



Kirk slams journalists after press gala shooting

NEWS, 4A



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DOJ drafting DEI whistleblowers



Corporations have become more cautious since President Donald Trump swept into office on campaign promises to eradicate "woke" DEI policies. ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

Bounty program pays workers to report issues

Jessica Guynn
USA TODAY

Blow the whistle, get paid. A Justice Department bounty program that incentivizes employees to blow the whistle on their employers comes as the Trump administration intensifies its crackdown on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

The Trump administration is investigating major companies under the False Claims Act, a federal law the Justice Department uses to take action against contractors alleged to have defrauded the government and recoup substantial damages.

Last year, the Justice Department established a task force to investigate federal contractors for alleged violations of the law. It said last week it has seen a "rapid increase" in whistleblower complaints filed in recent years. Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brenna Jenny's office is prioritizing

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Campaign launches to raise \$10M for veterans

Madeline Mitchell
USA TODAY

Ed Bambas, 88, was bagging groceries at Meijer during one of his regular shifts when his life changed forever. Samuel Weidenhofer, a social media influencer, shared a video of Bambas in December. In the TikTok, Bambas shared how the cost of caring for his wife and a confluence of other factors made it impossible for him to retire. The video went viral, and more than 60,000 online donors raised nearly \$2 million for Bambas in less than a week.

Now, Bambas wants to help other struggling veterans retire, too. On April 30, Weidenhofer launched the For Your Service campaign to raise \$10 million for 50 more veterans, one from every state. Bambas is donating \$1,000 to each of the 50 GoFundMe campaigns to get them started.

"I never dreamt that I could be in this position where I wasn't forced to work 'til I die," much less give so much to those in need, Bambas told USA TODAY.

It speaks to Bambas' character, Weidenhofer said, that "the first thing he's thought of, rather than splurging or buying a new house, it's really to help veterans across the country."

"That's the type of person Ed is," Weidenhofer said. "His first thought has been to help others."

After Bambas' story went viral, Weidenhofer said he was "inundated with so many veterans struggling throughout this country." Many of them had lost homes and hope as they

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Ohio lawmaker wants to suspend gas tax

Haley BeMiller
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

A state lawmaker wants to give Ohioans tax relief at the pump.

Rep. Ty Mathews, R-Findlay, is finalizing legislation that would temporarily suspend Ohio's gas tax. The move comes as motorists nationwide contend with high prices driven by the U.S.-Iran war, including nearly \$5 per gallon in

parts of Ohio. Mathews said his plan is still taking shape, but he hopes to pitch a three-month gas tax holiday that would overlap with the busy summer travel season.

"How do we give meaningful relief to the taxpayer and to Ohioans at the pump, hopefully in the meantime praying this conflict resolves?" Mathews told the statehouse bureau April 30.

The average gas price in Ohio hit \$4.46 this week, according to AAA, and

some gas stations in Columbus and Cincinnati sold regular fuel for \$4.99. The cost of gas continues to skyrocket as the U.S. and Iran remain deadlocked over blockades in the Strait of Hormuz, which transports 20% of the world's oil.

In response, officials in Georgia and Indiana suspended their state's gas tax to ease the burden on drivers.

Ohio's gas tax is 38.5 cents a gallon,

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Gas prices in some parts of Ohio, including this Cincinnati-area BP station, have surged to nearly \$5 per gallon. CARA OWSLEY/THE ENQUIRER

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