



## SENATE REBUKE

SENATE COMMITTEE VOTES TO HOLD FAUCI IN CONTEMPT OVER REFUSAL TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON PANDEMIC. SETS UP A REFERRAL TO THE DEPT. OF JUSTICE FOR POSSIBLE INVESTIGATION. **C1**

### KEYPORT

## Neighborhood a ‘hot spot’ of toxins linked to severe disease, study says

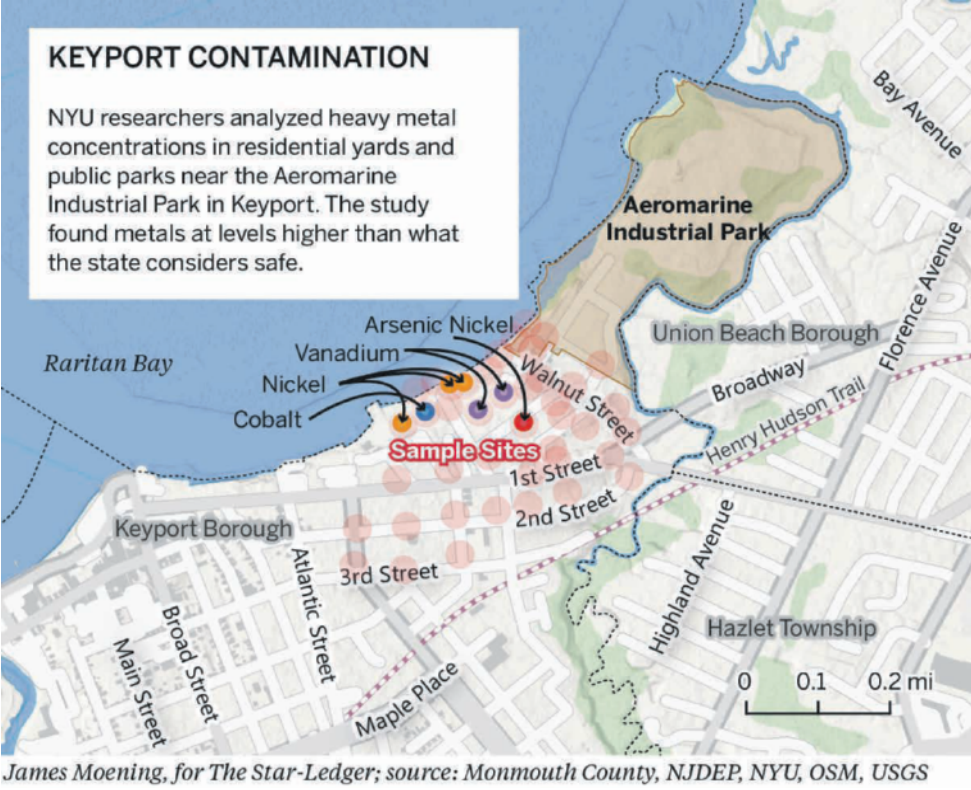


Andy Jelinsky, part of an NYU research team, tests the soil at Cedar Street Park in Keyport. The area is near an old landfill that studies show has high levels of toxic chemicals. Residents worry the contaminants are making them sick. *Karin Price Mueller, NJ.com*

*First study of neighborhoods near embattled landfill commissioned by NJ.com.*

**Karin Price Mueller** *NJ.com*

It can spread in the most innocent ways. The little girl giggling as she moves back and forth on the swing set, kicking up dirt. The dog whose owner takes him for a walk on the nearby trail, muddy paws happily scampering home after enjoying the fresh bay breeze. The mom watching her kids play in the yard, reminding them — again — to take their shoes off when they come inside. They’re tracking dirt into the house. All very normal, but also all very near Aeromarine — a shuttered dump in Keyport that’s at the center of neighbors’ fears that they are living in the middle of a cancer cluster. So far, state officials say new testing at the site hasn’t shown them a “pathway for human exposure” — a way for the excessive amounts of toxins and heavy metals found at the site to travel to people who live nearby. But new limited environmental testing commissioned by NJ.com calls that finding into question. “I don’t see how they could rule (a pathway) out,” said Judith T. Zelikoff, PhD, a professor of toxicology and environmental health in the environmental medicine division at New York University Medical Center in Manhattan. The testing, conducted by an NYU research team led by Zelikoff, analyzed heavy metal concentrations in residential



yards and public parks near the dump — areas that the state has so far not offered to test. The new study identified a potential “hot spot” of high heavy metal concentrations in an approximately six-to-seven-block radius immediately outside the old dump’s gates. The spot overlaps with some of the highest numbers of cancer cases that residents have reported to NJ.com. Throughout nearby neighborhoods, the study found metals at higher levels than what the state considers safe. Many of the detected metals were found to be at such

elevated levels that they hit state benchmarks for remediation or cleanup. Arsenic, lead, nickel, cobalt, silver, antimony and other toxic and carcinogenic metals were found in the soil across the testing area outside Aeromarine. Elevated levels of arsenic were found at a borough park, and a high amount of nickel — a metal known to cause lung cancer — was found at a baseball field. In some spots, the amounts of metals found spiked to as much as 200 times the acceptable state levels. **SEE KEYPORT, A6**

### TRANSPORTATION

## Commuters at risk in proposed rail merger, NJ Transit warns

*Two of nation’s biggest freight haulers would run more trains and disrupt passenger lines, critics say.*

**Benjamin J. Hulac** *NJ Spotlight News*

The nation’s biggest proposed freight railroad merger would send more shipments rumbling across New Jersey and potentially disrupt Manhattan commuter rail service for thousands of passengers, according to state officials. In a legal filing to national regulators, NJ Transit said the pending merger of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern railroads could lead to “traffic increases” on Conrail’s Lehigh Line. The stretch, from Manville in Somerset County to Newark, is used by NJ Transit and freight operators including Norfolk Southern. Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern did not provide “any data on the transaction’s impacts on NJ TRANSIT’s commuter operations” in their application to the Surface Transportation Board, the independent federal panel that approves or denies such railroad transactions, NJ Transit stated in a filing May 8. NJ Transit, the nation’s largest statewide commuter bus and rail operator, said a string of its train lines could be affected: Pascack Valley, Bergen, Main, Montclair-Boonton, Morristown, Raritan Valley, plus the Gladstone Branch. “Increased frequency of freight operations on these lines could materially and negatively impact NJ TRANSIT’s commuter operations,” it wrote. The commuter railroad in recent years has been trying to recover from decades of budget starvation, the pandemic’s negative effect on ridership volume and an increasingly unreliable Hudson River tunnel to Manhattan. Riders, who complain about continuing poor service, on July 1 started paying 3% higher fares, and they face another increase next year. During **SEE TRANSPORTATION, A2**

### LIFE

## Loud, gaudy and loved

New Italian restaurant in Old Bridge turns dial to 11 with \$600 drinks. **H1**

### NEWS

## A portrait of expense

Phil Murphy’s official governor portrait to cost the most in N.J. history. **A3**

### NEWARK

## N.J. civil rights leader moves to national role at Southern Poverty Law Center

*After 11 years, Ryan Haygood leaving as head of New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.*

**Ande Richards** *NJ.com*

The summer Ryan Haygood set out to build a relationship with the father he barely knew became the summer he found his life’s calling. An unexpected detour to a Newark YMCA exposed him to stories of incarceration, redemption and justice that would help define his future. Now 51, Haygood is preparing to leave his post as president and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, a role he has held

since 2015, to become president and CEO of the Southern Poverty Law Center. His journey there can be traced to a summer that didn’t go according to plan. Haygood, 25 at the time, was still getting to know his father when he accepted an invitation to spend the summer with him in Brooklyn. Heading into his third year of law school, he was interning at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in Manhattan. “He had been in the Air Force and later became a camera operator for CBS News. He invited me to stay with him while I worked in Manhattan, but after about three days it became clear it wasn’t going to work,” said Haygood of that summer in 1999. His high school sweetheart, Charity, was teaching in Newark as a first-year Teach For

America teacher. She suggested he look into the Newark YMCA instead. He checked in expecting little more than a place to sleep. “I’d never heard of water bugs. I’d never seen mice like that,” Haygood recalled. “The conditions... it was tough.” But the building gave him something far more valuable than a bed. Every evening, Haygood sat with men returning from incarceration, listening to stories about prison, redemption and starting over. “I needed all of that,” he said. “I needed all of them.” By day, he worked on a clemency petition for a young woman serving a federal prison sentence. By night, he returned to the **SEE HAYGOOD, A7**



**Ryan Haygood, president and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, is leaving the Newark-based organization.** *Chris Pedota, for NJ.com*