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# THE JOPLIN GLOBE

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**CORNELL COMPLEX:** Piano trio to perform in April. 2A

**DHS:** Senators seeking deal to end budget standoff. 4A

## Minnesota company plans data center, solar park

Online petition against eastern  
Jasper County project started

BY JOHN HACKER  
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SARCOXIE, Mo. — A Minnesota technology firm is planning a data center and solar energy park on land south of Missouri Highway 96 and west of La Russell and County Route U in eastern Jasper County.

Geronimo Power, based in Bloomington, Minnesota, confirmed to The Joplin Globe in an email that it is evaluating eastern Jasper County for what it called a “hyperscale data center,” and a large solar energy and battery park to help power the data center.

“We have been in the local area developing a new solar and battery project,” Lindsay Smith, vice president for external affairs and communications with the company, said in an email to the Globe. “We are in very early stages of developing a data center in the Jasper County area, and we have just begun conversations with local officials, landowners and community members. We are working together to design a project that works in this local area.”

The project will be located near Liberty’s La Russell Energy Center on Fir Road just west of La Russell. The park will house a number of data centers.

Geronimo Power said the actual size of the data center park and solar battery farm are not known at this time.

“The area south of the LaRussell Energy Center is currently being evaluated for the data center, and the solar project is planned just north of the LaRussell Energy Center,” Smith said. “We are very early in the process and excited to engage the local community and stakeholders. We are committed to being transparent in the process and encourage local feedback to help steer

SEE CENTER, 2A

# \$40M proposal



Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce President Betsy Mense speaks at a press conference Tuesday where she announced chamber support for the Joplin School District’s bond issue that will appear on the April 7 ballot. GLOBE | JOHN HACKER



Superintendent Kerry Sachetta speaks on Tuesday at the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce office about the Eagle Bond campaign. The chamber announced its support for the school bond issue Tuesday. GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

## Joplin chamber gives its endorsement to school bond issue

BY JOHN HACKER  
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The Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday threw its support behind the Joplin School District’s \$40 million Eagle Bond 2026 proposal. Passage would allow the district to borrow \$40 million to put with \$10 million the board has said it would commit from reserves on upgrades across four more older elementary schools. It also would pay for an

indoor athletic and activities center at Joplin High School. The district currently is spending \$11 million from reserves on three older elementary schools.

Passage would extend the district’s current debt service property tax levy of 76.16 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation for another six years.

The bond will be on the April 7 ballot and, like all school bond issues in Missouri, needs a

SEE CHAMBER, 2A

# Campaign says it has enough signatures to challenge map

Redrawn congressional districts passed by Republicans last year

BY RUDI KELLER  
Missouri Independent

Backers of a proposed referendum on Missouri’s gerrymandered congressional plan believe they have met

the minimum number of signatures needed to make the November ballot.

Updated data, posted Monday morning by People Not Politicians, the political action committee that organized a referendum petition drive, shows that the petition has at least 129% of the required signatures in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th districts. The last district needed to qualify for the ballot

was Southwest Missouri’s 7th District and 102% of the signatures needed are valid, with more than 6,000 signatures left to be checked.

“This is what we have known to be true all along,” said Richard von Glahn, director of People Not Politicians. “We clearly have enough signatures.”

The updated data, obtained from Secretary of State Denny Hoskins’ office

via a Sunshine Law request, arrived Monday morning, von Glahn said, just days after a Cole County judge ordered revisions last week to the ballot summary for the referendum.

In the decision delivered Friday, Circuit Judge Brian Stumpe wrote that he agreed with Hoskins that two phrases should be removed from the summary, originally prepared by

Hoskins, as prejudicial and unfair.

Stumpe also identified a third phrase that he deleted for the same reason.

The rest of the description, describing the geographic features, is neutral and fair, Stumpe wrote, and will be retained.

“It is neither inaccurate nor unfair to describe the map enacted by (lawmakers) in the summary state-

ment for (the referendum),” Stumpe wrote.

In the deleted phrases, Stumpe removed language that described the map adopted in 2022 as the “existing gerrymandered” plan that “protects incumbent politicians.” Both phrases were prejudicial, Hoskins had admitted in court.

The third phrase, that the

SEE MAP, 2A

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