

DETROIT

Fighting to Keep Blackness

NATIVE SUN

Op-Ed: Anti-obesity medicines are not all created equally



By April Ryan
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

As this nation observes the 60th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama, the words of President Trump reverberate. “This country will be WOKE no longer”, an emboldened Trump offered during his speech to a joint session of Congress Tuesday night. Since then, Alabama Congresswoman Terri Sewell posted on the social media platform formerly known as Twitter this morning that “Elon Musk and his DOGE bros have ordered GSA to sell off the site of the historic Freedom Riders Museum in Montgomery.” Her post of little words went on to say, “This is outrageous and we will not let it stand! I am demanding an immediate reversal. Our civil rights history is not for sale!” DOGE trying to sell Freedom Rider Museum

Also, in the news today, the Associated Press is reporting they have a file of names and descriptions of more than 26,000 military images flagged for removal because of connections to women, minorities, culture, or DEI. In more attempts to downplay Blackness, a word that is interchanged with woke, Trump supporters have introduced another bill to take down the bright yellow letters of Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, D.C., in exchange for the name Liberty Plaza. D.C. Mayor Morial Bowser is allowing the name change to keep millions of federal dollars flowing there. Black Lives Matter Plaza

Millions juggling side hustles to make ends meet

By Stacy M. Brown
Senior National Correspondent

A new 2025 Side Hustle Survey from LendingTree shows that nearly half of Americans, 44 percent, have a side hustle, with many depending on the extra income to cover basic expenses. The findings reflect the financial strain millions face as wages remain stagnant and the cost of living continues to rise. Among those with a side hustle, 43 percent say they need the additional income to stay afloat. Seventy-one percent report earning less than \$500 per month, and nearly a quarter make less than \$100 per month. The survey also found that younger generations are the most likely to take on extra work, with 60 percent of Gen Z respondents and 55 percent of millennials reporting that they have a side hustle. That compares to 39 percent of Gen X and 24 percent of baby boomers. While 18 percent of side hustlers bring in at least \$1,000 per month, most earn far less.

“The median amount our side hustlers earned monthly was \$400, but the average was \$1,215,” Matt Schultz wrote for LendingTree.

Considering how tight many households’ budgets are, \$1,215 is nothing short of a game-changing monthly amount. Men report earning more than double what women say they earn — an average of \$1,580 versus \$749.

was named in 2020 after a tense exchange between President Trump and George Floyd protesters in front of the White House. There are more reports about cuts to equity initiatives that impact HBCU students. Programs that recruited top HBCU students into the military and the pipeline for Department of Defense contracts have been canceled.

Meanwhile, Democrats are pushing back against this second-term Trump administration’s anti-DEI and Anti-woke message. In the wake of the 60th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, several Congressional Black Caucus leaders are reintroducing the Voting Rights Act. South Carolina Democratic Congressman James Clyburn and Alabama Congresswoman Terry Sewell are sponsoring H.R. 14, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Six decades ago, Lewis was hit with a billy club by police as he marched for the right to vote for African Americans. The right for Black people to vote became law with the 1965 Voting Rights Act that has since been gutted, leaving the nation to vote without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. Reflecting on the late Congressman Lewis, March 1, 2020, a few months before his death, Lewis said, “We need more than ever in these times many more someones to make good trouble- to make their own dent in the wall of injustice.”

A separate study from FinanceBuzz analyzed more than 75 of the largest cities in the US to determine where Americans are at the highest risk of burnout. The report ranked Denver, Dallas, and Washington, D.C., as the most overworked cities.

The report ranked Detroit as the least overworked city, followed by Tallahassee and Buffalo. Detroit has the lowest percentage of senior citizens in the workforce, at just 13.5 percent, and the lowest percentage of employees working at least 50 weeks per year, with only 77.1 percent meeting that threshold.

While platforms like Uber, DoorDash, and Etsy offer flexible opportunities, only 31% of side hustlers say they feel financially stable. Thirty-six percent worry that their side hustle income could disappear if demand drops or economic conditions worsen. Approximately 32% report working 20 hours weekly on their side hustle.

“Sure, many people have side hustling in their blood. They’re working these side gigs because they’re passionate about them, not just because of the money,” Schultz contended. “That’s not most people, though. Many Americans take on side hustles to help them manage debt. They’ve cut their spending to the bone to try to free up money to put toward the debt before realizing they need to bring in more income to make a real dent in their problem.”



By: Colonel Jeffrey D. Glover
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The new FDA-approved weight loss medicines have changed the game for people with obesity, offering millions of Americans a chance to transform their health, prevent disease, and live longer lives. But as demand for these treatments soars, an illegal industry is growing alongside it. Criminal networks, counterfeiters, and rogue compounding pharmacies are taking advantage of patients’ needs, flooding the market with fake, unsafe, and untested knockoffs. In December 2023, the FDA seized thousands of counterfeit injection pens within the U.S. drug supply chain. A Tennessee woman’s home was also raided by police, where officers found more than 300 vials of counterfeit weight loss drugs—semaglutide and tripeptide—that she had been supplying to med spa clinics. After testing, one of the vials contained nothing but water. This is the reality of an unregulated black market. People think they are injecting medicine into their bodies that will improve their health, but they could be injecting poison—or nothing at all.

For counterfeiters and other profiteers, the market is ripe for exploitation — high patient demand and a rising obesity epidemic create the perfect conditions for their illegal trade to thrive. The result? A knock-off weight-loss drug market populated with med spas, online “telehealth” sellers, and unauthorized compounding pharmacies pushing dangerous counterfeit or untested compounded medications. The Black community is especially vulnerable given its higher prevalence of obesity. In 2023, non-Hispanic Black or African American adults were 30% more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic white adults, with 43 percent of non-Hispanic Black

adults over the age of 18 classified as obese. As the Executive Director of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), I oversee an organization whose mission is to protect our communities from harm. Law enforcement officers are already seeing the rise of counterfeit weight loss drugs spread through our communities. Just as with illicit street drugs, enforcing the law is critical to get these dangerous products off the market. But equally critical is to stem consumer demand.

The Trump administration has an opportunity to help curb this rising demand. Currently, there is a proposed rule at the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) rule that would provide coverage for FDA-approved weight loss drugs, thereby significantly increasing access to these innovative medicines. Unlike other chronic diseases, obesity treatments have been excluded from Medicare coverage. The result has been limited access to authentic medicines, creating a high demand for knock-off versions. While law enforcement must do its part to rein in bad actors, the new administration can help by finalizing the CMS proposed rule. Providing greater access to safe and effective medicines would go. A long way to put illicit suppliers on notice and out of business. No one should be exposed to the risks that come with untested, unregulated injectable medicines and I am confident President Trump will make the right decisions to protect American public health.

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