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A look inside Kroger’s empire of house brands

STATE, 7A

The Advocate

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2026 | NEWARK, OHIO | NEWARKADVOCATE.COM

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There is no print edition of the paper today, but you can find today’s puzzles, comics, national news and sports here in the eNewspaper.

Data center group appeals denial

Pataskala City Council rejected proposal for 200-megawatt facility

Josué Perez
Newark Advocate
USA TODAY NETWORK

Aligned Data Centers has requested a judge review Pataskala City Council’s denial of a decision to build a 200-

megawatt data center in the city’s corporate park.
The company filed court documents indicating they plan to appeal in its push to build the center on 89 acres at Broad and Mink streets, stating that it could generate more than \$1 million in

income tax revenue and millions more in property tax revenue for the city. The incomplete plan on how to power the centers, coupled with residents’ opposition, left city officials uncomfortable with approval.
Court records show the company

wants city council and the planning and zoning commission to file transcripts and documents from meetings in December 2025, and February, April, June and August 2026, when officials discussed the proposal.
Attorneys representing the company declined to comment.
See DATA CENTER, Page 2A



Nicotine is the primary driver of tobacco addiction in the form of cigarettes, vapes and most other forms of commercial tobacco. The greatest health risks arise when tobacco is burned, which generates thousands of toxic substances.
PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

Ohio’s state treasurer race pits Edwards vs. Walsh

Jessie Balmert
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

Republican ex-state Rep. Jay Edwards and Democratic Cincinnati City Councilman Seth Walsh are facing off in a race to become Ohio’s next state treasurer.
The position, currently held by term-limited Republican Robert Sprague, is considerably less high-profile than governor, U.S. senator or attorney general. But it plays an important role in the state’s investments.
Both contenders also want to use the position as a bully pulpit to advocate for better ways to spend Ohio’s money.

What does the Ohio treasurer do?

Part of the challenge of running for state treasurer is explaining what the job does. The Ohio treasurer serves as the state’s chief investment officer and banker, overseeing about \$275 billion in investments. The office also oversees the Ohio Checkbook, which details state spending, revenue and salaries.
The treasurer appoints investment experts to the boards of Ohio’s pension systems, such as the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio and the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.
The state treasurer also manages programs, such as tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities called STABLE accounts, interest rate reductions for agricultural loans called Ag-LINK and savings accounts for future homebuyers called Ohio Homebuyer Plus.

Who is Seth Walsh?

Seth Walsh, 35, who lives in downtown Cincinnati, didn’t grow up dreaming of becoming Ohio treasurer. Obsessed with the 1960s space race, Walsh wanted to be a NASA astronaut.
“It’s such an inspiring, unifying time in American history,” Walsh told the statehouse bureau.

See TREASURER, Page 2A

Movement touts addictive drug as beneficial, but dangers persist

Hasmeena Kathuria
University of Wisconsin-Madison
THE CONVERSATION

An ironic development emerging alongside the “Make America Healthy Again” movement is the portrayal of nicotine as a wellness and performance-enhancing product. Across social media, podcasts, wellness communities and tech startups, prominent wellness personalities and other influencers are portraying nicotine as a misunderstood compound whose potential benefits have been overshadowed by its negative association with cigarette smoking.
As a result, nicotine is being repositioned from an addictive substance linked to tobacco use to a natural product that can be used for everything from improving focus to protecting against cognitive decline. This trend includes use of nicotine alone in noncombustible products such as nicotine pouches, or in combination with caffeine and nootropics, which are substances marketed to enhance cognition.
As a pulmonary physician-scientist who studies nicotine addiction and the health consequences of tobacco and nicotine products, I am concerned about claims that nicotine can enhance wellness, productivity and cognitive performance.

Distinguishing between nicotine and tobacco

Some of these claims stem from the observation



Nicotine, in products such as nicotine pouches, is being repositioned from an addictive substance linked to tobacco use to a natural product that can be used for everything from improving focus to protecting against cognitive decline.

that nicotine is a naturally occurring plant compound found primarily in tobacco and in night-shade vegetables such as tomatoes, potatoes and eggplant in trace amounts. Proponents of nicotine use also draw on studies suggesting that nicotine can affect certain aspects of cognition and brain function.

See NICOTINE, Page 5A

