

THE MORNING CALL

\$4.00 | TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2026 | THEMORNINGCALL.COM

GOP holdouts switch to back Blanche

Nominee confirms end of compensation fund for president's allies

By Mary Clare Jalonick and Alanna Durkin Richer
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Two Republican senators who threatened to block acting Attorney General Todd Blanche's confirmation to lead the Justice Department said Monday that they will support his nomination, ending an impasse over plans to create a fund to compensate allies of President Donald Trump.

The endorsement from GOP Sens. John Cornyn and Thom Tillis paves the way for the Senate Judiciary Committee to advance Blanche's nomination on Tuesday after the Justice Department and lawmakers reached a deal to formally rescind the \$1.8 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" proposed to settle Trump's lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service.

Cornyn and Tillis had refused to back Blanche's bid for the permanent post without official confirmation killing the fund meant to compensate people who believe they were unfairly prosecuted by the Justice Department. Blanche's written order, issued late Sunday, came after the days of negotiations between the Justice Department and the Republican senators who are leaving Capitol Hill when their terms end in January.

"We want to express our gratitude to Mr. Blanche and his staff for working with us on this, and we look forward to voting to advance his nomination out of the Senate Judiciary Committee soon," Cornyn, of Texas, and Tillis, of North Carolina, said in a statement.

Blanche has repeatedly said that the Justice Department was scrapping plans for the fund, which sparked bipartisan outcry over the possibility that violent rioters who attacked police at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, could be considered for payments.

But skeptical lawmakers said they were concerned that could be revived without a commitment in writing, especially because



Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche appears July 15 before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington. MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

See **BLANCHE** on Page A2



People get a glimpse of rows of cars Sunday at the 63rd annual Das Awkscht Fescht antique and classic car show at Macungie Memorial Park in Macungie. **JON CHIU/MORNING CALL PHOTOS**

Classic cars, classic festival



Several Volkswagen Beetles are lined up Sunday at Macungie Memorial Park.



Bruce Larson demonstrates the power of the engine of his USA-1 Chevrolet Camaro.

Lehigh County, med company face suits over jail suicides

Estates of 2 Allentown men claim protective measures weren't taken

By Chris Dornblaser
THE MORNING CALL

The estates of two Allentown men who died by suicide in Lehigh County Jail are suing the county and the company that is contracted to provide medical services to inmates, alleging both were responsible for their deaths.

The estates of Arturo Wright and Forest Touchberry filed separate lawsuits in federal court in July, both alleging that the county and Dauphin County-based PrimeCare Medical failed to take the necessary measures to protect the men.

Touchberry, 31, died March 13, 2025, and Wright, 32, died Aug. 27, 2024. Both men were found unresponsive at the jail and were taken to a hospital, where they died from their injuries.

Philadelphia attorneys Laura Zipin and Brian Zeigler, who are representing the estates in both lawsuits, wrote in court documents that the deaths were not isolated, and noted there have been three other suicides since 2022, including one in late June.

The suits reference the death of Cheryl Phillips, who died by suicide at the jail in 2022. Phillips' estate also is suing the county and PrimeCare, claiming she was removed from psychiatric observation despite a history of suicidal ideation, and was denied her methadone, forcing her to detox. Her

See **SUITS** on Page A2

Quakertown school's abrupt closure upsets families

By Maddie Hanna
PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

On June 1, Kent Groff wrote two \$2,400 checks toward his grandchildren's tuition this fall at United Friends School, a small Quaker early childhood and elementary school in Quakertown.

The checks were cashed June 4, Groff said. He was shocked when a little more than a month later, United Friends announced it would be closing — in five days.

In a July 10 letter to families, the school's board of trustees said it could not open for the fall school year because not enough students were enrolled.

"Unfortunately, with slow enrollment

activity in early summer and unexpected late attrition, it became clear that there was no sustainable path forward," the board said in the letter, noting that the school had built a "conservative" budget on 80 students, but only 50 had committed to attend.

The news stunned families, who said they were given no warning that the school, which had been open for 42 years, was on the brink of closure.

"I was like, there's no way this can be true. There has to be something that can be done," said Kelly Kringe, Groff's daughter, who had just picked her children up from a camp at United Friends when she got the email



United Friends School in Quakertown. **CATHERINE MEREDITH/THE MORNING CALL**

See **SCHOOL** on Page A2

SUBSCRIPTION

Visit myaccount.mcall.com or call 610-820-6601 to sign up for a subscription. To place an ad, visit placeanad.mcall.com.

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY H: 86 L: 61
WED. H: 82 L: 69
THU. H: 87 L: 70
Complete details on **NEWS 8**

INDEX

Business A9 Games A11 Nation/World A17
Classified C8 Horoscopes A14 Obituaries A22
Comics/TV A14 Life A16 Opinion A7





YOUR HOMETOWN TEAM

UPCOMING HOMESTAND

AUG 11 PITTIES NIGHT COLLAPSIBLE DOG BOWL GIVEAWAY (FIRST 1,500 FANS 18 & OVER) TAIL WAGGIN' DAY	AUG 12 CASEY THE BAT DOG APPEARANCE TACOS & TALLBOYS	AUG 13 CHRIS P. BACON BOBBLEHEAD GIVEAWAY (FIRST 3,000 FANS 18 & OVER) TWISTED THURSDAY HAPPY HOUR
AUG 14 PIRATE NIGHT FRIDAY NIGHT FIREWORKS	AUG 15 GOLF NIGHT STAINLESS STEEL CUP GIVEAWAY (FIRST 3,000 FANS 18 & OVER) FIREWORKS	AUG 16 FOOTBALL DAY MINI FOOTBALL GIVEAWAY (FIRST 3,000 FANS 18 & OVER) KIDS RUN THE BASES

