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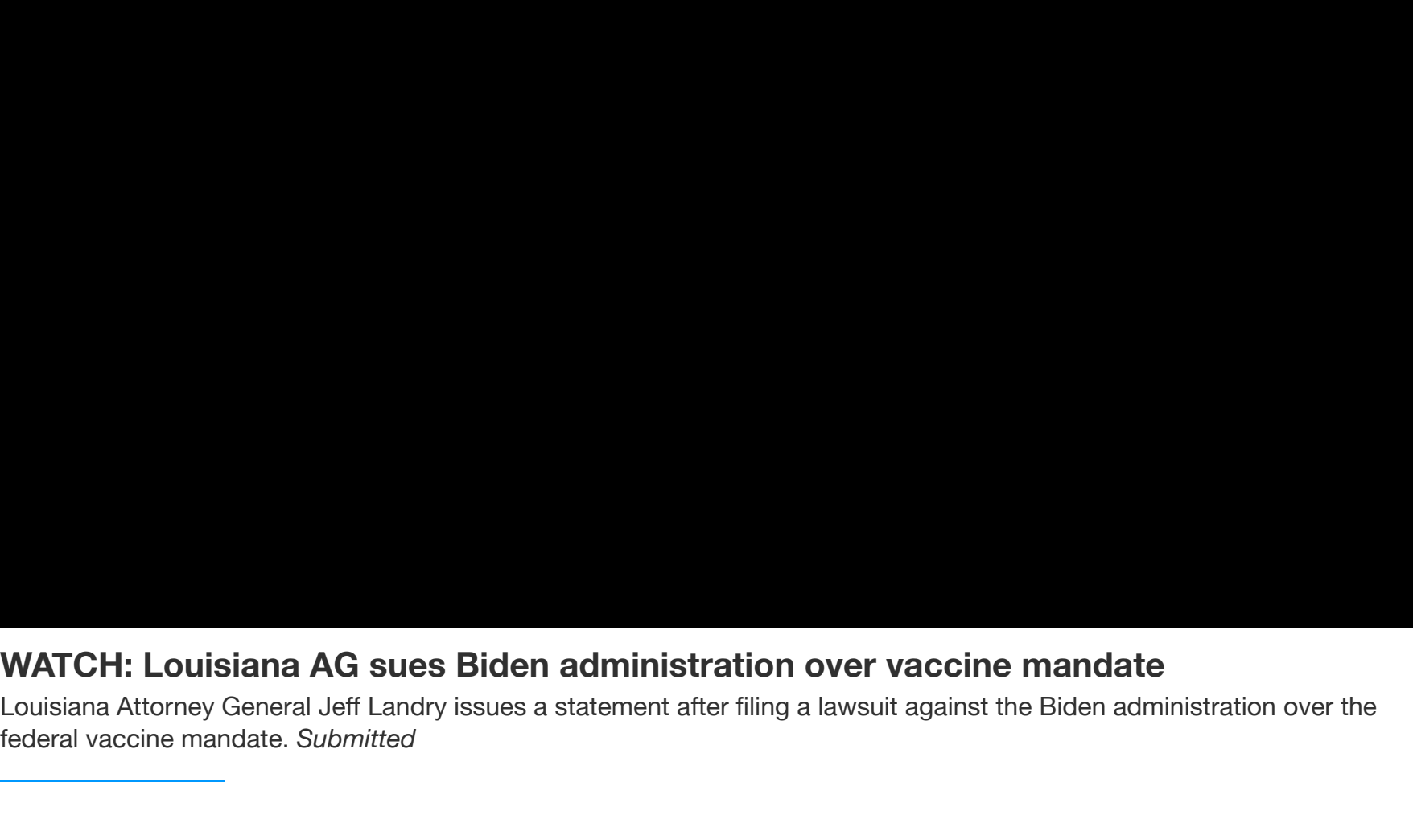
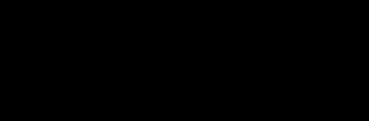
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NEWS

Louisiana judge blocks nationwide COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers

Greg Hilburn Lafayette Daily Advertiser

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WATCH: Louisiana AG sues Biden administration over vaccine mandate Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry issues a statement after filing a lawsuit against the Biden administration over the federal vaccine mandate. Submitted

A Louisiana U.S. district judge blocked a federal COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers Tuesday, issuing a nationwide injunction in another setback to President Joe Biden's effort to require wide segments of the population to be vaccinated.

Louisiana Western District U.S. Judge Terry Doughty's decision follows an identical ruling Monday from Missouri U.S. District Judge Matthew Schelp, but Schelp's decision only covered 10 states.

Doughty ruled on the lawsuit led by Republican Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry and joined by 13 other states, but Doughty added a nationwide injunction in his ruling.



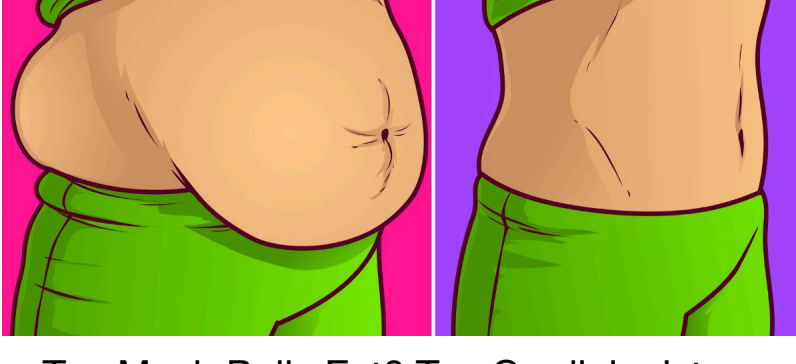
Louisiana U.S. Western District Judge Terry Doughty Greg Hilburn/USA Today Network

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In his decision, Doughty wrote the Biden Administration doesn't have the authority to bypass Congress in issuing such a mandate.

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"If the executive branch is allowed to usurp the power of the legislative branch to make laws, two of the three powers conferred by our Constitution would be in the same hands," he wrote. "If human nature and history teach anything, it is that civil liberties face grave risks when governments proclaim indefinite states of emergency."

"During a pandemic such as this one, it is even more important to safeguard the separation of powers set forth in our Constitution to avoid erosion of our liberties."

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Federal mandate: Louisiana attorney general files suit against Biden administration's vaccine mandates

The emergency regulation issued Nov. 4 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services would have required staff at providers that participate in the programs to receive at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by Dec. 6 and be fully vaccinated by Jan. 4, 2022.

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It would have covered more than 17 million health care workers, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

"While Joe Biden villainizes our healthcare heroes with his 'job or job' edicts, I will continue to stand up to the president's bully tactics and fight for liberty," Landry said in a statement. "While our fight is far from over, I am pleased the court granted preliminary relief against the president's unconstitutional and immoral attack on not only our healthcare workers but also the access to healthcare services for our poor and elderly."



Earlier this month the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans blocked a broader Biden administration mandate that businesses with more than 100 workers require employees to be vaccinated by Jan. 4 or wear masks and be tested weekly. Landry was also the lead in that lawsuit.

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Any appeals of Doughty's Tuesday decision would also go to the 5th Circuit.

Doughty, who was nominated to the federal bench by former President Donald Trump in 2017 and confirmed in 2018, acknowledged the case "will ultimately be decided by a higher court than this one."

"However, it is important to preserve the status quo in this case," he wrote. "The liberty interests of the unvaccinated requires nothing less."

The states that joined Louisiana in the lawsuit include Arizona, Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and West Virginia.

Louisiana's Western District Court includes a large geographic swath of the state with offices in Lafayette, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Monroe and Shreveport.

Vaccination in Louisiana

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Louisiana Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccination Information

Current Phase of Distribution: Everyone 12+

Zoom in to see parish and tract level data.

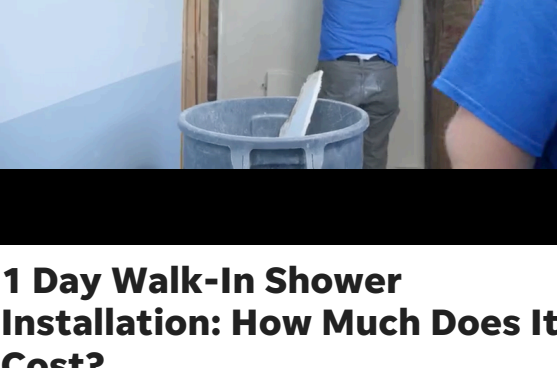
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Click the <-> arrows to navigate tabs containing other information. Vaccine information is updated on Monday and Thursday at noon.

Greg Hilburn covers state politics for the USA TODAY Network of Louisiana. Follow him on Twitter @GregHilburn.



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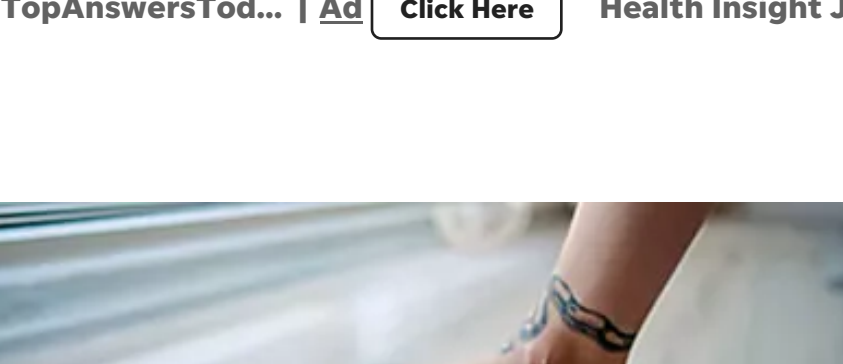
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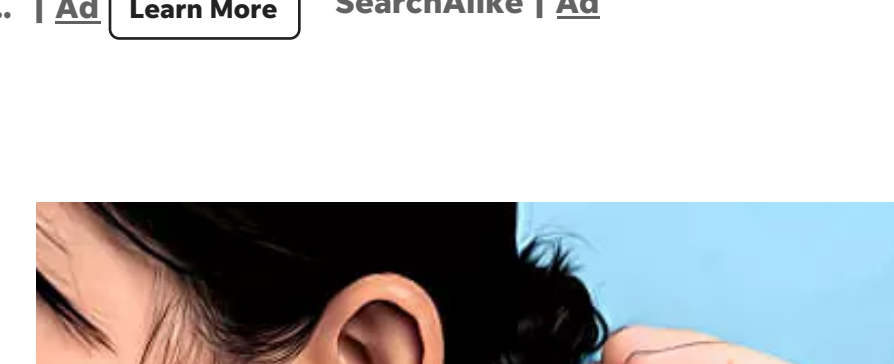
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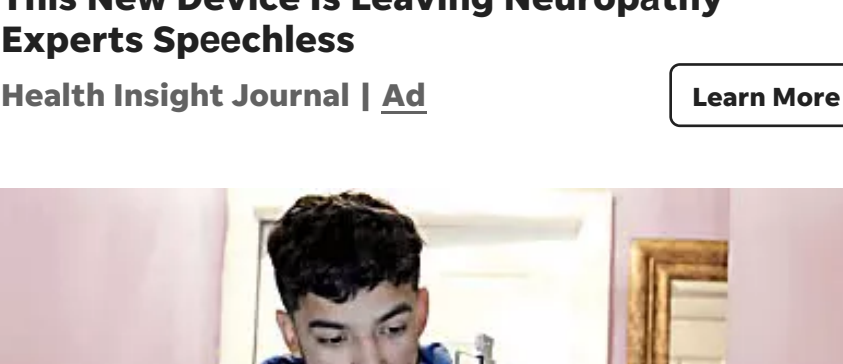
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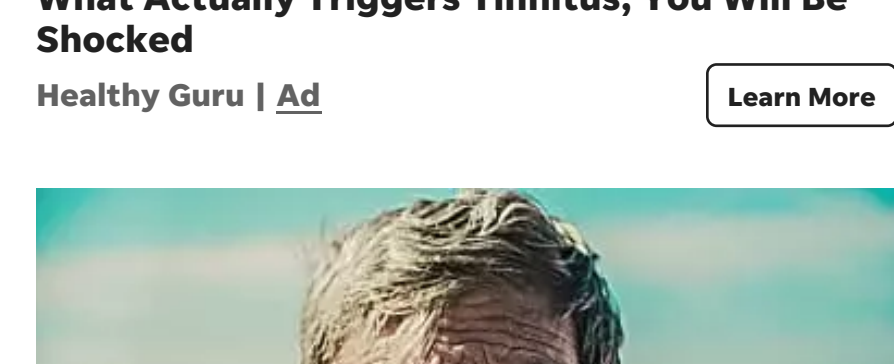
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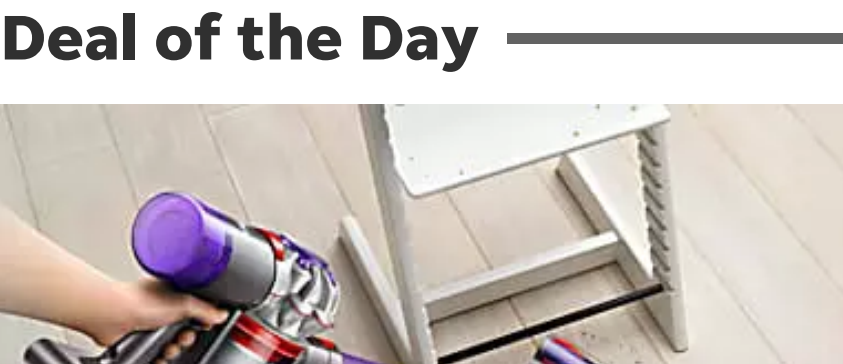


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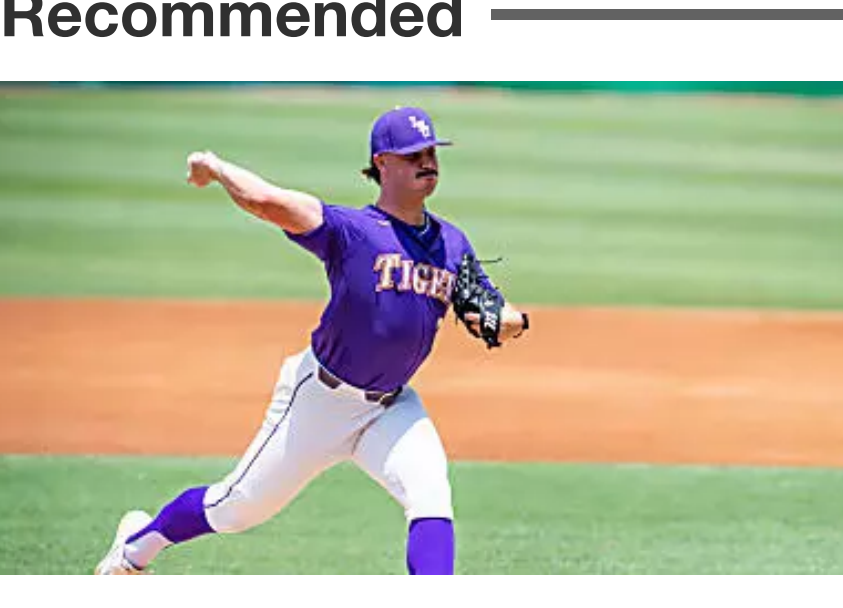
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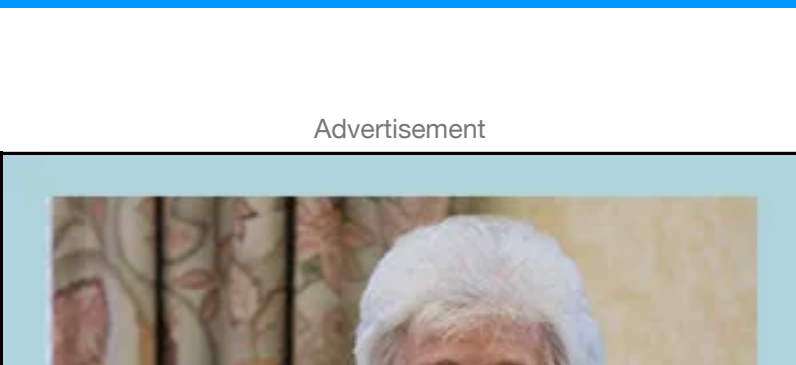
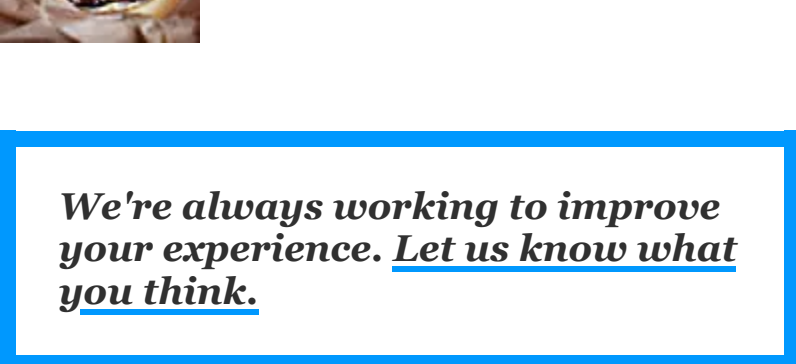
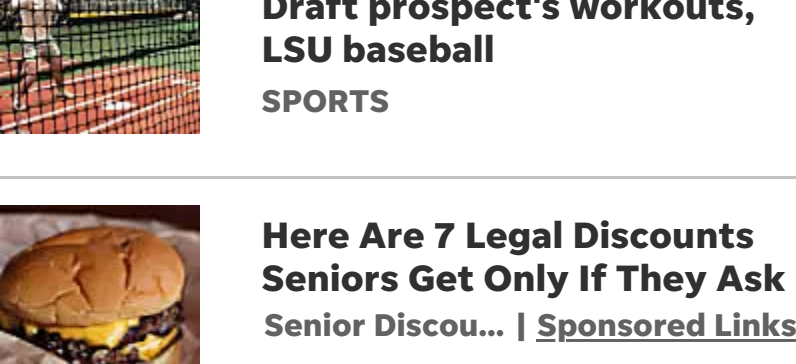


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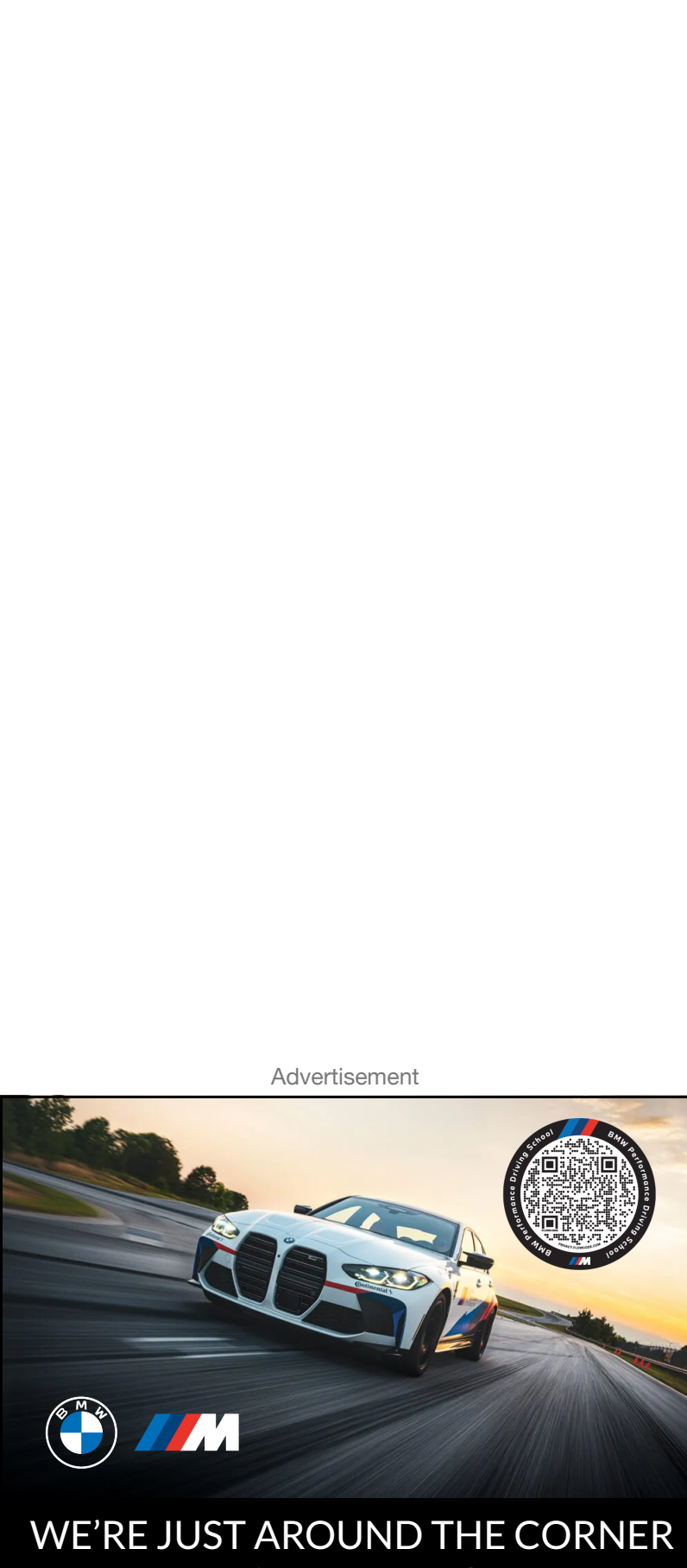
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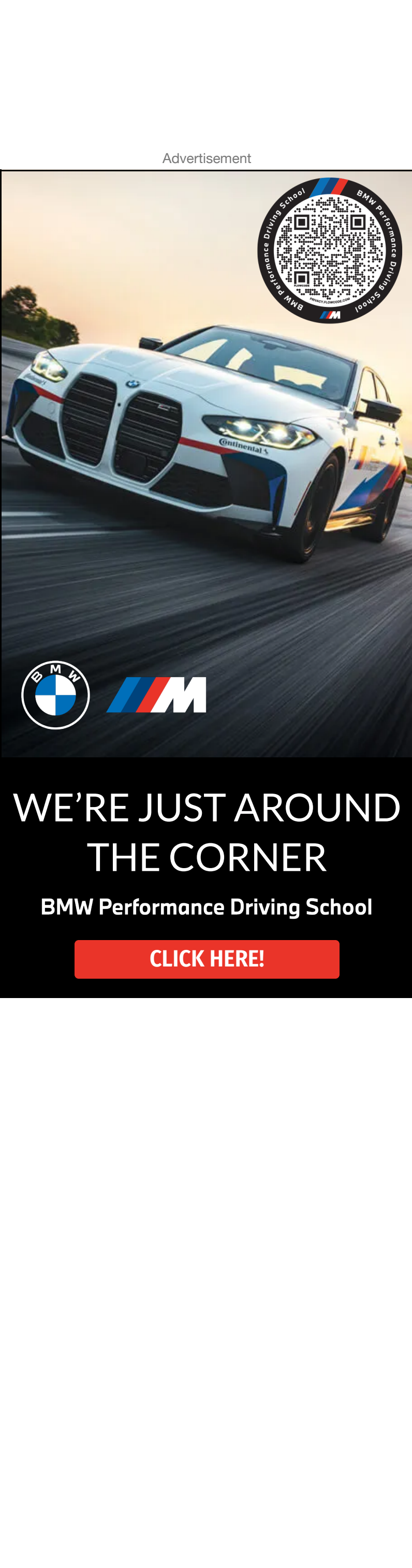
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