

Opinion

Little worries

Often, the little worries surprise us the most, arriving like special operation forces, attacking us in the middle of the night. None of them by themselves pose an ominous threat. It's not like the Huns are pounding on the city gate, threatening to destroy civilization as we know it. But one by one, they mount their attack, lining up to destroy an otherwise restful sleep. During the day, we ignore them, but in the middle of the night, they demand our attention. I mistakenly submitted the wrong book for one of my theology classes. The identification of the classes was similar, with only one number differentiating them. Mine wasn't a monumental mistake; the class doesn't begin for weeks, so it should be an easy correction. But that's not what my army of worries told me at 3 a.m. "What if students have already ordered the books online, only to find them unnecessary for the class?" the little army's captain whispered. "And what about the other class that will need the book? They won't know they need to purchase it. Won't you have to rearrange the syllabus?" Books, like everything else, have become more expensive. And so, my anxiety army expanded its assault to encompass potential complaints. "What about the dozens of emails you will receive from students wanting to know why you required them to buy an expensive book that wasn't germane to the syllabus?" That word "expensive" led to financial questions. "By the

way," the voice queried, "are you sure you have enough in your retirement account? What if you end up destitute? How will you seek employment when you're 85? Will you be healthy enough to work?" The mention of health empowered the "anxiety army" all the more. "Haven't you read how important sleep is to your health? Of course, you have. So what are you doing at 3 a.m. trying to sleep? Lack of sleep is harmful to your health." No one in the history of the world has gotten back to sleep when worried about getting back to sleep, especially when fearful that a lack of sleep may keep them from ever seeing the sun rise again. For the record, studies show that approximately 85% of the things we worry about never happen. But, of course, statistics don't diminish our worry. We worry that our worry is in that 15%. We're like the person who quipped: "When I don't have anything to worry about, I begin to worry about that." So, what to do? Anxiety can stimulate creativity. If it's a matter we can do something about, do that. I've gotten up in the wee hours to work on a project or write out possible solutions to a problem that bothered me. It's easier to rest once we've addressed the elephant in our mind. There is satisfaction in knowing we've done something about the potential problem. But we are helpless in resolving many things, like the weather or the economy.

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DAVID B. WHITLOCK
LIFE MATTERS

Tornado Alley

"One day you will tell your story of how you overcome what you are going through now, and it will become someone's survival guide." Brene Brown

The big storm that took out Somerset and London a couple of weeks ago was frightening for us personally. Our daughter Brenda lives in Somerset with her husband Kris and were in the middle of it. Thank the good Lord they are okay but their cars were pounded to death by hail. Fortunately they have insurance for that situation but many others lost everything, including their lives. Another daughter, Belle, knew a fellow she went to school with. He had just graduated from college prior to the tornadoes touching down. His grandmother saw the graduation. Two days later her home was destroyed while she was in it. Her life ended in that horrific event. The young man went from one of the happiest days of his life to the saddest at what must have seemed like the flip of a switch. We were watching the weather develop on television that night. I decided that I would go to bed



KEN BEGLEY

when it became clear that the worst of the squall was passing us by. Cindy was still up watching the progress of the storms. I told her "Don't wake me if it looks like the tornadoes are going to get me. I always wanted to die in my sleep." It seemed pretty funny at the time. Not so much later. I slept late the next morning. When I woke I found Cindy on the phone talking with Brenda who was shell-shocked as she had been up all night due to the storms by herself. Kris is a home healthcare worker for disabled people. He works at a residential house taking care of four individuals who live there. He made it there okay but later the storm took out some houses a few blocks over. Kris ended up staying there for 36 hours until his relief could make it in due to the mess. Brenda had been texting Cindy while everything was going on but it wasn't until the next morning that she saw this big string of messages for her on the phone. Let me tell you, it was scary hearing about it first hand. I'm sure you've all seen the destruction on television and the internet. But it's something to hear from someone that actually witnessed the devastation and loss.

I've been through a few storms but nothing like what those folks went through. Someone asked me if I thought God was trying to tell us something with all these storms. I don't think so. I believe that God created earth and heaven. This is not heaven. We are subject to the whims of nature down here. It can be good and it can be bad. Our lives are fragile. What I try to remember is that no matter how good things are in the moment, my life can turn on a dime. I am not promised a future here. My health, my possessions, my family and even my life will one day leave this world. So, I'm trying real hard to always remember that fact. The only thing that I truly possess is my eternal soul. I need to do a better job trying to keep it clean. I need to help those that need help, have understanding for those that have wronged me and ask for mercy from those that I have wronged. I need to be less judgmental of others so I can hope God will also judge me for all my sins the same way. These are just a few thoughts I had after talking with Brenda and Belle. Life is short but God is always with you. Be God strong.

Session results: Judiciary

The House Judiciary Committee plays a vital role in shaping the laws that impact Kentuckians every day. From contracts and courts to juvenile justice, jails, prisons, and other correctional facilities, the issues before this committee are broad and deeply consequential. While every legislative committee reviews new laws, the Judiciary Committee is especially significant because it helps establish the legal framework that underpins both our civil and criminal justice systems. Its work defines and defends our rights and responsibilities, ensures accountability, and promotes public safety. Here are several key pieces of legislation approved by the House Judiciary Committee



KIM KING
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

during the 2025 session:

Addressing Property Damage and Loss Caused by Squatters — HB 10 streamlines the process for law enforcement to remove squatters from private property while enhancing penalties for those who unlawfully damage real estate.

Strengthening Domestic Violence Laws — HB 38 makes violating a protective order three times in five years a class D felony.

Enhancing Accountability in Criminal Justice Institutions — HB 136 requires the annual report made to the legislature by the Department of Corrections to include additional data on persons released from a correctional institution, including time served, gang-affiliation, drug test results, educational attainment, and

recidivism.

Penalizing Failure to Return Rented/Leased Personal Property — HB 201 expands the definition of theft by failure to make required disposition of property to include situations where an individual retains rental or lease equipment or other items valued at \$100 or more beyond the contractually agreed period.

Protecting the Integrity of Legislative Proceedings — HB 399 creates the crime of interference with a legislative proceeding for knowingly engaging in disorderly or disruptive conduct in any legislative building that disrupts, impedes, or prevents the legislature from conducting business.

Honoring Kentuckians — HB 662 protects the personally identifiable information of judicial

officers and their immediate family members; establishes a process for the removal of personally identifiable information from publicly available content.

Banning Taxpayer-Funded Gender Transitions in Prison — SB 2 prohibits public resources from being used to fund cosmetic services or elective procedures like gender transitioning surgeries and hormone therapies. The measure allows for eligible drug or hormone therapies to be tapered off if a health care provider documents that ending the treatment immediately would cause harm to the inmate.

Protecting Critical Infrastructure — SB 64 strengthens penalties for the theft of copper from critical infrastructure, including cable,

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Recycle that plastic

Landfills are brimming with empty plastic containers. Either their users didn't bother to recycle them, or they were not recyclable due to their complex chemical compositions. Plastic was first manufactured in 1856, became popular after World War II, and its popularity surged in the 1960's. Unfortunately, almost 100% of plastic products are derived from oil, which, once removed from the ground, cannot be replaced. Oil is one of the

world's most valuable natural resources, providing almost half of the energy used by industrial nations, and the people of North America alone use more than 20 million barrels of it each day! Crude oil must be refined before it can be made into useful products such as gasoline, jet fuel, kerosene, diesel oil, wax, lubricating oil, grease, and asphalt. So, before pitching that plastic product into the garbage or trash, think of its source, and consider recycling it to help save our precious oil supply.



SR. JOEL GUBLER
BREATH OF ECOLOGY

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