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ELECTION DAY IS TODAY

Voters across the region will head to the polls today to vote in local elections. Get the latest election news, access our Voter Guide and check out results as they are released at SpringfieldNewsSun.com/elections.



ONLY IN THE NEWS-SUN

Construction begins on new park in Springfield

Engaged Neighborhood project also will include apartments, houses.

By Brooke Spurlock
Staff Writer

Construction has begun on a community park that's part of a multi-level plan in the Engaged Neighborhood on the southwest side of Springfield.

The plan for the neighborhood includes new apartments and single-family homes in three blocks adjacent to the Little Miami Scenic Trail bike path near West Euclid Avenue, according to the Clark County Land Bank.

Ethan Harris, the land bank's executive director, said it's "really exciting" to break ground on the project.

"What has been even more encouraging are all the phone

calls we have been getting from neighbors expressing their excitement and gratitude for the park. It makes things real when you see construction going vertical. We hope that once people see the project going vertical they will want to get involved and help bring the full project to fruition," he said.

The park development, a collaboration with the land bank,

Park continued on A6



A community park at 504 W. Euclid Avenue in Springfield is part of the Engaged Neighborhood, a Clark County Land Bank project. Workers broke ground on the park Wednesday.

JOSEPH COOKE / STAFF

CLOSER LOOK

Group says 'significant' tax reforms insufficient

Citizens for Property Tax Reform are trying to get on the ballot.

By Denise G. Callahan
Contributing Writer

Ohio House lawmakers are touting the recent passage of several property tax bills as the most significant reforms in 50 years but the group working to abolish those taxes says it isn't enough.

The House has passed two tax measures that will provide \$2.4 billion in tax relief over three years by limiting increases to inflation. House Speaker Matt Huffman said, "I think this should convince a reasonable voter, a reasonable citizen in Ohio, that something significant has been done."

"It perhaps took a push like it often does for something extraordinary to get something extraordinary done, this is a big deal," Huffman added. "As a result of these things over the next three years there's going to be \$2.4 billion less paid which is about a 10% cut, that's significant."

The bills are designed to prevent unvoted property tax spikes people have had to pay over the last five years, due to a host of factors, some of them pandemic related and others due to lawmakers tinkering with school funding and other tax laws through the years.

Statehouse conversations touching property taxes these days invariably turn to the grass-roots group from Cuyahoga County, Citizens for Property Tax Reform, that is attempting to put a constitutional amendment to eliminate property taxes



The Ohio House has passed two tax measures that will provide \$2.4 billion in tax relief for property owners in communities like Moraine over three years by limiting increases to inflation. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

entirely on the statewide November 2026 ballot.

Their spokeswoman Beth Blackmarr told this media outlet for "strategic" reasons they will not reveal how many petition signatures they've collected — they've been gathering since May and need roughly 600,000 — but they have signing stations in 63 counties and circulators statewide. The filing deadline is July 1, 2026.

As for the reform measures the House is touting, she said her tax bill jumped 51.9% and

these bills won't fix that.

"What they're doing now is a stop gap to keep from hitting us harder. We're already hit and the real estate market is flattening, so how does this help us," she said and later added. "Some of the stuff they're saying just doesn't jive and some of moves they're making, they're like it's \$2.7 billion over three years, well big deal, that's like three percent."

Blackmarr said while she isn't impressed with the effort so far, a Senate bill that just emerged from a dormant state — it's been

sitting on the shelf of unheard bills since May — could convince voters not to vote for their ballot initiative.

Senate Bill 206 — with an estimated \$1.5 billion price tag — would pay up to 50% of the property tax bills for homeowners age 65-plus, regardless of income. She said it would be "significant, that would help tremendously, I hope this thing makes it because people are looking for relief, immediate relief."

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TOP NATIONAL
STORY

Shutdown likely to become longest in nation's history

As it enters 6th week, Trump says he 'won't be extorted' by Dems.

By Mary Clare Jalonick
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The government shutdown is poised to become the longest ever this week as the impasse between Democrats and Republicans has dragged into a new month. Millions of people stand to lose food aid benefits, health care subsidies are set to expire and there are few real talks between the parties over how to end it.

President Donald Trump said in an interview aired on Sunday that he "won't be extorted" by Democrats who are demanding negotiations to extend the expiring Affordable Care Act subsidies. Echoing congressional Republicans, the president said on CBS' "60 Minutes" he'll negotiate only when the government is reopened.

Trump said Democrats "have lost their way" and predicted they'll capitulate to Republicans.

"I think they have to," Trump said. "And if they don't vote, it's their problem."

Trump's comments signal the shutdown could drag on for some time as federal workers, including air traffic controllers, are set to

Shutdown continued on A6

THE LATEST

Lawyer disputes FBI's allegations of terror plot in Michigan. **B1**

Five more arrested in connection with heist of crown jewels. **B2**

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