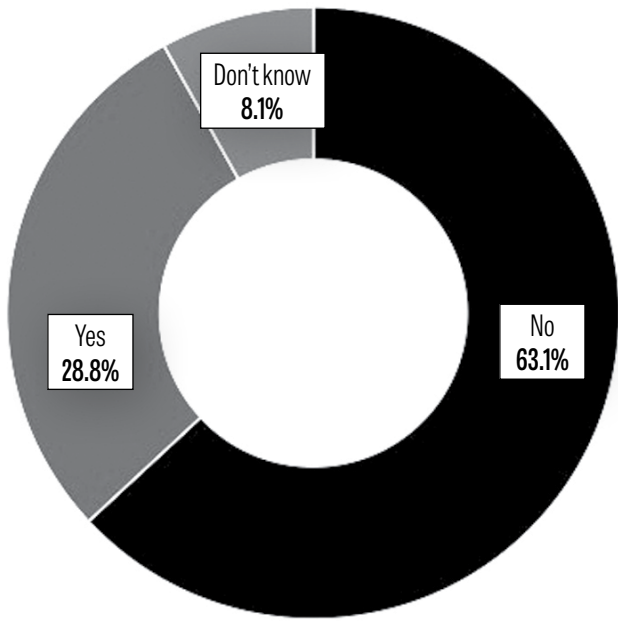


ONLINE POLL:

Would you be willing to pay a trash and recycling fee for curbside service in the city?



This poll reflects the opinions of 260 respondents. Visit www.state-journal.com to take part in today's poll.

EDITORIAL

Cellphone number porting scam could happen to you

It could happen to you. That warning comes from a local couple, who have spent weeks trying to sort out a cellphone number porting scam they fell prey to in the spring.

Porting a phone number can be done legally when a person changes providers but wants to keep their phone number. However, with fraudulent phone number porting, a scammer transfers a person's phone number to another carrier without permission, a type of identity theft that allows the scammer to intercept calls and text messages — including those containing security codes for the victim's bank, email and social media, potentially leading to account takeover and financial loss.

It started with a text and email from AT&T confirming that Branham had purchased a couple of phones on her account. She hadn't bought the phones and quickly canceled the order. Two weeks later, Dominick was advised by AT&T that his number had been ported out and Branham phoned to let the company know. Then she too received a similar text, but before she could contact AT&T, the phone went into SOS mode and died.

Meanwhile, the scammer was opening credit card and other accounts in their names and charging \$5,000 in concert tickets. They had to contact the credit bureaus to have their credit frozen.

"Who knew you had to protect your number? If you have your phone you think you're safe, but people can just go and port out your number," Branham said. "You can go in and lock it, so nothing can be done online. You can't order phones online; you can't port your number out online. We've done that. If I had known I needed to do that, I would have done that before. It's easy to take on and off. That would be the top thing I would recommend people do."

For the couple, the whole ordeal was a stressful, time-consuming nightmare.

And while they ultimately did not lose any money, they still don't know who perpetrated the scam and got their cellphone numbers.

If you are victim of a porting scam, the FCC recommends contacting your phone company, bank and other financial institutions, filing a police report and placing a fraud alert on your credit reports. You can also file a complaint with the FCC for free at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us>.

BOSK union vote a fight for all Kentucky workers

The hard-working men and women at the Ford Blue Oval SK (BOSK) plant in Hardin County will vote on forming a union later this month. Their campaign to join the United Auto Workers (UAW) is about winning safe working conditions, a voice on the job and affordable healthcare. But the vote is also a huge opportunity for every working-class Kentuckian across the state.

That's because the challenges facing Kentucky auto workers in recent decades mirror what's happened to the entire workforce. As our recent report at the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy shows, job quality in the Kentucky auto industry has declined as it has become less unionized. In the last decade, median production wages fell by \$9,321 a year after taking inflation into account. Once widely perceived as "good jobs," many parts and assembly occupations now don't pay enough for a decent life. And alongside deteriorating pay is a lack of say in issues like safety and health, a huge concern for BOSK workers exposed to dangerous chemicals.

But the historic strike and contract victory by the UAW in 2023 is beginning to turn things around. UAW members won a 25% increase in wages among other key improvements. Non-union employers were startled by

the size of UAW's win. Immediately, BOSK and Toyota bumped up wages. But that just provided a taste of what would come if those workers had a union of their own.



Jason Bailey
Guest columnist

But as the share of Kentucky workers who are unionized fell from 26% in 1979 to 11% today, that leverage has weakened. As a result, wages for workers across the middle and the bottom of the economy have stagnated while incomes at the top soared.

Union density has dropped because powerful corporations lobbied to weaken labor laws and undermine unions. They've pursued aggressive anti-union propaganda campaigns, including at BOSK, where the company has spent untold amounts of money on high-dollar consultants and slick advertising. UAW alleges that BOSK has fired workers for organizing and forced them to attend closed-door captive audience meetings, both of which are illegal.

As a maker of electric vehicle

batteries, BOSK is the future of automobile production. Governor Andy Beshear calls it the largest battery plant "on planet Earth," and media coverage of the plant has been extensive. Similarly, the decision its workers make on a union will be widely watched by Kentucky workers. Some will ask: "If those workers can come together for a voice and dignity at their workplace, why can't we?"

Kentuckians have another stake in this fight as well: we all helped pay for BOSK. The Kentucky General Assembly held a special legislative session in 2021 to give the company a \$250 million check, and the federal government has provided \$9.6 billion in loans.

Isn't it reasonable to expect safe jobs, respect for workers and economy-boosting wages for such a massive investment of public dollars?

The BOSK workers have discovered a truth so many of us have never experienced. Solidarity is a miracle drug. It's the closest we have to a cure for an ailing and unequal society.

Do what you can to support these workers in the coming weeks. Their win is a win for all of us.

Jason Bailey is executive director of the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy in Berea. He can be emailed at jbailey@kypolicy.org.

LETTER

INVESTING IN AN INDOOR POOL IS A NECESSITY

Dear editor,

In towns like Frankfort, where community spirit runs deep and our pride in youth and quality of life is unmatched, investing in an indoor pool isn't just a luxury — it's a necessity. The benefits span athletic development, public health, and economic opportunity. It's time for our community to step up and support Swim with Purpose.

Reopening the pool at Kentucky State is vital for students, faculty, and staff — not only for health and wellness, but also for academic and recreational enrichment.

Another compelling reason for an indoor pool is its importance to our school swimming teams. Currently, student-athletes face significant logistical barriers just to practice — long drives, inconvenient schedules, or, worst of all, no access at all. As a result, swim team participation has dropped drastically. A dedicated indoor facility would allow our swimmers to train consistently and safely, close to home. This investment in their future fosters discipline, team spirit, and school pride, enabling our schools to fully support one of the most demanding sports.

An indoor pool would also enable Frankfort to host regional swim meets, drawing families from across Kentucky and neighboring states. These events bring hundreds of visitors who dine, shop, and stay in our hotels, making an indoor pool not only a recreational asset but also an economic engine for the entire community.

Importantly, an indoor pool is a platform for vital aquatics education — a resource that could

save lives. Drowning remains a leading cause of accidental childhood death, and year-round swim lessons in a safe, controlled environment could be lifesaving. From toddlers learning water safety, to competitive swimmers honing their skills, to teenagers and young adults becoming certified lifeguards, this facility supports lifelong safety and skill development.

Let's also remember our senior residents: water aerobics is an accessible, effective exercise for joint health, circulation, and wellness. Year-round classes offer both fitness and social connection, supporting our aging population in staying active and engaged.

Is Frankfort big enough for two indoor pools? Absolutely! If that day comes, we'll support it. But right now, no new indoor pool project is even in the planning stages — and if one were, it could take years to become reality. For a fraction of the cost, the existing pool at Kentucky State University can be renovated in months to meet all these needs and more.

This isn't just about building a pool — it's about building opportunities for our youth, our families, local businesses, and our seniors. An indoor pool supports health, education, economic growth, and community cohesion. That's why we urge all our local officials and leaders to take the plunge and get on board. We encourage everyone to visit www.swimwithpurpose.org and show your support.

Let's stop treading water — let's start swimming forward, together.

*Swim With Purpose Board of Directors
Sam Taylor, Katrisha Waldridge, Dr. Jamaal Jackson, Berry Popp, Nick Belcore, Chuck Geveden, and Ann Hartley-Smith*

SUBMIT LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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