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# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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WASHINGTON

## Butler sworn in as state's new senator

Ex-labor leader appointed by governor becomes third Black woman to ever serve in U.S. Senate

By Mery Glare Jalowick and Michael S. Hood  
*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Former union leader and Democratic insider Laphonza Butler was sworn in as the newest member of the Senate on Tuesday, replacing California Sen. Dianne Feinstein after her death and becoming only

the third Black female senator in history.

Butler was appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sunday, just two days after Feinstein died at her home in Washington. Butler is a longtime fundraiser and strategist in the state's Democratic circles and was the head of Emily's List, a national organization that raises money for

women candidates who support abortion rights.

The new senator was sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris, who served as the second Black female senator until she resigned in 2021 to join President Joe Biden in the White House. The first was Democratic Sen. Carol Mosley Braun of Illinois, who served one term in the 1990s.

With dozens of supporters and family members looking down from the gallery, Butler smiled



Vice President Kamala Harris, right, swears in Laphonza Butler, D-Calif., left, to the Senate during a filibuster ceremony Tuesday. Butler's wife, Neneal Lee, center, holds the Bible. *AP PHOTO/SCOTT GORDON FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS*

WASHINGTON

## MCCARTHY OUT IN HOUSE VOTE



Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Bakersfield, leaves the House floor at the Capitol after being ousted Tuesday as speaker of the House. *MARK SCHIFF/GETTY IMAGES*

Showdown: GOP leader first speaker in history to be ousted as hard-liners flex muscles

By Lisa Mascaro and Penzance Smith  
*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Speaker Kevin McCarthy was voted out of the job Tuesday in an extraordinary showdown, a first in U.S. history, forced by a contingent of hard-right conservatives and throwing the House and its Republican leadership into chaos.

It's the end of the political line for McCarthy, who has sold repeatedly that he never gives up but found himself with almost

no options remaining. Less than nine months on the job, neither the right-flank Republicans who engineered his ouster nor the Democrats who piled on seem open to negotiating.

McCarthy told lawmakers in the evening he would not run again for speaker, putting the gavel up for grabs. Next steps are highly uncertain as there is no obvious successor to lead the House Republican majority. Action is halted in the House until next week, when Republicans try



McCarthy is followed by media as he leaves the House floor Tuesday. McCarthy has said repeatedly that he never gives up, but after Tuesday's vote to oust him he said he would not try to become speaker again. *AP PHOTO/SCOTT GORDON FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS*

INSIDE: How GOP lawmakers voted on the ouster of Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy. [PAGE 2](#)

OC JAILS

## Informant scandal unraveled 57 cases

Public defender says more than estimated 12 prosecutions affected

By Tony Saavedra  
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New numbers released by an attorney with the Orange County Public Defender's office show that the illegal use of jailhouse informants unraveled 57 homicide and other felony cases, with convictions overturned, charges dropped and sentences dramatically reduced.

Previous estimates had placed the number of affected cases at about 12 — far less than the results of the new analysis by Assistant Public Defender Scott Sanders, partially using data from the district attorney's office.

"We already knew that this was the biggest and longest running informant scandal in U.S. history, but there had never been a

SOUTHLAND

## Thousands from Kaiser set to begin 3-day strike

By Kevin Smith  
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More than 75,000 Kaiser Permanente workers, including 28,000 in Southern California, are poised to launch the biggest health care worker strike in U.S. history beginning today if the two sides fail to reach a labor agreement.

The Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions and the health care giant had a 6 a.m. deadline today to forge a contract before a three-day walkout begins.

The contracts for thousands [WALKOUT'S PAGE 7](#)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## Homebuyers, sales get pinched in late summer

Transactions continue to find 'new nadir' in August; 2023 on track to be slowest since 1988

By Jeff Golman  
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Buying a Southern California home became even more challenging in late summer, with shoppers contending with high prices, higher mortgage rates and continued competition for a limited number of properties for sale, new housing figures show.

Bidding wars still are common, although much less so than in 2021 when mortgage rates were lower.

Nearly half of all homes sold show their asking price versus about two-thirds two years ago. But the typical house payment still hit an all-time high, cutting buying power by hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In short, it's still a seller's market but with a smaller pool of players — fewer people who can afford to buy and even fewer homes for sale.

"There's still enough buyers in the market to keep prices propped up," said Russell Mor-

gan, founder and broker of HomeWay, an Orange real estate brokerage. "But the middle class is definitely getting squeezed. ... It's definitely more difficult to own a home."

The median price of a Southern California home — at the price at the midpoint of all sales — dipped to \$735,000 in August, down from \$740,000 the month before, real estate data firm CoreLogic reported Tuesday.

Still, the median was up 3% from a year earlier, and the

month-to-month dip also could be seasonal. Prices typically level off from July to August as shoppers shift away from homes hunting to summer activities and back-to-school plans.

Meanwhile, August sales remained severely depressed after nearly two years of declines.

With just 15,659 transactions, August sales were down 15.3% from the previous year, CoreLogic reported. It's the 21st straight month of year-over-year

HOUSING'S PAGE 3

COURTS



New York judge issues limited gag order on Trump  
The former president dispensed a key court staffer during his civil business fraud trial. [PAGE 10](#)

POLITICS

Florida Republican's push to remove McCarthy draws ire  
Matt Gaetz's push to oust Speaker Kevin McCarthy drew attention to his own ethics issues. [PAGE 10](#)

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