



Florida measure targets public sector unions

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Lawmaker seeking fluoride revival

Congresswoman touts the benefits of adding it

Anne Geggis
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

What Florida Man Gov. Ron DeSantis has done — making the state the second to outlaw the addition of fluoride to drinking water, Florida Woman Congresswoman Lois Frankel seeks to undo,

or get reconsidered. In recent legislation, Frankel is highlighting how the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently designated fluoridated public drinking water as one of the greatest health achievements in the 20th century that saves lives and money. The 180-degree turns might have your head spinning. Many adherents to the “Make American Healthy Again” movement, which

is adjacent to President Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again,” consider water fluoridation on the same level as COVID vaccine mandates — forced medication. But the Democrat from West Palm Beach’s congressional resolution seeks to remind Florida and the rest of the country that fluoridation of drinking water is still listed on the CDC’s website as one of “Ten Great Public Health Achievements — United States, 1900-

1999.” A year before Florida’s legislation forbade adding fluoride to drinking water, the CDC under then-President Joe Biden found that optimally fluoridated water saved \$6.5 billion in dental treatment, reaching a total of 144 million Americans. That’s a return on investment of \$20 for every \$1 spent, according to more material on the CDC
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Shrimp Festival Parade boasts floats, costumes



The 68th Annual Fort Myers Beach Shrimp Festival parade makes its way down Estero Boulevard on March 7. PHOTOS BY ANDREW WEST/FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS & NAPLES DAILY NEWS/USA TODAY NETWORK

Fort Myers Beach celebrates crustacean with all things pink

Charles Runnells and Andrew West
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

The floats, the costumes, the cheering fans. It was all to celebrate Fort Myers Beach’s most famous food — the tiny, tasty shrimp. The Fort Myers Beach Lions Club Shrimp Festival Parade did just that the morning of March 7 on Estero Boulevard. The approximately two-hour parade featured floats from island businesses, Queens Pageant “princesses,” law-enforcement vehicles and lots of people dressed in shrimp hats, shrimp shirts and shrimp costumes. The annual parade shines a spotlight on the island’s enduring shrimp industry, still recovering after taking a major hit from Hurricane Ian in 2022. Many parade organizers refer to the island’s delicious shrimp as “pink gold.” That juicy, delicious seafood gets pulled from the nearby Gulf and served on plates across Southwest Florida and the rest of the country too. Thousands of people lined Estero Boulevard for parade, part of the 68th annual Fort Myers Beach Lions Club Shrimp Festival. Proceeds from the festival benefit the Fort Myers Beach Lions Club’s various charities. For more details, visit fortmyersbeachshrimpfestival.com or facebook.com/ShrimpFestFMB. Charles Runnells covers arts and entertainment for



Spectators watch the Fort Myers Beach Shrimp Festival Parade, which is staged by the Fort Myers Beach Lions Club. The parade featured floats, “princesses,” law-enforcement vehicles and lots of people dressed in shrimp themes.

The News-Press and the Naples Daily News. To reach him, call 239-335-0368 or email crunnells@usatoday.com. Follow or message him on Facebook (@charles.runnells.7), Instagram (@crunnells1) and X (@CharlesRunnells). Please support local community journalism and stay informed about Southwest Florida news by subscribing to The News-Press and Naples Daily News. Download the free News-Press or Naples Daily News app, and sign up for daily briefing email newsletter, food & dining and growth & development newsletters.



People gather to support Mojtaba Khamenei, Iran’s new supreme leader, in Tehran, Iran, on March 9. MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY VIA REUTERS

Oil prices soar; Iran names leader

Pentagon identifies 7th service member killed

Thao Nguyen, Christopher Cann and Kim Hjelmgaard
USA TODAY

As the U.S.-Israel war with Iran entered its 10th day on March 9, oil prices soared over fears of a prolonged conflict, President Donald Trump demanded “unconditional surrender” and the Pentagon made public the name of the seventh U.S. service member to die in the conflict. Oil prices jumped above \$110 a barrel, reaching its highest prices since 2022 as fears grow over prolonged shipping disruptions due to war throughout the Middle East. Brent crude, the international benchmark, jumped to \$119.50 a barrel before retreating to around \$103. Trump called that “a small price to pay.” “Short term oil prices, which will drop rapidly when the destruction of the Iran nuclear threat is over, is a very small price to pay for U.S.A., and World, Safety and Peace,” Trump said in a social media post, adding, “ONLY FOOLS WOULD THINK DIFFERENTLY!” The increase in price comes as the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas typically passes, is virtually shut. It also occurred after Mojtaba Khamenei was named as his father Ali Khamenei’s successor as supreme leader, ignoring Trump’s warnings calling him an “unacceptable” choice. Ali Khamenei was killed in a targeted air strike on the first day of the war. Meanwhile, U.S. stock index futures
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