

EDITORIAL

Trump delivers better trade deal

President Donald Trump's take on trade has always been a cornerstone of his political brand. He has argued passionately and convincingly that elites among both Republicans and Democrats supported international trade pacts that, even as they boosted corporate profits and cut prices for consumers, cost the United States good jobs and depressed the wages of the ones that remained.

The North American Free Trade Agreement in effect among the United States, Mexico and Canada since 1994 was his most frequent target. His promises to tear it up were among his biggest hits on the stump.

But now, wisely, Trump has agreed to a deal that rebrands NAFTA as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and improves several of its provisions but does not do wholesale damage to our nation's most crucial trading partnerships.

One key provision of the new version, for instance, requires that an increasing percentage of parts in cars imported to the United States tariff-free from Mexico and Canada be made by workers earning at least \$16 an hour. That could serve two positive purposes — shifting more manufacturing jobs back to the United States, or providing Mexican workers with incomes that would increase prosperity and stability there. But that provision also illustrates how important it is that the United States join strong trade agreements worldwide, such as a well-vetted Trans-Pacific Partnership. It does no good to force a \$16 hourly wage in Mexico if companies shift production to \$6-per-hour workers in Asia.

There still are details in this dense deal that need to be analyzed and which Congress must vet. But one clear advantage is the certainty it brings. The flow of trade across North America is fantastically complicated and important, and many products include parts crafted in all three countries. Trump's bellicose tirades about ending NAFTA entirely at times roiled stock markets and left companies unsure how or whether to invest in new production. Now they know the rules under which they will operate, rules that have been tweaked in many areas but not upended in any.

The deal even includes wins for Trump's home state, including on Long Island: Canada's markets will be increasingly open to dairy products produced upstate and wine flowing from Suffolk County.

— *The editorial board*

A sad reminder of peril on our roads every day

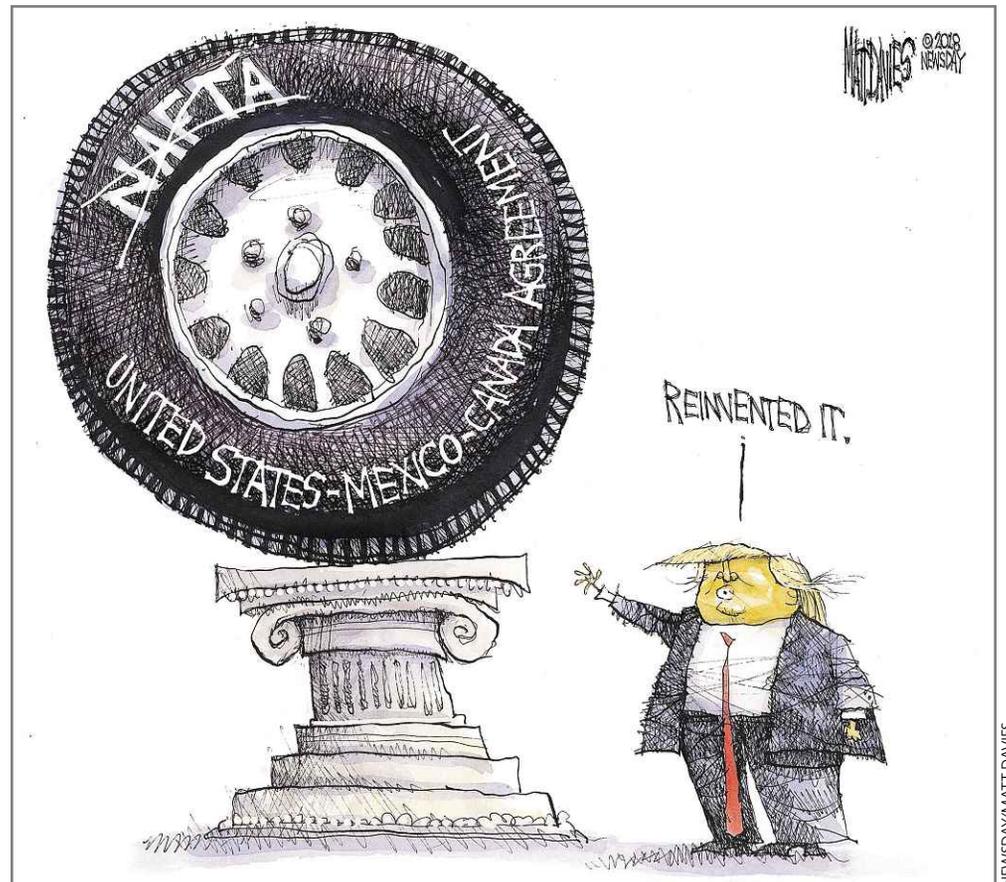
Long Island's roads are notoriously dangerous, especially as walkers and bikers increasingly share the streets with more vehicles. Add a driver who might have been under the influence of alcohol or drugs to that mix and the results can be tragic.

That appears to be what happened in the death of 12-year-old Andrew McMorris from injuries suffered in a daylight crash in Manorville on Sunday, when a 2016 Mercedes allegedly driven by Thomas Murphy, 59, hit five members of Shoreham's Boy Scout Troop 161. It's especially sad that the group, as part of leadership training, was walking on the side of a road while hiking the Long Island Greenbelt Trail. According to police, Murphy refused to take a Breathalyzer test but said he had been drinking.

Suffolk County regularly leads the state in traffic accidents. Roads need to be safer for drivers, walkers and bikers. Alcohol-ignition interlocks on every new vehicle should be required. Drivers need to slow down and stay focused, while families, friends and bar owners must be willing to take the keys from those who have had too much. Andrew McMorris was a seventh-grader whose talents and promise will not be realized. Another terrible loss on the roads for our community.

— *The editorial board*

MATT DAVIES



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LETTERS

Disability doctor should go free

It is incredible that the prison sentence of Dr. Peter Lesniewski has not been commuted. As reported in "LIRR disability claims plunge" [News, Sept. 24.], more than 90 percent of disability cases on behalf of Long Island Rail Road employees were re-examined "and won back their benefits — even under more stringent screening standards."

That means, for the 100 patients over 10 years he says he saw, Lesniewski is in prison for making correct and accurate diagnoses! His eight-year sentence was calculated on payouts obtained in a supposedly fraudulent manner. But there was no fraud, as subsequent, independent and more stringent examinations proved. Where is the justice?

Newsday should investi-

gate further. Peter Lesniewski, a member of my congregation, should be released and have his medical license reinstated immediately, with an apology from the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which in 2017 rebuffed his bid for exoneration.

Rev. Robert Walderman,
Levittown,

Editor's note: The writer is pastor of Lynbrook Baptist Church.

Lax immigration led to MS-13 killings

I have just finished reading "A mother, a murder and MS-13" [News, Sept. 20], Newsday's special report with ProPublica about the MS-13 victims on Long Island. After sorting through criticisms of the Suffolk County Police Department, I wondered whether any future segments will detail the

immigration status of the more than 240 MS-13 gang members arrested in the past two years. I hope Newsday will tell us how many of those arrested came as unaccompanied minors.

MS-13 is believed to be responsible for 25 killings on Long Island in 2016 and 2017. That is horrific. By comparison, during the same period, 20 U.S. military personnel were killed in the war we're fighting in Afghanistan. I believe many of the local killings could have been prevented with a border wall or better immigrant screening. Yet critics ridicule President Donald Trump. Go figure.

Richard Conte,
Levittown

Editor's note: The writer is a retired NYPD officer.

Your in-depth article on the MS-13 "killing fields" does its best to put the blame on the Suffolk County Police