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METRO&IOWA

Iowa AG: No decision on payments to rape victims

Plan B funding has been on hold since January

Michaela Ramm and Stephen Gruber-Miller
Des Moines Register | USA TODAY NETWORK

Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird's office says it is still reviewing whether to permanently halt the longstanding practice of paying for emergency contra-

ception, and in rare cases abortions, for victims of sexual assault.

Bird, a Republican, paused those payments when she took office in January after ousting former Attorney Tom Miller, a Democrat.

She has previously said the pause in payments is part of a larger review of the state's victim services programs.

On an episode of "Iowa Press" on Iowa PBS on Friday, Bird appeared to indicate she intends the change to be per-

manent.

"We did pause payments to entities like Planned Parenthood and others that were being reimbursed for abortions and for Plan B," Bird said. "However, those services still remain available under Iowa law to victims, it's just whether public funds will pay for them."

"So once this audit is done, do you intend that to be the permanent policy?" Kay Henderson, the program's host, asked Bird.

"I do, yes. Once it's done," Bird said.

Alyssa Brouillet, a spokesperson for the attorney general, said afterward that Bird was not saying she had made a final decision about whether the state will pay for emergency contraceptives for assault victims.

Instead, Brouillet said, Bird was saying the final decision in the audit will be permanent.

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Richard Core, left, and Glenn Ackeborg recreate a picture kissing Linda Riddle, a server they met in Ute in western Iowa during RAGBRAI in 1987. Since they took the original photo, they've always wondered what happened to her. They were able to find her through social media and meet up during RAGBRAI 50. COURTNEY CROWDER/DES MOINES REGISTER

Riders, server reunite 36 years after 1987 RAGBRAI

Courtney Crowder
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Linda Riddle was in church when she found out a picture of two men kissing her was floating around the internet.

She'd been a waitress at Ruth's Sweet Shop in 1987 on the "wild" day RAGBRAI came through Ute in rural western Iowa. And, for a few hours, she and her little shop were the center of the RAGBRAI universe. The counters were overtaken by lycra instead of seed caps; the stools were laden with out-of-towners with questions instead of regulars with usuals.

The chaos was all-encompassing, but the riders were so, well, just plain happy that all she could do was throw her hands up and laugh. *You'll eat when you eat* became the mantra of the day.

Just before leaving, a trio of riders asked to take a photo, surprising her with kisses on both cheeks when the shutter went click.

Her eyes closed and her smile wide — the men wearing mischievousness as thick as sunscreen — the photo oozes joy. It's a time capsule of a simpler summer, before cell phones and GPS and Wi-Fi. A Norman Rockwell — but with more spandex.

Turns out the trio was looking for the waitress some 36 years later. But they had no information, no name or hometown. So one of the men, Richard Core, posted the photo on Facebook in an at-



Virgil Kemp, left, and Glenn Ackeborg, right, surprise server Linda Riddle with kisses during a hectic morning on RAGBRAI in 1987. SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

tempt to find answers.

Rich's been checking things off lately, filling in the questions of life while he still can.

The three best friends treasured that moment — and the photo that marked it — as their favorite RAGBRAI story of all time, Rich wrote. And in a group where one of the members, Glenn Ackeborg, has done 43 cross-state treks, that's saying something.

Together, they'd recount over and over how the waitress had told riders they'd have to fill out their own gosh darn meal tickets that morning. How the cook nearly lost his lunch at the thought of all those orders. How riders had hopped on the grill and started flipping pancakes and cracking eggs.

And how the waitress had refused their tip.

Oh, you don't want to break that bill, honey, she said. *Once you do, they just go so fast.*

She'd become legend to the group, "RAGBRAI magic" personified: *What was her story? What ever happened to her?*

When RAGBRAI came back through that part of the state a few years ago, Glenn considered using precious saddle bag space to bring the photo with him and ask people in the area: *Do you know her?*

"That's how much she stayed with me," Glenn said. "Of all the people we met over the years, we'd always talk about the waitress at that diner in western Iowa."

Time has worn away some of the sharpness of the moment, but when the trio walks down this particularly well-worn path of memory lane, the feelings — that joy — oozes.

And, like Rich said, time is something he's found himself thinking about.

So he posted the story to Facebook. And then someone replied.

Hunger pains: Three best friends — in need of breakfast

Back when RAGBRAI was a smaller production, Rich, Glenn and Virgil Kemp could ride every mile three

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Terrence Welton rides to Des Moines from Ames on Day 4 of RAGBRAI on Wednesday.

NIRMALENDU MAJUMDAR/AMES TRIBUNE

Rider, 74, back after 30 years

Rachelle Chase

Des Moines Register | USA TODAY NETWORK

Riders stopped him and asked to take a selfie with him. Dozens of others complimented him on his stylish cycling kit.

It was a warm welcome from fellow cyclists on RAGBRAI this week for 74-year-old Des Moines native Terrence Welton after his fellow riders learned he had ridden in some of the earliest RAGBRAIs in the 1970s.

Welton participated annually for 17 years before taking an around 30-year hiatus. He decided to join the 50th anniversary RAGBRAI this year, riding with a friend and his son's father-in-law on Day 4 from Ames to Des Moines.

Love of riding began as a teen

When he got his first bike around age 14 or 15, he rode it every day, from one side of town to the other.

Then, when he was about 20 or 21, he and his buddies went riding every Saturday and Sunday.

"We'd just pick a route and go down to Indianola or wherever we wanted to go and come back," he said.

They didn't ride bike trails because there were hardly any in the Des Moines metro at that time. The only one Welton remembers is the Bill Reilly Bike Trail from Greenwood Park to Water Works Park, built in the early 1970s.

So they rode on the highway.

"Once in a while someone — I call them a-holes — used to kind of buzz you," Welton recalled. But he said the riding group never had any problems that were racially motivated. Most people in the small towns were just amazed that they had ridden all the way from Des Moines.

Over time, his buddies quit riding with him because he started riding faster than they could. So Welton ended up hanging out with bicycle mechanics and racers. That led him to competing

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