



Mets’ 3 biggest needs this offseason and players who can help them

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2026 | MYCENTRALJERSEY.COM PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

\$24M settlement tied to decades of pollution claims

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Hess Corp. will pay New Jersey \$19.5 million to settle claims tied to decades of alleged pollution at its former Port Reading refinery in Woodbridge, the largest piece of a broader package of environmental settlements worth more than \$24 million that also includes contamination claims at a former Hercules

site in Parlin and the preservation of hundreds of acres of open space in Middlesex County.
The agreement, announced Oct. 5 by Attorney General Jennifer Davenport and Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Ed Potosnak, also requires Hercules to preserve more than 600 acres through conservation easements, including 300 acres at the Duhernal property along the border of

Old Bridge and Monroe.

Hess refinery in Woodbridge drives largest settlement

The agreement requires Hess to pay \$19.5 million to settle natural resource damages claims at its former refinery and storage facility in the Port Reading

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End of an era as QuidelOrtho plans area shutdown

Mike Deak
MyCentralJersey.com
USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

RARITAN BOROUGH – QuidelOrtho, a company with deep roots in Somerset County dating back to its days as Ortho under Johnson & Johnson ownership, plans to close its long-time Raritan facility in 2027.

The San Diego-based medical diagnostics company has been gradually winding down operations on its 66-acre Route 202 campus since announcing the transition in 2025.

A company spokesperson said the timing could change as the consolidation effort moves forward.

"This decision was made after a thorough evaluation of our global customer needs and future growth opportunities," the spokesperson said.

The closure is part of QuidelOrtho's broader site consolidation plan, which the company said is expected to generate about \$20 million in annual savings.

The company declined to say how many employees will be affected.

"We are communicating directly with affected employees and supporting them through the transition," the spokesperson said.

The property is assessed at \$52.98 million and generates an annual property tax bill of about \$1.66 million, according to borough records.

Why is QuidelOrtho closing its Raritan facility?

QuidelOrtho has said the shutdown

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Support for Medicaid cuts is risky for the state GOP



People gather at the Statehouse Annex in Trenton for a rally to protect Medicaid on March 6, 2025. NORTHJERSEY.COM STAFF FILE



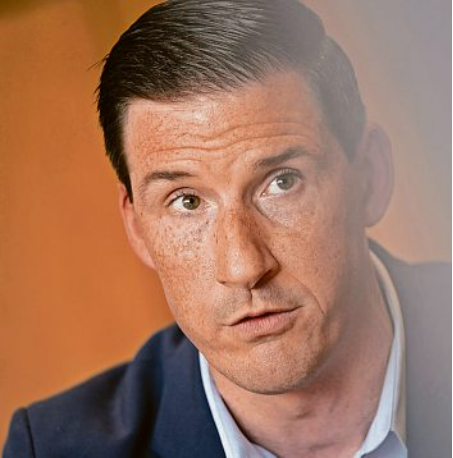
Political Stile
Charles Stile
USA TODAY NETWORK

U.S. Rep. Thomas H. Kean Jr. is campaigning for reelection as a defender of Medicaid, the health care program for the poor and people with disabilities that is funded by federal and state dollars.

The Westfield Republican said he "protected Medicaid for every single intended beneficiary" in his Sept. 27 debate against Democrat Rebecca Bennett, his challenger in the battleground 7th Congressional District.

Kean's campaign made a similar claim in a TV spot last month featuring his revered father, former New Jersey Gov. Thomas H. Kean, who asserted his son "worked to protect Medicare and Medicaid for every New Jersey senior, child and disabled person."

But the younger Kean joined a Republican Party push last year that is



Medicaid legislation would apply only to those who would otherwise be "sitting on the couch watching ... television all day," Republican candidate Joe Hathaway told NorthJersey.com on Sept. 18.

JULIAN LESHAY GUADALUPE/NORTHJERSEY.COM

likely have an opposite effect.

The congressman was one of 218 Republican House members whose votes

led to the narrow passage of President Donald Trump's massive domestic policy measure, marketed as the "One Big Beautiful Bill." To cover the cost of \$4.5 trillion in lower taxes over 10 years, Trump's bill set in motion dramatic changes and cuts to the nation's social safety net programs, especially Medicaid.

As a result, as many as 10 million fewer of the nation's most vulnerable will be eligible for Medicaid in the next seven years, according to one estimate from the Congressional Budget Office.

The law imposes strict new "contributions" on Medicaid recipients. Republicans say they will fortify the long-term stability of the program by forcing able-bodied people to get a job, volunteer or take classes for 80 hours a month. Parents, guardians or caregivers of children under 14 or individuals with disabilities are exempt.

The requirements apply only to people who would otherwise be "sitting on the couch watching ... television all

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Where to vote early in Central Jersey

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New Jersey voters don't have to wait until Election Day to cast a ballot in this year's general election.

The state's nine-day early voting period begins Oct. 24 and runs through Nov. 1, giving registered voters the chance to vote in person before the Nov. 3 election. Voters may use any early voting location within the county where they are registered.

Voters can also cast mail-in ballots or vote at their assigned polling place on Election Day.

When is early voting in New Jersey?

Early voting runs from Oct. 24 through Nov. 1 ahead of the Nov. 3 general election. Polling places will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. No appointment is required.

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Volume 148 | No. 177
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