

EDITORIALS

Voting in schools: a time for reform

School security is a crucial priority on Long Island and has garnered increasing attention and funding as deadly shootings have become tragically common around the nation.

Voting is a crucial priority, too, and schools, with their accessible locations, plentiful parking and big gyms are ideal places for polls.

So how do education officials safely deal with the fact that on election days, the schools they've worked so hard to secure with guards, vetting, cameras and restricted entries must welcome everyone?

That's a question district leaders and principals are asking, but one answer being pushed, state legislation to let schools refuse to be polling places, isn't wise. About 70 percent of polling places in Nassau and Suffolk counties are in schools, and many voters have cast their ballots at the same one for decades.

In some states, Election Day is a public holiday. Why not here? Many districts make November's general election a teacher development day — kids stay home — which makes sense and might be the quickest solution. Multiple primaries are an issue, too, but 49 states hold all non-presidential primaries on the same day and having ours on one day, during summer break, could resolve that problem.

Another help would be voting reforms and technology. Adding a weekend voting day would cut Tuesday crowds, making security easier to address if kids are in school. So would easy access to absentee ballots for any reason. So would using biometrics to allow remote voting.

But for now, we need to be able to vote in local schools. More should be done to keep kids at home on Election Day. And if voter reforms can reduce the Tuesday crowds, school districts should be able to handle these elections as easily as the ones they control and aren't trying to move, the mid-May votes on school boards and budgets — *The editorial board*

Require copters to reach the Hamptons over water

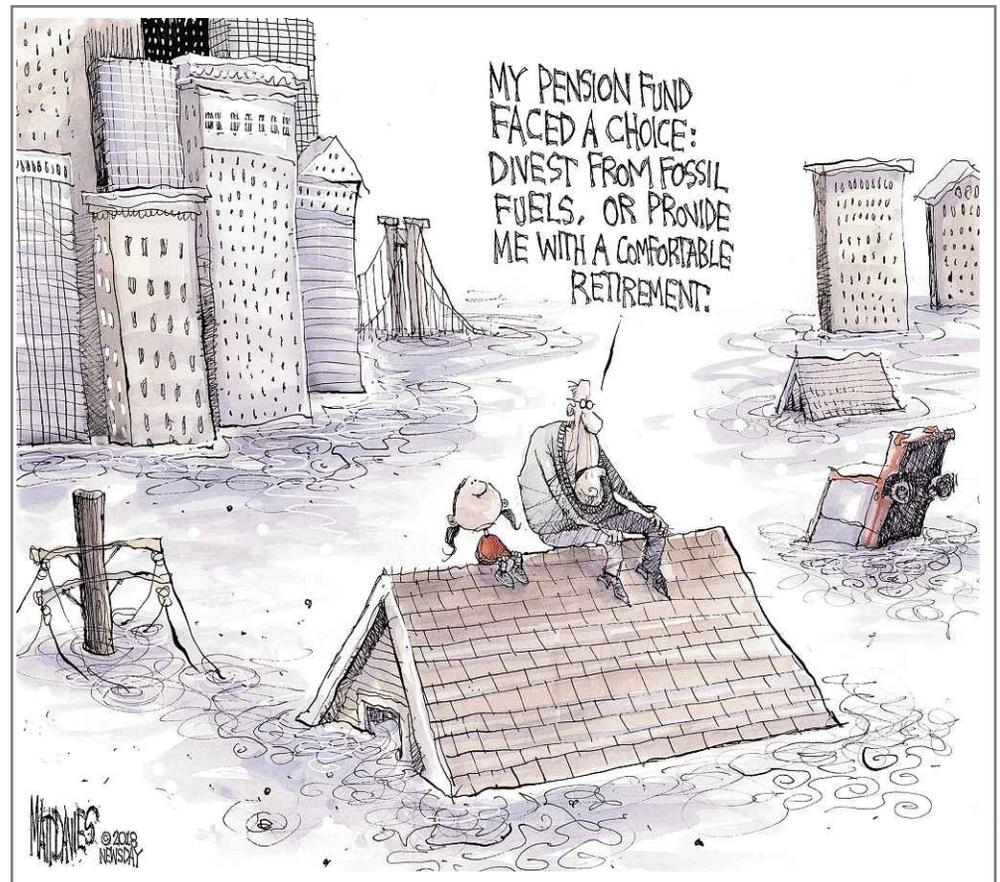
The percussive whop-whop-whop of helicopter blades has tormented North Fork and northwestern Nassau residents for far too long.

For more than a decade, East End residents have complained about the flights that ferry vacationers from Manhattan over Long Island Sound and turn across the bucolic North Fork to reach East Hampton airport. The Federal Aviation Administration is finally being required to re-evaluate that route, thanks to a bill recently signed by President Donald Trump. Not only does the FAA have to reassess the North Shore route and consider the impact the noise has on the communities below whose peace is routinely shattered, it also must hold public hearings. That will give aggrieved residents an overdue opportunity to state their case.

But this won't end fairly unless the FAA changes the flight pattern to an all-water route — around Orient Point or Plum Island and along the South Shore over the Atlantic Ocean. All-water routes have long been pushed by Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Lee Zeldin, who did good work in getting the reconsideration into the FAA reauthorization bill. And first-term Rep. Tom Suozzi got the FAA to agree to a six-month trial of a change at the other end of the North Shore route to push city-bound copters farther over water and away from residents of northwest Nassau County and northeast Queens.

Aircraft noise has health impacts on people living under flights. The helicopters benefit only the wealthy who can afford to pay to avoid the hassle of traveling by land to the Hamptons. It's time they absorbed the cost and inconvenience — a longer water route that will take more time. — *The editorial board*

MATT DAVIES



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LETTERS

Why the election is critical in 2018

Every election is touted as the most important ever. I believe this November will truly be one of the most important in decades ["Elections a test of bases' zeal," News, Oct. 7]. It will be a mandate on the direction that the United States travels for generations.

President Donald Trump's rhetoric and his divisive rallies are indeed despicable, but his successes are a result of his "America first" and "tough guy" policies. Moderate Republicans are appalled at Trump's words and behavior, but are watching their conservative policies become the laws and policies of the United States. So they hold their noses, wince and say nothing, lest they feel the wrath of Trump.

On Nov. 6, voters will decide whether the end justifies

the means and keep the status quo, or whether the country needs to reverse direction and give Democrats the majority in the House to be a check on the executive branch.

I could list all of the outrageous statements and behavior by Trump but, to be fair, I would also have to list all his conservative accomplishments, from tax reform to the Supreme Court. So, yes, this is the most important election in years. Vote!

*Jim Kiernan,
Holbrook*

Millennials worry about climate crisis

Based on the report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the future is gloomy ["Study: Urgent changes needed to curb warming," News, Oct. 9].

As a millennial starting my career, saving for a house and deciding on marriage and fam-

ily, the future has been on my mind and climate change frames that vision. This scary picture isn't unusual.

Millennials find ourselves asking: How do rising sea levels affect real estate? Do we leave Long Island or stay? Do we plan to have kids if we can't protect them? What will the Long Island economy look like as the planet warms? And how gloomy will things get?

Millennials didn't ask for this climate crisis, but what most people don't realize is that we have the answers. We, as millennials, Long Islanders, voters, taxpayers and community members, can make a difference.

One vital difference is for state legislators to pass, and for Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo to sign, the Climate and Community Protection Act in 2019. It would move New York to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050. The UN panel paints one important picture of the