

One Big Beautiful Bill

BY DAVID G. BRONNER

In July, Congress passed President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill ("the Bill"), which extends existing tax cuts and adds new ones for many Americans. This tax relief will be felt almost immediately, but some of the cuts are back-end loaded.

The GOOD NEWS for Alabama is that the state's congressional delegation helped secure additional wins beyond the tax cuts. Senator Tommy Tuberville worked to soften the financial burden that new SNAP requirements could place on states, particularly important for Alabama, where a sudden shift in responsibility could have been especially harmful. Senator Katie Britt secured enhancements to the child care tax credit, which will directly benefit many working families in the state. Congressmen Mike Rogers and Dale Strong helped deliver billions in funding for infrastructure and defense-related projects in North Alabama, which could bring lasting economic benefits.

BUT THE PAIN IS COMING. The Bill

does not extend the enhanced Affordable Care Act premium subsidies, which are set to expire at the END OF THIS YEAR. Without those subsidies, many Alabami-



ans may no longer be able to afford health insurance purchased through the marketplace, leading to a potential spike in the uninsured population.

Most of the Medicaid cuts are directed at states that have expanded Medicaid. Ten states, including Alabama, did not expand Medicaid. That might sound good, BUT, Alabama gave up \$2 billion a year

and \$20 billion over the last 10 years when the state would not put up 10 cents to get a dollar to help our children, seniors, disabled, nursing homes, and hospitals.

According to the National Academy for State Health Policy, Alabama may still see a reduction in federal funding between 6% and 11%. The reduction in funding will not be immediate and will come over the next few years.

To help offset some of the damage from Medicaid cuts and increased uncompensated care, the Bill includes \$50 billion in federal relief for rural hospitals. However, that relief is spread out over five years and divided among all 50 states.

Additionally, while Sen. Tuberville mitigated some of the SNAP changes, the Bill still includes cost-shifting based on each state's administrative error rate. These CHANGES DON'T TAKE EFFECT UNTIL FISCAL YEAR 2028, but they could place serious strain on Alabama's already overextended General Fund budget. ●



Golf Business News (U.K.)

More than 300 delegates from 33 countries took Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail to the Deep South city of Birmingham to attend the 16th annual North America Golf Tourism Convention.

Owned and operated by IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour

Operators), the event saw 70% of the participating golf tour operators and golf travel advisors coming from North America and Latin America, with the remainder travelling from Europe, Australia and Asia.

"It was an absolute pleasure to welcome IAGTO and its global members to

Birmingham," said Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau's President & CEO, Dan Williams. "It was such a fun and energising week, and we were proud to showcase our city, our golf, and our Southern hospitality."

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Renovations at the RSA's Prattville Hotel and Golf Complex

BY MARK FAGAN

The RSA's 54-hole Capitol Hill golf complex in Prattville on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail (the Trail) opened in 1999. Following the opening of this golf complex, the Business Council of Alabama (BCA), the for-profit arm of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, presented plans for a corporate conference center/ lodge adjacent to the golf courses to recruit industrial prospects. The RSA donated 14 acres at the golf complex, and the BCA used bank loans to finance a lodge and conference center. This three-story conference center opened in August 2000 as the Legends Conference Center at Capitol Hill.

In December 2002, the RSA provided financing for PCH Hotels and Resorts (a subsidiary of the RSA) to purchase the Legends Conference Center. In 2005, the city of Prattville partnered with the RSA to expand the conference center by 10,000 square feet for civic functions.

In 2024, a total renovation was started on this property, which has been completed and will meet the requirements for a new 20-year franchise agreement with Marriott. This hotel will remain the only full-service Marriott in the Montgomery-Prattville area. All guest rooms and baths, public space, meeting space, restaurants, pool deck area, and exterior are included.

This stacked-stone structure has marble floors with all the marble and stones from Alabama. The main building has 96 Queen and King bedded rooms with large murals of golf holes at Capitol Hill, large wall-mounted TVs, and many rooms with balconies overlooking the golf courses. Also, there are two 8-room luxury villas,

hole drops 200 feet from the tee box to the fairway, and this hole is followed by 14 holes adjoining water and one with an island green. **The Senator** resembles Scottish and Irish links courses with no trees, 193 sand bunkers, and high mounding with fescue grass separating holes.

The Legislator winds through trees along a bluff overlooking the Alabama River and descends 200 feet into vine- and moss-covered wetlands. There is a Sky Bridge with exceptional views going down to the six holes in a native cypress swamp and coming back up for the finishing holes at the clubhouse. The Legislator is finishing a renovation with completion in late September 2025. All greens are being regrassed with TifEagle Ultradwarf Bermuda grass and

restored to their original sizes. Four holes are redesigned for improved playability and accessibility. A total bunker renovation was added using capillary bunker and new forward tees for enhanced playability for ladies and senior golfers. Wooden bulkheaded walls on four holes are being replaced with long-lasting, durable steel sheet piles. Selective tree limb removal throughout the course has improved sightlines and supports turf-grass health. ●



and a separate 10,000-sf executive cottage with six suites with balconies, a dining room for 24, a garden, koi ponds, and a helipad. There are outdoor tennis courts, a swimming pool, a hot tub, a volleyball court, and a health club. The 60-seat Oak Tavern provides bar and food service inside and to a covered patio with TVs, fire pits, and live music overlooking the Senator Course.

This RSA hotel provides onsite lodging for the Capitol Hill site's three championship golf courses (The Judge, The Senator, and The Legislator). **The Judge's** opening

Golf Business News (U.K.)

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"We hope everyone enjoyed their time here as much as we enjoyed hosting them, and we look forward to welcoming all of our new friends back to Birmingham soon."

IAGTO Chief Executive Peter Walton commented, "Birmingham was the perfect venue for the NAC because it lies at the heart of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail,

which spans the state of Alabama with some 22 amazing golf courses.

"We were also able to showcase much of the state from Mobile in the south to Huntsville and Muscle Shoals in the north on pre- and post-convention trips for dozens of tour operators – many of whom had never previously visited Alabama...." ●

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Alabama Success Stories

Alabama Leads Toward a Future Without Cervical Cancer

Alabama is setting the example for other states. In a groundbreaking move, it has become the first in the nation to launch a comprehensive, statewide plan aimed at eliminating cervical cancer as a public health problem. This bold initiative brings together healthcare providers, public health experts, civic leaders, and everyday Alabamians to work toward a future where no one must face this preventable disease.

All women are at risk of developing cervical cancer, even though it is one of the most preventable forms of cancer thanks to effective tools like the HPV vaccine, regular screenings, and early treatment. However, Alabama has some of the highest rates of cervical cancer in the country.

To change this scenario, OPERATION WIPE OUT was launched in 2023 as a statewide collaborative effort between the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center, Rotary Club of Birmingham, and other partners. "The discovery that HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is the main cause of cervical cancer opened doors for new technologies and strategies, and, consequently, made cervical cancer elimination a reality," said Dr. Isabel Scarinci, Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and one of the leaders of OPERATION WIPE OUT.

The statewide plan focuses on three key evidence-based strategies:

- **HPV Vaccination:** Increasing HPV vaccination rates among children as young as 9 years old and young adults, up to age 26. This vaccine protects against the virus that causes most cervical cancers as well as other HPV-associated cancers such as vulvar, vaginal, anal, penile, and oropharyngeal.
- **Screening:** Expanding access to cervical cancer screening for women ages 21 to 65, especially in underserved and rural communities that may be unaware that there is a federally funded program (Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program) that provides free screening and follow-up for low-income uninsured women.
- **Follow-Up:** Ensuring timely follow-up and treatment for those with abnormal screening results, including an ADPH program with traveling nurse practitioners who can provide follow-up where women were screened so women do not need to travel to larger medical centers to obtain these services.

With these three tools, cervical cancer can be eliminated, and anyone can play a role in this effort. "The launching of the statewide action plan is a historic milestone in the fight against cervical cancer in Alabama," said Nancy Wright, Director of the ADPH Cancer Prevention and Control Division and one of the OPERATION WIPE OUT leaders. "It is an opportunity for all segments of society



to get involved, including parents, physicians, business leaders, community-based organizations, public health systems, and academic centers."

This work happening in Alabama has not gone unnoticed and was highlighted in *The Wall Street Journal* last year, as well as in a recent documentary streaming on PBS, "Conquering Cervical Cancer."

Through OPERATION WIPE OUT, Alabama is not only leading the way but also inviting other states to join in the mission to eliminate cervical cancer nationwide.

To learn more or get involved, visit <https://operationwipeout.org>.

This is a series of articles about Alabama Success Stories. Please let us know if you have a similar success story you would like to share with the RSA membership. You may contact us at communication.correspondences@rsa-al.gov. ●

Plastics and Your Health

BY DAVID G. BRONNER

How can something we use daily have a direct effect on our health? After reading a few articles, I want you to know something I never considered.

The air that we breathe is full of microplastic particles and fibers. We cannot see micro- and nano-plastic particles (MNPs). You might say, so what, I live near a plant that produces

obnoxious air quality with meat, paper, or other industries we can smell, and I am fine.

MNPs go to the liver, kidneys, and brain. Research shows that the brain collects up to 30 times more than the liver or kidneys. The brains of people who died in 2024, according to a University of New Mexico toxicology report, had 50% more MNPs than those who

died in 2016. Individuals with dementia had 10 times more MNPs in the brain.

Plastics are very common, starting around the 1950s with 450 million tons, but today, about 11 billion tons of plastic accumulate in our environment. Avoid plastic water bottles and avoid microwaving any plastic containers. Plastic can even shed particles at room temperature. ●

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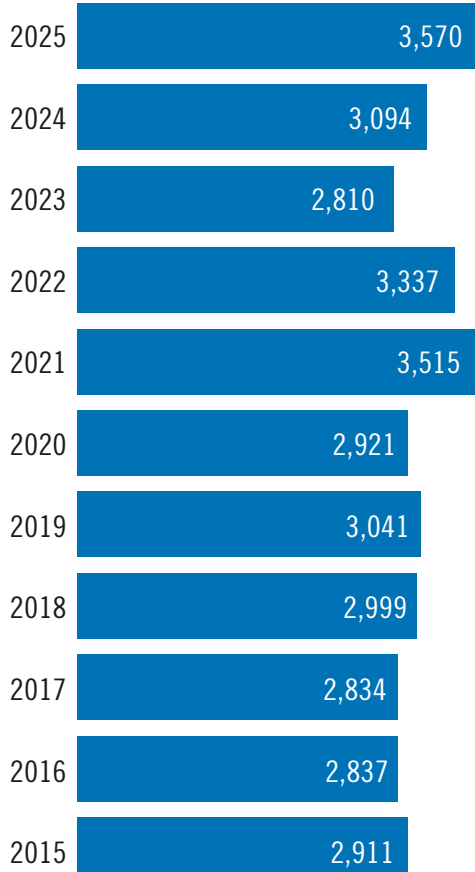
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Alabama K-12 Retirements

The bars show K-12 education employee retirements spiked during the 2024–25 school year, with most retirements coming in June, the end of the academic year.



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