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Tenn. State Rep. Justin Jones Visits Sacramento;

Gov. Newsom Calls Out "Stone-Cold Racism"

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

On May 7, Justin Jones, a Nashville lawmaker and Oakland native, set set fire to a paper replica of the Confederate flag in the Tennessee State Capitol rotunda to protest a Republican-led congressional redistricting plan passed during a special legislative session.

The Tennessee Legislature special session was held amid growing national outrage over voting rights and representation following the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that critics say further weakens protections under the Voting Rights Act and makes it more difficult to challenge racially discriminatory district maps.

A few days later, Jones, a graduate of Fisk University, a historically Black college and university (HBCU) in Nashville, was locked standing arm-in-arm, shoulder-to-shoulder with members of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) singing the civil rights movement anthem "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round" in the California State Capitol.

Jones, who represents Tennessee's 52nd District, returned to California to sound the alarm about how the maps alter the political balance by eliminating Tennessee's last remaining Democratic-leaning U.S. House seat. The plan also sliced up Memphis's majority-Black and Democratic population into three districts.

"The only way we defeat this new confederacy is with a united front of the United States. What happens in Tennessee is connected to what happens in California. What happens in the South is connected to what happens in Sacramento."

CLBC chair Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson (D-San Diego) and Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles) joined Assemblymembers Mia Bonta (D-Alameda), Sade Elhawary (D-Los Angeles), Mike Gipson (D-Carson), and Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood) at the event.

Assemblymembers Gail Pellerin (D-Santa Cruz), from the California Women's Caucus, and



Tennessee State Rep. Justin Jones, an Oakland native, visited the California State Capitol on May 13, to rally against partisan gerrymandering and what advocates describe as the rollback of minority voting rights across the South. Standing to his right are members of the California Legislative Black Caucus: Asm. Mike Gipson (D-Carson), Asm. Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), and Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles). CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

Chris Ward (D-San Diego), from the LGBTQ Legislative Caucus, stood in solidarity with the CLBC.

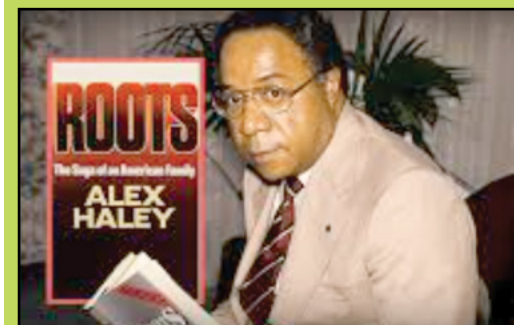
On May 14, the California State Assembly passed Assembly Joint Resolution (AJR) 31 with an

overwhelming bipartisan majority vote of 60-11. The legislation was referred to the Senate.

AJR 31, authored by Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (D-Ladera Heights) and co-authored by Bonta, calls on the U.S. Congress to enact legislation

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Pulitzer Prize Winning Alex Haley's 'Roots' Banned in Tennessee School District



Alex Haley

A Tennessee school district has banned "Roots," the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alex Haley that helped reshape how Americans understand the history of slavery and African American genealogy.

Knox County Schools confirmed the decision May 14, adding the 1976 book to its banned titles list under the state's Age-Appropriate Materials Act. As previously reported, the fight to keep Black history accessible in schools has intensified nationwide, with "Roots" and dozens of other titles by Black authors under sustained threat, and the erosion of Black educational representation has extended beyond books into university campuses as well. The Knox County Schools "Roots" ban was first confirmed by the Knoxville News Sentinel, which reported the book was among seven titles added to the district's banned list.

The decision brings the district's total number of banned titles to 124, up from 113 in May 2025. Tennessee's Age-Appropriate Materials Act broadly restricts school library materials containing nudity, sexual abuse, sexual content or what it classifies as "excessive violence." While books covered under the law can still be taught in classrooms, they cannot remain on library shelves. Complaints can be raised by staff, students, parents or any Tennessee resident under recently expanded legislation.

The irony of the ban is not lost on observers. Alex Haley was born in Ithaca, New York, but spent his early childhood in Henning, Tennessee, (where his mother was from) and maintained a farm in Clinton that was later acquired by the Children's Defense Fund. There is a large statue of Haley in East Knoxville, where he is celebrated as a hometown literary figure. His 1976 novel spent 22 weeks at number one on the New York Times bestseller list, sold tens of millions of copies, was adapted into a landmark television miniseries, and won both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award.

"Roots" follows multiple generations of an African family beginning with Kunta Kinte, a Mandinka warrior captured and sold into slavery in the American South in the 18th century. It was among the first widely read works to offer a detailed account of the Middle Passage, the transatlantic slave trade route that carried millions of enslaved Africans to the Americas between the 16th and 19th centuries.

Formally Homeless Black Teen from LA Graduates with 4.4 GPA, Accepted to 65 Colleges



Lamont Newell

Lamont Newell, an African American teen from Los Angeles, California, earned a full ride to Columbia University after years of housing instability. He was accepted to 65 colleges and will move to New York to study industrial engineering.

Newell is a senior at Verbum Dei Jesuit High School and graduated as valedictorian, holding a 4.4 GPA, standing out academically while balancing a difficult upbringing.

His childhood was marked by repeated homelessness. At times, his family slept in their car, moving often and facing unstable living conditions. He also grew up around gang violence and incarceration, which shaped much of his early environment.

"We've always been moving my whole entire life," Lamont told ABC News. "I couldn't give you an age where we were homeless because it was from a time span, but those were the main issues."

Even with those challenges, school became his steady ground. He credited after-school programs and extracurricular activities for helping him stay focused and consistent throughout high school.

His decision to apply to many colleges came from his family's history. His mother did not get the chance to attend the college she once hoped for, and he became the first male in his family to graduate high school.

"The main reason [I wanted to apply to so many schools] was my mom didn't get to go to the college she wanted to go. She didn't really get to apply as many as she wanted to. So my plan was ... to do the direct opposite," Lamont said.

That motivation helped push him toward a wide range of college applications, eventually leading to 65 acceptances and a full scholarship to Columbia University.

Now, he prepares to study industrial engineering in New York. He also says his long-term goal is to build an institution that helps Black students enter STEM careers and access opportunities in the field.

Newsom Pushes Fiscally Stable, Education

By Joe W. Bowers Jr.
California Black Media

Gov. Gavin Newsom presented the final May Revision of his administration on May 14, outlining a state budget proposal he says balances California's finances through 2027-28 while



Gov. Gavin Newsom delivers his final budget May 14, 2026 CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

preserving major investments in education, health care, behavioral health and housing programs.

During a presentation at the State Capitol, Newsom framed the proposal as a response to economic uncertainty, federal policy changes and long-term pressures on state spending.

"We're not just the fourth largest economy in the world," Newsom said, describing California as the "tentpole" of the U.S. economy while pointing to the state's \$4.1 trillion economy and leadership in innovation, manufacturing, agriculture and trade.

Newsom said California's strong economy continues to drive growth and investment but warned that federal Medicaid reductions and other policy changes are creating new fiscal pressures for California and other states.

The revised budget proposal totals about \$349 billion, including roughly \$248.3 billion from the General Fund.

The administration says revenues came in about \$16.5 billion higher than expected over the multiyear budget window, driven largely

by personal income tax collections tied to capital gains earnings.

Newsom and California Department of Finance Director Joe Stephanshaw said the improved revenues allowed the administration to eliminate projected deficits for the next two fiscal years while increasing reserves.

"This is a balanced budget structurally for the next 18 months after I'm gone," Newsom said during the presentation.

Stephanshaw later told reporters the May Revision reflects a multiyear balancing strategy rather than focusing only on the next fiscal year.

"It really is a conservative approach," Stephanshaw said.

The budget relies on spending reductions, fund shifts, reserve adjustments and new revenue proposals, including changes to corporate tax credit rules and expansion of sales taxes to some software products and services.

Education is one of the largest spending areas in the budget.

Under the proposal, Proposition 98 funding

Continued on page A2

Election Day Is Right Around the Corner. Here's How to Prepare

By Solomon O. Smith
California Black Media

Voters in California have two major elections coming up this year: the state primary election on June 2; and the midterm election on Nov. 3.

To help make sure eligible state residents understand the voting process, the state has created resources to inform the public.

Shirley N. Weber, California's Secretary of State and chief elections officer, has created a range of online tools to build confidence in the process.

"We are working to make sure that people can see what we do and so that people know that our voting is safe and secure. And that every registered voter has a right to vote in a safe place," said Weber in a conference on voting rights.

First Stop, Registration
On the Secretary of State's website, registerstovote.ca.gov, voter registration is a click away. Users can register, check the status of their registration or reregister. Online registrants will need a California driver's license, the last four digits of their social security number and date of birth.

There is also a pre-registration for California

residents 16 to 17 years old, which automatically registers them when they turn 18 years old.

People without access to a computer can use paper forms which can be found at local libraries, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), post offices and even some government buildings. For further help registering Californians can call the Election Division at (916)657-2166, the voter hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683) or fill out a help form online.

There is even a step-by-step guide. In California, the formally incarcerated are also eligible to vote, including those in jail awaiting trial, on probation or under supervision.

"Once you have finished serving your term, your right to vote is restored; however, you must register online at RegisterToVote.ca.gov or by filling out a paper voter registration card," reads the site.

The deadline for registering to vote by mail or online for the primary elections was May 18, but there is still a way to register. Same-day voter registration, or conditional voter registration, allows those who missed the deadline to receive a provisional ballot to vote on Election Day, June 2 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. The same materials for registration are required for provisional registration. The Secretary of State's website offers a list of county election offices and nearby vote centers.

Registered. Now What?
Filling out the ballot is the next step. Ballots were mailed to all registered California voters on May 4, but if a registered voter has not received a ballot, or needs a new one, they still have the option of provisional registration.

Weber's office also provides an online guide to voting which includes a voter's bill of rights, directions on how to get help and other information. The guide has 5 steps to getting the ballot in.

Complete your ballot, make sure it is clearly and completely marked. Seal it inside the ballot return envelope. Sign it.

Make sure you don't forget to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope to avoid delays in counting. Return it quickly. Do not wait. Turn in the ballot as soon as possible. For this step, the state and county have several solutions like early vote

centers which can collect the ballot and ballot drop-off boxes, which are faster than mail. If a person cannot mail or drop off their ballot, a trusted friend or family member can do so, as long as they are not compensated.

U.S. Postal Service delivery timelines may have changed, which may cause ballots to arrive too late to be counted. California Attorney General Rob Bonta addressed this in a joint statement with Weber.

"I want every Californian to have their vote counted, and the best way to make sure that happens is to vote early," said Bonta. "If you're mailing it that [Election] day, ask the post office for a postmark. Or better yet, use a secure drop box or vote center ahead of time."

Track It and Prepare for the Next Vote
The "where's my ballot" page lets voters see the status of ballots they completed. It can also send notifications to users about where their ballot is in the process.

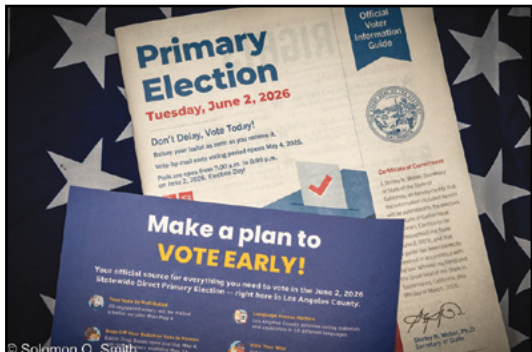
Although the California Secretary of State's office provides a wealth of information, it is not the only informing citizens about voting. Websites like Ballotpedia, or Vote.org also provide guides.

Local activist groups are also doing outreach to help people get through the process. Black Women for Wellness -- a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization focused on advancing the health, well-being, and empowerment of Black women and girls -- created a free pamphlet which covers how to register and voting in person.

It's the same process to register for the primary and the November midterm so preparing now is the best way to make sure your vote get counted.

Shelby Stephens, a voter who attended a Black Women for Wellness "Protect the Vote" voter education drive says these types of events clear up confusion about the ballot. She intends to share what she learned.

"If it wasn't important, they wouldn't try to get rid of it," said Stephens. "So I would just encourage everyone to vote, go through the process. It could be daunting. It could be a lot of things, but it's well worth it."



To prepare voters, the California Secretary of State mailed reminder cards and Voter Information Guides. The guides contain information on what is on the ballot and how to vote in the upcoming primary election. Saturday, May 18, 2026 Photo illustration by Solomon O. Smith/CBM

World & Nation

Thousands Celebrate Culture with 'Around the World Embassy Tour'

By Patricia McDougall
Special to the AFRO

On May 2 the 19th annual Around the World Embassy Tour was held in Washington, D.C., with over 69 Embassies welcoming over 50,000 people. The University District of Columbia (UDC), a historically Black institution, hosted several of the



Niqana Perry (left), Sophia Brown (center) and Frederick Fair, of The Nutmeg Alliance, participate in the tour festivities at the Grenadian Embassy. (AFRO Photo / Patricia McDougall)

embassies.

The Embassy Tour is one of the biggest events in D.C. with music, live performance, dancers,



Shown here, Belizean Ambassador Nestor Mendez (left); Dania Jolley, deputy chief of mission and cultural affairs for Events DC; Jan Du Plain, executive director of the Washington, Education and Cultural Attache Association, and Elvira Mendez (right), spouse of Ambassador Mendez. (AFRO Photo / Patricia McDougall)

singers, cultural food, vendors and more. People lined the streets to tour inside of the embassies. Each year, visitors come from all around the world to take part in the event.



Jessica Poomkudy (back, left) enjoys the embassy tour stop at University District of Columbia with Christina Chance (front, left), Israa Ajroudi (back center); Lizzy Jones (front center), Orissa Symmonett (back, right) and Logan Walker Back (front, right). (AFRO Photo / Patricia McDougall)



Shown here, Lucia Cherinda, deputy chief of mission for the embassy of the Republic of Mozambique, at the University District of Columbia (UDC) stop of the Around the World Embassy Tour on May 2. (AFRO Photo / Patricia McDougall)

Are We Really in the Same Boat? South Carolina Redistricting and the Limits of Coalition Politics

By Greer Marshall

BlackPressUSA Columnists

Rainbow coalitions have a history of leaking on Black folks. There are tons of stories behind that claim; that's probably not relevant right now, but I digress. In Southern politics, the Black electorate has been the engine of the Democratic Party for more than half a century. They've provided the votes, the grassroots infrastructure, and the moral authority that's kept the party alive. That said, at this point, they know when they're being asked to provide the labor for a coalition that doesn't prioritize them. So when Mayra Rivera-Vázquez, a Latina candidate, is running for Congress in South Carolina's 1st Congressional District as the state legislature carves up the only Black district in the state, the question isn't only if she's qualified. The first question is whether she's a legitimate option or, to be more direct, are we really in the same boat?

Eight days after the Supreme Court gutted Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act in Louisiana v. Callais, South Carolina Republicans are moving to trash the June 9 primary and push it to August so they can redraw the congressional map. Democracy is just too risky unless they can guarantee the outcome. Today, the South Carolina Senate is expected to vote on whether to authorize a special session for redistricting. President Trump says he will be "watching closely." The target is Jim Clyburn's 6th District. He holds the state's only Democratic seat and is the only Black representative from South Carolina since Reconstruction. This isn't the first time. In 2023, Republican lawmakers moved roughly 30,000 Black voters out of District 1 and

packed them into District 6 to hit a specific racial target. 17% of the Black vote, to be exact. A federal three-judge panel called it an unconstitutional racial gerrymander. The Supreme Court overturned that ruling in 2024, calling the motive partisan rather than racial, as if the two aren't the same thing in South Carolina. Now, the Callais ruling has given them permission to finish the job. The numbers are the only thing that matters in this story. Before redistricting, Black voters made up 21.4% of District 1. Today, 17.8%. Hispanic voters went from 7.9% to 8.2%. One group diminished with precision. The other was statistically consolidated. John Morgan, a Republican map consultant, testified before the House panel that the proposed map was drawn to deliver a 7-0 Republican sweep of the state's congressional delegation. If you don't believe me, he said that on the record. The cost of this latest maneuver, according to state Election Commission Director Conway Belangia, is at least \$2.2 million in taxpayer money. And that doesn't include county costs. It also renders the military ballots already in the mail dead on arrival. And that's where the public conversation starts telling on itself. The poetic hypocrisy is hard to miss in South Carolina politics. Nancy Mace, the Republican who held the seat Mayra Rivera-Vázquez is running for, wrote in a New York Times op-ed that women in her own party are stuck in "the token slots," claiming they are boxed in while the real power operates behind closed doors. But Mace backs the same anti-DEI crusade that South Carolina Republicans have used to dismiss Black achievement and the credentials of women of color as unearned. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, white women were

the largest beneficiaries of DEI initiatives. Mayra says to be taken seriously by state lawmakers, she practically has to carry her three advanced degrees like a permission slip at all times, "just because of the fact that I am Latina and a woman." District 1 in 2026 is a different beast from the one Mace first won. Mount Pleasant is 90% White with a median household income of \$124,000. Kiawah Island's median income exceeds \$213,000. The new math isn't designed to care for the deeply specific, land-related issues facing the Geechee-Gullah people in places like St. Helena, Wadmalaw, and Johns Island. This is the ghost map Mayra Rivera-Vázquez is running against—an algorithm engineered for the wealthy and for suburban developments, drawn to erase Black districts.

But here's where the coalition question gets uncomfortable. According to the US census, a significant portion of the Latino population in the Lowcountry identifies as white. A middle-class Latino family in Mount Pleasant has a fundamentally different relationship with this district than a Black family that was redistricted out of it. When a chunk of your coalition shares more economic interests with the people who drew the map than with the people who were erased by it, that ain't a coalition.

Mayra says she's not a politician. She's a lawyer, an economist, and the former chair of the Beaufort County Democratic Party, the first Latina to hold that position in South Carolina. She's spent 14 years in the Lowcountry. She stopped a rezoning effort for a golf course on Gullah Geechee land in Beaufort. She organized coalitions against a data center project near the ACE Basin. She's been in hearing rooms fighting for Black land before ever filing to



Mayra Rivera-Vázquez for Congress

run for anything. Mayra says she's drawn "lines in the sand" for working families in the Lowcountry. In fact, she is the only candidate in the District 1 race who can say to the families on St. Helena, "As former chair of the Beaufort County Democratic Party, while Nancy Mace was busy drawing you off the map, I was fighting to keep you in it." When I asked Mayra whether Black voters being displaced should trust a Latina candidate to carry their fight, she didn't dodge the question. "Being a Latina, I could not run for Congress without the fight the Black community in the '60s fought. They helped everyone get the right to vote," she said. "It's because of them that I am even a possibility." Mayra understands whose shoulders she's standing on and isn't pretending otherwise. Are we really in the same boat? I asked her that directly. "Only if we are rowing in the same direction."

Newsom Pushes Fiscally Stable, Education

Continued from page A1

for TK-14 education would rise to about \$127.1 billion, pushing total per-pupil funding to a record high of about \$27,700 when state, local and federal funding are combined.

The budget also includes a 4.31% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), a \$2.4 billion ongoing increase for special education, \$1 billion ongoing for community schools, literacy funding for reading coaches and specialists, and \$5 billion in flexible funding for teacher training and recruitment.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond praised the budget, saying the investments would strengthen literacy, special education, community schools and teacher recruitment.

"I am grateful to Governor Newsom for advancing a budget proposal that continues California's commitment to investing in our students, educators, and schools," said Thurmond.

EdVoice CEO Marshall Tuck also welcomed the education funding, particularly investments in literacy and educator support.

The California School Boards Association (CSBA) raised concerns about the state continuing to withhold roughly \$3.9 billion in Proposition 98 funding owed to schools.

"Unfortunately, the Governor's May Revise masks the underfunding of the Proposition 98 school funding guarantee," CSBA President Dr. Debra Schade said in a statement.

Medi-Cal spending is one of the state's largest fiscal pressures. The administration projects a \$4.2 billion Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program) shortfall in the current year, driven by rising enrollment, health care costs and federal policy changes stemming from H.R. 1, known as

the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act."

The budget proposes several Medi-Cal cost-control measures, including restoring asset tests for some recipients, stronger oversight of care services, and changes affecting some immigrant populations.

Federal changes could eventually reduce Medi-Cal enrollment by about 1.3 million Californians by 2029-30, according to administration projections.

The budget continues Newsom's homelessness strategy, including \$500 million for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program.

Newsom said California reduced unsheltered homelessness by about 9% in 2025 through programs such as Homekey and behavioral health reforms connected to Proposition 1, the 2024 voter-approved measure that expanded funding for mental health treatment facilities, housing and services for people experiencing homelessness.

The budget also includes funding for wildfire rebuilding assistance, affordable housing efforts, behavioral health programs, and workforce initiatives.

State Controller Malia Cohen said the revised budget reflects stronger-than-expected revenues but cautioned that California remains vulnerable to Wall Street volatility and continued dependence on high-income taxpayers.

The administration says the budget reduces projected future operating deficits by more than half compared to earlier forecasts.

The January budget projected a negative \$22 billion balance for 2027-28, while the May Revision now projects a positive balance for that year.

Republicans criticized the budget and

questioned whether the administration had fully resolved California's long-term structural budget issues.

Senate Republican Leader Brian Jones (R-San Diego) criticized the budget's approach to affordability and business costs, warning that it would "increase taxes on employers by \$5 billion in a move that will devastate our beleaguered business community."

Assemblymember David Tangipa (R-Fresno), vice chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, said the budget reflects "a pattern of deferred decision-making — kicking structural problems down the road for the next governor and legislature to inherit."

Democratic legislative leaders generally supported the administration's framework while signaling that negotiations remain underway.

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Salinas) said lawmakers must "safeguard health care and food assistance, advance housing affordability, and manage every taxpayer dollar with discipline."

Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara) said the Senate remains focused on strengthening reserves while maintaining critical investments.

"We look forward to working with our partners in the Assembly and the Governor's Office to deliver an on-time budget that strengthens the fiscal foundation of the state," said Limón.

The Legislature now begins formal negotiations with the Governor's office to finalize the 2026-27 state budget. Under the California Constitution, lawmakers must pass a balanced budget by June 15 before the new fiscal year begins July 1.

Tenn. State Rep. Justin Jones Visits Sacramento;

Gov. Newsom Calls Out "Stone-Cold Racism"

Continued from page A1

that restores and strengthens the full protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

"For the first hundred years of California's existence, states across this country used poll taxes, literacy tests, and gerrymandering maps to keep Black and Brown people out of the ballot box," Bonta said. "The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was supposed to be the end of that here. On April 29, the Supreme Court decided it wasn't."

David Trujillo, the executive director of ACLU California Action, the legislative and advocacy arm of the ACLU in California, one of the speakers at the gathering, explained that the strategy to prevent Black people from voting has now taken a new form.

"Make no mistake, the forces that supported poll taxes and who beat Americans trying to register to vote in the last century are the same forces today celebrating voter ID laws and the dismantling of Section 2 of the Civil Rights Act," said Trujillo. "Their tactics have changed, but their racist goals remain the same."

Jones noted that his grandparents fled Jim Crow laws in the South and relocated to Oakland,

which Bonta represents. He grew up Hercules, a town in Contra Costa County on the East Bay.

Jones told California Black Media (CBM) that the changing of maps directly affects constituents in his Nashville district by changing which U.S. Congressperson represents them in Washington, D.C.

At his May Budget Revision presentation on May 14, Gov. Gavin Newsom described to CBM that Republican-led redistricting efforts across the country, particularly those that eliminate majority-Black districts, as "Jim Crow 2.0" and "stone-cold racism."

Newsom denounced the Supreme Court's Louisiana v. Callais decision, specifically condemning Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry for his recent moves to eliminate Black representation in the state.

"I'm sick. Stone cold racism at a scale I never thought I would see in my life — Never has seen in my lifetime," Newsom told CBM during the Q&A portion of his presentation. "It's all bringing us back to a pre-1960s world. It's jaw-dropping what is happening."

Landry suspended the state's primary election after the Supreme Court's ruling. On May 14, the Louisiana State Senate passed a map, Senate Bill 121, 27-10, that eliminates the state's second majority-Black congressional district. The bill has advanced to the Louisiana House of Representatives.

Approximately 45,000 early and absentee ballots already cast in the congressional primary will be discarded, with Landry directing affected citizens to recast their votes in November, with runoffs, if necessary, set for Dec. 12.

In Tennessee, the Supreme Court's ruling paves the way for Tennessee Republicans to dismantle the state's only majority-Black congressional district in Memphis, which is 63% Black.

Jones said the Tennessee legislature "is not going to stop" at the state level. When the lawmakers reconvene in January, "they are coming after our state legislative districts next as they have at the federal level."

"What I want to be clear about is that we're seeing the largest Black political representation since the end of Reconstruction, and one-third of the Congressional Black Caucus can lose their seats as well as Black lawmakers in state houses," he said.

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Entertainment



LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA - FEBRUARY 06: (L-R) Aaron Pierre, Jennifer Hudson, Nick Kroll, Stephen Curry, Caleb McLaughlin, Gabrielle Union, Jelly Roll, Jennifer Lewis and Patton Oswalt attend the Los Angeles premiere of Columbia Pictures' and Sony Pictures Animation's "GOAT" at AMC Century City 15 on February 06, 2026 in Los Angeles, California. (Photo by Amy Sussman/Getty Images)

Steph Curry's Animated Hit 'GOAT' Lands on Netflix After Nearly \$200 Million Box Office Success

The animated comedy, produced by Curry's Unanimous Media, became one of 2026's highest-grossing animated films.

By ODAFE OGHEN

LOS ANGELES, CA — Steph Curry's animated basketball comedy "GOAT" is now available on Netflix. The film, which stars the voices of Caleb McLaughlin, Gabrielle Union, Jennifer Hudson and Jelly Roll, arrived on the platform May 14 after wrapping up a successful theatrical run.

As previously reported, Gabrielle Union and Curry were intentional about centering girls and women in the film's sports world, using the animated format to tell a story that rarely gets told

in mainstream sports movies, and McLaughlin had already flagged "GOAT" as his next major project as he reflected on the end of his decade-long run on "Stranger Things". Forbes reported that the "GOAT" Netflix debut comes after the film earned \$190.4 million worldwide, making it the third-highest-grossing animated film of 2026.

McLaughlin voices Will, a small goat who gets a chance to play roarball, a high-intensity, co-ed, full-contact sport dominated by the world's fastest and fiercest animals. Union voices his idol, a leopard

named Jett Fillmore who plays for the Vineland Thorns. The film was directed by Tyree Dillihay and produced by Sony Pictures Animation, the same studio behind the Spider-Man animated films.

The "GOAT" Netflix landing caps a strong theatrical performance. The film opened at No. 2 at the domestic box office over Valentine's Day weekend with \$27.2 million, then rallied in its second weekend to take the No. 1 spot with \$16.8 million. It closed its North American run on April 26 with \$103.3 million domestically and another

\$87.1 million internationally.

Curry produced the film through his Unanimous Media company and also has a voice role. Along with McLaughlin, Union, Hudson, Curry and Jelly Roll, additional cast members include David Harbour, Nicola Coughlan, Nick Kroll, Jenifer Lewis, Aaron Pierre, Patton Oswalt, among others.

Nicki Minaj Blames Barack Obama and Jay-Z for Her Support of President Trump

Nicki Minaj says her move toward President Donald Trump's politics comes from disappointment with Barack Obama and a long-running personal and professional conflict with Jay-Z. She links those experiences to her growing alignment with Trump-era political messaging and conservative voices.

Minaj has emerged as one of the most visible music figures to engage openly with Trump-aligned politics. She describes her shift as the result of personal experiences, online criticism, and a gradual break from expectations that entertainers should lean Democratic.

According to Time, she says her frustration with Obama played a major role in how her views evolved over time. She also points to her strained relationship with Jay-Z, arguing that industry power structures and career tensions shaped how she sees both politics and cultural influence in the United States.

Her political profile rises further after she faces intense backlash for comments about vaccines during the pandemic. During that period, she received public support from conservative activist Charlie Kirk, which increased her visibility in

right-leaning political spaces.

Minaj also deals with repeated swatting incidents at her home, which she describes as frightening and disruptive. She later seeks help from officials, including Gavin Newsom, and connects with Anna Paulina Luna, who assists her with security-related concerns.

As her public voice grows, Minaj becomes more active in political discussions on social media. She expresses support for voter ID laws and echoes claims made by Donald Trump about election integrity, placing herself closer to his political messaging.

Her alignment with Trump becomes more visible through public interactions and endorsements within his wider political circle. Supporters of Trump point to her as an example of how celebrity influence can reach younger and more diverse audiences.

Minaj says her stance comes from personal conviction rather than pressure. She argues that many celebrities share similar views but avoid speaking publicly, and she presents herself as part of a wider cultural shift in entertainment and politics.



Nicki Minaj and President Trump

Byron Allen to Become CEO of BuzzFeed with \$120M Majority Investment Deal Through Allen Family Digital

The move with BuzzFeed is one of many major transitions for Allen this year, as his 'Comics Unleashed' series will take over the time slot previously held by 'The Late Show With Stephen Colbert' on CBS later this month.

By Brandon Caldwell

Byron Allen, Byron Allen Buzzfeed, Byron Allen Family Office, Allen Family Digital, Buzzfeed

On Monday, the digital media brand announced it had entered into a transaction agreement with Allen Family Digital, LLC, an affiliate of Allen's family office, under which Buzzfeed would accept a majority investment valued at \$120 million. Allen will succeed Buzzfeed founder and CEO Jonah Peretti as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, while Peretti will shift to a newly created role as President of Buzzfeed AI upon the deal's closing.

"Byron Allen has built one of the world's largest media companies and is one of the most accomplished media entrepreneurs in the industry, having spent 30-plus years transforming distribution infrastructure, identifying strategic assets, and frastrating them into something much greater," Peretti said in a statement. "Byron's vision, operational experience, and long-term commitment to premium content makes him exceptionally well-positioned to lead Buzzfeed and HuffPost into our next phase of growth. And personally, I'm thrilled

Byron is taking over "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert's" time slot, and highly confident that his relationships with talent will bring some incredible stars to the BuzzFeed platform."



Byron Allen attends the 29th Annual UCLA Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation's "Taste For A Cure" honoring George Cheeks at the Fox Studio Lot on May 01, 2026 in Los Angeles, California. (Photo by Tommaso Boddi/Getty Images for UCLA Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation)

With Allen's arrival, BuzzFeed Studios, which features vertical micro-drama series, animation, digital video and a premium studio that includes feature films, will be an independent entity along with Tasty.

Peretti has served as BuzzFeed's CEO since the company's inception in 2006.

"Jonah is a great visionary and has done a phenomenal job. BuzzFeed and HuffPost have become two iconic global digital media brands with powerful audience reach and strong cultural importance," Allen said. "Our vision is to build on the iconic foundation of BuzzFeed and HuffPost by expanding into free-streaming video, audio and user-generated content. As of this moment, with the power of AI, BuzzFeed is officially chasing YouTube to become another premiere free video streaming service."

Allen is the founder and chairman of Allen Media Group, which is based in Los Angeles. He owns 13 ABC, CBS and NBC network affiliate broadcast television stations in 11 U.S. markets and 10 HD television networks serving nearly

275 million subscribers (including The Weather Channel, Pets.tv, Comedy.tv, Recipe.tv, Cars.tv, ES.tv, MyDestination.tv, JusticeCentral.tv, theGrio and HBCU GO).

Later this month, Allen's two-hour comedy block on CBS will begin. His longtime series "Comics Unleashed" will move up to the 11:35 PM EST timeslot previously held by "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" on CBS. After "Comics Unleashed," another Allen-owned property, "Funny You Should Ask," will air right after. The deal for both shows will last through the 2026-27 television season.

"After 20 years as CEO of BuzzFeed, I'm excited to switch my focus to a more hands-on role developing products and technology that are only possible because of recent advances in AI. I'm convinced that AI will fundamentally transform the media industry and empower creative people to build in new ways, and I believe the opportunity is enormous," Peretti said.

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026 085130
 Doing business as:
WITHFOUND / FOUND COLLECTIVE
 at 8605 SANTA MONICA BLVD #317595, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
KEYANNA REES INC at 8605 SANTA MONICA BLVD #317595, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069
 State of incorp. or org.: CA
 The business is conducted by: a Corporation
 SIGNED: **KEYANNA REES, CEO**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 04/2026
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: April 17, 2026
DEAN C. LOGAN
 Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: Savannah Rodriguez, 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 April 17, 2031

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Apr 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026 086374
 Doing business as:

AVVN UPHOLSTERY CLEANING at 437 Palm Dr Apt A, Glendale, CA 91202
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
YEVHENI AVDOSHYN at 437 Palm Dr Apt A, Glendale, CA 91202
 The business is conducted by: an individual
 SIGNED: **YEVHENI AVDOSHYN, Owner**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 02/2026
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: April 21, 2026
DEAN C. LOGAN
 Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: Lorena Valdez, 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 1, 2031

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Apr 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2026

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: Apr 30, May 7, 14, 21, 2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026 095969
 Doing business as:

STITCH & ROSE / JUST SAY YESSIE at 1809 E 57th Street, Long Beach, CA 90805
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
YESSENIA MELGAR at 1809 E 57th Street, Long Beach, CA 90805
 The business is conducted by: an individual
 SIGNED: **YESSENIA MELGAR, Owner**
 The registrant commenced to

transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 05/2021
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: May 1, 2026
DEAN C. LOGAN
 Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: Cortney Maffitt, 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 1, 2031

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: May 7, 14, 21, 28, 2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026 101547
 Doing business as:
INSTRUMENTS OF GLORY

SUPERVISED VISITATION SERVICES / CROSS FAMILY SUPERVISED VISITATION SERVICE PROVIDERS / HEAVENLY WONDERS CHILD SUPERVISION / INSTRUMENTS OF HIS GLORY SERVICES / UNLIMITED TOUCH at 407 N PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY #1070, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
NEPERTITI LAFONNE HAYNES at 407 N PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY #1070, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277
 The business is conducted by: an individual
 SIGNED: **NEPERTITI LAFONNE HAYNES, Owner**
 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 Los Angeles County on: May 7, 2026
DEAN C. LOGAN
 Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: Roslyee Guzman, 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 7, 2031

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: May 14, 21, 28, Jun 4, 2026

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE
 Lien Holder:
13911 CRENSHAW BLVD., HAWTHORNE, CA 90250
 Vehicle:
2021 DODGE
 Vin: 2C3CDZFJ9MH672120
 License #:
 Date of Sale: **05/25/2026**
LOS ANGELES BAY NEWS OBSERVER (E)
PUB: May 21, 2026

LIEN SALE

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE
 Lien Holder:
1969 FIRESTONE BLVD., LOS ANGELES, CA 90001
 Vehicle:
2022 DODGE
 Vin: 1C4RDJG1NC217264
 License #:
 Date of Sale: **06/04/2026**
LOS ANGELES BAY NEWS OBSERVER (E)
PUB: May 21, 2026

LIEN SALE

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE
 Lien Holder:
13911 CRENSHAW BLVD., HAWTHORNE, CA 90250
 Vehicle:
2021 FORD
 Vin: 1F6P8TD8M5152304
 License #:

LIEN SALE

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE
 Lien Holder:
13911 CRENSHAW BLVD., HAWTHORNE, CA 90250
 Vehicle:
2021 FORD
 Vin: 1F6P8TD8M5152304
 License #:

Date of Sale: **05/25/2026**
LOS ANGELES BAY NEWS OBSERVER (E)
PUB: May 21, 2026

LIEN SALE

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE
 Lien Holder:
1969 FIRESTONE BLVD., LOS ANGELES, CA 90001
 Vehicle:
2022 DODGE
 Vin: 1C4RDJG1NC217264
 License #:
 Date of Sale: **06/04/2026**
LOS ANGELES BAY NEWS OBSERVER (E)
PUB: May 21, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO: 2026 100123
 Doing business as:

RETAC & ASSOCIATES / ELMG & ASSOCIATES / CEC & ASSOCIATES at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715
 Mailing Address: same
 County: Los Angeles
 Full name of registrant(s):
STEPHEN D CARTER at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715
BEAU F CARTER at 15421 E GALE AVE UNIT 91144, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91715
 The business is conducted by: a

Joint Venture
 SIGNED: **STEPHEN D CARTER, General Partner**
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 05/2011
 This statement filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on: May 6, 2026
DEAN C. LOGAN
 Los Angeles County Clerk
 By: ISAUARA CORREA, 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 6, 2031

LOS ANGELES NEWS OBSERVER
PUB: May 21, 28, Jun 4, 11, 2026

Why Timeless Materials Still Influence Today's Remodeling Trends

By Amy Kang
 Remodeling trends influence your materials selection and the success of your home remodel. Options like hardwood flooring, natural stone countertops, and marble-inspired tile remain popular among homeowners looking to create spaces that feel both comfortable and stylish. These timeless materials also reduce the need for frequent updates, making them a cost-effective option in the long term. Today's homeowners aren't letting an uncertain economy stop them from improving their homes. In fact, nearly all (91%) say they'll proceed with their remodeling plans for 2026, per a recent U.S. Houzz report. Of homeowners planning to remodel, three in four (75%) expect to spend \$10,000 or more on their projects. As these individuals budget for home improvements, many are choosing materials that offer beauty, flexibility, and long-lasting value. This trend explains why classic materials remain the epicenter of modern home remodeling projects. What Makes Timeless Materials Dominate Remodeling Trends?

As the name suggests, timeless materials never fade away with the trends. Here's why:

- They are functional and durable
- They create a strong focal point
- They blend nicely with different design styles
- Timeless features not only offer a marriage of form and function. They also support both traditional and modern design styles. This flexibility gives homeowners confidence that their investment will still look stylish years later. Top examples of timeless home finishes include: Hardwood flooring

- Natural stone countertops
- Marble-inspired tile
- Brushed metal fixtures
- Neutral porcelain surfaces

Be the first to know about breaking news, articles, and updates. These materials also support enduring renovation trends because they are easier to maintain over time. Consider the use of Marble Look Tile in bathrooms and kitchens, for example. This material: Exudes the classic elegance of natural marble

- Requires little effort to clean and maintain
- Offers durable performance
- Additionally, it fits well within both minimalist and luxury design styles. Why Are Classic Design Materials So Valuable in Modern Homes?

Angi estimates that home remodel costs can range from \$19,000 to \$88,000 per square foot, depending on the room you're upgrading and the materials you choose. Since the total cost can add up quickly, many homeowners now prefer long-term value over fleeting trends.

Timeless materials often provide:

- Increased durability
- Timeless aesthetic appeal
- Greater design flexibility
- Higher resale value

Easier coordination with future updates
 For example, hardwood flooring can complement modern furniture, farmhouse décor, or industrial-style interiors. This ability to match changing preferences makes these materials practical choices for homeowners. How Does Traditional vs.

Modern Design Influence Remodeling Choices?

Traditional design is often seen as the opposite of modern design. Yet, many modern homeowners no longer choose one style over the other. Instead, they combine modern simplicity with timeless materials to create spaces that feel practical, balanced, and inviting.

Consider brick, for example. While it's usually associated with a more traditional style, it can be beautifully incorporated into modern living spaces to create a unique but unified look. In the same vein, large windows can be added to a traditional-style home to bring in as much natural lighting as possible into the interior space and make the space look and feel more modern. Why Are Neutral and Natural Finishes Growing in Popularity?

Many homeowners want to enjoy quiet luxury. Neutral and natural finishes can provide the subtle elegance needed to achieve it.

These finishes create a clean and calming environment, evoking a sense of authenticity and serenity in the room. They also allow homeowners to update furniture and décor without replacing major surfaces.

Some popular examples of natural-inspired finishes include:

- Warm beige tones
- Light oak textures
- Soft gray stone surfaces
- Matte ceramic finishes
- Cream colored porcelain tile

If you want to enjoy comfort and design flexibility, look no further than these finishes. Designers often recommend them because they help create an illusion of space in smaller rooms—that is, make rooms appear larger and brighter. In this era of green building practices, natural finishes also align with sustainability goals. Many eco-conscious homeowners now want products that last longer and reduce waste from constant remodeling. Hardwearing surfaces with timeless styling help meet this goal and save money by reducing the need for repairs and replacement. As homeowners continue seeking practical and attractive spaces, classic materials will likely remain the epicenter of tomorrow's remodeling trends. Frequently Asked Questions

Are Timeless Materials More Expensive?
 Classic design materials tend to have higher upfront costs than trendy modern alternatives. However, they often offer better long-term value because they maintain both function and appearance for many years.

These durable materials can reduce repair and replacement expenses over time, making them a smart long-term investment for renovating homeowners.

Why Do Designers Recommend Neutral Colors?

Warm neutral colors complement many lighting choices, furniture styles, and decorative accents. They also make rooms feel brighter and more airy. Today's designers recommend neutral color palettes because homeowners can refresh their spaces with small updates; no need for major



A modern kitchen featuring natural stone countertops and hardwood flooring.

renovations every few years.

Can Timeless Materials Work in Small Homes?
 Timeless elegance isn't reserved for expansive homes alone. You can use classic design materials to make your small house feel more open, organized, and luxurious.

Natural wood surfaces, marble-inspired tile, and soft stone finishes can create a clean appearance without making rooms feel cramped. Many homeowners use these materials to improve visual flow throughout compact spaces.

How Often Do Remodeling Trends Change?
 The frequency of design trends varies. Some design trends change every few years, especially paint colors and decorative accents. However, foundational materials like stone, wood, and porcelain tile tend to remain popular much longer.

These surfaces adapt well to many styles, which helps them stay relevant through changing design

cycles. What Rooms Benefit Most from Timeless Materials?

Rooms that experience frequent use and have moisture issues, such as kitchens and bathrooms, can benefit greatly from timeless materials.

Areas of the home that receive high traffic, like living rooms and hallways, can also benefit from durable flooring and natural finishes. Using timeless materials helps homeowners maintain an attractive, uniform appearance throughout the home.

Timeless Materials Exude Elegance That Never Goes Out of Fashion

Today's homeowners want improvements that remain attractive and functional long after remodeling trends shift. Timeless materials never fade away with the trends because they offer durability, flexibility, and lasting style. Natural textures, neutral finishes, and stone-inspired surfaces continue to meet (and exceed) those expectations.



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Political



California's "Big City Mayors" coalition traveled to Sacramento in March 2026 to lobby for \$1 billion in state homelessness funding — a 50% increase over the amount proposed in the governor's budget. From left are mayors Patricia Lock Dawson (Riverside), Rex Richardson (Long Beach), Barbara Lee (Oakland), and Matt Mahan (San José). CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



Gov. Gavin Newsom delivers his final budget May 14, 2026 CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

Homelessness Crisis Looms Large in Newsom's May Budget Revision

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2026–27 May budget revision includes \$500 million for the state's Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program, a reduction from the \$1 billion allocations provided in previous funding rounds.

During his May 14 May Revision presentation, Newsom defended the reduced allocation, telling California Black Media (CBM) that the funding "is not a cut" or "an entitlement."

"As a former mayor, I can assure you we never got any support. Not a dollar (to address homelessness)," Newsom shared with CBM. "This is one of dozen areas of support across the spectrum. The \$500 million is new money."

Established in 2019, HHAP is a state-funded block grant program that provides flexible funding to local governments to prevent and reduce homelessness. The funds support permanent housing construction, shelter operations, rental assistance, and wraparound services. Administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the program emphasizes regional coordination and evidence-based strategies to move unhoused Californians into permanent housing.

The proposed reduction comes as local leaders warn that scaling back HHAP funding could reverse progress made in reducing homelessness across the state.

Leaders from California's 13 largest cities, known as the "Big City Mayors Coalition," traveled to Sacramento in April to advocate for a permanent \$1 billion annual investment in the program.

Mayors including Rex Richardson of Long Beach, Barbara Lee of Oakland, Todd Gloria of San Diego, and Patricia Lock Dawson of Riverside argued that reduced state support could force thousands of people back onto the streets. According to the coalition, the funding decrease could eliminate as many as 6,000 shelter beds statewide and place up to 41,000 people currently housed or in temporary shelter at risk of returning to homelessness.

Lee said Black residents in Oakland are disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

"Oakland requires a racial equity approach at every single level of government through our programs that prevent homelessness and create more housing opportunities," Lee said. "I can't accomplish any of this without HHAP funding."

The HHAP reduction is part of Newsom's nearly \$350 billion proposed state budget, which seeks to address projected deficits by reducing or

restructuring several General Fund commitments before the governor leaves office at the end of the year.

Data from the 2024 California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (CASPEH) show that Black Californians account for about 6% of the state's population but represent roughly 28% to 32% of the unhoused population statewide. Conducted by the University of California, San Francisco Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, CASPEH is considered the largest representative study of homelessness in the United States since the 1990s.

The study concluded that the overrepresentation of Black Californians among the unhoused population is rooted in generations of anti-Black racism embedded in housing and economic policies.

Representatives from the California Budget and Policy Center say HHAP investments have delivered measurable results. According to the Sacramento-based nonprofit, early point-in-time count data show a 9% reduction in unsheltered homelessness in 2025, youth homelessness has declined 24% since 2019, and more than 90,000 Californians have secured permanent housing since 2023.

"But this progress hinges on sustained state

funding to continue upholding the solutions that have achieved these results," the Budget Center reported in February.

At the same time, scrutiny over the state's homelessness spending has intensified. In 2023, Republican lawmakers, including Sen. Roger Niello (R-Fair Oaks), Sen. Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R-Yucaipa), and Assemblymember Josh Hoover (R-Folsom), requested audits examining California's homelessness expenditures.

A California State Auditor report released in April 2024 found that the state spent approximately \$24 billion on homelessness programs over five years without adequately tracking outcomes or measuring effectiveness.

"Despite an exorbitant amount of dollars spent, the state's homeless population is not slowing down," Niello said in a statement. "These audit results are a wake-up call for a shift toward solutions that prioritize self-sufficiency and cost effectiveness."

Newsom told CBM at the budget presentation that reduced HHAP allocation reflects the expiration of one-time federal COVID-era funding and a broader shift toward stricter accountability standards based on a performance-based model for local governments receiving homelessness funds.

Political Playback:

California Capitol News You Might Have Missed



By Bo Tefu
California Black Media

New Initiative Would End California Open "Top Two" Primary System

A proposed California ballot initiative would eliminate the state's open primary election system and restore partisan primaries for congressional and statewide offices, reopening a long-running debate over voter choice and political representation.

The measure, titled "Undo the Top Two," was submitted to state officials by political consultant Steve Maviglio, who is requesting a circulating title and summary for the proposal. If approved by voters, the initiative would reverse election reforms adopted in 2010 that created California's current "top two" primary structure.

Under the existing system, all voters can choose any candidate in a primary election regardless of party affiliation. The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes advance to the general election, even if both belong to the same political party.

Supporters of the initiative argue the system has failed to achieve its original goals. In the proposal's findings section, backers said Californians were promised the open primary would reduce political division, limit the influence of special interests and encourage cooperation among elected officials.

"The experiment failed," the initiative states, arguing that political polarization has worsened in both Sacramento and Washington, D.C., while special interests continue to wield strong influence over elections and policymaking.

The proposal also argues that the current system limits voter choice by sometimes producing general elections featuring two candidates from the same political party. Supporters say that outcome can leave some voters without a candidate who reflects their political beliefs.

If enacted, the initiative would amend the California Constitution to remove language establishing the "top two" system. Political parties would once again be allowed to advance their highest-performing candidates from party primaries into the general election.

The effort comes as California prepares for another crowded statewide election cycle, including a highly competitive governor's race that has drawn dozens of candidates. Concerns that two Republicans could advance to the general election have renewed criticism of the current primary structure in the heavily Democratic state.

Critics of repealing the system have argued the open primary encourages broader participation and

produces more moderate candidates by allowing independents and crossover voters to participate in primary contests.

Maviglio previously served as communications director for former Gov. Gray Davis and managed the mayoral campaign of former Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson. The proposal must gather enough valid signatures before qualifying for a future statewide ballot.

What California Authorities Are Saying About the Hantavirus

California health officials say the public faces an extremely low risk from a recent Andes hantavirus outbreak linked to an international cruise ship, even as state and federal agencies continue monitoring exposed passengers.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced that California residents were aboard the MV Hondius cruise ship, where an outbreak of Andes hantavirus was identified. One passenger has returned to California and is being monitored by local public health officials, while another remained aboard the ship as of the agency's May 8 update.

State officials said they are coordinating closely with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), local health departments and international public health agencies as the situation develops.

"We understand that news of an unusual outbreak can be concerning," said Dr. Erica Pan, California's state public health officer and director of the California Department of Public Health. "At this time, local, state, national and global public health partners are working together to assess and care for people who may have been exposed and prevent spread of the virus."

Authorities emphasized that Andes hantavirus differs from more contagious respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19 and influenza.

According to CDPH, years of public health experience in South America have shown the virus rarely spreads between people and usually requires prolonged close contact with an infected individual.

Health officials said exposed passengers are undergoing daily symptom monitoring, including temperature checks and health assessments. As of May 8, officials reported there were no known ill passengers aboard the ship.

Hantaviruses are spread through contact with infected rodent saliva, urine or droppings and can lead to hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a rare but severe respiratory illness. Symptoms often begin with fever, headache, muscle aches and gastrointestinal problems before potentially progressing to life-threatening breathing complications.

According to CDPH, hantavirus pulmonary syndrome carries a fatality rate of roughly 30% to 40%, and there is currently no antiviral treatment. Medical experts say early supportive care is critical for survival.

California officials also said the state is supporting the national response through expanded laboratory testing. CDPH's Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory operates the nation's only validated public health PCR test capable of detecting multiple hantavirus strains, including the Andes virus connected to the cruise outbreak.

Authorities said they will continue monitoring the situation.

California State Library Releases Housing Construction Tracker

The California State Library has released an updated interactive Housing Construction Tracker designed to give policymakers a clearer picture of where new housing is being built across the state and how development patterns have changed over time.

The tool, developed by the California Research Bureau (CRB), compiles parcel-level data to map residential construction across legislative districts from 2001 through 2024. Officials say the updated version expands the state's ability to analyze housing trends that have long been difficult to track in a consistent, statewide format.

Housing affordability remains one of California's most persistent policy challenges, with lawmakers introducing more than 1,000 housing-related bills since 2019, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures' Housing and Homelessness Legislation Database. Despite repeated legislative efforts, construction has continued to lag behind demand in many parts of the state.

The CRB notes that economic research consistently shows increased housing supply helps reduce costs at a regional level. However, California's housing production has not kept pace with states such as Texas and Florida, which have continued to add more housing units in recent years.

According to the updated tracker, California saw stronger housing growth in the early 2000s before construction sharply declined during the Great Recession. While production gradually recovered in the following decade, it has largely flattened since around 2018.

The data also highlights clear geographic disparities in where housing is being built. Inland regions, including parts of the Inland Empire, Central Valley, and Sacramento suburbs, account for a large share of new development. Coastal areas such as Los Angeles and the Bay Area continue to show comparatively lower levels of construction.

The tracker further shows that even during periods of growth, housing production has been uneven across legislative districts, with some areas consistently building far more units than others. Researchers say these differences reflect long-standing economic, geographic and regulatory factors that influence development decisions across the state.

The updated database includes nearly 2 million recently built parcels, representing more than 2.3 million housing units and millions of bedrooms statewide. It also allows users to break down construction trends by district and other geographic categories, offering a more detailed view of how California's housing landscape has evolved over the past two decades.

State Library officials say the goal of the tool is to support evidence-based policymaking by giving lawmakers and researchers better access to data as they continue working to address California's housing shortage and affordability crisis.

Gov Newsom Deploys \$760 Million to Tackle and

Prevent Homelessness in 11 Regions

California is deploying \$760 million in homelessness funding to local governments and regional agencies across the state, with Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration saying the investment is aimed at expanding shelter, housing, and prevention services in all eligible regions.

The funding is being distributed through the state's Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program, which supports coordinated regional responses to homelessness. Officials said 11 regions are receiving new allocations under the latest round, which continues a statewide effort to reduce unsheltered homelessness and expand long-term housing solutions.

According to the California Department of Housing and Community Development, the latest awards build on previous HHAP funding rounds that have collectively supported local strategies to move people off the streets and into housing. State officials said every eligible region has now received support under HHAP Round 6.

"We're pairing historic investments with real accountability and demanding results at every level of government," Gov. Gavin Newsom said in announcing the funding. "No one in California should be without a place to call home."

The administration said more than 100,000 Californians have transitioned from homelessness into permanent housing through HHAP-supported programs and related initiatives in recent years. Officials also reported a 9% decline in unsheltered homelessness statewide, which they described as the first notable drop in more than a decade.

HHAP is a multi-year grant program that provides funding to California counties, large cities, and Continuums of Care. The program supports a range of interventions, including emergency shelters, street outreach, rapid rehousing, rental assistance, and permanent supportive housing.

Officials said most participating regions are dedicating roughly 90% of their HHAP funds to permanent and interim housing solutions, reflecting a state push to prioritize long-term exits from homelessness over short-term interventions.

"The state continues to invest in local regions and partner with local governments to scale proven solutions that prevent and end homelessness," said Tomiquia Moss. She said the grants are helping expand access to housing and supportive services while strengthening local systems aimed at reducing homelessness.

The latest funding round includes a combined \$760 million in HHAP allocations, part of nearly \$5 billion in total program investments since its expansion.

State officials said recipients will be required to demonstrate measurable progress in reducing homelessness, with performance tracked through standardized state metrics. Funds must be fully spent by June 2029.

The announcement comes as California prepares for a seventh round of HHAP funding, which is expected to total \$500 million and expand accountability requirements tied to housing outcomes and local policy implementation.

Officials said the combined investments reflect a broader statewide strategy focused on increasing housing supply, strengthening behavioral health services, and accelerating efforts to move people out of encampments and into stable housing.

Features

He Saw Us. He Heard Us. Why the California Black Women's Collective PAC Endorses Tom Steyer for Governor

By Kellie Todd Griffin

California Black Women's Collective PAC

Every election cycle, the routine is the same. Candidates show up at our churches, our sorority events, our community forums. They say our name. They tell us they see us. They tell us they need us.

And then they govern like they forgot we existed.

Black women in California are the most reliable voting bloc in the Democratic Party. We are the cultural and economic engine of communities across this state. We are mothers, caregivers, business owners, organizers, and the keepers of our families' histories. And we are tired of being courted in campaign season and forgotten in governing season.

That is exactly why the California Black Women's Collective PAC's endorsement process for the 2026 Governor's race was different.

Before we sat down with a single candidate, we sent each of them a briefing memo grounded in our research. Data on Black women's wages. Data on maternal health. Data on housing instability, caregiving burdens, criminal justice exposure, business ownership, and political representation. We did not want anyone walking into our interview room performing. We wanted to know who had done the reading. We wanted to know who could engage the data. We wanted to know who could speak to the lived realities behind the numbers.

Tom Steyer did the reading. And then some. He Engaged the Data. He Named the Realities.

When we asked Tom about the economic vulnerability of Black women in California, he did not deflect to generic uplift language. He spoke specifically. About the wage gap. About the maternal mortality crisis that disproportionately kills Black mothers. About the wealth chasm that leaves Black women with a fraction of the assets held by their white male counterparts.

He spoke about Black girls. About the pipeline failures in schools, in healthcare, in mental health systems, that shape their futures before they ever



Tom Steyer, a Democratic candidate for California governor. Photo courtesy of Tom Steyer for Governor campaign.

reach adulthood.

He referenced our data. He named our communities. He saw us.

That alone would have been notable. But let's be honest: endorsements are not built on a good interview. They are built on a record.

And Tom Steyer's record is one of the most substantial investments in economic mobility, civic engagement, and racial justice infrastructure of any candidate in this race.

In 2007, Tom Steyer and Kat Taylor founded Beneficial State Bank. Not as a profit play. As a community development financial institution explicitly designed to extend credit and capital to communities that traditional banking has historically locked out.

One hundred percent of the bank's economic rights are owned by nonprofit organizations. Profits are reinvested into the communities the bank serves, with at least 60% of its lending directed to low-to-moderate income communities.

Black women are among the fastest-growing groups of entrepreneurs in California. We are also among the most chronically underfunded. We know what predatory lending looks like, because we have lived under it. We also know what real capital access

looks like, because we have seen what happens when it appears.

Tom built an institution that does the second.

Through NextGen America, the organization Tom founded in 2013, he has spent more than a decade investing in voter engagement infrastructure. NextGen has registered more than 1.6 million young voters, with a deliberate focus on Black and Latino youth. In 2020 alone, NextGen reached more than 10.5 million young people and helped mobilize 4.7 million to the ballot box, contributing to the highest youth voter turnout in modern American history.

That kind of sustained investment matters.

Black political power is not built in the final days of a campaign. It is built year-round, in community, with consistent resources. Tom has put real money behind that proposition for more than a decade, long before it became politically convenient to do so.

Look at what Tom has actually done with his resources and his platform.

He led the campaign for Proposition 39, which closed a corporate tax loophole and has directed hundreds of millions of dollars into California schools and clean energy projects. Schools that serve our children.

He took on Big Tobacco to fund cancer research and prevent teen smoking. A public health fight that mattered directly to Black communities that the tobacco industry has targeted for generations.

He campaigned on forgiving certain categories of student loan debt, cracking down on predatory student loan servicers, and made a ten-year, \$125 billion investment in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) a centerpiece of his 2020 presidential platform. Because he understood that Black graduates carry disproportionately heavy debt loads. Because he understood that HBCUs are foundational to building Black professional and economic power.

And on reparations, the issue that exposes

which candidates are willing to walk through fire and which are not, Tom Steyer was unafraid.

In our interview he continued on his commitment to support reparations for the descendants of enslaved Blacks in California, which he committed to during his 2020 presidential race, when most Democratic candidates were tiptoeing around the question. He took political hits for it. He said it anyway.

California is at an inflection point. We are facing an affordability crisis, a housing crisis, a maternal health crisis, and a democracy under sustained federal assault. Black women and girls sit at the intersection of every one of these emergencies.

We do not need a governor who acknowledges that reality in a campaign speech. We need a governor who has spent years building the institutions, funding the organizing, and taking the unpopular positions that the moment requires.

Tom Steyer is not a perfect candidate. No candidate is. And we know there are things that we didn't agree with. But when our PAC evaluates a leader, we ask three questions: Have you done the work? Can you speak to our reality with specificity? Will you fight, on day one, for the policies that move Black women and girls from survival to power?

On all three questions, Tom Steyer earned this endorsement.

He saw us. He heard us. His record, his bank, his long-term investment in voter engagement, his unflinching support for reparations, his fight on student debt, his commitment to environmental justice, proves he understood what we were saying long before we walked into the room.

The California Black Women's Collective PAC is proud to endorse Tom Steyer for Governor of California.

We've done the work of holding this field accountable. Now it's time to hold the next administration accountable too.

We'll be watching. And we'll be voting for Tom Steyer.



When Life Gives Us Lemons, We Build Institutions

By Dawn Montgomery

BPUSA Contributor

Since January, I have been exploring and writing about school choice options in Atlanta, Mississippi, and Louisiana. I've focused specifically on schools committed to empowering Black students and families. Southern Lab was the first stop on this journey but the last story I decided to publish.

More than an outstanding example of school choice, the Southern University Lab School in Baton Rouge is proof of what Black communities can build when existing institutions shut them out. The question is not whether school choice can work for Black families. The question is why more HBCUs aren't building K-12 pathways of their own.

The day I arrived at the Southern University Laboratory School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the girls' varsity basketball team was on the verge of winning its third consecutive division championship. The hallways were filled with students, teachers, and staff. The atmosphere was spirited and, dare I say, loud. I'm from Mississippi, so I understand that type of carrying on. Game day is a time for celebration, and to NOT thank God for your school team on that day is surely a sin. By the end of that school visit, something very specific shifted in me. I could not immediately put

my finger on it. Then it "Dawned" on me. The Southern Lab School is a school choice option I had not considered. Their story is not only about legacy. It's also about fortifying Black institutions. In 1922, Jim Crow laws blocked Black student teachers from completing their classroom certification in segregated public schools. So, Dr. Joseph Samuel Clark, then president of Southern University, built a school on campus to train and certify them. He did not seek permission from the same state that righteously believed in locking them out. He simply solved the problem. The school has changed its name over the years, which is perhaps the least significant detail in its history. However, what does matter is that it has remained on an HBCU campus for more than a century. That fact alone shapes everything about what it is and what it can do. Connected to the College of Education, the Law Center, and the College of Science and Engineering, it functions as a school district within the Southern University system. Throughout the day, students move back and forth between the Lab School and the university, accumulating college credits before they graduate high school. I was told that roughly 33 percent of the staff and faculty are alumni. Among them is the principal, Nadia Seals, who arrived at the Lab School in middle school, attended Southern, did her student teaching there, and never really left. Herman

Brister, the school's director and a second-generation alum, put it this way: "You can come on this campus from pre-K to a PhD. Graduates return as teachers. Teachers' children become students." That means a four-year-old who enters the Lab School can be taught by alumni, coached by alumni, and mentored by people who once walked those same halls. Then she can cross the street to the university she's known since she could walk. Imagine that. All of that on an HBCU campus, constructed when the state wouldn't credential Black teachers. Continuity is the architecture. Brister said something else that stayed with me. He was talking about how the Lab School handles its high-level athletes. "Many times, students are taken advantage of because of their athletic ability. But we safeguard our kids. We've had some of the top players in the nation, but when they walk around campus, they're just a normal person. We don't treat them any differently. We make them feel normal." As a journalist who has spent more than a decade covering college and professional athletes, I have seen what happens to black high school athletes in environments where they are not protected. For Black children, especially those marked early as exceptional, normal can be protection. "We make them feel normal." Normal. That's the whole argument. There are more than a hundred historically Black colleges and universities

in the United States. Only a small number operate K-12 laboratory schools. Most don't. But most could. They have the campus. The community. The families who would trust an institution tied to their own university. What Dr. Clark did in 1922 wasn't just extraordinary—it was necessary. Is that really out of reach for Howard University, Spelman College, Morehouse College, Tuskegee University, or Jackson State? The moment our ancestors earned the opportunity to choose, we turned abandoned buildings into schools. They believed education was the currency that would fund Black futures. Southern has protected both its university and its Lab School for a century. That's the template. The more time I spent there, the clearer it became that Southern Lab wasn't waiting for the country or the state to decide whether Black education was worth defending. When I asked Brister whether he was concerned about DEI rollbacks, he flat-out said, "No." Just like his predecessors, his focus is on the mission. The Lab School exists because more than a century ago, a community understood something very important. Institutions shaped by the people they serve are the only ones that last. I love that part of our story. When life gives us lemons, we don't just make lemonade. We build institutions.

Democrats Don't Want to Protect the Black Vote. They Want to Own It

By Craig J. DeLuz

The Supreme Court has done something remarkable.

It has ruled that the Constitution means what it says. The Equal Protection Clause forbids racial discrimination. Apparently, this is controversial.

The court's decision striking down Louisiana's court-mandated congressional map has sent Democrats into theatrical fits of outrage. Chuck Schumer calls it a return to Jim Crow. Barack Obama says the court is abandoning its role in protecting minority rights. Kamala Harris warns of a grand conspiracy to suppress the Black vote.

But before accepting this narrative, it is worth asking a straightforward question: if Democrats are so deeply concerned about Black Americans, why does their concern so reliably align with their own electoral interests?

To understand what is actually at stake, one must be honest about history. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was not born from paranoia or partisan calculation. It was born from documented, systematic, legally enforced brutality against Black political participation across the Deep South. States deployed literacy tests designed to be failed. Poll taxes priced Black citizens out of the ballot box. Registrars turned away qualified Black applicants on technicalities invented on the spot. In some counties where Black residents constituted a majority, virtually none appeared on the voter rolls. Those who pressed the matter risked their livelihoods, their safety, and sometimes their lives. Selma was not a metaphor. It was a bridge, and the people beaten on it were trying to do nothing more than register to vote.

The Voting Rights Act was a necessary and just response to a genuine and documented emergency. It deserves to be honored. Which is precisely why it

deserves to be applied honestly, rather than stretched beyond recognition to serve ends its authors never intended.

Consider what the Louisiana court-ordered map actually looked like. To manufacture a second majority-Black congressional district, a court forced the state to draw a district stretching roughly 150 miles (from New Orleans to Shreveport) carving through the heart of the state to stitch together Black populations in communities more than a hundred miles apart. Geographic compactness, one of the fundamental standards for legitimate districting, was thrown out entirely. The goal was not coherent representation. The goal was racial arithmetic.

Justice Alito, writing for the majority, stated the principle plainly: Section Two of the Voting Rights Act was designed to enforce the Constitution, not collide with it. When courts force states to draw majority-minority districts, they are not fighting racial discrimination. They are mandating it. They are requiring the government to sort citizens by race and draw boundaries accordingly. The 15th Amendment forbids exactly that.

Democrats will not say this part out loud, but Hakeem Jeffries said the quiet part loud enough. His complaint about the decision was not primarily that Black voters would suffer. His complaint was numerical and nakedly partisan. By some estimates, he warned, this ruling could cost Democrats as many as 19 additional House seats. There it is.

The civil rights vision of the 1960s; equal treatment under the law regardless of race; had been quietly replaced by a political vision requiring racially proportional outcomes engineered by the government. This Supreme Court decision is a partial return to the original vision. The response from the Democratic establishment confirms this diagnosis perfectly. When you strip away the

rhetoric, what Democrats are arguing is this: Black voters tend to vote Democratic, Democratic seats are at risk, therefore any map that reduces Democratic seats is racist.

The facts on the ground make the "voter suppression" narrative increasingly difficult to sustain. Black voter turnout has exceeded White voter turnout in several of the last five presidential elections. More than 60 Black Americans currently serve in Congress, the overwhelming majority of them elected from districts where Whites and voters of other races constitute a significant share of the electorate.

Barack Obama won two presidential elections, winning 43% of White voters and 67% of Latino voters in 2008.

In Virginia's race for governor last year, the White candidate Abigail Spanberger won 90-93% of the Black vote in her Virginia contest, while the Black candidate Winsome Sears won 61% of the White vote in hers.

A country that systemically suppresses the Black vote does not produce these results.

The men and women who wrote and passed the Voting Rights Act were responding to conditions they could see with their own eyes: fire hoses, billy clubs, and registration offices that were open to White applicants and closed to Black ones. They built a law calibrated to that specific and documented emergency. The social landscape of 2026 is not the social landscape of 1965.

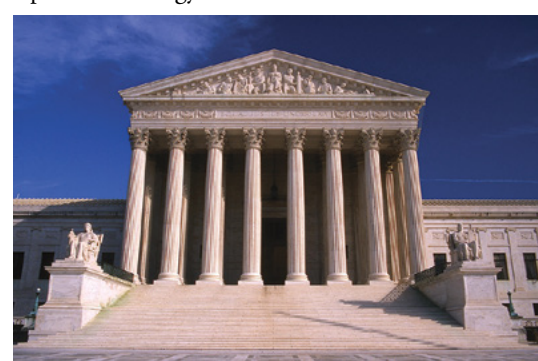
Republican Representative Wesley Hunt of Texas, when asked about the absence of Black Republicans in a new congressional term, gave the only answer consistent with genuine racial equality.

"I'm not here because I'm Black. I am here because I am qualified," he said. "That is the civil

rights ideal; a person judged by their competence and character, not sorted into political categories by the color of their skin.

Take California, for example, not a single Black lawmaker at the federal or state level represents a majority Black district. To remain electable, those Black officials have had to figure out how to create political platforms that appeal to a broad majority of voters in their districts – just as the Constitution imagined.

The men and women who crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge were fighting for the right to vote as free citizens, not the right to be assigned to a district based on their skin color by a federal court. There is a profound difference between protecting a vote and controlling it. One is a civil right. The other is a political strategy.



The U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C. The court has become central to national debates over the Voting Rights Act, race and congressional redistricting. Photo courtesy of Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Local

Farmers Market in the "City of Good Neighbors"

By Ricky Richardson
Contributing Writer

Hawthorne, CA- The City of Hawthorne has joined cities across the country to bring fresh, healthy food options to the "City of Good Neighbors."

The City of Hawthorne opened a weekly farmers market last month, on April 19, 2026. The popular market is held every Sunday from 9:00 am-2:00pm, at the Betty Ainsworth Sports Center parking lot (corner of El Segundo Blvd. and Doty Avenue).

Residents and guests have the opportunity to purchase farm-to-table fresh produce and shop with vendors offering artisan goods. The farmers' market allows residents to form meaningful connections with their neighbors and the community at large.

"Establishing a Certified Farmers Market is a significant step forward in our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for our residents," said City Manager Vontray Norris, in a written statement. "This market is more than just a place to shop--it's a weekly gathering space where neighbors can connect, and our local economy can thrive. We

can't wait to welcome everyone on Sundays!"

The farmers' market is important on various levels. It provides direct access to fresh, seasonal, and locally grown produce. The market will bolster food security and accessibility for all community members. This includes support for SNAP/EBT and WIC benefits through participating farmers, ensuring that nutritious options are available to every member of the Hawthorne community.

The Betty Ainsworth Sports Center parking lot was buzzing with excitement and contagious energy on Sunday, May 17, 2026. Word has spread throughout the "City of Good Neighbors" as residents and visitors realize that they no longer have to travel to surrounding cities to enjoy and partake in local farmers' markets.

"The farmers market has brought wonderful energy to Hawthorne, creating a space where neighbors can connect while supporting local businesses," said the Farmer Market Operator in a written statement. "Seeing families enjoy live music and residents engaging with local artisans is exactly the kind of community experience we strive to provide."

A steady flow of people strolled and shopped at the farmers market on this Gray Day, but otherwise, a beautiful day.

Alan Price, violinist, producer, and composer, provided an eclectic soundtrack on this particular day. This gives new meaning to "grubbing and grooving" on a lazy Sunday morning/early afternoon. The addition of live music elevated the atmosphere and established every Sunday as a community hub!

Residents and visitors to the market can look forward to a mix of offerings:

Farmers and growers: fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, honey, meat, poultry, and flowers. Prepared and packaged foods: an array of hot food, including pizza, Korean BBQ, tamales, and pupusas--alongside specialty breads, coffee, and prepackaged goods like hummus and dried fruits. Residents also enjoyed artisan and crafters: unique handmade goods from local creators.

Hawthorne Farmers Market attendees consisted of chefs from nearby restaurants, families picking up ingredients for evening dinner, or dinners throughout the week. The crowd also featured families picking up hot foods for a family outing in Memorial Park, as well as couples gathering items for a romantic picnic in the park. Members from local churches were also in attendance on this particular Sunday.

I stopped by each booth to chat briefly with the vendors. Mom's Kitchen, or Mom's Products and Brothers Products, sold a variety of tasty hummus.

There were many diverse cuisine options available for residents. Q Cute Bao-Dumplings, steamed buns, and Xiao Long Bao, to name a few.



Nikki Payton (Photo by Ricky Richardson)

Gochu Gang BBQ-awesome Korean BBQ, Imperio Gourmet Tamales (beef, chicken, or pork), Viva Mexican Foods- fresh guacamole, fresh salsas, corn chips, ceviche, and shrimp cocktails.

Alex Fruits and Nuts, Original Kettle Corn, and Linnie Bee Puff provided a great selection of original treats for multiple occasions.

People with a sweet tooth were able to get in on the action. Bread Love-Breads and Desserts, Cheesecake Labs, and Chaupain Artisan Bakery-fresh baked breads and pastries. They also served up French Kefir and cheese.

Hot and cold beverages were served by Zen Tea House, premium Loose Leaf Teas and Herbs, Summit Juice Co., and Del Cid Coffee.

Creative Artisans on site consisted of Peurr Soap Co-Body/Hair/Shave-premium Olive Oil & Goat Milk Soaps. Love Kenya Kids-imported women's apparel and accessories, and Handcrafted Pearl & Gem Jewelry-Handmade Tahitian & Freshwater Pearl Jewelry.

Farm to Table fresh produce and fruits were provided by Markowicz Eggs (Rhode Island eggs, Quail eggs, and duck eggs), Tulare County GFarm, Ayala Farms, Berumen Boys Farms, Scorpion Farms, Acevedo Farm, Bonta Farm, Great Day Farms, and Renzler Farms.

I'm thinking about expanding my writing horizon to include food critic. This will provide me an opportunity to visit local restaurants to sample their menu with ingredients that were locally sourced from the Hawthorne Farmers Market. Think also of the international cuisines that will be served during the upcoming FIFA World Cup Watch/Viewing Parties from ingredients sourced from the local farmers' market. Can we say "City of Good Neighbors" in unison?

As you can see, Hawthorne Farmers Market has something for everyone. Hawthorne is actively seeking local vendors to be a part of this exciting new venture. If you are a farmer, food producer, or artisan interested in joining the market, the City encourages you to apply at https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A-LocalFarmersMarket.com_vendor&d=DwIF-g&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=H87LzY2vqthYIOFokKtR2g&m=Rpzmw-JlsuNXh2tQCUD2cbVARz8GCSdk3dR_qUgGTTBiuXnnUZW8BWaT8PjGRuN&s=sQovv4EKc4zWcE4K3rP5N-OIEMyFiKfvdGncioXmkQ&c=-. You can reach out to Localfarm@gmail.com with questions. The Hawthorne Farmers Market is established under the Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce, serving as the Market operator. To ensure a high-quality

experience, the market will be managed by Local LA Farmer's Market in collaboration with the City. This partnership provides end-to-end support, from vendor recruitment and site logistics to marketing and financial management, allowing the market to grow sustainably alongside the community. Shout out to the above-mentioned partnership. Residents and visitors alike are thrilled to be able to shop at a local farmers' market, knowing that they are supporting local businesses and knowing exactly where their food is coming from. Community members are encouraged to mark their calendars for each Sunday going forward. It is important to stay in the know about the Hawthorne Farmers Market. Residents can subscribe to the City's email notifications through the City's homepage, and follow Hawthorne's social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Hawthorne Farmers Market is closed on Sunday, May 24th, for Memorial Day Weekend. The Market will reopen on Sunday, May 31, 2026.



Alan Price (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



Colorful Display of Fresh Fruits (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



Love Kenya Kids-Maathkare and Seeda, (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



BLACK CELEBRATION OF MEMORIAL DAY



Hi everybody!

Happy Memorial Day, especially to all the veterans out there! This American holiday is always observed on the last Monday of May. Memorial Day honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Like my father King Zusa, they bravely fought to protect the homeland.

BLACK HISTORY BEHIND MEMORIAL DAY

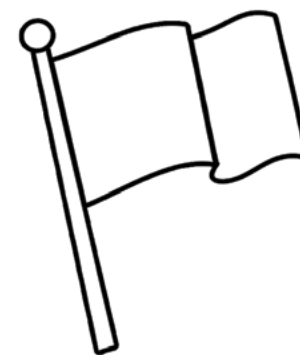


Today, Memorial Day honors veterans of all wars, but its roots began with the Civil War. It was originally called Decoration Day, which was founded in 1865 by a group of Black Americans who wanted to honor the soldiers that died in the Civil War. Three thousand Black school children carried bouquets of flowers, marched and sang that day. Members of the famous 54th Infantry Regiment and other Black Union Regiments attended the ceremony. The birth of the "First Decoration Day" was born. Americans began to see this holiday as not just one for Civil War Veterans but for veterans of all wars, so it was renamed "Memorial Day".

TELL THE TRUTH!

Print the letter T on the line if the statement is True or F if the Statement is False.

- ___ Memorial Day is always celebrated on the first Monday in May.
- ___ The First Decoration Day was later known as Memorial Day.
- ___ The 85th MA Infantry was the first Black American Union regiment.
- ___ Blacks celebrated the First Memorial Day in May 1865.



COLOR ME RED, WHITE AND BLUE!

WORD SCRAMBLE MEMORIAL DAY

The first letter is in bold.

- e**A**mrcai _____
- a**F**lg _____
- d**F**reom _____
- r**H**eeso _____
- ay**M** _____
- o**M**riemal _____

WAYS TO CELEBRATE MEMORIAL DAY

- Attend a Memorial Day event.
- Plan a family picnic to celebrate.
- Decorate the outside of your home with flags.
- Send a letter to families of fallen troops.
- Listen to the Hamilton soundtrack. The edited version is a great history lesson for all ages.
- Watch the movie "Glory".
- Color your own flag.
- Make a red, white and blue dessert.



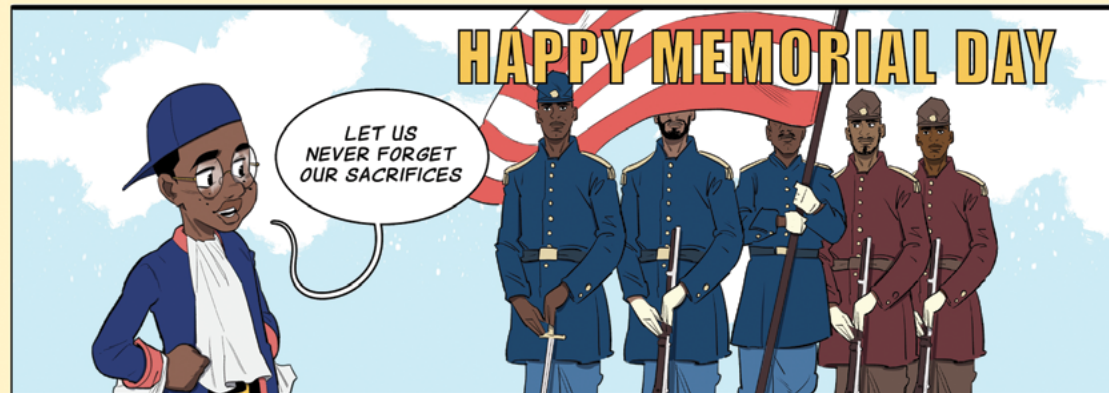
POPUP: DID YOU KNOW?

The 1989 movie "Glory" told the story of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry.



54TH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY REGIMENT

This regiment is famous for having fought in many battles as part of the Union Army during the American Civil War. The 54th, along with the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment, were organized in the northern states during the Civil War. The courage and sacrifice of the 54th Infantry is remembered and honored today. The most famous enlistees in the 54th were Charles and Lewis Douglass, two sons of the abolitionist Frederick Douglass.



ANSWER KEY

- WORD SCRAMBLE
- America
 - flag
 - freedom
 - heroes
 - May
 - memorial

TELL THE TRUTH!

- F
- T
- T
- T



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Dodgers Dominate Angels in Freeway Series Sweep



Shohei Ohtani has 5 RBIs and Dodgers take advantage of Angels' mistake

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

ANAHEIM — The Dodgers didn't just win the Freeway Series. They made a point. Over three games at Angel Stadium, the Dodgers outscored the Angels 31-3, controlling the series with power, pitching and pressure from start to finish. Los Angeles opened with a 6-0 shutout Friday, followed with a 15-2 rout Saturday and closed the weekend with a 10-1 win Sunday to complete the sweep. The most memorable moment came from Shohei Ohtani, who put on a show against his former team. Ohtani drove in a season-high five runs Saturday, going 2-for-4 with two walks and two runs scored

in the Dodgers' blowout win. In the eighth inning, Ohtani delivered one of the strangest highlights of the season. He ripped a ball down the right-field line that appeared headed out of play, but it hit the protective netting and bounced back onto the field. Angels right fielder Jo Adell raised his hands, thinking the ball was dead, but play continued. Ohtani never stopped running, scoring on what was officially ruled a two-run triple and an error. "I just kept running," Ohtani said through an interpreter after the game. The play turned into a "Little League home run" and became the signature moment of a series that belonged completely to the Dodgers. MLB's universal ground rules state that a ball

striking protective netting and rebounding onto the field remains live and in play, which is why the Angels' challenge did not overturn the call. Ohtani was not finished. In the ninth inning, he added a bases-loaded double, drawing "MVP" chants from the large group of Dodgers fans in attendance. The Dodgers' dominance started Friday, when eight pitchers combined on a two-hit shutout. Andy Pages and Max Muncy hit back-to-back home runs during a four-run fourth inning, and Teoscar Hernández added a two-run homer in the sixth. On Sunday, rookie pitcher Roki Sasaki helped close the sweep with the best start of his young major league career. Sasaki allowed one run on four hits over

seven innings, struck out eight and did not issue a walk. Ohtani and Pages each drove in two runs in the fourth inning as the Dodgers pulled away again. For the Angels, the weekend was another rough reminder of the gap between the two clubs. They managed only three runs across the series and could not slow a Dodgers lineup that looked comfortable, aggressive and locked in. For the Dodgers, the series offered a clear sign of momentum. Ohtani looked refreshed, the offense found its rhythm and the pitching staff delivered three complete performances. The Freeway Series may be a local rivalry, but this weekend, the Dodgers turned it into a statement.

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UCLA celebrates Megan Grant's (43) grand slam vs South Carolina Photo by: Mac Brown

Bruins' Big Bats Carry UCLA Into Super Regionals

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — It was a big weekend at Easton Stadium as the UCLA softball team powered its way through the NCAA Los Angeles Regional and earned another trip to the Super Regionals.

The No. 8 seed Bruins opened the tournament with a wild 12-11 comeback win over California Baptist, capped by Aleena Garcia's walk-off sacrifice fly in the bottom of the seventh inning. UCLA then followed with a 7-2 win over South Carolina to move into the regional final.

On Sunday afternoon, the Bruins left little doubt.

UCLA advanced to the NCAA Super Regional round with a 15-1, six-inning victory over South Carolina in the regional final. Senior Megan Grant hit a grand slam and drove in six runs, while senior pitcher Taylor Tinsley held the Gamecocks to two hits and one run in a complete-game performance.

The Bruins improved to 50-8 and continued to add to their record-setting power numbers. UCLA hit four more home runs Sunday, pushing its NCAA single-season record total to 193. Grant's grand slam was her NCAA-record 40th homer of the year, while Rylee Slimp, Kaniya Bragg and Soo-Jin Berry also went deep. Eight different Bruins homered at least once during the team's three regional games.

UCLA also recorded its 28th run-rule victory of the season, tying the program record set last year.

"I'm so proud of this team and their commitment to excellence, the standard, how they play for each other and with each other," said UCLA head coach Kelly Inouye-Perez. "Just some big-time moments from Bruins who have put a lot of work in. I'm very proud of Taylor's resilience; just the ability to do whatever she can to be able to help this team. She got stronger through the weekend. I'm proud of that; that's good news for us."

The Bruins will now host UCF in the Super Regionals, May 22-24, in a best-of-three series in Los Angeles. Game 1 is scheduled for Friday, May 22, at 6 p.m. PT on ESPNU. Game 2 is set for Saturday, May 23, at 6 p.m. PT on ESPN. A deciding third game, if needed, would be played Sunday.

UCF enters after winning the Tallahassee Regional, where the Knights upset No. 9 Florida State. Now the question is whether Grant can keep adding to her record-setting season — and whether UCLA's bats can stay hot at the most critical point of the year.

So far, the answer has been an emphatic yes. But the road only gets tougher as the Bruins continue their chase for the program's first national title since 2019.



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