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Police union endorses Democrat

In rare move, Mann picks up support for state AG

Jason Alatidd
Topeka Capital-Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The state police union is making a rare endorsement of the Democrat in the Kansas attorney general's race. The Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police endorsed Democrat Chris Mann, who is challenging incumbent Republican Kris Kobach. The Mann endorsement, announced



Mann

Oct. 6, is the first time the state police union endorsed the Democrat in the race since the 2002 election. "As a former police officer turned prosecutor, Chris Mann has a deep understanding of the issues facing our law enforcement community, which we believe makes him uniquely equipped to serve as Kansas' next Attorney General," said Amanda Wood, president of the Kansas State Lodge FOP, in a statement. "Chris' commitment to public safety, support for law enforcement, and dedi-

cation to serving the people of Kansas makes him the ideal candidate. We believe his leadership will greatly benefit the people of Kansas, and our members were overwhelming in their support of his campaign." Mann's campaign touted that over the past year he "has met with dozens of chiefs of police, sheriffs, and law enforcement leaders across Kansas, learning more about the unique issues facing Kansas law enforcement and communities." The state FOP represents more than 4,300 sworn law enforcement officers. "I am honored to have earned the

Kansas State Lodge FOP's endorsement, and I look forward to working closely with them when I am in office," Mann said in a statement. "Kansas law enforcement deserves a strong partner in the Attorney General's office. As Attorney General, I will work with local and state law enforcement to make sure our communities are protected, and agencies receive the support they need to keep Kansans safe." Incumbent Kris Kobach has touted endorsements from several individual sheriffs — roughly half of the sheriffs in

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Next steps in Pike case are uncertain



Photographs are set up in memory of Colleen Slemmer, the woman Christa Pike was convicted of murdering in 1995, on Sept. 30, the day Pike was scheduled to be executed at a Tennessee prison. DENNY SIMMONS/NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

Inmate may face second execution attempt

Amanda Lee Myers
USA TODAY

With the astonishing news that Christa Pike is conscious, talking and making a "medically unprecedented" recovery following her botched execution, Tennessee is now facing a critical question: Will the state try to kill her again? "Against all odds, Christa Pike is conscious, speaking, and continues to receive critical medical care," her attorneys said in a statement on Oct. 6. "Her prognosis remains unclear but, at a minimum, we expect a long recovery." They said that despite "severe damage" to Pike's arms, "she is still handcuffed and shackled to the bed." "She survived two complete rounds of lethal injection per Tennessee's protocol, despite her attorneys' warning to the state of specific challenges



Tennessee death row inmate Christa Gail Pike was convicted of the murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer in 1995.
PROVIDED BY CHRISTA GAIL PIKE'S LEGAL TEAM

with her veins," her attorneys said. "She is the only person known to have survived a complete execution attempt in the U.S. Christa is a survivor and will take recovery one day at a time."

So far, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has not responded to repeated calls from Pike's attorneys and death penalty observers to commute her sentence to life in prison. That leaves open the possibility that Pike will face a second execution, even after her attorneys said the first attempt on Sept. 30 amounted to unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment. "We're in uncharted territory," said Robin Maher, executive director of the nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center, which does not take a stance on the death penalty. "The U.S. Supreme Court has not decided whether a second execution attempt would violate the constitution since 1947," Maher told USA TODAY. "These are questions that have never needed to be asked before and no one knows the answers."

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U.S. 30-year mortgage rate surges to 7.49%

Ann Saphir
REUTERS

The interest rate on the most common U.S. home loan jumped last week to its highest in almost three years, worsening affordability for buyers four weeks before elections that will decide if President Donald Trump's Republicans keep control of Congress. The average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage surged 19 basis points to 7.49% in the week ended Oct. 2, the Mortgage Bankers Association said on Oct. 7. It was last higher in November 2023. Mortgage rates are tied closely to the yield on U.S. 10-year Treasury notes, which earlier this week hit a 24-year high, driven by worries over inflationary pressures from soaring oil prices and data showing stronger economic growth. The cost of living is the top issue on Americans' minds as they decide how they will vote on Nov. 3, a Reuters/Ipsos poll completed on Oct. 5 showed, and is one reason why Trump's approval rating is at a record low of 32%. Home borrowing rates are up about 1.4 percentage points since joint U.S.-Israeli strikes against Iran began in late February, tracking a similar rise in the 10-year Treasury yield, which topped 5.3% on Oct. 5. Inflation is also on the rise, registering 3.4% in August by a measure that the Federal Reserve targets at 2%.

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MARCO BELLO/REUTERS FILE

