essential integrity of elections in California." Supporters, including the League of Women Voters of California, praised the measure as a safeguard against federal interference in election administration. "This landmark law erects essential barriers against unauthorized federal access to voting systems, voter rolls, and polling places — protections that are more vital now than ever," said Dora Rose, deputy director of the organization. The legislation builds on a series of election-related measures California has enacted since 2019, including universal vote-by-mail, expanded protections against voter intimidation, and cybersecurity investments designed to protect election infrastructure.

Features

California Must Reinvest in the Next Generation of School Leaders Now

By Dr. Debra Duardo

Special to California Black Media Partners

Julian Rojas didn't grow up imagining himself as a school principal. He grew up imagining his students.

Now in his 13th year in education, Rojas is actively applying for assistant principal positions. What changed? A new program removed the barriers that stood between talented educators and school leadership and gave him the tools to lead differently.

That program is the Diverse Education Leaders Pipeline Initiative (DELPI), and California must act now to save it.

Our state is facing a leadership shortage that mirrors the well-documented teacher shortage. Principals and school leaders shape everything, from how teachers are supported to how families are welcomed through the door. Yet the pathway to becoming one is long, costly, and often inaccessible, with credentialing programs running tens of thousands of dollars at a moment when student debt nationally exceeds \$1.7 trillion. For educators of color, the very people whose presence in leadership most benefits our increasingly diverse student population, those barriers are often insurmountable.

DELPI was created to solve this. Through state funding, the program provides up to \$30,000 per candidate so educators can earn their administrative credentials at no cost. It pairs that financial support with culturally responsive training, anti-bias coursework and hands-on fieldwork designed to develop leaders who reflect and understand the communities they serve.

Rojas's experience illustrates what that development actually looks like.

When he entered LACOE's program, he was already a veteran educator, someone who had served as an interim assistant principal, coached fellow teachers and seen firsthand how school structures shape student outcomes. He knew he wanted to move into administration. "I want to expand my impact and support students at a systems level," he said. "The structures at a school site and family



A school administrator leads a data-driven presentation. Advocates say California must dramatically expand its pipeline of Black and diverse school leaders to meet the challenges facing public education in the state. (Photo: Adobe Stock)

partnerships directly influence student outcomes. I want to build on that work."

But DELPI pushed him further than he expected. "It helped me shift my practice from a transactional leader to a transformational leader," Rojas said. "I'm more intentional about including the perspectives of not just my colleagues, but families and students. Leadership is about creating spaces where people feel seen, heard and valued."

That shift shows up in his daily work, in the parent workshops he leads, the data conversations he initiates, the deliberate outreach to families that LACOE's program reinforced as non-negotiable. "I'm more thoughtful now about how I design supports that meet the needs of our diverse learners,"

he said, "and how I engage with families as partners in the process."

His advice to educators considering the program is direct: "Stay consistent and take advantage of the support LACOE provides. Being open to feedback from peers and coaches made a difference. Reaching out for one-on-one support helped me strengthen my work."

Rojas is not alone. Across California, approximately 300 educators are currently earning their administrative credentials through DELPI — and nearly every available slot has been filled. At LACOE, we are proud to serve as the fiscal lead for one of just 10 DELPI grants statewide, partnering with the Diversity in Leadership Institute, UMass Global, and a consortium of

school districts including Compton, Lynwood, Wiseburn, Centinela Valley, and Culver City. Our first cohort of 11 candidates completed the program in December 2025. Our second cohort of 15 is currently underway. A third cohort of 18 is set to begin in January 2027.

This is a program at capacity, with more educators ready to step forward than we can currently support.

The diversity imperative behind this work is stark. Today, roughly 70 percent of administrators in Los Angeles County are white, while our student population is among the most diverse in the nation. Research consistently shows that students benefit when they see themselves reflected in their leaders. DELPI is building a pipeline that begins to close that gap in Los Angeles County, in rural communities that struggle most to recruit qualified leaders, and across the state.

But here is the urgent reality: DELPI is funded on a one-time basis and expires on June 30, 2027. The state budget must be passed by June 15 and signed by the Governor by June 30 of this year. If DELPI is not included in this budget cycle, the program ends and the momentum we have built, the cohorts we are recruiting, the leaders like Julian Rojas who are ready to step forward, will have nowhere to go.

A renewed and modest reinvestment in DELPI will have far-reaching impacts across the state. We are urging state leaders to continue funding for DELPI in this year's budget without delay.

If we fail to invest in our leadership pipeline today, our schools will face greater instability, our teachers will lack the support they need and our students will be led by administrators who don't reflect or understand them.

Rojas is ready to be one of those leaders. There are hundreds more like him waiting for the chance. California must not close the door on them now.

About the Author

Dr. Debra Duardo, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools.

The UC Davis Scale--When "Race-Neutral" Becomes Code for Illegal Race-Based Affirmative Action

By Craig J. DeLuz

California Black Media

On June 10, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the findings of a six-month investigation into the UC Davis School of Medicine admissions practices.

The probe focused on whether the university's "Davis Scale" violated the U.S. Supreme Court's 2023 ruling in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard, which barred colleges and universities from considering race in admissions decisions.

Following that landmark decision, many institutions turned to race-neutral factors such as income, neighborhood conditions, parental education, and access to opportunity as ways to broaden student diversity. The central question in the UC Davis case is whether those factors were used as lawful measures of disadvantage or as a proxy for race to achieve outcomes the Court said could not be pursued directly.

True diversity in medicine is valuable. Different experiences and perspectives can strengthen the profession when they are earned through real preparation. But that kind of diversity must be built by better equipping underrepresented students to compete on equal footing—not by lowering standards or engineering racial outcomes through the back door.

When institutions choose shortcuts instead, everyone ultimately loses: the students, the profession, and the patients it serves. Nowhere is this clearer than at the UC Davis School of Medicine.

UC Davis has handed the Department of Justice a near-perfect exhibit of exactly how this misguided approach plays out in practice. School leaders created the "Davis Scale," a scoring system that gives extra consideration to applicants from lower-income families, those whose parents had less education, and those who grew up in underserved areas. On paper, it sounds perfectly race-neutral.

In practice, Associate Dean Mark Henderson explained the real point with refreshing candor: it was "class-based affirmative action," and "class struggles have a huge overlap with race — that's how we skirted the issue."

One almost has to admire his honesty. Most prefer to whisper such things in private emails. Here, the architect publicly described their workaround, promoted it to other medical schools, and celebrated the results. Internal documents and simulations showed they tested the scale specifically to increase Black and Hispanic enrollment. They tracked racial percentages like sports scores and proudly announced that "underrepresented in medicine" students had tripled, reaching levels that nearly matched California's demographics.

When the very people who designed the tool openly admit it was built to produce the racial outcomes the Supreme Court had just forbidden, their defense loses much of its force. Intent matters. As Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the Students for Fair Admissions decision, "what cannot be done directly cannot be done indirectly. The Constitution deals with substance, not shadows."

The law looks at reality, not the clever label. When administrators publicly confess they crafted the Davis Scale as a workaround — "that's how we skirted the issue" — they hand their critics the strongest evidence possible. As the old saying goes, once you've told the world how you evaded the law, it becomes much harder to claim you were following it all along.

The deeper problem is not just legal evasion; it is the quiet harm done to the very students these policies claim to uplift. Medical school is demanding. When students are admitted with noticeably weaker academic preparation—lower GPAs and MCAT scores on average—they often find themselves mismatched against classmates who arrived far better equipped. The predictable result is more academic struggle, lower performance on licensing exams, longer time to graduate, and, in too many cases, discouragement or outright failure to finish.

This "mismatch" effect is not speculation. Decades of evidence, including what happened in California after Proposition 209 banned racial preferences, show that Black and Hispanic students often succeeded at higher rates when admitted to schools where their academic preparation matched



Students walk the campus of the University of California, Davis. A controversial admissions scoring system used by the UC Davis School of Medicine has reignited debate over whether "race-neutral" policies can mask race-conscious decision-making in higher education. (Courtesy Photo)

the pace of their peers. Lowering the bar does not raise people up; it simply moves the finish line and leaves many still short of real competence. It hurts the students who struggle, the patients who deserve highly skilled doctors, and the profession's overall standards.

There is also the subtler cost of stigma. Talented students who would have earned their place on merit find their achievements clouded by doubt—both from others and, sometimes, from themselves. The soft bigotry of lowered expectations is still bigotry, and it carries a human price.

Medicine is not a demographic balancing act.

Patients of every background deserve doctors chosen for knowledge and skill. Real, lasting diversity comes from preparing underrepresented students to compete successfully at the highest levels—not from lowering standards to manufacture the desired mix. UC Davis's own documents and public statements have made the DOJ's job easier: intent was never truly hidden. Good intentions remain no substitute for clear thinking about consequences. True progress requires raising preparation long before students reach medical school—not inventing new ways to pretend the gaps do not exist.

Our Urban Hospitals Are at Risk. Billionaire Tax Cuts Are to Blame

By Debru Carthan

Special to California Black Media Partners

As a frontline healthcare worker, I know what happens when hospitals are stretched too thin: people wait for hours in crowded emergency rooms, nurses try to care for too many patients at once, families delay treatment because they're afraid of the bill. In many Black and working-class neighborhoods, this isn't a temporary crisis, it's a daily reality, and without intervention, it's about to get much, much worse.

The federal budget enacted by President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans cuts \$100 billion from California healthcare to pay for enormous tax cuts for billionaires. Now, hospitals that already operate on razor-thin margins are being told to absorb devastating losses so that California's richest 200 billionaires can continue to avoid paying their fair share.

A recent analysis by Public Citizen identified 83 California hospitals at heightened risk of closure, layoffs, or service cuts because of the new federal funding cuts — the highest number of any state in the country. Many are urban safety-net hospitals that primarily serve Black, working-class patients in communities where people already struggle to access care.

Facilities like Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital in South Los Angeles, East Los Angeles Doctors Hospital, Hollywood Presbyterian, and PIH Good Samaritan are lifelines for patients who rely on Medi-Cal, emergency rooms, trauma services, and public healthcare systems, and they're all at-risk of closing because California's billionaires

pay much lower tax rates than working people pay out of every paycheck.

That's why healthcare workers are supporting a modest, one-time tax on billionaires that will prevent hospital closures and ensure that the state's billionaires finally pay their fair share.

Black Californians already face higher rates of hypertension, maternal mortality, asthma, stroke, and preventable emergency room visits. Structural inequality has created enormous gaps in health outcomes, and cutting healthcare funding will only widen them. According to the Public Citizen analysis, hospitals at greatest risk from federal healthcare cuts disproportionately serve Black and Latino communities and higher-poverty areas.

Healthcare workers understand what happens when hospitals disappear. Ambulances travel farther. ER wait times explode. Patients delay care until small problems become life-threatening emergencies. Overcrowding increases burnout for nurses, technicians, respiratory therapists, and doctors who are already exhausted from years of understaffing.

And when city hospitals close, the damage spreads quickly. Community clinics lose referral partners. Trauma centers absorb impossible patient loads. Families without reliable transportation suddenly have to travel across counties for life-saving care, when every second matters. When these things happen, patients die unnecessarily. Families lose loved ones, and healthcare workers feel helpless.

Meanwhile, billionaires are doing fine. They continue benefiting from a tax system that allows their immense fortunes to grow largely untouched,

which is why California's billionaire tax proposal isn't just necessary, it's long overdue.

The idea is simple: if billionaires have accumulated extraordinary wealth while public systems collapse around us, they should contribute more to sustaining the society that made that wealth possible. A modest tax on extreme wealth could help stabilize hospitals, protect emergency services, preserve healthcare jobs, and keep care accessible for millions of Californians.

As healthcare workers, we're trained to recognize emergencies before they become catastrophes. California's hospital system is approaching that point right now. We can either act to protect the hospitals our communities depend on, or we can continue rewarding concentrated wealth while the hospitals and ERs we rely on close their doors forever.

This debate is ultimately about values. Do we believe billionaires deserve another tax break more than a child deserves an emergency room nearby? More than a mother deserves regular prenatal care and a maternity ward she can get to when she's in labor? Do we believe Wall Street portfolios matter more than if a grandmother can receive cancer treatment close to home?

Healthcare workers already know our answer. And this November, we hope you'll join us in voting our values by insisting billionaires finally pay their fair share.



Debru Carthan is a Radiologic Technologist at Kaiser in California.

Political

Political Playback:

California Capitol News You Might Have Missed



CLBC Concert at the Capitol June 17, 2026. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

Bo Tefu and Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

Sacramento: California Legislative Black Caucus Leads Capitol Juneteenth Celebration

To kick off the holiday weekend, the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) hosted its Juneteenth Freedom Day Celebration on June 17 on the West Steps of the State Capitol.

Alongside other lawmakers in the Legislature, hundreds of people gathered for the free community event, which focused on reflection, community, and African American heritage.

"Juneteenth is more than just a commemoration of the past," said CLBC chairperson Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego). "It's a celebration of Black excellence, Black joy, and ongoing pursuit of equality and opportunity for future generations."

The Juneteenth event featured live music from Oakland-born, Neo-Soul singer Goapele, Sacramento music producer and "NPR Tiny Desk" winner The Philharmonik, and the Grant Union High School Drumline.

Following the public concert, the celebration moved into the Capitol as the CLBC called on legislative colleagues to pass Senate Concurrent Resolution 183 (SCR183) to recognize the holiday officially.

The day after the public concert, CLBC members formally called on their legislative colleagues inside the Capitol to pass the resolution and officially recognize Juneteenth.

Assemblymembers and Senators delivered powerful remarks in honor of Juneteenth, with legislative leaders reflecting on emancipation and the ongoing pursuit of equality.

Juneteenth, a portmanteau that blends the words "June" and "Nineteenth," is a holiday commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States. It marks the day in 1865 when Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce that the Civil War had ended and that formerly enslaved people were free.

Black Freedom Fund Awards \$4.6 Million to Organizations Advancing Housing, Immigration and Economic Justice

Black Freedom Fund (BFF) has awarded \$4.6 million to 119 organizations across California, expanding support for nonprofits working on housing justice, immigration advocacy, economic equity and other community-driven initiatives.

The funding, announced as part of the organization's 2026 grantmaking cycle, will help community groups address immediate challenges while building long-term power in Black communities, according to BFF. The grants support organizations focused on keeping residents housed, protecting immigrant communities, increasing wages, expanding access to health care and improving educational outcomes.

The investment comes as philanthropic support for racial justice initiatives continues to decline nationwide. BFF said many community-

based organizations are facing growing financial uncertainty despite increasing demand for services and advocacy efforts.

This year's grantmaking round is the largest in the organization's history and reflects a strategy to broaden support across California while strengthening community-led organizations. The cohort includes 119 grantees statewide, with 24% receiving funding from BFF for the first time. The foundation also reported a 59% increase in funding for organizations in historically under-resourced regions, including Northern California, the Central Coast, the Inland Empire and the San Joaquin Valley.

In addition, funding for organizations focused on immigration justice increased by 140%, while support for housing and homelessness advocacy groups rose by 89% compared with previous grantmaking cycles.

"We believe it is more important than ever to invest in the organizations and leaders building lasting power in communities across California," said Marc Philpart, president and CEO of BFF. "This work is about helping build the conditions for Black communities to thrive; not only today, but for generations to come."

Fund leaders said the grants are intended to strengthen organizations rooted in the communities they serve and provide the resources needed to address both immediate concerns and long-term systemic challenges. Areas of focus include civic engagement, worker rights, health equity, criminal legal reform, housing stability and movement-building efforts.

Since its launch in 2020, BFF has awarded more than \$52 million to over 250 organizations throughout California. The organization said its latest investments are designed to help communities navigate current challenges while creating lasting opportunities for economic mobility, civic participation and community leadership across the state.

California's News "Career Passport" Program Aims to Connect Workers to In-Demand Jobs

California is launching a pilot program for its new Career Passport, a digital tool designed to help workers connect with employers by highlighting their skills, training and work experience rather than relying solely on college degrees.

The pilot phase began June 17 and runs through Aug. 24 as the state evaluates four vendors competing to build the platform. Officials say the Career Passport will help qualified workers, including those without four-year degrees, gain access to in-demand jobs while making it easier for employers to identify talent.

The initiative is part of Gov. Gavin Newsom's Master Plan for Career Education and reflects California's broader effort to promote skills-based hiring. The digital tool will allow users to securely share verified records of their education, job training, military service, work experience and professional credentials with potential employers.

"We're working to connect qualified Californians to employment opportunities they may have otherwise been overlooked for," said Newsom. "California's Career Passport will be a win-win for our workforce, ensuring that relevant skills, credentials and real-world experience are recognized, and that capable workers are not being filtered out simply because they lack a four-year

degree."

State officials say the Career Passport will combine traditional academic records, such as high school and college transcripts, with skills and credentials earned outside the classroom. The approach, known as a Learning and Employment Record, is intended to give employers a more complete picture of an applicant's qualifications.

Labor and Workforce Development Agency Secretary Stewart Knox said the platform will help create stronger links between education and career opportunities.

"The Career Passport will create connected pathways that help workers and students gain the skills and opportunities they need to thrive," said Knox. "California is committed to ensuring every person has access to family sustaining careers by building a workforce system that starts with the realities of workers, no matter where they begin."

The program is being developed in partnership with the California Community Colleges system and will involve collaboration among state agencies, educational institutions, workforce organizations and employers.

Officials say the Career Passport builds on California's workforce development efforts, including registered apprenticeships and earn-and-learn programs.



The California Legislative Black Caucus hosted a free public Juneteenth celebration on the West Steps of the State Capitol on June 17, 2026. Shown from left are Asm. Corey Jackson (D-Moreno Valley), Asm. Mike Gipson (D-Carson), California Secretary of State Shirley Weber, and her grandson, Kadir Gakunga. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

A fiscal analysis prepared by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) and the Department of Finance found the proposal could produce annual savings for California trial courts ranging from millions to tens of millions of dollars. The savings would depend on how many motor vehicle accident lawsuits are filed and how quickly remaining cases are resolved.

The analysis also found the measure could increase Medi-Cal costs by millions to tens of millions of dollars annually because some accident victims may receive less compensation that would otherwise help offset health care expenses covered by the state program.

The initiative was submitted by proponents John Moffatt and Kurt R. Oneto. If certified later this month, the measure will appear before California voters in the November 2026 election.

Secretary of State Weber: Measure to Limit Automobile Accident Insurance Payouts Makes It to Nov. Ballot



Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego), left, and Asm. Mia Bonta (D-Alameda) await their introduction during the California Legislative Black Caucus Juneteenth Celebration at the State Capitol on June 17, 2026. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

California voters will have the opportunity to decide on a proposed constitutional amendment that would limit certain compensation and attorney fees in automobile accident cases after the measure qualified for the November 2026 ballot, Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber announced.

The initiative became eligible for the Nov. 3, 2026, General Election ballot on June 17 after supporters gathered enough valid signatures to meet state requirements. The measure is expected to be formally certified on June 25 unless it is withdrawn by its proponents before that date.

If approved by voters, the proposal would make several changes to how compensation is awarded in motor vehicle accident cases. Among its provisions, the measure would limit the fees attorneys can collect when representing accident victims on a contingency basis, requiring that victims retain at least 75% of any monetary recovery. The restriction would not apply to attorneys representing defendants.

The initiative would also increase the burden of proof for certain medical expenses claimed by accident victims and limit the amount that can be recovered for those costs. In addition, it would prohibit certain financial arrangements between attorneys and medical providers.

To qualify for the ballot, the measure needed 874,641 valid signatures, equal to 8% of the votes cast for governor in the 2022 election. According to the Secretary of State's Office, the initiative exceeded the threshold required to qualify through random sampling, a process that allows measures to advance if projected valid signatures surpass 110% of the required total.

"Nothing to Hide": Newsom and Wife Say They Are Not Worried About New Federal Gov Probe

California Governor Gavin Newsom said he and his wife, First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, have "nothing to hide" as they face what he described as a new federal investigation, accusing President Donald Trump of using government agencies to target political opponents and those closest to him.

Speaking in a video address, Newsom said federal agents have recently contacted family members, friends and former employees while seeking records connected to him and his associates. He argued the effort is politically motivated and tied to his outspoken criticism of Trump.

"In recent days, federal agents have knocked on the doors of family, friends and former employees, not because they found a crime, but because they're simply trying to find one," Newsom said.

The remarks mark a sharp escalation in the feud between the Democratic governor and the Republican president. Newsom contends that federal authorities are pursuing people in his orbit despite a lack of evidence of wrongdoing, while Trump and his allies have rejected accusations that investigations are politically driven.

Newsom said investigators could review any records they wished because "we have nothing to hide." He added, "Donald Trump picked the wrong target."

The governor reserved some of his strongest criticism for what he described as efforts to involve his wife in the probe. Calling her a dedicated public servant, Newsom said she had "done nothing wrong other than having the temerity to advocate for what she believes in."

In an emotional moment, Newsom addressed his wife directly.

"I love you, and I'm sorry he's doing this," he said. "You have not earned a single one of the indignities that he's trying to inflict on you and our children."

Newsom also accused Trump of profiting from the presidency and using the Justice Department to pursue political rivals. He claimed the administration has targeted a growing list of critics and said he was prepared to join them.

"One by one, anyone who has challenged Donald Trump has ended up on his hit list," Newsom said.

The governor concluded by vowing to continue speaking out against the president and rejecting any effort to silence him.

"Come after me," said Newsom. "I'm not going anywhere, and the country is watching."



R&B and neo-soul singer Goapele was the featured performer at the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) Juneteenth Freedom Celebration at the State Capitol on June 17, 2026. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



California Legislative Black Caucus members Asm. Isaac Bryan (D-Los Angeles), left, and Asm. Sade Elhauary (D-Los Angeles) discuss ACR 214, a legislative measure recognizing and celebrating Juneteenth in California, during a Juneteenth event at the State Capitol. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

Local

Bakersfield College Celebrates Juneteenth with 'Freedom, Family and Fellowship' Event

By Cecil Egbele

Contributing Writer | California Local News Fellow
Hundreds gathered at Bakersfield College on June 17 to commemorate Juneteenth, the holiday marking the end of slavery in the United States. Hosted by the Bakersfield College African American Initiatives, alongside the Kern County Black Chamber of Commerce and the NAACP, the free public event brought together a diverse cross-section of Kern County over a shared breakfast to honor a pivotal chapter in American history. Themed "Freedom, Family and Fellowship - Rooted in Connection, Kinship and Joy," the event featured speeches, performances, and reflections on the significance of June 19, 1865.

"Juneteenth is an important time to stop and reflect on how far we as a country have come, while recognizing the work still to be done," said Bakersfield College President Dr. Stacy Pfluger in her opening remarks. She emphasized that the pursuit of unity and true justice remains a continuous, collective journey. "It's never the wrong time to do what is right. Let's continue to strive together for unity and what is just."

Providing historical context, Keith Wolaridge, Associate Professor of Business Economics at Bakersfield College, traced the origins of Juneteenth. He reminded attendees that while President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, many enslaved African Americans in Texas did not learn they were free until June 19, 1865, when Union troops arrived in Galveston, enforced the Emancipation Proclamation and freed the last 250,000 enslaved African Americans.

Wolaridge said Juneteenth represents more than a historical milestone. It is a reminder that freedom often comes through perseverance and collective action. He described the holiday as a celebration of resilience and community-building rather than a commemoration of slavery.

"Juneteenth is not a celebration of slavery. It is a celebration of resilience over slavery," he told attendees. "It reminds us that progress often comes through perseverance, courage and the determination of people who refuse to surrender

their culture."

He also urged the audience to view Black history as an essential part of the American story. "Black history is American history," Wolaridge said, noting that African Americans have contributed to every sector of the nation, from agriculture and industry to science, government, education, and the arts.

The keynote address by Keith Curry, President and CEO, Compton College, focused on what he called "freedom dreams" – bold ideas aimed at improving opportunities for Black students and communities. Curry highlighted California's recent designation of Black-Serving Institutions, a recognition awarded to colleges demonstrating strong support for Black student success. Bakersfield College, he said, is among the institutions that have earned the designation.

Curry encouraged attendees not to measure their success solely through comparisons with other institutions.

"A lot of times we're not good enough for some people," Curry said. "Be proud of your accomplishments, but continue striving to be better."

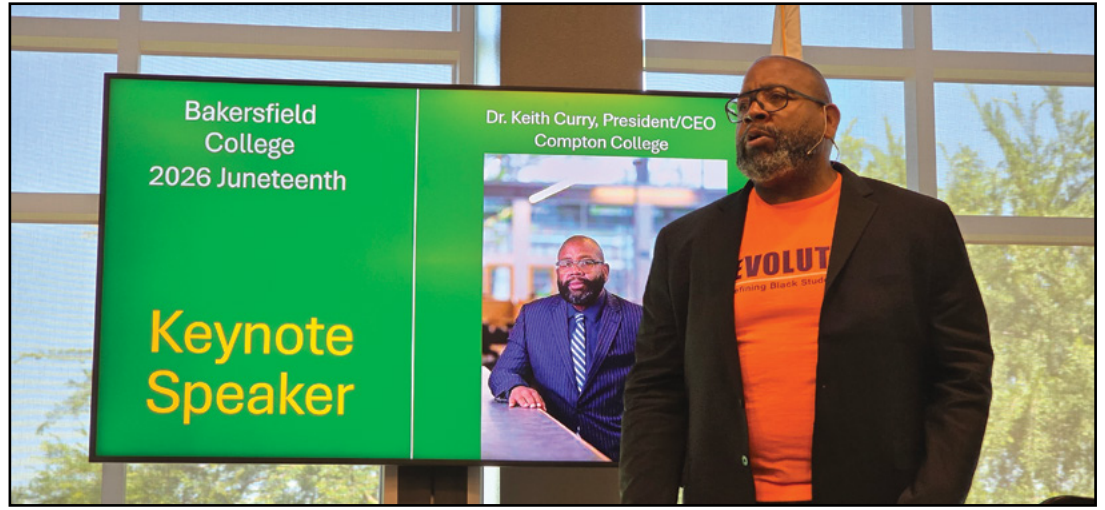
Throughout his speech, Curry returned to the event's themes of freedom, family, and fellowship. He challenged educators and community leaders to move beyond disagreements and focus on serving students.

He introduced a framework he calls "REAL LOVE," which emphasizes responsiveness, accountability, learning, community alignment, and the removal of barriers to student success. He argued that institutions must be willing to confront policies and systems that fail students and instead focus on measurable outcomes. "We have to be responsive. If systems, policies and structures are failing Black students, that's on us."

He challenged the notion that confronting difficult history weakens a nation, arguing instead that it takes courage and maturity. "Some may ask, why is Juneteenth important? The answer is simple: because history matters. A nation that understands its history gains wisdom, perspective, and strength."



Bakersfield College Juneteenth attendees gather for a group photo after participating in the event's "Juneteenth and Family Vibes" trivia activity. (Photo by Cecil Egbele)



Dr. Keith Curry, president and CEO of Compton College, delivers the keynote address at Bakersfield College's 2026 Juneteenth celebration. Curry spoke about educational equity, Black student success and the importance of understanding history. (Photo by Cecil Egbele)

Students engaged attendees in a Kahoot game featuring Juneteenth trivia.

Attendees expressed what Juneteenth meant to them personally. "For me, it means freedom for all," said Monique Johnson, a Bakersfield community member. "I plan to share the history and knowledge I learned with others."

Another resident, Jakell Davis, shared his takeaway from the day's event. "As Black people, I think it is imperative that we really understand what our ancestors had to go through to get us where we are today. It was really nice and a very humbling experience for me."

At the close of the event, organizers reminded attendees that Juneteenth is not merely a retrospective look at a delayed promise of the past, but an active, daily commitment to strengthening local kinship, advancing educational equity, and choosing to remember our shared history completely.



Keith Wolaridge, associate professor of business economics at Bakersfield College, addresses attendees during the college's Juneteenth celebration. Wolaridge spoke on the history of Juneteenth and described the holiday as a celebration of resilience, perseverance and community. (Photo by Cecil Egbele)



Community leaders, organizers and attendees gather during Bakersfield College's 2026 Juneteenth celebration, themed "Freedom, Family and Fellowship." The event brought together campus and community partners for a morning of reflection, history and connection. (Photo by Cecil Egbele)



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