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# The Daily Item

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Breezy in the morning; cloudy 34/15 Weather, B4

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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## RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

# Experts fear new funding won't save Pa. hospitals



A patient room at a health care facility.

Commonwealth Media Services file photo

## Medicaid cuts might offset benefit of \$193M injection

By Marley Parish  
Spotlight PA State College

BELLEFONTE — The outlook for rural hospitals in Pennsylvania remains grim as the state prepares to make the best of decreased federal investments and faces budgetary challenges that officials say make it impossible to absorb the cuts.

Policy experts say the \$50 billion, five-year Rural Health Transformation Program won't offset deep Medicaid

### SPOTLIGHT PA

cuts approved in a sweeping federal budget package that slashed spending by roughly \$1 trillion over the next decade and tightened eligibility requirements.

Pennsylvania officials estimate the state will lose about \$20 billion in federal Medicaid funding over 10 years starting in 2028.

Katherine Hempstead, senior policy adviser at

the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, said the federal program was offered almost as a "consolation prize" to ease fear that more hospitals would close because of the Medicaid cuts.

While \$50 billion is a lot of money, hospitals and health systems will feel the funding reductions "when they begin to address the needs of the uninsured," Lisa Davis, director of the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, told Spotlight PA.

Shapiro's \$53.3 billion budget proposal, presented to the divided legislature in early February, mostly keeps hospital funding intact and adds \$1 billion in Medicaid spending, primarily to cover services and keep up with rising costs. He also called for a higher minimum wage — from \$7.25 to \$15 an hour — hoping that could reduce the number of people who are insured through Medicaid.

See **EXPERTS**, Page A2

# Slack promoted to head of Sunbury Police Department

By Francis Scarcella  
fscarcella@dailyitem.com

SUNBURY — Sunbury has a new police chief.

Sgt. Brad Slack was promoted to police chief Monday night by a unanimous city council vote to replace Chief Travis Bremigen, who retired in December.

The police department, Slack's family and 75 residents in attendance at the meeting witnessed the swearing in of the new chief by Mayor Josh Brosious.

Bremigen said the department is in good hands.

"We have become brothers not only on the job but outside the job," he said. "I couldn't be more proud of him."

Bremigen said Slack is a true leader.

"There is a boss, and then there is a leader," Bremigen said.

"Chief Brad Slack is a leader."

Slack thanked everyone for coming, said he is excited to take over the department and is thankful for the faith council and Brosious have placed in him.

Councilman Jim Eister said he was happy for Slack and wished him the best of luck.

Brosious said he is thrilled to have Slack take over the department.

"This is a milestone in his career," he said. "I look forward to working with him during his tenure as chief."

"We will continue to move the police department forward in all aspects, and we will continue to hold everyone accountable for their actions."

# Snyder County woman killed in Route 35 crash

### The Daily Item

RICHFIELD — A 42-year-old Snyder County woman was killed in a crash early Tuesday morning along Route 35 near Richfield.

According to state police at Selinsgrove, Meghaan M. Yates, of Mount Pleasant Mills, was traveling north on Route 35 when her vehicle traveled into the southbound lane for unknown reasons, state police said.

The crash occurred at 5:50 a.m. along Route 35, just

east of the intersection with Cherry Hill Road.

Yates' vehicle struck a truck being driven south by Aaron M. Alderfer, 38, of Richfield, nearly head-on.

Police said Yates, who was not wearing a seatbelt, was ejected from the vehicle. She was pronounced dead at the scene by the Snyder County coroner's office, police said.

Alderfer, who was also not wearing a seatbelt according to

See **CRASH**, Page A2

# Undocumented immigrants seek shelter from ICE operation in Minnesota

By Esteban Fernandez  
CNHI News

MINNEAPOLIS — In some ways, normal life continues for many of the 430,000-some residents of Minneapolis even as nearly 2,300 federal immigration agents will remain in the city to continue Operation Metro Surge.

As the ICE operation stretched past two months, the new leader of the effort, White House "Border Czar" Tom Homan, announced last week that about 700 of the agents deployed around Minnesota would be withdrawn immediately.

Families continue to balance the risk of being detained and

possibly deported against the need to earn money for food, rent payments and other needs.

"Life is bad, honestly," said Claudia, an undocumented woman living in St. Paul. "We came searching for a better future. I had understood this was a free country. Now, it's not."

Claudia rents a room in St. Paul, where she works as a

roofer. She lives with two other undocumented families. Two 10-year-old children from different families play games on their cellphones. There's nothing else to do.

One of them is Claudia's daughter, who crossed with Claudia from Mexico three

See **ICE**, Page A2



Photo by Esteban Fernandez

Undocumented residents living at a home in St. Paul, Minn., have barricaded their front door to prevent immigrations and Customs Enforcement from breaking into their home.

### DELIVERY

For delivery issues, call 570-286-5755

### REMEMBRANCES A5

**CALLAHAN**, William, 77, North Kingsville, Ohio  
**HOWER**, Sue A., 74, Beaver Springs

**KEEFER**, Carol J., 85, Lewisburg  
**KOSSAR**, Michael D. Sr., 82, Watsonstown  
**SCHOLL**, Dylan M., 25, Coal Township

### STOCKS B4

Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026  
Dow Jones industrials -66.74 50,121.40  
Nasdaq composite -36.01 23,066.47  
Standard & Poor's 500 -0.34 6,941.47

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