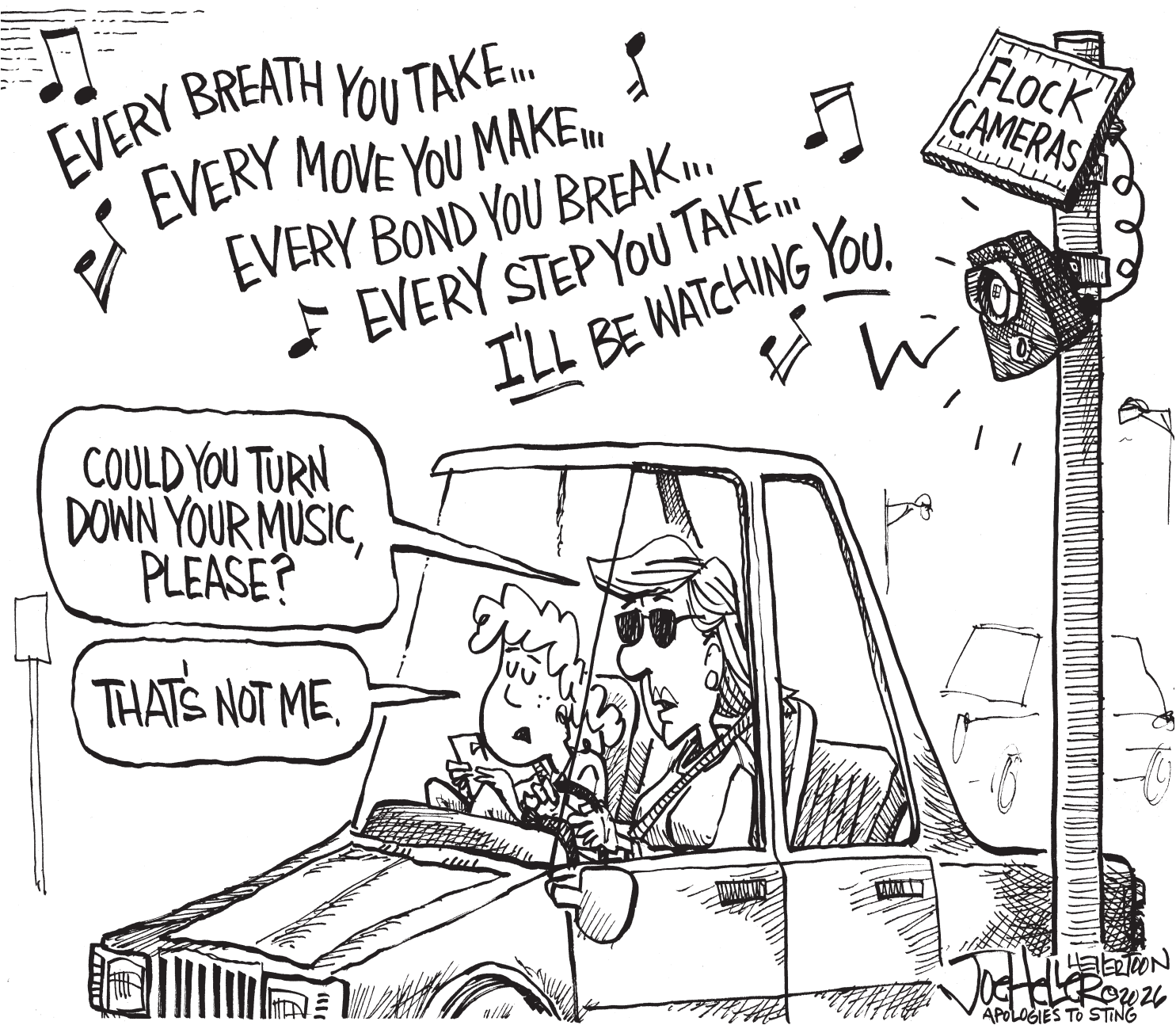


The opinions of writers on this page are not necessarily those of the newspaper, or management. We encourage our readers to share their views on the publication.

The Banner/Republican

OPINION

AUGUST 19, 2026



LETTER TO THE EDITOR Appreciates Real Local News

Dear Mr. Jeff Jobe,

I bought a small farm in Allen County in 1977. Moved to it in 1978 and moved back to Illinois in 2022-2023.

I was 42 years old when I arrived, 87 years old when I left and will be 90 years old this Saturday, August 8, 2026 if God be willing. 45 years. Best years of my life. Regret moving back to my birth state.

I am last one of my generation family on both sides. Nearest relatives, 2 nephews and 6 nieces who are now old themselves. What friends are still alive... are in Kentucky. Too late I realize my home is Kentucky.

I have taken this newspaper for years. I am unable to travel now. This paper means a lot to me.

You are doing an excellent job with it. It keeps me connected. I am a friend of Montie and Bob Harrison.

It is a pleasure to read how well the city and county are progressing. What a better place to live. Caler County, Charleston, Illinois is far behind. It was just the opposite when I moved there.

Caler County needs a good — excellent newspaper like *The Citizen-Times*. I am old school of course. I hear about events a week after they occur. I cannot find a Real Estate Broker. I want to move — been searching 3 years for another place. Internet doesn't work out well for me. I get there ... the property is sold etc. Your 30 minutes show is called "That was the closest I have gotten!"

These people need progress — need to see what their political people are doing. I'd be more informed by the truth instead of lies and hearsay. I would have loved to come here and use your methods on a NEW information newspaper. If not ... can you use your influence to spur someone to start a brilliant paper here? I hope I live long enough to be a subscriber.

Sincerely Yours,
Virginia C. Norris

Representative Rebecca Raymer LEGISLATIVE UPDATE Session Results: State Government

Members of the House State Government Committee, which I proudly serve as Vice Chair, had a productive legislative session, with several measures making their way through the legislative process to become law, including several enacted after veto overrides. This committee is responsible for issues involving the organization, oversight, and day-to-day operations of Kentucky's state government, including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, constitutional officers, state agencies, administrative regulations, and public pension systems.

As lawmakers considered these issues, one principle remained clear: government exists to serve the people, not the other way around. This session, the General Assembly protected essential services and programs that support Kentucky's most vulnerable citizens while also using the budgets for all three branches of government to begin a thorough review of existing programs and services. The goal is simple: identify outdated or ineffective programs, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and reduce spending on unused or underused contracts so taxpayer dollars are used as responsibly and efficiently as possible.

The results of those efforts include:

HB 10 strengthens accountability, transparency, and continuity of government during gubernatorial transitions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The measure strengthens public records preservation requirements by requiring the executive branch to retain key records during the final year of an administration, including communications related to contracts, board appointments, permits and licenses, employee hiring and promotions, litigation, pardons, and political donations. Vetoed. Overridden.

HB 213 provides city and county governments and universities the ability to reemploy retired police

officers without incurring employer retirement contributions.

HB 220 retroactively exempts pension spiking adjustments for members of Kentucky Employees Retirement System, County Employees Retirement System, or State Police Retirement System who retired on or after July 1, 2021. The measure also requires the Kentucky Public Pension Authority to review and adjust the benefits of those impacted.

HB 314 replaces the board and remove the executive director of the Kentucky Communications Network Authority, which runs the state's high-speed fiber optic cable network, KentuckyWired. Vetoed. Overridden.

HB 456 establishes the fourth week of September as Unclaimed Property Week and eliminates an outdated requirement that the State Treasurer reside in the capital city.

HB 480 establishes policies to ensure timely payments to contractors or individuals awarded state government contracts.

HB 642 removes the requirement that dependent children over age 18 must have a qualifying disability to remain eligible for certain survivor benefits through the Kentucky Teacher's Retirement System.

SB 29 prevents counties and waste management districts from imposing extra fees, permits, or local requirements on out-of-area solid waste facilities handling their waste, promoting better waste management by eliminating duplicative regulations and unnecessary costs. The measure also closes a loophole in state law to require residual waste landfills not housed with the industry they serve to be subject to local determination.

SB 59 strengthens protections for taxpayers by clarifying enforcement of the ban on the use of public funds to influence ballot questions, including constitutional amendments and constitutional convention

questions. Vetoed. Overridden.

SB 68 allows the Kentucky Horse Park Commission to remove or ban people from the park if they have been banned from Olympic, Paralympic, or equestrian sports for misconduct or if they pose a threat to the safety of others.

SB 70 updates the Public Pension Oversight Board to strengthen oversight of Kentucky's public retirement systems. Changes include updating board membership, membership eligibility, and requiring an annual report on both disability benefits and line-of-duty death benefits.

SB 85 allows individuals to designate a special needs trust to receive state-administered retirement benefits, ensuring those benefits can be directed to and managed for beneficiaries with disabilities.

SB 226 allows providers of preneed burial contracts to charge a one-time administrative fee of up to 15%, after full payment, while exempting that fee from certain refund requirements and updating related statutes.

SB 251 allows the Kentucky Department of Corrections (KDOC) to set execution procedures through internal policies and memorandums, making the department exempt from formal administrative regulations. Vetoed. Overridden.

SJR 74 directs the Legislative Research Commission and state agencies to work together to build a full, statewide picture of where substance use disorder resources and funding are located, to determine what is available and how to use those dollars more effectively.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Rebecca.Raymer@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.

Letter to the Editor

The Banner/Republican welcomes letters to the editor regarding our publications or local issues of importance. Letters should be no more than 300 words; we reserve the right to edit for clarity or length, or to reject letters that are in poor taste or libelous. Writers must include their name and a valid telephone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will be rejected. Send your letter by email to print@jpinews.com or mail to or drop off at any Jobe Publishing office.