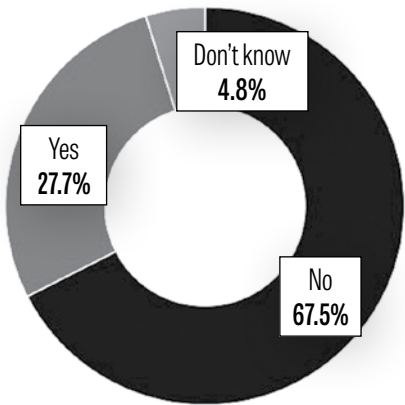


ONLINE POLL:

Are you surprised by how long it has taken for President Donald Trump to approve Kentucky's disaster declaration?



This poll reflects the opinions of 273 respondents. Visit [www.state-journal.com](http://www.state-journal.com) to take part in today's poll.

EDITORIAL

# Community fortunate for strong leadership during flooding

In times of crisis, like the historic flooding that we witnessed earlier this month, it certainly helps to have solid leaders. And our elected local government officials on both the Frankfort Board of Commissioners and Franklin County Fiscal Court; the Office of Emergency Management; city and county first responders; staff and crews at the Frankfort Plant Board; Franklin County Health Department have stepped in and shown up for this community throughout the disaster that affected 600 residences.

Perhaps taking a page or two from Gov. Andy Beshear's COVID-19 pandemic playbook, Mayor Layne Wilkerson and Judge-Executive Michael Mueller regularly updated residents several times per day with videos posted on social media. In fact, the pair was in front of the camera so often keeping the community informed that they developed a unique back-and-forth banter. Emergency management personnel and first responders kept barricaded and stood guard near flooded streets, residences and property — in addition to responding to rescues, motor vehicle accidents and other emergencies.

Frankfort Plant Board Director of Marketing and Communications Cathy Lindsey was also instrumental in keeping residents up-to-date on water conservation, telecom outages, operations at the water treatment plant, water main breaks and the post-flood electric re-connection process.

City of Frankfort Communications Director Blair Hecker and Franklin County Internet and Technology Coordinator Andrew Tippett regularly posted valuable information on the city's and county's website and social media sites. Franklin County Schools offered Franklin County High School as an emergency shelter for evacuated flood victims and the Capital City Activity Center/Meals on Wheels Greater Frankfort continues to serve as a shelter.

Numerous organizations, such as the Red Cross and Frankfort Elks Lodge 530, have helped around the community and at the flood relief supply distribution center that was set up in the former Pic-Pac.

The Franklin County Health Department was quick to recommend that those helping with the cleanup effort make sure their tetanus vaccine was current (in the past five years) in case of injury. The health department then took it a step further by hosting mobile vaccine clinics in flood-affected areas throughout the county. We are grateful for strong leadership, not just in our elected offices, but throughout Frankfort and Franklin County who have come together to help those in need. It is our hope that they continue to support flood victims in the weeks and months to come.

# Kentuckians have a lot of issues to work through in 2026

Kentucky's legislative session is over, but those of us who follow politics — or have family or friends who are political nerds — are already hearing rumblings about what could come down the pike next year.

Undoubtedly, Gov. Andy Beshear will be looking to burnish his credentials as some national Democrats yearn for a Democrat from a red state to run for president. Sen. Mitch McConnell's retirement will have all sorts of people jockeying for position, as vacancies are potentially created by those who will run to succeed him, and those who will run to succeed them, and so on.

Everyone wants government to do everything it can to make life more affordable — something that apparently has been more of a challenge for our elected leaders than anyone would have expected. After problems with learning loss due to COVID (better here than in a lot of places), everyone wants schools doing better.

Some folks in the health-care space are already talking about an effort to make hospitals undertake a bunch of new government-mandated reporting regarding drugs they buy at a discount because the pharmaceutical industry — not exactly popular in this part of the coun-

try — thinks they're having to sell too many drugs at a discount and their ability to profit is being hurt.



Jessica Lawson  
Guest columnist

This bill was introduced this year, but did not pass before the session ended. There are a lot of problems with this project. First, as noted, this is not a state where the pharmaceutical industry has a lot of friends or much latitude to be demanding legislative goodies. True, one specific company was most responsible for the opioid crisis, but between that and many Kentuckians upset about COVID-era policies that were pushed by the industry, this is not a natural locale for them to be extracting any benefits.

Second, in a state that keeps electing Sen. Rand Paul and Rep. Thomas Massie, it seems philosophically inconsistent for anyone to be pushing government mandates of just about any sort.

Third, given that rural hospitals who disproportionately benefit from the program in question are not in great shape, financially or staffing-wise, it would be boneheaded to impose costs on them associated with complying with new reporting

mandates, or require them to pull existing staff off essential jobs to do the mandated work.

Fourth, the state whose legislation is being copycatted here is Minnesota; the signature "report your discounts" bill was signed into law there by 2024 Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Tim Walz. It's hard to imagine many Kentuckians, given the very different politics of this state, are going to naturally rally to legislation most closely associated with that guy.

People in this Commonwealth — from the top names in politics right on down to rank-and-file voters — are going to have a lot of issues to work through next year. Focusing on obvious, kitchen table issues would be a better use of time — and one less likely to force a collective double take from all of us — especially given the challenges that a period of extended high inflation presented, and the tumult that could flow from good, or bad, federal policy changes under the new administration.

*Jessica Lawson is a get-healthy advocate and blue state exile who lives in Northern Kentucky with her boyfriend and pets, including an over-exuberant, senior retriever mix. She can be emailed through Brittany Cover at [Brittany@mair-strategies.com](mailto:Brittany@mair-strategies.com).*

LETTERS

## VACCINES ARE SIMPLE, SAFE WAY TO PROTECT OURSELVES

Dear editor,

For those living and working in Franklin County, the recent winter measles outbreak hit home in February when a Kentucky resident who had travelled internationally and later visited a Frankfort gym was confirmed to have the disease. It was the first known case of measles — a disease declared eliminated from the United States in 2000 due to the success of widespread vaccination efforts — in a Kentuckian in two years.

In weeks since, no further cases have been reported. Let's celebrate and elevate a likely contributor to that fact: Vaccines.

Vaccines are key to disease prevention. Vaccination is a simple, safe, and effective way of protecting ourselves and loved ones against harmful contagious diseases even before direct contact. Vaccines save billions of dollars in health and societal costs, but most importantly, they save lives.

Diseases like measles know no borders, no educational or economic status.

People with weakened immune systems, such as those undergoing chemotherapy or those with chronic illness, are more susceptible to contagious diseases.

Older people and infants are at risk. Higher rates of vaccination protect not just these groups, but everyone.

April 24-30 is World Immunization Week. It's a good time to talk to a doctor about vaccinations. It all starts with vaccinating children according to federal recommendations — visit <https://tinyurl.com/pc6fk89n>. Youth and adults can and should catch up on missed vaccines with guidance from health professionals. It's never too late for protection.

Do your part to keep yourself and our community healthy and strong — vaccinate.

*Anya Weber  
Frankfort*

## POWER OF THE PURSE SHOULD BE IN HANDS OF CONGRESS

Dear editor,

Rep. James Comer (KY) has proposed a bill (HR 1295) which would hand the Constitutionally-mandated power of Congress to oversee federal agency management, funding, etc. from Congress to the executive branch. This would be a temporary change, ending in December of 2026.

In short, President Donald Trump and Elon Musk would be given a power that the founders not only did not envision being under the executive branch, but openly expressed concern about being corrupted by the executive. They wanted this "power of the purse" to be in the hands of Congress because it is "closer to the people."

Comer wants to relegate the House to being a rubber stamp for Trump's policies, whims, designs and even destruction of large areas of our government.

In my view if Comer no longer wishes to fulfill his oath to uphold the Constitution, and perform the ascribed powers of his office as a member of the House of Representatives, then he should resign.

Why should the people of Kentucky and the United States pay him to dodge the hard work of managing the federal government, and potentially severely weaken our Constitutional balance of powers?

*Linda Allewalt  
Shelbyville*



# THE State Journal

Joe Imel, Publisher  
270-783-3273  
[joe.imel@bgdailynews.com](mailto:joe.imel@bgdailynews.com)

Chanda Veno, Editor  
502-209-6340  
[chanda.veno@state-journal.com](mailto:chanda.veno@state-journal.com)

Hannah Brown, Design Editor  
502-209-6339  
[hannah.brown@state-journal.com](mailto:hannah.brown@state-journal.com)

NEWS  
Linda Younkin  
502-209-6336  
[linda.younkin@state-journal.com](mailto:linda.younkin@state-journal.com)

Phil Case  
502-682-5995  
[phil.case@state-journal.com](mailto:phil.case@state-journal.com)

Linda Boileau, Editorial Cartoonist  
[linda.boileau@me.com](mailto:linda.boileau@me.com)

ADVERTISING SALES  
Meri Latek, Director of Advertising  
502-395-3434  
[meri.latek@state-journal.com](mailto:meri.latek@state-journal.com)

CLASSIFIEDS/LEGAL NOTICES  
[classifieds@state-journal.com](mailto:classifieds@state-journal.com)  
[public.notices@state-journal.com](mailto:public.notices@state-journal.com)  
502-871-4559

MAIN OFFICE  
Sheri Bunker, Director of Customer Service  
502-209-6305  
[sheri.bunker@state-journal.com](mailto:sheri.bunker@state-journal.com)

Jim Wainscott, Bookkeeper  
502-209-6301  
[jim.wainscott@state-journal.com](mailto:jim.wainscott@state-journal.com)

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