

GOP'S HEALTH CUTS LOOM

Counties aren't sure how they'll pay for the care of millions of newly uninsured.

By Christine Mai-Duc and Claudia Boyd-Barrett

In 2013, before the Affordable Care Act helped millions get health insurance, California's Placer County provided limited healthcare to some 3,400 uninsured residents who couldn't afford to see a doctor.

For several years, that number has been zero in the predominantly white, largely rural county stretching from Sacramento's eastern suburbs to the shores of Lake Tahoe.

The trend could be short-lived.

County health officials there and across the country are bracing for an estimated 10 million newly uninsured patients over the next decade in the wake of Republicans' One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

The act, which President Trump signed into law this summer, is expected to reduce Medicaid spending by more than \$900 billion over that period.

"This is the moment where a lot of hard decisions have to be made about who gets care and who doesn't," said Nadereh Pourat, director of the Health Economics and Evaluation Research Program at UCLA. "The number of people who are going to lose coverage is large, and a lot of the systems that were in place to provide care to those individuals have either gone away or diminished."

It's an especially thorny challenge for states such as California and New Mexico, where counties are legally required to help their poorest residents through what are known as indigent care programs. Under Obamacare, both states were able to expand Medicaid to include more low-income residents, alleviating counties of patient loads and redirecting much of their funding for the patchwork of local programs that provided bare-bones services.

Placer County, which estimates that 16,000 residents could lose healthcare coverage by 2028, quit operating [See Uninsured, A7]



ERIC THAYER Los Angeles Times

WRIGHTWOOD BEARS STORM'S BRUNT

Workers navigate debris after an atmospheric river triggered destructive flows in the mountain town. "All it is is rock and mud," said a man who left his home when the hills began to collapse. CALIFORNIA, B1

ICE puts graduation dream on hold

Community circles wagons after a teen is detained days before his senior year

By Brittney Mejia

The baby-faced teen called his mom for the fourth time that November day. He was homesick, but he wanted her to know he was OK.

Benjamin Guerrero Cruz had recently turned 18, and he was farther from his mother and younger siblings than he'd ever been before.

But he wasn't off at college or starting a new job. He was calling from San Bernardino County, where he'd been held in an immigration detention center for months. "You have to be strong," he consoled his mother.

In August, days before Benjamin was set to start his senior year at Reseda Charter High School, masked agents surrounded him as he walked his family's puppy, Athena. He said they did not identify themselves. He was still wearing what

he slept in — black shorts and a T-shirt — when the agents arrested him, he told The Times in his first interview with a news outlet since his ordeal began. "I didn't know who they were, I didn't know what they wanted," he said. "But they handcuffed me and left me wondering: 'What did I do?'"



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

BENJAMIN Guerrero Cruz, 18, was detained while walking his dog in the San Fernando Valley in August. [See Detainee, A6]

Model, influencer — and alleged thief

Adva Lavie is accused of using dating apps to target rich older men for burglaries.

By Summer Lin

It was an invitation that lingerie model Amber Karis Bassick couldn't refuse — a sun-filled hotel stay on the Spanish isle of Ibiza, paid for

by her new friend Adva Lavie, a men's magazine centerfold and social media influencer.

"I thought that was really nice of her and sweet, and it'd be a lot of fun," Bassick recalled of the offer.

A willowy Los Angeles resident with dark hair and eyes, Lavie had long cultivated a reputation as a glamorous, jet-setting model with an exotic background. Dressed in revealing out-

fits, Lavie posed in TikTok videos, Instagram posts, Penthouse photo spreads and other media. She boasted to podcast listeners and bikini contest judges that she was from Israel and a former member of the Israel Defense Forces.

But behind the flashy social media facade of luxury cars, private jets and model getaways in Vegas, there lurked something darker and predatory, according to

Bassick and others.

It didn't take long for Bassick to wonder whether Lavie might have an ulterior motive for inviting her along.

When Bassick arrived at the hotel, staff told her their room wasn't paid for, so she had to shell out about \$2,400 to check in, she said.

Then, when Lavie showed up at the hotel, she was being trailed by a taxi driver who demanded to be [See Lavie, A9]

CHP moves hiring to fast lane

Agency has sworn in 600 officers this year as other departments struggle with attrition.

By Libor Jany

For all the talk of recruitment struggles at the Los Angeles Police Department and other law enforcement agencies nationwide, some local agencies are finding that hiring new officers has gotten easier.

Take the California Highway Patrol, which in November graduated a class of 146 officers from its academy in West Sacramento. The statewide agency, which mainly polices traffic violations on freeways and oversees state property, has sworn in more than 600 new officers this year — a total that many departments would envy.

While citing many of the same reasons that experts have given for why fewer people are going into law enforcement — continued scrutiny over officer misconduct, relatively low pay compared with other less dangerous professions, and a general lack of interest in long careers in government service — CHP Commissioner Robin Johnson said that some of the agency's recruitment problems were internal.

For instance, she said, the agency for many years resisted outsourcing its background check process, partly because of the cost, but also to avoid going against tradition that said the process should be handled in-house. As a result, the roles were filled by officers who had had to juggle "other duties besides background investigations" — thereby prolonging the time it took to review an applicant's background, she said.

An internal analysis found that roughly half of applicants were dropping out during background checks, she said.

Now, the CHP uses a third-party company that Johnson said has significantly sped up the process for new recruits. The agency [See CHP, A9]

Zelensky, Trump set up meeting for Sunday

The 20-point plan to end the war 'is about 90% ready,' says the Ukrainian president.

By Illia Novikov

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Friday that he will meet with President Trump in Florida over the weekend.

Zelensky told journalists that the two leaders will discuss security guarantees for Ukraine during Sunday's talks, and that the 20-point plan under discussion "is about 90% ready."

An "economic agreement" also will be discussed, Zelensky said, but added he was unable to confirm "whether anything will be finalized by the end."

The Ukrainian side will also raise "territorial issues," he said. Moscow has insisted that Ukraine relinquish the remaining territory it holds in the Donbas — an ultimatum that Ukraine has rejected. Russia has captured most of Luhansk and about 70% of Donetsk — the two

areas that make up the Donbas.

Zelensky said that Ukraine "would like the Europeans to be involved" but doubted whether it would be possible on short notice.

"We must, without doubt, find some format in the near future in which not only Ukraine and the U.S. are present, but Europe is represented as well," he said.

The announced meeting is the latest development in an extensive U.S.-led diplomatic push to end the nearly four-year Russia-Ukraine war, but efforts have run into sharply conflicting demands by Moscow and Kyiv.

Zelensky's comments came after he said Thursday that he had a "good conversation" with U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters Friday that the Kremlin had already been in contact with U.S. representatives since Russian presidential envoy Kirill Dmitriev recently met with U.S. envoys in Florida.

"It was agreed upon to [See Ukraine, A4]

Hit the dance floor at Philippine grocery

Seafood City sells lumpia by day and turns into a multigenerational club by night

By Kailyn Brown



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

DJS 10AK, left, Ever Ed-E, and Aymo keep the tunes coming. [See Seafood City, A12]

Airstrikes rattle Nigerian villagers

Trump announces that the U.S. launched a "powerful and deadly" attack against Islamic State forces. **WORLD, A2**

Kings' Kempe passes loyalty test

Passing up more money as an unrestricted free agent, winger signed an eight-year extension to stay in L.A. **SPORTS, B12**

Developer weighs L.A.'s challenges

Bill Witte is retiring after running Related California and helping shape the city for decades. **BUSINESS, A10**

Weather Variable cloudiness. L.A. Basin: 61/46. **B8**

