



## Fed minutes show officials dealing with policy split

BUSINESS, 6A

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## Haitians helped bring growth to Springfield



Attendees voice their opinions through signs during a prayer service and faith leaders gathering at St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio, on Feb. 2. Springfield is home to one of the largest Haitian immigrant communities in the Midwest and a focal point of national political rhetoric. DORAL CHENOWETH/COLUMBUS DISPATCH

### Downtown was ghost town until immigrants sparked revival; now unease spreads

**Danae King**  
Columbus Dispatch  
USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD, Ohio - Downtown Springfield is punctuated by weathered brick and stone buildings, brightly painted murals and a vibrancy that longtime residents say wasn't always there.

When Tim Voltz moved to Springfield

in 2009, the downtown area was a ghost town. Most storefronts were empty, and no one spent extended time there. But today the South Side resident sees people patronizing the restaurants, brewery, co-working space, market and shops that have opened in the past few years.

The city was dying. Now, it's not, he said.

After suffering five decades of decline

and population loss, the city went through what Voltz calls a "massive turnaround" as about 15,000 Haitian immigrants moved into the city over the past five years.

"Springfield is this really interesting case study of a town and its ability to turn itself around and make change," said Kevin Rose, who studies the community's history as a historian for the revitalization-focused Turner Foundation. "Springfield is really doing that."

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## Native of Cincinnati area to exit DHS post

### Trump spokesperson: 'Job is a meat grinder'

**Erin Glynn and David Ferrara**  
Cincinnati Enquirer  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Cincinnati-area native Tricia McLaughlin is stepping down from her role as the chief mouthpiece for President Donald Trump's immigration agenda within the Department of Homeland Security.

McLaughlin told The Enquirer on Feb. 17 that her last day with the agency will be Feb. 27.

Neither McLaughlin nor the Trump administration gave a reason for her departure. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem commended McLaughlin's work and said she served with "exceptional dedication, tenacity, and professionalism."

"While we are sad to see her leave, we are grateful for her service and wish Tricia nothing but success," Noem said.

McLaughlin told The Enquirer in December that the job consumes much of her time and she considered it a privilege but also a sacrifice to do the work.

She said she and her husband, political consultant Ben Yoho, planned to move back to Cincinnati at some point to start a family.

"Obviously this job is a meat grinder and, as I told you guys before, a sacrifice," she said in February.

McLaughlin said her stepping down has been in the works since December but was delayed because of the shootings in Minneapolis.

During McLaughlin's tenure, she has defended Trump's immigration

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## Wexner gives testimony about Epstein to committee

Columbus Dispatch  
USA TODAY NETWORK

New Albany billionaire Les Wexner testified to a congressional committee from his New Albany home for nearly five hours on Feb. 18 about his relationship with disgraced and now deceased financier Jeffrey Epstein.

Epstein, a convicted sex offender, died in 2019 in what New York City's chief medical examiner ruled a suicide in a New York jail cell awaiting trial on child sex trafficking charges. He was Wexner's former financial adviser, and the two had a close relationship for years.

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform released its full deposition video of Wexner on Feb. 19.

A spokesperson for Wexner declined to comment for this story.

Here are key takeaways from the interview with the committee.

### More Inside

Gov. Dewine says relation between Epstein and Wexner an 'old story', 2A

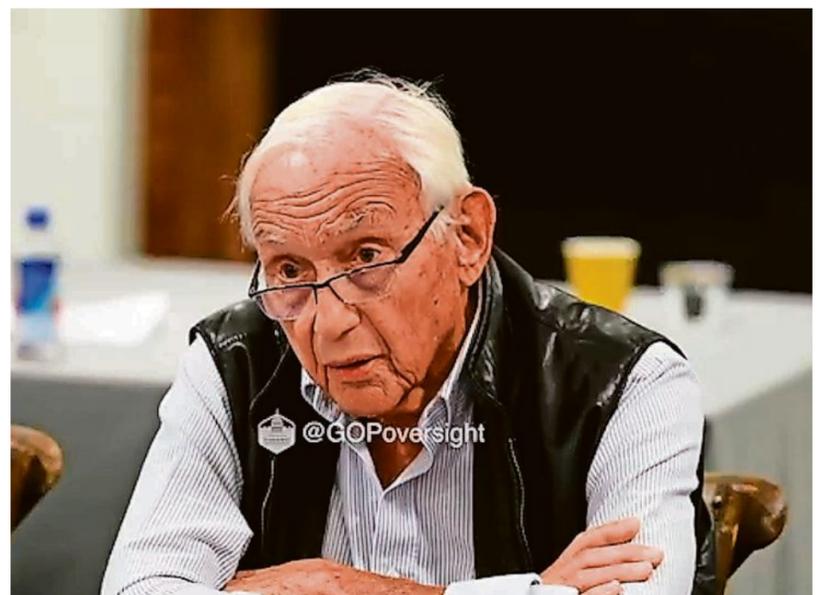
### Wexner answers questions about Ohio State OB-GYN Mark Landon

Wexner told questioners that he was not aware of payments made to Dr. Mark Landon, an OB-GYN at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and who documents show was being paid by Epstein.

Landon has said he did not provide medical care to Epstein but was a consultant on bio-tech investments from 2001 to 2005. Records released by the Justice Department suggest Landon was being paid \$25,000 to \$30,000 at a time.

A memo left for Epstein on April 11, 2005, stated: "Dr. Landon's \$25k quarterly payment is due, please approve."

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The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform released its full deposition video of Les Wexner. PROVIDED BY THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Volume 117 | No. 44  
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