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THE SUNDAY TOWN TALK

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ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE, LOUISIANA

AG confirms settlement in Greene incident

Ian Robinson
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill confirmed Wednesday that the state has reached a \$4.8 million settlement in the 2019 traffic stop death of Ronald Greene, the Black motorist who died in Louisiana State Police custody.



Greene was brutally beaten and died during a State Police arrest shortly after midnight May 10, 2019, following a two-parish, high-speed chase that ended in a car crash in Union Parish near Monroe. Greene originally failed to pull over for an unspecified traffic violation about 30 miles south of the Arkansas state line.

Greene's family filed a wrongful lawsuit death against State Police in May 2020, a year after his death.

Five officers were criminally charged in 2022 in connection to Greene's, but the case resulted in no jail time for them. Master Trooper Chris Hollingsworth, the sixth officer caught on bodycam footage stating he "beat the ever-living f- out of" Greene, died in a single-vehicle car crash on September 22, 2020.

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Senate kills bill protecting university faculty speech

Avery White
LSU Manship School News Service

BATON ROUGE — A bill to protect university faculty academic speech died in a Senate committee Tuesday.

The House bill authored by Rep. Chuck Owen, R-Rosepine, in its original form would have prohibited professors from receiving punishments for things said in the classroom or research topics. However, it was heavily watered down before advancing from the House floor.



The bill was kept in committee by Senate Judiciary A, on a 4-1 vote. "I'm very frustrated," Owen said.

As created, the bill provided protections and civil remedies for university staff who faced retributive action based on academic speech, allowing for punitive damages up to \$500,000 and fines up to \$100,000 against the university.

Owen testified he filed the bill because of cases of academics facing punitive actions for things said in class. He did not specify certain incidents, only saying he has seen faculty members sanctioned for espousing liberal or

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What is the fate of New Orleans?



The ATF and New Orleans Police Department SWAT team fly reconnaissance over flooded portions of New Orleans on Sept. 6, 2005. MANDI WRIGHT/USA TODAY NETWORK VIA IMAGN IMAGES

Study: City may be lost to the ocean by the year 2100

Presley Bo Tyler
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

A recent study published in the Nature Sustainability Journal has concluded that New Orleans has reached a "point of no return" and will be surrounded by the ocean in decades because of the climate crisis.

The new paper estimates that the city may be surrounded by the Gulf of Mexico before the end of the century because of rising sea levels, coastal erosion, global heating and strengthening hurricanes.

This means that low-lying southern Louisiana faces multiple threats, and that the process of relocating people from New Orleans should start immediately, says The Guardian.

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Will New Orleans be under water?

Southern Louisiana is facing the loss of three-quarters of remaining coastal wetlands, as well as three to seven meters of sea-level rise, which will cause the shoreline to migrate as much as 62 miles inland, stranding New Orleans and Baton Rouge, according to the recent study.

The state's shoreline is projected to move over 30 miles inland of New Orleans and, by 2070, it will lose about 75% of its remaining wetland. Eventually, all of coastal Louisiana will become uninhabitable, says Yale School of the Environment.

This situation makes the region the

most vulnerable coastal zone in the world, according to researchers, and requires action to transition people away from New Orleans, which has a population of about 360,000, to safer ground, The Guardian reported.

Louisiana has already experienced depopulation in recent years, as nearly all the state's coastal zone has lost residents since 2000, especially following major hurricanes. This means that climate-driven depopulation has already begun and may accelerate as sea-level rise increases the impact of future storm surges, according to Tulane University.

Despite depopulation and the

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When can Louisiana drivers scrape off 'hated' vehicle inspection stickers?

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana drivers will soon be free of the state's "hated" vehicle inspection sticker after the Senate approved a bill on May 13 to scrap the program.

House Bill 1085 by Republican Stonewall Rep. Larry Bagley has already cleared the House, where it will return for final passage.

Democratic Alexandria Sen. Jay Luneau presented Bagley's bill in the Senate, where it was approved on a 27-7 vote.

"It's time for a change," Luneau said Wednesday. "Our constituents want this change."

Final passage will end a seven-year quest by Bagley to end the program, which he has described as little more than a sham at many stations.

This year Bagley had the backing of Republican Gov. Jeff Landry to get the legislation across the finish line.

"This is probably one of the most hated things we do," Bagley said. "This has been a long time for me."

But this time Republican Gov. Jeff Landry is on board to help Bagley get the bill across the finish line.

Bagley credited Landry for making it a priority.

"The traditional vehicle inspection sticker process is annoying, it's inconvenient, it serves little value to the safety of our roads," Landry said March 9 during his State of the State speech delivered to open the Legislative Session. "I think it's time to retire the inspection sticker."

The bill will abolish the current program in favor of a QR code sticker that vehicle owners would pay for and receive in the mail when securing or renewing their registration.

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