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# THE SACRAMENTO BEE

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## Newsom touts efforts to combat retail crime

BY NICOLE NIXON  
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Gov. Gavin Newsom on Monday touted his administration's recent efforts to crack down on retail theft, as polls show tough-on-crime Proposition 36 is poised to pass overwhelmingly.

While the governor opposes Prop. 36, he is not actively campaigning against it and acknowledged its likely passage.

"We know what's going to happen - likely to happen - as it relates to Prop. 36," he said. "I understand it and I just hope people take the time to understand what they're supporting."

A year after announcing \$267 million in grants to local law enforcement agencies to address retail and auto thefts, Newsom said those resources have led to 10,138 arrests. He also touted increases in recruits with the California Highway Patrol and local law enforcement.

Newsom signed a large retail theft bill package earlier this year and has repeatedly referred to Prop. 36 as "drug policy," saying it would usher in a return to the "war on drugs."

According to the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office, Prop. 36 could lead to "a few thousand people" more in the state's jails and prisons and could increase prison costs by tens or hundreds of millions of dollars.

"I can't in good conscience support it, just as someone that supports law enforcement, that's never been part of the defund the police movement, ...

that believes we need to do more on quality of life," Newsom said.

"We've seen demonstrable success and real progress," Newsom said, though he acknowledged "it takes time for the data to come in" regarding crime rates.

Violent and property crimes are on the rise in California, though not nearly as high as the rates of the 1980s and 1990s. Nationally, violent crime dropped in 2023, according to the FBI.

State Sen. Roger Niello, R-Fair

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Pedestrians walk past the Downtown Commons Macy's in Sacramento earlier this year.

## State workers return to offices, but business still lags

BY WILLIAM MELHADO  
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Five years ago, K Street in downtown Sacramento was a lively pedestrian area, with tens of thousands of employees descending from the capital region every weekday to work in government offices in and around the Capitol. The workforce's reliable presence helped support restaurants, coffee

shops and retail businesses that made up the bustling downtown.

Then COVID-19 hit — and downtown business ground to a halt.

In the years since, things have opened up. People began trickling back into offices downtown. This summer, per an order from Gov. Gavin Newsom, state workers returned downtown at least two days a week. But the bustle associated

with K Street before the pandemic has not fully returned.

"We still don't have the same level of state workers that come by consistently," said Katie O'Reilly, a manager at Capital Books on K and 10th streets. "I don't think they're spending as much money downtown either now that they're back."

O'Reilly said weekday foot traffic from public employees was part of the reason the independent bookstore opened on K

Street. But now, weekends are the store's busiest days.

Business owners across downtown echoed the sentiment. While the economic outlook looks better today than it did when workers were fully remote, the partial return of state workers has not resolved the challenges downtown businesses are facing.

"I think that it exposed the vulnerability downtown had in many respects, with being so overly reliant on the public-sector workforce," said Scott Ford, Downtown Sacramento Partnership's deputy director. The organization represents property owners in the 66 block

SEE BUSINESS, 6A

## Afghan woman faces extradition hearing in federal court

BY SHARON BERNSTEIN  
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Wajiha Korashi was living among fellow Afghan refugees in Elk Grove when federal agents swooped in last May, detaining the mother of two in a gruesome murder case that raises questions of transnational law enforcement, honor killings and the trauma of war.

Details of the case are murky. The Swedish government, which is seeking to extradite



Wajiha Korashi

offer specific details of how the crime was committed.

But prosecutors say that Korashi, who fled Afghanistan to Sweden in 2020, was involved in his murder, seeking to pur-

chase date-rape drugs and false passports in advance, and then fleeing through Sweden, Denmark and Germany before winding up Elk Grove, where her sister lived.

The 25-year-old is being held in the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility in Nevada City. She faces an extradition hearing on Wednesday in Sacramento federal court. Her husband, Farid Vaziri, is wanted by Europol, the European Union's law enforcement agency.

Both American prosecutors and the defense say the case has elements of an honor killing, part of a legacy of violence that has followed some Afghan refugees from their war-torn land to other countries. But that association is also somewhat uncertain, experts say, because the victim was a man.

Korashi's lawyer, federal public defender Mia Crager, does not deny a relationship between Korashi and the victim. But she says her client did not kill him, and that she would be subjected to anti-immigrant bias if returned to Sweden to stand trial. A sworn statement by Swedish prosecutor Cecilia Tepper detailing the crime is

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## For young Americans, climate isn't a partisan issue

BY ADRIANA PÉREZ  
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CHICAGO

A "supermajority" of young Americans across the political spectrum feel distressed about human-made climate change and want bolder action from the government and corporations, a new study has found. Experiencing the worsening effects of a rapidly changing climate throughout their youth and into adulthood, this crisis has become existential for them.

In the largest survey of its kind, 85% of nearly 16,000 respondents ages 16 to 25 from all 50 states reported being worried about the impact of climate change on people and the planet. More than 60% said they felt the emotional impact of this global crisis - anxiety, powerlessness, fear, sadness, anger. The study showed high proportions of concern across the board, whether respondents identified as Democrat, Republican, independent or other.

"So it really kind of challenges the notion that this is a very partisan issue. It certainly doesn't appear that way in this younger age group," said Eric Lewandowski, the study's lead author and a clinical psychologist. He's also a child and adolescent psychiatry professor at the New York University Grossman School of Medicine, one of six universities involved in the research published this month in the scientific journal *The Lancet Planetary Health*.

One-third of respondents said climate change affected their ability to carry on with their daily lives, including focusing on work or school, eating and sleeping, having fun and enjoying relationships.

"Honestly, the results don't surprise me. I've seen it in my friends, I've seen it in myself. I've seen the despair," said Chicago resident Zoharia Drizin, 24, a Gen Z advisory board member at the Climate Mental Health Network, a national advocate-led resource hub for mental well-being helping youth, parents and educators develop strategies to manage the emotional toll of climate change.

These sweeping feelings of helplessness, however, translate into a strong desire for action: 77% want the U.S. government and other countries to plan and prevent the worst consequences of the climate crisis. There is a similarly strong consensus

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