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TURNING TO PLAN B



Max Bryan / The Detroit News

Oakland County Sheriff's Lt. Darrin Zehnpfennig listens at an Orion Township meeting Friday, where Supervisor Chris Barnett predicted savings to put toward police and fire would run out by June if millages aren't renewed.

Failed police, fire millages challenge area communities

BY MAX BRYAN
The Detroit News

Orion Township — A host of rejected public safety millages throughout southeast Michigan in last week's election have left communities scrambling to find money for services and meet the deadline to put new measures before voters in November.

Voters in at least six Metro Detroit townships — Brandon, Orion, Independence, Highland, Waterford and Sumpter — turned down police and fire millage renewals or increases. These decisions at the ballot have left the communities with the possibility of reduced —

and in some cases, eliminated — public safety services.

Several communities say they have no choice but to go back to voters in November and ask them again for support or they'll have to make severe cuts or even eliminate some services. Waterford and Orion townships hosted special meetings Friday, where they agreed to put millages back before the voters on the November ballot.

Sumpter Township in Wayne County plans to hold a special meeting at 6 p.m. Monday to consider ballot language. The city's police department has said that without a dedicated millage, it'd lose 40% of

its funding.

"Just to reiterate: if we don't do that (vote to put renewal measures on the ballot in November), we run out of money," said Orion Township Supervisor Chris Barnett at an emergency meeting Friday, who predicted the township would run out of savings to put toward police and fire by June next year if the millages aren't renewed.

But some residents are angry that local officials would go to the voters again in November. They say they've already answered and they've said no to more taxes.

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College tuition hikes in Mich. stir debate on cost cutting

State, education officials at odds on how to ease burden on students and families

BY SARAH ATWOOD
The Detroit News

Students and their families are looking at a higher sticker price for tuition this fall at all of Michigan's public colleges and universities, while the growth in state support is being reduced below inflation levels.

Several of the largest universities — Wayne State in Detroit, Western Michigan in Kalamazoo and Grand Valley State in Allendale — raised tuition 4%, the maximum amount permitted by the state Legislature. Michigan State University and Oakland University in Rochester went right up to that line and raised theirs for students by 3.99%.

"When will it end?" said state Rep. Tim Kelly, a Republican who represents Saginaw and chairs the House Subcommittee on School Aid.

"I think (the yearly tuition increase) is wrong. I don't see an end to it," Kelly said. "How do you satiate it? ... The more and more they ask for money, the more they put out an inferior product."

For decades, the state government and public colleges and universities have debated who is responsible for lowering the pressure of tuition on students and their families.

University and state education officials argued that yearly tuition increases are necessary because the state Legislature doesn't raise appropriations to universities in line with rising operating and employee health care costs. The Michigan Association of State Universities reported that since 2002, real state

Please see Colleges, Page 7A

Pressure from Trump, skeptical courts await Blanche as AG

BY JEREMY ROEBUCK
Washington Post

With his bruising confirmation battle behind him, Todd Blanche will soon be sworn-in as the Senate-backed head of the Justice Department.

But the hardest part may be what comes next.

Blanche, President Donald Trump's former criminal defense lawyer, will officially assume the title of attorney general and take command of an agency he has led on an acting basis since April.

But he will do so under competing pressures from a president intent on seeing his enemies put on trial, a federal judiciary increasingly skeptical of those efforts and a Republican-led Congress harboring growing doubts about Blanche's ability to say "no" to his boss.

The Justice Department's career staff has been ravaged by firings, departures and low morale over the past year and a half, as its traditional independence from the White House has

Please see Blanche, Page 6A

Pushback on Flock cameras heated

Unrest over tech that
reads license plates boils
over into vandalism

BY N'DEA YANCEY-BRAGG
USA TODAY

You might not be accused of committing a crime, but a coast-to-coast network of cameras is still trying to track your vehicle's movements.

It's a high-tech attempt at deterring crime and catching criminals, championed by its creators and some local law enforcement, who say license plate readers are a big part of the future of policing.

But the technology is also a snowballing privacy nightmare, according to critics who are fighting back with protests, legislation and websites



Courtney Hergeshelmer / Columbus Dispatch

Flock Safety's network is in 49 states.

dedicated to tracking the trackers.

Frustration has boiled over into vandalism in some locations.

License plate readers have been shot at in Tennessee, hit with a truck

in California, beat with a baseball bat in Virginia, cut down with a saw in Texas and splattered with paint in New York. They've also been regularly blocked by a lone protester in Florida.

Notably, the criticism of the technology has been strikingly bipartisan in a nation where it's often tough to find political common ground.

Chad Marlow, senior policy counsel at the American Civil Liberties Union who focuses on privacy, surveillance and technology issues, said the technology triggers concerns about government overreach on the right and worries about who is being targeted on the left.

"For people in the center or the non politically engaged are even like

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