

Opinion & Politics

Letters

Tax dollars and trust at stake

Dear Editor:

Once again, Supervisors Stancil and Hobbs are acting against the best interests of Madison County taxpayers. Despite the county employing a qualified Human Resources Director — whose role is to ensure fair, legal, and transparent hiring practices — these supervisors have chosen to sideline this process and take hiring into their own hands.

Historically, all county offices have relied on Human Resources for recruiting, hiring, and managing employee relations, following established policies to protect both the county and its workforce. Human Resources' involvement is not just best practice; it safeguards taxpayers by ensuring that hiring is conducted ethically and by the book.

Now, with the County Auditor position open, Stancil and Hobbs have decided to bypass Human Resources entirely. Instead of allowing objective evaluation, they are centralizing control, raising serious questions about their motives.

Are they seeking to appoint someone they can control? Are they trying to avoid background checks or other legal requirements, as happened previously with a past Auditor Kaczinski's hire? The fact that applications for the Appointed Auditor position are being directed to the Board Clerk, rather than Human Resources, only deepens these concerns.

The County Attorney has confirmed that his office, which oversees Human Resources, has no role in this hiring process. Human Resources has been excluded from both the Appointed County Auditor and Deputy Auditor appointments, despite being the county's expert in these matters. This deliberate circumvention undermines the integrity of county government and exposes taxpayers to unnecessary risk.

Taxpayers deserve supervisors who respect established procedures and prioritize transparency over personal agendas. Stancil and Hobbs' actions erode public trust and suggest they are more interested in consolidating power than serving the community.

Madison County residents should demand accountability and insist that all hiring follow the proper channels. Our tax dollars — and our trust — are at stake.

—Wendy Frost, Winterset

Removing people from Medicare and Medicaid

Dear Editor:

A response to a letter to the editor, published in the June 4, 2025, Madisonian:

"The Democrats have been focusing on this specific line of attack that 13.7 million Americans are going to lose their health care, and that's just blatantly false," said Rep Erin Houchin (R) from Indiana.

"Five million of those people are receiving a tax credit under the Affordable Care Act that was passed by the Democrats with a sunset date that was implemented by the Democrats. We're simply allowing the sunset date to expire as the Democrats originally intended," Houchin said. (Source: Fox Digital, May 2025.)

Additionally 1.4 million illegal aliens are being removed from Medicare/Medicaid, plus another 4.8 million who have been double dipping by receiving benefits from more than one state.

Republicans are NOT cutting Medicare or Medicaid, the aforementioned will be remove that were scheduled to be removed per the Affordable Care Act as intended by the Democrats. Removing those illegal aliens that are ineligible to part take in Medicare and Medicaid will only strengthen both programs and assure that those American Citizens in need are provided their government provided insurance protection. Lastly, the almost 5 million who have been fraudulently receiving benefits from two or more states are being removed as they should be.

—Frank Santana, Winterset

Proposed bill to reimburse victims of SNAP fraud

Representative Zach Nunn (IA-03) introduced the SNAP Anti-Theft and Victim Compensation Act of 2025, legislation to protect taxpayer dollars, expand law enforcement tools to combat fraud, and ensure families harmed by benefit theft are made whole.

In recent weeks, nearly 90 Iowans reported having their SNAP benefits stolen, including Iowa Army veteran David Schroeder, who Rep. Nunn stood with to announce this important legislation.

"Iowans like Army veteran David Schroeder shouldn't be left picking up the pieces and fighting bureaucracy after falling victim to benefit fraud," said Rep. Nunn. "SNAP is meant to help Iowans in need — not fraudsters gaming a broken system. David did everything right yet his SNAP benefits were still stolen by a criminal in New Jersey. This bill is a commonsense solution that makes victims whole and ensures fraudsters face real consequences."

The SNAP Anti-Theft and Victim Compensation Act empowers the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Inspector General to investigate and coordinate multi-jurisdictional efforts to prevent cyber-enabled SNAP theft. It also authorizes states to reimburse households for stolen benefits and establishes a new civil penalty to deter criminals who exploit the system.

SNAP benefit theft is often carried out by organized cybercrime rings using cloned EBT cards, which has skyrocketed in recent years. While states like Iowa have led on fraud prevention, other states lack the tools or authority to respond swiftly. This bill would close critical gaps by allowing the Inspector General to issue subpoenas, coordinate across law enforcement agencies, and access EBT processor data during investigations.

In addition to expanded enforcement, the bill would create a civil penalty of twice the value of stolen benefits for individuals who fraudulently access another person's SNAP allotment. Recovered funds will be used to reimburse victims and support future investigations.

Catch the Winterset City Government Update with Mayor Tom Leners each month!

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Relatively Minor

Vicki Minor, Editor
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Laughter does not have to come from a major source. It could indeed be ... relatively minor.

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Nothing Rhymes With...

Standing on my tiptoes, I reached for a book on the top shelf of the half-price bookstore. I probably didn't look graceful, but my curiosity about the book's content kept me going. Its cover featured an orange with tears, an image I hadn't seen since childhood. Realizing I was late for an important appointment, I knew I had to leave and reluctantly returned the paperback to the shelf.

A week later, I returned to the bookstore, standing again in aisle three, facing the same bookcase. There it was, just as I had left it, untouched, as if no one else had wanted it, or perhaps the store had unknowingly reserved it just for me.

Wedged between two other books, I had to tug and wiggle it free. The orange still adorned the cover, its tears cascading like rain. Yet, despite the emotional outpouring, not a single drop had left a stain.

I bought the dictionary for \$6.99 because it includes rhyming words. If I'm a poet and don't know it, I might find myself in the middle of a stanza, searching for a word with a similar sound to finish a line. Or, as a writer pulling an all-nighter, crafting a nail-biter on my typewriter. Perhaps I'll need words for a song to sing all summer long that doesn't come on too strong while jogging after a thrilling game of ping pong.

Unfortunately, as I flipped through the pages, I couldn't shake the image of that sorrowful round fruit on the paperback cover — endlessly weeping — an orange that will never be a poet or write an award-winning song.

Because the book is titled "Nothing Rhymes with Orange", I bet it wishes it were another kind of fruit, like a banana. Imagine it playing the piano in Havana while wearing pajamas. Now, wouldn't that be appealing!



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