



MARINE PLANE HAD EMERGENCY AT ALTITUDE

The crash that killed 16 service members Monday in the Mississippi Delta left two debris fields a mile apart, according to a Marine Corps general. Terry Murray, seen hugging his daughter Grace, lost his son in the crash. **Nation, 2A**

Police patrolling without cameras

Two Plant City officers opened fire on a motorist last week and investigators looking into the fatal shooting don't have access to dashboard or body-worn cameras because the department still has neither. **Local, 1B**

Teens mourn loss of 'fearless' friend

Trey Austin Dagwan Cardozo, 17, was known for cracking jokes and enjoying adventure. Marion County deputies found Cardozo unresponsive in the water of an Ocala quarry on Monday. He died Tuesday. **Local, 1B**

Tampa to get first Harveys grocery

Seven Winn-Dixie stores in Florida are being converted into Harveys Supermarkets, including one store in Tampa. **Business, 4B**

Enjoying the Souza experience

The Rays' Steven Souza Jr. dives for balls even if he can't catch them and loves to hug. "You just don't know exactly when, but Souza is going to happen." **Sports, 1C**

Disney updates classic tale

The *Little Mermaid* stage play has something for people of all ages. **Andrew Meacham review, 2B**

TODAY'S WEATHER

PM storms

8 a.m.	Noon	4 p.m.	8 p.m.
79°	85°	90°	83°

40% chance of rain
More, back page of Sports

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FLOOD INSURANCE FIX ADrift IN RANCOR



DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD | Times

Suzanne Hamilton surveys flooding from the Anclote River in Pasco County after Hurricane Hermine in September 2016.

Time is short for the program that covers 1.8 million Florida homes.

BY ALEX LEARY
Times Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON — Despite the rancor consuming Washington, bipartisan work is happening on an issue that affects Florida more than any other state: flood insurance.

But the fight over health care and controversy over Russian interference in the election — not to mention an August recess of some length — threaten to impede that work, stoking renewed fears of uncertainty in the real estate market.

"It's not exactly being the most productive Congress," said Steve Ellis, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, a group that is part of a

broad coalition working on flood insurance. "It's getting closer and closer to the deadline."

The decades-old, debt-plagued National Flood Insurance Program expires at the end of September. It covers about 5 million homes and businesses, 1.8 million of those in Florida. If the program lapses, the policies would remain but new ones could not be sold, potentially disrupting sales of homes that carry federally backed mortgages requiring flood insurance.

The House and Senate are weighing proposals that would reauthorize the program by as many as 10 years while making numerous changes

» See FLOOD, 7A



LUIS SANTANA | Times

Residents evacuated the Elfers Parkway area to escape Anclote River flooding in Pasco in 2016.

Tampa politicians join suit over voter database

Joyner and Suarez team with the ACLU in opposing the Trump commission's request.

BY RICHARD DANIELSON
Times Staff Writer

TAMPA — Two Tampa politicians are part of a new lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida challenging President Donald Trump's Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity.

Former Florida Senate Minority Leader Arthenia Joyner and Tampa City Council member

Mike Suarez, both Democrats, are among seven plaintiffs who filed the suit in federal court in Miami on Monday. They are the only two from outside of South Florida.

The other plaintiffs include a Broward County activist, a South Florida longshoreman's union official, a Miami lawyer who has chaired that city's community relations and police review

boards, the nonprofit Florida Immigrant Coalition and the ACLU.

Before and since the 2016 election, Trump has made repeated claims about massive voter fraud and election-rigging, assertions that PolitiFact, the political fact-checking arm of the Tampa Bay Times, has examined and found to be false on more than a half-dozen occasions.

The ACLU's Florida lawsuit is the latest in a series of challenges to the commission's request that every state send it information

about voters, including the full names of registered voters, dates of birth, party registration, the last four digits of Social Security numbers and voting history. At least 44 states, including Florida, have said they wouldn't provide all their voter data, and some have said they wouldn't give the commission anything.

Both Joyner and Suarez, according to the suit, oppose "the dissemination, collection and potential distribution" of voter IDs and information.

"I've always been concerned

(including) as a legislator, about voters' rights and integrity," Joyner said. Joining the ACLU in the lawsuit is "a natural outgrowth of work that I've done over the years."

Growing up in Tampa, Joyner took part in sit-ins as a high school student. When no firm would hire her after she finished law school, she opened her own practice, was the first black woman to practice law in Hillsborough County and is the longest-practicing African-American

» See DATABASE, 7A

FBI chief hopeful: Loyalty is to law

Christopher Wray is grilled by senators on various aspects of the Trump investigation.

Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Christopher Wray, President Donald Trump's nominee to head the FBI, told Congress on Wednesday that if the president tried improperly to get him to drop an investigation, he would first try to talk him out of it — and if that failed, resign.

He also testified that no one has asked him for any loyalty oath as part of his nomination. "And I sure as heck didn't offer one," he said.

Wray, a low-key former senior Justice Department official, was nominated after Trump abruptly fired FBI director James Comey in May amid a bureau investigation into potential collusion between Trump associates and the Kremlin to interfere in last year's presidential election.

In his opening remarks, Wray promised to be independent and resistant to political pressures, including from the White House.

Wray said he would never allow the bureau's work to be driven "by anything other than the law, the facts and the impartial pursuit of justice."

He said: "My loyalty is to the Constitution and the rule of law."

Wray later added that there was only one way to do the job — "without fear, without favoritism, and certainly without regard to any partisan political influence."

The issue takes on even more significance this week in the wake of revelations that Trump's son, son-in-law and then-campaign manager last year met with a Russian lawyer who Donald Trump Jr. believed might offer damaging information on

» See WRAY, 3A



Christopher Wray is the president's nominee for FBI director.

'Living drug' a new frontier in leukemia treatment

An FDA panel recommends the gene therapy, which alters a patient's cells to fight cancer.

New York Times

A Food and Drug Administration panel opened a new era in medicine Wednesday, unanimously recommending that the agency approve the first treatment that genetically alters a patient's own cells to fight leukemia, transforming them into what scientists call "a living drug" that powerfully bolsters the immune system to shut down the disease.

If the FDA accepts the recommendation, which is likely, the

treatment will be the first gene therapy to reach the market. Others are expected: Researchers and drug companies have been engaged in intense competition for decades to reach this milestone. Novartis is now poised to be the first, and it is working on similar types of treatments for another type of leukemia, as well as multiple myeloma and an aggressive brain tumor.

To use the technique, a separate treatment must be created

for each patient — their cells removed at an approved medical center, frozen, shipped to a Novartis plant for thawing and processing, frozen again and shipped back to the treatment center. A single dose of the resulting product has brought long remissions, and possibly cures, to scores of patients in studies who faced death because every other treatment had failed. The panel recommended approving the treatment for B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia that has resisted treatment, or relapsed, in children and young adults ages 3 to 25.

One of those patients, Emily Whitehead, now 12 and the first child given the altered cells, was at the meeting of the panel with her parents to advocate approval of the drug that saved her life. In 2012, as a 6-year-old, she was treated in a study at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Severe side effects — raging fever, crashing blood pressure, lung congestion — nearly killed her. But she emerged cancer-free, and has remained so.

"We believe that when this treatment is approved it will

» See LEUKEMIA, 7A



New York Times

Emily Whitehead, with her parents Tom and Kari Whitehead, was 6 when she became the first child ever given altered cells to treat cancer. Now 12, she has remained cancer-free.