

65th SLE Rodeo brings new entertainment, girl power

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Ivey says no to pausing gas taxes

Alabama Gov. blames Biden for current prices

Brad Harper
Montgomery Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said Wednesday she does not support a temporary pause on state gas taxes and said the responsibility for lowering prices lies with President Joe Biden.

Asked about the potential for a temporary tax cut at the state level, Ivey blamed Biden for a range of issues including the steep increase at the pump that started when Russia invaded Ukraine as well as pandemic-related supply shortages.

"The problem at hand is the Biden

policies," Ivey said. "Under his policies, inflation has skyrocketed to almost a 40-year high.

"You see the crisis on our shelves, the supply shortage crisis. Under President Trump you could go buy gas and not have to hold your breath. Now, prices are jumping sky-high almost day by day. Right now, President Biden is in the driver's seat."

Gas prices fell slightly this week after a furious two-week increase that sent the national average to well over \$4 a gallon. Low demand and less travel during the pandemic had pushed prices down for nearly two years. Prices had begun recovering when Russia invaded Ukraine and sparked a historic surge.

"For now, a \$4.50 per gallon national average is off the table, but it certainly could be a future possibility as long as

there is conflict between Russia and Ukraine," said Patrick DeHaan of price tracking site GasBuddy.

Ivey's comments came after she spoke at a Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce event a few blocks away from the Capitol. A crowd of area business executives applauded Ivey as she talked about her support for education initiatives, infrastructure and the military, including Maxwell Air Force Base.

A former lieutenant governor, Ivey became Alabama's second female governor in 2017 when former Gov. Robert Bentley pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges of campaign finance violations and resigned from office. Ivey easily won election to a full term the following year and is now running for re-election.

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Alabama Governor Kay Ivey addresses the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday morning at the RSA Activity Center in Montgomery.

MICKY WELSH/ADVERTISER

'This is a real world story'



Mike Lutzenkirchen, the father of former Auburn tight end Phillip Lutzenkirchen, talks to Etowah County students about the life and death of his son.

PHOTOS BY EHSAN KASSIM/
GADSDEN TIMES

Lutzenkirchen brings safe driving message to local students

Ehsan Kassim
Gadsden Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

"Clear head, clear hands, clear eyes, click it, now turn your key."

Those are the five items on a checklist on lanyards handed out to Etowah County ninth- and 10th-graders who attended the Lutzie 43 Foundation safe driving seminar Wednesday at the Gadsden City High School gymnasium.

Mike Lutzenkirchen, father of former Auburn football player Phillip Lutzenkirchen, shared his late son's legacy while inspiring students to be the best version of themselves as he spoke to 1,400 students from Gadsden City, Southside, Sardis, Etowah, Glencoe, Hokes Bluff, Gaston and West End.

The majority of the students in attendance had not gotten their driver's licenses yet, meaning this was the perfect time for Lutzenkirchen to get his safe driving message out.

Phillip Lutzenkirchen, who was a tight end for the Tigers from 2009 to 2012, was killed in a car crash on June 29, 2014, near LaGrange, Georgia, after a night of drinking with friends in LaGrange, Georgia. He was in the back seat of the vehicle and was not wearing a seat belt.

Mike Lutzenkirchen wants people to learn from his son's "poor decisions."

"This is more important than you sitting in a classroom right now, studying science or math, history or language," he said. "This is a real world story."

Lutzenkirchen said he also spoke to

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Alabama Association of School Boards releases superintendent finalists

Jemma Stephenson
Montgomery Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Alabama Association of School Boards presented their short list of MPS superintendent candidates at a special Montgomery County Board of Education Meeting Tuesday evening.

Of the five finalists, three are currently serving as superintendents. One is working in Alabama.

Dr. James Wright, from the Alabama Association of School Boards, presented the five finalists to the board:

- Dr. Avis Williams, superintendent at Selma City Schools in Alabama
- Dr. Melvin Brown, superintendent at Reynoldsburg City Schools in Ohio
- Dr. Anthony Lewis, superintendent at Lawrence Public Schools in Kansas
- Dr. Marla Sheppard, deputy chief of academics at KIPP Public Schools, a charter school network in Texas



Weil

Washington Carver Senior High School. The open interviews are expected to be at 6 p.m. on March 28, March 29, March 31, April 4 and April 5, said Clare Weil,

Dr. Donald Warren, deputy superintendent at Griffin-Spalding County Schools in Georgia

The next public meeting of the superintendent search will feature finalist interviews at George

president of the school board. She said she hopes the public will attend the meetings.

"I really hope that, if somebody commits to coming, they will come to all five of them," she said. "So that they see what is out there."

Jemma Stephenson is the children and education reporter for the Montgomery Advertiser. She can be reached at jstephenson@gannett.com or 334-261-1569.

USA TODAY

Dropping the mask?: CDC's new metrics are much less strict, but experts worry they may understate the risk. **1B**

'We're going to come after you'

How Eric Kiesau plans to change the Auburn football's offense in 2022. **Sports, 1C**

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Forecast, **8C**

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