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**U.S. SINKS IRANIAN SHIP IN INDIAN OCEAN. B1**

### TOP NATIONAL STORY

## Republicans pursue DHS funding, cite Iran war

DHS funding lapsed Feb. 14 when spending bill stalled in Senate.

By Kevin Freking  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON – Republicans are invoking the war in Iran and the prospect of retaliatory terrorist attacks as they tee up votes Thursday on a funding bill for

the Department of Homeland Security.

The House already approved a DHS spending bill in January, but it faltered in the Senate as Democrats insisted on changes to immigration enforcement operations following the shooting death of ICU nurse Alex Pretti in Minneapolis. As a result, funding for the department lapsed on Feb. 14.

Republicans are calling on Democrats to reconsider their vote in

the wake of the conflict in Iran. Both the House and the Senate are expected to hold votes on the matter.

“The military action in Iran makes it all more urgent and crucial to have a fully funded, fully staffed DHS across all its departments,” House Speaker Mike Johnson said.

Republicans continued on A6



Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., speaks as Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem testifies during a Senate Judiciary Committee oversight hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington on Tuesday. MANUEL BALCE CENETA / AP

### ONLY IN THE JOURNAL-NEWS



The Cincinnati State building at 1 N. Main St. last saw students in mid-2023, when classes moved from the building to Miami University Regionals campus in Middletown. The tower has been vacant since the move. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

## Middletown to reclaim Cincinnati State building

Office tower in city's urban core has been vacant since 2023.

By Bryn Dippold  
Staff Writer

Middletown city council has approved the purchase of the vacant Cincinnati State building in downtown.

The building, formerly the

home of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College and Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company, last saw students in mid-2023 when classes moved from four floors of 1 N. Main St. to Miami University Regionals campus in Middletown.

Now, the city has approved the purchase of the approximately 84,000-square-foot building and 13,000-square-foot parcel of land at 1 N. Main St. for \$325,000.

“The revitalization of our urban core is a project city staff has taken full ownership of,” said City Manager Ashley Combs. “By acquiring the former Cincinnati State building at 1 N. Main St., we as a city can champion the change Middletown wants to see.”

The city previously owned the building in 2011, when it was purchased from the estate of local businessman and Middletown City Council member Perry Thatcher.

In April 2012, the city sold the building to Higher Education Partners, who inked a deal with Cincinnati State as a tenant.

It was then sold to Store Master Funding out of Arizona in April 2014 for \$5.8 million, according to the Butler County Auditor's site. This was the last transfer of building ownership on the auditor's site.

Cincinnati continued on A6

### TOP STATE STORY

## GOP lawmaker floats Ohio tourism pass for discounts

House Bill 732 was introduced by Rep. Melanie Miller.

Avery Kreemer  
Staff Writer

A Republican representative in the Ohio House is hoping to create a tourism pass in Ohio that would connect Ohioans and out-of-state visitors with discounts, promotions and other benefits offered by the state's tourism drivers.

The proposal, dubbed the “Ohio, The Heart of It All Pass,” is purely conceptual at this point, as it was just introduced in House Bill 732 on Tuesday.

At a press conference the same day, bill sponsor Rep. Melanie Miller, R-Ashland, laid out her belief that the pass could lead to more out-of-state visitors, more perks for residents, more visits to tourist destinations, and more tax revenue for the state.

“Tourism is not just about travel, it's about economic development, job creation, community pride, and long-term growth,” said Miller. She said improving Ohio's tourism record – tourism accounted for \$57 billion spent in Ohio last year and \$4.7 billion in tax revenue in 2024 – would be wholly beneficial to the state and its people.

Miller, who chairs the committee that will vet this bill, told this news outlet that this

Pass continued on A6

### THE LATEST

Top FDA regulator aims to hire friend, a critic of antidepressants. B2

Racial slur at BAFTA awards stirs complex feelings. C1

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