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Hamilton County residents attend the Hamilton County Planning Commission meeting Monday, as commissioners pass the Plan Hamilton growth blueprint.

## Plan Hamilton advances

### Regional panel OKs proposed growth rules favored by builders

**BY ELLEN GERST**  
STAFF WRITER

Planning commissioners Monday approved a strategic growth plan for unincorporated parts of Hamilton County, following years of public meetings and revisions.

All but two members of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission voted in favor of Plan Hamilton. County mayoral appointee Nathan Janeway, the county's development director, voted against it, and Nathan Bird, who works for a firm that consulted on the plan, recused himself from the vote.

Some residents of the unincor-

porated area, who've organized in an attempt to reduce the amount of growth and building allowed where they live, said the plan threatens the county's rural character.

"It is not aligned with the resident vision and goals for the community," Ooltewah resident Don Johnson told planning commissioners before the vote. "Increasing density continues to increase the current \$135 million backlog of infrastructure repairs."

Residents have also raised concerns that the planning board, with nine of its 15 members working jobs connected to the housing industry, is biased toward developers.

In August, county commissioners

amended the plan to include changes Commissioner Lee Helton, R-East Brainerd, presented as a compromise between those residents and the interests of local home builders. Those changes passed by one vote.

"The commission did vote 6-5, but that was not the will of the people," Birchwood resident Glenda Pappu said to applause.

The Homebuilders Association of Greater Chattanooga was in favor of Helton's changes, though they aren't everything members would want in the plan, said the group's president, Jason Farmer.

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## States face off over abortion shield laws

BY PAM BELLUCK  
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

America's battle over abortion has entered an intense phase of legal maneuvering over a deeply fraught issue of states' rights: Whether states must honor one another's abortion laws.

At the center of the fight are abortion shield laws, which were adopted by many states that support abortion rights after the Supreme Court revoked the nationwide right to abortion three years ago. Shield laws in at least eight states protect health care providers who prescribe abortion pills by telemedicine and send them to patients in states with abortion bans.

Officials in those shield-law states are prevented from obeying subpoenas, extradition requests and other legal actions that states with bans take against abortion providers. That is a stark departure from typical interstate practices of cooperating in legal matters.

With more and more patients — well over 100,000 per year — receiving pills from shield-law providers, states with abortion bans have been searching for ways to block or hinder those laws. Now, the battle is about to explode into a constitutional showdown in a New York court — a challenge that is expected to wind up in the Supreme Court.

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## Congress obtains note to Epstein allegedly from Trump

BY MICHAEL GOLD  
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — A key congressional committee Monday obtained a note and sexually suggestive drawing apparently signed by Donald Trump and included in a book for disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein's 50th birthday in 2003 — a drawing that Trump has insisted is fake.

Democrats on the House Oversight Committee said they had viewed the drawing — a figure of a naked woman with "Donald" written below her waist — and posted a photo of it on their official social media account. The drawing, in thick black ink, outlines text that quotes an imagined conversation between Trump and Epstein, with what appears to be Trump first name written in his distinctive handwriting.

"The Oversight Committee has secured the infamous 'Birthday Book' that contains a note from President Trump that he has said does not exist," Rep. Robert Garcia of California, the top Democrat on the

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## What Americans think about socialism, capitalism, according to Gallup poll

BY AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — For years, Republicans have disparaged their political rivals by describing them as socialists. But that may not be the insult it once was for rank-and-file Democrats, who have warmed to socialism and increasingly see "capitalism" as a barb.

A new Gallup poll finds that while U.S. adults overall are more likely to have a positive view of capitalism than socialism, Democrats feel differently. According to the survey, only 42% of Democrats view capitalism favorably, while 66% have a positive view of socialism.

Capitalism's image has slipped with U.S. adults overall since 2021, the survey finds, and the results show a gradual but persistent shift in Democrats' support for the two ideologies over the past 15 years, with socialism rising as capitalism falls. The shifts underscore deep divisions within the party about whether open support for socialism will hurt Democrats' ability to reach moderates or galvanize greater support from people who are

concerned about issues like the cost of living.

Those tensions were cast into sharp relief earlier this year when Zohran Mamdani, a self-described democratic socialist, won the Democratic primary in the race for New York City mayor, leading some centrist Democrats to worry about his impact on the party's national brand. Meanwhile, years after independent Sen. Bernie Sanders' insurgent presidential campaigns put a new face and brand on socialism, Sanders is attracting massive crowds with a "fighting oligarchy" tour pushing Democrats to embrace his ideas as they search for a path back to viability.

The new poll, conducted in August among a sample of 1,094 U.S. adults, shows that both younger and older Democrats have both warmed slightly on socialism since 2010. But Democrats under 50 are much less likely to view capitalism favorably, while the opinions of Democrats ages 50 and older haven't shifted meaningfully, according to Gallup.

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Ooltewah resident Maddy Kaminski holds a sign April 19 during a protest and food drive near the Chattanooga Area Food Bank.