



# Miami Herald

## Where should Wasserman Schultz run for Congress? Not here, Black Democrats say

BY CLAIRE HEDDLES  
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Gov. Ron DeSantis split up Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz's South Florida voters into five different districts in his newly approved maps, leaving her with complicated options as Black Democratic leaders and

candidates fight to keep her out of at least one of those districts.

Only two of the five districts her voters were split into favor a Democratic candidate — and both of those districts were created in 1992 under the Voting Rights Act to ensure Black voters could elect a candidate of their choice.

Rep. Frederica Wilson's district, the 24th Congressional District, was drawn to pack an even larger Black majority into the district in the new maps. But DeSantis' office intentionally broke up Black neighborhoods in District 20 as a justification for redraw-



Debbie Wasserman Schultz

ing surrounding districts in a way that favors Republicans.

Black candidates and party leaders in that district say a well-funded, white Democrat jumping into the race would work to further weaken Black political

power. Wasserman Schultz currently represents the 25th District.

"Why is she helping Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis take away Black representation?" Democratic candidate Elijah Manley said of the possibility that Wasserman Schultz could run in that district. "I don't expect our Democratic allies to

assist Republicans in wiping out Black seats."

Florida's new map came at the same time the Supreme Court weakened the Voting Rights Act, prompting a push across Southern states to redraw congressional districts in ways that both favor Republicans and eliminate districts long-held by Black representatives.

"In this time when Black representation specifically — in the South specifically, where we are — is under such brutal

SEE CONGRESS, 2A



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Amy Drinkhouse, president of Spirit Flight Attendants Union, speaks to former Spirit Airlines employees, who were recently left without jobs as the airline closed, outside of headquarters on May 4 in Dania Beach. 'We were a family,' said Drinkhouse. 'Even though that airline doesn't exist, AWA is still there for our flight attendants and any other employee that needs help.'

## How Spirit's collapse changed the economy — and lives. 'Back to ramen noodles'

BY VINOD SREEHARSHA  
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Like much of the world, Donald "Dean" Zoellers learned of Spirit Airlines' demise on the morning of May 2.

He was hit hard, certainly more than travelers who loved the Broward-based carrier's low prices or bright yellow planes. The 63-year-old grandfather of seven worked as a maintenance controller, managing airline maintenance technicians at Orlando International Airport.

He'd just put in a full week

of making sure planes were safe, and fixing those that weren't. And he was looking forward to the weekend at his home in St. Cloud, a city of just over 60,000 near Orlando. He previously worked for the company in Miramar.

Around 7 a.m., he read his emails and saw one from his long-time employer abruptly informing him that they'd eliminated his main source of income.

Something else ended for Zoellers and his wife that day: health insurance.

His wife, Lydia, 63, has Parkinson's disease and her



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View of deserted Spirit Airlines counters after the shutdown on May 2.

SEE SPIRIT, 6A

## What to know about the hantavirus strain that led to cruise ship outbreak

BY MICHELLE MARCHANTE  
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All eyes are on passengers of a cruise ship battling an outbreak of Andes virus, an infectious disease that has so far left three people dead and several others sick.

On Monday, a group of Americans on the ship were flown from the Canary Islands in Spain to Nebraska for monitoring, with at least two later flown to Atlanta for treatment. Their arrival comes just days after the U.S.'s top health agency issued a nationwide advisory urging doctors to be on the lookout, as a precaution, for potential "imported cases," while noting "the risk of broad spread to the United States is considered extremely unlikely at this time."

The infectious disease is commonly being referred to simply as "hantavirus," the family name for the Andes virus and other viruses that are primarily transmitted by contact with rodents.

The Andes virus, a species within the Orthohantavirus genus, is a rare disease known to cause severe, and often fatal, respiratory illness. So far, there are at least 11 reported cases linked to the Netherlands-based MV Hondius cruise ship and at least three deaths, according to CBS News.

As of now, there are no reported cases in Florida, which has not seen a confirmed hantavirus-related case in more than 30 years, according to data from the state health department.

No antiviral drugs or vaccines currently exist to prevent or reduce symptoms. But public health experts say this isn't like the early days of COVID, when cruise ships were ground zero for outbreaks and hospitals were overwhelmed with sick patients

SEE OUTBREAK, 2A

## Miami's sargassum problem is exploding. Is climate change to blame?

BY ASHLEY MIZNAZI  
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Sargassum is washing up on South Florida beaches in mountainous amounts, rotting into a gag-worthy mush. It's scaring away tourists, making swimmers itchy and costing millions to

clean up.

Scientists say the problem is getting worse. Blooms are growing larger and arriving earlier. This January, satellite images showed some of the largest masses of sargassum ever for that month, according to Chuanmin Hu of the University of South Florida, who pioneered

satellite tracking of sargassum using NASA data.

"What is scary to me as a scientist is, in the last two or three years, more and more historical records are being reached," Hu said. "At a certain time, I said, 'Well, this is a record.' Three months later, 'Well, this is another record.'"

So why the increase, and how much of this can be blamed on climate change?

"It's a tough question," said National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration researcher Joaquin Trinanes, who also tracks sargassum growth and

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Massiel Vadel-Pedraza, Abelardo Pedraza and their son Tyler walk through seaweed on South Beach on Thursday.

Epstein survivors testify in Palm Beach hearing, 8A

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14A



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