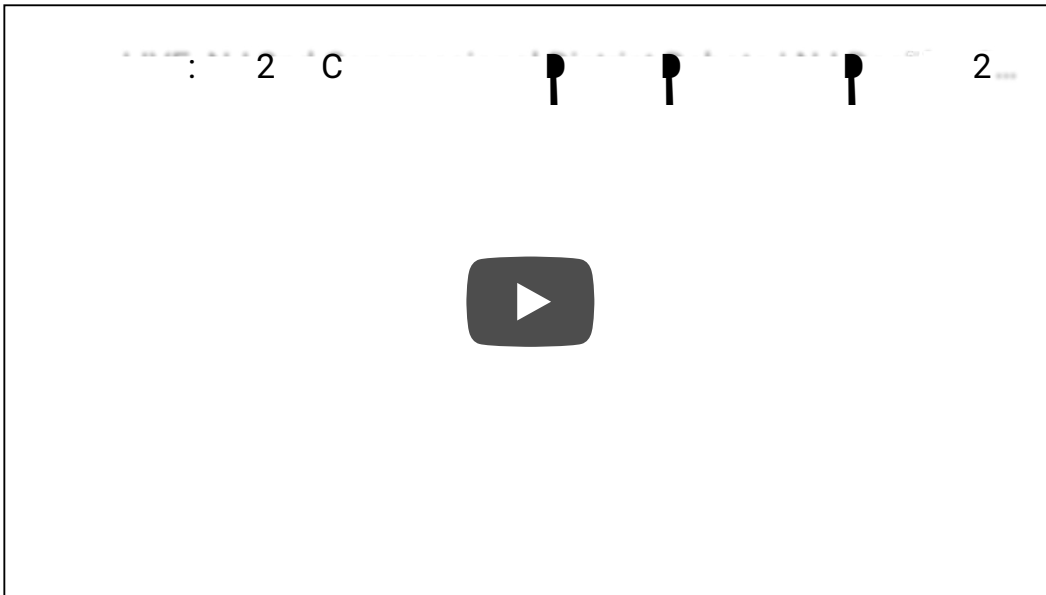




Van Drew, Kennedy keep things civil in congressional debate at Stockton





ATLANTIC CITY — Congressman Jeff Van Drew, R-2nd, and Democratic challenger Amy Kennedy, of Brigantine, had few strong disagreements in a debate Thursday night at Stockton University's Atlantic City campus, until the subject of defunding police arose.

Van Drew said he did not support defunding police but believed they need more funding and more support as they risk their lives for the rest of us.

"I don't believe the average law enforcement officer hates anyone of color. Many are people of color," Van Drew said.

Kennedy said Van Drew had misrepresented her position on the issue, as her voice rose in anger for the first time.

"You said I supported defunding police. You've used it in every ad in mailers about me," Kennedy said. "You are willing to put words into my mouth I have not even said."

She said she had instead said there was merit in discussing how we provide funding to police and how we can reallocate funds to make healthy communities.

The 2nd District race is one of the most important House races in the nation, said moderator John Froomjian, executive director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton. The district, which encompasses all or part of the state's eight southernmost counties, is expected to be tightly competitive, withSt

On new federal COVID-19 relief, Kennedy said much more is needed for state and local governments, small businesses, the airline industry and individuals.

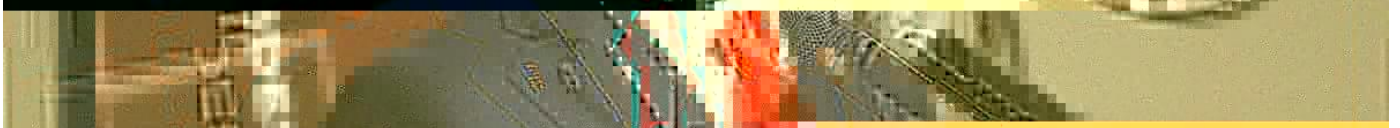
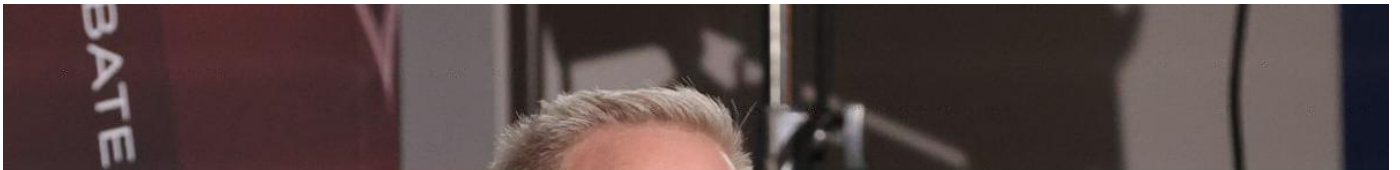
Van Drew said he believes Trump will sign measures to provide aid to airlines and \$1,200 payments to taxpayers. He also said a bill should have already passed to provide that aid, but that Democrats added extras like support for the environmental Green New Deal in legislation that Republicans and even some Democrats could not support.

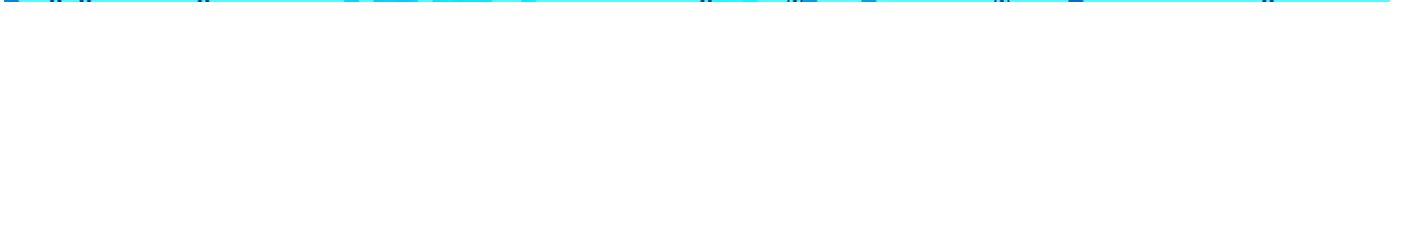
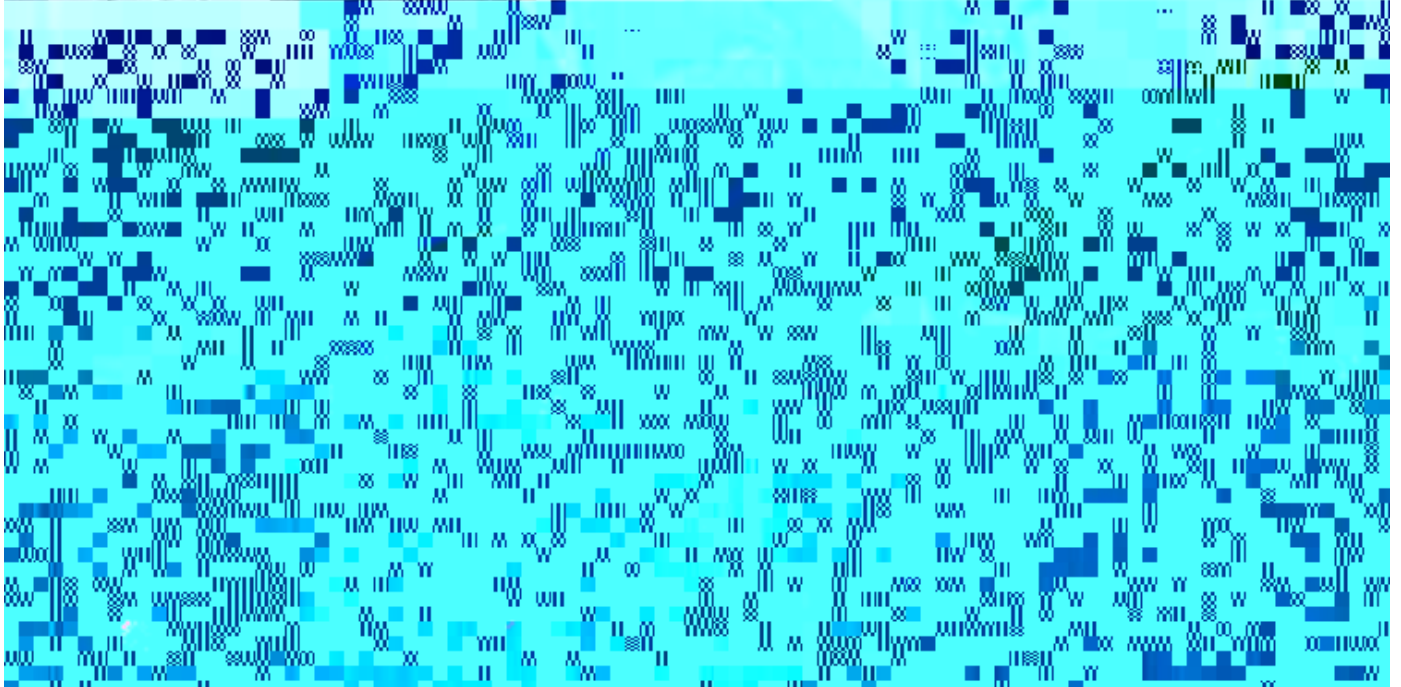
There were also differences in how the two feel about New Jersey's mostly vote-by-mail election.



Kennedy said it will result in more participation by voters, while Van Drew said he worried about massive numbers of ballots being sent out without being requested.

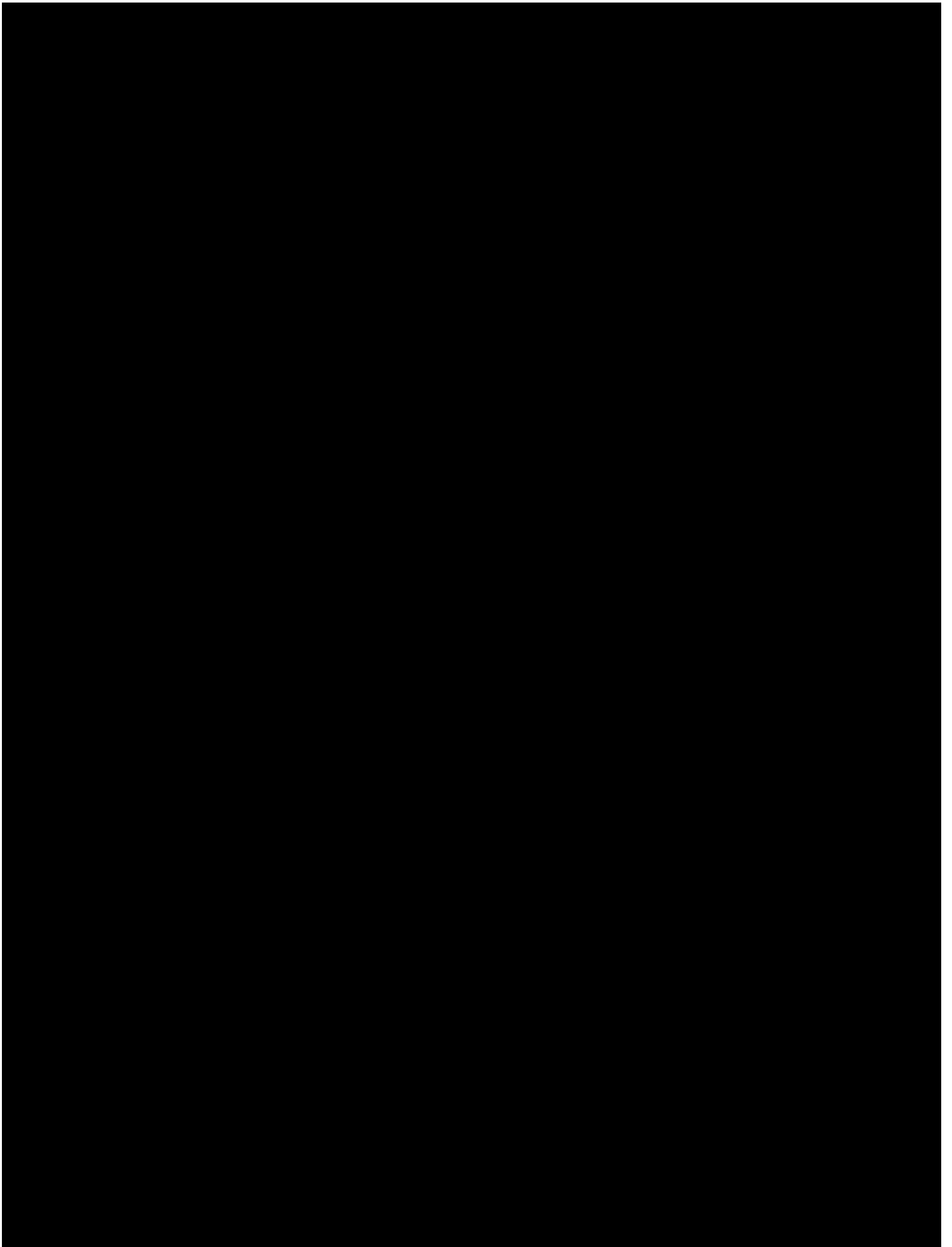
"It's not good. We are sending live ballots in the mail — millions of them," Van Drew said.



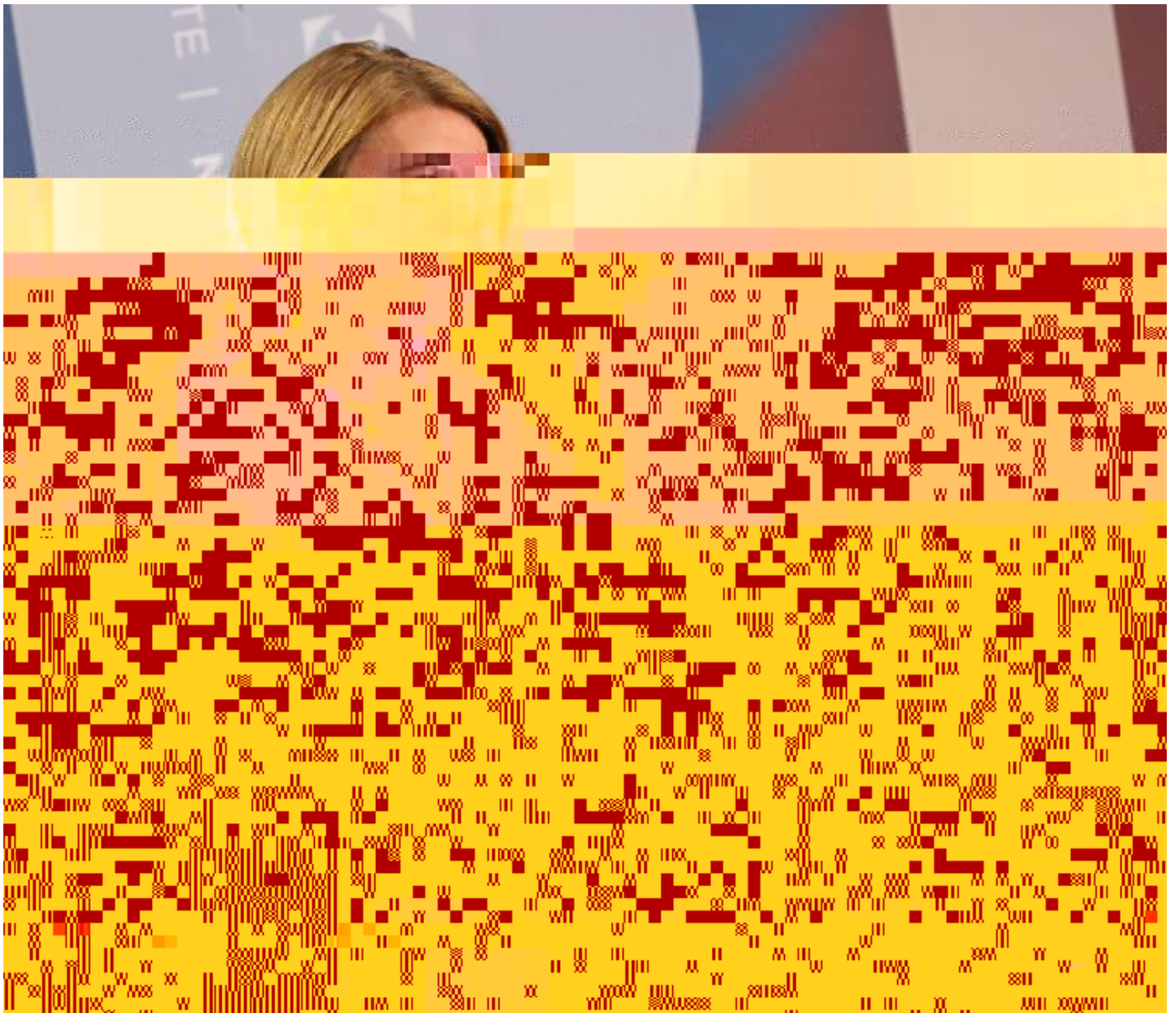




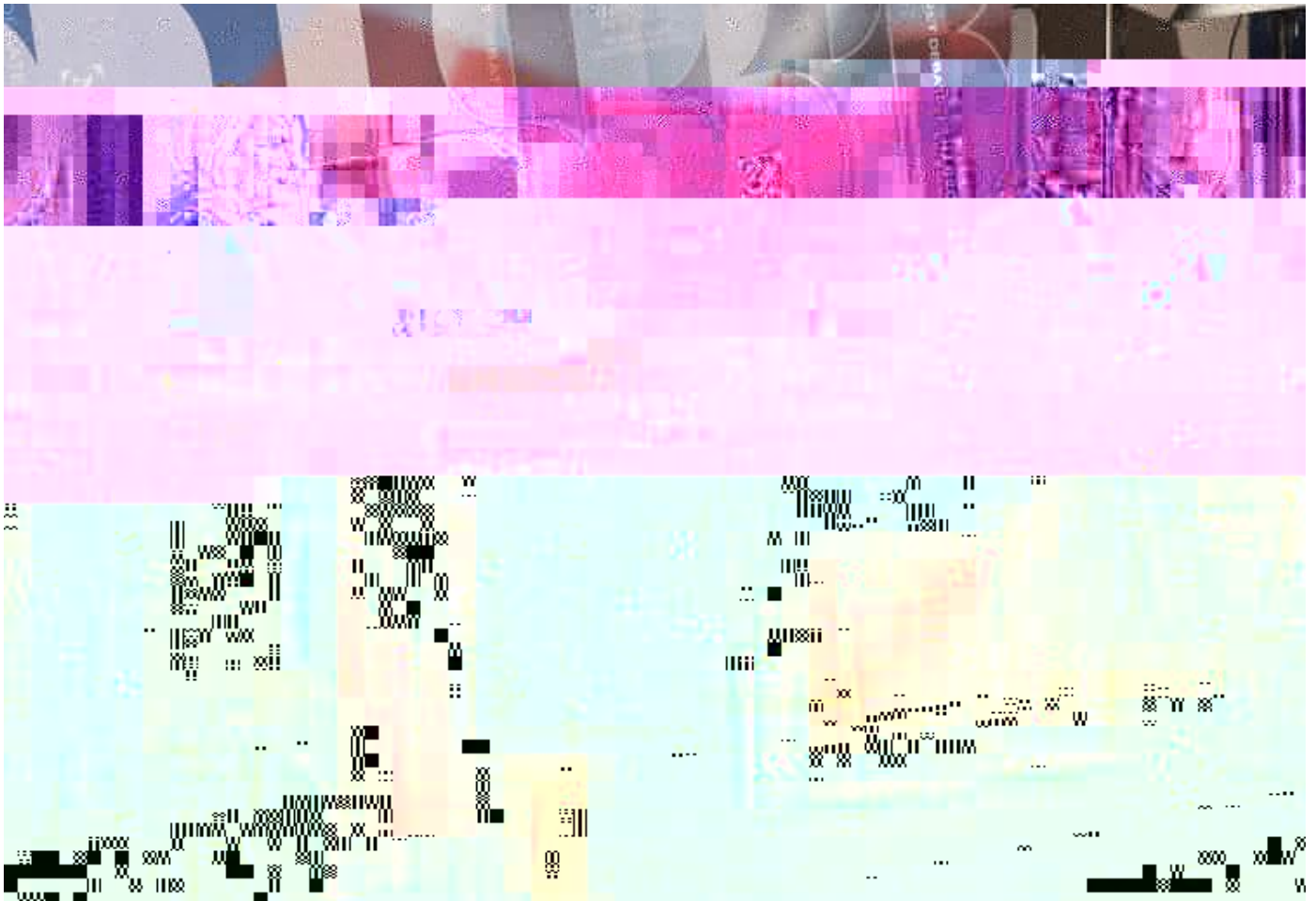






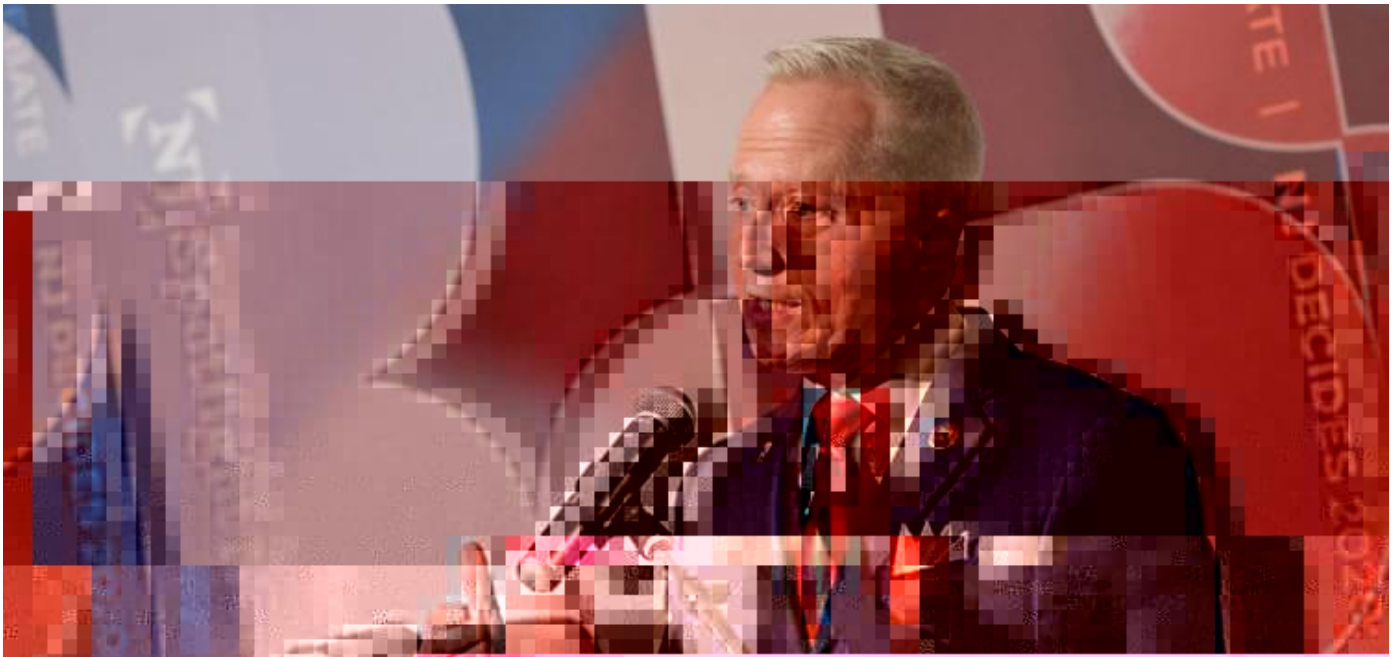


















mpost@pressofac.com



Michelle Brunetti Post
Staff Writer