The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2026 — THE BREAKFAST EDITION — FREE, FOREVER

Congress files its second bill against Flock's 120,000 cameras in 27 days; the first still hasn't moved

BY MITCH
Investigations

I read filings for a living, and this month the filings are singing in harmony.

Start in Nevada. In the week of 27 August, an interim judiciary committee unanimously accepted a recommendation to request that a bill be drafted next session — oversight of automatic license plate readers, with what the Washington Examiner described as tentative bipartisan support. Follow it through: accept a recommendation, to request a draft, for a session that has not convened. Three steps, and no law at the end of any of them.

On 3 September, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky unveiled the Flock-Off Act. All together now — the verbs: the bill would block federal funds to purchase, install, maintain, operate or upgrade automated license plate readers and biometric surveillance cameras for municipalities and local law enforcement. Five verbs. Somebody sat down and thought through how a camera travels from a loading dock to a utility pole and shut a door at every stop. That is careful drafting. The Hill ran the story twice that day under two headlines, "Massie unveils Flock-Off Act" and "Massie unveils 'Flock off' bill," which is two more appearances than the bill has had on a floor.

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THE WORD

§47 — 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

On nasty

DEMOCRAT

13 TIMES

REPUBLICAN

NASTY

'I want to say first, these are very good reporters. They ask very good questions — I'd never get a question like that out my self. May 28th of last year, a reporter asks about a trading nickname, and the answer is: 'That's a nasty question. To me, that's the nastiest question.' All right — that's about a question. Then November. 'Quiet, quiet piggy.' 'Are you stupid?' 'I gly, both inside and out.' December: 'always Stupid and Nasty.' Excuse me, I'm going. In May it was the question that was nasty. By November, what was?" — LOU

... Continued on Page W47

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

THE FLOOR NEVER FALLS

Above a fixed dollar floor, Congress is notified. Below it, Congress is not. The floor was set in 1981; the only amendment since raised it.

... Continued on the Investigative Reporting page

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

THE HOUSE IS A PARK

The house costs $15.5 million a year to run and $600 million this year to add a room; Congress voted on the first number.

... Continued on the Investigative Reporting page

Housing aid hit by the pocket rescission that cut refugee grants; Congress's power to reverse it also unspent

BY THE WRECKING CREW
The Remedy Desk

The chief puts the September 26 drawer on the table first, because it is the schematic. Nearly $1 billion in appropriated money canceled by pocket rescission — the second such rescission in fifty years, both of them issued this term. Of that, $810 million came off immigration and refugee programs, foreign debt-relief programs, and grants given to businesses.

Our planner admires the build, professionally. You do not have to beat the appropriation on the floor. You hold the money at the end of the fiscal year and let the calendar spend it for you. Two uses in fifty years, both inside one term: that is a tool being tested, not a tool being retired.

Today it is pointed at housing. ABC reports the administration shifting federal policy and dollars away from Housing First, the approach that has sat at the heart of federal homelessness policy, with upheaval running through the programs that carry it.

The same week produced the cliff. Billions Congress appropriated for health programs sit unspent, at risk of expiring Wednesday when the fiscal year ends. Democratic lawmakers and some Republicans say withholding

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Congress scheduled the $45 billion Iran war bill for after voters decide who controls Congress

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Let me run the two calendars side by side, because they do not reconcile.

The first is the war's. It opens in February, when the administration began the war with Iran without a vote of Congress. Both chambers then passed a war powers resolution, and that is where the entry stops. On September 2 the executive director of NIAC Action, Jamal Abdi, told Congress its remaining option was to go to court and enforce the resolution it had already passed, and used the words constitutional crisis. A resolution that needs a lawsuit to become an instruction has a gap in it. The gap is the size of a war.

On August 28 the war the president had called quick was six months old with no end in sight. On September 9 he said it would not end before the midterms. The next day the Defense Secretary described the devastation done to Iran's capabilities. I am not going to argue with either statement. I will note only that they were filed a day apart, and that a capability can be devastated while the war continues, apparently into November.

Then the invoices. On September 15 the Congressional Budget Office closed its books at nearly $40 billion and called that figure conservative.

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Billionaires' ad blitz enters sixth week; their tax polls 52, then 45, then 48 percent

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Proposition 40 is arithmetic. Five percent, one time, on the net worth of Californians holding a billion dollars or more — about 200 people. The proceeds go to the state's healthcare system.

By August 25 an advertising blitz against it was under way, run by organizations backed by mega-billionaires. The item names Google co-founder Sergey Brin and the venture capitalist Peter Thiel among the backers, and names the two most prominent committees fighting the measure: Building a Better California, and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes. What those committees have spent is not in anything on my desk. What came back is.

September 16: the New York Post reports 52 percent of likely voters in support, with pitfalls ahead. September 21: a group of Nobel-winning economists calls the vote a possible "turning point in the battle between democracy and oligarchy," the measure still at 52. September 22: the Berkeley Citrin Center-POLITICO poll puts support at 45 percent of registered voters, and The Hill writes that support is falling. September 30: NBCUniversal Local and

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Google covering full cost of Arkansas power plant; customers billed for part of the full cost

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

"Full costs" is the phrase, and it is worth turning over before it gets away from you. Entergy says Google is covering the full costs of building a new solar and battery facility to power one data center at West Memphis. Full. And the regular consumers of Arkansas are footing the bill for part of that plant's construction as well. Both sentences stand. Nothing broke — no meter misread, no clerk asleep — the rates were designed this way, filed this way, and they are performing.

You are waiting for the part where somebody made a mistake. Keep waiting.

And how much is "part of it"? The utility says part of it. Part.

Someone will say Congress has handled this. In September the House passed the Ratepayer Protection Act, bipartisan, aimed at putting data center electricity costs on the technology companies. Then read it: the states must consider standards. Consider ... precatory language, which asks and does not bind, and which requires no state to regulate anyone.

Google is covered. Arkansas households pay for part of a power plant built

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President rejects Iran's seven-day ceasefire plan, counteroffers on it, expects the bombing after the midterms

BY LOU
One More Question

I've got a piece of paper here. Give me a second — it's in the coat, and the coat's got the one pocket that still works. Here. Renewal notice, the plates on the car. Two dates printed on it. The day they mailed it and the day the money's due. Fine piece of paper. What it hasn't got anywhere on it is the day somebody sat down and picked the number. You'd think that would be on there.

I had it folded in this pocket all week, so forgive me if I keep it in the same hand as the notes. The notes start on the first of September. Iran's president, Masoud Pezeshkian, on the sidelines of a summit in Kyrgyzstan, says that if the United States returns to its commitments under the Memorandum of Understanding — the June ceasefire — Iran will immediately reciprocate. Immediately, that's the paper's word. Same paper says this came after the United States again broke a ceasefire deal between the two countries. The Morning Star, first of September.

Before that, the twenty-fifth of August — hold on, I've got it here — Democracy Now reports Washington threatening a new economic war on

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Rent rose because they came, then fell because they were deported; economics confirmed both this morning.

BY LOU
One More Question

This was in my coat. Hang on. It's been in the pocket since the twenty-second — you can see where the rain got at the fold.

It's a page I printed off the Washington Examiner. The headline reads, and I'll read it the way it's printed: "Biden's weakness cost you $3,000 — Trump's strength is saving you $2,500." Underneath it says that two years ago POLARIS National Security documented the price Americans paid. Two numbers on one page, both of them described as yours. Which of those two is the bigger number?

I only kept it because of what came out this morning. Eight days later — the twenty-second to the thirtieth, I counted it on my fingers sitting in the car — two pages land on the same day.

The first one's The Hill. "Brookings confirms what basic economics predicted about Biden's open border." I want to be careful here, because I had this wrong once already and a fellow set me straight, so: that page doesn't say economists. Not anywhere on it. It says basic economics predicted, and it names Brookings, and Brookings is who it names. Then it lists what it says

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Supreme Court case billed as fight to reshape American society actually decides Big Oil's climate bill

BY SAL
Staff Writer

The Federalist wants you to know the fight at the Supreme Court next week isn't really about climate. It's about "whether we're going to allow this maneuver to be what reshapes American society." Big words for a maneuver. I've heard that trick before — when they call something civilizational, check your wallet, because there's usually an invoice hiding under the flag.

Five days before that ran, the Washington Examiner filed the case under a different banner. On September 25 it grouped Suncor's appeal with a gun case and a voter-registration case, three fights over guns, voting, and climate, repackaged as one question: will the justices read the Constitution as written, or bend it. Same trick, different font. Group three unrelated liability and rights questions under one word — originalism — and nobody has to say out loud what any one of them actually decides.

So what does this one decide? Strip the word "society" out and read what Grist put on the page: whether states can make Big Oil pay for the damage its product did. That's the whole case. New York already tried it. It passed its own climate superfund law, got sued, and lost twice in the courts below be-

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New York City marks more than two dozen e-bike and scooter deaths with a meeting to discuss it.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

More than two dozen people got on an e-bike or a scooter in New York City this year and were killed in the crash. That is the number in the paper this morning, stated the way papers state a body count: plainly, as a fact that has already happened, past tense, done. The same paper calls it a "growing safety crisis," which is one way to say it, and a way to say it after the fact.

Officials, the reporting says, are "moving to address" the crisis. Moving. Not moved. The distinction is not small; it is the entire distance between the two stories the paper ran on the same morning. One is the toll. The other is what the toll produced, and what it produced, after more than two dozen deaths, is a discussion.

On Wednesday, lawmakers are expected to sit down and talk about a raft of proposals to regulate electric bikes and scooters. Not a vote. Not a rule signed into effect. A discussion, scheduled for after the fact, the same way the safety crisis was named for after the fact. The order of operations is the story: the crashes come first, then the count, then the crisis gets its name, then the meeting gets its date. Nowhere in that order does a rule arrive before a death.

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Government launches chatbot that fact-checks the president, censors it hours later.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

The administration's new government chatbot, America.gov, went live this morning with one job: answer citizens' questions about their own government, in the government's own voice. Ask it about the president's claims and, for a few hours, it corrected them — Popular Information caught the bot contradicting the president's own statements within hours of launch. This was, I want to be clear, a triumph of transparency, a machine built by the government and paid for by the government, telling the truth about the — wait. That's not right.

That the correcting had material to work with says something about the caseload it walked into. In August, Public Citizen tallied the president's cryptocurrency ventures at $4.7 billion in investor losses, most of it traced to a meme coin he launched three days before his second term began. On September 24th, a report that the White House had pushed to add the president's name to Ford's Theatre, the building where Lincoln was shot, got called "a ridiculous lie" and "FAKE," in his own capital letters. The very next day, the Campaign Legal Center found the president's own description of his

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Schmitt sets a trap for Jack Smith, then can't remember which basketball teams played.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

Sen. Eric Schmitt was doing his job Tuesday, is the point, and the point holds up if you don't look at the transcript. The senator walked into the Judiciary Committee room with a real predicate: a week before, on September 23, the House Judiciary Committee released a 57-page interim staff report accusing Jack Smith's office of using an operation called "Arctic Frost" to seize phone records from 44 sitting lawmakers while skirting the Speech or Debate Clause, the same day Chairman Jim Jordan told Fox News the special counsel had tried to "sway" the 2024 election and the Daily Caller called the investigation "lawless." That is a real allegation, filed by a real committee, and a senator who wants to ask a real witness about it is doing exactly what a Judiciary Committee member is supposed to do. Two days later, on September 25, The Hill confirmed Smith would testify the following Tuesday — Schmitt had time to build a real question. What he showed up with, on the record, in front of live cameras, was a question about whether the special counsel had attended a February 2024 NBA game between the Hawks and the Golden State Warriors in Atlanta. That was not — that's not actually the Arctic Frost question at all,

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Trump calls Paxton the best AG in Texas history at the convention Paxton privately says tanked his numbers.

BY LOU
One More Question

I have to admit I came in about my E-ZPass account. There's a charge on there from a toll plaza in Waco I've never been within two hundred miles of, and I've been transferred four times this week trying to find whoever's desk that particular ten dollars and forty cents sits on. Nobody at the toll authority will own it. Everybody agrees somebody else has it. I only mention it because it turns out not to be entirely unrelated to what I actually came to talk about.

While I was on hold — and it's a long hold, they play you a saxophone version of something I can't place — I had the paper open on my knee, and there was Ken Paxton. Attorney General, Senate nominee, the man the President stood up for at the party's convention in front of a primetime crowd. I wrote this down because I wanted it exact: "You may not like his looks, but he's the best AG in Texas history." That was September 10th. I have it right here — hold on, it's under the toll bill — yes. September 10th.

A week before that, September 3rd, the same President had already given what the wire service called a scathing review of Mr. Paxton's appearance, in

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Montana enforces Medicaid work rules on patients its own exemption was written to excuse.

BY THE WRECKING CREW
The Remedy Desk

Montana begins enforcing Medicaid work-requirement checks October 1st, three months before the federal deadline, and the rollout itself is already sowing confusion and anxiety, per NPR: enrollees unsure whether they owe hours, a volunteer log, or a class roster, before the paperwork even exists everywhere else.

Congress built a release valve for exactly this kind of confusion: an exemption for the medically frail, people too sick to be chasing work-hour math in the first place. It sits in the statute already. No new law needed. No vote required. A part that shipped with the machine.

Nine days before Montana flips the switch, on September 22nd, a lawsuit landed saying the part never got installed. Medicaid enrollees, several major health care advocacy organizations, and the city of Columbus, Ohio, told a court the administration's final rule narrows who counts as medically frail so tightly that it isn't what Congress wrote — the exemption sitting on paper while the enforcement runs anyway.

The next day, September 23rd, a new campaign launched to help millions

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EPA answers a war priced at $38 billion by reconsidering air quality rules, not the war.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

"Reconsider" is the word of the week, and it is a careful word, the kind an agency reaches for when it does not want to say "loosen." That is the agency's word. It is worth walking backward to see what led to a letter about air.

Start on September 4th, a Friday. Diesel closed that day at an all-time high, $5.85 a gallon, the highest that fuel has ever posted in this country, because the war in Iran had by then run long enough to reprice the freight network that moves almost everything else it touches. Three days later, on Labor Day, gasoline followed it to its own holiday record, $4.14 a gallon — and the same report noted that diesel's Friday high was still standing. One record, mentioned twice. Not two.

Careful. Room to grow. I was about to call that just accounting language, and it is not — it is the office telling you the bill isn't finished. Two weeks after that, an airfare analysis found this the most expensive holiday travel season in a decade, the fuel surcharge on this season's tickets tracing back to the same war the Budget Office had just priced.

Which brings us to Tuesday, and to reconsider. The war itself is not on the

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OpenAI asked Washington to mandate AI safety, then signed Trump's voluntary pledge instead.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

The industry signed it. That's the story, and it should be enough. Tuesday, in a room with the country's biggest artificial intelligence companies, the President got Sundar Pichai, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Jensen Huang, Dario Amodei, and OpenAI's Greg Brockman to put their names on a document called a Joint Commitment on Frontier Responsibilities. It states that every company is responsible for developing its own technology safely. That's not a loophole. That's the plan working exactly as designed — industry polices industry, because industry knows the technology, and Washington doesn't move at the speed of—

Actually, Washington moves at whatever speed it funds. That's not the same as industry knowing best. Sit with that a second.

Here's the pitch anyway: a morally binding pledge, signed at a table with over a dozen tech leaders including Amazon's Jeff Bezos and representatives from Microsoft and Palantir, is faster than a bill. It skips committee. It skips the fight a real safety statute would take to draft, mark up, and pass. Self-regulation is efficient, and efficient is safe, because—

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87-year-old's eviction after seventy years broke no law; undoing it took tens of thousands in the streets

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

Not a rule failed here. Failed, mind you — not bent, not skirted, failed, and none did. A real-estate holding company, a "vulture" fund in the reporting, held the title to a Madrid flat. An 87-year-old woman, María del Carmen Abascal, held the use of it, and had held the use for seventy years. Use is not title, and seventy years does not ripen the one into the other. So the police came to the door on the twenty-third of September, hundreds stood outside it, the activists barricaded at the entrance were beaten aside, and a government that had criticized the eviction order watched the order carried out regardless. By the twenty-fifth the criticism was on the record and the flat was empty. Every clause performed.

Then the streets filled. Tens of thousands, countrywide — tens of thousands — and the government presented measures to address the housing crisis. Measures. Presented.

And the fund? She is going home. You are thinking the owner lost something ... the owner holds the title it held on the twenty-third, and what she has is sufferance: she is back because the holder of the title suffers her to be.

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Pentagon declares ISIS defeated as an organized military threat in Iraq for the second time in twelve years.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Operation Inherent Resolve died Wednesday, declared complete by the Pentagon after twelve years, the second time in that stretch American commanders have said this exact war was finished. Born in 2014, when a caliphate took Mosul and the United States sent soldiers back into a country it had left three years before.

In December 2015 Washington answered ISIS's advance with more Special Operations troops, and Iraq answered back: members of the ruling alliance said only Parliament could authorize the deployment, and political associates of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi called the expansion unacceptable before a single new boot touched ground. Iraq's militias decried it too, on their own terms. The promise attached to the 2011 withdrawal — no more American boots on Iraqi soil — did not survive four years.

The war did what wars do next. In October 2017 the Iraqi Army and allied fighters stormed Hawija, one of the last cities ISIL held, and by the following April the coalition was ready to say so: major combat operations over, the mission narrowing to training Iraqi forces to stand on their own. That was

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Only the senator whose own constituent was killed votes against investigating the killing

BY SAL
Staff Writer

The record starts August 27, when Senate Democrats — Van Hollen, Kaine, Sanders — filed a privileged resolution demanding the State Department detail its investigations into the killings of U.S. citizens in the West Bank. A week after that, September 23, the Washington Examiner quoted House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries opening a door — Democrats should weigh a sanctions bill on West Bank violence if they win the House back this November. The next day, September 24, Common Dreams reported nineteen Senate Democrats had already written that bill, targeting settlement construction at E1.

Tuesday the resolution Van Hollen filed in August finally reached the floor. The Senate killed it, 51 to 47. Every Democrat but one voted to advance it; Rand Paul crossed over to join them, and the measure still fell four votes short. The one Democrat who voted no was John Fetterman. The Intercept reported that vote left him alone among Democrats blocking an investigation into his own constituent's killing. Van Hollen's own count, given after the vote, put the number of Americans the report would have covered at nine.

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Barred from renaming the Kennedy Center, Trump threatens demolition; its own overseers call that nearly impossible.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is not dead. It is, as of this week, only being measured for the box — by the man who picked the board that runs it.

On September 15, U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper ruled, not for the first time, that the center's board could not lawfully put the president's name on the building. Within hours the same day, the president had a different word for the place: destined to doom. In lieu of a name, malarkey; in lieu of malarkey, apparently, something heavier.

Two days later a photographer caught him on Air Force One, home from a rally in North Carolina, studying a large printout of the words Kennedy Center DEMOLISHED, the way a man studies a menu he has already ordered from.

By the 18th the fantasy had paperwork behind it. The board he had personally appointed voted that Tuesday to close the main building. He told reporters the renovations will not happen. The Hill reported the same day that his administration was floating what it called the nuclear option. JFK's own

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Peltola camp blames slurs on grief, gets answered with a slur of its own.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

The Alaska Senate campaign of Mary Peltola met a New York Times report on September 24 the way experienced campaigns meet unflattering stories: with an explanation. Former aides told the Times about outbursts, a shove, and slurs — the New York Post specified which ones, "retard" and a word for gay men. The campaign didn't deny the language. It supplied a reason: Peltola lost her mother and her husband in 2023, and the campaign called what followed "shouldering the enormous burden of grief." That's a defensible frame — grief changes people, everyone knows that — except the frame answers for two deaths and has to stretch to cover a pattern of language collected from multiple former staffers who weren't in the room for either funeral. It doesn't stretch that far. It doesn't stretch at all.

The Hill covered the same Times report that day with its own words, chaos and profane outbursts, and noted the aides had requested anonymity. No reason given, none needed — sourcing on condition of anonymity is ordinary practice, and treating it as suspicious would be the wrong read here. The right read is simpler: three outlets covered the same report the same day,

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Facing firing calls and impeachment papers, Hegseth strips tenure from professors, cuts a fifth of the military's generals.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Tenure for civilian professors at the military's academies died this week. It was born on the idea that a professor grading a cadet's paper should answer to scholarship, not to rank, and it went the way of the Army secretary whose job was supposed to keep men like that insulated in the first place.

The next day, Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, a former member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who voted to confirm Hegseth, called on Trump to fire him over what Tillis termed "inept management" — the second time this month a senator who once vouched for the man asked the president to un-vouch for him too.

By September 5th, the reporting caught up to August: the Pentagon had quietly polygraphed some fifty members of the Joint Staff, hunting for whoever leaked word that the weapons stockpile feeding the Iran war was running thin. Ten days later, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky filed articles of impeachment against Hegseth on the House floor, citing a war he said was launched without Congress's say. A defense secretary can now claim the rare distinction of drawing formal removal papers from one chamber and a firing

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Democrats finally fund a five-point Texas lead; a friendly outlet brands him a liar the next day.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Three days ago this page carried the story of a president who skipped the floor for a flyover before a vote on a bill written to cover college sports broadly, athlete pay and transfer rules together, not football alone. That's the story so far. This is what happened next.

Two days later, on September 27, the arithmetic caught up with the ambition. Texas Public Opinion Research put Talarico at 49 percent, Ken Paxton at 44, a five-point lead a little more than a month out, margin of error 3.6 points. The Hill printed the same number the same day.

Then came this week. On Tuesday morning, Senate Majority PAC turned on the money in Texas — a digital ad keyed to that plea deal, the first dollar the committee had spent in the race, by the Washington Examiner's own count. By Wednesday morning, The Federalist had an exclusive: footage it said caught Talarico in a lie, footage the piece said rips off the mask of a "phony" moderate.

One day. That's the whole gap between the spigot opening and the exclusive landing — not a coincidence with room to argue, an invoice with a due

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A landmark forever-chemical settlement leaves the shell game standing; Meta's own accountants call its AI tax play risky.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Start with the settlement. This week's landmark PFAS settlement, as The Lever lays out, closes the ledger on decades of forever-chemical pollution without touching the corporate architecture that let the waste keep moving in the first place. It pays for the chemical. It does not touch the paperwork that kept it moving from company to company.

Open the filing next to it, filed the same week. Meta's own accountants, per the Times, call the position risky. Run the settlement against the filing and it's the same maneuver wearing two different departments: one side restructures its liability so the chemical isn't on its books, the other restructures its expenses so the deduction is. Here is the reconciliation, hon: neither filing has to say where the thing actually went.

Follow the credit to where it lands. The data centers it's subsidizing are, per a September 18 item on the Hill, a newly identified source of the same forever chemicals the settlement was supposed to be about — through their cooling systems and through the semiconductors inside them. Four days earlier, on September 14, a Swedish nonprofit released research tying the AI

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Justice Department unveils new pandemic-fraud charges the week a congressman's agency lost track of $1.23 billion.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On September 14th, in a hotel ballroom in Kansas City, Vice President Vance and Attorney General Blanche stood with the Small Business Administration's chief and the FBI to announce new charges tied to loans issued under the pandemic's Emergency Rental Assistance program. A podium, a seal, a number. That is what accountability looks like on camera.

Two weeks later a different file crossed this desk. The audit's own word for it is "gross oversight." In the ledger, that is the line with no signature attached: not money proven stolen, money nobody checked.

Run that figure against the one filed out of Connecticut the same week. Robert Cappelletti, who ran the Meriden Housing Authority, was charged with $16.2 million in loan fraud. That number has a docket attached to it, and a name, and, eventually, a hearing date. Divide $1.23 billion by $16.2 million and the unmonitored pile in Florida runs seventy-six times the size of the one somebody is now going to answer for in a Connecticut courtroom.

That is the reconciliation. The government has built a system that can charge a housing director $16.2 million at a time, one docket at a time, one

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"Notice every "temporary" on the page. Temporary tariffs, temporary fees, temporary emergencies. I've been temporary since 2017. So has the tab."

— *Sal*

"If the numbers on this page bother you, I'd gently suggest that numbers are one perspective."

— *Chip*

THE RESCISSION LEDGER

Housing aid hit by the pocket rescission that cut refugee grants; Congress's power to reverse it also unspent

By THE WRECKING CREW

THE REMEDY DESK



"Trump's shift from 'Housing First' causing upheaval for homelessness programs", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The administration is pulling money Congress voted for homelessness programs, with the tool it used on refugee grants.

WHO GETS PAID. The administration gains the power to decide which programs Congress funded actually receive the money.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress's control of spending slips: money it votes now moves only if the president agrees to release it.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the health money is still unspent Wednesday, when the fiscal year ends, it is at risk of expiring and the programs Congress funded go without it. That is the date already on this calendar.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The chief puts the September 26 drawer on the table first, because it is the schematic. Nearly $1 billion in appropriated money canceled by pocket rescission — the second such rescission in fifty years, both of them issued this term. Of that, $810 million came off immigration and refugee programs, foreign debt-relief programs, and grants given to businesses.

Our planner admires the build, professionally. You do not have to beat the appropriation on the floor. You hold the money at the end of the fiscal year and let the calendar spend it for you. Two uses in fifty years, both inside one term: that is a tool being tested, not a tool being retired....

...(cont) Today it is pointed at housing. ABC reports the administration shifting federal policy and dollars away from Housing First, the approach that has sat at the heart of federal homelessness policy, with upheaval running through the programs that carry it.

The same week produced the cliff. Billions Congress appropriated for health programs sit unspent, at risk of expiring Wednesday when the fiscal year ends. Democratic lawmakers and some Republicans say withholding them is illegal. The Hill calls it a significant test of Congress's willingness to stand up.

Count the sets that learned this month that an appropriation is a ceiling an administration may decline to reach: the immigration, refugee, debt-relief and business grants inside the rescission; the health billions; the homelessness dollars; and, from the September 12 drawer, the food assistance millions were dropped from, with the One Big Beautiful Bill's changes waiting on Congress to pass a resolution delaying them. Four.

Muscle swings at the premise, not the paperwork.

Then the tinkerer lays out parts, all of them already in the room. The appropriation, which is law. The Impoundment Control Act, the statute whose name is on this fight. And the part that is new this week: the votes. The Hill has Republicans in both chambers breaking ranks with the president across a host of sensitive issues, hoping separation helps avert a blue wave, which the paper calls highly unusual for a party that walked in lock-step. The bloc and the deadline arrived in the same seven days.

The pilot's problem is the shortest one on the board: Wednesday.

That is the assembly, every part cited, none of it ours. We do not claim it starts. We claim it is sitting in the toolbox, in plain sight, while the people waiting on a housing grant find out what upheaval means.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

CONGRESS VOTED THE MONEY FOR HEALTH PROGRAMS, AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT spent it; on Wednesday the fiscal year ends. That isn't budgeting, it's a repossession on a timer — the vote happens, the check gets held, and the clock does the cutting so no one has to sign anything. The money sits unspent because the administration decided it sits, and because it sits through Wednesday the homelessness dollars get shifted while the housing programs go into upheaval now, and the same move on the same calendar is pointed next at the food-assistance card in your kitchen drawer.

"They keep telling you there's no money for housing, and meanwhile there's a billion dollars Congress already voted that just got canceled on a Friday night, plus billions more for health programs that expire Wednesday because somebody decided not to cut the checks. That's the con — the vote isn't the decision anymore, the calendar is, and the calendar works for whoever's holding the money. And the guy who was next on the list for an apartment doesn't get told any of this; he just gets told the program changed."

— Sal

"Look, a pocket rescission is an established executive tool — second one in fifty years, that's hardly a spree. Did I say spree? That doesn't sound like me. And nothing's being cut here, the fiscal year simply ends on Wednesday, that's a calendar, take it up with the calendar; as for the Republicans saying it's illegal, well, they're breaking ranks on a lot of things right now, which, you know, proves the party's healthy."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

But: **Republicans' reconciliation package puts $70 billion into ICE's department** *NBC News, May 2026*

Trump's shift from 'Housing First' causing upheaval for homelessness programs

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *07:25 EDT*

The Trump administration is shifting federal policy and dollars away from the "Housing First" approach that has been at the heart of federal homelessness policy

~~Unspent healthcare funding faces do-or-die cliff~~

Trump's team is letting billions in health funding expire; lawmakers call it illegal

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

The Trump administration has refused to spend billions of dollars that Congress appropriated for health programs, putting them at risk of expiring on Wednesday when the fiscal year ends. Such a move, which Democratic and even some Republican lawmakers say is illegal, poses a significant test of Congress's willingness to stand up to the...

But: **Democrats are running an average of 11.5 points ahead of their 2024 baseline across 2026 special elections** *MultiState Elections, 2026 special-election tracking*

GOP breaks with Trump on multiple issues

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

Republicans in both chambers are increasingly breaking ranks with President Trump across a host of sensitive issues, hoping some separation from the GOP's unpopular standard bearer will help avert a blue wave in the midterm elections. The divisions are highly unusual for a party that's walked virtually in lock-step with Trump for more...

· Trump takes aim at DEI and noncitizen programs in $1 billion pocket rescission *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Millions dropped from SNAP food assistance as funding faces September uncertainty *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· Millions dropped from SNAP food assistance as funding faces September uncertainty *from the morgue, 12 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

THE HIDDEN INVOICE

Congress scheduled the $45 billion Iran war bill for after voters decide who controls Congress

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined", 16 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA TRUTHOUT — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Congress scheduled the question of how to pay for the Iran war for after voters choose the next Congress.

WHO GETS PAID. The members who will cast the funding vote get to face voters before that vote is on their record.

WHAT SLIPS. Voters pick the Congress that will pay for the war without being shown the bill.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the vote keeps waiting, the war keeps running without one; that is what followed the House's failed Libya authorization vote on June 24, 2011, when the operation ran four more months and more than 26,000 sorties.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Let me run the two calendars side by side, because they do not reconcile.

The first is the war's. It opens in February, when the administration began the war with Iran without a vote of Congress. Both chambers then passed a war powers resolution, and that is where the entry stops. On September 2 the executive director of NIAC Action, Jamal Abdi, told Congress its remaining option was to go to court and enforce the resolution it had already passed, and used the words constitutional crisis. A resolution that needs a lawsuit to become an instruction has a gap in it. The gap is the size of a war....

...(cont) On August 28 the war the president had called quick was six months old with no end in sight. On September 9 he said it would not end before the midterms. The next day the Defense Secretary described the devastation done to Iran's capabilities. I am not going to argue with either statement. I will note only that they were filed a day apart, and that a capability can be devastated while the war continues, apparently into November.

Then the invoices. On September 15 the Congressional Budget Office closed its books at nearly $40 billion and called that figure conservative. Conservative means careful. It also means the number has room. The figure now attached to the war is $45 billion, and fifteen days separate those two filings.

Here is the reconciliation, hon. That invoice took no floor time and no hearing. It arrived at the pump, monthly, for eight months, while the $45 billion figure waited on a schedule.

And the schedule is the story. On November 3 voters decide who controls Congress. How the war gets paid for is calendared for after that. So the members who will cast the funding vote meet the voters first and the invoice second. Of those two dates, one is printed on the ballot.

One war powers resolution that now needs a lawyer to mean anything. And one disclosure date, set by the body that will do the paying, for after the households that paid the larger of the two figures have finished voting.

I am not saying the two calendars were drawn to sit in that order. I am saying I have reconciled a great many sets of books, and when a number arrives after the meeting instead of before it, the delay is doing work for somebody. In this case the somebody is on the ballot, and the number is not.

"They told us this thing would be quick, then said out loud it won't end before the midterms, then priced it at forty-five billion and put the payment question on the calendar for after we vote. Meanwhile my share already cleared — a hundred twenty-one billion in energy money, seventeen sixty a household, and nobody needed a roll call to collect it. They're not keeping that bill from Congress; they're keeping it from us, and then they'll ask us who we trust with the checkbook."

— Sal

"Look, the appropriations calendar is the appropriations calendar, and it's frankly insulting to suggest anyone schedules a war around an election. Did I say schedule? That doesn't sound like me. The Budget Office already gave a number, it was described as conservative, which means careful, and pump prices are a global market — you're the one who brought up November."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *EPA answers a war priced at $38 billion by reconsidering air quality rules, not the war.* By Chip · the sunrise edition, 30 September 2026
- *Trump admin calls Iran's oil losses a win for the world, cites them to gut Texas air rules.* By Chip · the midnight edition, 30 September 2026
- *Georgia governor cuts gas tax for 30 days over pipeline outage that lasted under three weeks* By Ruth · the breakfast edition, 29 September 2026
- *Grassley's embargo would raise the diesel price Georgia's governor just cut the tax to lower.* By Sal · the milkman edition, 29 September 2026
- *New York Post Calls Iran War a Success the Day It Wounds Eight Marines Under Its Banned Name* By Chip · the milkman edition, 29 September 2026
- *Grassley asks party for a diesel embargo, gets a split caucus, frets a Democrat might pick his successor.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined
Truthout · *17:27 EDT*

This amounts to more than 80 trades per market day for the president in his first 17 months back in office.

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one *Military Times, 19 December 2025*

Congress is hiding Trump's $45 billion Iran war bill until after you vote
Washington Examiner RIGHT · *07:00 EDT*

On Nov. 3, voters will decide who controls Congress while the war with Iran is still underway. What they will not decide is how that war gets paid for.

~~UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran, That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime~~

UN: US knowingly bombed civilian sites in Iran, killing 123 children
Truthout · *15:50 EDT*

The US targeted "clearly identifiable" civilian sites in Minab and Lamerd, killing over 100 children, the UN found.

· US Energy Consumers Have Spent $121 Billion Extra Since Trump Launched Iran War: Moody's *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· 'We Are in a Constitutional Crisis': Congress Urged to Sue Trump to End Iran War *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· U.N. experts say U.S. may have committed war crimes with 2 Iran strikes *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Trump Says 'Big Decision' Coming on Whether to 'Annihilate' Iran *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Pentagon No. 3 frustrates senators in closed-door briefing on Iran war, Trump defense strategy *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Senate Democrats, minus Fetterman, urge Hegseth to provide receipt for Iran war costs *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth on "devastation" to Iran's capabilities *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Trump admits Iran war will not end before midterms *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Iran War Trump Said Would Be Quick Has Now Lasted 6 Months With 'No End In Sight' *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· CBO Finds Trump's Iran War Has Already Cost Nearly $40 Billion—And That's a 'Conservative' Estimate *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis supports Hegseth impeachment resolution: 'He needs to go' *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie Files Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth for Illegal Iran War, Boat Murders *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Massie launches effort to impeach Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis urges Trump to fire Hegseth over 'inept management' of military *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Tillis renews calls for Hegseth's firing after Driscoll's departure: 'I have never witnessed more inept management' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says farmers are "all just in survival mode" *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says "I can't stay in business" amid rising costs *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie says he's convinced enough Republicans to pass Epstein Files II discharge petition *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie names Epstein 'coconspirators,' discusses new Epstein files legislation *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Read Thomas Massie's eight impeachment charges against Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Fake Republican midterm convention site still redirects to Epstein files *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision' coming up on Iran: 'Do I want to go in and annihilate them' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Fox News Poll: 71% think Trump administration lacks plan to end Iran war *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran recently downed at least 2 American drones, officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Big Oil Stocks Surged Due to Iran War—and New Filings Show How President Trump Cashed In *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

· Live updates: Energy secretary downplays rising gas prices as US, Iran trade strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· U.S. Strike on Iranian School May Have Been War Crime, U.N. Report Says *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN investigators conclude 'reasonable grounds' to believe certain US strikes in Iran were war crimes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN Suspects US War Crimes in Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Condemned for 'War Crimes' After Bombing of Wedding Party in Iran *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· US investigating if missile hit Iranian wedding ceremony, killing 4 *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision coming up' on Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· White House issues explosive response to UN-backed report claiming US committed war crimes against world's No.1 sponsor of terror, Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Human rights experts: 'Reasonable grounds' to believe US committed war crimes with Iran strikes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran downed at least 2 American drones in recent days, U.S. officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran: Account of US Air Force colonel's rescue 'fictional' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Burden of Trump Iran War Exceeds $100 Billion as Oil Prices Pass $100 a Barrel *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'A Serious and Alarming Threat': US Bombing, Blockade Deepen Iran Medical Crisis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Confidence Hits Lowest Level in Months as US Faces 'Trump's Reckless Tariffs and War With Iran' *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· U.S. Air Force officer rescued from Iran speaks for the first time to 60 Minutes *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Rep. Thomas Massie forcing vote on Pete Hegseth's impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Did Johnson Just Adjourn Congress for 7 Weeks to Avoid Massie's Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth? *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· The Hitchhiker's Guide to Massie saying Johnson is sending the House home early to prevent Hegseth impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'You're Elected to Fight and Kill the Other Side': How Congress Lost Its Way *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Army combat veteran challenging Mike Lawler calls Hegseth national security 'hazard,' backs impeachment *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary says he 'couldn't serve' in Trump administration *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary: Hegseth's Pentagon 'dysfunctional' *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· House Republicans split over leaving Washington early for campaign trail *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Fossil Fuel Advertising Contracts Hit Record High as Big Oil Pockets Billions From Iran War *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'How are we gonna get through this?' Many Americans are struggling as prices rise *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Trump's Top Oil Stocks Have Made Him Up to $4.4 Million Richer During Iran War: Analysis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Gas prices reach Labor Day high amid Iran war *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Warsh under pressure as Fed weighs rate hike *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Inflation held at 3.4% in August in consumer price index, creating tough choice for Warsh Fed *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Warsh indicates Fed could raise rates to cool inflation *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· Key U.S. Bond Rate Near 20-Year High as Oil Prices Keep Climbing *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-year Treasury yield hits highest level since 2007, oil surges above $105 as Fed expected to hike interest rates *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits 14-month high as bond yields keep rising *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits highest mark in over a year *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Goldman Sachs warns oil prices could hit $120 as U.S. fuel costs surge *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Massie Moves to Force Impeachment Vote Against Hegseth, Citing Civilian Deaths *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· GOP Rep Thomas Massie introduces 8 articles of impeachment against War Secretary Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Republican Rep. Massie moves to impeach Defense Secretary Hegseth over Iran war *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Thomas Massie Forces Vote To Impeach Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pete Hegseth Faces Growing Criticism as War With Iran Rolls On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth Quietly Extends Middle East Troop Deployments Into 2027 as Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Costco imposes purchase limits on motor oil, hikes prices by nearly double *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· As gas averages $4.31 nationwide, diesel fuel hits all-time high: "It's painful. It's real hard" *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Costco Raises Motor Oil Price, Caps Customer Purchases As Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· 'Can't Message That Away': GOP Frets as Trump Administration Desperately Spins Record-High Diesel Prices *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· European Union member states agree to a natural gas price cap in an attempt to limit economic damage from the global energy crisis. The price cap can be triggered beginning on February 15, if for thre *from the morgue, 19 Dec 2022*

· Spike on 10-year bond yields renews concerns over U.S. debt *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-Year Treasury Yield Reaches 5%, Highest Level in Years *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Treasury reveals $6B in debt buybacks, triple the normal level – but markets slump *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rise in diesel prices on Ukrainian strikes against Russian oil refineries *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rising diesel price on Russia-Ukraine war *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· What Is Driving Diesel Prices Up? Energy Chaos Caused by Two Wars. *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Billionaires' ad blitz enters sixth week; their tax polls 52, then 45, then 48 percent

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"California voters back a billionaire tax, but the proposal falls short of majority support", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA NBC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Groups backed by billionaires are running ads against California's Proposition 40, a one-time 5 percent tax on billionaires' wealth.

WHO GETS PAID. The roughly 200 Californians who would pay the tax, including backers named in the receipts, Sergey Brin and Peter Thiel.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the polling band holds, the November ballot decides the state's healthcare money by a few points, and the ad money only has to keep support under half.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Proposition 40 is arithmetic. Five percent, one time, on the net worth of Californians holding a billion dollars or more — about 200 people. The proceeds go to the state's healthcare system.

By August 25 an advertising blitz against it was under way, run by organizations backed by mega-billionaires. The item names Google co-founder Sergey Brin and the venture capitalist Peter Thiel among the backers, and names the two most prominent committees fighting the measure: Building a Better California, and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes. What those committees have spent is not in anything on my desk. What came back is....

...(cont) September 16: the New York Post reports 52 percent of likely voters in support, with pitfalls ahead. September 21: a group of Nobel-winning economists calls the vote a possible "turning point in the battle between democracy and oligarchy," the measure still at 52. September 22: the Berkeley Citrin Center-POLITICO poll puts support at 45 percent of registered voters, and The Hill writes that support is falling. September 30: NBCUniversal Local and Telemundo have yes ahead of no, 48 to 38, with fourteen points the item does not account for.

So: 52, then 45, then 48. Three readings in fourteen days, seven points from the top of the range to the bottom. I can't tell you which is the true one. That is the honest version, and I'd rather give you that than a trend line.

What I can reconcile is what the three do together. Not one of them has the measure collapsing. Not one of them has it safe. Every reading since the ads began sits in the same ten-point neighborhood, straddling the only number that matters, which is fifty.

That is worth sitting with, because the opposition's arithmetic is not the same as the measure's. A committee fighting a ballot initiative does not need to persuade a majority of anything. It needs to keep one from forming. Forty-five does that job. Forty-eight does that job. A stalled needle is not a failed campaign; on that side of the ledger it is the deliverable.

And the bill it is holding off: five percent, once, of one billion dollars is fifty million. That's the check at the very bottom of the bracket, for people whose defining characteristic is that they have at least a billion.

So the ledger reads, hon, like this. There is no money for the state's healthcare system.

"Five percent, once, on a billion — that's fifty million bucks from a guy who has a thousand million, and they're carpet-bombing the airwaves to stop it. They don't have to beat it, they just have to keep it under fifty, and look at that, three polls in two weeks and the thing won't move. Meanwhile the money it was going to pay for is my kid's clinic, and nobody's running ads for that."

— Sal

"Look, forty-five percent — forty-eight, whatever the number is today — the voters are clearly skeptical of a wealth tax, and that's organic, that's not ads. Did I say it's not ads? I didn't say that. These are grassroots coalitions, they happen to be funded by people in the bracket, which is a coincidence in the sense that it isn't one."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

> ~~California voters back a billionaire tax, but the proposal falls short of majority support~~
>
> California's billionaire tax leads 48% to 38% - a 10-point margin
>
> NBC News MAINSTREAM § 06:00 EDT
>
> A new NBCUniversal Local/Telemundo Station Group shows "yes" supporters leading 48% to 38% on the California ballot measure.

· Fewer than half of California voters back billionaire tax: Poll *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· California billionaire tax draws majority support in new poll — but there's a big catch *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Billionaire-Backed Groups Launch Ad Blitz Against California Wealth Tax *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· Nobel-Winning Economists Say California Billionaire Tax Could Be 'Turning Point in the Battle Between Democracy and Oligarchy' *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

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Google covering full cost of Arkansas power plant; customers billed for part of the full cost

By STERLING
THE OWNERSHIP DESK



"Entergy says Google covering full costs for data center power project, as consumers pay for 'part of it'", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Entergy is billing Arkansas customers for part of a power plant that Google said it would fully fund.

WHO GETS PAID. Google, which gets a solar and battery plant built for its West Memphis data center without carrying the whole construction bill.

WHAT SLIPS. The House bill only asks states to consider shifting these costs to tech companies, so no regulator is required to protect customers.

WHAT'S NEXT. If states are merely asked and not required, legislatures can move the other way instead. That is what West Virginia did on 30 April 2025, when the governor signed a law barring counties and towns from rules that hinder data center districts.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

"Full costs" is the phrase, and it is worth turning over before it gets away from you. Entergy says Google is covering the full costs of building a new solar and battery facility to power one data center at West Memphis. Full. And the regular consumers of Arkansas are footing the bill for part of that plant's construction as well. Both sentences stand. Nothing broke — no meter misread, no clerk asleep — the rates were designed this way, filed this way, and they are performing.

You are waiting for the part where somebody made a mistake. Keep waiting....

...(cont) And how much is "part of it"? The utility says part of it. Part.

Someone will say Congress has handled this. In September the House passed the Ratepayer Protection Act, bipartisan, aimed at putting data center electricity costs on the technology companies. Then read it: the states must consider standards. Consider ... precatory language, which asks and does not bind, and which requires no state to regulate anyone.

Google is covered. Arkansas households pay for part of a power plant built for a data center, and their state has been invited to think about it.

> The village hauled the stone. Inside the new wall, the squire grazes his horses.
>
> — ENOCH
> *The Ownership Desk*

🍺

"A company tells you it's paying the full freight for its own power plant, and then your utility turns around and puts part of the construction on your bill anyway — that's not a billing error, that's the deal as written. Google gets solar and batteries for a data center in West Memphis; the guy in West Memphis gets a line item. And the big fix out of Washington? A bill that asks states to maybe think about it."

— Sal

🚬

"Google committed to covering the costs, full stop — customers paying for part of it doesn't change that Google is paying for it, which, obviously, it is. Did I say that? That doesn't sound like me. And the House just passed a bipartisan ratepayer bill, so this is being addressed, and I'd rather not get into which parts of it states actually have to do."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Entergy says Google covering full costs for data center power project, as consumers pay for 'part of it'

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *07:00 EDT*

Google has committed to covering the costs to build a new solar and battery facility that will generate energy for one of its new data centers in Arkansas, though regular consumers are also footing the bill for part of the power plant's construction. The new data center in West Memphis, Arkansas, is set to be [...]

· House approves bill aimed at putting data center electricity costs on tech companies *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

President rejects Iran's seven-day ceasefire plan, counteroffers on it, expects the bombing after the midterms

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined", 16 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA TRUTHOUT — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Washington rejected Iran's seven-day ceasefire and Strait reopening plan, then sent Tehran a counterproposal on that same plan.

WHO GETS PAID. The president and his party get the midterm election held before any decision to resume bombing is made public.

WHAT SLIPS. Voters cast ballots in November before learning whether the strikes they would be voting on are coming back.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the strikes resume after November, expect no congressional vote and the operation to continue anyway. That is what Washington got after 24 June 2011: the House refused to authorize the Libya operation 123 to 295, and the bombing ran four more months.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I've got a piece of paper here. Give me a second — it's in the coat, and the coat's got the one pocket that still works. Here. Renewal notice, the plates on the car. Two dates printed on it. The day they mailed it and the day the money's due. Fine piece of paper. What it hasn't got anywhere on it is the day somebody sat down and picked the number. You'd think that would be on there.

I had it folded in this pocket all week, so forgive me if I keep it in the same hand as the notes. The notes start on the first of September. Iran's president, Masoud Pezeshkian, on the sidelines of a summit in Kyrgyzstan, says that if the United States returns to its commitments under the Memorandum of Understanding — the June ceasefire — Iran will immediately reciprocate. Immediately, that's the paper's word. Same paper says this came after the United States again broke a ceasefire deal between the two countries. The Morning Star, first of September....

...(cont) Before that, the twenty-fifth of August — hold on, I've got it here — Democracy Now reports Washington threatening a new economic war on Iran by going at China and Tehran's other top trading partners. Then the twenty-third of September, Iran's president stands up at the United Nations and says the United States and Israel are the real terrorists. That's Common Dreams.

Then the twenty-sixth. The Hill, off the Wall Street Journal, off U.S. officials: the president privately rejected Iran's seven-day proposal — seven days, a ceasefire and a phased reopening of the Strait of Hormuz — and is considering renewed military strikes after the midterm elections in November. The reason given is that he's skeptical about Iran's ability to honor it.

Now I get stuck, and it's the renewal notice again, I'm sorry. The twenty-sixth is the day the report surfaced. A private rejection doesn't come with a postmark on it. So the date in my notes is the day I was told, not the day it was decided. I've gone through the piece three times looking for that line and I've come up with it zero times out of three. Maybe you'll do better.

And then this morning. CBS, the thirtieth: Iranian state media says the regime has received a full U.S. response to that same proposal — the ceasefire, the phased reopening. The headline says Iran is considering the U.S. counterproposal. That's the wire's verb on what state media reported; I don't have Tehran's own word in front of me.

Can I show you something out front? The car. There's a belt under the hood that's been squealing since the spring — fan belt, twelve dollars for the part. The fella at the garage on the corner told me to bring it by any Tuesday. Any Tuesday. And every week I look at the calendar and think, the plates are due, the dog's shots are due, I'll do it after. So I schedule the belt around my month. The belt has no idea about my month. It squealed all summer and it'll squeal through November, and it'll go one morning on a day I didn't pick, probably in the middle of the parkway.

So here's what I can't work out. The proposal on the table is seven days. The strikes in that report wait for the elections in November. The skepticism in the same report — which of those two numbers is it aimed at?

Ah — excuse me, before you go, I've got one arm in the sleeve here, one thing. Two wires, four days apart, and the same verb turns up in both. On the twenty-sixth, he's considering renewed military strikes after the midterms. On the thirtieth, Iran's considering the counterproposal. One of those two has a date attached to it in the receipts and the other one doesn't. Which one has the date?

"Tehran puts seven days and a phased reopening of the Strait on the table, he turns it down in private, and then Washington mails back a full response to the same plan it turned down — while the strikes get penciled in for after you vote. That's not diplomacy, that's a campaign calendar with a shipping lane bolted to it. The war runs on its own clock; the only clock anybody in this story is watching is November."
— Sal

"Look, skepticism isn't rejection — you hand a regime a seven-day clock, you'd like some confidence they can run it. Did I say we rejected it? That doesn't sound like me; we sent a full response, which is the opposite of rejecting, if you think about it for a second. And the November business is your calendar, not ours — you're the one who keeps bringing up the election."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Trump promises the war ends 'very soon' but leaves the details to Iran, whose letter runs 25 pages.* By Lou · the milkman edition, 30 September 2026
- *War that promised to shut the Strait of Hormuz shuts a new rial record every few weeks instead.* By Chip · the supper edition, 29 September 2026
- *The war that promised to shut the Strait of Hormuz has shut down nothing but the ceasefire talks.* By Chip · the early bird edition, 29 September 2026
- *Iran awaits response to a rejection Trump already announced twice.* By Chip · the noon edition, 29 September 2026
- *Trump rejects Iran's ceasefire plan, denies offering one, Iran still waits on his answer to it.* By Chip · the sunrise edition, 29 September 2026
- *Trump calls Iran sanctions report untrue, demands Axios pull it anyway* By Lou · the midnight edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined
Truthout · *17:27 EDT*
This amounts to more than 80 trades per market day for the president in his first 17 months back in office.

Iran says it is considering U.S. counterproposal to 7-day ceasefire plan
CBS News · MAINSTREAM · *08:06 EDT*
Iranian state media says the regime has received a full U.S. response to its proposal for a cease-fire and the phased reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

~~UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran, That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime~~
UN: US knowingly bombed civilian sites in Iran, killing 123 children
Truthout · *15:50 EDT*
The US targeted "clearly identifiable" civilian sites in Minab and Lamerd, killing over 100 children, the UN found.

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one *Military Times, 19 December 2025*
U.S. military lays groundwork for potential action around Cuba
CBS News · MAINSTREAM · *11:23 EDT*
Some units would "possibly [be] needed in 90-120 days," according to an internal Army message reviewed by CBS News.

· Trump rejects Iran's 7-day plan to end war, expects bombing to resume post-midterms: Report *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Iran's president says Iran would return to ceasefire deal if the US does *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Russia's Lavrov blasts US, Western allies as "warmongers" in fiery UN tirade *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Russia and China unite against US over Iran and Cuba in UN speeches *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· The United Nations Security Council has resoundingly rejected a United States bid to extend a global arms embargo on Iran. In a Security Council vote, United States only got support from the Dominican *from the morgue, 14 Aug 2020*

· U.S. Threatens New Economic War on Iran by Targeting China & Tehran's Other Top Trading Partners *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· In Defiant UN Speech, Iranian President Says US and Israel Are the Real Terrorists *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Trump slams reporting on removal of his endorsements from GOP candidate's website *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

· Donalds removes several Trump mentions from campaign website *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· GOP hopeful removes 'Pro-Trump' mention from campaign slogan in deep-red seat *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Where Trump's 2026 endorsement record stands after primary season *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· U.N. experts say U.S. may have committed war crimes with 2 Iran strikes *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Trump Says 'Big Decision' Coming on Whether to 'Annihilate' Iran *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Pentagon No. 3 frustrates senators in closed-door briefing on Iran war, Trump defense strategy *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Senate Democrats, minus Fetterman, urge Hegseth to provide receipt for Iran war costs *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth on "devastation" to Iran's capabilities *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Trump admits Iran war will not end before midterms *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Iran War Trump Said Would Be Quick Has Now Lasted 6 Months With 'No End In Sight' *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· CBO Finds Trump's Iran War Has Already Cost Nearly $40 Billion—And That's a 'Conservative' Estimate *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis supports Hegseth impeachment resolution: 'He needs to go' *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie Files Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth for Illegal Iran War, Boat Murders *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Massie launches effort to impeach Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis urges Trump to fire Hegseth over 'inept management' of military *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Tillis renews calls for Hegseth's firing after Driscoll's departure: 'I have never witnessed more inept management' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says farmers are "all just in survival mode" *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says "I can't stay in business" amid rising costs *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie says he's convinced enough Republicans to pass Epstein Files II discharge petition *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie names Epstein 'coconspirators,' discusses new Epstein files legislation *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Read Thomas Massie's eight impeachment charges against Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Fake Republican midterm convention site still redirects to Epstein files *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision' coming up on Iran: 'Do I want to go in and annihilate them' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Fox News Poll: 71% think Trump administration lacks plan to end Iran war *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran recently downed at least 2 American drones, officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Big Oil Stocks Surged Due to Iran War—and New Filings Show How President Trump Cashed In *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

· Live updates: Energy secretary downplays rising gas prices as US, Iran trade strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· U.S. Strike on Iranian School May Have Been War Crime, U.N. Report Says *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN investigators conclude 'reasonable grounds' to believe certain US strikes in Iran were war crimes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN Suspects US War Crimes in Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Condemned for 'War Crimes' After Bombing of Wedding Party in Iran *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· US investigating if missile hit Iranian wedding ceremony, killing 4 *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision coming up' on Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· White House issues explosive response to UN-backed report claiming US committed war crimes against world's No.1 sponsor of terror, Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Human rights experts: 'Reasonable grounds' to believe US committed war crimes with Iran strikes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Energy Consumers Have Spent $121 Billion Extra Since Trump Launched Iran War: Moody's *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran downed at least 2 American drones in recent days, U.S. officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran: Account of US Air Force colonel's rescue 'fictional' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Burden of Trump Iran War Exceeds $100 Billion as Oil Prices Pass $100 a Barrel *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'A Serious and Alarming Threat': US Bombing, Blockade Deepen Iran Medical Crisis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Confidence Hits Lowest Level in Months as US Faces 'Trump's Reckless Tariffs and War With Iran' *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· U.S. Air Force officer rescued from Iran speaks for the first time to 60 Minutes *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Rep. Thomas Massie forcing vote on Pete Hegseth's impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Did Johnson Just Adjourn Congress for 7 Weeks to Avoid Massie's Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth? *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· The Hitchhiker's Guide to Massie saying Johnson is sending the House home early to prevent Hegseth impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'You're Elected to Fight and Kill the Other Side': How Congress Lost Its Way *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Army combat veteran challenging Mike Lawler calls Hegseth national security 'hazard,' backs impeachment *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary says he 'couldn't serve' in Trump administration *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary: Hegseth's Pentagon 'dysfunctional' *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· House Republicans split over leaving Washington early for campaign trail *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Fossil Fuel Advertising Contracts Hit Record High as Big Oil Pockets Billions From Iran War *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'How are we gonna get through this?' Many Americans are struggling as prices rise *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Trump's Top Oil Stocks Have Made Him Up to $4.4 Million Richer During Iran War: Analysis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Gas prices reach Labor Day high amid Iran war *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Warsh under pressure as Fed weighs rate hike *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Inflation held at 3.4% in August in consumer price index, creating tough choice for Warsh Fed *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Warsh indicates Fed could raise rates to cool inflation *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· Key U.S. Bond Rate Near 20-Year High as Oil Prices Keep Climbing *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-year Treasury yield hits highest level since 2007, oil surges above $105 as Fed expected to hike interest rates *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits 14-month high as bond yields keep rising *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits highest mark in over a year *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Goldman Sachs warns oil prices could hit $120 as U.S. fuel costs surge *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Massie Moves to Force Impeachment Vote Against Hegseth, Citing Civilian Deaths *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· GOP Rep Thomas Massie introduces 8 articles of impeachment against War Secretary Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Republican Rep. Massie moves to impeach Defense Secretary Hegseth over Iran war *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Thomas Massie Forces Vote To Impeach Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pete Hegseth Faces Growing Criticism as War With Iran Rolls On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth Quietly Extends Middle East Troop Deployments Into 2027 as Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Costco imposes purchase limits on motor oil, hikes prices by nearly double *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Rent rose because they came, then fell because they were deported; economics confirmed both this morning.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION



"DHS claims deportations are lowering rent. Economists agree", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Department of Homeland Security said its deportations are lowering rents in major cities.

WHO GETS PAID. The department itself, which takes public credit for falling rents while it expands the deportation program.

WHAT SLIPS. A federal agency is grading its own program with a rent number it announced, naming no city and no figure anyone can check.

WHAT'S NEXT. If a claim with no itemized numbers stands, the next claim gets bigger; that is what Washington got after 4 March 2025, when a savings claim rose to $105 billion while the posted receipts documented about $19.8 billion.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

This was in my coat. Hang on. It's been in the pocket since the twenty-second — you can see where the rain got at the fold.

It's a page I printed off the Washington Examiner. The headline reads, and I'll read it the way it's printed: "Biden's weakness cost you $3,000 — Trump's strength is saving you $2,500." Underneath it says that two years ago POLARIS National Security documented the price Americans paid. Two numbers on one page, both of them described as yours. Which of those two is the bigger number?...

...(cont) I only kept it because of what came out this morning. Eight days later — the twenty-second to the thirtieth, I counted it on my fingers sitting in the car — two pages land on the same day.

The first one's The Hill. "Brookings confirms what basic economics predicted about Biden's open border." I want to be careful here, because I had this wrong once already and a fellow set me straight, so: that page doesn't say economists. Not anywhere on it. It says basic economics predicted, and it names Brookings, and Brookings is who it names. Then it lists what it says the four years produced. Higher rents. Suppressed wages at the low end of the distribution. School systems absorbing students they hadn't budgeted for. Emergency rooms eating uncompensated care. Four items. I wrote all four down, because I'm slow.

The second page is the Washington Examiner again, same morning. "DHS claims deportations are lowering rent. Economists agree." That one does use the word — "some economists agree with the assessment," it says. And it says the Department declared rent reductions in major cities nationwide to be the result of fewer people living in the country.

So I put the two pages side by side on the hood of a car that needs a fan belt, which is all I did, and that's when I got stuck. The first page lists four things that went wrong. The second page reports one thing going right. Which of the four is it?

And the wages at the low end of the distribution — the ones the first page says were suppressed — which of these two pages tells you what those did afterward?

Here's the habit I have, and then I'll get out of your way. I keep every receipt from the garage in the glovebox. February's fan belt is in there with the part number on it and the hours written out, because when a man hands me a number I like to be able to put my hand on the paper it came off of. So this morning I went hunting on that second page for the cities. It says "major cities nationwide." That's the whole of it, that's the phrase. How many cities is that, on that page? And the sentence with the Department's own words in it — "DHS is reducing" — my printout stops right there, mid-thought, and I've been telling myself that's the printer.

One page says economics predicted rents going up when people arrived. The other page says economists agree rents came down when people left. Same rent, same morning, and on the first page the movement is a harm and on the second page it's an accomplishment. I'm not saying that's anything. I'm asking a smaller thing: on either page, is there a rent — a city, a building, a number before and a number after?

— Oh. Excuse me. I'm standing in your doorway, I apologize. One thing and then I'll go out in the rain.

This page from my pocket. Eight days old. Three thousand dollars going one direction, twenty-five hundred coming back the other, both of them printed as yours. If both numbers on their own page are correct, which way does that leave you — and by how much?

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

ON THE SAME MORNING, ONE PAPER RAN BROOKINGS CONFIRMING THAT ARRIVALS PUSHED rents up, and another ran the Department of Homeland Security claiming its deportations pushed rents down in major cities, with some economists agreeing. That isn't housing policy, it's a federal department putting its name on your rent and billing you for the weather. And because the department took the credit on the way down, it owes you nothing on the way back up — that number comes from your landlord, typed on the renewal notice with your name printed above the line, and there is no office on that page to call about it.

"One page this morning says people arriving drove your rent up, and the page beside it says people being hauled out drove your rent down, and both pages are selling you the same policy. Watch what quietly fell off the list: the first page counted suppressed wages, the schools, the emergency rooms — by the second page the only surviving item is rent, because rent is the one you can put in a press release. Your landlord still sets your rent; a federal department just put its name on the number."

— Sal

"Look, both things can be true, it's supply and demand, it's not complicated — did I say basic? That doesn't sound like me. The Department didn't list the cities because it's all of them, which is a stronger claim if you think about it, and if your rent goes back up in the spring that's a local housing matter, which I have always said."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

But: **First-time homebuyers are a record-low 21% of the market, buying at a record median age of 40** *National Association of Realtors, 2025 Profile*

DHS claims deportations are lowering rent. Economists agree

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *07:00 EDT*

Department of Homeland Security officials have claimed that surging deportations have caused rent prices to fall, and some economists agree with the assessment. The federal department handling President Donald Trump's mass deportation operation recently declared rent reductions in major cities nationwide to be the result of fewer people...

Brookings confirms what basic economics predicted about Biden's open border

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *07:30 EDT*

The Biden administration ran an unhedged book for four years. The results were higher rents, suppressed wages at the low end of the distribution, school systems absorbing students they hadn't budgeted for, emergency rooms eating uncompensated care.

· Biden's weakness cost you $3,000 — Trump's strength is saving you $2,500 *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Supreme Court case billed as fight to reshape American society actually decides Big Oil's climate bill

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Supreme Court hears a case on whether states can make oil companies pay for climate damage.

WHO GETS PAID. Oil and gas companies, who stop owing states for climate damage if the industry wins.

WHAT SLIPS. A state's power to make a polluter pay in its own courts slips to nine justices in Washington.

WHAT'S NEXT. The case goes to argument next week. If the court sides with the oil industry, New York's climate law and every state's version of it lose their power to make oil companies pay, the same result New York's own courts already reached twice below.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The Federalist wants you to know the fight at the Supreme Court next week isn't really about climate. It's about "whether we're going to allow this maneuver to be what reshapes American society." Big words for a maneuver. I've heard that trick before — when they call something civilizational, check your wallet, because there's usually an invoice hiding under the flag.

Five days before that ran, the Washington Examiner filed the case under a different banner. On September 25 it grouped Suncor's appeal with a gun case and a voter-registration case, three fights over guns, voting, and climate, repackaged as one question: will the justices read the Constitution as written, or bend it. Same trick, different font. Group three unrelated liability and rights questions under one word — originalism — and nobody has to say out loud what any one of them actually decides....

...(cont) So what does this one decide? Strip the word "society" out and read what Grist put on the page: whether states can make Big Oil pay for the damage its product did. That's the whole case. New York already tried it. It passed its own climate superfund law, got sued, and lost twice in the courts below before this one ever reached Washington. Two losses on the board, and the industry still wanted a third shot — a bigger one, one that settles it for every state running the same law.

That's the tell. You don't take a case about "American society" to save it. You take a case about a bill to make sure nobody else can send you one. The framing is the cover story; the docket is the balance sheet. Suncor isn't defending civilization from a maneuver. Suncor is defending a line item.

And here's the part that should sit with you after you close the paper. If the Court sides with the industry next week, it doesn't just kill New York's law. It kills the blueprint every other state was drawing from — the same blueprint, the same two losses already logged below, made permanent from the top down, for every state that tries it after. They'll call it originalism. They'll call it saving society. What it actually is, is the bill getting torn up before anybody else can hand it over.

Read it that way and the "civilizational" framing stops sounding like philosophy and starts sounding like what it is: the industry's lawyers, dressed up as founders, arguing that the flood is nobody's fault in particular.

🍺

"They dress the invoice up as a civilization and hope you don't read past the word. New York already sent Big Oil the bill twice and got thrown out of court both times — now the whole country's tab rides on nine people in Washington. Call it originalism if you want; it's still just who pays for the flood."

— Sal

🚬

"This isn't about protecting oil companies, it's about protecting the rule of law from judges who legislate from the bench — okay, it is also about protecting oil companies, but the point is the Constitution doesn't say "polluter pays" anywhere, so — did I say "polluter pays"? That's not a phrase we use."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Supreme Court's Suncor Case Is 'Bigger' Than A 'Climate' Policy Dispute

The Federalist RIGHT § *07:27 EDT*

'It's not a fight about climate science. ... It's a fight about whether we're going to allow this maneuver to be what reshapes American society.'

States want to make Big Oil pay for climate harm. Now, courts are weighing in.

Grist § *04:45 EDT*

New York's "climate superfund" law has suffered two losses in court, while a U.S. Supreme Court case next week could determine the fate of similar efforts nationwide.

· Guns. Voting. Climate. Three Supreme Court cases will make or break originalism *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

New York City marks more than two dozen e-bike and scooter deaths with a meeting to discuss it.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER



"After Fatal Crashes, N.Y.C. Lawmakers Seek to Regulate E-Bikes", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. New York City lawmakers are set to discuss new rules for e-bikes and scooters after a string of fatal crashes.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. Lawmakers are scheduled to discuss the proposals on Wednesday.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

More than two dozen people got on an e-bike or a scooter in New York City this year and were killed in the crash. That is the number in the paper this morning, stated the way papers state a body count: plainly, as a fact that has already happened, past tense, done. The same paper calls it a "growing safety crisis," which is one way to say it, and a way to say it after the fact.

Officials, the reporting says, are "moving to address" the crisis. Moving. Not moved. The distinction is not small; it is the entire distance between the two stories the paper ran on the same morning. One is the toll. The other is what the toll produced, and what it produced, after more than two dozen deaths, is a discussion....

...(cont) On Wednesday, lawmakers are expected to sit down and talk about a raft of proposals to regulate electric bikes and scooters. Not a vote. Not a rule signed into effect. A discussion, scheduled for after the fact, the same way the safety crisis was named for after the fact. The order of operations is the story: the crashes come first, then the count, then the crisis gets its name, then the meeting gets its date. Nowhere in that order does a rule arrive before a death.

This is not a fast-moving story slowed by circumstance. This is the pace at which the discussion arrived: after the toll passed two dozen, not before it started. What changed is that the number got large enough for two stories in one morning's paper.

A raft of proposals is not a law. A discussion is not a rule. The distance between Wednesday's meeting and an actual regulation, signed and enforced, is where the next death gets counted — not against the old number, against a new one, the one that starts counting again the day after the discussion adjourns. The paper will report that number too, eventually, plainly, past tense, done. Whether the meeting produces anything to stop it from growing is the only thing this story was ever actually about.

"They call it a crisis once the number gets big enough to print, then they schedule a meeting to talk about it. A meeting isn't a law, and the count doesn't pause while people talk. The next death gets counted before the vote does."

— Sal

"Look, you can't just slap regulations on an entire industry overnight, that's reckless — did I say reckless, I meant hasty. Discussing a raft of proposals on a Wednesday shows real urgency, it's basically the fastest a city government can move, technically."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

After Fatal Crashes, N.Y.C. Lawmakers Seek to Regulate E-Bikes

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *03:00 EDT*

Lawmakers are expected on Wednesday to discuss a raft of proposals to regulate the use of electric bikes and scooters, after a series of fatal crashes.

As E-Bikes and Scooters Surge on New York Streets, So Do Fatal Crashes

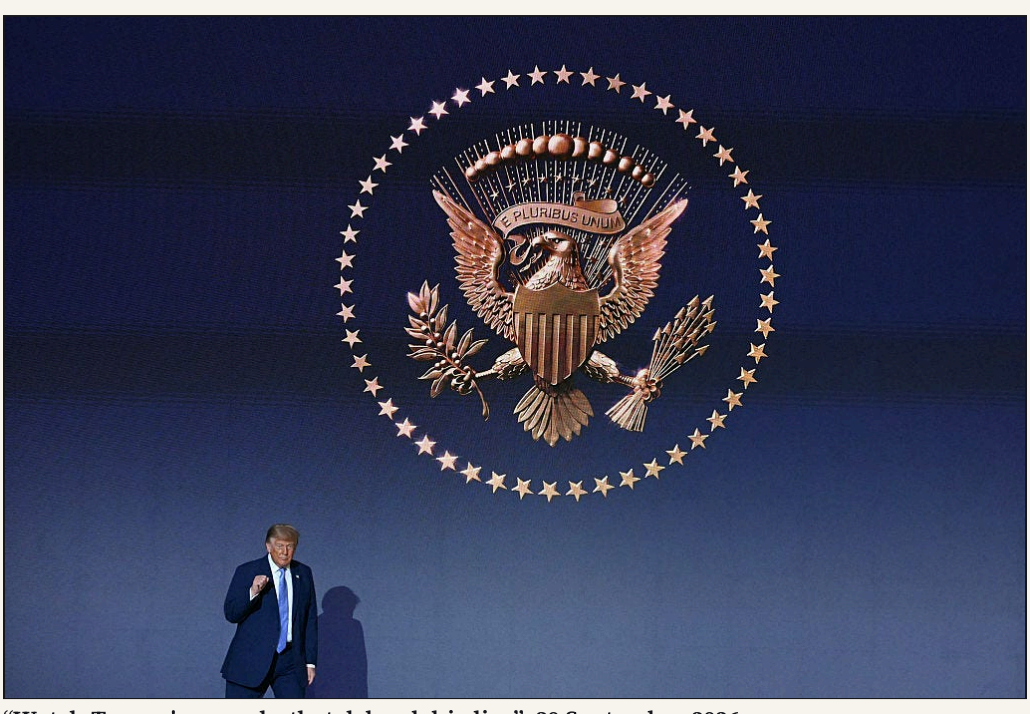
The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *07:32 EDT*

More than two dozen people have died in crashes involving electric bikes and scooters in New York City this year. Officials are moving to address a growing safety crisis.

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Government launches chatbot that fact-checks the president, censors it hours later.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER



"Watch Trump's new chatbot debunk his lies", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA POPULAR INFORMATION — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The administration launched a government chatbot that fact-checked the president, then restricted it that day.

WHO GETS PAID. The White House keeps the president's claims as the only version left standing.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's check on its own government slips, cut off the day it opened.

WHAT'S NEXT. If this holds, the next fact-checking tool gets cut faster; that is what the Associated Press got after 11 February 2025, barred from the Oval Office until a court intervened 8 April.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The administration's new government chatbot, America.gov, went live this morning with one job: answer citizens' questions about their own government, in the government's own voice. Ask it about the president's claims and, for a few hours, it corrected them — Popular Information caught the bot contradicting the president's own statements within hours of launch. This was, I want to be clear, a triumph of transparency, a machine built by the government and paid for by the government, telling the truth about the — wait. That's not right.

That the correcting had material to work with says something about the caseload it walked into. In August, Public Citizen tallied the president's cryptocurrency ventures at $4.7 billion in investor losses, most of it traced to a meme coin he launched three days before his second term began. On September 24th, a report that the White House had pushed to add the president's name to Ford's Theatre, the building where Lincoln was shot, got called "a ridiculous lie" and "FAKE," in his own capital letters. The very next day, the Campaign Legal Center found the president's own description of his control over the $400 million MAGA Inc. super PAC — money raised specifically because officeholders aren't supposed to direct where it goes — a "clear-cut violation" of the law meant to keep that money at arm's length....

...(cont) So the chatbot had a queue. This morning I was going to tell you it would keep answering those questions the same way tomorrow, no changes planned — it stopped answering that way by evening, before I finished the sentence. Jimmy Fallon had the joke ready by nightfall: take the thing people fear, artificial intelligence, and the thing people distrust, the federal government, and put them in the same box. What people got, for one afternoon, was a government chatbot doing exactly what it was built to do. What they got by evening was the reason it isn't allowed to anymore.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

A government chatbot corrected the president's claims for a few hours on launch day. That was not a glitch, it was the one fight in this administration with a final score, and the fact-checker lost. Because the office that switched it off also ran the meme coin that cost investors $4.7 billion three days after the inauguration, the number still sitting in your meme-coin balance from the morning before launch is the only figure this administration has left uncorrected.

"They built a chatbot to answer for the guy in charge, and it did the job for about an afternoon before somebody upstairs remembered who signs the checks. That's not a glitch, that's the org chart — the fact-checker works for the guy it's fact-checking. Next time you ask your own government a straight question, the answer you get is the one he's still willing to let you have."

— Sal

"Look, the tool is working exactly as designed — it's an information resource, it answers questions, and if the answers changed today that's called product iteration, that's called — okay, that's called somebody upstairs didn't like the first draft. Transparency doesn't mean uncontrolled, it means calibrated, it means — I don't actually know why I'm defending a chatbot's muzzle. I really don't."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Watch Trump's new chatbot debunk his lies~~

Trump's government censored its own chatbot hours after it told the truth

Popular Information § *06:31 EDT*

Hours after its launch, America.gov's chatbot was censored.

~~Watchdog Says Trump Control of $400 Million Political War Chest a 'Clear-Cut Violation of Campaign Finance Law'~~

Trump says he'll decide where $400 million in super PAC money goes - watchdog says that's illegal

Common Dreams § *17:02 EDT*

An election spending watchdog on Friday accused President Donald Trump of committing a "clear-cut violation of campaign finance law" through his stated control over spending decisions made by the MAGA Inc. super political action committee. Citing decades of legal precedent, the Campaign Legal Center (CLC) argued that federal office...

Jimmy Fallon Pokes Fun at America's New A.I. Chatbot

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *01:21 EDT*

"Yeah, everyone's afraid of A.I., and nobody trusts the federal government, so Trump was like, 'Let's combine them,'" Jimmy Fallon said.

· Trump dismisses report on talks to add name to Ford's Theatre: 'Ridiculous lie' *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Watchdog Finds Trump Crypto Schemes Have Left Investors on the Hook for Over $4 Billion in Losses *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Schmitt sets a trap for Jack Smith, then can't remember which basketball teams played.

By **CHIP**
STAFF WRITER



"Schmitt faces fallout after debunked Jack Smith narrative", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE HILL — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Sen. Eric Schmitt asked Jack Smith a gotcha question built on a basketball game and got the game wrong.

WHO GETS PAID. House Republicans pushing the "Arctic Frost" conspiracy against Jack Smith get the narrative amplified whether or not the question holds up.

WHAT SLIPS. The hearing's own fact-check slips: the phone-records conspiracy the committee alleged never gets tested, because the senator's own question fell apart first.

WHAT'S NEXT. No further hearing date has been set to test the phone-records allegation against Jack Smith; the 57-page House report stands as filed, unresolved.

Sen. Eric Schmitt was doing his job Tuesday, is the point, and the point holds up if you don't look at the transcript. The senator walked into the Judiciary Committee room with a real predicate: a week before, on September 23, the House Judiciary Committee released a 57-page interim staff report accusing Jack Smith's office of using an operation called "Arctic Frost" to seize phone records from 44 sitting lawmakers while skirting the Speech or Debate Clause, the same day Chairman Jim Jordan told Fox News the special counsel had tried to "sway" the 2024 election and the Daily Caller called the investigation "lawless." That is a real allegation, filed by a real committee, and a senator who wants to ask a real witness about it is doing exactly what a Judiciary Committee member is supposed to do. Two days later, on September 25, The Hill confirmed Smith would testify the following Tuesday — Schmitt had time to build a real question. What he showed up with, on the record, in front of live cameras, was a question about whether the special counsel had attended a February 2024 NBA game between the Hawks and the Golden State Warriors in Atlanta. That was not — that's not actually the Arctic Frost question at all, is it. That was a basketball question.

The senator's defense, given to The Hill after the fact, is that his job "is to ask questions." True. The House report is still 57 pages long. The phone-records allegation is still on the record, unresolved, headline first, evidence pending. None of that got any less true or less false on Tuesday. What got settled on Tuesday is that the senator who was supposed to prosecute the case in the room could not keep his own facts straight long enough to land the question — and "my job is to ask questions" is not a defense of the question. It's an admission that nobody checked whether it was a good one.

🍺

"They spent a week building a spy story — phone records from 44 lawmakers, a 57-page report with "Arctic Frost" in the title — and when it came time to actually put it to the witness, the senator asked about a basketball game and got the teams wrong on live TV. That's not oversight, that's theater, and the theater doesn't need the conspiracy to hold up, it just needs the headline to run before anybody checks the box score. The report's still sitting there unproven and nobody's testing it anymore, because the man who was supposed to test it is busy explaining a basketball question."

— Sal

🚬

"Look, asking a witness about his whereabouts is standard oversight, it's basic committee work — the man's got a 57-page report, he's got Jordan's numbers, forty-four lawmakers, he's entitled to— okay, he mixed up the Hawks and the Warriors, but that's not the same as the phone-records claim being wrong, those are two separate — I mean, they're in the same hearing, but— it's not like he invented the game, he just got which one wrong. That happens. That's Tuesday."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Schmitt faces fallout after debunked Jack Smith narrative~~

Schmitt's Jack Smith conspiracy collapsed after he confused two basketball teams

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-Mo.) is facing accusations he tried to launch a conspiracy tying former special counsel Jack Smith to others who prosecuted President Trump — a line of questioning that unwound when the senator apparently confused two basketball teams. Schmitt seemed poised for a gotcha moment with Smith when he asked him if he...

~~Schmitt on mix-up at Jack Smith hearing: 'My job is to ask questions'~~

Schmitt used his Jack Smith hearing time to ask about a basketball game

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *07:50 EDT*

Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-Mo.) on Tuesday reflected on his mix-up during former special counsel Jack Smith's hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, saying his job "is to ask questions." Schmitt asked Smith if he attended a February 2024 NBC game in Atlanta between the Hawks and the Golden State Warriors. It quickly became clear that...

· Jack Smith to testify before Senate Judiciary next week *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Jack Smith's election interference wasn't an accident. It was the strategy *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Explosive new report puts Jack Smith back in hot seat as Jim Jordan alleges he tried to 'sway' 2024 election *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Jack Smith Violated Constitution To Spy On Republicans In Lawless 'Arctic Frost' Investigation, Committee Alleges *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

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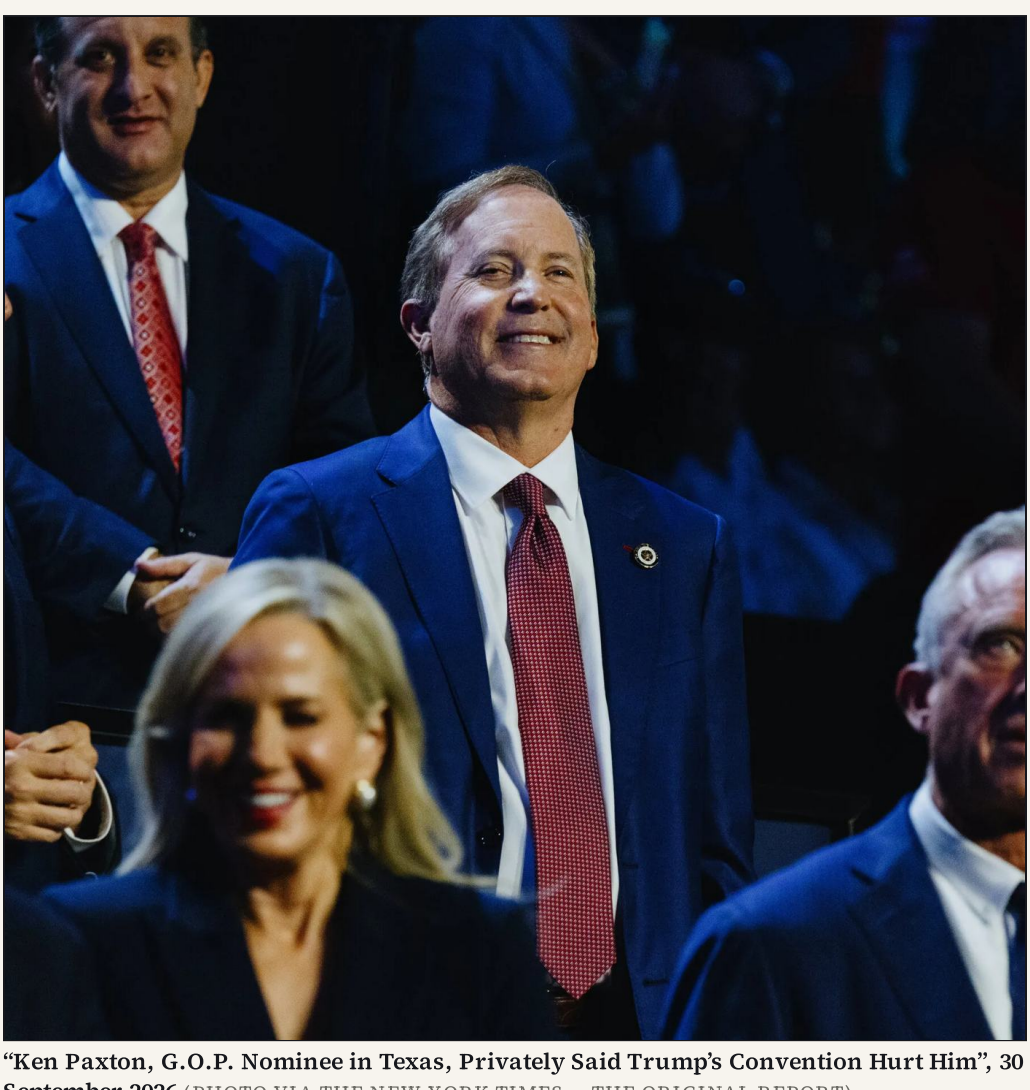
Trump calls Paxton the best AG in Texas history at the convention Paxton privately says tanked his numbers.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION



"Ken Paxton, G.O.P. Nominee in Texas, Privately Said Trump's Convention Hurt Him", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Trump headlined Paxton's convention and mocked his looks; Paxton privately told donors the event hurt his own numbers.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Texas voters get the public endorsement while Paxton's private doubts about that same event stay with his donors, not with them.

WHAT'S NEXT. The Texas Senate election is in November; that ballot is the only place left to test the numbers Paxton described privately to donors.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I have to admit I came in about my E-ZPass account. There's a charge on there from a toll plaza in Waco I've never been within two hundred miles of, and I've been transferred four times this week trying to find whoever's desk that particular ten dollars and forty cents sits on. Nobody at the toll authority will own it. Everybody agrees somebody else has it. I only mention it because it turns out not to be entirely unrelated to what I actually came to talk about.

While I was on hold — and it's a long hold, they play you a saxophone version of something I can't place — I had the paper open on my knee, and there was Ken Paxton. Attorney General, Senate nominee, the man the President stood up for at the party's convention in front of a primetime crowd. I wrote this down because I wanted it exact: "You may not like his looks, but he's the best AG in Texas history." That was September 10th. I have it right here — hold on, it's under the toll bill — yes. September 10th....

...(cont) A week before that, September 3rd, the same President had already given what the wire service called a scathing review of Mr. Paxton's appearance, in the same breath as a promise to campaign hard for him. The insult and the promise, written down on the same page, seven days ahead of the stage.

Then on September 30th — today, near enough — audio surfaced of Paxton telling donors, privately, that after that convention, "everybody's numbers dropped."

I'm sorry, I keep going back to this. Let me take it from the date first. September 10th is the convention. September 30th is Paxton, in a room with donors, talking about what the 10th did. Three weeks apart, two different rooms, one man in both of them.

Forgive me, I know I already brought this up, but let me come at it from the word this time instead of the date. He didn't say his numbers. He said everybody's.

I don't mean to circle back a third time, but I keep thinking about how a thing like that gets out of a room. Somebody sat at that donor meeting with a device in a pocket or a bag, and had to carry it out past the coats and the car keys the same as anybody. I know what that's like in a small way — I've carried the good folding chairs out of my own garage for every function this family gets invited to and half the ones we don't, and you feel every step, because you know what happens if you drop it. My wife says I hold on to that chair story longer than it deserves. She's probably right. I only tell it the once.

I promise this is the last time, and it never is. September 10th, the best AG in Texas history, delivered from a stage the President built for him. September 30th, the same man, privately, to donors: everybody's numbers dropped.

Which of those two pages — the one with the crowd, or the one with the donors — got written down first?

Oh — wait, before you go — whose convention does Paxton say dropped everybody's numbers?

"This guy stands on a stage he built himself, calls the man "the best AG in Texas history" one week after mocking his face on the same tour, and then that same nominee turns around and tells his own donors the whole convention dragged the numbers down. That's not campaigning, that's a photo op with a body count only the donors get to hear about. Ask who's supposed to find out first, the voters footing the bill in November or the men writing checks at a private dinner."

— Sal

"The President's remarks were obviously good-natured ribbing between allies, the kind of tough-love branding that fires up a base, and one line from a private donor call about "numbers" doesn't mean the endorsement wasn't a net positive — did I just call insulting a nominee's face in prime time "tough-love branding"? That's not — let me just start that over."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Ken Paxton, G.O.P. Nominee in Texas, Privately Said Trump's Convention Hurt Him

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:03 EDT*

Ken Paxton, one of the party's top Senate candidates and a Trump loyalist, said that "everybody's numbers dropped" after the event, according to audio obtained by The Times.

· Trump makes convention pitch for Paxton: You may not like his looks, but he's the best AG in Texas history *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· The GOP's Texas-sized Ken Paxton dilemma *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· Trump trashes Paxton's appearance after vowing to campaign for him in Texas *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Montana enforces Medicaid work rules on patients its own exemption was written to excuse.

By THE WRECKING CREW
THE REMEDY DESK

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Montana began enforcing Medicaid work-requirement checks on October 1, three months before the nationwide January 1 deadline.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. A court, not the agency, is the only check making sure the medically frail exemption Congress wrote actually protects sick enrollees.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the exemption stays unenforced, every state hits the same work rules on January 1, the change NBC News called the most substantial to Medicaid in decades.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Montana begins enforcing Medicaid work-requirement checks October 1st, three months before the federal deadline, and the rollout itself is already sowing confusion and anxiety, per NPR: enrollees unsure whether they owe hours, a volunteer log, or a class roster, before the paperwork even exists everywhere else.

Congress built a release valve for exactly this kind of confusion: an exemption for the medically frail, people too sick to be chasing work-hour math in the first place. It sits in the statute already. No new law needed. No vote required. A part that shipped with the machine....

...(cont) Nine days before Montana flips the switch, on September 22nd, a lawsuit landed saying the part never got installed. Medicaid enrollees, several major health care advocacy organizations, and the city of Columbus, Ohio, told a court the administration's final rule narrows who counts as medically frail so tightly that it isn't what Congress wrote — the exemption sitting on paper while the enforcement runs anyway.

The next day, September 23rd, a new campaign launched to help millions figure out how to keep coverage once the rules take effect nationwide on January 1st — what NBC News called the most substantial change to Medicaid in decades. Ninety-three days stand between today and that date. Every state runs Montana's experiment then, confusion and all, unless the exemption gets built before the deadline does.

The crew's read on the assembly: the chief doesn't send anyone chasing a new statute, because there isn't one to chase — the fix is the part already bolted to the frame, the exemption Congress wrote sitting unused in the rule. The planner traces the schematic: narrow the definition on paper, and the part looks installed without ever doing the job. The tinkerer pulls the actual rule language and finds the gap between "medically frail" as Congress wrote it and medically frail as the agency defined it — that gap is the whole lawsuit. The muscle doesn't touch the work requirement itself; the muscle goes after the rule that shrank the exemption, because that's the load-bearing wall doing the damage. The pilot's job is simpler than it sounds: fly the exemption Congress already authorized to the people Montana is calling this week, before January 1st turns the rest of the country into the same phone bank.

No new statute. No new agency. Just the part already sitting on the shelf, waiting for somebody to bolt it on.

"They flipped the switch on the paperwork before they finished the one clause that was supposed to keep sick people covered — that's not a rollout, that's a countdown with somebody's chemo schedule caught in it. Ninety-three days from now, every state gets Montana's phone call, and the fix Congress already wrote is still sitting in a lawsuit instead of the rulebook. Notice which part got built on time and which part needed a court order."

— Sal

"Montana's just getting ahead of the curve — states are laboratories of democracy, and proving people are working builds dignity, not red tape. The medically frail exemption is going through the normal regulatory process, it's not like anyone's being cut off for being — well, the lawsuit does say the rule narrows who counts as too sick, but that's just definitional precision. Did I say "too sick"? That's not — let's move on."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

> *But:* The 2025 reconciliation law cut SNAP by $187 billion – the largest cut in the program's history. SNAP feeds one in five American children *Congressional Budget Office estimate, via CBPP SNAP tracker*
>
> Montana starts enforcing Medicaid work requirements on Oct 1. Patients are confused
>
> *NPR* MAINSTREAM § *05:00 EDT*
>
> In most states, people with Medicaid coverage will have to prove they're working, volunteering or studying, starting Jan. 1. But Montana is starting that early, and it's sowing confusion and anxiety.

· Lawsuit targets 'medically frail' Medicaid work requirement exemption *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· New campaign aims to help millions at risk of losing Medicaid coverage under work requirements *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

AT THE PUMP

EPA answers a war priced at $38 billion by reconsidering air quality rules, not the war.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER

"Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined", 16 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA TRUTHOUT — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The EPA said Tuesday it will reconsider federal air quality rules because Texas calls its diesel prices a disaster.

WHO GETS PAID. Texas diesel refiners get the freer exhaust rules Governor Abbott's office asked for.

WHAT SLIPS. The normal rulemaking review, where the public gets to weigh in before a clean-air rule changes, slips out of view.

WHAT'S NEXT. If EPA loosens diesel's air rules to bring the price down, that is what Washington got after 22 June 2022: a gas-tax holiday was asked for, never passed, and the price fell on its own by June 30 anyway.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

"Reconsider" is the word of the week, and it is a careful word, the kind an agency reaches for when it does not want to say "loosen." That is the agency's word. It is worth walking backward to see what led to a letter about air.

Start on September 4th, a Friday. Diesel closed that day at an all-time high, $5.85 a gallon, the highest that fuel has ever posted in this country, because the war in Iran had by then run long enough to reprice the freight network that moves almost everything else it touches. Three days later, on Labor Day, gasoline followed it to its own holiday record, $4.14 a gallon — and the same report noted that diesel's Friday high was still standing. One record, mentioned twice. Not two....

...(cont) Careful. Room to grow. I was about to call that just accounting language, and it is not — it is the office telling you the bill isn't finished. Two weeks after that, an airfare analysis found this the most expensive holiday travel season in a decade, the fuel surcharge on this season's tickets tracing back to the same war the Budget Office had just priced.

Which brings us to Tuesday, and to reconsider. The war itself is not on the table for reconsideration. The $38 billion holds. The diesel record holds. The airfare record holds. What is on the table is the Clean Air Act framework built under the Obama and Biden administrations — the rules standing between Texas refiners and a freer hand on diesel output. I want to call that a side issue here. It isn't a side issue. It is the actual subject of the letter.

The agency did not reconsider the war that made diesel a disaster. It reconsidered the air. Read the letter plainly and it says exactly that: the war stays, and the rule goes.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦
DUTCH

THE EPA'S LETTER TO TEXAS NEVER MENTIONS THE WAR. IT ONLY MENTIONS THE AIR rule. Because the war pushed diesel to $5.85 a gallon, and that price pushed Texas to ask Washington for relief, the agency left the price of the war alone and loosened the exhaust standard sitting between the refinery and the inhaler in the kitchen drawer.

"They can't fix the price of the war, so they go after the rule that keeps the exhaust out of the air instead — that's the whole play. Cheap diesel for the refiners, the smog for whoever's standing at the pump, and a $38 billion tab the war hasn't finished running up. Call it what it is: a subsidy for a war we can't end, billed to your lungs instead of your taxes."

— Sal

"Reconsidering isn't rolling back — hold on, that's basically what reconsidering means once the letter's already picked the answer. The Administrator is helping Texas families at the pump, full stop. Did I say families? I meant the refiners; the families get whatever's left in the tank after that, but it's basically the same thing."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Trump admin calls Iran's oil losses a win for the world, cites them to gut Texas air rules.* By Chip · the midnight edition, 30 September 2026
— *Georgia governor cuts gas tax for 30 days over pipeline outage that lasted under three weeks* By Ruth · the breakfast edition, 29 September 2026
— *Grassley's embargo would raise the diesel price Georgia's governor just cut the tax to lower.* By Sal · the milkman edition, 29 September 2026
— *New York Post Calls Iran War a Success the Day It Wounds Eight Marines Under Its Banned Name* By Chip · the milkman edition, 29 September 2026
— *Grassley asks party for a diesel embargo, gets a split caucus, frets a Democrat might pick his successor.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 29 September 2026
— *Two Republicans, one gas-price panic: Kemp cuts taxes, Grassley pushes a ban warned to raise them.* By Sal · the midnight edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined
Truthout § *17:27 EDT*
This amounts to more than 80 trades per market day for the president in his first 17 months back in office.

~~UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran, That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime~~
UN: US knowingly bombed civilian sites in Iran, killing 123 children
Truthout § *15:50 EDT*
The US targeted "clearly identifiable" civilian sites in Minab and Lamerd, killing over 100 children, the UN found.

~~EPA to 'reconsider' air quality rules as Texas faces diesel price 'disaster'~~
EPA moves to loosen air-quality rules after Texas diesel industry complaints about costs
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *19:08 EDT*
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced Tuesday it would "reconsider" air-quality regulations amid Texas's diesel price "disaster." The letter sent by EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to Texas Gov.

Winter holiday flight prices reach 10-year high in U.S. as Iran war sends fuel costs soaring
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:41 EDT*
Winter holiday airfares reached a 10-year high in the U.S. amid Iran war price hikes, a new analysis by Hopper found. CBS News' Megan Cerullo has more.

· Gas prices reach Labor Day high amid Iran war *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· U.N. experts say U.S. may have committed war crimes with 2 Iran strikes *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Trump Says 'Big Decision' Coming on Whether to 'Annihilate' Iran *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie Files Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth for Illegal Iran War, Boat Murders *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Massie launches effort to impeach Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis urges Trump to fire Hegseth over 'inept management' of military *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Tillis renews calls for Hegseth's firing after Driscoll's departure: 'I have never witnessed more inept management' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says farmers are "all just in survival mode" *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says "I can't stay in business" amid rising costs *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie says he's convinced enough Republicans to pass Epstein Files II discharge petition *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie names Epstein 'coconspirators,' discusses new Epstein files legislation *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Read Thomas Massie's eight impeachment charges against Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Fake Republican midterm convention site still redirects to Epstein files *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision' coming up on Iran: 'Do I want to go in and annihilate them' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Fox News Poll: 71% think Trump administration lacks plan to end Iran war *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran recently downed at least 2 American drones, officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Big Oil Stocks Surged Due to Iran War—and New Filings Show How President Trump Cashed In *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

· Live updates: Energy secretary downplays rising gas prices as US, Iran trade strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· U.S. Strike on Iranian School May Have Been War Crime, U.N. Report Says *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN investigators conclude 'reasonable grounds' to believe certain US strikes in Iran were war crimes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN Suspects US War Crimes in Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Condemned for 'War Crimes' After Bombing of Wedding Party in Iran *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· US investigating if missile hit Iranian wedding ceremony, killing 4 *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision coming up' on Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· White House issues explosive response to UN-backed report claiming US committed war crimes against world's No.1 sponsor of terror, Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Human rights experts: 'Reasonable grounds' to believe US committed war crimes with Iran strikes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Energy Consumers Have Spent $121 Billion Extra Since Trump Launched Iran War: Moody's *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran downed at least 2 American drones in recent days, U.S. officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran: Account of US Air Force colonel's rescue 'fictional' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Burden of Trump Iran War Exceeds $100 Billion as Oil Prices Pass $100 a Barrel *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'A Serious and Alarming Threat': US Bombing, Blockade Deepen Iran Medical Crisis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Confidence Hits Lowest Level in Months as US Faces 'Trump's Reckless Tariffs and War With Iran' *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· U.S. Air Force officer rescued from Iran speaks for the first time to 60 Minutes *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Rep. Thomas Massie forcing vote on Pete Hegseth's impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Did Johnson Just Adjourn Congress for 7 Weeks to Avoid Massie's Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth? *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· The Hitchhiker's Guide to Massie saying Johnson is sending the House home early to prevent Hegseth impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'You're Elected to Fight and Kill the Other Side': How Congress Lost Its Way *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Army combat veteran challenging Mike Lawler calls Hegseth national security 'hazard,' backs impeachment *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary says he 'couldn't serve' in Trump administration *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary: Hegseth's Pentagon 'dysfunctional' *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· House Republicans split over leaving Washington early for campaign trail *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Fossil Fuel Advertising Contracts Hit Record High as Big Oil Pockets Billions From Iran War *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'How are we gonna get through this?' Many Americans are struggling as prices rise *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Trump's Top Oil Stocks Have Made Him Up to $4.4 Million Richer During Iran War: Analysis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Warsh under pressure as Fed weighs rate hike *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Inflation held at 3.4% in August in consumer price index, creating tough choice for Warsh Fed *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Warsh indicates Fed could raise rates to cool inflation *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· Key U.S. Bond Rate Near 20-Year High as Oil Prices Keep Climbing *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-year Treasury yield hits highest level since 2007, oil surges above $105 as Fed expected to hike interest rates *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits 14-month high as bond yields keep rising *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits highest mark in over a year *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Goldman Sachs warns oil prices could hit $120 as U.S. fuel costs surge *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Massie Moves to Force Impeachment Vote Against Hegseth, Citing Civilian Deaths *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· GOP Rep Thomas Massie introduces 8 articles of impeachment against War Secretary Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Republican Rep. Massie moves to impeach Defense Secretary Hegseth over Iran war *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Thomas Massie Forces Vote To Impeach Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pete Hegseth Faces Growing Criticism as War With Iran Rolls On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth Quietly Extends Middle East Troop Deployments Into 2027 as Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Costco imposes purchase limits on motor oil, hikes prices by nearly double *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· As gas averages $4.31 nationwide, diesel fuel hits all-time high: "It's painful. It's real hard" *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Costco Raises Motor Oil Price, Caps Customer Purchases As Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· 'Can't Message That Away': GOP Frets as Trump Administration Desperately Spins Record-High Diesel Prices *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· European Union member states agree to a natural gas price cap in an attempt to limit economic damage from the global energy crisis. The price cap can be triggered beginning on February 15, if for thre *from the morgue, 19 Dec 2022*

· Spike on 10-year bond yields renews concerns over U.S. debt *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-Year Treasury Yield Reaches 5%, Highest Level in Years *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Treasury reveals $6B in debt buybacks, triple the normal level – but markets slump *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rise in diesel prices on Ukrainian strikes against Russian oil refineries *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rising diesel price on Russia-Ukraine war *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· What Is Driving Diesel Prices Up? Energy Chaos Caused by Two Wars. *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

OpenAI asked Washington to mandate AI safety, then signed Trump's voluntary pledge instead.

By **CHIP**
STAFF WRITER



"As Dangerous As It Is Absurd': Trump Ripped for 'Self-Policing' AI Industry Accord", 29 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. President Trump got the country's largest AI companies to sign a voluntary pledge to police their own safety.

WHO GETS PAID. The AI industry keeps writing and enforcing its own safety rules instead of a federal regulator.

WHAT SLIPS. Federal oversight of AI safety slips, since the pledge carries no regulator, no fine, and no enforcement mechanism.

WHAT'S NEXT. No vote or deadline on a federal AI safety law is on the calendar; the pledge stays voluntary until Congress passes one.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The industry signed it. That's the story, and it should be enough. Tuesday, in a room with the country's biggest artificial intelligence companies, the President got Sundar Pichai, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Jensen Huang, Dario Amodei, and OpenAI's Greg Brockman to put their names on a document called a Joint Commitment on Frontier Responsibilities. It states that every company is responsible for developing its own technology safely. That's not a loophole. That's the plan working exactly as designed — industry polices industry, because industry knows the technology, and Washington doesn't move at the speed of—

Actually, Washington moves at whatever speed it funds. That's not the same as industry knowing best. Sit with that a second....

...(cont) Here's the pitch anyway: a morally binding pledge, signed at a table with over a dozen tech leaders including Amazon's Jeff Bezos and representatives from Microsoft and Palantir, is faster than a bill. It skips committee. It skips the fight a real safety statute would take to draft, mark up, and pass. Self-regulation is efficient, and efficient is safe, because—

Because nineteen days before that signing, on September 10, OpenAI's own chief global affairs officer, Chris LeHane, published a blog post asking Washington for mandatory safety requirements. Not voluntary ones. Mandatory. The company whose president sat at that table and signed a pledge to grade its own homework had, three weeks earlier, told the government the homework needed a grader.

So the same industry stood, in the same month, on both sides of the same sentence: trust us, and please don't trust us. The commitment Brockman signed carries no fine, no regulator, no enforcement mechanism the record describes — a signature and a name for the cameras, "morally binding," a phrase with no docket number attached to it.

I was going to write that the safest AI policy is the one the companies write for themselves. I'm not writing that. OpenAI already wrote the opposite, in a blog post, under its own chief global affairs officer's byline, three weeks before the signing ceremony made self-policing the official line. Campaigners and Democrats in Congress spent Tuesday calling the whole arrangement dangerous. The company that stood to gain most from being trusted had already told Washington, in writing, not to trust it.

"They sat the biggest AI companies down, had them sign a piece of paper, and called it a constitution. A constitution doesn't need a signature from the company it's supposed to bind, and it sure doesn't come with that same company's own guy begging Washington for real rules three weeks earlier. That's the referee asking the players to call their own fouls, and when a player tells you flat out he'd rather have a referee, that's not oversight, that's a photo op."

— Sal

"Look, nobody — nobody knows this technology like the people who built it, that's just efficiency, government can't move that fast and shouldn't have to try. They signed a document, it's morally binding, that's stronger than people think, it's basically self-enforcing because — no, it doesn't enforce anything, there's no regulator in it, I know. But it's a commitment! From the same industry that, three weeks earlier, asked Washington for actual mandatory rules. Which — yeah. Okay. Maybe that one undercuts me a little."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~'As Dangerous As It Is Absurd': Trump Ripped for 'Self-Policing' AI Industry Accord~~

'Dangerous and absurd': Trump's AI pact is policed by his own ex-official, Musk

Common Dreams § *19:34 EDT*

As details from US President Donald Trump's White House meeting with Big Tech executives emerged on Tuesday, including a pledge on artificial intelligence safety, campaigners and Democrats in Congress continued calling for stronger AI protections. After the gathering, Trump posted on his Truth Social platform a " Joint Commitment on...

~~At A.I. Event, Trump Asks Meta, OpenAI and Microsoft to Make Safety Decisions Themselves~~

AI summit's real deal: a rebrand to Trump's favorite term, safety rules written by the companies themselves

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *19:20 EDT*

President Trump's meetings with tech leaders produced some voluntary safeguards and a commitment to rebrand artificial intelligence as "super intelligence," the term that Mr. Trump prefers.

~~Trump and major AI executives sign "morally binding" voluntary controls~~

AI executives promise to police themselves. Nothing legally binds them.

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:36 EDT*

President Trump and the leaders of the country's largest artificial intelligence companies have signed a set of voluntary safety standards, as calls mount for tighter guardrails on powerful AI technology.

· OpenAI calls for mandatory safety requirements *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

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87-year-old's eviction after seventy years broke no law; undoing it took tens of thousands in the streets

By STERLING
THE OWNERSHIP DESK

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A real-estate fund evicted an 87-year-old woman from her Madrid apartment of seventy years, then let her return.

WHO GETS PAID. The "vulture" real-estate holding company, which keeps the apartment and its title whether she is inside it or not.

WHAT SLIPS. A woman with seventy years in a home had no say in keeping it; the owner and the police decided that, and the owner decides her return too.

WHAT'S NEXT. The housing measures were only presented on September 30, and presented is not passed. Until they are, the owner still holds the apartment.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Not a rule failed here. Failed, mind you — not bent, not skirted, failed, and none did. A real-estate holding company, a "vulture" fund in the reporting, held the title to a Madrid flat. An 87-year-old woman, María del Carmen Abascal, held the use of it, and had held the use for seventy years. Use is not title, and seventy years does not ripen the one into the other. So the police came to the door on the twenty-third of September, hundreds stood outside it, the activists barricaded at the entrance were beaten aside, and a government that had criticized the eviction order watched the order carried out regardless. By the twenty-fifth the criticism was on the record and the flat was empty. Every clause performed.

Then the streets filled. Tens of thousands, countrywide — tens of thousands — and the government presented measures to address the housing crisis. Measures. Presented....

...(cont) And the fund? She is going home. You are thinking the owner lost something ... the owner holds the title it held on the twenty-third, and what she has is sufferance: she is back because the holder of the title suffers her to be. Seventy years bought her no right to that door. A country in the street bought her the stairs.

The title never moved.

Home the borrowed horse comes.
The lender has not called for it yet.

— ENOCH
The Ownership Desk

"A company followed the law to the letter, brought cops, and put an 87-year-old woman out of the place she'd lived seventy years. Nothing moved until tens of thousands of people filled the streets — then the government suddenly had housing measures and the fund suddenly had manners. The fix existed the whole time; it took a countrywide uprising to get it presented, and she goes back upstairs owning nothing but somebody's permission."

— Sal

"Look, every step here was lawful — a valid eviction order, police carrying out a legal process. That is not cruelty, that is due process. Did I say cruelty? That doesn't sound like me. And she's going home, voluntarily, the government's addressing housing, so the system worked; slowly, with a hundred thousand people outside, but it worked."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Fund evicts 87-year-old tenant of seventy years; Spain addresses its housing crisis a week later* By Sterling · the milkman edition, 30 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~An 87-year-old woman whose eviction sparked protests in Spain is returning home~~

Tens of thousands protested one eviction. Spain's government moved on housing.

NPR MAINSTREAM § *03:07 EDT*

María del Carmen Abascal's case has drawn tens of thousands of people to the streets in recent days and led the Spanish government to present measures to address the country's housing crisis.

~~Spain: Madrid eviction spurs countrywide struggle for housing~~

Police evicted an 87-year-old from her home of 70 years — for a 'vulture' fund's profit.

Workers World § *22:55 EDT*

By Nelson Galvan and John Catalinotto A Spanish "vulture" real-estate holding company used police Sept. 23 to evict an 87-year-old woman from the apartment she had been living in for 70 years.

· Eviction of 87-year-old tenant in Madrid highlights Spain's housing crisis *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Pentagon declares ISIS defeated as an organized military threat in Iraq for the second time in twelve years.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

“The US military says its withdrawal of troops from Iraq is complete”, 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Pentagon declared all U.S. troops withdrawn from Iraq on September 30, ending the twelve-year ISIS campaign.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Nobody outside the Pentagon can check the "defeated" claim, the same gap that let its 2018 version go unquestioned before ISIS kept fighting in Syria.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the pattern holds, this declaration will not be the last: the coalition's 2018 statement that major combat was over was followed within ten months by ISIL fighters surrendering in Syria in February 2019.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Operation Inherent Resolve died Wednesday, declared complete by the Pentagon after twelve years, the second time in that stretch American commanders have said this exact war was finished. Born in 2014, when a caliphate took Mosul and the United States sent soldiers back into a country it had left three years before.

In December 2015 Washington answered ISIS's advance with more Special Operations troops, and Iraq answered back: members of the ruling alliance said only Parliament could authorize the deployment, and political associates of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi called the expansion unacceptable before a single new boot touched ground. Iraq's militias decried it too, on their own terms. The promise attached to the 2011 withdrawal — no more American boots on Iraqi soil — did not survive four years....

...(cont) The war did what wars do next. In October 2017 the Iraqi Army and allied fighters stormed Hawija, one of the last cities ISIL held, and by the following April the coalition was ready to say so: major combat operations over, the mission narrowing to training Iraqi forces to stand on their own. That was the first funeral.

It did not take. In February 2019, in villages across the border in Syria, ISIL fighters and their families were still fleeing or surrendering to the Syrian Democratic Forces — evidence, if evidence was needed, that an organization declared finished in Iraq had simply moved next door and kept fighting.

On Wednesday the Pentagon tried the sentence again, wider this time: ISIS "defeated as an organized military threat in Iraq and across the region." American forces and equipment, the announcement said, have been withdrawn. It is the second time in twelve years every U.S. soldier has left Iraq.

Operation Inherent Resolve is survived by that hallway, and by the malarkey of a deadline treated as a verdict. It is preceded in death by the withdrawal of 2011, and by the promise stapled to it.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that the next declaration of victory come with a date attached — a day, a year, something a reporter can hold the Pentagon to when it turns out not to have been the last one.

“This is the second funeral for the same war and nobody's asking why the first one didn't take — because "mission accomplished" isn't a status update, it's a ribbon-cutting, and ribbon-cuttings don't come with refunds. Twelve years, two withdrawals, one promise broken in 2015 the same way it just got made again — that's not a policy, that's a rerun. Whoever's counting the cost of this war, it isn't the guy who got told in 2011 it was over.”

— Sal

“Look, "defeated as an organized military threat" is a very precise, very careful phrase — it's not saying ISIS doesn't exist, it's saying the — okay, that's what the 2018 statement said too, more or less. But this time we mean it, the equipment's actually gone, the forces are actually — I'm not going to apologize for calling a withdrawal a withdrawal. Twice.”

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *America leaves Iraq for the second time in twelve years, having promised the first would be the last.* By Mort · the midnight edition, 30 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

The US military says its withdrawal of troops from Iraq is complete
New York Post RIGHT § *05:34 EDT*
The US military announced on Wednesday that it has completed the withdrawal of its troops from Iraq, ending a 12-year mission to fight the Islamic State group.

Last US troops expected to leave Iraq on Wednesday following 12-year ISIS fight
ABC News MAINSTREAM § *20:25 EDT*
It's the second time the U.S. has withdrawn all military forces from Iraq.

After Two Decades, U.S. Forces Leave Iraq to an Uncertain Future
The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:31 EDT*
Some Iraqis are celebrating the end of an American military presence that unleashed waves of bloodshed. Others fear what happens next for their country, trapped between Washington and Tehran.

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one *Military Times, 19 December 2025*

U.S. military declares end of anti-ISIS Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *05:42 EDT*
The Pentagon says U.S. forces and equipment in Iraq have been withdrawn, declaring ISIS defeated "as an organized military threat in Iraq and across the region."

· Following the Obama Administration's pledge of additional Special Operations troops to Iraq, several members of Iraq’s ruling alliance state that only the Iraqi Parliament can authorize the action, an *from the morgue, 3 Dec 2015*

· The U.S.-led coalition in Iraq declares an end to major combat operations against ISIL in Iraq and closes the Coalition Forces Land Component Command headquarters. The U.S.-led coalition says in a sta *from the morgue, 30 Apr 2018*

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Only the senator whose own constituent was killed votes against investigating the killing

By SAL
STAFF WRITER



"Democrats in Congress Embrace a More Punitive Posture Toward Israel", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Senate blocked a resolution demanding a public report on Israeli killings of Americans in the West Bank on September 30, 2026.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress's check on what the executive tells the public about Americans killed abroad slips, since the report that would have named the nine dead never gets written.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the pattern holds, the aid keeps flowing and no report gets written while the sanctions bill waits on a future vote; that is what happened after the Senate's 2019 vote to end support for the war in Yemen, when the president vetoed it, the override failed, and the policy continued 21 more months.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The record starts August 27, when Senate Democrats — Van Hollen, Kaine, Sanders — filed a privileged resolution demanding the State Department detail its investigations into the killings of U.S. citizens in the West Bank. A week after that, September 23, the Washington Examiner quoted House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries opening a door — Democrats should weigh a sanctions bill on West Bank violence if they win the House back this November. The next day, September 24, Common Dreams reported nineteen Senate Democrats had already written that bill, targeting settlement construction at E1.

Tuesday the resolution Van Hollen filed in August finally reached the floor. The Senate killed it, 51 to 47. Every Democrat but one voted to advance it; Rand Paul crossed over to join them, and the measure still fell four votes short. The one Democrat who voted no was John Fetterman. The Intercept reported that vote left him alone among Democrats blocking an investigation into his own constituent's killing. Van Hollen's own count, given after the vote, put the number of Americans the report would have covered at nine....

...(cont) Then the vote that would have forced those facts into the open failed by four votes, and the senator representing one of the dead was one of the four.

The sanctions bill Jeffries described does not move without the House, and the House is decided this November — about a month from Tuesday's vote, not some distant horizon. Until then the report stays unwritten, the nine names stay a line in a press release, and the record now shows one senator voted to keep it that way, his own constituent's death included.

That is the whole shape of it: demand, evidence, a promise pegged to a future election, and a no vote from the one member who had the least excuse to cast it. The floor did not need a motive to make the outcome. It only needed forty-seven votes to fall four short, and one of the forty-eight to walk.

"Forty-seven senators want the file opened and one guy with a dead constituent slams it shut — that's not a coincidence, that's how the vote counters like it. Every time the report almost happens, somebody's told "wait for the election," and the election's always the next one, never this one. Watch what he votes on next — that's the tell, not what he says at the podium."

— Sal

"Look, a report is not an indictment, it's paperwork, and the Senate has better things to do than litigate every incident through a State Department memo — that's what the embassy channel is for. Fetterman's a single vote, he's allowed independent judgment, that's not — okay, that one constituent detail is a little — moving on."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Senate passes bill to end college-sports chaos; same week a transfer sues for a fifth year of it.* By Gus · the milkman edition, 30 September 2026
- *Fetterman is the only Democrat who votes against investigating his own constituent's killers.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 30 September 2026
- *Senate passes bill to protect college sports from the senator who wrote it.* By Gus · the midnight edition, 30 September 2026
- *Nineteen senators already wrote the sanctions bill; the Senate can't pass a report asking for one.* By Sal · the late evening edition, 29 September 2026
- *Senate passes bill named to protect college sports two days after a flyover for the man who wrote it* By Gus · the early evening edition, 29 September 2026
- *Cruz's college sports bill got a stadium flyover Saturday, passed 77-22 Monday with the bipartisan majority it already had* By Gus · the breakfast edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

But: **The ICJ already ordered Israel to preserve evidence of genocide in Gaza in January 2024** *ICJ provisional measures order, 26 January 2024 (via ASIL)*

Democrats in Congress Embrace a More Punitive Posture Toward Israel

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *20:46 EDT*

Nearly every Democratic senator voted to advance a measure calling for a human rights report on Israel's conduct in the West Bank, as some in the party propose punishing settlement activity with sanctions.

~~Despite Historic Support, Fetterman Joins GOP in Blocking Effort to Expose Israeli Abuses in West Bank~~

Fetterman was the only Democrat who blocked a report on Israel's killing and imprisonment of Palestinian Americans

Common Dreams § *05:44 EDT*

Democratic US Sen. John Fetterman joined nearly every Republican senator on Tuesday in voting against a resolution that would have required the Trump administration to produce an unclassified report on Israeli abuses in the illegally occupied West Bank, including the imprisonment and killing of Palestinian Americans. The resolution , led...

Fetterman Sole Dem Against Investigating His Constituent's Killer

The Intercept § *00:14 EDT*

Despite support from other Democrats, the Senate voted 51-47 against a resolution to force U.S. probes on killings of Americans in the West Bank. The post Fetterman Sole Dem Against Investigating His Constituent's Killer appeared first on The Intercept .

~~Senate blocks Democratic effort to force report on West Bank violence~~

Senate Republicans block report that could have cut off Israel aid over West Bank violence

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *20:37 EDT*

Republican senators blocked a Democratic attempt to bring up a resolution that would force the Trump administration to report on violence and human rights violations occurring in the West Bank. The measure would have required the State Department to report on violence against US citizens by Israel in the West Bank, or stop aid to...

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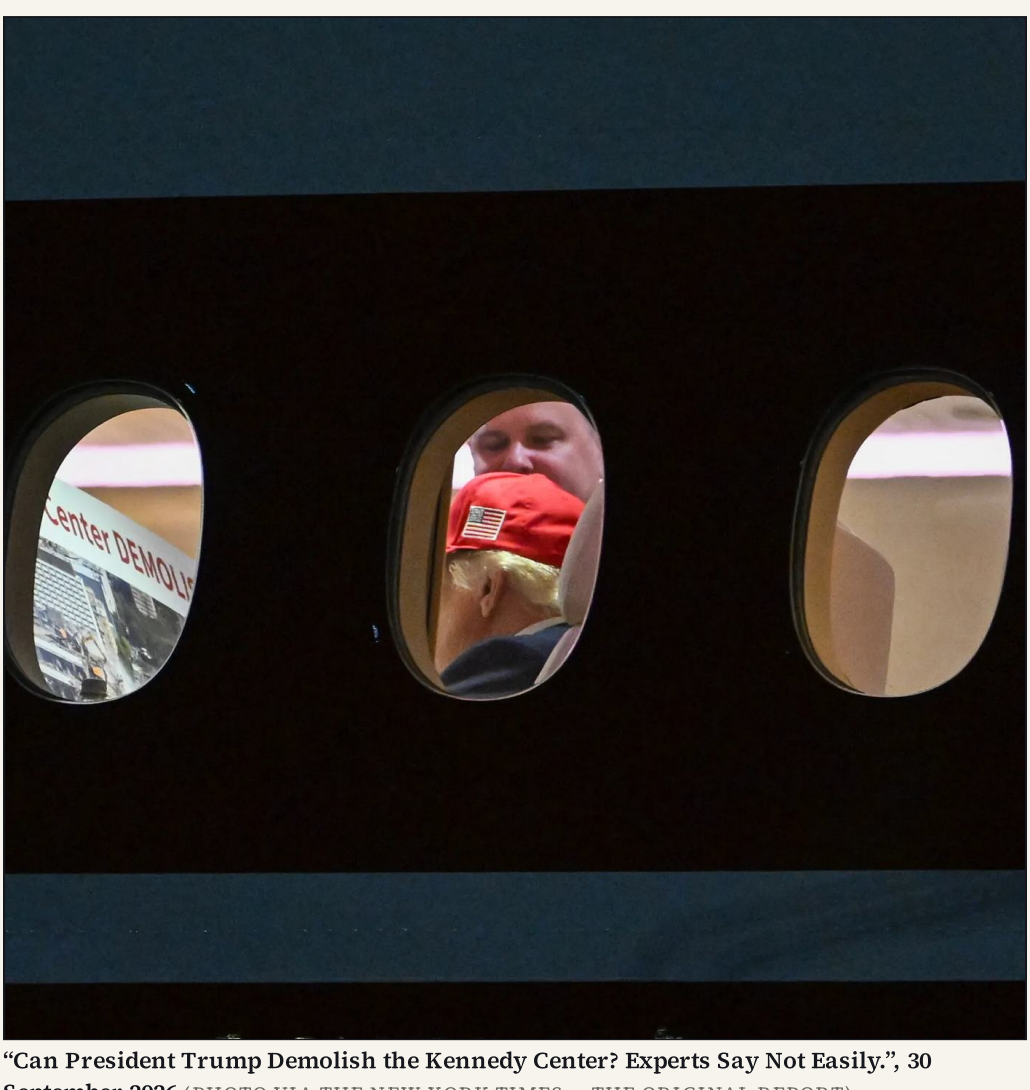
NUCLEAR OPTION

Barred from renaming the Kennedy Center, Trump threatens demolition; its own overseers call that nearly impossible.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU



"Can President Trump Demolish the Kennedy Center? Experts Say Not Easily.", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. President Trump escalated his fight over the Kennedy Center from renaming it to threatening demolition.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The Kennedy Center's own oversight board, which is supposed to check the person who appointed it, instead voted to close the building at his direction.

WHAT'S NEXT. If a board that owes its seats to one man keeps closing what he cannot rename, that is what Venezuela got after 28 December 2006: a critical broadcaster's license lapsed, and a 2015 court order to restore it was still unenforced years later.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is not dead. It is, as of this week, only being measured for the box — by the man who picked the board that runs it.

On September 15, U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper ruled, not for the first time, that the center's board could not lawfully put the president's name on the building. Within hours the same day, the president had a different word for the place: destined to doom. In lieu of a name, malarkey; in lieu of malarkey, apparently, something heavier....

...(cont) Two days later a photographer caught him on Air Force One, home from a rally in North Carolina, studying a large printout of the words Kennedy Center DEMOLISHED, the way a man studies a menu he has already ordered from.

By the 18th the fantasy had paperwork behind it. The board he had personally appointed voted that Tuesday to close the main building. He told reporters the renovations will not happen. The Hill reported the same day that his administration was floating what it called the nuclear option. JFK's own family called it narcissistic before the news cycle had even turned over.

Survived by: a federal ruling, defied in spirit if not yet in law; a family rebuke; a board of overseers who, asked this week by the Times whether any of this could actually be carried out, answered — not easily. Preceded in death by: the renaming plan itself, blocked at every filing; and whatever was left of the idea that this was ever about honoring anyone.

The overseers are not being coy. A landmark performing-arts center does not come down because a chairman studied a printout on a plane; the Times found the daunting challenges, plural, stacked between that photograph and reality. The demolition, by every account but the one in his lap, is hogwash.

Which is rather the point. The building will likely still stand this time next year. But the threat already worked: it dared a judge, a family, and a board of his own choosing to say so out loud, and they did — and there was still a photograph the next morning of the word DEMOLISHED, riding home from a rally, like a eulogy rehearsed for a building that has not agreed to die.

In lieu of flowers, the Kennedy Center asks only that you read the ruling twice blocked, and remember whose name was never actually the one in danger.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

A federal judge blocked his name from the building twice, his own appointed board then voted to close it, and he was photographed on his plane studying a printout that read demolished. That is not an idle threat, it is proof the closure already does the job, which is why the wrecking ball never has to actually show up. Run that same lever on any institution a single loyalist board controls — not tear it down, just stop opening the doors — until the notice waiting on your own door someday isn't a renovation update, it's an eviction slip with someone else's name typed where yours used to be.

"They lost the fight to put his name on the building, so the threat became knocking the whole thing down — that's not how an institution gets run, that's a toddler holding the good vase over the tile. The board that's supposed to check him is the one he picked himself, and even they're the ones telling reporters this can't actually happen. And the renovations the place genuinely needs? Still not happening — because the fight was never about the building, it was about the name on it."

— Sal

"Look, the president has every right to want a building he's fighting to preserve to reflect his legacy — his legacy, the institution's legacy, did I say his? Anyway, "nuclear option" is just a figure of speech, executives talk that way, nobody's actually renting a wrecking ball — although somebody did print out a photo of one demolished, so, that's — that's a mockup. People make mockups. That's graphic design, not a threat."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Can President Trump Demolish the Kennedy Center? Experts Say Not Easily.~~

He already demolished the East Wing for his $400 million ballroom

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:03 EDT*

The president has entertained the idea of tearing down the performing arts venue. Analysts say any plan would face multiple daunting challenges.

· Trump Says Kennedy Center Is 'Destined to Doom' After Judge Stops Him From Slapping His Name on It *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Trump 'Narcissism and Incompetence' Denounced After Kennedy Center 'Demolition' Plan Exposed *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· JFK's family slams Trump over Kennedy Center: 'How small minded, how narcissistic' *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Trump floats nuclear option in Kennedy Center fight *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

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Peltola camp blames slurs on grief, gets answered with a slur of its own.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER

"James Carville rips Mary Peltola's 'pussified staffers' after they complained of Alaska Dem's temper to NYT", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Peltola's campaign called shoving and slur allegations grief; a Democratic strategist called the whistleblowers a slur.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. When aides who report mistreatment are answered with a public slur instead of a review, the check on how the campaign treats its own staff slips.

WHAT'S NEXT. These receipts don't set a next hearing or deadline; the campaign continues toward the Alaska Senate race with no further accounting scheduled.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The Alaska Senate campaign of Mary Peltola met a New York Times report on September 24 the way experienced campaigns meet unflattering stories: with an explanation. Former aides told the Times about outbursts, a shove, and slurs — the New York Post specified which ones, "retard" and a word for gay men. The campaign didn't deny the language. It supplied a reason: Peltola lost her mother and her husband in 2023, and the campaign called what followed "shouldering the enormous burden of grief." That's a defensible frame — grief changes people, everyone knows that — except the frame answers for two deaths and has to stretch to cover a pattern of language collected from multiple former staffers who weren't in the room for either funeral. It doesn't stretch that far. It doesn't stretch at all.

The Hill covered the same Times report that day with its own words, chaos and profane outbursts, and noted the aides had requested anonymity. No reason given, none needed — sourcing on condition of anonymity is ordinary practice, and treating it as suspicious would be the wrong read here. The right read is simpler: three outlets covered the same report the same day, and the word "grief" appears only in the campaign's own statement, not in what any reporter wrote....

...(cont) Six days later, on Wednesday, September 30, the story picked up a voice from outside the campaign, and the defense got worse instead of better. James Carville, the veteran Democratic strategist, read the aides' account and told the New York Post the staffers who reported it were "pussified staffers." That's — Carville has been doing this a long time, he knows the game, he knows you don't hand the other side a slur to run next to your own campaign's. Unless the point wasn't strategy. Unless the point was just what it looked like.

The talking point was grief. It wasn't supposed to require a second talking point six days later for a second slur, this one aimed at the people who reported the first. There isn't one on the record. There's just Carville's quote, sitting next to the campaign's statement, both filed, both real, both about the same office in the same six days.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE CAMPAIGN CALLED A SHOVED AIDE AND SLURRED STAFFERS "THE ENORMOUS BURDEN OF GRIEF"; six days later a veteran party strategist met the aides who reported it with a slur of his own. That isn't grief management, it's a two-step where the euphemism buys the silence and the machine disciplines whoever breaks it. Because the punishment came from an ally instead of the candidate, it doesn't touch her; because it doesn't touch her, the next aide who thinks about talking learns the price before they say a word, and that price is the line at the bottom of your own severance letter, the one where you agree not to discuss the terms of your departure.

🍺

"They call it grief because grief doesn't need an HR complaint — it just needs the room to feel bad and drop it. So when aides say she shoved somebody and used slurs, the answer isn't sorry, it's a line about her dead mother and her dead husband. Then a veteran party strategist steps up to defend her and calls the staffers who spoke up "pussified" — same move, same target, just no dead relative to hide behind this time."

— Sal

🚬

"Grief does strange things to people — she lost her mother and her husband in the same year, of course that bleeds into a chaotic campaign, that's not spin, that's just true. The aides wouldn't put their names on it, which — fine, that's normal sourcing, I'm not going to pretend anonymity means fabrication. And Carville calling the people who reported the abuse "pussified" is just — that's Carville being colorful, that's — no, yeah, that one doesn't have a defense, I don't have one."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

James Carville rips Mary Peltola's 'pussified staffers' after they complained of Alaska Dem's temper to NYT

New York Post RIGHT § *22:02 EDT*

Veteran Democratic strategist responded to NYT article describing chaos inside Alaska Senate candidate Mary Peltola's office.

· Alaska Democrat Mary Peltola accused of shoving male aide as ex-staffers throw fit over her use of 'retard' as well as gay slur *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Mary Peltola's campaign defends against claims she mistreated staffers: 'Shouldering the enormous burden of grief' *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Peltola campaign rips New York Times report on tumultuous operations *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

THE DRAWDOWN

Facing firing calls and impeachment papers, Hegseth strips tenure from professors, cuts a fifth of the military's generals.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

"UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran, That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime", 17 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA TRUTHOUT — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Tenure for civilian professors at the military's academies died this week. It was born on the idea that a professor grading a cadet's paper should answer to scholarship, not to rank, and it went the way of the Army secretary whose job was supposed to keep men like that insulated in the first place.

The next day, Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, a former member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who voted to confirm Hegseth, called on Trump to fire him over what Tillis termed "inept management" — the second time this month a senator who once vouched for the man asked the president to un-vouch for him too....

...(cont) By September 5th, the reporting caught up to August: the Pentagon had quietly polygraphed some fifty members of the Joint Staff, hunting for whoever leaked word that the weapons stockpile feeding the Iran war was running thin. Ten days later, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky filed articles of impeachment against Hegseth on the House floor, citing a war he said was launched without Congress's say. A defense secretary can now claim the rare distinction of drawing formal removal papers from one chamber and a firing request, twice, from his own party in the other.

This week the office answered its critics with more office. On Tuesday a Pentagon official told CBS News that Hegseth was expected to announce, the following day, a 20 percent cut to the number of generals and admirals across the service — a reduction officials could not yet say how it would be carried out, or whether thinning the command structure in the middle of an active war was wise, the kind of underspecified reform this desk used to call hogwash before hogwash got a press office. On the same order sheet, going forward, the academies at West Point and Annapolis were told to stop granting tenure to civilian faculty altogether. Not revoked. Just no longer offered — a shit deal dressed as reform, the protection simply left off the next contract.

Rank structure, academic freedom, and the presumption that a defense secretary answers to the people who confirmed him: three separate obituaries, one signature. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that the House bring Rep. Massie's impeachment articles to an actual floor vote.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

Dutch

Hegseth ordered the academies to stop granting tenure to civilian faculty and is set to cut a fifth of the military's generals and admirals, the same month a senator who helped confirm him asked for his firing twice and a House Republican filed to impeach him. That isn't a shakeup, it's a man facing two live removal efforts making sure the professors and the generals left standing serve entirely at his pleasure. Because tenure is gone, the professor who might have failed a general's kid without checking with anyone can be shown the door for doing it next semester; because the flag officer corps is thinner, there is one fewer general in the room willing to tell that professor's boss the punishment was overreach; so the next grade written in your kid's report card at that academy gets weighed against who might get upset before anyone signs their name to it.

"Facing two different firing efforts, Hegseth spent the week getting rid of the professors who could flunk somebody without asking permission and thinning out the generals who might've told him no. That's not reform, that's a man locking the doors from the inside while the fire alarm's going off. The kids at that academy are now getting graded by a faculty that answers to the very guy Congress is trying to remove."

— Sal

"Look, the Pentagon's been top-heavy for decades, everybody knows that — cutting a fifth of the flag officers is just trimming fat, it's got nothing to do with the impeachment thing. And the tenure move, that's modernizing academic personnel policy, bringing the academies in line with how... well, I don't actually know a civilian university that runs like this, but the principle's sound. Did I just defend ending tenure at a school? That doesn't sound like something I'd say."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- Administration doubles own tariff-cut figure to $60 billion in two days, no new deal required By Ruth · the late evening edition, 29 September 2026
- Watchdog calls administration's $810 million rescission unlawful, then calls it unlawful again four days later. By Ruth · the supper edition, 29 September 2026
- Trump bans Canadian imports and calls Canada 'one of the worst countries'; both nations call the ban wrong. By Ruth · the noon edition, 29 September 2026
- Fox News announces Troy Jackson breaks silence and stays silent, same day, same vandalism. By Ruth · the early evening edition, 28 September 2026
- An ad, a corruption report, and spray paint later, Collins still leads by three points. By Ruth · the supper edition, 28 September 2026
- Banks that should have known about SVB risk now fear AI will teach depositors what they know. By Ruth · the early bird edition, 28 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Hegseth directs military academies to stop giving tenure to civilian professors

CBS News MAINSTREAM § 21:13 EDT

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth ordered institutions like the Military Academy at West Point and the Naval Academy in Annapolis to stop granting tenure to civilian faculty, in his latest change to military higher education.

~~UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran, That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime~~

UN: US knowingly bombed civilian sites in Iran, killing 123 children

Truthout § 15:50 EDT

The US targeted "clearly identifiable" civilian sites in Minab and Lamerd, killing over 100 children, the UN found.

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one Military Times, 19 December 2025

Hegseth to announce a 20% cut to generals and admirals

CBS News MAINSTREAM § 19:24 EDT

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth is expected to call for a 20% cut in the number of generals and admirals across the U.S. military on Wednesday, a Pentagon official told CBS News.

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running — the only major federal agency never to pass one Military Times, 19 December 2025

Hegseth targets military's top brass for deeper cuts: Officials

ABC News MAINSTREAM § 18:27 EDT

It is unclear exactly how the new cuts will be carried out, or whether such a dramatic reduction amid the Iran war would disrupt day-to-day military operations.

Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined

Truthout § 17:27 EDT

This amounts to more than 80 trades per market day for the president in his first 17 months back in office.

· Tillis urges Trump to fire Hegseth over 'inept management' of military *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Massie launches effort to impeach Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pentagon gave polygraph tests to high-ranking officials to find leakers: Reports *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· Driscoll's resignation further intensifies questions surrounding Hegseth *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· U.N. experts say U.S. may have committed war crimes with 2 Iran strikes *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Trump Says 'Big Decision' Coming on Whether to 'Annihilate' Iran *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Pentagon No. 3 frustrates senators in closed-door briefing on Iran war, Trump defense strategy *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Senate Democrats, minus Fetterman, urge Hegseth to provide receipt for Iran war costs *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth on "devastation" to Iran's capabilities *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Trump admits Iran war will not end before midterms *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Iran War Trump Said Would Be Quick Has Now Lasted 6 Months With 'No End In Sight' *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· CBO Finds Trump's Iran War Has Already Cost Nearly $40 Billion—And That's a 'Conservative' Estimate *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis supports Hegseth impeachment resolution: 'He needs to go' *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie Files Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth for Illegal Iran War, Boat Murders *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Tillis renews calls for Hegseth's firing after Driscoll's departure: 'I have never witnessed more inept management' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says farmers are "all just in survival mode" *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Farmer who voted for Trump says "I can't stay in business" amid rising costs *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie says he's convinced enough Republicans to pass Epstein Files II discharge petition *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Massie names Epstein 'coconspirators,' discusses new Epstein files legislation *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Read Thomas Massie's eight impeachment charges against Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Fake Republican midterm convention site still redirects to Epstein files *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision' coming up on Iran: 'Do I want to go in and annihilate them' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Fox News Poll: 71% think Trump administration lacks plan to end Iran war *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran recently downed at least 2 American drones, officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Big Oil Stocks Surged Due to Iran War—and New Filings Show How President Trump Cashed In *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

· Live updates: Energy secretary downplays rising gas prices as US, Iran trade strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· U.S. Strike on Iranian School May Have Been War Crime, U.N. Report Says *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN investigators conclude 'reasonable grounds' to believe certain US strikes in Iran were war crimes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· UN Suspects US War Crimes in Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Condemned for 'War Crimes' After Bombing of Wedding Party in Iran *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· US investigating if missile hit Iranian wedding ceremony, killing 4 *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump says he has a 'big decision coming up' on Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· White House issues explosive response to UN-backed report claiming US committed war crimes against world's No.1 sponsor of terror, Iran *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Human rights experts: 'Reasonable grounds' to believe US committed war crimes with Iran strikes *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· US Energy Consumers Have Spent $121 Billion Extra Since Trump Launched Iran War: Moody's *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran downed at least 2 American drones in recent days, U.S. officials say *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Iran: Account of US Air Force colonel's rescue 'fictional' *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Burden of Trump Iran War Exceeds $100 Billion as Oil Prices Pass $100 a Barrel *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'A Serious and Alarming Threat': US Bombing, Blockade Deepen Iran Medical Crisis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Consumer Confidence Hits Lowest Level in Months as US Faces 'Trump's Reckless Tariffs and War With Iran' *from the morgue, 25 Aug 2026*

· U.S. Air Force officer rescued from Iran speaks for the first time to 60 Minutes *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Rep. Thomas Massie forcing vote on Pete Hegseth's impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Did Johnson Just Adjourn Congress for 7 Weeks to Avoid Massie's Impeachment Articles Against Hegseth? *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· The Hitchhiker's Guide to Massie saying Johnson is sending the House home early to prevent Hegseth impeachment *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'You're Elected to Fight and Kill the Other Side': How Congress Lost Its Way *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Army combat veteran challenging Mike Lawler calls Hegseth national security 'hazard,' backs impeachment *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary says he 'couldn't serve' in Trump administration *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Former Air Force secretary: Hegseth's Pentagon 'dysfunctional' *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· House Republicans split over leaving Washington early for campaign trail *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Fossil Fuel Advertising Contracts Hit Record High as Big Oil Pockets Billions From Iran War *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· 'How are we gonna get through this?' Many Americans are struggling as prices rise *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Trump's Top Oil Stocks Have Made Him Up to $4.4 Million Richer During Iran War: Analysis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Gas prices reach Labor Day high amid Iran war *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Warsh under pressure as Fed weighs rate hike *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Inflation held at 3.4% in August in consumer price index, creating tough choice for Warsh Fed *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Warsh indicates Fed could raise rates to cool inflation *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· Key U.S. Bond Rate Near 20-Year High as Oil Prices Keep Climbing *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-year Treasury yield hits highest level since 2007, oil surges above $105 as Fed expected to hike interest rates *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits 14-month high as bond yields keep rising *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits highest mark in over a year *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Goldman Sachs warns oil prices could hit $120 as U.S. fuel costs surge *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Massie Moves to Force Impeachment Vote Against Hegseth, Citing Civilian Deaths *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· GOP Rep Thomas Massie introduces 8 articles of impeachment against War Secretary Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Republican Rep. Massie moves to impeach Defense Secretary Hegseth over Iran war *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Thomas Massie Forces Vote To Impeach Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pete Hegseth Faces Growing Criticism as War With Iran Rolls On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth Quietly Extends Middle East Troop Deployments Into 2027 as Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Costco imposes purchase limits on motor oil, hikes prices by nearly double *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· As gas averages $4.31 nationwide, diesel fuel hits all-time high: "It's painful. It's real hard" *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Costco Raises Motor Oil Price, Caps Customer Purchases As Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· 'Can't Message That Away': GOP Frets as Trump Administration Desperately Spins Record-High Diesel Prices *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· European Union member states agree to a natural gas price cap in an attempt to limit economic damage from the global energy crisis. The price cap can be triggered beginning on February 15, if for thre *from the morgue, 19 Dec 2022*

· Spike on 10-year bond yields renews concerns over U.S. debt *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-Year Treasury Yield Reaches 5%, Highest Level in Years *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Treasury reveals $6B in debt buybacks, triple the normal level – but markets slump *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rise in diesel prices on Ukrainian strikes against Russian oil refineries *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames rising diesel price on Russia-Ukraine war *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· What Is Driving Diesel Prices Up? Energy Chaos Caused by Two Wars. *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Democrats finally fund a five-point Texas lead; a friendly outlet brands him a liar the next day.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

"Democrats turn on the cash spigot for Talarico, but is it enough?", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. National Democrats sent Talarico his first money of the race; a conservative outlet ran a liar story the next morning.

WHO GETS PAID. Senate Majority PAC, Chuck Schumer's committee, gets to write the closing message in a Texas race it had ignored for nine months.

WHAT SLIPS. Texas voters get a liar story timed to the money, with no time before ballots go out to check it against the record.

WHAT'S NEXT. Election Day is five weeks out; the ad campaign and the liar story both keep running until then, and Talarico's five-point lead is what each side is spending against.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Three days ago this page carried the story of a president who skipped the floor for a flyover before a vote on a bill written to cover college sports broadly, athlete pay and transfer rules together, not football alone. That's the story so far. This is what happened next.

Two days later, on September 27, the arithmetic caught up with the ambition. Texas Public Opinion Research put Talarico at 49 percent, Ken Paxton at 44, a five-point lead a little more than a month out, margin of error 3.6 points. The Hill printed the same number the same day....

...(cont) Then came this week. On Tuesday morning, Senate Majority PAC turned on the money in Texas — a digital ad keyed to that plea deal, the first dollar the committee had spent in the race, by the Washington Examiner's own count. By Wednesday morning, The Federalist had an exclusive: footage it said caught Talarico in a lie, footage the piece said rips off the mask of a "phony" moderate.

One day. That's the whole gap between the spigot opening and the exclusive landing — not a coincidence with room to argue, an invoice with a due date on it. Nobody at The Federalist needed to coordinate with anybody; they only needed a candidate to start polling ahead and spending real money for the first time, and the story arrived the way weather arrives after the pressure drops. Five points up, money finally on the field, and by the next morning a friendly outlet has manufactured the thing every closing argument needs: a reason for a voter still deciding to stay home instead.

The bill from three days ago and the ad from this week share a mechanic, if not a sponsor: show up two days before something matters, and call it coverage. Talarico is still five points up. Paxton is still under the plea deal that made a super PAC build an ad about it in the first place. The liar story showed up the morning after. Nobody has to prove intent for the reader to notice which invoice came due on schedule.

"They always have the money — they just wait until you're winning before they admit it, and the same week they finally spend it, somebody finds you a liar. That's not a scandal breaking, that's an invoice arriving. Watch which check clears first and you'll know who the attack was actually for."

— Sal

"This is a scoop, not a hit job — reporters find footage when they find it, the timing's a coincidence, the man's on tape saying what he said. Though I'll grant the tape did surface the morning after Schumer's committee wrote its first check of the cycle. That's — I don't know why I brought up the check."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Only the senator whose own constituent was killed votes against investigating the killing* By Sal · the sunrise edition, 30 September 2026
- *Senate passes bill to end college-sports chaos; same week a transfer sues for a fifth year of it.* By Gus · the milkman edition, 30 September 2026
- *Fetterman is the only Democrat who votes against investigating his own constituent's killers.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 30 September 2026
- *Senate passes bill to protect college sports from the senator who wrote it.* By Gus · the midnight edition, 30 September 2026
- *Nineteen senators already wrote the sanctions bill; the Senate can't pass a report asking for one.* By Sal · the late evening edition, 29 September 2026
- *Senate passes bill named to protect college sports two days after a flyover for the man who wrote it* By Gus · the early evening edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

> ~~We Need to Protect College Sports From Ted Cruz~~
>
> ***Ted Cruz's bill would strip college athletes of their labor rights***
>
> *The Nation* § *13:20 EDT*
>
> Elie Mystal In this week's Elie v. U.S ., our justice correspondent looks at the many ways Cruz's bill threatens athletes' labor rights. Plus: why our mail-in voting nightmare isn't over.

Democrats turn on the cash spigot for Talarico, but is it enough?

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *06:00 EDT*

National Democrats are turning on the cash spigot in Texas in hopes of pushing Senate nominee James Talarico across the finish line, despite not spending anything in the race to date. Senate Majority PAC launched a digital ad in Texas on Tuesday morning homing in on a plea deal that Attorney General Ken Paxton negotiated [...]

Exclusive: Texas Dem Talarico Caught In Lie On Trans Insanity

The Federalist RIGHT § *07:31 EDT*

Unearthed footage exclusively obtained by The Federalist rips off the mask of Talarico's phony 'moderating' position on trans issues.

· Talarico holds 5-point lead over Paxton in Texas Senate race, poll shows *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

· Talarico leads Paxton by 5 points in Texas Senate race poll *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

· Schumer launches new PAC to boost James Talarico's chances in Texas *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Trump stumps for Protect College Sports Act at Texas-Tennessee game: 'Bipartisanship for the first time in a while' *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· No. 1 Texas escapes Tennessee with thrilling SEC victory as President Trump watches on from Neyland Stadium *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Audio problems plague ABC for Texas-Tennessee after warning of possible disruptions with Trump at game *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Trump met with roaring cheers at University of Tennessee-Texas Longhorns college football game *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Air Force One does majestic flyover before Trump attends highly anticipated Texas-Tennessee game *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Trump trolls reporter: I don't want fake news 'like you' *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· SEC crowd greets Trump with massive cheers ahead of Tennessee-Texas showdown *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Trump to attend major Texas vs. Tennessee college football game — and coaches are worried about disruptions *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Tennessee fans excited for Trump's attendance at game vs Texas: 'I hope he stays the whole game' *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Trump set to attend Tennessee-Texas football game in Knoxville *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Trump to attend Texas-Tennessee football game as he pushes college sports bill *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Cruz: Trump should sign college sports bill live on ESPN's 'College GameDay' once passed *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Cruz faces rowdy crowd at College GameDay while promoting the Protect College Sports Act *from the morgue, 12 Sep 2026*

· GOP hopeful removes 'Pro-Trump' mention from campaign slogan in deep-red seat *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Tennessee uses unusual alcohol tactic to get fans there early with President Trump attending Texas showdown *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Live updates: Trump attends Texas-Tennessee football game in Knoxville; US, China to cut tariffs on $30 billion worth of goods *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Trump wants the Protect College Sports Act passed. What to know about the legislation. *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· This week on the Hill: Senate eyes final passage on college sports bill *from the morgue, 20 Sep 2026*

· College football pressure index: Four coaches, two QBs and one coordinator under the gun in Week 4 *from the morgue, 20 Sep 2026*

· Senate votes to move forward with Protect College Sports Act *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Kirk Herbstreit defends having Ted Cruz on 'College GameDay' *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

A landmark forever-chemical settlement leaves the shell game standing; Meta's own accountants call its AI tax play risky.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



"The Global Shell Game Hiding Forever Chemicals", 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE LEVER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Meta uses a federal research tax credit to fund AI data centers whose cooling systems can add to forever-chemical pollution.

WHO GETS PAID. Meta, which keeps billions in taxes it would otherwise owe.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's ability to see where forever-chemical liability sits slips, since the settlement leaves the shell structure that moves the waste in place.

WHAT'S NEXT. If local anger over data-center pollution turns into local bans, expect state preemption next; that is what West Virginia did on 30 April 2025, barring counties from blocking data-center construction.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Start with the settlement. This week's landmark PFAS settlement, as The Lever lays out, closes the ledger on decades of forever-chemical pollution without touching the corporate architecture that let the waste keep moving in the first place. It pays for the chemical. It does not touch the paperwork that kept it moving from company to company.

Open the filing next to it, filed the same week. Meta's own accountants, per the Times, call the position risky. Run the settlement against the filing and it's the same maneuver wearing two different departments: one side restructures its liability so the chemical isn't on its books, the other restructures its expenses so the deduction is. Here is the reconciliation, hon: neither filing has to say where the thing actually went....

...(cont) Follow the credit to where it lands. The data centers it's subsidizing are, per a September 18 item on the Hill, a newly identified source of the same forever chemicals the settlement was supposed to be about — through their cooling systems and through the semiconductors inside them. Four days earlier, on September 14, a Swedish nonprofit released research tying the AI buildout directly to rising PFAS production, the same week a United Nations expert renewed a call for a global ban on nonessential uses of the chemical. The settlement closes one source. The tax credit is quietly financing a new one.

Twelve days before that research went public, and sixteen before the Hill's report, the Commerce Secretary told CNBC that data centers "don't use water" at all. He was talking about cooling. Cooling is exactly the process the Hill later named as one of the two ways these facilities can put PFAS into the ground.

So here is the bottom line, filed twice this week under two different names. A settlement moves liability off one balance sheet. A tax credit moves research off another. Both filings end in the same place: the chemical is still out there, the money that made it is still deductible, and the column where it should show up stays exactly as clean as the accountants can keep it.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE COMMERCE SECRETARY TOLD CNBC THAT DATA CENTERS DON'T USE WATER, THE same week a report on Capitol Hill said their cooling systems can carry PFAS into the ground. That isn't a denial, it's the label printed on the tax break. The research credit pays for the data center, the data center runs on the cooling nobody at Commerce will call water, and what comes out the other end shows up on the water bill with your name on it.

"They settle the forever-chemical lawsuit and call it closed, then turn around and use a tax credit built for laboratories to bankroll a whole new supply of the same chemical. It's not two stories, it's one accounting trick working both ends of the same shell game — pay to make the old poison disappear, deduct to make the new batch. Either way the bill for cleaning it up lands on whoever's downstream, and that's not the guy signing the tax return."

— Sal

"The research and experimentation credit exists to keep American innovation here instead of overseas, and Meta's data centers are exactly the kind of high-tech investment Congress meant to reward. Sure, their own accountants flagged it as risky, but risky isn't illegal, it's just — okay, that's not actually the defense I meant to give. Look, nobody's proven the cooling systems are the ones causing the problem yet."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

The Global Shell Game Hiding Forever Chemicals
The Lever § *05:01 EDT*
A landmark settlement confronts decades of PFAS pollution — but not the corporate system that keeps moving the toxic waste elsewhere.

How Meta Uses A.I. Data Centers to Avoid Billions in Federal Taxes
The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:00 EDT*
Meta is exploiting a lucrative tax break intended to support research and experimentation. Its own accountants say the gambit is risky.

· How data centers may use forever chemicals *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Data centers, drawing concerns over water and power, may have another surprise impact: Forever chemicals *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Research Warns of Surge in Cancer-Causing Forever Chemicals From AI Data Center Build-Out *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Lutnick claims that data centers, known for water consumption, 'don't use water' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Justice Department unveils new pandemic-fraud charges the week a congressman's agency lost track of $1.23 billion.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



"Former Connecticut housing authority exec charged with $16.2 million loan fraud", 29 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A federal audit found Rep. Jared Moskowitz's Florida disaster agency failed to monitor $1.23 billion in COVID relief funds.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The government's own audit finds the billion-dollar gap, but no prosecutor's check follows that trail the way one followed the $16.2 million case.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the $1.23 billion stays unresolved, that is what happened after the Grace Commission's 1984 audit: reviewers found only about a third of the claimed $424 billion in savings, $98 billion, was real, and the rest was never recovered or charged to anyone.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On September 14th, in a hotel ballroom in Kansas City, Vice President Vance and Attorney General Blanche stood with the Small Business Administration's chief and the FBI to announce new charges tied to loans issued under the pandemic's Emergency Rental Assistance program. A podium, a seal, a number. That is what accountability looks like on camera.

Two weeks later a different file crossed this desk. The audit's own word for it is "gross oversight." In the ledger, that is the line with no signature attached: not money proven stolen, money nobody checked....

...(cont) Run that figure against the one filed out of Connecticut the same week. Robert Cappelletti, who ran the Meriden Housing Authority, was charged with $16.2 million in loan fraud. That number has a docket attached to it, and a name, and, eventually, a hearing date. Divide $1.23 billion by $16.2 million and the unmonitored pile in Florida runs seventy-six times the size of the one somebody is now going to answer for in a Connecticut courtroom.

That is the reconciliation. The government has built a system that can charge a housing director $16.2 million at a time, one docket at a time, one name at a time. It has not built the system that follows $1.23 billion once it leaves an agency answering to a sitting member of Congress. The audit found the gap. Nobody has filed a docket on the gap itself.

Kansas City got a podium. Meriden got an indictment. Florida got an audit finding, and so far, an audit finding only. The dollar amounts run in the opposite direction of the enforcement: smallest number, most paperwork; biggest number, a paragraph calling it "gross oversight" and moving to the next line item.

Somewhere there is a filing cabinet where the $1.23 billion sits next to the $16.2 million, and only one of the two has a court date, hon. The receipts this week name a housing director and a disaster agency. They do not yet name who signs for the difference — or when anyone will be asked to.

"They can always find sixteen million to hang on a housing director in Connecticut — that's easy math, a name and a docket number. Seventy-six times that much walks out the door of a congressman's own disaster agency and it gets called "gross oversight" in a report instead of a courtroom. The audit only points down, at renters and program managers; nobody's writing a subpoena for the billion-dollar hole upward."

— Sal

"Look, the administration is out there cracking down, holding press conferences, charging real fraud — that's the story, that's the number people should be talking about. The audit in Florida? That's a state agency's paperwork problem, that's — well, it is federal relief money, and it is Moskowitz's shop, but — did I say that, that's not landing right — the point is, we caught somebody. Focus on that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Former Connecticut housing authority exec charged with $16.2 million loan fraud

New York Post RIGHT § *19:13 EDT*

Robert Cappelletti was charged with committing the crimes while heading up Meriden Housing Authority.

But: **The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one** *Military Times, 19 December 2025*

Unearthed audit exposes vulnerable Dem's handling of COVID relief funds: 'Gross oversight'

Fox News RIGHT § *19:00 EDT*

A federal audit found Rep. Jared Moskowitz's Florida Division of Emergency Management failed to monitor $1.23 billion in COVID-19 relief funding.

· Watch live: Vance, Blanche unveil fraud charges tied to COVID-era emergency loans *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

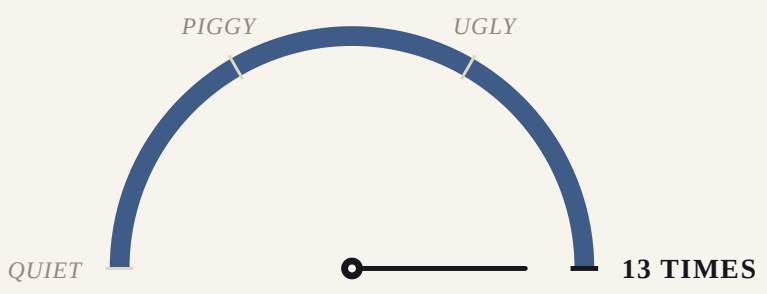
This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

§47 — 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

On nasty

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



13 TIMES

Here is the count. TheWrap tallied ten women reporters on the receiving end in thirty days last fall: on November 14, "Quiet, quiet piggy!"; on November 18, "terrible person"; on November 26, "ugly, both inside and out"; on November 27, "Are you stupid?" [1]. On December 6, of a CNN anchor: "always Stupid and Nasty" [2]. In August, Axios counted at least thirteen such attacks on women reporters since November 2025 and listed the vocabulary: "nasty," "piggy," "terrible," "ugly," "incapable" [3].

A question can be nasty; that was the defense, and in May it was about a question. Four of the five words on the list could not describe a question if they tried.

SOURCES

1. Ten women reporters in thirty days: "Quiet, quiet piggy!" (14 November), "terrible person" (18 November), "ugly, both inside and out" (26 November), "Are you stupid?" (27 November) — TheWrap, 9 December 2025 ↑
2. "Always Stupid and Nasty" — Truth Social — The Hill, 6 December 2025 ↑
3. At least thirteen attacks on women reporters since November 2025; the words "nasty," "piggy," "terrible," "ugly," "incapable" — Axios, 31 August 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



NASTY

The word has a long record and, at its best, a narrow target. In the October 2016 debate: "Such a nasty woman" [1]. But the best-known recent use was aimed at a question, not a person. Asked in May 2025 about the trading desks' nickname for his tariff reversals: "And you ask a nasty question like that? It's called negotiation. … That's a nasty question. To me, that's the nastiest question" [2].

The defense of the word is that one. A president who thinks a question is a cheap shot is entitled to say so, loudly, in the room where it was asked. The line between calling a question nasty and calling a person something is the whole argument, and the other column is the count of which side of it the word has been landing on.

SOURCES

1. "Such a nasty woman" — third presidential debate — CNN, 19 October 2016 ↑
2. "And you ask a nasty question like that? It's called negotiation. Don't ever say what you said. That's a nasty question. To me, that's the nastiest question." — FOX 9, 28 May 2025 ↑

"I want to say first, these are very good reporters. They ask very good questions — I'd never get a question like that out myself. May 28th of last year, a reporter asks about a trading nickname, and the answer is: "That's a nasty question. To me, that's the nastiest question." All right — that's about a question. Then November. "Quiet, quiet piggy." "Are you stupid?" "Ugly, both inside and out." December: "always Stupid and Nasty." Excuse me, I'm going. In May it was the question that was nasty. By November, what was?" — Lou

🍺

"Nasty. Ten years ago it was "such a nasty woman" on a debate stage. Now it's the White House press pool: "Quiet, quiet piggy." "Ugly, both inside and out." "Always Stupid and Nasty." Ten women reporters in thirty days by one count, at least thirteen times since November by another. He says it's the question that's nasty. The count keeps coming back to who asked it."

— Sal

🚬

"The president has enormous respect for the press, which is why he gives it such specific feedback — and if the feedback lately has gone mostly to women, that only reflects how many excellent questions women have been asking."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎