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Transforming Bullets Into Beauty 8
Transformando las Balas en Belleza

Photo/Foto: Whitney Curtis for KHN

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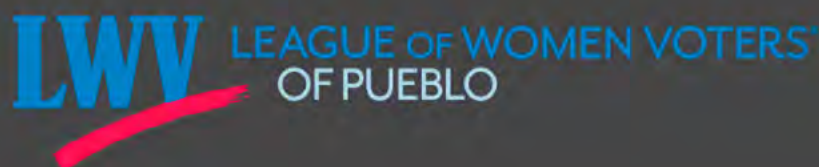


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Commentary/Commentario

New Year, Same Immigration Problems

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

The New Year has arrived with the same old problems. Undocumented immigrants already rooted in this country for decades, and those who arrive at the border seeking asylum, are between a rock and a hard place: still the favorite target of a Republican Party that refuses to solve the immigration issue it exploits politically; and Democrats whose promises have withered on the vine, despite claiming to be on the side of immigrants. It's an undeniable reality of immigration that thousands of human beings hold out the expectation that something in their favor will happen, for the first time in a long time. But politicking has taken over the entire national scene, so much so that it has ended up displacing even the most minimum compassion and U.S. moral sense. Because if anything was clear in the three-ring circus that was the election of California Republican Kevin McCarthy to be Speaker of the House, it's that Republican extremism will dominate in that



Photo/Foto: America's Voice



Photo/Foto: America's Voice

legislative body, at least for the next two years. It's fantasy, therefore, to think that the body could advance real immigration reform that tackles all of the problems the system has accumulated, in the thirty-six years since the 1986 amnesty was enacted by a Republican president, Ronald Reagan. That is, after almost four decades of vain attempts, it seems to be time to accept that what the rest of the world is witnessing is that the United States is not capable of resolving the migration question at this moment; a country that traditionally solves problems for other people, for better or for worse. In the face of this scenario, all hope los-

es meaning, even in the discourse where migrants are beseeched to "resist," which they have done. For example, Biden finally went to the southern border, a topic he should already know inside and out since he was the vice-president to Barack Obama, who promised an immigration reform that never materialized. And before that, today's president was a U.S. senator from the state of Delaware for thirty-six solid years, seeing proposals for immigration reform come and go without yielding anything. At this point and in that sense, he and the Democrats should already have had an abundance of options, from those that have not worked to those

that have the potential to bear fruit, and selected the best in order to concretize a real plan that not even the most anti-immigrant members of the Republican Party or the fringe of the MAGA movement could refute, much less destroy. However, it would have been even more real and convincing for the leader to see first-hand the human drama that thousands of migrants who fill the streets of El Paso and other border cities are living, with the hope of applying for asylum. Biden, it's true, has taken measures to reduce unauthorized immigration at the border, issuing 30,000 "parole" entries per month to immigrants from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, so that they can apply from their countries of origin and come to the United States with authorization to seek asylum, as long as they come on a plane, have a sponsor, and pass the background check. But those who present themselves at the border or attempt to cross without authorization will be expelled under the authority of Title 42, a program originally tied to public health, which has been revived and applied since one of the most

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Politicking has taken over the entire national scene, so much so that it has ended up displacing even the most minimum compassion and U.S. moral sense.

anti-immigrant administrations of our time, that of Donald Trump. The Biden administration has been criticized for maintaining the policies of its predecessor, like the aforementioned Title 42, and has been put on the defensive, indicating that it is simply implementing what has been ordered by the courts. But that is a legal explanation that leaves aside the human element. Moreover, applying a discriminatory policy that, in reality, is trying to undermine asylum laws, because a court allegedly orders it, does not erase the damage that said policy has caused to thousands of refugees. Because who replaces a life, a hope, a chance at leaving the quagmire of violence, persecution,

See Hastings & Torres on page 21

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Año Nuevo Con Problemas Migratorios Añejos

Maribel Hastings y David Torres

El Nuevo Año arranca con viejos problemas. Los inmigrantes indocumentados ya radicados por décadas en este país y los que abarrotan la frontera sur buscando asilo siguen estando entre la espada de un Partido Republicano negado a solucionar el tema migratorio que explota políticamente; y una pared demócrata que aunque afirma estar del lado de los inmigrantes, sus promesas han muerto en el intento. Es una realidad migratoria innegable en la que miles de seres humanos se mantienen a la expectativa de que algo ocurra en su favor por primera vez en tanto tiempo. Pero la politiquería se ha adueñado de todo el panorama nacional, de tal modo que ha terminado por desplazar incluso la más mínima compasión y la esencia moral estadounidense. Porque si algo quedó claro en el circo de tres pistas que fue la elección del republicano de California, Kevin McCarthy, como presidente de la Cámara Baja, es que el extremismo republicano dominará ese cuerpo legislativo al menos

durante los próximos dos años. Es irreal, por otro lado, pensar que pueda impulsarse una reforma migratoria verdadera y amplia que aborde todos los problemas que el sistema ha acumulado en los 36 años desde que se promulgó la amnistía de 1986 por un presidente republicano, Ronald Reagan. Es decir, después de casi cuatro décadas de vanos intentos, al parecer va siendo tiempo de aceptar que lo que está atestiguando el resto del mundo es que Estados Unidos no es capaz de resolver su cuestión migratoria en este momento; un país que tradicionalmente resuelve los problemas de otros pueblos, para bien o para mal. Y ante ese panorama, toda esperanza pierde sentido, incluso en los discursos donde se conmina a los migrantes, que lo han dado todo, a "resistir".

Por ejemplo, Biden, finalmente, fue a la frontera sur, un tema que debería conocer al dedillo, pues antes fue vicepresidente de Barack Obama, quien prometió una reforma migratoria que nunca se concretó. Y antes de eso, el actual presidente fue senador federal por el estado de Delaware durante 36 sólidos años viendo ir y venir pro-

puestas de reforma migratoria que no rindieron fruto. A estas alturas, en ese sentido, él y los demócratas ya deberían tener un abanico de opciones entre lo que no ha funcionado y lo que ha tenido potencial de fructificar durante todo ese tiempo para, rescatando lo mejor, concretar un plan real que ni siquiera los más antiinmigrantes del Partido Republicano o la esfera del movimiento MAGA pudieran refutar, mucho menos destruir.

“

La politiquería se ha adueñado de todo el panorama nacional, de tal modo que ha terminado por desplazar incluso la más mínima compasión y la esencia moral estadounidense.

Sin embargo, habría sido más real y convincente que el mandatario viera de primera mano el drama humano que viven los miles de migrantes que llenan las calles

Vea Hastings & Torres/Esp, página 13

The New McCarthyism Is Coming

Jeffrey C. Isaac

It has always been clear that a Republican takeover of the House of Representatives would signal real danger for American democracy. Last week's drama surrounding Kevin McCarthy's ascension to the House Speakership was a sideshow. The demands of the so-called "far-right" Gaetz Gang—"so-called" because the entire House Republican leadership and most of its members are far-right—for House rules changes was never a sincere effort to promote greater transparency and deliberation.

More important, the changes were always motivated by a genuine far-right agenda far beyond legislative "process": to weaken the Biden administration and the



Photo: Jeffrey C. Isaac

Democratic Party, to harass and intimidate all so-called "deep state" agencies of the federal government, and to wage a culture war against liberalism.

McCarthy's nauseating encomiums to "democracy" notwithstanding, it is now even clearer that what House Republicans have in store

for us is a version of "democracy" best described by the influential, Carl Schmitt, whose political ideas helped to pave the way for the rise of Nazism in the 1930's: *"Every actual democracy rests on the principle that not only are equals equals but unequals will not be treated equally. Democracy requires, first, homogeneity and second—if the need arises—elimination or eradication of heterogeneity . . . A democracy demonstrates its political power by knowing how to refuse or keep at bay something foreign and unequal that threatens its homogeneity."*

This is precisely what the new McCarthyism promises: the investigation, punishment, and suppression, if not the more ominous "eradication," of what is "foreign" and "threatening" to the MAGA vision: the Democratic Party, liberalism

and progressivism in all of its variations, and especially "wokeness" as it has supposedly corrupted and debased all educational, scientific, and legal institutions. And while McCarthy himself speaks out of both sides of his mouth—playing to his red base while also pretending to be "moderate"—his entire leadership team, with his blessing, is already laying the foundation for this latest MAGA assault on liberal democracy.

Exhibit 1: News outlets report that plans are underway for the House Armed Services Committee to investigate and purge "wokeness" in the armed forces. Rep. Mike Rogers—the so-called "moderate" that assaulted Matt Gaetz on the House floor after McCarthy's failed fourteenth ballot last week—is in line to assume the chairman-



They will use their investigative and subpoena power to destroy individuals, disrupt the process of government, attack opponents, and delegitimize the very institutions of liberal democracy.

ship of the Committee. And he has already declared: "All this wokeness in the military, we are going to be aggressively trying to root that stuff out." As Paul Waldman has pointed out, there is absolutely no evidence that the U.S. military

See Isaac on page 7

Time is Running Out. Get Covered by January 15.

Laura Packard

If you don't have health insurance — or just want to explore your options — go to healthcare.gov on or before Jan. 15 to get covered with affordable health insurance now.

Having and keeping good quality affordable health care is personal for me. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) saved my life.

In 2017, I walked into a doctor's office with a nagging cough and walked out with a stage four cancer diagnosis. My Obamacare policy paid for the six months of chemotherapy and a month of radiation treatments I needed to be in remission today. As a small business owner, before the ACA I was only eligible for junk insurance. If I still had that policy, I would be bankrupt or dead.

Nobody knows what our future holds. From an accident to an unexpected diagnosis, we all deserve great health care when we need it. When we are sick or injured, our focus should be on healing, not living through sleep-



less nights worrying how to pay for it.

In the past, Affordable Care Act health insurance policies weren't always affordable for some middle class Americans like me and perhaps you, too. At the time I was diagnosed, I did not qualify for financial help.

But thanks to Congress and President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan and now the Inflation Reduction Act, millions more can get assistance paying for their health insurance. Your premiums are capped at no more than 8.5% of your income, and you may be

eligible for cost-sharing to bring down prices even more. Four out of 5 Americans can find coverage options for \$10 a month or less.

An estimated 160,000 Coloradans will save hundreds of dollars on average on their Marketplace health care premiums.

These health insurance savings are especially important for self-employed people, small business owners and employees, gig workers, temp workers, and older people who have retired but are not yet eligible for Medicare.

To find out what discounts you are eligible for (and also whether you may be eligible for Medicaid or other programs in your state), go to healthcare.gov and plug in your estimated income for 2023. If you live in a state with its own state-based health insurance exchange, you will be redirected to the website for your state.

The deadline for open enrollment is Jan. 15. After that date, you would only be able to sign up if you qualified for a special enrollment period — perhaps you moved, or experienced a life change such

as getting married or divorced, or lost health insurance through your employer.

There is much more work to do, but we have come far on making health care more affordable in the past few years.

Even if you didn't qualify for help before, the subsidies available through the Inflation Reduction Act mean that millions more Americans like you and I will get financial assistance. Take a few minutes to go through your options, and figure out what coverage possibilities you're eligible for.

If there is more you want to know about open enrollment and your options, check out my CareTalk show and podcast, where experts answer your health insurance questions and talk through larger issues in our health care system.

Time is running out to ensure you and your family have access to affordable health care this year. The life you save could be your own. Get covered through healthcare.gov today.

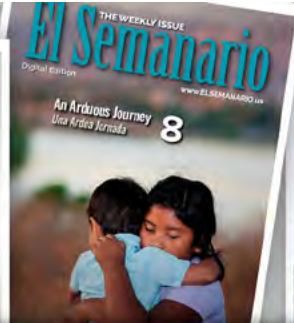


These health insurance savings are especially important for self-employed people, small business owners and employees, gig workers, temp workers, and older people who have retired but are not yet eligible for Medicare.

Laura Packard is a stage 4 cancer survivor and Denver-based health care advocate, founder of [Voices of Health Care Action](https://VoicesofHealthCareAction.org) and executive director of [Health Care Voter](https://HealthCareVoter.org). She hosts [CareTalk](https://CareTalk.org), a weekly consumer call-in show on health care and health insurance issues in America on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. Eastern time. This commentary is republished from [Colorado Newsline](https://ColoradoNewsline.org) under a Creative Commons license.

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Commentary/Commentario

1965 Wichita Plane Crash Left Families (Like Mine) Locked in a Moment

Mark McCormick

After a fully fueled KC-135 military tanker crashed into what was then a segregated Wichita neighborhood, my sister Chan chose not to believe our 5-year-old cousin, Tracy Randolph, had died in the fiery 1965 disaster.

Chandra McCormick, weeks from her 12th birthday, watched soap operas with our great-grandmother, Jessie Pearl Holloway, whom we called Big Mama. Chan borrowed a common storyline from the shows and told herself Tracy had just lost her memory. When her amnesia lifted, Tracy would come home.

But that Saturday morning crash — still considered Kansas' deadliest air disaster — killed 30 people, including Tracy, our grandmother Mary Daniels (we called her Little Mama), our uncle C.L. Daniels and our cousin Clyde Holloway.



Photo: Mark McCormick

Documentarians Kevin Harrison, Riccardo Harris and Kenneth Hawkins want to re-examine the grief of survivors from that Jan. 16 morning — people either carrying that grief and continuing to live, or those who coped by existing because living felt impossible.

Interviewing them convinced me that I needed to look no further than my childhood household for various expressions of grief,

though my mother and my aunt almost never spoke of it.

The tanker had just left McConnell Air Force Base outside Wichita but struggled to climb. As a crash seemed imminent, the crew began dumping fuel, but the plane dived into a vacant lot. A cascade of 32,000 gallons of jet fuel and fire incinerated a dozen homes.

The entire crew died. The crash gouged a crater 15 feet deep. The emotional trauma ran deeper. Several children died, as did an entire family. The accident left others homeless.

A [Kansas Historical Society article](#) praised the initial disaster response but said "that help started to wane." It described the temporary survivor housing as "rundown and unsafe."

It described the legal settlements as "disappointing."

"One family received just \$400," the article said, while the average

settlement stood at \$13,000, minus the 20% that went to attorney fees. Many survivors wondered whether the payouts would have been more substantial had they been white.

Segregation, according to D.W. Carter, author of "Mayday Over Wichita," forced Black people into a small area, boosting the death toll. Wichita then ranked as one of the nation's most segregated cities.

The documentary intends to excavate all this ground.

"My interest in this story increased as I learned more about the victims," said Harris, who is my cousin and executive director of GEAR UP at Wichita State University. I attended KU with both him and Harrison in the late 1980s. "I hope the unheard voices of the victims — those who died and those left behind — can finally be heard and understood."

Harrison, an assistant professor for the Cohen Honor College

at WSU, said previous books and films about the crash didn't sufficiently examine survivors' emotions.



"I hope the unheard voices of the victims — those who died and those left behind — can finally be heard and understood."

Riccardo Harris

"Every rung of Maslow's ladder expresses the desire to be heard and understood," Harrison said, referring to the model of basic human needs. "This project was an opportunity to give a voice to the voiceless."

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Will GOP Voters Ever Wake Up to How Much GOP Lawmakers Screw Them Over?

Thom Hartmann

When will Republican voters figure out how badly they're getting screwed by Republican politicians?

— Desperate workers struggle with soaring rents (courtesy of Republican-donor hedge funds); — lack of healthcare (12 GOP-controlled states still refuse to expand Medicaid for under-\$15,000/year workers) is literally killing Americans; — wages have flatlined since Reagan declared war on workers in 1981 while the merely rich have become the morbidly rich; — Americans pay 10 times as much as Canadians for some drugs because Republicans block any effort to bring competition to that marketplace;

— at the same time Trump and his GOP buddies in the House and Senate borrowed \$1.7 trillion to fund a tax giveaway to his billionaire buddies, student debt passed the \$1.7 trillion mark...

Yet somehow the "conservative" base voters never seem to figure it out. Why?

Most Republican voters don't think much about it, but there are two very distinct layers to the GOP. It's like a pyramid with a capstone at the very top.

The vast base of the pyramid are the white voters who Richard Nixon invited into the party after the Democrats embraced racial equality in 1964/1965 with the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.

They mostly live in all-white neighborhoods, attend all-white

churches, and send their kids to all-white schools. While most aren't the Confederate-flag-toting "out and open" racists like the folks who showed up at the Capitol on January 6th, they're nonetheless "uncomfortable" with nonwhite people. It's their "culture," they'll tell you.

At the tippy-top of the pyramid, it's capstone, are the handful of white billionaires who answered Lewis Powell's 1971 call to get active and seize control of America's political institutions.

They've funded think tanks in every state and at the federal level, sponsor anti-labor economics and political science professors in our colleges and universities, lever judges into positions all the way up to the Supreme Court, and pour a

seemingly unending river of cash into Republican candidates for office.

These elite of the GOP live insular lives in their mansions with servants' quarters and private security, travel on private jets, and vacation on private islands or their own personal super-yachts. They don't really care that much about race because it's not an issue in their daily lives: the people who enter the circle around them and their families are tightly regulated.

These conservative elite often own or are descended from the owners of America's largest and most profitable businesses. Their issues, therefore, are their own income taxes and the regulation of their companies' behavior.

They understand that Voltaire was dead serious when he said, "The comfort of the rich depends on an abundant supply of the poor."

To keep their taxes low they fund movements to privatize public schools, gut "entitlements," and oppose any sort of "welfare" aid to working class or poor people. To keep their businesses "free of government interference" they pay off politicians and hire judges to destroy unions, kneecap regulations, and spiff "conservative" media celebrities who lionized them as "job creators" and "geniuses."

You'd think the white base of the GOP would have figured out by now that the Republican elite are more interested in keeping



You'd think the white base of the GOP would have figured out by now that the Republican elite are more interested in keeping their wages down than having them as neighbors.

their wages down than having them as neighbors, but the "Makers" of the party have executed a brilliant strategy to keep their own taxes low and profits high while suppressing the "Takers" wages and benefits among the party's base.

Truth be told, many in the GOP base were beginning to figure this out by the end of the disastrous presidency of trust-fund-baby George W. Bush.

He'd begun the privatization of Medicare with his Medicare Advantage scam in 2003; lied us into two unnecessary and illegal wars; borrowed around \$4 trillion to fund a massive tax cut for his donors, family, and friends; and to top it all off was only in the White House because his brother was governor of Florida and threw 80,000 Black voters off the rolls just months before the 2000 election...and *still* needed his father's friends on the

See Hartmann on page 18

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is overtaken with "wokeness." But there is a great fear on the right that traditional gender norms, and especially conceptions of "masculinity," have been waning in society at large, including the military, and this fear is being stoked daily by Tucker Carlson, Laura Ingraham, and a host of other right-wing media personalities. And so it is now Republican dogma that liberal gender norms, and the protections they offer to many citizens, must be eradicated. This obviously represents a threat to women, LGBTQ individuals, and perhaps even ethnic and racial minorities. But it also represents a threat to all of those inside the military, in the officer corps and in the military academies and educational institutions, who are working to create a culture of greater tolerance and understanding of the world. In short, it represents a threat to the very practice of military professionalism.

We can thus look forward to Benghazi-like hearings in which General Milley and a range of other military leaders who have refused to follow the example of Mike Fly-

nn will be subjected to public inquisition and debasement.

Exhibit 2: Sunday's Tweet from Rep. Steve Scalise, McCarthy's loyal lieutenant who will now step into the role of House Majority Leader. "THIS WEEK—The House Republican Majority will move to pass legislation to:

- Defund the 87,000 new IRS agents

- Establish a committee on the weaponization of the federal government against citizens

- End SPR oil sales to China

- Hold woke prosecutors accountable."

Every one of these promises represents an attack on the federal government. The "SPR oil sales" is a nod to the investigation of Hunter Biden and on Joe Biden himself (the logic of this is laid out in Barton Gellman's recent *Atlantic* piece, "The Impeachment of Joe Biden"). And items two and four are clearly aimed at the Justice Department's investigations and prosecutions of the January 6, 2021 insurrection, including its cases against Donald Trump, and is possibly also aimed at the House January 6 Committee

itself (promised by McCarthy back in November).

Exhibit 3: The "committee on the weaponization of the federal government against citizens" is a very serious, and ominous, initiative that is clearly intended to counter, and undermine, the now-terminated January 6 Committee. The new committee, a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee, will be chaired by Judiciary Chair Jim Jordan. As the *New York Times* reports, the Republican initiative will grant Jordan extensive power: "authority to subpoena the Justice Department for information about the special counsel inquiry into Mr. Trump's attempts to overturn the 2020 election and his handling of classified documents, along with other politically charged matters like an open tax investigation into President Biden's son, Hunter Biden . . . [it] would also grant Mr. Jordan's panel the power to receive the same highly classified information that intelligence agencies make available to their oversight committee, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence."

It is very clear that this past is now prologue.

House Republicans are taking aim at the Biden administration; the Democratic Party, including their own Democratic colleagues; and a wide range of governmental institutions deemed "tyrannical." They will use their investigative and subpoena power to destroy individuals, disrupt the process of government, attack opponents, and delegitimize the very institutions of liberal democracy. And they will be aided, abetted, and incited by a far-reaching network of media institutions and social media platforms.

They cannot govern. But they do not seek to govern. They seek

to lay waste to what they despise, and especially anything that is "foreign" to their perverse idea of "American Greatness." What they despise is nothing less than political pluralism and liberal democracy itself.

Jeffrey C. Isaac is James H. Rudy Professor of Political Science at Indiana University, Bloomington. This commentary is republished from Common Dreams under a Creative Commons license.

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To Combat Gun Violence, This Artist Turns Ammunition Into Art

By Cara Anthony

As a child, Mykael Ash enjoyed picking up seashells near the Mississippi Gulf Coast. His grandfather lives there, so trips to the beach were a regular part of life.

"It's peaceful energy," Ash said. "Especially when you put that seashell to your ear."

“

My art saved my life. There's so much other stuff that I could have gotten off into."

Mykael Ash, Artist

At age 32, he still collects shells. But the terrain is different in this city of 18,000 people. Ash walks on concrete instead of sand, picking up shells left by bullets as he walks through the city for exercise.

"It just hit me one day," he said. He could use the shell casings in his artwork.

Gun violence has been a persistent problem in East St. Louis, which to the frustration of many residents had one of the highest murder rates of any U.S. city before the pandemic. While the rates have improved somewhat, it's still a plague there and a growing problem in communities across the country. More than 47,000 people died from gunshot injuries nationwide in 2021, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which was the highest toll in the U.S. since the early 1990s.

In Ash's studio, spent ammunition mixes with caution tape, shredded tires, broken glass, and paint to transform the litter of violence into art that tells stories about race, resistance, and history. The work is personal, Ash said.

Each year since he was 17, Ash has lost at least one friend or relative to gun violence. That includes his cousin Dashaun "Bookie" Gage, 28, who died in 2018 in a shooting in front of a gas station across the Mississippi River in St. Louis. Ash and Gage were close. Losing Gage left Ash so traumatized that he stopped going to that gas station.



Mykael Ash stands near a mural he painted in honor of East St. Louis rapper Cedric Gooden, who died after being shot in 2019. / Mykael Ash frente a un mural que pintó en honor al rapero de East St. Louis, Cedric Gooden, quien murió después de recibir un disparo en 2019.



Ash holds bullet shells he found on the streets of East St. Louis, Illinois, at his studio. / Ash sostiene cartuchos de bala que encontró en las calles de East St. Louis, Illinois.

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He turned to his art after the shooting, creating a portrait of Gage the same year.

"My art saved my life," Ash said. "There's so much other stuff that I could have gotten off into."

Ash fell in love with art at a young age. His mother, Gina Walker, noticed his interest in drawing when he was just 2 and their family moved from Anchorage, Alaska, to East St. Louis. It took them eight days to make the journey, Walker said. Little Mykael drew while his parents drove.

"He was drawing before he could even talk very well," Walker

said. "As a little boy, I told him that he would be a world-renowned artist."

They moved again when he was 11. The school district in East St. Louis had cut funding for art, Walker said, so she moved their family to neighboring Belleville, Illinois, where Ash could learn in schools that at the time had more robust art programs.

"He would go to a craft store and he would touch the paper," Walker said. "The paper had to have a certain touch and a certain feel."

His skill and his love for art grew. Ash sold his first painting

as a high school student. His art teacher, Dan Krause, purchased the painting for \$60. Ash went on to study at the Art Institute of St. Louis before the college closed in 2019.

Today, Ash is a resident artist at the House of Miles East St. Louis, a nonprofit housed inside Miles Davis' childhood home in the city. The jazz legend is a source of inspiration for Ash, who has painted at least 250 portraits of the musician. "Every picture has a distinct expressive feel to it," said Lau-

Para Combatir la Violencia, Artista Convierte las Balas en Arte

By Cara Anthony

East St. Louis, Illinois.- Cuando era niño, Mykael Ash disfrutaba recogiendo conchas marinas cerca de la costa del golfo de Mississippi, en donde vive su abuelo. Los viajes a la playa eran una parte habitual de su vida.

"Es energía pacífica", dijo Ash. "Especialmente cuando apoyas esa concha marina sobre la oreja".

A los 32 años, todavía colecciona conchas. Pero el terreno es diferente en esta ciudad de 18,000 habitantes. Ash camina sobre concreto en lugar de arena, y en vez de conchas recoge cartuchos dejados por las balas y cintas amarillas de seguridad mientras camina para hacer ejercicio.

"De repente, un día me di cuenta", dijo: podría usar estos cartuchos en sus obras de arte.

La violencia con armas de fuego ha sido un problema persistente en East St. Louis, que, para frustración de muchos residentes, tenía una de las tasas de homicidios más altas de cualquier ciudad de Estados Unidos antes de la pandemia.

Si bien las tasas han mejorado un poco, todavía es una plaga en East St. Louis, y un problema creciente en las comunidades de todo el país. Según datos de los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC), a nivel nacional, más de 47,000 personas murieron por heridas de bala en 2021: la cifra más alta desde principios de la década de 1990.

En el estudio de Ash, municiones usadas se mezclan con llantas trituradas, vidrios rotos y pintura para transformar la basura de la violencia en arte que cuenta historias sobre la raza, la resistencia y la historia. El trabajo es personal, dijo Ash.

Cada año desde sus 17, Ash ha perdido al menos a un amigo o familiar a causa de la violencia con armas de fuego. Eso incluye a su primo Dashaun "Bookie" Gage, de 28 años, quien murió en 2018 en un tiroteo frente a una gasolinera al otro lado del río Mississippi, en

St. Louis. Ash y Gage eran cercanos. Perder a Gage dejó a Ash tan traumatizado que dejó de ir a esa gasolinera.

Volvió a su arte después del tiroteo y ese mismo año creó un retrato de Gage.

"Mi arte me salvó la vida", dijo Ash. "Hay tantas otras cosas en las que podría haberme metido".

Ash se enamoró del arte a una edad temprana. Su madre, Gina Walker, notó su interés por el dibujo cuando solo tenía 2 años y su familia se mudó de Anchorage, Alaska, a East St. Louis. Les tomó ocho días hacer el viaje, dijo Walker. El pequeño Mykael dibujaba mientras sus padres conducían.

"Ya estaba dibujando antes de poder hablar", dijo Walker. "Cuando era niño, les dije que sería un artista de renombre mundial".

Se mudaron de nuevo cuando él tenía 11 años. El distrito escolar en East St. Louis había recortado los fondos para arte, dijo Walker, por lo que la familia se trasladó a la vecina Belleville, Illinois, donde Ash pudo aprender en escuelas que en ese momento tenían programas de arte más sólidos.

"Iba a una tienda de arte y tocaba el papel", dijo Walker. "El papel tenía que tener una cierta textura y una cierta sensación".

Su habilidad y su amor por el arte crecieron. Ash vendió su primera pintura cuando era estudiante de secundaria. Su maestro de arte, Dan Krause, compró la pintura por \$60. Ash pasó a estudiar en el Instituto de Arte de St. Louis antes de que la universidad cerrara en 2019.

Hoy, Ash es artista residente en House of Miles East St. Louis, una organización sin fines de lucro ubicada dentro de la casa de la infancia de Miles Davis en la ciudad.

La leyenda del jazz es una fuente de inspiración para Ash, quien ha pintado al menos 250 retratos del músico. "Cada imagen tiene una sensación expresiva distinta", dijo Lauren Parks, presidenta y cofundadora de House of Miles.



Mykael Ash en su estudio en East St. Louis, Illinois. Ash usa cartuchos de bala que encuentra en el suelo como elementos de sus obras de arte para contar historias sobre la violencia racial, la resistencia y la historia. / Mykael Ash sits in his studio in East St. Louis, Illinois. Ash uses bullet shells he finds on the ground as elements in his artwork to tell stories about racial violence, resistance, and history.



"The Gathering" describe la revuelta racial de East St. Louis de 1917. / "The Gathering" depicts the East St. Louis race riot of 1917.

En 2019, como regalo de cumpleaños para su madre, Ash organizó una muestra especial de su arte en House of Miles sobre la fuerza de la comunidad negra.

Cada pintura ilustraba el orgullo, dijo Walker.

Su obra también ahonda en el lado más oscuro de la historia de la ciudad.

A principios de este año, Ash terminó una serie de retratos sobre el disturbio racial de East St. Louis

Vea **Violencia**, página 21

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State News / Noticias del Estado

Colorado General Assembly Discuss Priorities for 2023 Session

COLORADO

By Sara Wilson

The Colorado General Assembly convened for its 2023 regular session Monday morning as Democrats prepare to legislate with a wide majority and Republicans learn to navigate the reality of diminished power in the state Capitol.

Opening day began with musical performances — Colorado Children's Choral in the House and four-person ensemble DeVotchKa in the Senate — prayer, and the swearing in of every legislator, with a crowded floor and packed galleries that required an overflow room to accommodate the increase in visitors.

In her opening remarks, House Speaker Julie McCluskie, a Democrat from Dillon, spoke about previous legislative successes for the party and offered a glimpse into how Democrats hope to propel the "Colorado dream" forward this session.

"It's our job to support and celebrate those individual dreams. We must understand and deeply respect that lawmakers in this

chamber will have different visions and ideas for what this looks like. To do this, we must contemplate what binds us all together — the basic needs that every individual has," she said.

McCluskie said this is the year the Legislature makes water the "centerpiece of (its) conservation efforts" by working to modernize the state's water management system and work to secure federal dollars for restoration and conservation programs.

“Let's put people above politics, and progress above partisanship to continue delivering results for all Coloradans.”

House Speaker Julie McCluskie

"The General Assembly has recently invested millions in the Colorado Water Plan, drought mitigation, watershed protection, and water conservation, and yet our water faces unprecedented threats that no one has seen or experienced before," she said.

On firearm policy, she shared that the Legislature is seeking to expand how and when a red flag petition — to confiscate guns from potentially dangerous people — can be filed, as well as seeking to increase the age limit and waiting period to buy a gun.

She also spoke about her desire for bipartisanship as Democrats hold a supermajority. Just 19 of 65 members in the chamber are Republicans.

"Much of our important progress has been accomplished because Democrats and Republicans came together, rolled up their sleeves and delivered commonsense results for their constituents. There have been powerful examples of the lawmakers in this room putting people above partisanship," she said. "As this session begins, I want us all to pursue that same goal. Let's put people above politics, and progress above partisanship to continue delivering results for all Coloradans."

House Minority Leader Mike Lynch, a Wellington Republican, said that while the GOP isn't "proactively" thinking about putting forward its own firearm policies, it will monitor Democratic bills for



Members of the Colorado House of Representatives are sworn in on Jan. 9, 2023. / Los miembros de la Cámara de Representantes de Colorado prestan juramento el 9 de enero de 2023.

Second Amendment or personal freedom violations.

Lynch urged all representatives to be accountable and beholden to their constituents.

"(There are) voices you may not agree with, but are still there to be heard from in each one of your districts. I ask only one thing of you, the supermajority, let those voices be heard," he said in his opening remarks.

McCluskie also highlighted the bounty of firsts this legislative session. Democratic Rep. Brianna Titone is the first transgender lawmaker in the country to serve on caucus leadership, Democratic Rep. Regina English is the first Black woman to represent El Paso County and Democratic Rep. Elizabeth Velasco is the first Latina to represent the Western Slope. Additionally, this is the first session in which three women are in the top three majority caucus leadership positions.

Republicans want to be 'full participants'

Senate President Steve Fenberg, a Democrat from Boulder, spoke about the Senate's potential to slow down a hyperpartisan and politicized legislative process. The chamber's smaller membership allows for more deliberation, he said.

"We don't need to abandon or turn our backs on our tribe. But we need to build fewer walls, and more bridges between our tribes," he said. "We need to build authentic relationships with those who are outside of our insular groups. In other words: we need to become friends."

At the same time, he said, Colorado voters gave Democrats a mandate and intends to utilize the historic majorities. There are 12

Republicans and 23 Democrats in the chamber.

Fenberg, like McCluskie, also spoke about prioritizing gun violence prevention in his opening remarks. The proposal to expand the red flag law, also known as extreme risk protection orders, would allow professionals like counselors and district attorneys to bring petitions to a judge, rather than only law enforcement officers and family members. Fenberg said the bill will be sponsored by Centennial Democratic Sen. Tom Sullivan, who lost his son in the 2012 Aurora theater shooting.

"Nobody is saying that Coloradans don't have the right to defend themselves and own a gun," Fenberg said. "We're saying that, in a civilized society, where people expect the freedom to live with basic security and safety, we must be willing to consider that there are some people who are not fit to possess a deadly weapon because of the extreme risk they pose to themselves and others."

On a controversial fentanyl bill from last session, which Republicans heavily criticized during the campaign cycle, Fenberg said he wants to give it "a chance to work" before considering changes to the law.

Senate Minority Leader Paul Lundeen of Monument said during his opening remarks that he hopes any bipartisan legislation this session will include meaningful contributions from Republicans, rather than simply one or two Republican co-sponsors.

"We are intent to do more than just talk. We insist on being full participants in the legislative process in this chamber, and will offer our best, constructive suggestions for



State News / Noticias del Estado

La Asamblea General de Colorado
Convoca, Discute Prioridades

COLORADO

Por Sara Wilson

La asamblea general de Colorado convocó para su sesión regular 2023 lunes por la mañana mientras que los demócratas se preparan para legislar con una mayoría amplia y los republicanos aprenden navegar la realidad de la energía disminuida en el capitolio del estado.

El día de apertura comenzó con actuaciones musicales - Colorado Childrens' Choral en la Cámara y el conjunto de cuatro personas DeVotchKa en el Senado - la oración, y el juramento de cada legislador, con un piso lleno y galerías llenas que requirieron una sala de desbordamiento para dar cabida al aumento de visitantes.



"Pongamos a las personas por encima de la política, y el progreso por encima del partidismo para seguir ofreciendo resultados a todos los coloradenses".

Julie McCluskie,
Presidenta de la Cámara.

En su discurso de apertura, la presidenta de la Cámara, Julie McCluskie, demócrata de Dillon, habló de los éxitos legislativos anteriores del partido y ofreció una visión de cómo los demócratas esperan impulsar el "sueño de Colorado" en esta sesión.

"Es nuestro trabajo apoyar y celebrar esos sueños individuales. Debemos entender y respetar profundamente que los legisladores en esta cámara tendrán diferentes visiones e ideas de lo que esto parece. Para ello, debemos contemplar lo que nos une a todos: las necesidades básicas que tiene cada individuo", dijo.

McCluskie dijo que este es el año en que la Legislatura hace del agua la "pieza central de (sus) esfuerzos de conservación" trabajando para modernizar el sistema de gestión del agua del estado y trabajar para asegurar dólares federales para programas de restauración y conservación.

"La Asamblea General ha invertido recientemente millones en el Plan de Agua de Colorado, la mitigación de la sequía, la protec-

ción de cuencas hidrográficas, y la conservación del agua, y sin embargo, nuestra agua se enfrenta a amenazas sin precedentes que nadie ha visto o experimentado antes", dijo.

Sobre la política de armas de fuego, compartió que la Legislatura está tratando de ampliar cómo y cuándo una petición de bandera roja - para confiscar armas de personas potencialmente peligrosas - puede ser presentada, así como la búsqueda de aumentar el límite de edad y el período de espera para comprar un arma.

También habló de su deseo de bipartidismo, ya que los demócratas tienen una supermayoría. Sólo 19 de los 65 miembros de la cámara son republicanos.

"Gran parte de nuestro importante progreso se ha logrado porque demócratas y republicanos se unieron, se arremangaron y obtuvieron resultados con sentido común para sus electores. Ha habido poderosos ejemplos de legisladores en esta sala que han puesto a las personas por encima del partidismo", dijo. "Al comienzo de esta legislatura, quiero que todos persigamos el mismo objetivo. Pongamos a las personas por encima de la política, y el progreso por encima del partidismo para seguir ofreciendo resultados a todos los coloradenses".

El líder de la minoría en la Cámara, Mike Lynch, un republicano de Wellington, dijo que aunque el GOP no está pensando "proactivamente" en presentar sus propias políticas sobre armas de fuego, vigilará los proyectos de ley demócratas en busca de violaciones a la Segunda Enmienda o a la libertad personal.

Lynch instó a todos los representantes a rendir cuentas y estar en deuda con sus electores.

"(Hay) voces con las que puede que no estéis de acuerdo, pero que siguen estando ahí para ser escuchadas en cada uno de nuestros distritos. Sólo les pido una cosa, a la supermayoría, que dejen oír esas voces", dijo en su discurso de apertura.

McCluskie también destacó la abundancia de primicias de esta sesión legislativa. La diputada demócrata Brianna Titone es la primera legisladora transgénero del país que forma parte de la dirección del grupo, la diputada demócrata Regina English es la

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Illustration by Kyle Malone

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State News / Noticias del Estado

LEC Calling on Colorado Community to Discuss Educational Equity

COLORADO

By Luis Torres

The future of Chicana/o and other Latina/o students in Denver is evolving. To advocate for our children's academic future, please attend and participate in the Latino Education Coalition's (LEC) Forum on Saturday, January 21, 11:00-3:00pm, at the Highlands Masonic Temple, 3550 Federal Boulevard, Denver, CO. Lunch will be served, free of charge, beginning at noon.



The Latino Education Coalition will host a community forum on Saturday, January 21, to advocate for our children's academic future.

The LEC brings together individuals and groups from various backgrounds to work toward educational equity, and we invite you to work with us in 2023 and into the future. While we focus on Denver, we invite participants from the surrounding communities. The Forum is, "Calling la Comunidad," and the LEC needs your help and advice to better serve Latina/o students. The afternoon will emphasize, "What we have done and where we are going."

This past year has been very active for the LEC, and an agenda

item for the Forum will certainly emphasize what we have worked to accomplish and how much is left to do. For example, members of LEC have been heavily involved in the Colorado State Legislature's 2019 bill, HB19-1192, known as the Inclusion of American Minorities in Teaching Civil Government, that is, Multicultural Studies in K-12. Among other educational topics, the Bill calls for recommendations about the history, culture, and social contributions of the four ma-

See LEC on page 17

Congressman Crow Cracks Down on Dark Money Political Spending

COLORADO

Congressman Jason Crow (CO-06), Co-Chair of the End Corruption Caucus, re-introduced the *End Dark Money Act* on Jan. 9, to crack down on dark money organizations trying to influence our elections. The bill, Crow's first legislative action of the 118th Congress, is designed to stem the flood of dark money by closing a loophole that allows

mega-donors to hide their political contributions through so-called "social welfare" organizations.

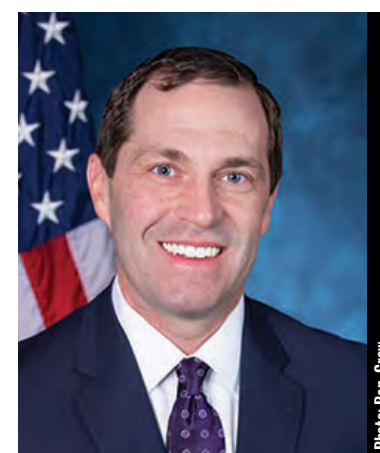
"Coloradans deserve to know who is trying to influence their vote. Instead, we have a system that allows mega-donors to hide their identities. This is a critical threat to our democracy and yet it's going unchecked," said Rep. Jason Crow. "This bill strikes at the root of the problem by preventing mega-donors from using non-profits as ve-

hicles for political contributions. By increasing transparency and accountability in our elections, we are returning power back to voters and restoring Americans' faith in our democracy."

Special interests and dark money groups have leveraged their connections in Congress to stand in the way of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) stopping the abuse of social welfare organizations by mega-donors who use 501(c)s to

hide their political contributions. In the Fiscal Year 2023 spending bill, the House voted on an amendment to strike the rider, only to see it re-added by the Senate in the 11th hour.

The *End Dark Money Act*, which was included in H.R. 1 and passed the House in the 117th Congress, would repeal the rider from current law and allow the IRS to issue guidelines to ensure non-profits adhere to their social welfare mis-



Congressman Jason Crow (CO-06), Co-Chair of the End Corruption Caucus.

sion or be required to register as a PAC, disclose their donors, and risk losing their tax-exempt status.



"This is a critical threat to our democracy and yet it's going unchecked."

U.S. Rep. Jason Crow

The *End Dark Money Act* is supported by End Citizens United / Let America Vote Action Fund and Public Citizen. "For too long, mega-donors and big money special interests, operating under the guise of 'social welfare,' have abused this glaring loophole for their own gain. It's a scheme that's designed to keep the American people in the dark about who's trying to buy influence in our elections. Representative Crow's End Dark Money Act would put an end to this shady tactic. We thank him for his leadership and we look forward to working with him in support of the bill," said Tiffany Muller, president, End Citizens United / Let America Vote Action Fund. "Bad rules at the IRS have allowed

See Crow on page 13

Please contact COLOR about upcoming community forums on the **"Know Your Rights"** training for immigrant families and the **"What's At Stake?"** information sessions regarding your health care coverage.

Contacta las oficinas de COLOR para obtener información de los próximos foros comunitarios sobre inmigración y el taller Conozca Sus Derechos. En los foros puedes saber más sobre como puede verse afectada tu cobertura médica mediante el taller ¿Qué está en juego?



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El Semanario



de El Paso y de otras ciudades fronterizas con la esperanza de solicitar asilo. Biden, es cierto, ha tomado medidas para reducir esa inmigración indocumentada en la franja, otorgando 30 mil permisos mensuales a inmigrantes de Cuba, Haití, Nicaragua y Venezuela que pueden solicitar desde sus países de origen y venir a Estados Unidos legalmente a pedir asilo, siempre y cuando viajen en avión, tengan un patrocinador y aprueben las verificaciones de antecedentes.

Pero quienes se presenten en la frontera e intenten cruzar sin documentos serán expulsados con base en el Título 42, un programa originalmente de salud pública, pero a todas luces revivido y aplicado desde uno de los gobiernos más antiinmigrantes de nuestra era como fue el de Donald Trump.

Precisamente, la administración Biden ha sido criticada por mantener políticas de su predecesor, como el mencionado Título 42, y se ha mostrado a la defensiva indicando que simplemente está implementando lo que ha sido ordenado por los tribunales. Pero se trata de una explicación legal que deja fuera el elemento humano. Además, el aplicar una política discriminatoria que en realidad busca minar las leyes de asilo porque lo ordene el tribunal, no borra el daño que dicha política ha ocasionado a miles de refugiados. Porque, ¿quién repone una vida, una esperanza, una ilusión de salir del atolladero de la violencia, la persecución, la falta de oportunidades en regiones muy específicas del mundo, que históricamente han sido golpeadas para que en otras zonas florezca el desarrollo?

Además, no deja de sorprender que una nación rica y poderosa como Estados Unidos no destine los recursos adecuados para lidiar con el flujo de migrantes en la frontera de una manera más ordenada, humana y salubre. Si tiene miles de millones de dólares para enviar a Ucrania a fin de defenderse de la invasión rusa, uno pensaría que podría mane-

jar la llegada de miles a sus fronteras de una manera más digna. Pero en ello radica el verdadero interés de la clase política estadounidense, pues el destinar recursos para atizar un conflicto bélico en lugar de reparar de una vez y para siempre un sistema migratorio descompuesto equivale a la más visible derrota ética del momento histórico que vivimos.

No se trata de criticar a los demócratas por criticarlos. Pero ahora que comienza una nueva sesión en el Congreso, quienes llevamos décadas cubriendo política, elecciones y debates migratorios hemos escuchado hasta el cansancio las mismas promesas y las mismas excusas para no cumplirlas. Entonces, el dilema para este país y sus autoridades es decidir si quieren continuar siendo una nación de bienvenida con base en su propia tradición migratoria y en sus leyes humanitarias, o pasar la antorcha a algún otro que pueda absorber la cantidad de seres humanos que solo buscan refugio y protección, perdiendo de ese modo Estados Unidos la imagen de ser ese faro de esperanza que alguna vez fue y que empieza a extinguirse.

Y esto no exime de su responsabilidad a un Partido Republicano ahora controlado por extremistas que ha entorpecido en cada oportunidad el avance de una reforma, porque es más rentable políticamente explotar la falsa idea de una crisis incontrolable. Se puede controlar con la misma reforma migratoria a la que se oponen. Pero los demócratas deben ir más allá de criticar a los republicanos y externar su indignación, porque para ambas partes de esta ecuación el libreto está demasiado desgastado.

Maribel Hastings es Asesora Ejecutiva de América's Voice.

David Torres es Asesor en Español de América's Voice.

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Crow

bad actors to abuse the system for too long," said Emily Peterson-Cassin, coordinator of the Bright Lines Project at Public Citizen. "Representative Crow's bill finally allows the IRS to make better rules that drive political spending into the light, where it belongs."

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State News / Noticias del Estado

Lawmakers Look to Build Hydrogen Economy in New Mexico

NEW MÉXICO

By Hannah Grover

After being placed on the speaker's table and struggling to make it through committees, hydrogen legislation attempts failed last year during New Mexico's legislative session. But the formation of the Western Interstate Hydrogen Hub (WISHH) and the U.S. Department of Energy's encouraged recommendation on a concept paper the coalition of western states submitted may have changed attitudes toward developing the fuel.

State Rep. Patricia Lundstrom, D-Gallup, is optimistic as she drafts a new piece of legislation focused on hydrogen.

Lundstrom sponsored several of the unsuccessful bills last session. This year, she told *NM Political Report*, the bill will have a more narrow, targeted focus.

"We've often talked about diversification of our economy. This is the perfect way to do it. It's got a lot of federal support," Lundstrom said.

New Mexico Environment Department Cabinet Secretary James

Kenney said that the encouraged recommendation may garner more support from state lawmakers for legislation to support building a hydrogen economy in New Mexico. That legislation, he said, could help WISHH's efforts to receive federal grant money.

The WISHH proposal includes eight anchor tenants, or businesses that the states have partnered with. These businesses, Kenney said, have committed to spending their own resources and capital to build upon federal funding should WISHH be awarded the hydrogen hub funding. Five of those anchor tenants are located in New Mexico, including the Tallgrass Energy proposal to retrofit the closed coal-fired Escalante Generating Station in New Mexico so that it can use hydrogen to create electricity.

Kenney said the next steps for WISHH involve developing a more detailed application about how the four states would spend the federal money if awarded it.

Hydrogen debate

Proponents say that hydrogen can create a clean fuel that will cut emissions from hard to decarbonize sectors like transportation while

also providing baseload power to ensure a reliable electrical grid.

While hydrogen is among the most abundant elements, it is not readily available. To get it, the hydrogen atoms must be broken off of other molecules such as water or methane.

That is where the different classifications of hydrogen energy come in.

Most of the proposed projects focus on what is known as blue hydrogen. Blue hydrogen is derived from methane. That methane comes from natural gas.

That is why opponents say hydrogen power will lead to continued reliance on fossil fuels and emissions related to the extraction and transportation of natural gas.

Additionally, once hydrogen is broken off of the carbon atoms in the methane molecule, the carbon must be captured and sequestered underground in deep reservoirs. Opponents point to limited successes with carbon capture.

They further say that the market for hydrogen is moving toward green hydrogen—or hydrogen that is created from water.

Mona Blaber, communications director with Sierra Club's Rio



The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included funding for four hydrogen hubs in an effort to develop the technology needed to make hydrogen a reality. / La Ley Federal de Inversión en Infraestructuras y Empleo incluye financiación para cuatro centros de hidrógeno en un esfuerzo por desarrollar la tecnología necesaria para hacer realidad el hidrógeno.

Grande Chapter, said green hydrogen is preferable to blue hydrogen, especially in light of the amount of emissions leaking from natural gas production in areas like the Permian Basin in New Mexico.



"A solar and storage plant could provide the same amount of power a lot cheaper."

Mona Blaber, Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter

emissions than retrofitting a coal-fired power plant like New Mexico's Escalante Generating Station to run using hydrogen.

The Escalante project involves using natural gas to create that hydrogen and Blaber said that means methane leakage.

"A solar and storage plant could provide the same amount of power a lot cheaper," she said.

Blaber said there are better uses of state money than incentivizing hydrogen. For example, she said, the money could be used to fund more positions for inspectors at the environment department so it would be better able to enforce regulations.

Federal legislation

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which the president signed in 2021, included funding for four hydrogen hubs in an effort to develop the technology needed to make hydrogen a reality.

Those would include both blue and green hydrogen hubs as well as what is known as hydrogen produced using nuclear energy, including "pink" hydrogen that uses nuclear power to split the hydrogen atoms in water from the oxygen atoms. While blue and green hydrogen has dominated the discussions in New Mexico, there has been little conversation about nuclear energy and hydrogen.

After the hydrogen legislation failed to pass last year, the governor brought New Mexico into a partnership with Utah, Wyoming and Colorado, forming WISHH.

Together, the four states submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Energy to have one of the hydrogen hubs be a regional effort that they would share. The infrastructure law allows for regional hubs, which would be a network of producers, consumers and related infrastructure.

She said the Sierra Club chapter is more likely to support legislation that would restrict which types of hydrogen are allowed in New Mexico than it is to support legislation that would include incentives for hydrogen production.

However, in an arid environment that has struggled with water scarcity, some have concerns about using a vital resource for hydrogen production.

Kenney said that New Mexico views hydrogen as a way to meet emission reductions needed to mitigate climate change. He said using "dirty" hydrogen would be counterproductive to those efforts.

Many of the proposals he's seen for hydrogen in New Mexico involve what he calls "clean" hydrogen. He said that means using something like waste from dairy cattle or brackish water to create the hydrogen.

Blaber said only a small percentage of hydrogen can actually be considered a clean source of energy and she said that should be focused on the hard to decarbonize sectors.

"I don't think the state of New Mexico needs to subsidize that," she said.

She said incentivizing renewable energy is a much quicker and more direct solution toward cutting

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Legisladores Buscan Construir Una Economía del Hidrógeno en Nuevo México

NEW MÉXICO

Por Hannah Grover

Después de ser colocado en la mesa del orador y luchando por llegar a través de los comités, los intentos de legislación de hidrógeno fracasaron el año pasado durante la sesión legislativa de Nuevo México. Pero la formación del Western Interstate Hydrogen Hub (WISHH) y la recomendación del Departamento de Energía de EE.UU. sobre un documento conceptual que la coalición de estados occidentales presentó puede haber cambiado las actitudes hacia el desarrollo del combustible.

La diputada Patricia Lundstrom, demócrata de Gallup, se muestra optimista mientras redacta una nueva ley sobre el hidrógeno.

Lundstrom patrocinó varios de los proyectos de ley sin éxito en la última sesión. Este año, dijo a NM Political Report, el proyecto de ley tendrá un enfoque más estrecho y específico.

“

Una planta solar y de almacenamiento podría proporcionar la misma cantidad de energía de forma mucho más barata.”

Mona Blaber, Río Grande del Sierra Club

“A menudo hemos hablado de la diversificación de nuestra economía. Esta es la manera perfecta de hacerlo. Tiene mucho apoyo federal”, dijo Lundstrom.

El Secretario del Gabinete del Departamento de Medio Ambiente de Nuevo México, James Kenney, afirmó que la recomendación alentada puede obtener más apoyo de los legisladores estatales para una legislación que apoye la construcción de una economía del hidrógeno en Nuevo México. Esa legislación, dijo, podría ayudar a los esfuerzos de WISHH para recibir dinero de subvenciones federales.

La propuesta WISHH incluye ocho inquilinos ancla, o las empresas que los estados se han asociado con. Estas empresas, dijo Kenney, se han comprometido a gastar sus propios recursos y capital para aprovechar la financiación federal en caso de que se conceda a WISHH la financiación del centro de hidrógeno. Cinco de esos inquilinos

nos ancla se encuentran en Nuevo México, incluyendo la propuesta de Tallgrass Energy para adaptar la Estación Generadora Escalante de carbón cerrada en Nuevo México para que pueda utilizar hidrógeno para crear electricidad.

Según Kenney, los próximos pasos de la WISHH consistirán en elaborar una solicitud más detallada sobre cómo gastarían los cuatro estados el dinero federal si se les concediera.

Debate sobre el hidrógeno

Sus defensores afirman que el hidrógeno puede crear un combustible limpio que reducirá las emisiones de sectores difíciles de descarbonizar, como el transporte, al tiempo que proporcionará energía de carga base para garantizar una red eléctrica fiable.

Aunque el hidrógeno es uno de los elementos más abundantes, no es fácil obtenerlo. Para obtenerlo, los átomos de hidrógeno deben desprenderse de otras moléculas como el agua o el metano.

Ahí es donde entran las distintas clasificaciones de la energía del hidrógeno.

La mayoría de los proyectos propuestos se centran en lo que se conoce como hidrógeno azul. El hidrógeno azul se obtiene a partir del metano. Ese metano procede del gas natural.

Por eso los detractores dicen que la energía del hidrógeno hará que se siga dependiendo de los combustibles fósiles y de las emisiones relacionadas con la extracción y el transporte del gas natural.

Además, una vez que el hidrógeno se desprende de los átomos de carbono de la molécula de metano, el carbono debe ser capturado y retenido bajo tierra en depósitos profundos. Los detractores señalan el escaso éxito de la captura de carbono.

Además, afirman que el mercado del hidrógeno se está orientando hacia el hidrógeno verde, es decir, el hidrógeno creado a partir del agua.

Mona Blaber, directora de comunicaciones de la sección de Río Grande del Sierra Club, afirma que el hidrógeno verde es preferible al hidrógeno azul, sobre todo teniendo en cuenta la cantidad de emisiones que se escapan de la producción de gas natural en zonas como la Cuenca Pérmica de Nuevo México.

Dijo que es más probable que el capítulo del Sierra Club apoye una legislación que restrinja qué tipos

de hidrógeno están permitidos en Nuevo México que una que incluya incentivos para la producción de hidrógeno.

Sin embargo, en un entorno árido que ha luchado con la escasez de agua, algunos tienen preocupaciones sobre el uso de un recurso vital para la producción de hidrógeno.

Kenney afirmó que Nuevo México considera el hidrógeno como una forma de cumplir con las reducciones de emisiones necesarias para mitigar el cambio climático. En su opinión, utilizar hidrógeno “sucio” sería contraproducente para esos esfuerzos.

Muchas de las propuestas que ha visto para el hidrógeno en Nuevo México implican lo que él llama hidrógeno “limpio”. Eso significa

utilizar residuos de ganado lechero o agua salobre para crear el hidrógeno.

Blaber dijo que sólo un pequeño porcentaje de hidrógeno puede considerarse realmente una fuente limpia de energía y dijo que debería centrarse en los sectores difíciles de descarbonizar.

“No creo que el estado de Nuevo México necesite subvencionar eso”, dijo.

En su opinión, incentivar las energías renovables es una solución mucho más rápida y directa para reducir las emisiones que adaptar una central eléctrica de carbón como la de Escalante, en Nuevo México, para que funcione con hidrógeno.

El proyecto de Escalante implica el uso de gas natural para crear

ese hidrógeno y Blaber dijo que eso significa fugas de metano.

“Una planta solar y de almacenamiento podría proporcionar la misma cantidad de energía de forma mucho más barata”, dijo.

Blaber afirmó que el dinero del Estado puede emplearse mejor que para incentivar el hidrógeno. Por ejemplo, el dinero podría emplearse para financiar más puestos de inspectores en el Departamento de Medio Ambiente, de modo que éste estuviera en mejores condiciones de hacer cumplir la normativa.

Legislación federal

La Ley Federal de Inversión en Infraestructuras y Empleo, que el

Vea [Hidrógeno](#), página 19



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COVID-19 News / Noticias COVID-19

Medical Experts Discuss the Future of the COVID-19 Pandemic

By Benjamin Neufeld

Despite increasingly lax attitudes around the COVID-19 pandemic among the majority of the population, new vaccine resistant vari-

ants continue to form and spread throughout the world. XBB.1.5, a subvariant of Omicron, "now accounts for 40 percent of COVID-19 infections in the U.S." according to a press briefing from Ethnic Media Services.

On Friday, January 6, Ethnic Media Services hosted a panel of medical experts to speak about the implications of the new variant, vaccine efficacy against XBB.1.5, and the future of the pandemic. The panel included Dr. Ben Neuman, Chief Virologist of the Global Health Research Complex at Texas A&M; Jill Rosenthal the director of Public Health Policy at the Center for American Progress; Sophia Tan a Research Data Scientist at UC San Francisco; and Dr. Oliver Brooks the Chief Medical Officer for Watts Healthcare.

According to Dr. Neuman, COVID-19 has been the third leading cause of death in the U.S. for the last three years. He stressed that the pandemic is ongoing, that it is as much a problem now as it was during the height of COVID protections in 2020. He compared trends in COVID to trends in RSV and influenza, saying that influenza/RSV cases have spiked during their regular seasonal peak and



Scientists suspect that XBB.1.5 was formed in someone infected with two COVID strains at the same time. / Los científicos sospechan que XBB.1.5 se formó en una persona infectada con dos cepas COVID al mismo tiempo.

have since gone down. Meanwhile, COVID cases, which many people have hoped would begin to follow a similarly seasonal pattern, have continued to rise.

"We've essentially taken our eye off the ball," said Dr. Neuman. Though all the experts on the panel stressed the importance of individual precautions such as hand washing and masking (which have become less and less popular since the roll-out

of the first vaccine), Dr. Neuman was most critical of the lack of vaccine updates since the emergence of new variants. According to Dr. Neuman, neither major mRNA vaccine producers have announced plans for a vaccine update, and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has not met to discuss COVID in many months.

See COVID on page 23

Expertos Médicos Debaten el Futuro de la Pandemia de COVID-19

Por Benjamin Neufeld

A pesar de las actitudes cada vez más laxas en torno a la pandemia de COVID-19 entre la mayoría de la población, siguen formándose y propagándose por todo el mundo nuevas variantes resistentes a la vacuna. XBB.1.5, una subvariante de Omicron, "representa ahora el 40% de las infecciones por COVID-19 en Estados Unidos", según un comunicado de prensa de Ethnic Media Services.

El viernes 6 de enero, Ethnic Media Services organizó un panel de expertos médicos para hablar sobre las implicaciones de la nueva variante, la eficacia de la vacuna contra XBB.1.5 y el futuro de la pandemia. El panel estaba formado por el Dr. Ben Neuman, virólogo jefe del Global Health Research Complex de Texas A&M; Jill Rosenthal, directora de Políticas de Salud Pública del Center for American Progress; Sophia Tan, investigado-

ra científica de datos de la UC San Francisco; y el Dr. Oliver Brooks, director médico de Watts Healthcare.

Según el Dr. Neuman, la COVID-19 ha sido la tercera causa de muerte en EE.UU. durante los últimos tres años. Hizo hincapié en que la pandemia está en curso, que es tanto un problema ahora como lo fue durante el apogeo de las protecciones contra la COVID en 2020. Comparó las tendencias de la COVID con las del VRS y la gripe, diciendo que los casos de gripe/VRS han aumentado durante su pico estacional regular y desde entonces han disminuido. Mientras tanto, los casos de COVID, que muchos esperaban que empezaran a seguir un patrón estacional similar, han seguido aumentando.

"Esencialmente, hemos desviado la atención", afirmó el Dr. Neuman. Aunque todos los expertos del panel destacaron la importancia de las precauciones individ-

uales, como el lavado de manos y el enmascaramiento (cada vez menos populares desde el lanzamiento de la primera vacuna), el Dr. Neuman fue más crítico con la falta de actualizaciones de la vacuna desde la aparición de nuevas variantes. Según el Dr. Neuman, ninguno de los principales productores de vacunas de ARNm ha anunciado planes para una actualización de la vacuna, y el Comité Asesor sobre Prácticas de Inmunización (ACIP) de los CDC no se ha reunido para debatir el COVID en muchos meses.

El Dr. Neuman sospecha que la población ha alcanzado la inmunidad de rebaño contra las variantes más antiguas del virus (y potencialmente incluso las ha llevado a la extinción). Sin embargo, debido a la larga espera entre las actualizaciones de las vacunas, las personas que reciben su primera vacuna o dosis de refuerzo están

Vea COVID/Esp, página 23

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primera mujer negra que representa al condado de El Paso y la diputada demócrata Elizabeth Velasco es la primera latina que representa a la vertiente occidental. Además, ésta es la primera legislación en la que

tres mujeres ocupan los tres primeros puestos de dirección de la mayoría.

Los republicanos quieren participar plenamente

El Presidente del Senado, Steve Fenberg, demócrata de Boulder, habló del potencial del Senado para frenar un proceso legislativo hiperpartidista y politizado. El menor número de miembros de la cámara permite una mayor deliberación, dijo.

"No necesitamos abandonar o dar la espalda a nuestra tribu. Pero tenemos que construir menos muros y más puentes entre nuestras tribus", afirmó. "Tenemos que construir relaciones auténticas con quienes están fuera de nuestros grupos insulares. En otras palabras: tenemos que hacernos amigos".

Al mismo tiempo, dijo, los votantes de Colorado dieron a los demócratas un mandato y tiene la intención de utilizar las mayorías históricas. Hay 12 republicanos y 23 demócratas en la cámara.

Fenberg, al igual que McCluskie, también habló de dar prioridad a la prevención de la violencia armada en su discurso de apertura. La propuesta de ampliar la ley de bandera roja, también conocida como órdenes de protección de riesgo extremo, permitiría a profesionales como consejeros y fiscales de distrito presentar peticiones a un juez, en lugar de sólo a agentes de la ley y familiares. Fenberg dijo que el

proyecto de ley será patrocinado por el senador demócrata de Centennial Tom Sullivan, quien perdió a su hijo en el tiroteo del teatro Aurora en 2012.

"Nadie está diciendo que los habitantes de Colorado no tengan derecho a defenderse y a poseer un arma", dijo Fenberg. "Estamos diciendo que, en una sociedad civilizada, donde la gente espera la libertad de vivir con seguridad y protección básicas, debemos estar dispuestos a considerar que hay algunas personas que no son aptas para poseer un arma mortal debido al riesgo extremo que suponen para sí mismos y para los demás".

Sobre un controvertido proyecto de ley de fentanilo de la última sesión, que los republicanos criticaron duramente durante el ciclo de campaña, Fenberg dijo que quiere darle "una oportunidad de trabajar" antes de considerar cambios en la ley.

El líder de la minoría del Senado, Paul Lundeen, de Monument, dijo durante su discurso de apertura que espera que cualquier legislación bipartidista de esta sesión incluya contribuciones significativas de los republicanos, en lugar de simplemente uno o dos copatrocinadores republicanos.

"Tenemos la intención de hacer algo más que hablar. Insistimos en ser participantes de pleno derecho en el proceso legislativo de esta cámara, y ofreceremos nuestras mejores y constructivas sugerencias para que las futuras leyes de este estado sean mejores", dijo, añadiendo que la mayoría de los temas debatidos durante el último ciclo electoral -especialmente los relacionados con la seguridad pública- no se han resuelto.

Un republicano desafía a McCluskie por la portavocía

Dos representantes republicanos de primer año interrumpieron el proceso de elección del presidente de la Cámara de Representantes. Los demócratas de la Cámara seleccionaron a la representante Julie McCluskie, de Dillon, a finales del año pasado para ocupar la presidencia en esta sesión, dependiendo de un voto de aprobación a menudo unánime del pleno de la cámara.

En cambio, el representante Ken DeGraff nominó al representante Scott Bottoms, ambos republicanos de Colorado Springs, para servir como presidente de la Cámara, en la que los demócratas tienen una supermayoría. A pesar de la falta de una vía para Bottoms para convertirse en un altavoz, DeGraff dijo que su nombramiento no era partidista o un truco.

Bottoms apoyó su propia candidatura.

McCluskie fue elegida portavoz por 55 votos a favor y 8 en contra.

Los que votaron en contra de ella fueron DeGraff y Bottoms, junto con Reps. Brandi Bradley de Littleton, Lisa Frizell de Castle Rock, Richard Holtorf de Akron, Stephanie Luck de Penrose, Ron Weinberg de Loveland y Ty Winter del Condado de Pueblo. Esto supone algo menos de la mitad de los 19 miembros del grupo republicano de la Cámara de Representantes. Holtorf criticó la decisión de nominar a Bottoms, pero votó por él de todos modos.

Bottoms, un pastor evangélico que se etiqueta a sí mismo como de extrema derecha, habló en el

pleno de la Cámara sobre la defensa de la Segunda Enmienda, su creencia de que la vida comienza en la concepción y que Dios "creó el hombre y la mujer."

"No vamos a tener poder en esta sesión, lo entendemos, pero tenemos principios", dijo.

El líder de la minoría en la Cámara, Mike Lynch, no sólo votó a favor de McCluskie para portavoz, sino que fue quien apoyó su candidatura. Calificó el drama de la elección del presidente de un "blip" después de la cámara entró en receso por la tarde. Dijo que el grupo es coherente y cohesionado, a pesar del drama en la Cámara y los ocho miembros

que votaron en contra de McCluskie.

"No van a seguir como ovejas por el camino. Todos tienen sus propias ideas y su propia interpretación de las normas. Eso es lo que hemos visto hoy aquí", dijo.

Sara Wilson es reportera de Colorado Newslite. Este artículo fue publicado originalmente por Colorado Newslite.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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LEC

major racial and ethnic minorities, including Latinos. The past three years have seen advancements in this area, but the LEC would like to know from the community, which features of Latino history, culture, and social contributions should be included?

According to Mr. Milo Marquez, Chair of the LEC, the agenda may also include other current issues of importance to the Latino community. While according to Mr. Marquez the Forum agenda is still being finalized, it promises to be challenging. There have been opportunities for improvements for Latino student achievement in Denver Public Schools, including a heartening increase in graduation rates over the past few years. However, there are still some barriers. This past year the Denver Public Schools Board

considered possibly closing some schools in the District, but decided against that recommendation. What must the community do to prepare for that recommendation's possible reintroduction? Also, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) has been closed for new applicants nationally since July of 2021, affecting our young undocumented students. Can Denver create a Denver DACA, and Colorado a Colorado DACA, to assist our youth?

Members of the LEC have for many years been central in the development and continuation of the bilingual education program, including the Court Order and resultant Consent Decree with DPS. What more should be done to ex-

pand and further improve the program? These and/or other important topics will be raised and debated at the Forum.

Please join us, and for more information, contact Milo Marquez, LEC Chair, at milo.marquez@cllaro.org, or pena_craig@yahoo.com. We hope to see you Saturday, January 21.

Luis Torres, Ph.D. is an educator. He retired in 2016 as Metropolitan State University of Denver's Deputy Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, and professor of Chicana/o Studies.

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Encouraged recommendation

On Dec. 27, WISHH learned that the Department of Energy's Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs program gave its proposal—contained in a concept paper—an "encouraged" recommendation. It was one of 33 of the 79 proposals to receive that endorsement.

The Department of Energy program either gave proposals the encouraged notification or the discouraged notification.

The submitters of the 46 concept papers that received "discouraged" were essentially told not to expend more resources on the effort as their proposals were unlikely to meet the requirements for the hydrogen hubs program.

WISHH's concept paper receiving the "encouraged" notice does not mean that the proposal will receive the federal funding. Even if only applicants that received the "encouraged" notification were to apply, the Department of Energy is anticipating a competitive process. The total request for funds of the 33 proposals that received "encouraged" notifications was about \$33.5

billion, far exceeding the \$6 billion to \$7 billion allocated for the hydrogen hubs.

WISHH asked for \$1.25 billion, of which approximately \$355 million could come to New México.

The full application deadline is April 7.

Potential legislation

Lundstrom said last year the legislation she sponsored was broad because she did not know what the federal government's hydrogen hub efforts would look like.

Kenney said last year's legislation included two parts: tax credits and public-private partnerships. The tax credits that New Mexico was considering implementing to encourage development of hydrogen-related industries are similar to those that were incorporated into the federal Inflation Reduction Act.

He said a public-private partnership bill could help with WISHH's April 7 deadline by showing that New Mexico is not just after the federal grant money.

"It's still important that we think about how we encourage the hy-

drogen economy in New México," Kenney said. "How do we continue to separate ourselves from the other applicants?"

He said attitudes in New México may have changed in the last year in regards to hydrogen.

"Last year I think the public was not as educated and willing to go down that path with us," he said.

President Joe Biden's support of hydrogen and the federal funding opportunities and tax credits have helped shape the conversation and educate people about the possible fuel, he said.

"Even some of the environmental community has recognized that we don't get to net zero or climate goals without hydrogen," Kenney said.

Hannah Grover is a Reporter with New Mexico Political Report. This story was originally published by [New Mexico Political Report](#).

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Supreme Court to get him into office.

Bush Junior was also the least racist of the Republican presidents since Nixon, and put two Black people at the top of the State Department: many in the white GOP base never forgave him for Colin Powell or Condoleezza Rice.

All in all, most Americans — including a substantial margin of Republican voters — were done and over with Bush and the metaphorical horse he rode in on (as much as he wanted to emulate Reagan, Bush is afraid of horses which is why his Texas election-prop "ranch" was an old pig farm).

Combine that dynamic with Barack Obama being one of the most gifted political orators of the 21st century and in 2008 a Black man became President of the United States for the first time in history.

Obama's ascension to the highest office in the land was a gift to the morbidly rich funders of the GOP: a "Black liberal from Chicago" being president broke the brains of the most reliable part of the GOP base.

The billionaires leaped to the opportunity. Resurrecting a meme from the tobacco industry's "smoker's rights" scam of the 1990s, they rolled out the 2009 version of the Tea Party, complete with millions of dollars to pay for buses, staged events, and well-funded PR operations to get it all into the media every day.

While the foreground was "taxed enough already" and "death panels," the background was "Black man in the White House wants to give your tax dollars to his Black friends." It was Nixon's "Southern Strategy" all over again, only in a far more sophisticated form.

There's a lot of truth to the internet meme: "Republicans have gotten over Trump's sexual assaults, affairs, idolatry, greed, profanity and vulgarity...but they've never gotten over Obama being Black."

By the end of Obama's presidency, though, the Tea Party had become a caricature of itself: old white boomers with silly "Keep your government hands off my

Medicare" signs wrote their own jokes.

So, with fellow billionaire (at least he said he was) Trump in the White House, the capstone funders of the GOP changed their brand positioning.

They plastered the word "freedom" all over everything, including the caucus they bought and paid for in Congress. They helped launch hundreds of Spanish-language radio stations to spread the gospel of "free markets" and "you, too, can have white privilege" to America's fastest growing demographic group. Their media operations made billions and aligned themselves with Russia, Hungary, and other straight-white-male-power authoritarian states.

They even continue to financially support politicians who tried to overthrow the government of the United States.

Which brings us back to the question: When will Republican voters wake up to their own oppression at the hands of the GOP's billionaire funders?"

My bet is that as long as Democrats continue to welcome racial and gender minorities into their party, Republican voters will stay with their nearly-all-white politicians. Particularly people like Steve "David Duke without the baggage" Scalise and Marjorie "Jewish space lasers" Greene.

Will investigations of Hunter Biden's laptop or the FBI be enough for Republicans to re-energize their base and gain control of all of Congress and the White House by 2024?

Hold my popcorn...

Thom Hartmann is a talk-show host and the author of "The Hidden History of Monopolies: How Big Business Destroyed the American Dream" (2020); "The Hidden History of the Supreme Court and the Betrayal of America" (2019); and more than 25 other books in print. This commentary is republished from [Common Dreams](#) under a Creative Commons license.

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Hidrógeno

presidente firmó en 2021, incluye financiación para cuatro centros de hidrógeno en un esfuerzo por desarrollar la tecnología necesaria para hacer realidad el hidrógeno.

Estos centros incluirían tanto hidrógeno azul como verde, así como lo que se conoce como hidrógeno producido mediante energía nuclear, incluido el hidrógeno "rosa", que utiliza energía nuclear para separar los átomos de hidrógeno del agua de los átomos de oxígeno. Mientras que el hidrógeno azul y verde ha dominado las discusiones en Nuevo México, ha habido poca conversación sobre la energía nuclear y el hidrógeno.

Después de que la legislación sobre el hidrógeno no se aprobara el año pasado, el gobernador asoció a Nuevo México con Utah, Wyoming y Colorado para formar la WISHH.

Juntos, los cuatro estados presentaron una propuesta al Departamento de Energía de EE.UU. para que uno de los centros de hidrógeno fuera un esfuerzo regional que compartirían. La ley de infraestructuras permite los centros regionales, que serían una red de productores, consumidores e infraestructuras conexas.

Recomendación alentadora

El 27 de diciembre, la WISHH se enteró de que el programa de Centros Regionales de Hidrógeno Limpio del Departamento de Energía había recomendado su propuesta, contenida en un documento conceptual. Fue una de las

33 de las 79 propuestas que recibieron ese respaldo.

El programa del Departamento de Energía dio a las propuestas la notificación de alentada o la de desalentada.

A los autores de los 46 documentos conceptuales "desaconsejados" se les dijo que no dedicaran más recursos al proyecto, ya que era improbable que sus propuestas cumplieran los requisitos del programa de centros de hidrógeno.

El hecho de que el documento conceptual de la WISHH recibiera el aviso de "alentado" no significa que la propuesta vaya a recibir la financiación federal. Incluso si sólo los solicitantes que recibieron la notificación "alentada" fueran a presentarse, el Departamento de Energía prevé un proceso competitivo. La solicitud total de fondos de las 33 propuestas que recibieron notificaciones "alentadas" ascendía a unos 33.500 millones de dólares, cifra muy superior a los entre 6.000 y 7.000 millones asignados a los nodos de hidrógeno.

WISHH solicitó 1.250 millones de dólares, de los que aproximadamente 355 millones podrían llegar a Nuevo México.

El plazo completo de solicitud finaliza el 7 de abril.

Legislación potencial

Lundstrom dijo que el año pasado la legislación que patrocinó era amplia porque no sabía cómo serían los esfuerzos del gobierno federal para los hubs de hidrógeno.

Kenney dijo que la legislación del año pasado incluía dos partes: créditos fiscales y asociaciones público-privadas. Los créditos fiscales que Nuevo México estaba considerando implementar para fomentar el desarrollo de industrias relacionadas con el hidrógeno son similares a los que se incorporaron en la Ley federal de Reducción de la Inflación.

Dijo que un proyecto de ley de asociación público-privada podría ayudar con la fecha límite del 7 de abril de WISHH, mostrando que Nuevo México no es sólo después de que el dinero de la subvención federal.

"Sigue siendo importante que pensemos en cómo fomentar la economía del hidrógeno en Nuevo México", dijo Kenney. "¿Cómo seguimos separándonos de los otros solicitantes?"

Dijo que las actitudes en Nuevo México pueden haber cambiado en el último año con respecto al hidrógeno.

"El año pasado creo que el público no estaba tan educado y dispuesto a ir por ese camino con nosotros", dijo.

El apoyo del presidente Joe Biden al hidrógeno y las oportunidades de financiación federal y créditos fiscales han ayudado a dar forma a la conversación y educar a

la gente sobre el posible combustible, dijo.

"Incluso parte de la comunidad ecologista ha reconocido que sin hidrógeno no alcanzaremos los objetivos climáticos o de emisiones netas cero", afirmó Kenney.

Hannah Grover es Reportera de New Mexico Political Report. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por New Mexico Political Report.

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A detail of Mykael Ash's painting "The Gathering." / Un detalle de la pintura de Mykael Ash "The Gathering".

ren Parks, the president and a co-founder of the House of Miles.

As a birthday gift to his mother in 2019, Ash put together a special show of his art at the House of Miles about the strength of the Black community. Each painting illustrated pride, Walker said.

His work also delves into the

darker side of the city's history.

Earlier this year, Ash finished a portrait series about the East St. Louis race riot of 1917, using the shell casings from today's violence. The riot left as many as 200 Black residents dead after white mobs terrorized the city for three days.

"It's a cycle we're kind of stuck in," Ash said. "We're left with the oppression of it."

Ash paints the pain of the present, too. He painted a mural to honor the life of Cedric Gooden, a local rapper known as Cold Kase who was gunned down in 2019. The mural he painted bears the slogan

"STOP THE VIOLENCE" — a desperate cry that resonates across decades.

The mural also says "CITY OF CHAMPIONS," the motto of the city that produced not just Miles Davis but also Olympic gold medaling track-and-field stars Dawn Harper Nelson, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, and Al Joyner. Ash hopes the slogan shows that even amid limited resources, those who grow up in this city find ways to win.

Ash teamed up with fellow artists Kas King and Edna Patterson-Petty to paint a mural on the side of a historical theater. Their artwork helped save the building from demolition.

"I just want to show the change that's trying to happen," Ash said. "People are trying to clean the streets, people are trying to have peaceful walks, so we can get some justice back in the community, get some money flowing in the city because that's pretty much what we need."

As he gathers shell casings in parts of the city with vacant build-

ings and abandoned homes — and even on the walk to the grocery store near his grandmother's home — Ash dreams of a vibrant city splashed with color. He wants to turn his Third Ventricle Studios into an art gallery, with a co-op space, so other artists can showcase their work. In the meantime, he's bringing corners of the city back to life and transforming its bullets into beauty.

"I see a blank canvas," Ash said. "I see a place with a lot of potential."

Cara Anthony is a Midwest Correspondent with Kaiser Health News. KHN (Kaiser Health News) is the newsroom of KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation), which produces in-depth journalism on health. It is one of the three main programs of KFF, a non-profit organization that analyzes the problems of health and public health in the nation.

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Session

making the future laws of this state better," he said, adding that most of the issues debated during the last election cycle — especially involving public safety — have not been solved.

Republican challenges McCluskie for speakership

Two freshman Republican state representatives disrupted the typically uneventful process of electing the House speaker. House Democrats selected Rep. Julie McCluskie of Dillon at the end of last year to serve as speaker this session, dependent on an often-unanimous vote of approval from the full chamber.

Instead, Rep. Ken DeGraff nominated Rep. Scott Bottoms, both Republicans of Colorado Springs, to serve as speaker of a House, in which Democrats have a supermajority. Despite the lack of a pathway for Bottoms to become a speaker, DeGraff said his nomination was not partisan or a stunt.

Bottoms seconded his own nomination.

McCluskie was still elected as speaker on a 55-8 vote.

Those who voted against her were DeGraff and Bottoms, along with Reps. Brandi Bradley of Littleton, Lisa Frizell of Castle Rock, Richard Holtorf of Akron, Stephanie Luck of Penrose, Ron Weinberg of Loveland and Ty Winter of Pueblo County. That is a little less than half of the 19-member Re-

publican House caucus. Holtorf was critical of the move to nominate Bottoms, but voted for him anyway.

Bottoms, an evangelical pastor who labels himself as far-right, spoke on the House floor about defending the Second Amendment, his belief that life begins at conception and that God "created male and female."

"We're not going to have power this session, we understand that, but we do have principles," he said.

House Minority Leader Mike Lynch not only voted for McCluskie for speaker but was the one who seconded her nomination. He called the drama in the speaker election a "blip" after the chamber went into recess in the afternoon. He said the caucus is coherent and cohesive, despite the drama on the House floor and the eight members who voted against McCluskie.

"They're not going to follow like sheep down the road. They all have ideas of their own and they all have their interpretation of the rules here. We saw that play out here today," he said of the caucus.

Sara Wilson is Reporter with Colorado Newsline. This article is republished from Colorado Newsline under a Creative Commons license.

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Violencia

de 1917, utilizando los proyectiles de la violencia actual. La revuelta dejó a cerca de 200 residentes negros muertos después de que turbas de blancos aterrorizaran la ciudad durante tres días.

"Es un ciclo en el que estamos atrapados", dijo Ash. "Nos quedamos con esa opresión".

Ash también pinta el dolor del presente. Pintó un mural para honrar la vida de Cedric Gooden, un rapero local conocido como Cold Kase que fue baleado en 2019. El mural que pintó tiene la leyenda "STOP THE VIOLENCE", un grito desesperado que resuena a lo largo de décadas.

El mural también dice "CIUDAD DE CAMPEONES", el lema de la ciudad que produjo no solo a Miles Davis, sino también a las estrellas olímpicas de atletismo Dawn Harper Nelson, Jackie Joyner-Kersey y Al Joyner. Ash espera que la frase muestre que, incluso en medio de recursos limitados, aquellos que crecen en esta ciudad encuentran formas de ganar.

Ash se asoció con sus compañeros artistas Kas King y Edna Patterson-Petty para pintar un mural en el lateral de un teatro históri-



La pintura de Mykael Ash "Marchando a través de la opresión" representa la revuelta racial de East St. Louis de 1917, que dejó hasta 200 residentes negros muertos después de que turbas blancas aterrorizaran la ciudad durante tres días. / Mykael Ash's painting "Marching Through Oppression" depicts the East St. Louis race riot of 1917, which left as many as 200 Black residents dead after white mobs terrorized the city for three days.

co. Su obra de arte ayudó a salvar el edificio de la demolición.

"Solo quiero mostrar el cambio que se está tratando que ocurra",

dijo Ash. "La gente está tratando de limpiar las calles, la gente está tratando de tener marchas pacíficas, para que podamos recuperar

algo de justicia en la comunidad, hacer que fluya algo de dinero a la ciudad porque eso es más o menos lo que necesitamos".

Mientras recolecta balas en zonas de la ciudad con edificios vacíos y casas abandonadas, e incluso en el camino a la tienda de comestibles cerca de la casa de su abuela, Ash sueña con una ciudad vibrante salpicada de color. Quiere convertir su Third Ventricle Studios en una galería de arte, con un espacio cooperativo, para que otros artistas puedan exhibir sus trabajos. Mientras tanto, está devolviendo la vida a los rincones de la ciudad y transformando sus balas en belleza.

"Veo un lienzo en blanco", dijo Ash. "Veo un lugar con mucho potencial".

Cara Anthony, corresponsal de KHN (Kaiser Health News), la redacción de KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation), que produce periodismo en profundidad sobre salud. Es uno de los tres principales programas de KFF, una organización sin fines de lucro que analiza la problemática de salud y salud pública de la nación.

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Hastings & Torres

and lack of opportunities in very specific regions of the world—regions that have historically been pummeled so that development can flourish in other zones? Moreover, it never stops being surprising that a nation as rich and powerful as the United States does not designate enough resources to deal with the flow of migrants at the border in a more orderly, humane, and healthy manner. If it has billions of dollars to send to Ukraine to defend itself against Russia, one would think it could handle the arrival of thousands at its borders in a more dignified way. But that is where the real interest of the U.S. political class lies, since dedicating resources to agitating a bellicose conflict, instead of repairing—once and for all—a decomposed migration system equates to the most visible ethical failing of this historical moment in which we live. This is not about criticizing Democrats just to criticize them. But now that a new session of Congress has begun, those of us who have spent decades covering politics, elections, and immigration debates have heard the same promises and the same excuses for not having achieved it repeatedly, *ad nauseam*. The dilemma for this country and

its authorities, then, is to decide if they want to continue being a nation of welcome, based on their own migration tradition and humanitarian laws, or pass the torch to some other country that can absorb the quantity of human beings who are just looking for refuge and protection, and in that way the United States will lose the image of being a beacon of hope that it was once, and is beginning to extinguish. That does not exempt from responsibility a Republican Party now controlled by extremists, who have torpedoed every opportunity to advance reform because they think it's more profitable to exploit the false idea of an uncontrolled crisis. It could be controlled with the same immigration reform they are opposing. But Democrats must go beyond criticizing Republicans and demonstrating their indignation, because for both sides of this equation, that song is over.

Maribel Hastings is a Senior Advisor to América's Voice.

David Torres is a Spanish-language Advisor at América's Voice.

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McCormick

Harrison said previous projects identified victims' names and addresses. He intends to dig deeper.

"Stories give us power," he said. "I want to explore real emotion."

A \$10,000 Kansas Humanities Council grant funds the project, along with a partnership with Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Robert Weems Jr., a professor of Business History at WSU serves as project consultant. They plan to screen the film at the park near the crash site this spring.

I wasn't born until 1967. Still, the crash never seemed far away.

I was an adult, for example, before learning from my sister that my aunt Laura Faust, Tracy's mother, doted over every boy-child in the family, but never had much to do with the girls, who likely reminded her too much of Tracy. Much of what I know, my sister shared.

Chan shared a particularly cruel story about witnesses claiming to have seen a child, engulfed in flames, running from one of the homes and collapsing. Someone asked our aunt if that child was Tracy.

Horried, I asked how she replied.

"She didn't," Chan said. "She just closed her eyes and lowered her head."

When loved ones die, "what ifs" and our memories can act as comforting counterweights when pain starts to circle. But with a child, the what ifs must seem gargantuan because of what the child never had a chance to become. My aunt suffered quietly, dying at 65.

My sister planned to visit our grandmother's house that morning but overslept.

She awoke to my aunt leaving to drop Tracy at Little Mama's. Chan started walking there later, but along the way, the ground shook and black smoke filled the air. Where our grandmother's house stood, she saw a lake of fire.

"I was numb," she said. "It didn't seem real."

The grief stricken can find themselves locked in a moment, compressing a traumatizing incident into perhaps its worst instant.

A child might do what my sister did, create a magical narrative as a means of coping.

An adult might do what my

aunt Laura did — hold it in, withdraw, and struggle through life existing because she couldn't peel back enough of the grief to really live.

People grieve differently, doing their best to move from one moment to the next and secure some semblance of safety and control.

In 1965's segregated Wichita, neither our family nor our neighbors — however we grieved — really had much of either.

Mark McCormick is the former executive director of The Kansas African American Museum, a member of the Kansas African American Affairs Commission and deputy executive director at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kansas. This commentary is republished from Kansas Reflector under a Creative Commons license.

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Dr. Neuman suspects that the population has achieved herd immunity against (and potentially even driven to extinction) older variants of the virus. However, because of the lengthy wait between vaccine updates, people receiving their first vaccine shot or booster dose are essentially being protected against strains which may not even exist anymore.

Scientists suspect that XBB.1.5 was formed in someone infected with two COVID strains at the same time. The variant contains significant changes to the receptor-binding part of the spike of the virus. The vaccines function by creating antibodies which recognize that spike region of the virus. These changes to that region are why new variants are so vaccine resistant.

Dr. Neuman also pointed out that the reason vaccine-resistant variants continuously become so prevalent is due to the fact that variants which are not vaccine resistant are not able to spread as easily or rapidly through a vaccinated population.

Despite their reduced effectiveness, each of the experts agreed that getting vaccinated is still crucially important. "The number one thing we can do is get vaccinated,"

said Dr. Oliver Brooks. According to Dr. Brooks, only 15% of the population has received the updated, bivalent booster. "Vaccinations are safe and effective. Even if you only have a 10 percent response rate, you still should get vaccinated. There is no downside."

On a systematic scale, Rosenthal stressed the importance of action and increased funding from the U.S. government. "The U.S. Congress' shortsighted failure to invest in existing and improved COVID-19 countermeasures, disease tracking, and monitoring has left the country unprepared for future stages of the pandemic, including the current surge related to a new variant," she said.

At the individual level, other than getting vaccinated, Dr. Oliver Brooks recommends that people continue to wear masks, diligently wash their hands, take supplements of Vitamin C, Vitamin D, and Zinc, and continue to test regularly for the virus.

Benjamin Neufeld is an Independent Reporter for The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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COVID/Esp

siendo protegidas esencialmente contra cepas que puede que ya ni siquiera existan.

Los científicos sospechan que XBB.1.5 se formó en una persona infectada con dos cepas COVID al mismo tiempo. La variante contiene cambios significativos en la parte de unión al receptor de la espiga del virus. Las vacunas funcionan creando anticuerpos que reconocen esa región de la espiga del virus. Estos cambios en esa región son la causa de que las nuevas variantes sean tan resistentes a las vacunas.

El Dr. Neuman también señaló que la razón por la que las variantes resistentes a las vacunas se vuelven continuamente tan prevalentes se debe al hecho de que las variantes que no son resistentes a las vacunas no son capaces de propagarse tan fácil o rápidamente a través de una población vacunada.

A pesar de su menor eficacia, todos los expertos coincidieron en que vacunarse sigue siendo de vital importancia. "Lo primero que podemos hacer es vacunarnos", afirmó el Dr. Oliver Brooks. Según el Dr. Brooks, sólo el 15% de la población ha recibido el refuerzo bivalente actualizado. "Las vacunas son seguras y eficaces. Aunque sólo haya un 10% de respuesta, hay

que vacunarse. No hay inconveniente".

A escala sistemática, Rosenthal subrayó la importancia de la acción y de una mayor financiación por parte del gobierno estadounidense. "La falta de visión de futuro del Congreso de EE.UU. a la hora de invertir en las contramedidas existentes y mejoradas contra el COVID-19, el seguimiento y la vigilancia de la enfermedad ha dejado al país sin preparación para futuras fases de la pandemia, incluido el actual repunte relacionado con una nueva variante", afirmó.

A nivel individual, además de vacunarse, el Dr. Oliver Brooks recomienda que la gente siga llevando mascarillas, se lave diligentemente las manos, tome suplementos de vitamina C, vitamina D y zinc, y siga haciéndose pruebas periódicas para detectar el virus.

Benjamin Neufeld es un Reportera Independiente de The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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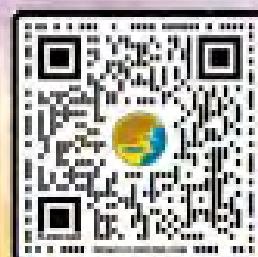
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