

“History has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.” ~ Michelle Obama



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SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

February 16 - 22, 2023

‘Deadliest Disease’ that Has No Cure

This week, WHO officials confirmed that the Marburg virus was first found in the west African country, where it has already killed at least nine people.

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent@StacyBrownMedia

The World Health Organization held an “urgent meeting” on February 14 to discuss the new Marburg outbreak in Equatorial Guinea and possible vaccine and treatment candidates.

The organization said it would send teams to the affected areas and send experts in epidemiology, case management, infection prevention, lab work, and risk communication to help with the national response.

Matshidiso Moeti, the WHO’s regional director for Africa, said, “Marburg is very contagious.”

Due to the Equatorial Guinean government’s prompt and decisive action in confirming the disease, “emergency response can get to full steam quickly” to save lives and end the virus as soon as possible, Moeti stated.

This week, WHO officials confirmed that the Marburg virus was first found in the west African country, where it has already killed at least nine people.

Previously, in 2017, health officials confirmed a few cases of Marburg in Ghana.

Despite being what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention calls “a very rare disease in people,” Marburg has the potential to spread, and when it occurs, it

can be fatal, officials warned.

Hemorrhagic fever caused by the Marburg virus is highly contagious, the CDC said.

The RNA virus that causes it belongs to the same family as the Ebola virus, Filoviridae.

Both diseases are incredibly uncommon but can cause widespread epidemics with devastating effects.

In previous outbreaks of Marburg, the fatality rate ranged from 24% to 88%, depending on the virus strain and the quality of case management.

People who worked in mines and caves with colonies of Rousettus bats were likely the first to be infected with Marburg because of their prolonged exposure to the virus.

Unlike COVID, officials noted that the disease isn’t spread through the air.

Instead, it rapidly spreads from person to person through contact with infected blood, saliva, or urine, as well as contaminated surfaces and objects.

Family members and healthcare providers remain at risk even after a patient has been buried, as the disease can live on for some time in the body.

In 1967, the disease was

Continue **Cure** Page 4

Governments target medical debt with COVID relief funds

By MARK PRATT



Somerville City Councilor Willie Burnley Jr., stands near the Prospect Hill Monument, Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, in Somerville, Mass. Somerville could follow the lead of an increasing number of municipal, county and state governments and use federal pandemic relief funds to pay residents’ burdensome medical debt. (AP Photo/Steven Senne)

Millions of Americans mired in medical debt face difficult financial decisions every day — pay the debt or pay for rent, utilities and groceries. Some may even skip necessary health care for fear of sinking deeper into debt.

To address the problem, an increasing number of municipal, county and state

governments are devising plans to spend federal coronavirus pandemic relief funds to eliminate residents’ medical debt and ease those debt burdens.

The City Council in the Boston suburb of Somerville last month unanimously passed a resolution to spend \$200,000 of the city’s \$77

million in American Rescue Plan Act funding that could clear as much as \$4.3 million in medical debt, said Willie Burnley Jr., one of the city councilors behind the effort. As many as 5,000 of the city’s 80,000 residents could benefit.

Cook County, Illinois, which includes Chicago, and

Pittsburgh, New Orleans and Toledo, Ohio, are among more than a dozen communities that have set into motion or are considering similar plans.

Democratic Connecticut governor Ned Lamont last week proposed spending \$20 million in

Continue **Debt** Page 4

White House Exposes Republicans’ Plan to Gut Social Security, Medicaid

The White House exposed Lee and others on Thursday, just two days after their arrogant behavior during the globally televised event.

By Stacy M. Brown/Photo Credit: NNPA File

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent@StacyBrownMedia



When Republicans like Georgia’s Marjorie Taylor Green and Utah’s Mike Lee interrupted President Joe Biden’s State of the Union Address to call him a liar, they may have forgotten their own words.

Worse, Lee doubled down

Continue **Gut** Page 2

Ruth Simmons will resign early as president of Prairie View A&M University

Simmons was expected to step down June 1. The abrupt resignation appears to be over a difference with Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp over hiring during the rest of Simmons’ term as president.

BY KATE MCGEE

[<link rel="canonical" href="https://www.texastribune.org/2023/02/10/ruth-simmons-prairie-view-am/">](https://www.texastribune.org/2023/02/10/ruth-simmons-prairie-view-am/)

Ruth Simmons, president of the historically Black Prairie View A&M University, said Friday she will resign at the end of February, four months earlier

than her expected resignation date, June 1.

The abrupt resignation appears to be over a difference with Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp over hiring during the rest of Simmons’ term as president. In a letter to the campus community Friday, Simmons



Prairie View A&M University President Ruth J. Simmons said Friday she will resign by the end of February. Photo/Credit: Marjorie Kamys Cotera for The Texas Tribune

said she was recently informed that “she could only continue as president with limited presidential authority.”

“My immediate response was that I could not and would not agree to being president in name only,” she stated. “No enduring good can arise from subservience

to low standards and expectations.”

Simmons declined further comment through a university spokesperson.

In a statement, Sharp said that presidents in the Texas A&M System who are leaving cannot hire senior staff

Continue **Resign** Page 6



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EDITORIAL PAGE

Are You Raising one of the Next Generation of Hoodlums?

Fostering Unselfishness

By Joyce Teal



Dr. Joyce Teal

It is a fact that we're all born selfish creatures. In fact, our initial selfishness no doubt contributes to our initial survival. Before we are born, we must take from our mothers what we need in order to survive and thrive. And this is acceptable selfishness. Unfortunately, we don't just naturally become unselfish as we naturally grow and mature. Consequently, unselfishness must be fostered.

It does no good to scream and rant at your child, "Why are you so selfish?" The child is probably as baffled as you are regarding his selfish behavior. All he knows is that he wants what he wants when he wants it. He has not taken the time

to analyze his selfish behavior. In fact, he probably has not even thought of himself as selfish.

In a recent column readers were reminded, "Help your son develop that little voice in his head to remind himself of the consequences of his choices." That same little voice can assist him to become less selfish by reminding him when he is behaving in a selfish manner. And your son is much more likely to pay attention to the little voice that serves to remind him when his behavior is inappropriate if you have ongoing conversations with him regarding appropriate behavior, including behaving and responding unselfishly.

Becoming less self-centered, learning to feel with and for others, feeling empathy and tolerance are all targets at which to aim when fostering unselfishness. You want your son to develop sensitivity to needs of others.

A Harvard study showed a correlation between the amount of responsibility children have and their tendency

to think of others. Consequently, a child with no responsibility may become spoiled and may begin to lose his sense of caring and concern (or may even fail to develop one). This should serve to make parents aware of the appropriateness of assuring that children are assigned responsibilities that are age appropriate during each stage of their development. A parent is not doing his or her child any favor by allowing a son or daughter to spend hours at home on the sofa channel surfing or engaged in other mindless activities.

Following are suggestions to assist individuals who are in the process of raising children to foster unselfishness:

- **Praise:** If you notice your child behaving unselfishly, heap praise on him to reward him. Let him know that what he is doing is a good thing.
- **Assign responsibility:** There is a definite correlation between the amount of responsibility children have and their

tendency to think of others.

- **Let your children know how the things they do make you feel.** Be aware that your child wants to please you and is much more likely to do certain things when he knows that these things please you.
- **Be willing to apologize.** If you have made a mistake or were insensitive to your child, let your child know you are sorry for this.
- **Encourage/require your child to apologize** when he has been unkind or insensitive.
- **Reward sharing.** It is important and you should always compliment it.
- **Accept that unselfishness does not come naturally.** Becoming unselfish is a process that takes thinking and practicing and also requires a certain amount of maturity to develop.

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Continued Gut Page 1

on his own lie, claiming that "no Republican had made such a suggestion" of cutting or changing Social Security and Medicaid.

The White House exposed Lee and others on Thursday, just two days after their arrogant behavior during the globally televised event.

"Half of Sen. Lee's statement is an admission that he did indeed call for eliminating Social Security outright," White House spokesman Andrew Bates told reporters.

"But in terms of his claims that he's aware of 'no Republican - in either House of Congress - who has suggested any modification to Social Security as a condition for raising the debt ceiling,' we can help."

The White House then provided several news articles in which Republican members expressed a desire to cut or modify Social Security and Medicaid.

The articles were published by Fox News, the Washington Post, Reuters, and Bloomberg News.

The White House also noted that Biden has taken steps to protect Social Security and strengthen Medicare, two foundational programs on which tens of millions of seniors rely for a living.

Congressional Republicans, however, have a different record. For years,

Republican members of Congress have repeatedly tried to cut Medicare and Social Security, move toward privatizing one or both programs, and raise the Social Security retirement age and Medicare eligibility age," White House officials wrote in a Fact Sheet.

Earlier, House Republicans introduced legislation to repeal Biden's inflation-reduction bill, a move that would raise prescription drug prices for seniors, raise taxes on an estimated 14.5 million people, and give Big Pharma tens of billions of dollars.

On Feb. 9, Biden visited Florida to highlight the work his administration is doing to protect and strengthen Medicare and Social Security.

According to the White House, Republican members of Congress have continued to push plans that would jeopardize the economic security of millions of people.

To back that claim, administration officials presented receipts detailing congressional Republicans' long history of working to reduce Medicare and Social Security.

Senator Mike Lee said, "One thing that you probably haven't ever heard from a politician: it will be my objective to phase out Social Security. To pull it up by the roots and get rid of it."

Continue Gut Page 6

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I CORINTHIANS STUDY

I CORINTHIANS 16:1-24

INSTRUCTIONS ON PRACTICAL MATTERS

By Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith



Having dealt with the subject of the Resurrection in Chapter 15, we come now to Chapter 16 where Paul is giving some final instructions on practical matters. In verses 1-4, Paul will discuss taking up a collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem. He stated that our giving (Christian giving) should be done on the first day of the week (Sunday),

for Sunday is the day our Lord rose from the dead. Christ rose on the first day of the week, Sunday, and not on the Sabbath! As Christians, we should give as the Lord prospers us. Paul then stated that the collection will be taken to Jerusalem by a responsible committee. Having discussed his planned arrival to receive the collection for the poor saints of

Jerusalem, it was Paul's plan to leave Ephesus and journey through Macedonia (vv. 5-8). In going through Macedonia, other churches of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea were planning to participate in the collection efforts for the Jerusalem church (II Corinthians 8:1-4). On that visit, Paul planned to spend some time with the

Corinthians. Paul states that he plans to go to Corinth, but only if the Lord permits. As we minister for the Lord, we have noted that a great opportunity has been opened for ministry but there are many adversaries (v. 9). A great and effectual door has been opened unto Mount Moriah, but we are aware that there are many enemies trying to

suppress God's work! In verses 10-12, Paul instructs the Corinthian church to accept Timothy and Apollos as servants of the Lord. In verses 13-14, Paul admonished the Corinthian believers to stand firm in the faith in view of false teachers among them; further, he exhorted the men to be courageous and strong, and let all things be done with charity (love). He urged the Corinthians to submit to those who serve in commitment among them (vv. 15-16). Paul commented about three men (Stephas, Fortunatus and Achaicus) who were able to refresh and encourage Paul and they

were probably the ones who brought confirmation of the bad news from Chloe's household (vv. 17-18). Aquila and Priscilla, along with other brethren joined to bring greetings to the Corinthian church. As a sign of their familial bond, the church greeted one another with a holy kiss! (vv. 19-20). In verse 21, Paul ceased dictating the letter and wrote the final words himself. Paul invoked God's wrath on any man who love not the Lord and closed this epistle expressing his love in Christ Jesus (vv. 22-24).

May God Bless!



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Continued Page 1: World Health Officials Gather for Urgent Meeting Over Outbreak of Virus Deemed among Globe's 'Deadliest Disease' that Has No Cure

found after researchers in Marburg, Germany, Frankfurt, Germany, and Belgrade, Serbia, got sick.

According to the WHO, symptoms like high fever, severe headache, chills, and malaise can appear "abruptly."

Among the most frequently experienced signs and symptoms are aches and pains in the muscles.

Some of the others are jaundice, nausea, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.

On day five, the CDC says a non-itchy rash may appear on the chest, back, or stomach.

CDC officials warns that many of the symptoms of Marburg "can be difficult" to diagnose in a clinical setting because they are shared with other infectious diseases like

malaria, typhoid fever, and Ebola.

Death usually happens 8-9 days after the disease starts.

Initially, the victim experiences lots of blood loss, bleeding, and problems with multiple organs.

According to the WHO, those affected have a "ghost-like" appearance due to their lack of facial expression and extreme listlessness.

There are currently no approved vaccines or antiviral treatments to combat the Marburg virus.

Rehydration through oral or intravenous fluids, maintaining adequate oxygen levels, employing drug therapies, and treating specific symptoms as they arise are all examples of supportive care that can increase the

likelihood of survival.

Though no treatments have been proven in clinical trials, some health experts have suggested that Ebola drugs, like those used for the virus, could be effective.

The CDC says that making people more aware of the disease can help stop and control it.

Health officials noted that some "experimental treatments" for Marburg have been tested on animals, not humans.

According to the WHO, at least nine people have died this week, and 16 have been diagnosed in the western Kie-Ntem province.

"We're still digging into this," the WHO said.

The organization confirmed it had sent advance teams to the affected districts

to "trace contacts, isolate, and provide medical care to people showing symptoms of the disease."

There are also documented cases in Uganda, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.

According to the Health Ministry of Angola, the largest outbreak in 2005 killed more than 350 people.

"The virus is not known to be native to other continents, such as North America," the CDC wrote in a release.

"Further investigations are ongoing. Advance teams have been deployed in the affected districts to trace contacts, isolate, and provide medical care to people showing symptoms of the disease," the health body said.

Continued Debt Page 1

ARPA funds to eliminate as much as \$2 billion in state residents' medical debts.

Unlike credit card or loan debt, medical debt is not a choice, advocates said.

"Medical debt is something that people can't help and it's not their fault," Burnley said. "No one chooses to get hurt or to get sick."

Somerville resident Virginia Faust has health insurance, but she still fell several thousand dollars into debt in 2021 when a mental health emergency required a weeklong hospital stay. The debt affected her credit, and in a cruel irony, put additional stress on her mental health.

"This would have a tangible effect on my life and relieve a lot of stress," Faust, 25, said of Burnley's plan. "It would mean I would be more likely to go to a doctor and get regular checkups."

In Toledo, a combined \$1.6 million from the city and Lucas County will eliminate as much as \$240 million in medical debt for as many as 41,000 residents, according to Ohio state Rep. Michele Grim, who drove

the effort when she served as a Toledo city councilor.

"It's such a great return on investment," she said. "I really couldn't think of a better way to use dollars that were meant to aid in the economic recovery of our citizens."

The cities and states are teaming up with RIP Medical Debt, a New York-based nonprofit that since 2014 has used donations to buy huge bundles of debt from hospitals and other health care providers at pennies on the dollar and pay it off. A single donated dollar erases an average of \$100 of debt.

More than 40% of American adults have medical debt and about two-thirds of personal bankruptcies in the nation cite medical debt as a leading cause, said Allison Sesso, president and CEO of the nonprofit.

The money is coming from the federal government's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, which included \$360 billion for local, state, territorial and tribal governments to provide economic relief.

"This is one of the most impactful and direct ways we can use this money and it would have incredible and

quantifiable benefits," Burnley said.

Eligibility requirements can vary, but to be eligible in Somerville for the debt relief through RIP Medical Debt, individuals or families can have a household income of up to 400% of the federal poverty — that's \$111,000 annually for a family of four according to federal statistics — or have medical debts that exceed 5% of their annual income.

There is no need to apply. RIP Medical Debt determines eligibility and the beneficiaries get a letter informing them that their debt has been acquired and canceled. Not everyone will benefit. People whose debt continues to be held by for-profit collection agencies may miss out.

Unlike federal student loan debt relief, medical debt relief has more widespread and bipartisan support. According to a recent survey by Tulchin Research, more than 70% of Americans support medical debt relief, while only about half of Americans support student loan debt relief. The survey of 1,500 adults had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

Since its founding, RIP Medical Debt has raised enough money to eliminate more than \$8.5 billion of debt for nearly 5.5 million people. But that's barely a dent in the total number of people facing tough money choices.

A 2021 study that appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association determined that Americans have \$140 billion in unpaid health care bills at collection agencies alone, and that debt disproportionately affects the poor.

Although it's a good cause, using ARPA funds to discharge medical debt does not address the underlying systemic problem, said Ray Kluender, an assistant professor at Harvard Business School and one of the study's co-authors.

Medical debt is a "byproduct of the patchwork way we pay for health care," he said. "While relieving debts after they have gone through the provider collections process won't address the issues driving the accumulation of these unpaid bills in the first place, it may nevertheless help people who are struggling to pay back their bills," he said.



SPORTS/NEWS PAGE



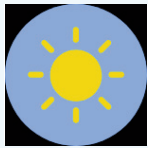
7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, Feb. 16



H - 46°
L - 33°

Friday, Feb. 17



H - 48°
L - 36°

Saturday, Feb. 18



H - 51°
L - 41°

Sunday, Feb. 19



H - 64°
L - 56°

Monday, Feb. 20



H - 74°
L - 60°

Tuesday, Feb. 21



H - 70°
L - 49°

Wednesday, Feb. 22



H - 60°
L - 45°

Super Bowl top moments happened on, off and above the field

By DAVID BRANDT



AP Photo/Matt Slocum

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — The Kansas City Chiefs beat the Philadelphia Eagles 38-35 in a memorable Super Bowl that included plenty of big plays on and off the field. Here's a look at some top moments from Sunday night's game:

Harrison Butker kicked a 27-yard field goal with 8 sec-

onds remaining to lift the Chiefs to their 38-35 win over the Eagles. The Chiefs have won the Super Bowl in two of the past four seasons and their roll shows no sign of stopping, especially with Patrick Mahomes throwing the pass- night's game: Harrison Butker kicked a 27-yard field goal with 8 sec-

after throwing for 182 yards and three touchdowns. Coach Andy Reid also captured his second Super Bowl title and this one came at the expense of the franchise he coached for 14 seasons before coming to Kansas City.

Rihanna provided a high-flying halftime performance in Arizona. The nine-time Grammy Award winner began and ended the half-time show suspended high above the field. She wore a puffy, bright red jumpsuit with tight, rubbery garb underneath as she stood on a transparent rectangular platform that raised and lowered as she belted out the lyrics to her hit songs over the turf.

Oh yeah, and to top it off, she did the performance while pregnant, news that was revealed after the show.

Tiger Woods returns to golf with the same belief he can win

By DOUG FERGUSON



FILE PHOTO: Tiger Woods playing at the Quicken Loans National, June 2018 (Photo: KA Sports Photos / Wikimedia Commons)

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tiger Woods feels good enough to play at Riviera, his first tournament with a cut and without a cart since the British Open last July. He already is looking ahead to the Masters. And yes, he thinks he can win.

"I would not have put myself out here if I didn't think I could beat these guys," Woods said Tuesday ahead of the Genesis Invitational, which has attracted 19 of the top 20 players in the world.

He also is well aware that he has not won since October 2019, and that at age 47 and with more surgeries than major titles (15), time is running out. He knows that. He's just not quite ready to accept it.

He marvels at how long Tom Brady lasted. He remembers when John Elway retired from the Denver Broncos because his body could no longer recover the way it once did. Golf is not a contact sport, but it has become a young man's game. Only two of the top 10 players in golf are in their 30s. The oldest is Rory McIlroy at 33.

Woods can play. The question is whether he can compete, whether he can win. He remains at 82 career PGA Tour titles, a record he shares with Sam Snead, who was 67 when he made the cut at a PGA Championship.

Part of Woods was annoyed that he was celebrated for making the cut in the Masters last year, his first competition since a February 2021 car crash outside Los Angeles shattered bones in his right leg and ankle.

"I'm there to get a W, OK? So I don't understand that making the cut is a great thing," Woods said. "If I entered the event, it's always to get a W. There will come a point in time when my body will not allow me to do that anymore, and it's probably sooner rather than later. But wrapping my head around that transition and being the ambassador role and just trying to be out here with the guys, no, that's not in my DNA."

He played that ambassador role last year at the Genesis Invitational as the tournament host. He also is leading the private player meetings geared toward building a new PGA Tour model of elite tournaments as a response to Saudi-funded LIV Golf.

His announcement Friday that he was playing led to a scramble for media credentials. The back of the press room in the Riviera clubhouse was lined with some two dozen photographers waiting for him to show up for his news conference.

Justin Rose watched in December as Woods played with his son at the PNC Championship, riding in a cart. Woods has been saying he can hit all the shots, that it's walking to them that makes it difficult.

"In terms of the important part of can you hit a golf ball, can you get a ball in the hole, all of that seemed to be really in order," Rose said. "But we know that's definitely not the thing he struggles with, right? It's obviously the physical side of putting together four rounds of golf. (It's) a really

good sign to see him in the field and feeling willing and able to get out here."

Woods had planned to play in his Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas the first week of December, but in accelerating his practice he developed plantar fasciitis that kept him from walking. He said he still copes with plantar fasciitis, only it has become manageable. The ankle is what gives him problems.

He prepared for Riviera — and the Masters, and whatever else can follow — with a more graduated practice of hitting golf balls, walking the course until he became tired, and then walking a little more until he could get in 18 holes.

What to expect? Not even Woods knows.

Expectations have run the gamut during his incomparable career. He once went two whole months in 2001 without winning, and the cover of a golf magazine said, "What's wrong with Tiger?" He went on to win his next three starts, including the Masters.

Now it's whether he's kidding himself about winning.

Woods no longer is motivated by naysayers, a product of age and maturity, with a dose of reality. He knows his last win was the Zozo Championship in Japan in 2019, which was six months after he won the Masters.

Before his back fusion surgery in 2017, when it was a struggle just to walk, Woods had reason to wonder if he would ever play. He thinks he can beat McIlroy and Scottie Scheffler, the new No. 1 in golf. But there is more gratitude about simply playing.



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Making Black History Month Truly Meaningful

By: **Dr. John E. Warren**, Publisher
San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Newspaper



Dr John E. Warren

It's not enough that Black History Month is the shortest month in the year; or that many capitalize on it with lip service and feign recognition. By this we mean the commercialization of "Black

History Month" by some while others are attempting to erase us by banning books that speak to our history and struggle.

When we personally stop and reflect or read the accounts of what people like James Weldon Johnson and his brother did in writing the "Negro National Anthem" over 123 years ago; when we consider that this was done in the midst of a segregated society with much open race hatred, it's a testimony to the personal and family commitment to a people that you not only identify with, but are proud of.

To make Black History meaningful to us individual-

ly and to our people, we must first get reacquainted with our history. For example, it is embarrassing to be in a Black History program calling for the singing of "Lift Every Voice & Sing" (the Negro National Anthem) and watch people struggle to sing one verse or fumble while looking for the words in a program. The act of meaningful engagement with our history must be year-round and based on a commitment to who we are collectively and how much we care for our own heritage.

Let's start by learning the words to the song and studying the meaning for what it

tells us about those who came before us. Let's be able to sing the song from our hearts just as the people of South Africa do with their national anthem. Because the South African people care and identify with their song, we can feel the depth of their emotions.

When we re-enter that space for ourselves, we will no longer have to be concerned about what others do or say about us. The words to the song will rekindle our desire to revisit what our ancestors have done both for us and this nation. Let's make Black History everyday, as some of us, like this paper, already work at.

who had paid into the system for years.

Republicans in the House also proposed repealing the Inflation Reduction Act, including its provisions on health care.

Working families across the country, including in Florida, where Biden recently traveled, would see their insurance premiums rise by \$7,000 per year as a result of such actions.

Approximately 14.5 million Americans would face higher health-care premiums and a tax increase.

If Medicare is unable to negotiate drug prices, everyone with Medicare will face higher drug prices, and the deficit will grow as tens of

billions of dollars are returned to Big Pharma.

More than 3.3 million Medicare beneficiaries who use insulin will no longer have the peace of mind of knowing that their insulin is capped at \$35, and drug companies may resume increasing drug prices faster than inflation with no accountability, as happened last year for 1,200 prescription drugs.

"In his State of the Union address, President Biden vowed to protect Social Security and Medicare while building on our progress in lowering health-care costs for millions of seniors and American families," officials said.

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Continued **Resign** Page 1

or deans except on an interim basis so the new president can choose their team. Sharp said he informed Simmons he would not make exceptions and she chose to resign.

"I am sorry she chose this path, but I am forever grateful for her service at Prairie View A&M University and look forward to even greater things in the future," Sharp said in a statement.

Simmons announced last March that she would step down as president of Prairie View, where she has served since 2017. Sharp convinced her to come out of retirement to lead the historically Black university.

The Houston native has been a leading voice in higher education for decades and previously worked at Smith College in Massachusetts, where she served as the president, and Brown University, where she was the first Black woman to lead an Ivy League school.

Under her leadership, Prairie View grew its endowment by 40%, increased fundraising and boosted financial aid. In 2020, billionaire MacKenzie Scott donated \$50 million to the university.

Simmons was supposed to serve until the incoming president, Tomikia LeGrande, assumed the role on June 1.

LeGrande is the current vice president for strategy, enrollment management and student success at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Simmons said she would remain at the university as a professor and continue to help with university fundraising and leadership development.

In the letter, Simmons pledged to continue advocating for historically Black colleges and universities.

"I will support the efforts of faculty, staff and students who seek the best for themselves and their university," she wrote. "We must not be held hostage to how others choose to see us or treat us, but, instead, continue to chart our own path demonstrating the pride, commitment and integrity that defines us."

The Texas A&M System said it will appoint an interim president to serve before LeGrande starts in June.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/02/10/ruth-simmons-prairie-view-am/>.

Continued **Gut** Page 2

• In November, John Thune, the number two Senate Republican in leadership, declared that Social Security and Medicare benefits should be slashed.

• Florida Senator Rick Scott is championing a plan to put Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security on the chopping block every five years, which would put the health and economic security of 63 million Medicare beneficiaries, 69 million Medicaid beneficiaries and 65 million Social Security beneficiaries at risk.

• Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin proposed sunset these laws every year.

According to Politico, the Republican Study Committee, which includes most House Republicans, released a budget plan that would raise the entry age.

The GOP would also raise taxes on some people who retire early or have a certain income, and they would privatize Social Security.

In addition, in 2015, the majority of House Republicans, including Speaker Kevin McCarthy of California, Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana, and a slew of others in current leadership, voted to raise the retirement age to 70.

That move would reduce Social Security benefits for tens of millions of seniors