

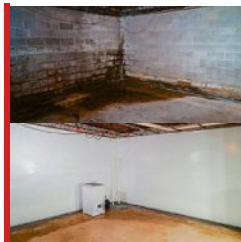
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The Gleaner

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ANALYSIS

The high cost of U.S. health care



GETTY IMAGES

U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it.

Complex system, competing interests barriers to lower prices

Patrick Aguilar Washington University in St. Louis | THE CONVERSATION

In announcing its “Great Healthcare Plan” in January, the Trump administration became the latest in a long history of efforts by the U.S. government to rein in the soaring cost of health care. • As a physician and professor studying the intersection of business and health, I know that the challenges in reforming the sprawling U.S. health care system are immense. That’s partly for political and even philosophical reasons.

But it also reflects a complex system fraught with competing interests – and the fact that patients, hospitals, health insurance companies and drug manufacturers change their behaviors in conflicting ways when faced with new rules.

Soaring costs

U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it – whether it’s their medications, a doctor’s visit, health insurance or an unpredictably costly medical emergency.

Disputes over health policy even played a central role in the federal government shutdown in fall 2025.

Trump’s health care framework outlines no specific policy actions, but it does establish priorities to address a number of longtime concerns, including prescription drug costs, price transparency, lowering insurance premiums and making health insurance companies generally more accountable.

Why have these challenges been so difficult to address?

See **HEALTH CARE**, Page 2A



When COVID-19 pandemic era Affordable Care Act subsidies expired on Jan. 1, about 1.4 million people dropped coverage, and for most who didn’t, premiums more than doubled.

ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

City and former fire chief settle civil lawsuit

Sarah Loesch

Evansville Courier & Press
 USA TODAY NETWORK

EVANSVILLE — The civil suit former Evansville Fire Department Chief Paul Anslinger filed against the city has been dismissed following a settlement between the parties, according to court records.

On April 1, Anslinger and the city filed a joint stipulation of dismissal with prejudice of all claims within the case originally filed last fall. Anslinger claimed the city owed him money from unpaid vacation time following his resignation.

Anslinger retired in 2024 shortly after receiving a formal notice of discipline from the city. He was later arrested and currently faces a criminal case in Vanderburgh County Circuit Court stemming from allegations of theft from EFD and official misconduct.

According to the filing for dismissal, the city and Anslinger reached a settlement agreement that fully resolves the civil suit. Vanderburgh County Superior Court Judge Mary Margaret Lloyd granted the dismissal officially the next day.

The terms of the settlement are not readily available via court records. The Courier & Press has filed a public records request for the settlement.

Evansville Mayor Stephanie Terry’s office said it had no comment on the matter at this time.

What did the civil suit ask for?

Anslinger was suing the city for unpaid earned wages and liquidated damages totaling more than \$30,000.

In the civil complaint, Anslinger stated the city owed him for 240 hours of accrued vacation time and 24 hours of PTO at a total of \$10,405.27. He also requested \$20,819.04 in liquidated damages under Indiana Code 22-2-5-2.

In the city’s response to the civil complaint, it denied there was any unpaid money due from earned vacation or personal days. The city denies Anslinger has any vacation payout available to him due to a provision in the collective bargaining agreement that the individual cannot leave the department in lieu of termination.

See **LAWSUIT**, Page 2A

Holiday World debuts Rubber Duck Days for families

Nida Tazeen

Evansville Courier & Press
 USA TODAY NETWORK

Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari has announced “Rubber Duck Days,” a new family-friendly event set to run June 8-21, 2026.

The event will feature the World’s Largest Rubber Duck, standing more

than 60 feet tall, as its centerpiece, according to a community announcement. The massive duck will be stationed in Splashin’ Safari throughout the two-week event. A smaller, 10-foot-tall rubber duck named Timmy will also be available for guest interactions and photos.

“Holiday World is all about fun and giving our Guests new things to quack about,” Lauren Crosby, the park’s director

of entertainment & events, said in the announcement. “We love to delight and surprise our Guests, and we think they’ll find Rubber Duck Days pretty unBILLievable!”

In addition to the duck-themed attractions, the event will include new food items and other surprises, according to the announcement.

Rubber Duck Days is included with

park admission. More information is available at HolidayWorld.com/duck.

This story was created by reporter Nida Tazeen, NTazeen@usatodayco.com, with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved in every step of the information gathering, review, editing and publishing process. Learn more at cm.usatoday.com/ethical-conduct.

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