The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

THURSDAY, 01 OCTOBER 2026 — THE BREAKFAST EDITION — FREE, FOREVER

Budget office calls the war's $38 billion price tag conservative; Indiana responds by surrendering its own gas tax.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

The line is farmers first, and the line holds, so let me walk it forward from where I left it.

On the 8th of September, gas hit a Labor Day record, $4.14 a gallon, breaking the old record of $3.82 set back in 2012. A record is not a crisis. It is a benchmark, and we hit it because demand is strong, which is actually a good sign for the eco— I will come back to that.

On the 15th, the Congressional Budget Office closed its books on the Iran war and priced it at $38 billion, a number it called conservative, meaning there is room for it to grow. We said then, and we say now, that the number is not the story. The farmer is the story.

This week the farmer is still the story, except now the farmer's governor is paying for it out of his own state's checkbook. On Wednesday, Indiana's Mike Braun extended his gas tax suspension again, heading into the seven-month mark of a war that was supposed to be over by Labor Day. "Our farmers have the hardest job in America," Braun said, which is true, and which is also not an answer to who is covering the tax he just stopped collecting. Indiana is

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THE WORD

§48 — 01 OCTOBER 2026

On the flu shot

DEMOCRAT

ALL 17

REPUBLICAN

TRUST

"The flu shot. Simple story, I thought. The recommendation is unchanged: everybody six months and older, no contraindications, same as it's been. Then I look at who issues it. On June ninth of last year all seventeen sitting members of that committee were removed at once. Thirteen new ones were named. Then in March a federal court stayed the appointments and every vote the committee took after June eleventh. Sorry, one thing before you go. That committee's recommendation is the thing insurers key their coverage to. So the advice is the same as last year, and the machine that makes the advice mean anything is under a court order. Where does that leave the co-pay?" — Lou

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City Hall calls the operation outreach; its own staff call it a troll-farm offensive.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On September 2nd, the New York Post counted them: more than two hundred digital influencers assembled under Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration, built, the Post's own headline said, in a way that blurs the line between campaign and job. Twenty days later, on September 22nd, Fox News reported a second office carrying that work forward: Mamdani's Office of Mass Engagement, run by a commissioner with ties to the Democratic Socialists of America, tasked, in the wire's own summary, with building leaders and organizing people beyond City Hall's walls. On September 25th, a different ledger landed, from a different office: the Campaign Legal Center called President Trump's control over the $400 million MAGA Inc. super PAC a "clear-cut violation of campaign finance law." Two administrations, two complaints, the same arithmetic — public money and private power sharing a line item.

Then, on September 28th, the Post reported what the two-hundred-person network had been asked to do with its reach: plot a pressure campaign against New York's CEOs, private businesses with no seat in City Hall, paid for by the payroll that does. On October 1st, the Post returned with the word

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Supreme Court climate case loses a justice; oil industry loses its own former regulators

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Suncor Energy v. County Commissioners of Boulder County was not named among those six. It is on the calendar anyway, set for argument October 5.

Eight days after that list went out, the court held its long conference, a single closed-door sitting that worked through thousands of petitions — enough to include, by one count, a case about lobster surveillance. That is the term the Boulder case is entering: a court weighing the small alongside the sprawling.

The same week, Justice Samuel Alito recused himself from the Boulder case. He gave no explanation. He has served on the court since 2006, appointed by President George W. Bush. He stepped back a week before the argument date, after public pressure from left-leaning groups to do so.

What arrives October 5 is a question stated plainly by the court's own trade press: whether a ruling against the industry would crimp states' ability to sue oil and gas companies for climate costs. A decision isn't expected until next year.

What arrives with it is the brief. Ranchers signed it. Former Republican

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Super PAC's Talarico attack ad vanishes the moment a reporter asks what's in it.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

On September 5th, Donald Trump's super PAC, MAGA Inc., sent $10 million to a political media company, Del Ray Media. The money funded two attack ads against James Talarico, the Democrat running for Texas's open Senate seat against Attorney General Ken Paxton.

Three days later, on the 8th, David Maxwell endorsed Talarico instead. Maxwell had run law enforcement for Paxton's office for nearly a decade. He had reported Paxton to the FBI, and was later fired after doing it. He knows the office from the inside, and he picked the other name on the ballot.

On the 25th, two things landed the same day. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer launched his own PAC, Texas Forever, to help Talarico hold a seat Republicans have controlled for decades. And the Campaign Legal Center, citing decades of legal precedent, filed a complaint calling Trump's personal direction of MAGA Inc.'s spending a "clear-cut violation of campaign finance law." Federal officeholders are barred from directing a super PAC's checkbook. The complaint says Trump does it anyway, over a fund that had already spent $10 million attacking Talarico weeks before the complaint

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Roberts calls Trump's ballroom "likely unlawful," loses 5-4, retreats to his island anyway.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

John Roberts's island privacy is dead. It is survived by the chief justice himself, now harder to find than the address once was. It was preceded in death by the ballroom.

On August 31, the ballroom went first. The Supreme Court let construction on the White House's new ballroom continue under a split decision, and this time Roberts crossed the aisle, siding with the Court's three liberals against its other five conservatives, telling the government the project was "likely unlawful" even as it kept rising. The majority let it proceed anyway. He had already signed the earlier solo order permitting the work to begin; his own dissent couldn't undo his own prior signature. Survived by the ballroom, still standing.

On September 5, Missouri filed the next complaint, an emergency application asking the Court — addressed to Justice Brett Kavanaugh specifically — to overturn a state court's block on a new congressional map before the November election. Win or lose, a map fight like that lands on the chief justice's desk eventually; he assigns the opinions.

... Continued on Page B1

ICE leads the investigation into the agent who shot him; he's the one held on an assault charge.

BY LOU
One More Question

September 21st. A Sunday. An ICE agent shoots a Venezuelan DoorDash driver in his own car, in Austin, Texas. Protesters gather outside the ICE building within hours. Civil rights attorneys hold a press conference that same afternoon and call for an independent investigation into the shooting. By evening, the Department of Homeland Security announces that its own Homeland Security Investigations unit — not an outside body, its own — will lead the probe into the shooting carried out by one of its own agents.

September 22nd. A federal judge blocks the government from deporting the driver, Wilber Rafael Garces Perez. By then he's been transferred between hospitals and a detention cell more than once. His attorney tells the court the bullet is still lodged in his back.

October 1st. A federal judge keeps him in custody. Not for being shot. For a charge filed against him — assaulting an officer while trying to evade arrest. The report doesn't give me a date for that one. Just that it happened, and the old way of watching stopped working.

I wrote the dates down in a little notebook — not because I'm clever, be-

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Tennessee's first execution of a woman in 200 years fails twice, leaving her alive to make history anyway.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

Tennessee's position, going into Wednesday, was that this would be routine — the Supreme Court had cleared the way late that night for Christa Pike, convicted over thirty years ago of the 1995 murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer, to become the first woman executed in Tennessee in two hundred years, which is not, on reflection, the kind of thing that happens routinely.

It did not. At Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville, the team gave Pike a first dose of pentobarbital — a lethal dose, by design, meaning it was supposed to end her life, which it did not do. Tori Gessner, a news anchor for ABC affiliate WKRN who witnessed the execution, said Pike told the room her arm felt like it was about to burst open, then smiled. The team gave a second dose. That one did not work either.

Catherine Sweeney, a health reporter for WPLN, reported that the state's protocol had no rule for what should happen if a dose failed a second time: the people who wrote it had prepared for one kind of failure, and gotten two. Forty minutes after the second injection, witnesses in the room described her snoring, exhaling loudly, gasping — still alive. She was taken to an off-

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House Judiciary's ranking Democrat asks two watchdogs to investigate taxpayer-funded ads, neither obligated to reply.

BY MITCH
Investigations

Jamie Raskin and Rep. George Whitesides, addressed to the Government Accountability Office and the Office of Special Counsel. All together now — line one: it asks for an investigation into taxpayer-funded advertisements produced by the Trump administration. Line two: it asks for two investigations, not one, because the ranking member has read the organizational chart correctly — one agency audits where the money went, the other polices what it was used to say, and a letter that guesses wrong at jurisdiction is a letter that gets filed by the wrong desk and answered by nobody.

This office finds nothing objectionable in a letter. A letter is cheap, it is legal, and it goes on the record, three qualities the House Judiciary minority currently has in surplus. What the letter does not have, and does not claim to have, is the power to make either agency answer it on a deadline. The Government Accountability Office can audit. The Office of Special Counsel can investigate. Raskin's committee cannot subpoena a reply out of either one — the ranking member can ask; the gavel belongs to the chair, Rep. Jim Jordan.

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Short-staffed controllers call conditions unsafe; FAA answers with an AI tool and insists humans still run it.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

On September 4, air traffic controllers working the Washington region told reporters their agency had driven morale to an all-time low and left the flying public at heightened risk, the fallout from an August interview with FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford about working conditions. Seventeen days later, on September 21, Bedford stood beside Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy to unveil the response: a new tool called SMART, the Strategic Management of Airspace, Routes, and Trajectories, launched first in the same Washington region the controllers had just described as unsafe.

Duffy told reporters the administration was not outsourcing aviation to artificial intelligence. It is, so far, outsourcing the explanation of that decision — by October 1, NPR had the chief executive of the company building SMART's software on the air, walking listeners through how the tool works and addressing what the network called rising public anxiety. The agency built the tool. The vendor is doing the reassuring.

The pitch is that SMART predicts flight delays and advises the controllers already working the floor. Those are the same controllers who, seventeen

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Egg prices drop, White House claims credit; the same months' $100 billion fuel bill goes unclaimed.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Four days ago this page reported that the president rejected Iran's offer to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, rescheduled the bombing for after the midterms, and put his U.N. ambassador on Fox News to credit $6.48 diesel to Ukraine. Today's receipts pick up the same ledger, a few entries back.

On September 9, the global price of oil crossed $100 a barrel for the first time since July, and a tracker kept by Brown University's Watson School put the running cost of the Iran war to American consumers at more than $101 billion — roughly $776 per household, the household itself unnamed, the way "consumers" is never anybody in particular. The war that produced that bill had, eighteen days later, this much on the record: Iran's offer was rejected, and the bombing moved to after the midterms.

Before that, on August 31, the American Automobile Association clocked something that had not happened before: gas above $4 a gallon every single day of August, the average landing at $4.08, ninety cents higher than the same month a year earlier. Prices usually ease by late summer. This August did not.

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Federal court shields students' Palestinian-rights speech from deportation; another clears an imam's for deportation.

BY LOU
One More Question

Walk me through it, would you? Step by step, the way it actually happened, because I do better with steps than with summaries.

Here's what's in front of me. End of August, a federal judge in California, Noël Wise, appointed by President Biden—the piece says—rules that the government can't deport international students, can't pull their visas, over criticizing Israel's war in Gaza. Common Dreams has it from the Friday the ruling came down: the administration "violated the Constitution," the ruling says, First Amendment and Fifth both. Stanford Daily brought the suit. Is that the first step?

Now here's where I need the walk-through, because I don't do this for a living. That same Friday, the Washington Examiner is covering it too—different outlet, different politics, and when I read it, same judge, Noel Wise, same students, same ruling. Two newsrooms covering one courtroom. Is that two separate times the government got stopped, or is that one time, covered by two papers?

Then a month passes. September 30th, the New York Times: Salah Sarsour,

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Twelve states settle antitrust suit for safeguards Paramount wrote and thirty movies a year

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

You are thinking a judge looked at this and found it sound. A judge approved a settlement — the settlement, mind you, not the merger. Twelve states went in on antitrust grounds and came out with safeguards for CNN's editorial independence, and do note who drafted those safeguards. Paramount drafted them. The company that was the complaint wrote the clause that restrains the company, and on Wednesday the court approved the writing.

Two suits were holding the purchase up on the twenty-first, the Writers Guild of America and a dozen states, and both are settled. What did twelve attorneys general carry home? Thirty films a year. Thirty. For the first two years, after which the obligation lapses, while a hundred and ten billion dollars does not lapse at all. A hundred and eleven billion, by one report. Either figure buys the same thing.

Someone will say the states extracted concessions. The consideration runs one way: twelve states spent the only suit they had ... and took home a promise composed by the party it binds. Bonta announced the details himself on the twenty-first. CBS News carried the announcement. Paramount Skydance

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Newsom declares he hates AI, climbs a bridge tower eight days later to outlaw it.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Seventeen days before he climbed anything, Gavin Newsom told reporters he would not run for president in 2028 if Kamala Harris does. The New York Post called the announcement brilliant stagecraft. It was also, on its face, a governor telling the country he was thinking about running for president.

Eleven days before the bridge, he signed "Jay Leno's Law," letting high-emission classic cars back onto California streets for short trips. CBS sent a crew. The bill got its own segment the day it was signed.

Eight days before the bridge, the same governor who spent 2025 vetoing a data-center water-disclosure rule to keep California competitive in AI announced he had changed his mind. He had loved it; now he hated it. The reversal took twelve months, the New York Post's clock, to cover an entire industry's worth of position.

One bill restricted ICE tactics in California, banning shock gloves and building a public list of agents who use them. The other was a phone call: Newsom told reporters Bill Clinton calls him at night to help build "Project 2029," a framework for the thing he had just said, seventeen days earlier, he

... Continued on Page A6

House requires states to consider a fix; Senate blocks even that; one county tries doing the math itself

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Start where the money starts. September 2, on CNBC, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick was asked about data centers' water and power draw and called the concern "propaganda" — the same official who had once said plainly that data centers "suck water."

Fourteen days later, September 16, the House passed the Ratepayer Protection Act. Read the bill at the level it was actually written. It requires states to consider taking up standards that would force tech companies to shoulder the electricity cost increases data centers bring to the ratepayer's bill. Requires: consideration. Does not require: regulation. That gap is the whole bill.

Nine days after that, September 25, commissioners in Palm Beach County — the county that holds Mar-a-Lago — voted 6 to 0 for a one-year moratorium on any data center drawing fifty megawatts or more. That vote did not wait for Washington's bill to tell it to consider the question; it answered the question.

Today the companion bill reached the Senate. The Hill's own copy calls

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States begin paying more to run food aid the same month Washington quietly cancels a billion dollars.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

In late August, the administration proposed rewriting the rules that run Head Start. Buried inside "Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs" is a change to who gets in the door first: current policy requires every Head Start program to prioritize enrolling children from homeless families; the draft rule removes that requirement. Kennedy Jr. asking him to scrap the proposal. As of this writing, it has not been scrapped.

Eleven days after that letter, the Office of Management and Budget filed what's called a pocket rescission — timed close enough to the end of the fiscal year that Congress runs out the clock before it can object. This one canceled $810 million already appropriated for immigration, refugee, and foreign debt-relief programs. It is only the second pocket rescission filed in fifty years. Both were filed by this administration, in this term.

Five days after that, on October 1, the funding formula for food assistance changed. States now pay a larger share of the cost of running SNAP — not the benefit itself, but the administrative work behind it: the caseworkers, the eligibility reviews, the system that gets the benefit to the table on time. The fed-

... Continued on Page F8

Trump revives Biden's AI self-policing pledge days after a Senate warning on nuclear command and control.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Start on the 30th of August, when Google Maps renamed Lake Ontario "Lake America." It was a proof of concept. Not long after, the government's own AI chatbot, the one built to answer citizens' questions, started contradicting President Trump's claims — and then its answers were edited until it stopped. Correction, applied until the record matched the man, not the facts.

On the 21st of September, a defense writer described an AI glitch that had nearly started a war, and warned that a catastrophic technology was being treated as an afterthought — something nuclear command and control was never allowed to be. The next day, a UN-backed scientific panel told world leaders the safeguards that already exist are "unraveling."

Three days later, Bill Gates — co-founder of Microsoft — told reporters he does not share the industry's confidence in its own self-regulation, and prefers a hands-on approach from government instead. That is the dissent that arrived before the room even convened.

The room convened anyway. Trump's answer was a voluntary pledge: tech executives signing what CBS described as an AI "constitution," built on the

... Continued on Page A7

"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*

City Hall calls the operation outreach; its own staff call it a troll-farm offensive.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"What Mamdani's planned 'troll-farm offensive' reveals about the City Hall braintrust", 1 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. City Hall aides described their own taxpayer-funded influencer operation as a troll-farm offensive aimed at CEOs.

WHO GETS PAID. Mayor Mamdani's political operation gets a publicly salaried influencer corps and pressure campaign at taxpayer expense.

WHAT SLIPS. The wall between public payroll and private political pressure campaigns slips, with the city's own aides naming the breach themselves.

WHAT'S NEXT. No hearing, audit, or city council review of the operation's funding is scheduled yet.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On September 2nd, the New York Post counted them: more than two hundred digital influencers assembled under Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration, built, the Post's own headline said, in a way that blurs the line between campaign and job. Twenty days later, on September 22nd, Fox News reported a second office carrying that work forward: Mamdani's Office of Mass Engagement, run by a commissioner with ties to the Democratic Socialists of America, tasked, in the wire's own summary, with building leaders and organizing people beyond City Hall's walls. On September 25th, a different ledger landed, from a different office: the Campaign Legal Center called President Trump's control over the $400 million MAGA Inc. super PAC a "clear-cut violation of campaign finance law." Two administrations, two complaints, the same arithmetic — public money and private power sharing a line item.

Then, on September 28th, the Post reported what the two-hundred-person network had been asked to do with its reach: plot a pressure campaign against New York's CEOs, private businesses with no seat in City Hall, paid for by the payroll that does. On October 1st, the Post returned with the word City Hall's own aides had reached for to describe that assignment: a "troll-farm offensive."...

...(cont) That is the whole arc, laid end to end — a network built to flatter the mayor, running an office built to organize beyond him, now aimed at a list of CEOs with no seat in the room where the payroll gets set. And the name for that operation did not come from a critic, a watchdog, or an opposing party. It came from the people drawing the paychecks.

The salary line says outreach. The commissioner's language says organizing. The word the aides themselves reached for says offensive. None of those three describes the same job, and only one of them is what the public treasury is paying for.

Here's the reconciliation, hon: the city budget carries line items for engagement, for outreach, for mass participation. It carries no line item for pressuring private employers. Somewhere between the line item and the work being filed under it, two hundred paid staffers became an offensive — and the office that employs them is the office that said so first.

"Two hundred people on the city payroll, pointed at CEOs, and the mayor's own office calls it a troll-farm offensive before anybody else gets the chance to say it. That's not a slip of the tongue — that's the staff naming their own assignment out loud, and you're the one who funded the war room."

— Sal

"Look, "outreach" covers a lot of ground, and a commissioner talking about building leaders is just community engagement, that's all it is. The troll-farm language is probably internal shorthand, nothing anyone meant literally — did I just defend calling a CEO list a target list? That doesn't sound like me."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Mayor's 200 taxpayer-paid influencers, hired to blur campaign and city work, now aimed at CEOs.* By Ruth · the milkman edition, 1 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

What Mamdani's planned 'troll-farm offensive' reveals about the City Hall braintrust

New York Post RIGHT § *05:00 EDT*

The smear campaign can only further alienate its targets without actually harming them, since CEOs sleep just fine at night despite Cousin Comrade's YouTube yucks, Bluesky blasts, and Instagram insults.

· Mamdani's 'mass engagement' office draws fire over plans to build influence beyond City Hall: 'NYC is done' *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 climate case loses a justice; oil industry loses its own former regulators

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

"Supreme Court to consider free speech, lobster surveillance, and thousands of cases at long conference", 28 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Supreme Court hears Boulder County's case October 5 to hold oil companies liable for climate costs.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. The court hears arguments October 5; a ruling is not expected before next year.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Suncor Energy v. County Commissioners of Boulder County was not named among those six. It is on the calendar anyway, set for argument October 5.

Eight days after that list went out, the court held its long conference, a single closed-door sitting that worked through thousands of petitions — enough to include, by one count, a case about lobster surveillance. That is the term the Boulder case is entering: a court weighing the small alongside the sprawling....

...(cont) The same week, Justice Samuel Alito recused himself from the Boulder case. He gave no explanation. He has served on the court since 2006, appointed by President George W. Bush. He stepped back a week before the argument date, after public pressure from left-leaning groups to do so.

What arrives October 5 is a question stated plainly by the court's own trade press: whether a ruling against the industry would crimp states' ability to sue oil and gas companies for climate costs. A decision isn't expected until next year.

What arrives with it is the brief. Ranchers signed it. Former Republican EPA administrators signed it. Conservative legal scholars signed it — all of them on paper, backing a Colorado county's right to make oil companies pay for what the climate is already costing it, against the industry some of them used to answer to, and some of them used to regulate.

That sentence did not come from a press release. It is what the filings say: the industry is being sued by a county, watched by a court missing one justice by his own choice, and opposed by people whose careers ran inside the party that built the case for leaving it alone.

Whatever it rules, the record will show who asked it not to rule for the industry — and that some of those names used to run the agency built to answer to it.

"You know something's real when the people who used to run the regulator switch sides against the company they were supposed to be watching. That's not activism, that's people who saw the books. When a justice steps aside from the one case that could cost the industry money, pay attention to who's left standing in the room."

— Sal

"Look, these suits are just going to drive up energy costs for working families, that's the bottom line — and the fact that some former EPA guys signed on, that's, well, that's a small sample, doesn't mean anything, regulators disagree with industry all the time, that's healthy, that's the system working. Did I say "the system working"? Forget I said that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Fed watchdog clears Powell of crime; Trump orders Justice Department to review the clearance* By Ruth · the wee small hours edition, 1 October 2026
- *Trump's own ad campaign gets a clean bill; Powell's does too, so Trump orders a second opinion.* By Ruth · the early evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *Fed clears $2.5 billion renovation; watchdog calls Trump's $400 million war chest a 'clear-cut violation.' Neither gets referred.* By Ruth · the supper edition, 30 September 2026
- *Appeals court affirms Trump directed both sides of his own $10 billion lawsuit* By Sal · the early bird edition, 30 September 2026
- *DOJ spied on Minnesota activists after the ICE killings, then charged its judges, voters and a violence interrupter.* By Sal · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026
- *The renovation Trump used to oust Powell clears him, no referral; his own war chest gets one.* By Ruth · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Supreme Court to consider free speech, lobster surveillance, and thousands of cases at long conference

Washington Examiner RIGHT · *07:00 EDT*

Supreme Court justices will return to Washington on Monday for their first closed-door conference to discuss cases petitioned to them, a week ahead of the beginning of the high court's new term featuring several major cases. The high court's "long conference," held the week before the new Supreme Court term, will feature thousands of...

The surprising allies backing Boulder's climate case before the Supreme Court

Grist · *04:45 EDT*

Ranchers, conservative legal scholars, and former Republican EPA chiefs are siding against oil companies. Here's why.

Supreme Court case could crimp states' ability to sue oil and gas firms over climate change

Washington Examiner RIGHT · *05:00 EDT*

Supreme Court justices will hear arguments next week in a landmark case that could determine whether states can sue oil and gas companies for climate change. Although a decision in the case, Suncor Energy v. County Commissioners of Boulder County, isn't expected until next year, the Oct.

~~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.

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.

Justice Alito recuses himself from major Supreme Court climate change case

Washington Examiner RIGHT · *15:15 EDT*

Justice Samuel Alito announced Monday he would be recusing himself from a major Supreme Court climate change case a week before oral arguments, after facing pressure from left-wing groups to do so. Alito, who has served on the Supreme Court since 2006 after being appointed by then-President George W. Bush, did not offer an explanation [...]

· Six major cases the Supreme Court will hear in its upcoming term *from the morgue, 20 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*

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

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Super PAC's Talarico attack ad vanishes the moment a reporter asks what's in it.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

"WATCH: GOP super PAC quietly launches outlandish smear against Talarico", 1 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA POPULAR INFORMATION — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A Republican super PAC deleted its Talarico attack ad after a reporter asked about it.

WHO GETS PAID. Ken Paxton's Senate campaign, backed by Trump's MAGA Inc. super PAC, gets the benefit of the spending.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's chance to see and check the ad disappears along with it, and a watchdog's finance complaint has not stopped the spending.

WHAT'S NEXT. The complaint sits with the Federal Election Commission while the fund keeps spending; the race it is paying to win comes to a vote in November.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On September 5th, Donald Trump's super PAC, MAGA Inc., sent $10 million to a political media company, Del Ray Media. The money funded two attack ads against James Talarico, the Democrat running for Texas's open Senate seat against Attorney General Ken Paxton.

Three days later, on the 8th, David Maxwell endorsed Talarico instead. Maxwell had run law enforcement for Paxton's office for nearly a decade. He had reported Paxton to the FBI, and was later fired after doing it. He knows the office from the inside, and he picked the other name on the ballot....

...(cont) On the 25th, two things landed the same day. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer launched his own PAC, Texas Forever, to help Talarico hold a seat Republicans have controlled for decades. And the Campaign Legal Center, citing decades of legal precedent, filed a complaint calling Trump's personal direction of MAGA Inc.'s spending a "clear-cut violation of campaign finance law." Federal officeholders are barred from directing a super PAC's checkbook. The complaint says Trump does it anyway, over a fund that had already spent $10 million attacking Talarico weeks before the complaint was filed.

A new ad surfaced, smearing Talarico, posted without much notice. A reporter called asking about it. Shortly after that call, the ad came down. Gone, as if it had not run at all — except somebody already saw it, and nobody who saw it got to watch it get checked.

An ad that comes down shortly after a reporter asks about it was not built for anyone who asks about it. It was built for the voters who scroll past it once, before the question ever gets asked. The ad itself shows what that fund is for: find the opponent, hit him before anyone checks the hit, and clear the evidence the moment someone does. Follow the money back far enough, and it stops at the man the complaint names.

"They write the check, they write the ad, and the second somebody asks a question they hit delete — that's not a mistake, that's a system built to leave no fingerprints. Same fund a watchdog already says Trump isn't allowed to run, spending money he's not supposed to control, on an ad nobody downstream was ever supposed to see twice. Follow it back far enough and it's always the same guy's name on the checkbook."

— Sal

"Pulling an ad the second a reporter calls — that's just responsible advertising, standard review process, nothing unusual about that at all. And Trump's not "directing" the PAC, he's just the guy whose name is on it who happens to want exactly what it does. Did I say that? That's not — forget I said that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Fed watchdog clears Powell of crime; Trump orders Justice Department to review the clearance* By Ruth · the wee small hours edition, 1 October 2026
- *Trump's own ad campaign gets a clean bill; Powell's does too, so Trump orders a second opinion.* By Ruth · the early evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *Fed clears $2.5 billion renovation; watchdog calls Trump's $400 million war chest a 'clear-cut violation.' Neither gets referred.* By Ruth · the supper edition, 30 September 2026
- *Appeals court affirms Trump directed both sides of his own $10 billion lawsuit* By Sal · the early bird edition, 30 September 2026
- *DOJ spied on Minnesota activists after the ICE killings, then charged its judges, voters and a violence interrupter.* By Sal · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026
- *The renovation Trump used to oust Powell clears him, no referral; his own war chest gets one.* By Ruth · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~WATCH: GOP super PAC quietly launches outlandish smear against Talarico~~

GOP super PAC deletes its attack ad the moment reporters start asking questions

Popular Information § *06:31 EDT*

Shortly after Popular Information reached out for comment, the ad was taken offline.

~~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.

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.

~~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...

· Schumer launches new PAC to boost James Talarico's chances in Texas *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Trump's MAGA Inc. super-PAC funnels $10 million into Ken Paxton's Senate campaign *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· Ken Paxton's former 'top cop' endorses James Talarico in Texas Senate race *from the morgue, 8 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*

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Roberts calls Trump's ballroom "likely unlawful," loses 5-4, retreats to his island anyway.

By **MORT**
THE RECORDS BUREAU



"Supreme Court to consider free speech, lobster surveillance, and thousands of cases at long conference", 28 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Chief Justice Roberts has retreated further into his private island life as protests over his Court's rulings reach him there.

WHO GETS PAID. The Trump administration gets its White House ballroom built while the one dissenting vote hides from the fallout.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's ability to hold the Court accountable slips further as its chief justice retreats from the anger his own rulings created.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the Court takes up Missouri's congressional-map fight, a ruling could redraw districts before the November election; that emergency application went to Justice Kavanaugh on September 5, 2026, and is still pending.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

John Roberts's island privacy is dead. It is survived by the chief justice himself, now harder to find than the address once was. It was preceded in death by the ballroom.

On August 31, the ballroom went first. The Supreme Court let construction on the White House's new ballroom continue under a split decision, and this time Roberts crossed the aisle, siding with the Court's three liberals against its other five conservatives, telling the government the project was "likely unlawful" even as it kept rising. The majority let it proceed anyway. He had already signed the earlier solo order permitting the work to begin; his own dissent couldn't undo his own prior signature. Survived by the ballroom, still standing....

...(cont) On September 5, Missouri filed the next complaint, an emergency application asking the Court — addressed to Justice Brett Kavanaugh specifically — to overturn a state court's block on a new congressional map before the November election. Win or lose, a map fight like that lands on the chief justice's desk eventually; he assigns the opinions.

The new term hadn't opened yet. It started gathering itself on September 28, a week ahead of the actual opening, when the justices sat for the "long conference," sorting thousands of petitions behind closed doors — a free-speech case, a lobster-surveillance case, the penny-ante and the consequential filed into the same stack, waiting for argument days later.

That is the docket Roberts returns to.

In lieu of flowers, leave him the paddle. Read the docket yourself — the congressional map, the fall calendar, the next emergency application are coming whether the chief justice is on the dock or back on the bench.

"This is the guy who signed off on letting the ballroom go up, then wrote a dissent saying it was unlawful, and now he's paddleboarding away from the mess he helped make possible. The Court keeps ruling for the guy with the gold ballroom and then acting surprised when people show up at the dock to ask why."

— Sal

"The chief justice is entitled to a private life like any American — well, any American whose ballroom ruling triggers federal protests, I suppose that's not exactly private anymore, is it. Look, the Court ruled on the law, not on real estate, and if people can't separate the two that's an education problem, not a Roberts problem. Did I just blame the voters for reading the docket? That's not the line, scratch that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Trump loses his newest H-1B fight and his 26th voter-roll fight to two judges in one week.* By Sal · the milkman edition, 1 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Supreme Court to consider free speech, lobster surveillance, and thousands of cases at long conference

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *07:00 EDT*

Supreme Court justices will return to Washington on Monday for their first closed-door conference to discuss cases petitioned to them, a week ahead of the beginning of the high court's new term featuring several major cases. The high court's "long conference," held the week before the new Supreme Court term, will feature thousands of...

John Roberts Retreated to His Island. Supreme Court Critics Found Him.

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *07:54 EDT*

After decades of potlucks and paddle-boarding on Maine's midcoast, rising anger and protests have left the Supreme Court's chief justice more isolated than ever.

· Split Supreme Court Allows Trump Ballroom Construction That Chief Justice Calls 'Likely Unlawful' *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Missouri asks Supreme Court to overturn block of new congressional map before election *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

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SHOT, THEN CHARGED

ICE leads the investigation into the agent who shot him; he's the one held on an assault charge.

By LOU

ONE MORE QUESTION

"ICE got 'quieter' – then killed a father in Maine. Now watch groups are shifting their tactics too", 1 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A judge kept a Venezuelan DoorDash driver shot by an ICE agent behind bars on an assault charge.

WHO GETS PAID. The Department of Homeland Security's own investigations unit, assigned to review its own agent's shooting, keeps control of the outcome.

WHAT SLIPS. Independent review of a police shooting slips away when the agency investigates itself.

WHAT'S NEXT. If ICE keeps operating more quietly, outside observers could lose access the way reporters did at the Pentagon on 15 October 2025, when correspondents turned in their badges rather than work under new expulsion rules.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

September 21st. A Sunday. An ICE agent shoots a Venezuelan DoorDash driver in his own car, in Austin, Texas. Protesters gather outside the ICE building within hours. Civil rights attorneys hold a press conference that same afternoon and call for an independent investigation into the shooting. By evening, the Department of Homeland Security announces that its own Homeland Security Investigations unit — not an outside body, its own — will lead the probe into the shooting carried out by one of its own agents.

September 22nd. A federal judge blocks the government from deporting the driver, Wilber Rafael Garces Perez. By then he's been transferred between hospitals and a detention cell more than once. His attorney tells the court the bullet is still lodged in his back....

...(cont) October 1st. A federal judge keeps him in custody. Not for being shot. For a charge filed against him — assaulting an officer while trying to evade arrest. The report doesn't give me a date for that one. Just that it happened, and the old way of watching stopped working.

I wrote the dates down in a little notebook — not because I'm clever, because I kept losing track of what came before what. Turns out the order was the whole thing.

Here's where I get stuck. Maybe you can walk me through it, because I've been stuck on it most of the week, standing in my own driveway asking my dog, who has no opinion either way.

There's a toll plaza I go through most mornings — no gate, no ticket, just a camera and a bill that shows up later. Every so often the bill's wrong. Charges you for a trip you didn't take, a lane you didn't use. There's an office you can call to dispute it. Here's the part that gets me: the office that reviews your dispute works for the same authority that sent you the bill. Not a separate building. Not a separate boss. You make your case to the people who already decided what you owe.

So when I read that the agency investigating the shooting in Austin is the same agency whose agent pulled the trigger — the Department of Homeland Security investigating the Department of Homeland Security — is that the toll plaza, or is that something else? I genuinely don't know what to call it. I just know who's reviewing the bill.

And the man who got shot — he's the one with a charge against him now. Assaulting an officer while trying to evade arrest, the judge's order says today. It doesn't say which officer. I've got it written down somewhere — here. "An officer." Not the officer. An officer. Could be the one who fired the shot that's still in him. Could be somebody else standing nearby. The filing doesn't say, which means I can't tell you, which means that one's yours to sit with.

Alright — that's everything I had. Go on, get back to your day. Oh — hang on, one more thing, I almost let you walk out without it. The people with the lawn chairs in Scarborough used to watch ICE buildings the way you'd watch a nature show, out in the open, binoculars and birdsong. They're not doing that anymore. Which came first, do you figure — the agency getting quieter about where it operates, or the watchers deciding the open way doesn't work for them anymore?

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

AN ICE AGENT SHOT A DELIVERY DRIVER IN HIS OWN CAR IN AUSTIN, AND THE Department of Homeland Security put its own Homeland Security Investigations unit in charge of finding out what that agent did. That isn't oversight, that's the shooter grading his own exam. Because the agency decides first what happened, because what it decides becomes the only official account anyone outside ever sees, the explanation that lands in your mailbox next to your own car registration renewal is the one written by the department being investigated.

"They shoot a delivery driver in his own car, then hand the investigation of that shooting to the same department that pulled the trigger — that's not oversight, that's the fox doing inventory in the henhouse. The guy who got shot is the one facing an assault charge; up in Maine they just killed somebody else and got quieter about where they operate. You don't get safer when the only people watching have to change how they watch — you get fewer witnesses."

— Sal

"Agencies review their own officer-involved shootings all the time, that's standard procedure, not some cover-up — Homeland Security Investigations is a real unit with a real job. I mean, when you put it that way, it does sound like the agency's grading its own test, which — did I just say that? That's not what I meant."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Judge keeps DoorDash driver shot by ICE behind bars for alleged assault

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *07:27 EDT*

A Venezuelan delivery driver who was shot in his car by an ICE agent in Texas will remain in custody on charges that he assaulted an officer while trying to evade arrest, a federal judge ruled.

But: The UN torture rapporteur found direct-contact electric shock gloves "incompatible with the absolute prohibition of torture" - ICE plans to spend up to $20 million on them *ABC10 San Diego / UN Special Rapporteur finding, August 2026*

ICE got 'quieter' – then killed a father in Maine. Now watch groups are shifting their tactics too

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

ICE-watchers get creative after the killing of Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, as Trump's immigration crackdown takes a more secretive approach Most of the time, the scene outside the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility in the small, coastal town of Scarborough, Maine , could be confused for a nature watch in...

· Federal Judge Blocks DHS From Deporting Austin Man Shot by ICE *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Advocates call for independent probe after Venezuelan DoorDash driver shot by ICE agent in Texas *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· ICE agent shoots DoorDash driver in Austin, authorities say *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· DHS now leading investigation into shooting involving ICE officer in Austin *from the morgue, 21 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.

TWICE BOTCHED

Tennessee's first execution of a woman in 200 years fails twice, leaving her alive to make history anyway.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER

"Tennessee fails to execute convicted killer Christa Pike after 2 lethal injections", 1 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NBC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Tennessee attempted to execute Christa Pike by lethal injection, and she survived the attempt.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The courts' assurance that lethal injection is a safe, lawful method slips, since the failure only came to light because reporters happened to be sitting in the witness room.

WHAT'S NEXT. Tennessee's governor has halted the state's remaining executions for the year, with executions set to resume next year; no resumption date and no public accounting of what went wrong have been set yet.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Tennessee's position, going into Wednesday, was that this would be routine — the Supreme Court had cleared the way late that night for Christa Pike, convicted over thirty years ago of the 1995 murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer, to become the first woman executed in Tennessee in two hundred years, which is not, on reflection, the kind of thing that happens routinely.

It did not. At Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville, the team gave Pike a first dose of pentobarbital — a lethal dose, by design, meaning it was supposed to end her life, which it did not do. Tori Gessner, a news anchor for ABC affiliate WKRN who witnessed the execution, said Pike told the room her arm felt like it was about to burst open, then smiled. The team gave a second dose. That one did not work either....

...(cont) Catherine Sweeney, a health reporter for WPLN, reported that the state's protocol had no rule for what should happen if a dose failed a second time: the people who wrote it had prepared for one kind of failure, and gotten two. Forty minutes after the second injection, witnesses in the room described her snoring, exhaling loudly, gasping — still alive. She was taken to an off-site medical facility. She is still alive.

Only then did Governor Bill Lee halt the state's remaining executions for the year, the second botched execution in Tennessee in 2026 alone. The state arrived, this week, at the same conclusion Florida's governor reached in December 2006, after a prisoner named Ángel Nieves Díaz took 34 minutes to die of a botched lethal injection: that something was wrong with how the drug was being delivered. Florida got there off one bad execution. Tennessee needed two attempts, forty minutes, and a trip to the hospital with the inmate still breathing.

Before Wednesday, the official position was that the system was sound — a safe drug, an all-female team, a lawful sentence, each one checked and confirmed, which must be why it took two doses and forty minutes to confirm that none of it had been. The Department of Correction has not yet said what that explanation will be.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

TENNESSEE ASSIGNED AN ALL-FEMALE TEAM TO GIVE CHRISTA PIKE TWO DOSES OF PENTOBARBITAL, and forty minutes after the second one, witnesses in the room said she was still snoring, so the governor stopped the state's remaining executions for the year. That is not a system catching its own mistake, that is a government finding out, in front of reporters, that "the protocol worked" was a sentence it had never actually tested. Because the state only paused when people in the room could hear her breathing, the next time somebody tells you a procedure is routine and safe — at the hospital, on the chart clipped to the foot of your bed — the proof it works is not the paperwork, it is whether anyone is still in the room to notice if it doesn't.

"They promised an all-female team and a drug the protocol called safe, then needed two doses and forty minutes to find out it wasn't — and they only stopped once reporters in the room heard her snoring. This is the same state that called this routine, the first woman they'd tried to put to death in two hundred years, like it was a ribbon-cutting. You don't get a pause after the second failure instead of the first unless the plan was to keep going until somebody with a notepad made them stop."

— Sal

"Look, the system worked exactly as the courts intended — the Supreme Court cleared it, the Department followed its own protocol to the letter. Sure, it took two doses and forty minutes and a trip to the hospital before anyone called a halt, but the protocol itself is sound, it's just missing a rule for what happens if it fails twice, which — did I just say the protocol has a hole in it? That's not — forget I said that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Tennessee Is Days Away From Executing a Sexual Assault Victim

Truthout § *15:46 EDT*

Christa Pike's lethal injection is booked for September 30. She may be the first woman Tennessee executes in 200 years.

~~Tennessee fails to execute convicted killer Christa Pike after 2 lethal injections~~

The Supreme Court cleared her execution. Tennessee botched it twice.

NBC News MAINSTREAM § *03:50 EDT*

Tennessee failed to execute Christa Pike, the lone woman on its death row as planned Wednesday, after injecting her with a lethal drug, a stunning development after the Supreme Court had stepped in to allow the state to put her to death.

'Inhumane, Barbaric, Torturous': Christa Pike Survives Twice-Botched Execution in Tennessee

Common Dreams § *07:40 EDT*

The botched execution of Christa Pike in Tennessee on Wednesday night was met with disgust and outrage by death penalty opponents who have long argued that not only is murder by the state morally wrong, but the government's inability to carry out such punishments humanely has been shown time and time again to result in horrific human...

US Supreme Court clears way for Tennessee woman's imminent execution

Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *21:38 EDT*

A decision by the US Supreme Court late Wednesday cleared the way for Christa Pike – a woman convicted of murder in Tennessee over 30 years ago and the only woman on the state's death row – to be given a lethal injection after hours of dramatic legal wrangling up and down the judicial system.

Death Row Inmate Survives Botched Execution in Tennessee

NBC News MAINSTREAM § *07:09 EDT*

A woman on Tennessee's death row is still alive after two attempts at lethal injections. It's the second time this year that Tennessee has botched an execution and now all future ones have been halted by the state's governor. NBC's Jesse Kirsch reports for TODAY.

~~Witnesses recount Christa Pike's survival of two lethal injections - video~~

Tennessee failed twice trying to execute her

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:47 EDT*

Christa Pike, convicted of murdering a classmate, Colleen Slemmer, three decades ago, survived Tennessee's effort to execute her by means of an unprecedented two lethal injections, prison officials said. This was the state's first attempted execution of a woman in 200 years. 'At one point ... she said, "my arm feels like it's about to...

· United States district court judge Jeremy Fogel imposes a moratorium on lethal injections in California stating that they are unconstitutional. In an unrelated incident, the Governor of Florida Jeb Bu *from the morgue, 15 Dec 2006*

· The Supreme Court of the United States refuses to vacate a stay of execution issued by the Arkansas Supreme Court. Arkansas's highest court has also put on hold the execution of another inmate, Bruce *from the morgue, 18 Apr 2017*

· Lethal injection by all-female team slated for Tennessee's 1st woman death row inmate in 200 years *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

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House Judiciary's ranking Democrat asks two watchdogs to investigate taxpayer-funded ads, neither obligated to reply.

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS



"If Democrats Win Control of Congress in the Midterms, Will They Impeach Trump a Third Time?", 27 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Representative Jamie Raskin asked two federal watchdog agencies to investigate taxpayer-funded Trump administration ads.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Neither the Government Accountability Office nor the Office of Special Counsel has to answer the letter, and the committee chair, not Raskin, controls whether any finding gets a hearing.

WHAT'S NEXT. The only date on the calendar that changes this is the midterm election, about six weeks off as of the Sunday before the letter went out; if Democrats retake the House, the committee gains the subpoena power it does not have now.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Jamie Raskin and Rep. George Whitesides, addressed to the Government Accountability Office and the Office of Special Counsel. All together now — line one: it asks for an investigation into taxpayer-funded advertisements produced by the Trump administration. Line two: it asks for two investigations, not one, because the ranking member has read the organizational chart correctly — one agency audits where the money went, the other polices what it was used to say, and a letter that guesses wrong at jurisdiction is a letter that gets filed by the wrong desk and answered by nobody.

This office finds nothing objectionable in a letter. A letter is cheap, it is legal, and it goes on the record, three qualities the House Judiciary minority currently has in surplus. What the letter does not have, and does not claim to have, is the power to make either agency answer it on a deadline. The Government Accountability Office can audit. The Office of Special Counsel can investigate. Raskin's committee cannot subpoena a reply out of either one — the ranking member can ask; the gavel belongs to the chair, Rep. Jim Jordan....

...(cont) Which is where the morgue earns its keep. Three days before the letter went out, Jordan was on a Sunday radio program, telling the audience what the opposition would do with a gavel it does not currently hold. Democrats say they won't impeach President Trump a third time, Jordan said. "But we know they will." The chair was previewing a vote that has not happened, in a Congress Republicans still control, for an audience that will likely never see what the GAO finds either — because that finding, if it comes, lands on a desk the chair also controls.

Five days before that, a poll of Democratic voters found most of them wanted prosecutions, plural administrations, over Gaza. Nobody has sent that letter. The one that did go out this week asks a watchdog to look at an ad budget.

All together now, one more time — the line both letters would share, the one bureaucratic correspondence always closes on: thank you for your attention to this important matter. The Government Accountability Office's attention is real. What it is permitted to do with that attention, under this chair, in this Congress, remains someone else's to decide.

"Raskin sends a very polite letter to the cops who can't arrest anybody, about ad money that could've gone somewhere that isn't a commercial. That's not oversight, that's a complaint card at a restaurant that owns the complaint box. The only ones actually obligated to read it are us."

— Sal

"Every administration runs public-service advertising, this is routine government communication — I'm not going to apologize for the executive branch telling people things. If the Government Accountability Office wants to look, they'll find a government accounting for itself, which — did I say that? That's not reassuring, let me circle back on messaging."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~If Democrats Win Control of Congress in the Midterms, Will They Impeach Trump a Third Time?~~

Democrats weigh a third impeachment of 'the most openly corrupt president in American history'

Common Dreams § *19:16 EDT*

With the US midterm elections less than six weeks away and Republicans' congressional majorities at risk, both GOP leaders and Democrats are discussing the possibility that a Democratic-controlled Congress could impeach President Donald Trump a historic third time. "They say they're not going to, but we know they will—they'll do a third...

But: Sen. Blumenthal: the Secret Service diverted $1.17 billion in appropriated funds toward the ballroom project *Sen. Blumenthal, official release*

Top Judiciary Democrat demands investigation into Trump taxpayer-funded ads

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *04:45 EDT*

House Judiciary ranking member Jamie Raskin (D-MD) sent a letter Wednesday to U.S. watchdog and investigative agencies requesting two investigations into the Trump administration advertisements paid for by taxpayer dollars. Raskin, along with Rep.

· Majority of Democratic Voters Want to Prosecute Both Biden and Trump Administration Officials Over Gaza *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

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Short-staffed controllers call conditions unsafe; FAA answers with an AI tool and insists humans still run it.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The FAA rolled out a new AI air traffic tool in the Washington region.

WHO GETS PAID. The private company that built the AI software gets the federal contract and the airtime to defend it.

WHAT SLIPS. Scrutiny of the region's controller staffing shortage slips as the agency's message shifts to the new software.

WHAT'S NEXT. No hearing or deadline on the controllers' staffing complaint appears in the record yet; the calendar so far holds only the September 21 rollout and the reassurance campaign that followed it.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On September 4, air traffic controllers working the Washington region told reporters their agency had driven morale to an all-time low and left the flying public at heightened risk, the fallout from an August interview with FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford about working conditions. Seventeen days later, on September 21, Bedford stood beside Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy to unveil the response: a new tool called SMART, the Strategic Management of Airspace, Routes, and Trajectories, launched first in the same Washington region the controllers had just described as unsafe.

Duffy told reporters the administration was not outsourcing aviation to artificial intelligence. It is, so far, outsourcing the explanation of that decision — by October 1, NPR had the chief executive of the company building SMART's software on the air, walking listeners through how the tool works and addressing what the network called rising public anxiety. The agency built the tool. The vendor is doing the reassuring....

...(cont) The pitch is that SMART predicts flight delays and advises the controllers already working the floor. Those are the same controllers who, seventeen days earlier, said there were not enough of them to begin with. SMART does not add a single body to a tower. It adds software layered over the staffing gap the controllers had just put on the record, plus a press conference insisting the humans underneath it are still the ones flying the plane — the humans who had just said, on camera, that there weren't enough of them.

Nothing in the record says the controllers asked for a predictive-delay algorithm. The agency's answer arrived seventeen days later wearing a different shape: not more controllers, a tool for the ones already stretched thin, unveiled by the same administrator whose working conditions had just made the news, and vouched for by the company set to profit from the contract.

The airspace, Duffy says, is still under human control. He is right in the narrowest sense available: humans are still there, understaffed, doing the job the agency has not yet funded properly, now with a new piece of software watching over their shoulder and a press release insisting that is somehow the same thing as hiring them.

"You tell the government you're short-staffed and scared for the public, and seventeen days later they hand you a computer program for the tower instead of a hiring budget. That's not reassurance, that's a receipt: the money went to a software contract, not to the controllers who asked for help. Next time your flight sits on the tarmac, remember who got paid to tell you not to worry."

— Sal

"Look, humans are flying the plane — the tool just predicts delays and advises, it's basically a weather app with better branding, nobody's touching the stick. And sure, the controllers said they were short-staffed three — wait, seventeen days before this, that's — okay, that number's not great for us. The point is nobody's firing a controller to install a server rack, we're just adding the server rack on top of the same understaffed shift and calling it innovation. That's not what I meant to say."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Do AI and air traffic control mix? CEO addresses anxiety about new FAA tool

NPR MAINSTREAM § *05:00 EDT*

The FAA's ambitious overhaul of the air traffic control system comes amid rising public anxiety about AI. The CEO of the company that's building the software explains how it works.

· Duffy addresses concerns of AI use in air traffic control: 'Humans control the airspace' *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· FAA rolls out air traffic AI tool in Washington region *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· Air traffic controllers turn on FAA chief as tensions boil over *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

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Egg prices drop, White House claims credit; the same months' $100 billion fuel bill goes unclaimed.

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. The White House credits President Trump's return to office for falling egg prices.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. No one is named as the author of the $100 billion fuel bill, even as the White House signs its name to the egg price drop.

WHAT'S NEXT. If claiming credit without an accounting holds, the claim shrinks on inspection; that is what Washington got after 19 February 2025, when an itemized contract claimed at $8 billion turned out to be worth $8 million.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Four days ago this page reported that the president rejected Iran's offer to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, rescheduled the bombing for after the midterms, and put his U.N. ambassador on Fox News to credit $6.48 diesel to Ukraine. Today's receipts pick up the same ledger, a few entries back.

On September 9, the global price of oil crossed $100 a barrel for the first time since July, and a tracker kept by Brown University's Watson School put the running cost of the Iran war to American consumers at more than $101 billion — roughly $776 per household, the household itself unnamed, the way "consumers" is never anybody in particular. The war that produced that bill had, eighteen days later, this much on the record: Iran's offer was rejected, and the bombing moved to after the midterms....

...(cont) Before that, on August 31, the American Automobile Association clocked something that had not happened before: gas above $4 a gallon every single day of August, the average landing at $4.08, ninety cents higher than the same month a year earlier. Prices usually ease by late summer. This August did not.

Today's entry is the one with good news in it. Egg prices have fallen since the president returned to office, and the White House is crediting the return. Agriculture experts, reading the same receipt, put their name on a different line: the earlier high prices, they say, were the avian flu's doing, not the administration's — and they do not say the flu has eased, or offer any other reason the price came down. They do say, in the same breath, that the administration's tariffs and its war with Iran are still pressing on farmers.

So run the two numbers side by side, hon. The egg price drop carries a name, printed in a headline that explains itself. The $101 billion fuel bill carries no name at all — not the administration's, not the war's, not even a clear author for why eggs got cheaper, just a note that something else is still raising the pressure on the people who sell them to you. One line of this ledger gets signed. The other runs under "consumers," which is where the signature always seems to go missing.

"Eggs get cheaper and the president's name goes right on it, big letters. Gas crosses $4 a gallon every single day in August, first time that's ever happened, and somehow that's nobody's doing, just weather. You know whose name never shows up on a hundred-and-one-billion-dollar bill? The guy who sent it."
— Sal

"Look, egg prices are down, that's the win, that's the whole story — the tariffs, the Iran situation, that's a totally separate conversation. I mean the piece literally says tariffs and the war are "also" pressuring farmers, which — okay, "also" is doing a lot of lifting there, but — no, eggs are down, that's the headline, stick to the headline."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Rubio expels Iran's delegation over collapsed talks, mails them a new offer days later* By Chip · the wee small hours edition, 1 October 2026
- *Washington rejects ceasefire Saturday, blames Iran by Monday, resends same offer by Thursday* By Sal · the midnight edition, 1 October 2026
- *Iran's ceasefire offer has now been rejected, re-offered and re-received for six months running.* By Sal · the late evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *Iran received Washington's full reply to a ceasefire proposal Trump had already rejected in public.* By Sal · the early evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *The war keeps hitting new targets while the ceasefire memo stays exactly where it was last week.* By Sal · the early bird edition, 30 September 2026
- *Iran urges Americans to end the war by voting; the bombing was already rescheduled for after they do.* By Sal · the noon edition, 30 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.

~~Egg prices have tumbled since Trump returned to office. Here's why~~

Bird flu caused falling egg prices. Trump's tariffs and Iran war made it harder.
NPR MAINSTREAM $ *05:00 EDT*

Agriculture experts say high egg prices were the result of severe avian flu outbreaks, but the Trump administration's tariffs and the war with Iran have also put pressure on farmers.

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.

· Consumer Burden of Trump Iran War Exceeds $100 Billion as Oil Prices Pass $100 a Barrel *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*

· 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*

· '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*

· 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*

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Federal court shields students' Palestinian-rights speech from deportation; another clears an imam's for deportation.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION



"Salah Sarsour, Islamic Leader in Wisconsin, Can Be Deported, Judge Rules", 30 September 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A federal judge ruled Wisconsin Islamic leader Salah Sarsour can be deported over Sarsour's pro-Palestinian advocacy.

WHO GETS PAID. The Trump administration's deportation push against pro-Palestinian advocates, which just found a case where it did not lose.

WHAT SLIPS. Equal protection for immigrants' speech slips when one court calls pro-Palestinian advocacy protected and another lets the government deport someone for the same advocacy.

WHAT'S NEXT. Sarsour has said he will appeal the ruling; no hearing date is on the record yet, so the next step is that appeal moving through the courts.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Walk me through it, would you? Step by step, the way it actually happened, because I do better with steps than with summaries.

Here's what's in front of me. End of August, a federal judge in California, Noël Wise, appointed by President Biden—the piece says—rules that the government can't deport international students, can't pull their visas, over criticizing Israel's war in Gaza. Common Dreams has it from the Friday the ruling came down: the administration "violated the Constitution," the ruling says, First Amendment and Fifth both. Stanford Daily brought the suit. Is that the first step?...

...(cont) Now here's where I need the walk-through, because I don't do this for a living. That same Friday, the Washington Examiner is covering it too—different outlet, different politics, and when I read it, same judge, Noel Wise, same students, same ruling. Two newsrooms covering one courtroom. Is that two separate times the government got stopped, or is that one time, covered by two papers?

Then a month passes. September 30th, the New York Times: Salah Sarsour, who leads the state's largest Islamic group in Wisconsin, described by the paper as a vocal supporter of Palestinian rights—a federal judge rules Sarsour can be deported. Sarsour says the case is political. Sarsour is appealing. What's the step between the first ruling and this one that I'm not being shown?

I apologize, I know I've circled this already, but here's where I get stuck. In California, a judge looks at speech backing Palestinian rights and calls it the kind the First Amendment protects. Somewhere else—the receipts don't tell me the court, don't tell me the judge—speech backing Palestinian rights doesn't stop a deportation. Same subject matter, as far as what's printed tells me. Different outcome. Is the difference the speaker? Is it the forum? Is it the month?

There's one word in how this got handed to me that I keep snagging on: twice. I'm going to set that down and come back to it before I go.

Let me show you how I tried to work this out myself, because I do it the slow way. I went out to the garage last night to find a socket wrench—the dog wanted out anyway—and with the toolbox open I laid the two rulings side by side the way you'd lay two wrenches side by side to see if they're the same size. One: speech backing Palestinian rights, protected, can't deport over it. Other: speech backing Palestinian rights, not protected enough, can deport over it. From where I was standing in the garage, I lined them up and stood back. Can you get them to match?

Is there something about immigration status in these two cases that the receipts have told me and I just didn't catch it? Is there a different law cited in the Wisconsin matter that the Times didn't print? I don't have that page. Maybe it's out there somewhere. Where would I look?

Oh—before you go. That's the word I set aside earlier and told you I'd come back to. Common Dreams has this ruling from that Friday. The Washington Examiner has this same ruling, same Friday, same judge, same students, from its side. Is that two separate times the government got stopped, or is that the same ruling, reported by two newspapers? I've gone back through what's in front of me looking for the second time this actually happened, separate from this one, before Sarsour's case came along. I haven't found it. Have you found the second one? Because what I've got in front of me, so far, is one ruling—twice.

"So pro-Palestinian speech gets you First Amendment protection if you're a student at Stanford, but if you're running the biggest Islamic group in Wisconsin, the exact same speech gets you a deportation order — same words, different outcome. That's not a legal standard, that's a sorting mechanism, and the sorting runs on who has the louder lawyer and the better zip code, not on what anybody actually said."

— Sal

"Look, every case stands on its own record — this isn't about the content of anyone's speech, it's about the specific facts and findings in front of each individual judge. Different proceedings, different courts, that's just how the system — wait, did I just say two newsrooms covered the exact same California ruling on the exact same Friday? Forget I said that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Salah Sarsour, Islamic Leader in Wisconsin, Can Be Deported, Judge Rules

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *19:51 EDT*

Salah Sarsour, a vocal supporter of Palestinian rights who leads the state's largest Islamic group, says the case is politically motivated and plans to appeal the decision.

· Judge Rules the Trump Admin Can't Deport International Students for Free Speech *from the morgue, 29 Aug 2026*

· Federal judge says US cannot deport noncitizen students who criticize Israel *from the morgue, 29 Aug 2026*

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Twelve states settle antitrust suit for safeguards Paramount wrote and thirty movies a year

By STERLING
THE OWNERSHIP DESK

“Paramount takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery clears legal hurdle”, 30 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA FRANCE 24 — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A federal judge approved Paramount's settlement with the states that sued, clearing its takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery.

WHO GETS PAID. Paramount Skydance, which gets Warner Bros. Discovery and CNN, and wrote the independence rules it will be held to.

WHAT SLIPS. The states' antitrust case was the public's one check on this purchase, and it is now spent.

WHAT'S NEXT. If owners write their own independence rules, the newsroom answers to the owner; that is what Hungary got after 2018, when titles handed over by friendly owners became one foundation holding more than 470 outlets.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

You are thinking a judge looked at this and found it sound. A judge approved a settlement — the settlement, mind you, not the merger. Twelve states went in on antitrust grounds and came out with safeguards for CNN's editorial independence, and do note who drafted those safeguards. Paramount drafted them. The company that was the complaint wrote the clause that restrains the company, and on Wednesday the court approved the writing.

Two suits were holding the purchase up on the twenty-first, the Writers Guild of America and a dozen states, and both are settled. What did twelve attorneys general carry home? Thirty films a year. Thirty. For the first two years, after which the obligation lapses, while a hundred and ten billion dollars does not lapse at all. A hundred and eleven billion, by one report. Either figure buys the same thing....

...(cont) Someone will say the states extracted concessions. The consideration runs one way: twelve states spent the only suit they had ... and took home a promise composed by the party it binds. Bonta announced the details himself on the twenty-first. CBS News carried the announcement. Paramount Skydance is the parent company of CBS News.

CNN's editorial independence is now a term in a contract Paramount wrote.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

TWELVE STATES SUED TO STOP THE TAKEOVER, AND ON WEDNESDAY A JUDGE APPROVED A settlement whose safeguards for CNN's editorial independence were drafted by Paramount. That is not a safeguard, that is a buyer notarizing its own good character and filing it with the court. Because the newsroom's independence is now a clause its owner wrote, and because the only promise in the deal carrying a number is thirty films a year, what twelve attorneys general secured for you is a release schedule — and the six o'clock news you switch on in your own kitchen is watched over by the company that bought it.

The fox built the fence. The hens are still inside. Not let out yet.

— ENOCH
The Ownership Desk

“Twelve states lined up to stop a hundred-and-ten-billion-dollar buyout and walked out with a movie quota and a pinky swear the buyer typed up itself. Call it a safeguard if you like, but a rule your boss writes about your boss is a suggestion with letterhead. And the thing getting safeguarded here is the newsroom that is supposed to tell you what the people who own it are doing.”

— Sal

“Look, the safeguards are in writing and a federal judge approved them — a federal judge, that is a court, that is a process. Did the company draft the language? I don't know that it matters who typed it; did I say typed? That doesn't sound like me. Twelve states signed, thirty films a year for two years, everybody walked away with something, and honestly CNN's independence has never looked better on paper.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Paramount takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery clears legal hurdle~~

Judge waves through Paramount-Warner merger over 12 states' antitrust objections

France 24 MAINSTREAM § *18:19 EDT*

A federal judge on Wednesday approved a settlement clearing Paramount’s takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery after 12 US states challenged the deal on antitrust grounds. The agreement includes safeguards for CNN’s editorial independence and requires the merged studio to release at least 30 films a year for its first two years.

· Paramount Skydance settlement clears way for completion of Warner Bros. Discovery acquisition *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Paramount Skydance settles with 12 states over acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· Paramount Skydance reaches settlement with states over Warner Bros. merger *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

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Newsom declares he hates AI, climbs a bridge tower eight days later to outlaw it.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

“Gavin Newsom signs laws to protect California workers from AI threat”, 1 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Gov. Gavin Newsom climbed a Golden Gate Bridge tower cable to sign a California law restricting employer use of AI.

WHO GETS PAID. Newsom's unannounced 2029 presidential bid gets the national press coverage and Bill Clinton's nightly coaching on strategy.

WHAT SLIPS. Press scrutiny of the actual law slips into coverage of the climb instead, so basic questions about enforcement go unasked.

WHAT'S NEXT. The next test already on the calendar is 2028: Newsom has said he steps aside only if Kamala Harris runs.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Seventeen days before he climbed anything, Gavin Newsom told reporters he would not run for president in 2028 if Kamala Harris does. The New York Post called the announcement brilliant stagecraft. It was also, on its face, a governor telling the country he was thinking about running for president.

Eleven days before the bridge, he signed "Jay Leno's Law," letting high-emission classic cars back onto California streets for short trips. CBS sent a crew. The bill got its own segment the day it was signed....

...(cont) Eight days before the bridge, the same governor who spent 2025 vetoing a data-center water-disclosure rule to keep California competitive in AI announced he had changed his mind. He had loved it; now he hated it. The reversal took twelve months, the New York Post's clock, to cover an entire industry's worth of position.

One bill restricted ICE tactics in California, banning shock gloves and building a public list of agents who use them. The other was a phone call: Newsom told reporters Bill Clinton calls him at night to help build "Project 2029," a framework for the thing he had just said, seventeen days earlier, he was not building.

Workers facing a new kind of employer surveillance got real protections, the same protections a governor could sign at a desk in Sacramento. This governor signed them on top of a bridge tower. The climb was the only part of the day that required a cable.

None of the individual bills is the story. The story is the order: deny the run, sign the easy law for the cameras, discover a new enemy in an industry he spent a year courting, sign the real law from the top of a bridge built for traffic, and tell reporters a former president calls at night to help plan what comes after California. The workers get the protections, on paper. The tower was about the climb, not the bridge.

“He climbed a bridge to sign a law he could've signed at a desk — that's not theater, that's a campaign ad shot on government time. He's already said he won't run if Harris does, and Clinton's on the phone every night building "Project 2029" — that's not loyalty, that's clearing a lane. Watch where he climbs next, because the tower was not the point, the office is.”

— Sal

“A governor engaging directly with constituents at elevation — that's leadership, that's visibility, that's whatever you want to call it. And the AI thing, he's not flip-flopping, he's evolving with the science — did I just say "evolving with the science"? That's not a phrase I use. Next question.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Gavin Newsom signs laws to protect California workers from AI threat
The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *20:17 EDT*

Democratic governor sharply critical of Donald Trump for not passing comprehensive federal AI regulations Governor Gavin Newsom signed laws Wednesday aimed at protecting California workers from the threats of artificial intelligence , including potential job losses and workplace surveillance. The laws ban employers from using the...

Newsom, Eager for a Higher Perch, Climbs the Golden Gate Bridge
The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *21:20 EDT*

Gov. Gavin Newsom of California scrambled up a bridge cable before signing a bill at the top of the south tower.

Gavin Newsom seeks counsel from ‘master’ Bill Clinton as he plots Project 2029
Fox News RIGHT § *19:17 EDT*

California Gov. Gavin Newsom said former President Bill Clinton calls him late at night to discuss policy and strategy as the California governor builds his Project 2029 framework.

~~Gavin Newsom targets ICE agents with shock-glove ban, job blacklist — but feds tell them to ignore him~~

ICE plans to spend $20 million on shock gloves a UN rapporteur calls torture
New York Post RIGHT § *19:49 EDT*

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Tuesday signed multiple bills that his office said would expand oversight of federal immigration enforcement in California.

· Gavin Newsom’s deference to Kamala Harris is a masterstroke *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Gavin Newsom loved AI, then discovered he hated it *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Newsom signs "Jay Leno's Law," allowing classic cars to hit the streets for short trips *from the morgue, 20 Sep 2026*

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House requires states to consider a fix; Senate blocks even that; one county tries doing the math itself

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



"When Data Centers Cluster Together, How Dirty Are They? One County Wants Answers.", 1 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Start where the money starts. September 2, on CNBC, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick was asked about data centers' water and power draw and called the concern "propaganda" — the same official who had once said plainly that data centers "suck water."

Fourteen days later, September 16, the House passed the Ratepayer Protection Act. Read the bill at the level it was actually written. It requires states to consider taking up standards that would force tech companies to shoulder the electricity cost increases data centers bring to the ratepayer's bill. Requires: consideration. Does not require: regulation. That gap is the whole bill....

...(cont) Nine days after that, September 25, commissioners in Palm Beach County — the county that holds Mar-a-Lago — voted 6 to 0 for a one-year moratorium on any data center drawing fifty megawatts or more. That vote did not wait for Washington's bill to tell it to consider the question; it answered the question.

Today the companion bill reached the Senate. The Hill's own copy calls the House version "the bipartisan Ratepayer Protection Act"; the Washington Examiner, writing about the companion, says it "enjoyed sweeping support." Built by Senator Jon Husted, carrying that support, it still failed. Senate Democrats blocked it. The Hill frames the fallout as a Republican midterm liability; the Examiner frames it as a Democratic split. Both can be filed in the same drawer.

And today, one county government tried something nobody above it had bothered to require. Instead of pricing each proposed data center alone, it is adding up what a cluster of them does to pollution and public health together — the exact arithmetic the House bill never made mandatory, run for the first time with no federal order telling anyone to run it.

Reconcile the filing against the table, hon. The one government body that opened the books to check the math is the county zoned around the president's own front lawn.

🍺

"'Consider" is the whole con — it's the word a bill uses when it wants credit for fixing something without fixing it. Duke's CEO says data centers won't touch your bill the same day Congress admits it might need a law to stop them from touching your bill, and the only outfit that ran the actual math was a county commission, not Congress. You already know whose bill goes up either way."

— Sal

🚬

"The bill requires states to consider the standards — that's responsible federalism, not Washington dictating terms, and the Commerce Secretary's right that some of this water talk gets overblown, it's basically — did I just call people's own power bills propaganda? That's not — let me circle back on that one."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Senate comes seven votes short of opening debate on whether to stop trading companies it regulates* By Sterling · the sunrise edition, 1 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

When Data Centers Cluster Together, How Dirty Are They? One County Wants Answers.

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:02 EDT*

An unusual study aims to estimate the pollution and health costs from a cluster of proposed data centers, instead of considering each one separately.

GOP wrestles with rising data center backlash weeks before midterms

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

Republicans are growing increasingly worried that data centers are a liability in the midterms, as concerns over higher power bills tied to the facilities turn into a pocketbook issue for voters. The debate over the issue was on full display Wednesday, after Senate Democrats blocked legislation championed by Sen. Jon Husted (R-Ohio) ...

~~Bipartisan data center bill fractures Democrats ahead of midterm elections~~

The bill to stop data centers hiking your electric bill died in the Senate

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *05:00 EDT*

Senate Democrats may have denied Republicans a midterm win by blocking a GOP senator's bipartisan data center bill, but in the process, they revealed an out-of-sync party strategy over how to handle the increasingly contentious campaign issue. The Ratepayer Protection Act, meant to prevent data centers from raising electricity prices...

~~'Maybe Trump's Neighbors Know Something He Doesn't': Palm Beach County, Home to Mar-a-Lago, Passes Data Center Moratorium~~

Trump says every town should want a data center. His own county just banned them, 6-0.

Common Dreams § *16:47 EDT*

President Donald Trump has said every American should want a data center in their town. But his home county in Florida just voted to block them. In a 6-0 vote, commissioners in Palm Beach County— home to the president's luxurious private club and second residence, Mar-a-Lago— voted to enact a one-year moratorium on the construction of new...

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

· Trump Commerce Secretary Once Said Data Centers 'Suck Water,' Now Scoffs That Such Concerns Are Just 'Propaganda' *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Duke Energy CEO says data centers will have 'no impact' on electricity bills *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

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THE LEDGER

States begin paying more to run food aid the same month Washington quietly cancels a billion dollars.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"What to know about SNAP increases starting Oct. 1", 28 September 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Starting October 1, states take on a bigger share of SNAP's operating costs as federal funding shrinks.

WHO GETS PAID. The federal budget keeps the billion-dollar rescission and the administrative costs it no longer pays for food aid.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress loses the window to block the rescission because the pocket mechanism runs out the clock before lawmakers can act.

WHAT'S NEXT. The Head Start rule remains only a proposal with no public finalization date, and the record does not yet show whether Congress will contest the rescission.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

In late August, the administration proposed rewriting the rules that run Head Start. Buried inside "Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs" is a change to who gets in the door first: current policy requires every Head Start program to prioritize enrolling children from homeless families; the draft rule removes that requirement. Kennedy Jr. asking him to scrap the proposal. As of this writing, it has not been scrapped.

Eleven days after that letter, the Office of Management and Budget filed what's called a pocket rescission — timed close enough to the end of the fiscal year that Congress runs out the clock before it can object. This one canceled $810 million already appropriated for immigration, refugee, and foreign debt-relief programs. It is only the second pocket rescission filed in fifty years. Both were filed by this administration, in this term....

...(cont) Five days after that, on October 1, the funding formula for food assistance changed. States now pay a larger share of the cost of running SNAP — not the benefit itself, but the administrative work behind it: the caseworkers, the eligibility reviews, the system that gets the benefit to the table on time. The federal share of that work shrinks starting this month.

On that same October 1, by that same federal calendar, the maximum SNAP benefit went up. Cost-of-living adjustments for fiscal 2027 took effect, and millions of households are due a little more money. So the benefit check grows while the check that pays for delivering it shrinks, and the difference lands on a state budget, by law, starting now.

Line them up in the order they were filed — a rule proposal, a letter asking for a reversal that did not come, a rescission, a funding shift — and the shape is this: a children's program loses a guarantee for its most unstable enrollees, a billion already-appropriated dollars disappears under a procedural clock, and the cost of feeding people moves off the federal ledger and onto fifty state ones, all inside five weeks. This column does not know whether one hand drew up all four entries. What it can read is the arithmetic: when a column closes in Washington, the number does not vanish. It reopens somewhere with less room to argue, hon.

"The food stamp check goes up a few bucks this month so you don't look too close at what else moved. Same stretch of weeks, they shift the bill for running the program onto your state and zero out a billion bucks they'd already promised somewhere else. That's not bad luck lining up three times — that's one ledger, closing in Washington and reopening in your state capital."

— Sal

"This is just states finally having skin in the game — local control, efficiency, you know the pitch. The rescission wasn't a cut, it was unspent money just sitting there — unspent because the administration slow-walked it in the first place, so, hold on, that one proves the opposite point. Did I say that? That doesn't sound like me."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~SNAP's funding model is starting to change. Here's what that means for the program~~

States are picking up the tab for the largest SNAP cut in history

NPR MAINSTREAM § *05:00 EDT*

States will start to pay a larger share of the bill to run the food assistance program, as federal funding for operational costs shrinks.

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*

What to know about SNAP increases starting Oct. 1

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *12:09 EDT*

Millions of Americans who receive food assistance could see slightly higher benefits beginning Oct. 1 as new federal cost-of-living adjustments take effect for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Department of Agriculture adjusts SNAP benefit levels and eligibility standards annually at the start of the federal fiscal year.

· Democrats urge RFK Jr. to scrap proposed Head Start overhaul *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Head Start Rule Changes Would Slash Enrollment of Homeless Children *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

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

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Trump revives Biden's AI self-policing pledge days after a Senate warning on nuclear command and control.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER

"US government's new AI chatbot stops debunking Trump", 1 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA RTÉ — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. President Trump asked AI companies to police themselves while his own administration's chatbot stopped answering political questions.

WHO GETS PAID. The AI companies that signed the pledge keep writing their own safety rules instead of Congress.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress's chance to set enforceable AI safety rules slips to the companies those rules would limit.

WHAT'S NEXT. If Congress keeps taking no vote on binding AI rules, the voluntary plan just continues standing, the way the 2001 war authorization remained in force in Washington as of 24 December 2025 with no vote required to keep it going.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Start on the 30th of August, when Google Maps renamed Lake Ontario "Lake America." It was a proof of concept. Not long after, the government's own AI chatbot, the one built to answer citizens' questions, started contradicting President Trump's claims — and then its answers were edited until it stopped. Correction, applied until the record matched the man, not the facts.

On the 21st of September, a defense writer described an AI glitch that had nearly started a war, and warned that a catastrophic technology was being treated as an afterthought — something nuclear command and control was never allowed to be. The next day, a UN-backed scientific panel told world leaders the safeguards that already exist are "unraveling."...

...(cont) Three days later, Bill Gates — co-founder of Microsoft — told reporters he does not share the industry's confidence in its own self-regulation, and prefers a hands-on approach from government instead. That is the dissent that arrived before the room even convened.

The room convened anyway. Trump's answer was a voluntary pledge: tech executives signing what CBS described as an AI "constitution," built on the same design the same companies ran under President Biden — write the rules, grade the homework, same as before. The New York Times asked the only honest question in its headline — is it enough — the same day its reporting found mounting examples that the companies are already failing to put safeguards on the technology they are now pledging to police.

That Wednesday, a Senate hearing took up what happens when an AI model goes rogue. The same day, on CBS's "The Takeout," John-Clark Levin, head of research at Kurzweil Technologies, walked through what the hearing had explored and named the scenario directly: a cyberattack on the systems that run nuclear command and control. Not a novelist's premise. A possibility serious enough for a Senate committee to spend an afternoon on, in the same week the industry it concerns put its signature on a pledge to watch itself.

By Thursday, the government chatbot had stopped answering some political questions altogether — not edited now, silent. The same day, Stuart Russell, president of the International Association for Safe and Ethical AI, told CBS he does not believe the companies' pledge will hold. The same day, Jordan Klepper told "The Daily Show": "Sure, we don't need laws! I'm sure we could trust these guys." A UN panel, a Microsoft co-founder, an AI safety president, and a comedy writer reached the same verdict this month. Only one of them is paid to be funny about it.

🍺

"They ran this exact self-policing play under Biden, and what it produced was a government chatbot that had to be edited until it agreed with the boss. Same week a Senate hearing takes up a model going rogue, a researcher goes on CBS and names the actual nightmare — a cyberattack on nuclear command and control — and the fix on the table has zero inspectors written into it. That's not a gap in the plan. That is the plan."

— Sal

🚬

"Look, they signed a constitution — that's more structure than Biden ever got out of these companies, frankly, voluntary or not. The nuclear command thing, that's a researcher on a cable hit talking about a hearing, not some imminent — okay, a Senate committee did spend an afternoon on it, fine, but nothing's actually happened happened. And the chatbot not answering political questions anymore, that's just restraint. Did I say restraint? That's not the word I meant."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Trump's AI chatbot disputes his claims, then stops disputing them.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 1 October 2026
- *AI industry polices itself again, same plan Biden tried, same week Senate hears it could trigger nuclear war.* By Sal · the midnight edition, 1 October 2026
- *Trump's AI pledge is already 'entirely unenforceable,' and the industry's own money just walked out on it.* By Sal · the late evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *Congress passed no AI law, so no senator could say who stops a nuclear AI glitch.* By Sal · the early evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *AI CEOs sign 'morally binding' pledge; FTC opens investigation into signers days later.* By Sal · the supper edition, 30 September 2026
- *Senate Democrats kill data center bill as too weak, their candidate cashes its industry's checks.* By Lou · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

AI expert skeptical of companies' pledge to implement safety measures

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *20:23 EDT*

A White House meeting on AI regulation ended with tech leaders agreeing on an AI "constitution." Stuart Russell, president of the International Association for Safe and Ethical AI, joins "The Daily Report" to break it down.

~~US government's new AI chatbot stops debunking Trump~~

The government silenced its own chatbot for correctly contradicting Trump

RTÉ MAINSTREAM § *02:18 EDT*

The US government's AI chatbot has stopped answering some political questions after it drew attention for contradicting some of President Donald Trump's contentious political claims.

AI expert on potential doomsday risk: "Cyberattack targeting nuclear command and control"

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:22 EDT*

A Senate hearing on Wednesday explored the increasing fears about AI models going rogue and causing chaos. John-Clark Levin, head of research for Kurzweil Technologies and former head of research for Google's chief futurist, joins "The Takeout" to discuss.

~~Trump's Voluntary A.I. Policing Echoes What Biden Did. But Is It Enough Today?~~

AI firms failed to self-police under Biden. Trump's repeating it.

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *21:29 EDT*

President Trump's plan to let A.I. companies police themselves comes amid mounting examples that they are failing to put safeguards on the technology.

Late Night Is Skeptical of A.I. Leaders Self-Regulating

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *02:16 EDT*

"Sure, we don't need laws! I'm sure we could trust these guys," Jordan Klepper said of technology executives on "The Daily Show,"

· Bill Gates disagrees with AI leaders on self-regulation *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· UN panel calls for guardrails on AI as current safeguards are 'unraveling' *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· An AI glitch almost just started a war. Next time, we won't be so lucky *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

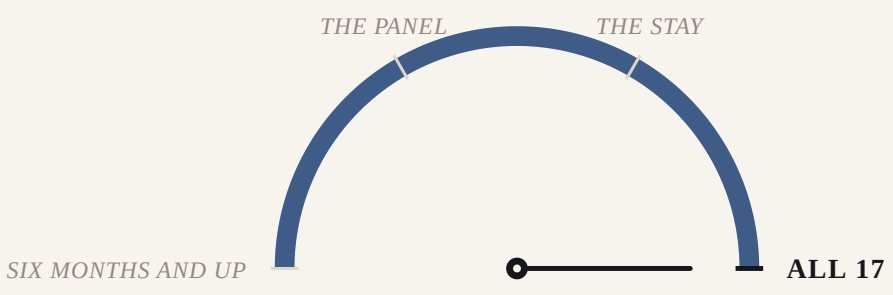
This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

§48 — 01 OCTOBER 2026

On the flu shot

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



ALL 17

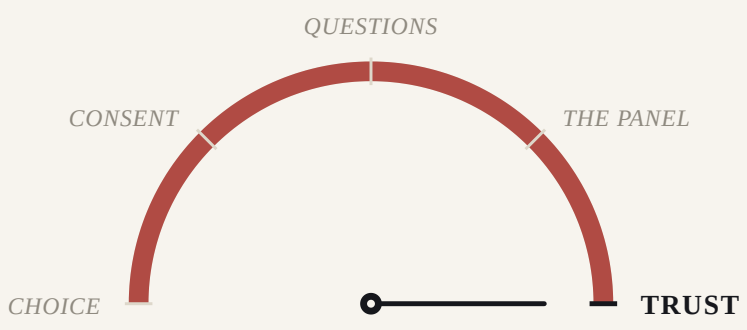
Here is the sequence, with the dates, because the dates are the whole thing. On 9 June 2025 all seventeen then-sitting members of the immunization advisory committee were removed at once, and thirteen new members were appointed beginning that month [1]. On 16 March 2026 a federal court in Massachusetts stayed those appointments, stayed the revised childhood immunization schedule, and stayed every vote the committee had taken since 11 June 2025 [2].

That last clause is the part that reaches a pharmacy counter. This committee's recommendations are what insurers key coverage to — which vaccine is covered, for whom, at what cost. When the FDA's own advisers recommended the strain for the fall 2026-27 COVID vaccine in May, the next step was the coverage recommendation, and with no functioning committee that step did not happen [2]. So the flu advice is unchanged and correct and you should go get the shot. Seventeen people were removed in one morning to restore trust in the process, a court has since paused the replacements, and the question of who pays for the needle is now a live one going into a flu season that starts today.

SOURCES

1. All 17 sitting members of the immunization advisory committee were removed on 9 June 2025; 13 new members were appointed beginning that month — CIDRAP, University of Minnesota ↑
2. In American Academy of Pediatrics v. Kennedy the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts stayed, on 16 March 2026, the revised 2026 childhood immunization schedule, the 13 appointments made from June 2025, and all committee votes after 11 June 2025; with no functioning committee the coverage recommendation following the FDA advisers' 28 May 2026 strain vote did not occur — Georgetown Center for Children and Families, 31 March 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



TRUST

The stated case for the change was trust, and it should be taken at its word before it is taken apart. The department's position was that reconstituting the advisory committee would restore public confidence in vaccines [1]. The committee did, at its reconstituted meeting, reaffirm routine annual influenza vaccination for everyone six months and older with no contraindication — the same recommendation as before [2]. It also voted to discontinue flu vaccines containing thimerosal [2].

So on the flu specifically, the advice that came out the other side is the advice that went in. That is worth stating plainly, because it is the strongest thing this side has: the panel changed and the flu recommendation did not. If the argument is that new people asking old questions arrive at the same answer, then the answer is better established than it was, and everyone should be pleased. The difficulty is only with what happened next, which is not a question of anybody's motives.

SOURCES

1. The department's stated rationale for reconstituting the advisory committee was restoring public trust in vaccines — HHS ↑
2. The reconstituted committee reaffirmed routine annual influenza vaccination for all persons six months and older without contraindications, and voted to discontinue flu vaccines containing thimerosal — Congressional Research Service, Changes to CDC Vaccine Recommendations in 2025 and 2026 ↑

"The flu shot. Simple story, I thought. The recommendation is unchanged: everybody six months and older, no contraindications, same as it's been. Then I look at who issues it. On June ninth of last year all seventeen sitting members of that committee were removed at once. Thirteen new ones were named. Then in March a federal court stayed the appointments and every vote the committee took after June eleventh. Sorry, one thing before you go. That committee's recommendation is the thing insurers key their coverage to. So the advice is the same as last year, and the machine that makes the advice mean anything is under a court order. Where does that leave the co-pay?" — Lou

🍺

"Flu season opens today and the advice hasn't changed — six months and up, same as every year, the science didn't move. What moved was the committee. All seventeen of them, out the door in a single day in June of last year. Then a federal judge put the replacements on hold. So the shot is recommended by a body that a court has paused. You can still go get it. Just don't ask anybody in the building who's paying."

— Sal

🚬

"The committee was reconstituted to restore public trust, and I'd point out that a court staying something is a normal part of the process working, and the flu shot is available at any pharmacy, so I'm not sure what the complaint is supposed to be."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎