

Trump’s tax-cut promises widely panned

His vows to exempt tips, Social Security and overtime are an unrealistic ‘sham’ and ‘gimmick,’ analysts say.

By JAMES RAINEY

The last time Donald Trump was president, he delivered a massive tax cut, touting the many benefits of the 2017 law. But a slew of nonpartisan reviews found it benefited mostly the wealthy, expanded the federal deficit enormously and didn’t result in the promised economic boost to the middle class.

Perhaps recognizing that his previous tax cut lacked populist appeal, the former president has spent the summer reeling off new tax-cut proposals — promising to exempt tips, Social Security benefits and overtime pay from federal taxes.

Trump used a rally in Tucson on Thursday to roll out the latest proposal: to stop taxing overtime pay.

“People who work overtime are among the hardest-working citizens in our country,” the Republican presidential nominee said. “And for too long, no one in Washington has been looking out for them.”

He said that under his proposal, “police officers, nurses, factory workers, construction workers, truck drivers and machine operators” would finally “catch a break.”

Tax and policy analysts from across the ideological spectrum quickly lambasted the Trump proposal, saying it would make an already massive federal budget deficit even larger. It wasn’t immediately clear how much eliminating the three taxes would cost the U.S. Treasury, though one group said the Social Security tax ban alone would deny the government \$1.6 trillion over a decade.

Several critics said the proposals amounted to pandering to working-class voters, whose ballots could tip the balance in several states. Offering breaks to those who earn tips and overtime felt like a “sham,” they added, coming from a man whose Labor Department failed to protect tips and enacted policies that made millions

[See Tax plans, A16]

A TIMES INVESTIGATION



FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA HAS been destroying veterinary records that detail a pet’s origin and health status. Above, dogs in Arkansas.

A PUPPY MILL PIPELINE

Unsuspecting dog buyers in California can face heartache and thousands in veterinary costs when their pets, mass-bred in the Midwest, get sick or die

By Melody Gutierrez and Alene Tchekmedyan

Blaring music drowned out the barking, but there was no masking the neglect inside the sweltering Riverside County garage.

Jamie Abruzzo, a Missouri middle school teacher who picked up a summer job trucking puppies around the country, was overcome by anger as he took in the filth and feces that surrounded him.

Outside, the temperature neared triple digits. Inside, where the air conditioner wasn’t working, dozens of puppies and kittens were jammed into small cages and storage bins lined with soiled shredded paper. Water

containers nearby were empty.

Abruzzo cradled his delivery, a 10-week-old Boston terrier that had made its way from an Indiana breeder to a broker, then to a crate inside his transport van. After two days on the road, this was the puppy’s next stop — the detached garage turned holding pen in an Inland Empire suburb.

The driver knew where this multi-state pipeline was supposed to lead for the animals left unattended that day: loving homes. But what Abruzzo stumbled into was the underbelly of California’s lucrative, unregulated

puppy market.

And it haunted him.

A Times investigation found that truckloads of doodles, French bulldogs and other expensive dogs from profit-driven mass breeders pour into the state from the Midwest, feeding an underground market where they are resold by people claiming to be small, local home breeders.

The trail of imported dogs — some from operators cited by state and federal officials for neglect — persists, despite California’s efforts to stem the

[See Puppies, A6]

Mixed feelings in San Francisco as X exits

City is fed up with Elon Musk and what’s become of Twitter, but its departure is a blow

By Wendy Lee and Queenie Wong

SAN FRANCISCO — When Elon Musk took over Twitter in 2022, it marked a new era for the struggling San Francisco company.

As the deal neared completion, Musk, the eccentric entrepreneur known for leading Tesla and SpaceX,

tweeted, “Entering Twitter HQ — let that sink in!” with a video of him carrying a white sink into Twitter’s San Francisco office.

Two years later, the business is moving out.

Twitter, now known as X, is expected to close its San Francisco headquarters this month, leaving behind the Mid-Market neighborhood it has called home since 2012.

The company is reportedly moving its headquarters to Austin, Texas, but plans to relocate its San Francisco employees to San José and Palo Alto, where it has already listed job openings.

The departure is another blow to a city that has been buffeted by high-profile business departures and that once held up Twitter as a key part of its revival.

Downtown San Francisco’s vacancy rates have ballooned as tech companies slashed their real estate expenses and halted office expansion plans as the pandemic has relented.

Confronted with a falloff in foot traffic, major retailers such as Nordstrom and Anthropologie also shut their stores amid heightened concerns about crime,

theft, vandalism, drug use and homelessness.

X is the second-largest tenant in the Mid-Market neighborhood, leasing 457,793 square feet, according to CoStar, which tracks real estate trends. Vacancy rates in Mid-Market are at their highest in decades at 62%, according to CBRE.

“It’s just symbolic of the

[See X, A4]

Aging and shortsighted NASA faces era of austerity, experts say

By Corinne Purtill

Aging infrastructure, short-term thinking and ambitions that far outstrip its funding are just a few of the problems threatening the future of America’s vaunted civil space agency, according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

In a report commissioned by Congress and released last week, experts said that a number of the agency’s technological resources are suffering, in-



NASA

AN ANTENNA at NASA’s Goldstone Deep Space Communications Complex near Barstow.

cluding the Deep Space Network — an international collection of giant radio antennas that is overseen by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Cañada Flintridge.

Report authors warned that NASA has, for too long, prioritized near-term missions at the cost of long-term investments in its infrastructure, workforce and technology.

“The inevitable consequence of such a strategy is to erode those essential capabilities that led to the

[See NASA, A9]

The godfather of navigation apps

Today’s driving-directions tech owes a debt to SigAlert creator Loyd Sigmon, writes Patt Morrison. CALIFORNIA, B1

Injured Glasnow likely out for year

“It’s a big blow,” Dodgers manager says of his ace pitcher, whose season appears over because of elbow sprain. SPORTS, D1

Between Venice’s canals and beach

Here’s your guide to a nuanced self-tour of the neighborhood, whether with just adults or the family. WEEKEND, L6



Our climate change challenge

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