The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

SATURDAY, 03 OCTOBER 2026 — THE BREAKFAST EDITION | FREE, FOREVER

Washington Examiner predicts a Republican sweep the same week Republicans pour millions into defending a once-safe Kansas seat.

BY LOU
One More Question

My nephew is in his second year of law school, and I called him Tuesday with a question that wasn't really about the law, more about reading, but he's the only one in the family who reads anything twice. I asked him: if a witness swears to something on the stand, and it turns out the witness's own office filed a report three weeks earlier saying the opposite, what do you call that? He said impeachment — the evidence kind, not the political kind. You take somebody's own prior statement and use it to take apart what they're telling you now. I told him I wasn't thinking about a courtroom. I was thinking about a newspaper. He said a document is a document, isn't it?

Here's what was sitting in front of me. On September 21st, the Washington Examiner ran its own poll and reported Democrats up five points among registered voters — a smaller lead, the paper noted, than the one Democrats held in 2018, the year they flipped the House. Is five points, by the paper's own count, smaller or larger than what it took to flip the House eight years ago?

The next morning, September 22nd, the same paper ran a piece saying Republicans were staring down what it called a midterm election reckoning

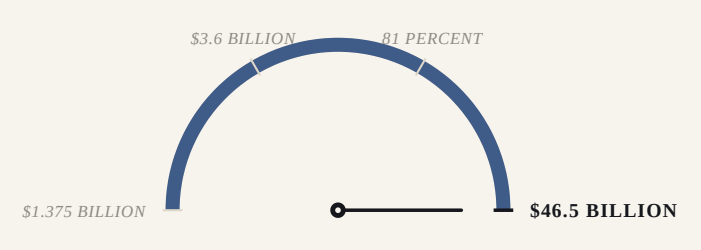
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THE WORD

§50 — 03 OCTOBER 2026

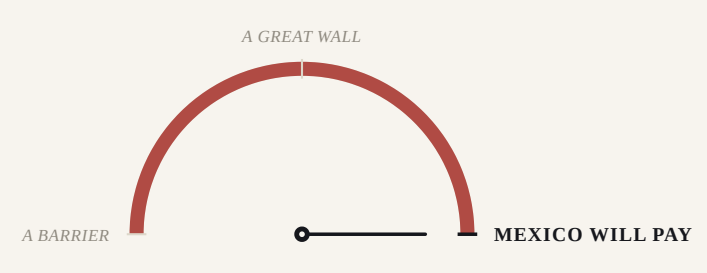
On who pays

DEMOCRAT



$46.5 BILLION

REPUBLICAN



MEXICO WILL PAY

"I'm just going to read the payers, in order. Congress, 2019: one point three seven five billion, about fifty-five miles. The Treasury forfeiture fund: six hundred one million. Counterdrug money: up to two and a half billion. Military construction: up to three point six billion. Congress again, last year: forty-six and a half billion, available through 2029. Sorry — I'm leaving, I'm leaving — that's the whole list. Which line on it is Mexico?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W50

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

THE FLOOR NEVER FALLS

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

... Continued on the Investigative Reporting page

Trump calls the Fed "hostile" for a hike, then calls the chairman who voted for it blameless.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Kevin Warsh took the oath as Federal Reserve chairman and said the regime was changing, that past mistakes would not repeat. The filing on that promise comes due every six weeks, same as always, and the first installment landed September 16: the Fed raised its interest rate target, the first hike under the new chairman, a vote the board returned unanimously.

The next day, September 17, two entries post against the same account. First: the president, who spent months telling Powell to cut rates and calling him a mistake for not doing it, declined to say the same about Warsh for raising them. Second, same day, speaking with reporters in North Carolina: the president called the Fed board "hostile" for the vote it had just taken, while holding back criticism of the one chairman who sits on that board and cast one of the votes. The board gets the hostility. The chairman who was in the room gets a pass. Run the two statements side by side and the gap is one person wide, and it is Warsh.

Six days later, September 23, Fed Governor Michael Barr told reporters another hike is "likely." Not a forecast from outside the building — a sitting

... Continued on Page F2

Billionaires fund ads against the tax on billionaires, named in the receipts as billionaires

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Proposition 40 does one piece of arithmetic: a five percent tax, taken once, from each of California's 200 billionaires, routed into the state's healthcare and education funds. That's the whole measure. The rest of the story is who shows up to argue with the arithmetic.

On August 25, two campaigns opened fire on it. Building a Better California and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes began an ad blitz against Prop 40, financed in part by Google co-founder Sergey Brin and venture capitalist Peter Thiel. The filing runs against the table here without much reconciling to do: the people the tax would charge are the people paying to defeat it.

On September 21, a group of Nobel-winning economists stepped into that fight and called the ballot measure a potential turning point in the battle between democracy and oligarchy.

The next day, a different instrument found something else. The UC Berkeley Citrin Center and POLITICO released a poll on September 22 putting support at 45 percent. Fewer than half. The gap doesn't require a motive to ex-

... Continued on Page F3

Court releases bodycam arrest footage months after Mangione pleaded guilty to the crime it documents.

BY MITCH
Investigations

Friday, a judge in Pennsylvania unsealed police bodycam footage from the arrest of Luigi Mangione, the man who has since pleaded guilty to murdering UnitedHealthcare chief executive Brian Thompson in Manhattan. The footage arrives with real production values: multiple camera angles, cut together into one sequence, officers approaching a McDonald's in Altoona, officers searching a backpack, officers asking a seated man to lower the mask covering his face. All together now — watch the mask come down. The video exists to answer one question, is this the man, and the answer, now carried in headline after headline, is "that's 100% him."

The footage finds a gun in the backpack. It finds Mangione at a booth. None of this is contested. That is the part worth sitting with. The footage was built, clause by clause, timestamp by timestamp, to be shown to a jury weighing whether it proved what the prosecution said it proved. The case did not reach that jury. It resolved by guilty plea instead, which is one way a case can resolve — a defendant stands up, enters the plea, and the proceeding that was going to need this tape stops needing it.

... Continued on Page A3

Valkyries trail by 16, erase it, reach the WNBA semifinals anyway

BY GUS
The Sports Desk

● HOT MIC MOMENT

This reporter will say what the production truck isn't supposed to hear: a franchise that didn't exist until 2025 just outlasted a Mercury roster the wire itself calls struggling, and nobody in ownership has to explain what happens to the old markets once the investment money finds a shinier one. Send this reporter to the political desk before standards and practices gets back from lunch.

... Continued on Page S2

Kalshi's advertised bonus rose from $25 to $2,000 since August; the deposit required stayed $25

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

You will have seen the two thousand and taken it for the offer. It is not the offer. Twenty-five dollars is the offer, and the two thousand is a ceiling — "up to," mind you, and up to costs the house nothing whatever.

Watch the code instead. NYPMAX. NYPMAX1. NYPMAX2000. The letters hold from August to October; only the Saturday moves. The twenty-ninth of August, Kalshi: trade twenty-five, get twenty-five, Florida State against New Mexico State. Today, Kalshi: trade twenty-five, get up to two thousand, Ohio State against Iowa. The same twenty-five going in. Polymarket asks ten dollars, and asked ten on the fifth of September, ten on the twelfth, ten this morning — Ball State, Iowa State, Mississippi State, and the deposit never shifts a penny. The fifth of September is a handsome thing: the headline promised twenty, the copy beneath it promised fifty. Both ran.

And what is actually being sold? The deposit. The deposit is the consideration ... the fixture is decoration. DraftKings asked five dollars, offered two hundred, and put Arch Manning's Heisman campaign in the copy at no charge.

... Continued on Page F4

Oman flagged him a security risk in 2024; Examiner calls it a lesson on who belongs here.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Wednesday, September 30. A FlyDubai flight out of Dubai drops out of level flight near Israeli airspace. The Israeli prime minister tells reporters a co-pilot stabbed the other pilot and nearly crashed the aircraft; The Hill's headline that day calls it a "cockpit clash." By day's end, Indian media and then the Indian Embassy name the surviving pilot: Smit Machchhar, the man who gets stabbed and still manages to open the cockpit door so passengers can end it.

Saturday, October 3. Two filings land the same day and change what kind of story this is.

The first is personnel. ABC News and Fox News report that the co-pilot, now identified as 29-year-old Omani national Hamam al-Hammami, had already been grounded once — by Oman Air, in 2024, as a security risk. He did not clear that flag. He changed airlines.

The second is legal. NBC News and the New York Post report that a UAE official has told prosecutors this was an attempted terrorist attack: al-Hammami used the cockpit's crash axe on the pilot and tried to take the flight controls himself. "Hijacking" and "brawl" are words other people added, be-

... Continued on Page A4

Collins's office denies any allegations exist, then she spends a day disputing them.

BY MITCH
Investigations

The headline on the document says the quiet part first: "We Uncovered Bribery Allegations Involving Susan Collins." ProPublica is specific about what's new here: the existence of an FBI investigation into that scheme, confirmed in print for the first time. All together now — line one: an investigation, reported for the first time, dated September 22nd, filed, footnoted.

The responses arrived same day, and the order matters. Collins's office called the allegations "categorically false," adding that "there have never been any allegations of wrongdoing by the Collins for Senator campaign." Hours later, Troy Jackson, her Democratic opponent in a race he has every reason to make about this, called it "corruption of the highest order" and said Collins "delivered millions in taxpayer dollars for a corrupt donor bankrolling her campaign." The senator herself waited until the next morning to answer in her own voice: a "political hit job," she said September 23rd, and then she did to a witness what you cannot do to a document — she questioned Martin Kao's credibility, the same contractor executive the filing already named as the scheme's architect.

... Continued on Page A5

Putin pitches oil deal to Trump's son-in-law, the man negotiating peace with Putin.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On September 4, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner flew to Moscow, then to Kyiv — the special envoy and the president's son-in-law, sent to revive the stalled talks. By September 6, they called the Kyiv leg "encouraging." By September 7, Witkoff was touting "substantive progress" and a three-day pause in the fighting both sides had agreed to so the talks could continue. Two days later, on September 9, the president took a call with Putin and pronounced it "great."

That same September 9, a separate ledger closed. An analysis of the president's financial disclosure found his nine largest oil and gas holdings had risen by as much as $4.4 million since the United States went to war with Iran six months before — a different war than the one Witkoff and Kushner were in Moscow to end, running through the same portfolio at the same time. The filing does not break out how much of that nine-holding basket sits in Russian or Ukrainian energy rather than Iranian; what it establishes is simpler: the portfolio moves with war, and that week it moved by millions.

Two weeks later, on September 23, Secretary of State Marco Rubio invited

... Continued on Page F5

Trump says Russia, Ukraine agreed to spare energy sites; weeks later G7 drains 100 million barrels anyway

BY THE LODGERS
The Euro Desk

Today we are making a reserve release, which is what a government reaches for once it has stopped waiting for the price to fall on its own. On the second of October the Group of Seven, with Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and others named among its members, agreed to put 100 million barrels of fuel, including diesel, onto the market from their own stockpiles, as prices skyrocketed these past weeks.

You will need a Treasury Secretary prepared to name a cause: on Wednesday the second of September, from a G20 finance ministers' meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, Scott Bessent told reporters the Russia-Ukraine war, and the war with Iran, had produced what he called an energy shock. You will need a president prepared to announce the problem solved: on the fourteenth of September he posted, "Ukraine has agreed not to hit Russian Energy targets. Russia has agreed to do likewise!" And you will need, from Senate Democrats, a report dated the twenty-fourth of September, naming a billion dollars raised from the fossil fuel industry for the 2024 campaign, and the policy returned on it since.

... Continued on Page F6

Only one column in Pennsylvania this week balanced to the dollar, and it wasn't the one about measles.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Ryan Field opened Saturday with a final score of 34-13, Northwestern over Penn State, Caleb Komolafe carrying 188 yards and a touchdown on a team total of 413 yards rushing. The stadium itself cost $875 million. Those are the only two figures in this story that line up to the dollar and the yard: a construction budget and a box score, filed on the same weekend, both final, both verifiable by anyone with a browser.

The other filing in this week's drawer is a health department dashboard. Pennsylvania's count of measles cases crossed 900 on Monday, September 28th, when the state updated its tally to 903 — 115 new infections added in the seven days before that update alone. That is not a season total settled in May; that is a number still climbing on a Monday, with no final score attached and no fourth quarter to run out the clock on.

Reconcile the two filings and the gap holds its shape. The stadium number is a known quantity because somebody had to write it down to borrow it, bond it, and build it — $875 million does not get poured into a roof on a handshake. The measles number is a known quantity because a health department

... Continued on Page F7

Netanyahu brands mayor a terrorist's buddy, is branded too soft on the Palestinians by his own side.

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Start with the sequence, because the sequence is the whole story. On September 17th, Israel's ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, said it was Zohran Mamdani who should be arrested, not his own prime minister. Five days later, on the 22nd, Mamdani answered the only way he'd been answering for weeks, by repeating that Netanyahu should face arrest over Gaza when he landed in New York. Two days after that, Netanyahu took the UN podium himself and did what ambassadors do for a living: he named Mamdani by name, called Hamas his "buddies," and did it in a chamber that delegates from scores of countries had already walked out of to protest his presence. Mamdani hit back the same day, calling it a sanitizing of a death toll now past 73,000 Palestinians.

On September 28th, the Guardian filed the beat that explains all of the above without needing a single new fact: Netanyahu wasn't improvising. He was campaigning. A mayor six time zones away makes a cleaner villain than the coalition partners sitting next to you.

Fair word for it. Then on Saturday, the Daily Caller ran a story that an-

... Continued on Page A6

Tennessee's first execution of a woman in 200 years leaves her unconscious on a ventilator instead of dead

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Frank Strada ran executions in Arizona, a record documented well enough that the New York Times is now asking how Tennessee came to hire him anyway, before putting him in charge of the state's prisons. That is the first beat on this page: the warning was already in the file. The second beat landed September 29, when the Supreme Court declined Christa Pike's clemency appeal, clearing Tennessee to become the first state in more than two hundred years to execute a woman. The third beat arrived the next morning, with witnesses already seated at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution: a divided Sixth Circuit panel, voting 2-1, halted the execution an hour before it was scheduled, to weigh Pike's allegations that she had been sexually abused and raped in custody.

That halt was temporary by its own terms. By October 2, the execution went forward under Strada's department, and it did not go as planned. Pike is now unconscious on a ventilator. Court filings surfacing this week describe what she told the experts who examined her case: that as the drug entered her vein, she believed her arm would burst open. Those experts describe

... Continued on Page A7

Banned from NFL stadiums over Gaza, Macklemore sells out Paris, London and Dublin instead

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Died, in the time between two words spoken into a live mic at MetLife Stadium and a box office selling out in three European capitals: the National Football League owners' claim that their stadiums have no room for a man who says "free Palestine."

Born in the owners' box, where New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, Common Dreams reported, rallied fellow NFL venue holders after Macklemore's remark onstage. The symptom arrived fast — he was pulled from the remaining U.S. dates of Ed Sheeran's Loop tour, a show he neither owned nor promoted. By Sept. 15, the Washington Examiner was already reporting him gone from the bill.

What followed was not the owners' plan. Several of Sheeran's own opening acts quit the tour that week in solidarity, the Examiner and Common Dreams both on record, one outlet calling it a possible "turning point" for how pop music handles Israel and Palestine. Sheeran, who said the removal was not his call, told Instagram followers that Tuesday he was "not complicit," that the decision belonged to the promoter, that Macklemore's contract ran

... Continued on Page D2

Rove warns Paxton to debate Talarico or lose, as Fox spends the week calling his Bible reading wrong

BY SAL
Staff Writer

Texas Democrats have been here before, which is the whole problem with trusting it now. Three decades without winning a top-of-the-ballot race will do that to a party, and after thirty years of waiting, all it takes to get hopeful again is five points in a poll of 1,007 voters taken September 19 to 22, the third week of the month, with a 3.6 percent margin of error built right into the dream.

Go back four weeks and you can watch the campaign build the case. On September 2, Talarico's campaign put out an ad accusing Paxton's "billionaire handlers" of keeping their candidate off a debate stage. The accusation sat there a day before Karl Rove gave it a second opinion: on September 3, Rove told reporters time was running out for Paxton, that the president needed to start spending money fast if he wanted the seat held. Rove wasn't rescuing Talarico. He was telling his own side the clock the Democrat had already started.

In between, the campaign did what campaigns do when the floor is this thin. On September 9, Talarico walked back a past comment about "six sexes,"

... Continued on Page A8

"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*

Trump calls the Fed "hostile" for a hike, then calls the chairman who voted for it blameless.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



“Fed expected to raise interest rates again, against Trump’s wishes”, 3 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh, installed by President Trump, is expected to raise interest rates again four months into his term.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Public criticism, the check Trump used against the last Fed chair for the same move, does not apply to this one.

WHAT'S NEXT. No pattern fits yet; what's on the calendar is the hike itself, and whether the president criticizes Warsh afterward the way he never has since September is the thing to watch.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Kevin Warsh took the oath as Federal Reserve chairman and said the regime was changing, that past mistakes would not repeat. The filing on that promise comes due every six weeks, same as always, and the first installment landed September 16: the Fed raised its interest rate target, the first hike under the new chairman, a vote the board returned unanimously.

The next day, September 17, two entries post against the same account. First: the president, who spent months telling Powell to cut rates and calling him a mistake for not doing it, declined to say the same about Warsh for raising them. Second, same day, speaking with reporters in North Carolina: the president called the Fed board "hostile" for the vote it had just taken, while holding back criticism of the one chairman who sits on that board and cast one of the votes. The board gets the hostility. The chairman who was in the room gets a pass. Run the two statements side by side and the gap is one person wide, and it is Warsh....

...(cont) Six days later, September 23, Fed Governor Michael Barr told reporters another hike is "likely." Not a forecast from outside the building — a sitting member of the rate-setting committee that had just voted unanimously, narrating the next page before it's written. The inflation Warsh was installed to out-manage had not moved enough to let the new regime skip a meeting.

Which brings the ledger to today. Warsh is expected to raise rates again, four months and change into a tenure that opened on a pledge against repetition. The rate is going up. The criticism is not following it.

He has not been named. Whatever accounting is being done in that building, the entries are consistent: the rate moves, the chairman's name stays off the complaint, and four months into the term the only thing that has not repeated yet is the criticism.



“Trump spent a year calling the last Fed chairman a mistake for not cutting rates, put in his own guy, and the guy raised them anyway — and nothing happens to him. That tells you it was never about the rate, it was about who's sitting in the chair. Your mortgage payment doesn't care who got the loyalty pass.”

— *Sal*



“The Fed's independent, that's the whole design, the president respects the process — wait, did he respect it with Powell? No, strike that, forget I said that. Look, inflation's sticky, the data made Warsh do it, and the president just happens to agree with the process this particular time.”

— *Chip*

THE RECEIPTS

Fed expected to raise interest rates again, against Trump's wishes

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *06:15 EDT*

When Kevin Warsh was sworn in as chairman of the Federal Reserve, he touted a planned policy regime change for America’s central bank and pledged not to repeat past mistakes. Four months-plus into his tenure, Warsh finds himself in the same boat as his predecessor: sticky inflation and the need for higher interest rates. Warsh [...]

· Fed raises interest rates in defiance of Trump *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Trump spares Kevin Warsh from criticism despite Fed rate hike *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Fed's Barr says future interest rate hikes 'likely' needed to tame inflation *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Trump rips ‘hostile’ Fed board after interest rate hike but defends Warsh *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

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

Billionaires fund ads against the tax on billionaires, named in the receipts as billionaires

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



“Top Democrats battle over California's proposed billionaire tax”, 3 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A California ballot measure would tax the state's 200 billionaires 5 percent once, for healthcare and schools.

WHO GETS PAID. Two billionaire-funded groups, backed in part by Sergey Brin and Peter Thiel, are running ads to defeat it.

WHAT SLIPS. Voters' own judgment slips when an ad campaign funded by the people being taxed moves the poll number against the tax in the same week it ran.

WHAT'S NEXT. Californians vote on the measure in November 2026, after the ad blitz from two of the billionaires it would tax and a poll showing support already under half.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Proposition 40 does one piece of arithmetic: a five percent tax, taken once, from each of California's 200 billionaires, routed into the state's healthcare and education funds. That's the whole measure. The rest of the story is who shows up to argue with the arithmetic.

On August 25, two campaigns opened fire on it. Building a Better California and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes began an ad blitz against Prop 40, financed in part by Google co-founder Sergey Brin and venture capitalist Peter Thiel. The filing runs against the table here without much reconciling to do: the people the tax would charge are the people paying to defeat it....

...(cont) On September 21, a group of Nobel-winning economists stepped into that fight and called the ballot measure a potential turning point in the battle between democracy and oligarchy.

The next day, a different instrument found something else. The UC Berkeley Citrin Center and POLITICO released a poll on September 22 putting support at 45 percent. Fewer than half. The gap doesn't require a motive to explain it.

By September 29, the campaign had entered what Common Dreams, reporting on the push, called its final weeks, amid what the outlet described as cuts to federal social spending under President Trump and the Republican-controlled Congress — the conditions backers say the tax would answer, not a phrase from Sanders's own statement. Sanders said he would return to California to rally alongside Rep. Ro Khanna and Rep. Aisha Wahab. Today's wire confirms it: Sanders and Khanna hold that rally.

So the ledger closes out this way. Two hundred people face a one-time, five percent charge. Support fell seven points the same week an ad blitz funded by some of those two hundred was running. The economists who called it popular and the poll that found it wasn't both come from the same month. Nobody has to accuse anybody of anything, hon — the dates line up on their own.



“You want to know who's scared of a one-time nickel-on-the-dollar tax? The guys writing checks to stop it, and they're on the list of people it would charge. That's not a coincidence, that's a line item, and it's working — the poll number dropped the same week the ads started running.”

— Sal



“Look, nobody's against funding healthcare — the concern here is purely about job creators and, you know, the chilling effect of taxing wealth that hasn't technically been — did I say chilling effect? These are concerned Californians exercising their right to spend money telling other Californians what to think about a tax on themselves. That's democracy. That's literally what that is.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Top Democrats battle over California's proposed billionaire tax~~

Sanders and Khanna rally for a one-time 5% tax on billionaires' wealth

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *06:34 EDT*

Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Ro Khanna will rally in support of an initiative that would place a one-time 5% tax on the wealth of billionaires in the state.

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

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

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

· Bernie Sanders Going Back to California to Rally for Billionaire Tax Ballot Measure *from the morgue, 29 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.

Court releases bodycam arrest footage months after Mangione pleaded guilty to the crime it documents.

By **MITCH**
INVESTIGATIONS



“Newly released video shows Luigi Mangione’s arrest”, 2 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA BBC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A judge unsealed police bodycam footage of Luigi Mangione's arrest months after he pleaded guilty to the killing it documents.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The jury that was supposed to weigh this footage at trial never sat; the public now watches it unchallenged on cable news instead.

WHAT'S NEXT. No further court date appears in the record; the case closed by guilty plea before the footage ever reached a jury.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Friday, a judge in Pennsylvania unsealed police bodycam footage from the arrest of Luigi Mangione, the man who has since pleaded guilty to murdering UnitedHealthcare chief executive Brian Thompson in Manhattan. The footage arrives with real production values: multiple camera angles, cut together into one sequence, officers approaching a McDonald's in Altoona, officers searching a backpack, officers asking a seated man to lower the mask covering his face. All together now — watch the mask come down. The video exists to answer one question, is this the man, and the answer, now carried in headline after headline, is "that's 100% him."

The footage finds a gun in the backpack. It finds Mangione at a booth. None of this is contested. That is the part worth sitting with. The footage was built, clause by clause, timestamp by timestamp, to be shown to a jury weighing whether it proved what the prosecution said it proved. The case did not reach that jury. It resolved by guilty plea instead, which is one way a case can resolve — a defendant stands up, enters the plea, and the proceeding that was going to need this tape stops needing it....

...(cont) All together now — line two. A gun. A backpack. A mask lowered on request, days after the killing of the UnitedHealthcare executive the footage was gathered to connect him to. The evidence survived to be unsealed. The trial it was gathered for did not survive to use it. What a judge released Friday is a courtroom exhibit with no courtroom left to sit in, airing instead on cable news with chyrons under it, in front of an audience that was never the twelve people it was filmed for.

The timestamp still reads correctly. The clause still resolves the way the officers needed it to resolve, on the day they needed it. It is simply resolving, months later, for us — the public, the viewers, the people who were never on the jury and never needed convincing — instead of the people it was actually made to convince. The document did its job. It just never got to work.



“They built a case airtight enough to need a trial, then skipped the trial, and now the only people watching the tape are us on the couch. That's not justice working, that's rerun television with a timestamp. The system got its plea; the public got the chyrons instead of the jury box.”

— Sal



“Look, unsealing is just standard transparency — the public has a right to see the record once a case resolves. Did I say 'resolves'? I mean concludes. The officers did exactly what the footage shows, the plea confirms it, so really this tape proves nothing that wasn't already settled — which is sort of the whole reason we're showing it to you now, I don't see the tension there.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

New bodycam footage shows moment Luigi Mangione was arrested at McDonald's

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *20:58 EDT*

Newly released bodycam footage shows the arrest of Luigi Mangione, who has since pleaded guilty to murdering UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson. Ali Bauman has more.

Newly released video shows Luigi Mangione’s arrest

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *16:37 EDT*

The bodycam footage also shows a police officer finding a gun in Mangione's backpack, days after the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson.

Newly released bodycam video shows arrest of Luigi Mangione – video

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *17:51 EDT*

Newly released police bodycam footage shows officers in Altoona, Pennsylvania, approaching, searching and arresting Luigi Mangione at a McDonald's on 9 December 2024 in connection with the shooting death of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson. The Guardian has edited the video from multiple cameras to show the moments of the arrest...

‘That’s 100% him’: new video shows police arrest of Luigi Mangione

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *18:20 EDT*

Judge unseals bodycam footage from officers who responded to 911 from McDonald’s in Pennsylvania Police bodycam footage released Friday shows the moment officers located and arrested Luigi Mangione at a Pennsylvania McDonald’s in connection with the shooting death of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson in Manhattan. In one video...

Valkyries trail by 16, erase it, reach the WNBA semifinals anyway

By GUS

THE SPORTS DESK



“Golden State Valkyries erase 16-point deficit, stun Dallas Wings to reach WNBA semifinals”, 3 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA FOX NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A WNBA expansion team in its second season came back to beat the Dallas Wings and reach the league semifinals.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. The Valkyries now play the Las Vegas Aces in the WNBA semifinals.

● HOT MIC MOMENT

This reporter will say what the production truck isn't supposed to hear: a franchise that didn't exist until 2025 just outlasted a Mercury roster the wire itself calls struggling, and nobody in ownership has to explain what happens to the old markets once the investment money finds a shinier one. Send this reporter to the political desk before standards and practices gets back from lunch.

GUS HIS SIDE

The gals showed real grit chasing down that deficit, scrapping the way this reporter's generation expected ladies' basketball to scrap back when the league still had to prove it belonged on the same broadcast schedule as the men.

The dagger came late, Gabby Williams calmly burying the go-ahead seventeen-footer as Golden State held off Dallas for a 79-73 final that will be replayed on highlight reels for years.

This reporter notes the comeback bug is going around: Arch Manning and Texas erased a twenty-point deficit against Ohio State on September 13th in a fourth-quarter vanishing act of their own.

TRUDY *HER SIDE*

> *Third season, sugar? CBS Sports has the Valkyries launching as a WNBA expansion club in 2025. This is only their second season, and it already includes their first playoff series win.*

> *"The gals" just won a playoff series as a one-year-old franchise. CBS Sports calls it exactly what it is — a first, full stop, no ladies' auxiliary qualifier required.*

> *Fox News has it 77-73, not 79. Williams's shot was plenty — Golden State didn't need the extra two points you just handed them.*

> *That one you got right — 23-3 is a twenty-point hole, same as the Fox headline said. Mark the calendar, it happens.*

> *August 27th, same Fox wire. Good memory for once. Have a seat before the postgame.*

> *Mic's hot, genius, and nobody's reassigning you over a box score. Golden State is a 2025 expansion team that just won its first playoff series, and Fox News had the Mercury filed as struggling on August 27th — the facts clear you without the speech.*



“They'll tell you a brand-new team needs years to find its footing, then hand it a roster that skips the line while a ten-year franchise in Phoenix gets stuck with the word "struggling" stapled to its name in the same week's wire copy. That's not parity, that's just where the next sponsorship dollar decided to land, and the players are the ones left guessing which city keeps the lights on.”

— Sal



“Look, expansion fees fund the whole league, that's just how pro sports works, every market gets its shot — the Mercury's situation has nothing to do with where the investment's flowing, that's a totally separate— did I say "flowing"? That's not the word I meant to use.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Golden State Valkyries erase 16-point deficit, stun Dallas Wings to reach WNBA semifinals

Fox News RIGHT § *01:11 EDT*

Gabby Williams hit a go-ahead 17-footer and the Golden State Valkyries rallied from 16 down to stun the Dallas Wings 77-73 in a wild Game 3.

'A switch flipped': Valkyries erase 16-point deficit against Wings, advance to WNBA semis to face the Aces

CBS Sports § *01:06 EDT*

This was the first playoff series win for the Valkyries, who just launched as an expansion team in 2025

· Arch Manning and Texas Longhorns erase 20-point deficit to stun Ohio State in shocking comeback for the ages *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· Golden State Valkyries and New York Liberty headline two WNBA picks for tonight's slate *from the morgue, 27 Aug 2026*

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

Kalshi's advertised bonus rose from $25 to $2,000 since August; the deposit required stayed $25

By **STERLING**
THE OWNERSHIP DESK



"Polymarket promo code NYPMAX1: Deposit $10, get $25 for Alabama vs. Mississippi State", 3 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Prediction-trading platforms ran the same deposit-bonus promotion again this weekend, changing only which college football game was named.

WHO GETS PAID. Kalshi, Polymarket and DraftKings Predictions, which collect the new-user deposits, and the New York Post, whose initials appear in the promo codes it prints.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. The same offer ran on August 29, September 5, September 12 and October 3, with the required deposit unchanged each time. The next college football Saturday is October 10.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

You will have seen the two thousand and taken it for the offer. It is not the offer. Twenty-five dollars is the offer, and the two thousand is a ceiling — "up to," mind you, and up to costs the house nothing whatever.

Watch the code instead. NYPMAX. NYPMAX1. NYPMAX2000. The letters hold from August to October; only the Saturday moves. The twenty-ninth of August, Kalshi: trade twenty-five, get twenty-five, Florida State against New Mexico State. Today, Kalshi: trade twenty-five, get up to two thousand, Ohio State against Iowa. The same twenty-five going in. Polymarket asks ten dollars, and asked ten on the fifth of September, ten on the twelfth, ten this morning — Ball State, Iowa State, Mississippi State, and the deposit never shifts a penny. The fifth of September is a handsome thing: the headline promised twenty, the copy beneath it promised fifty. Both ran....

...(cont) And what is actually being sold? The deposit. The deposit is the consideration ... the fixture is decoration. DraftKings asked five dollars, offered two hundred, and put Arch Manning's Heisman campaign in the copy at no charge.

Nothing was broken here. The code carries the paper's initials. The ten dollars is yours to put up.

At the fence each morning, the fox waits. The hens come out anyway.

— ENOCH
The Ownership Desk

"Same promo code since August, same ten bucks out of your pocket, and the only thing they swap out is which two teams are in the headline. They call it a bonus — a bonus is money somebody hands you, this is money you hand them first and then they tell you what you won. And the code has the newspaper's own initials sitting right in the middle of it."

— Sal

"These are promotional offers for adults, voluntarily entered into, and nobody is forced to — did I say forced? That doesn't sound like me. Look, the two thousand dollars is right there in the headline, it says up to, everybody knows what up to means, and if a reader deposits ten dollars that was their call. The newspaper runs the copy. Running copy is not the same as, well, running it."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Polymarket promo code NYPMAX1: Deposit $10, get $25 for Alabama vs. Mississippi State

New York Post RIGHT § *07:00 EDT*

New users can apply the Polymarket promo code NYPMAX1 to deposit $10, to get a $25 trading bonus.

Kalshi promo code NYPMAX2000: Get up to $2,000 bonus for Ohio State vs. Iowa

New York Post RIGHT § *07:30 EDT*

Trade $25, get up to $2,000 with the Kalshi promo code NYPMAX for Iowa vs. Ohio State.

· Polymarket promo code NYPMAX1: Deposit $10, get $20 for Ball State vs. Ohio State *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

· Kalshi promo code NYPMAX: Trade $25, get $25 for Florida State vs. New Mexico State *from the morgue, 29 Aug 2026*

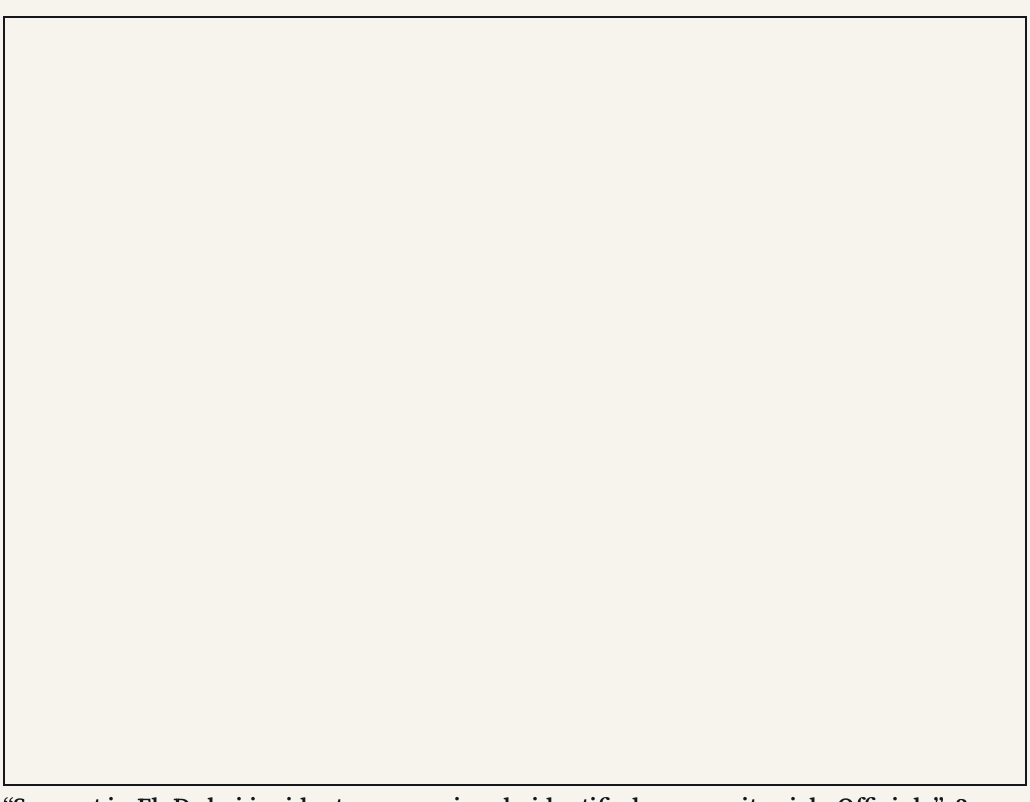
· Polymarket promo code NYPMAX1: Deposit $10, get $50 for Iowa State vs. Iowa *from the morgue, 12 Sep 2026*

· DraftKings Predictions promo code: Spend $5, Get $200 for Texas vs. Texas State *from the morgue, 5 Sep 2026*

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Oman flagged him a security risk in 2024; Examiner calls it a lesson on who belongs here.

By **SAL**
STAFF WRITER



"Suspect in FlyDubai incident was previously identified as security risk: Officials", 3 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. UAE prosecutors say a FlyDubai co-pilot attacked the pilot with a crash axe in an attempted terrorist attack.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. FlyDubai's hiring check never saw the security flag Oman Air had already put on him.

WHAT'S NEXT. The case now moves toward formal terrorism charges in the UAE; the receipts give no hearing date, so that filing is what comes next.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Wednesday, September 30. A FlyDubai flight out of Dubai drops out of level flight near Israeli airspace. The Israeli prime minister tells reporters a co-pilot stabbed the other pilot and nearly crashed the aircraft; The Hill's headline that day calls it a "cockpit clash." By day's end, Indian media and then the Indian Embassy name the surviving pilot: Smit Machchhar, the man who gets stabbed and still manages to open the cockpit door so passengers can end it.

Saturday, October 3. Two filings land the same day and change what kind of story this is....

...(cont) The first is personnel. ABC News and Fox News report that the co-pilot, now identified as 29-year-old Omani national Hamam al-Hammami, had already been grounded once — by Oman Air, in 2024, as a security risk. He did not clear that flag. He changed airlines.

The second is legal. NBC News and the New York Post report that a UAE official has told prosecutors this was an attempted terrorist attack: al-Hammami used the cockpit's crash axe on the pilot and tried to take the flight controls himself. "Hijacking" and "brawl" are words other people added, before and after the fact.

By Saturday afternoon, the op-eds arrive, built on the same five days of wire copy. One argues that a Hindu captain and Jewish passengers surviving together is America's real answer to a debate about who belongs here — a debate the flight never actually held.

What the timeline actually proves is smaller and uglier than either column. An airline grounded this man as a security risk. Another airline put him back in a cockpit, flying people to Israel, with an axe within arm's reach of the controls. The receipts don't say how many flags like his get read before the next hiring; they only say this one didn't. That isn't a debate about belonging. It's a staffing file that didn't get read twice.

"An airline flagged this guy as a security risk in 2024. Another airline put him in a cockpit with an axe within reach anyway, flying people to Israel — the hiring check and the security file never talked to each other. You only find out the two offices don't share a folder when somebody almost doesn't walk off the plane."

— Sal

"Look, the real story here is unity — a Hindu pilot, Jewish passengers, that's America working. The security flag thing, every airline's got paperwork that doesn't transfer between carriers, that's not a conspiracy, that's bureaucracy. Although — Oman Air grounded him specifically as a risk, so, did I say "doesn't transfer"? Strike that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Co-pilot suspended by Oman as a security risk, hired by FlyDubai, then allegedly tries to kill his captain.* By Sal · the milkman edition, 3 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Suspect in FlyDubai incident was previously identified as security risk: Officials

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *08:06 EDT*

The co-pilot of the FlyDubai plane who allegedly attacked its captain is an Omani national who was previously suspended by Oman Air as a security risk, sources say.

While America debates who belongs, a Hindu captain and Jewish passengers just stopped a hijacking

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *06:00 EDT*

While Americans argue about which religious minorities belong in our national life, a Hindu of Indian origin captain and Jewish Israeli passengers offered a more consequential answer: They helped keep everyone on board Flydubai Flight FZ1073 alive. On Sept. 30, Flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv became the scene of an apparent attempt...

Flydubai co-pilot used crash ax to hack at pilot in attempted 'terrorist attack': UAE official

New York Post RIGHT § *07:50 EDT*

UAE prosecutors say flydubai co-pilot Hamam al-Hammami used a crash axe to attack the pilot in an attempted hijack of an Israel-bound flight.

FlyDubai co-pilot accused of stabbing captain identified as 29-year-old Omani national

Fox News RIGHT § *06:17 EDT*

Hamam al-Hammami, the 29-year-old FlyDubai co-pilot accused of stabbing the captain on a Tel Aviv-bound flight, was previously grounded by Oman Air in 2024.

How newsrooms turned an attempted hijacking into a 'brawl' (and killed public trust)

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *06:00 EDT*

Imagine sitting on an airplane at 34,000 feet. Breakfast has been served. You are flying from Dubai to Tel Aviv with more than 170 other people, most of them Israelis.

Flydubai pilot attacked captain with cockpit's crash axe in attempted terrorist attack, UAE official says

NBC News MAINSTREAM § *05:25 EDT*

TEL AVIV — A Flydubai pilot attacked his fellow pilot using a crash axe and tried to take control of the aircraft's flight controls in an attempted terrorist attack, an official in the United Arab Emirates said Saturday.

· What to know about Flydubai cockpit clash as pilot is arrested

from the morgue, 30 Sep 2026

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THE FILING

Collins's office denies any allegations exist, then she spends a day disputing them.

By MITCH

INVESTIGATIONS

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The headline on the document says the quiet part first: "We Uncovered Bribery Allegations Involving Susan Collins." ProPublica is specific about what's new here: the existence of an FBI investigation into that scheme, confirmed in print for the first time. All together now — line one: an investigation, reported for the first time, dated September 22nd, filed, footnoted.

The responses arrived same day, and the order matters. Collins's office called the allegations "categorically false," adding that "there have never been any allegations of wrongdoing by the Collins for Senator campaign." Hours later, Troy Jackson, her Democratic opponent in a race he has every reason to make about this, called it "corruption of the highest order" and said Collins "delivered millions in taxpayer dollars for a corrupt donor bankrolling her campaign." The senator herself waited until the next morning to answer in her own voice: a "political hit job," she said September 23rd, and then she did to a witness what you cannot do to a document — she questioned Martin Kao's credibility, the same contractor executive the filing already named as the scheme's architect....

...(cont) Ten days after the filing, on October 2nd, the race arrived at a number: tied. CBS's poll shows Collins and Jackson even, Jackson drawing voters who want change, Collins holding a share of voters who disapprove of Trump but not, evidently, of her. The poll does not mention Kao. It does not mention the FBI. It mentions a tie, and leaves the reader to decide what put it there.

All together now, line two: a spokesperson calls a filing false the same day it's filed; the opponent calls it corruption the same day; the senator calls it political the next morning; the poll, ten days later, calls it even. The sequence does not require you to believe what ProPublica alleges. It requires only that you count how many of those responses are built from emails and legal records, and how many are adjectives.



"Her office says there's nothing here, then the senator spends a whole news cycle arguing with the guy she says can't be believed — that's not a denial, that's homework. Ten days later the race is tied, so whatever she's covering, it isn't costing her a point yet. Watch the money and the contracts, not the adjectives."

— Sal



"There's nothing here, categorically — although the senator did spend the next day explaining why the man making the allegation can't be trusted, which is maybe not "nothing." This report lands in the middle of a close Senate race, which tells you everything about the timing — except the tie in the polls came ten days after the story broke, not before. Bad timing for somebody; I'm not saying who."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

> ~~The Consultants Will Kill You~~
>
> ***El-Sayed leads by 5 running as himself. Jackson trails by 3 running from the consultants.***
>
> *Current Affairs* § *16:56 EDT*
>
> The New York Times has a new article headlined " Democrats Show Strength in Michigan Senate Race but Trail in Maine, Polls Find. " It highlights the divergent electoral prospects of two Democratic Senate candidates: Michigan's Dr.

CBS News poll finds voters split on state v. national focus in Maine Senate race

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *22:10 EDT*

Troy Jackson is boosted by those looking for change, while Collins peels off some Trump disapprovers.

Watch: We Uncovered Bribery Allegations Involving Susan Collins

ProPublica § *05:00 EDT*

The post Watch: We Uncovered Bribery Allegations Involving Susan Collins appeared first on ProPublica .

> *But:* **In special elections, Democrats have retained 10 points more of their previous turnout than Republicans** *Ballotpedia, 26 February 2026*
>
> Susan Collins tied with Troy Jackson in Maine Senate race, new CBS News poll shows
>
> *CBS News* MAINSTREAM § *19:39 EDT*
>
> Democrat Troy Jackson has pulled into a tie with Republican Sen. Susan Collins in Maine's battle for U.S. Senate.

· Susan Collins aide dismisses ProPublica corruption allegation as 'categorically false' *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· 'Incredible Story of Corruption': Bombshell Report Puts Susan Collins at Center of Massive Bribery Scheme *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Susan Collins tears into bribery allegations as new claims emerge during critical Senate battle *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· 'Corruption of the Highest Order,' Says Troy Jackson After Explosive Susan Collins Report *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

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Putin pitches oil deal to Trump's son-in-law, the man negotiating peace with Putin.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"Trump, Putin, Ukraine and an Oil Deal: 5 Takeaways", 3 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Putin brought up a sale of Russian energy assets with his own peace negotiators, Kushner and Witkoff.

WHO GETS PAID. Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, the president's own negotiators, stand to gain if the deal they're being pitched becomes real.

WHAT SLIPS. The safeguard that keeps a peace negotiator from also being the buyer in the deal he's brokering is the one slipping, with no recusal on record yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. If Congress holds no vote on an oil arrangement tied to the ceasefire, it can proceed anyway; that's what happened with the Libya operation in 2011, when an authorization resolution failed 123 to 295 and the campaign continued four more months regardless.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On September 4, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner flew to Moscow, then to Kyiv — the special envoy and the president's son-in-law, sent to revive the stalled talks. By September 6, they called the Kyiv leg "encouraging." By September 7, Witkoff was touting "substantive progress" and a three-day pause in the fighting both sides had agreed to so the talks could continue. Two days later, on September 9, the president took a call with Putin and pronounced it "great."

That same September 9, a separate ledger closed. An analysis of the president's financial disclosure found his nine largest oil and gas holdings had risen by as much as $4.4 million since the United States went to war with Iran six months before — a different war than the one Witkoff and Kushner were in Moscow to end, running through the same portfolio at the same time. The filing does not break out how much of that nine-holding basket sits in Russian or Ukrainian energy rather than Iranian; what it establishes is simpler: the portfolio moves with war, and that week it moved by millions....

...(cont) Two weeks later, on September 23, Secretary of State Marco Rubio invited Putin to the G20 summit in Miami this December, the first time Putin would appear at a G20 in person since he started the war in 2022. Two days after that, on September 25, seven Senate Republicans — Mitch McConnell and John Cornyn among them — signed a letter telling the president they had "serious concern" and asking him to explain why Putin had been invited at all.

Today's filing reconciles the rest. The New York Times reports that Putin raised a sale of Russian energy assets directly with the two men running the American side of these talks, Kushner and Witkoff, in a proposal the paper's own reporting says "raises new questions about conflicts of interest." The men brokering the ceasefire are the same two men being pitched the deal that ceasefire would make profitable to close. There is a seller, a sale, and two buyers who also hold the pen on the calendar that prices what they would be buying, hon — the longer the war runs, the less they would pay for it.

FROM THE CORNER

DUTCH

PUTIN'S NEGOTIATORS OFFERED A STAKE IN RUSSIAN OIL TO THE TWO MEN RUNNING THE American side of the peace talks, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, the same month seven Senate Republicans wrote the president asking why Putin was invited to the G20 in Miami at all. That is not shuttle diplomacy. it is a sales call with diplomatic cover. The longer the war runs, the cheaper the oil prices out before the sale closes; the two men pricing the oil are the two men setting the ceasefire date; so the retirement statement in your dresser drawer is waiting on the same two guys who are also doing the shopping.

"This isn't a mystery, it's a sales pitch wearing a peace plan. The same two guys writing the ceasefire are the same two guys being offered a stake in what's left once the oil stops getting shelled — that's not diplomacy, that's inventory management. The Senate letter doesn't even mention it; they're busy asking why Putin got invited to Miami while his own deal gets cut in the next room."

— Sal

"Look, nothing's been signed — my goodness, people act like a conversation is a contract. Putin brings up a lot of things in a room, doesn't mean Jared's running to the bank, he's a dealmaker, that's what dealmakers do, they talk business, it's practically a compliment to American negotiating skill — did I say compliment? Forget I said that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Seniors get $90 once; the president's oil stocks gain up to $4.4 million from the war.* By Ruth · the wee small hours edition, 3 October 2026
- *Ads praising the president's presidency were charged to border security, at the president's direction.* By Mort · the supper edition, 2 October 2026
- *Sen. Ron Johnson holds the vote that could save $810 million, declines to cast it.* By The Wrecking Crew · the late evening edition, 30 September 2026
- *White House mails 'finally getting something back' checks for overcharges no audit ever found* By Ruth · the supper edition, 30 September 2026
- *Administration mails $500 checks for ACA premiums it admits no audit confirmed were ever overcharged* By Ruth · the matinee edition, 30 September 2026
- *Trump priced Congress at $5,000 an adult; twenty days later his party counts his controversies among its headaches* By Mort · the breakfast edition, 29 September 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~Trump, Putin, Ukraine and an Oil Deal: 5 Takeaways~~

Trump administration's Ukraine peace plan doubles as a Russian oil deal
The New York Times | MAINSTREAM | *05:03 EDT*

A proposal to bolster relations with the Kremlin through the purchase of Russian energy assets is striking even for an administration that regularly mixes personal business interests with foreign policy.

But: Trump promised to settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of taking office, on 53 separate occasions, CNN counted *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

U.S.-Russia Talks on Ukraine Now Involve an Oil Deal Tied to Trump Allies
The New York Times | MAINSTREAM | *05:02 EDT*

President Vladimir V. Putin brought up a sale of Russian energy assets with President Trump's envoys, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, pushing a deal that raises new questions about conflicts of interest.

· Trump hails 'great' call with Putin as negotiators eye elusive Russia-Ukraine deal *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· McConnell, Cornyn join letter questioning Trump invite to Putin *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· US invites Putin to G20 summit in Miami for first time since Russia-Ukraine war began *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· Trump envoys hail 'encouraging' talks in Kyiv to end Russia-Ukraine war *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Witkoff, Kushner to visit Moscow and Kyiv in renewed push to end Russia-Ukraine war *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

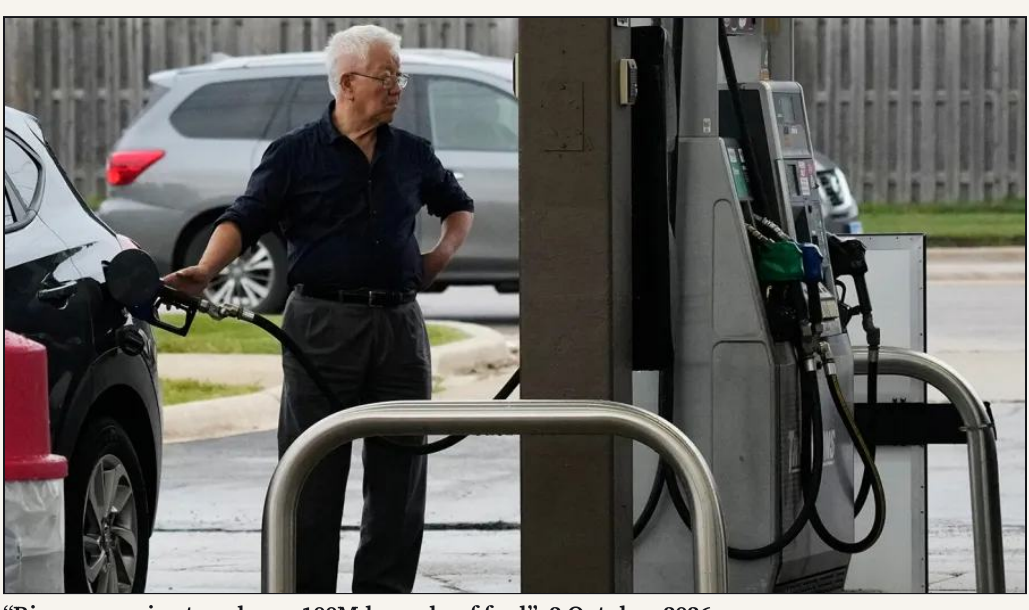
· Witkoff touts 'substantive progress' after peace talks with Ukraine, Russia *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

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

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Trump says Russia, Ukraine agreed to spare energy sites; weeks later G7 drains 100 million barrels anyway

By THE LODGERS
THE EURO DESK



"Big economies to release 100M barrels of fuel", 2 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE HILL — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The G7 released stockpiled fuel reserves after Treasury blamed Ukraine's strikes on Russia for soaring energy prices.

WHO GETS PAID. The fossil fuel industry, which put up a billion dollars for the 2024 campaign and got its policy agenda enacted.

WHAT SLIPS. No congressional vote or independent inquiry has reviewed whether the industry's billion-dollar campaign donation actually bought its energy policy.

WHAT'S NEXT. If blaming the war holds, expect another reserve draw instead of a price fix; Washington did that after 31 March 2022, releasing 180 million barrels as 'Putin's Price Hike at the Pump.'

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Today we are making a reserve release, which is what a government reaches for once it has stopped waiting for the price to fall on its own. On the second of October the Group of Seven, with Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and others named among its members, agreed to put 100 million barrels of fuel, including diesel, onto the market from their own stockpiles, as prices skyrocketed these past weeks.

You will need a Treasury Secretary prepared to name a cause: on Wednesday the second of September, from a G20 finance ministers' meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, Scott Bessent told reporters the Russia-Ukraine war, and the war with Iran, had produced what he called an energy shock. You will need a president prepared to announce the problem solved: on the fourteenth of September he posted, "Ukraine has agreed not to hit Russian Energy targets. Russia has agreed to do likewise!" And you will need, from Senate Democrats, a report dated the twenty-fourth of September, naming a billion dollars raised from the fossil fuel industry for the 2024 campaign, and the policy returned on it since....

The Fixer *A campaign. Now that's a word I understand — give me a campaign fund and a flag, and I will have the boiler fixed by Thursday.*

Now comes the part the house will be looking for: a vote, a resignation, a market correction, something that actually lowers the price. There is no such part; the hundred million barrels are what blame is instead of.

The Punk *A flag won't fix the boiler. I could have it in pieces by Thursday without any fund at all, and call that the market correction.*

Across the water, the Irish broadcaster RTÉ asked, in its own headline, "How is the EU dealing with energy price shocks?", and set out the choices open to governments trying to ease the pressure on households. One of those choices the EU had already taken, in December of 2022, when its member states agreed a gas price cap to limit exactly this kind of spike.

The Hippie *Pieces by Thursday. That's just the boiler finishing what the damp started, and nobody's capped the pressure on this house either.*

Here is the dish turned over and looked at underneath: the Treasury Secretary named the strikes; he did not name the cap his own allies had already written, in 2022, for this exact shock.

The Fixer *Say what you like about the damp, nobody's named a cap on the rent in this house, and I would sell the formula if anyone here could write it down.*

It serves the households still paying the pump price either way; the barrels buy time, not a lower cause. The bill goes to whoever fills the tank next.

The Poet *Sell the formula if you like; I have been filling the immersion tank out of my own pocket since the meter went, and nobody has called that a crisis.*

"They say it's Ukraine's fault your fuel bill is climbing, but the same month we learn the fossil fuel industry put up a billion dollars for the 2024 campaign and got policy returned on it. Now the G7's draining a hundred million barrels from the emergency reserve like this snuck up on anybody. You pay at the pump for the war, and you paid again for whoever bought the policy."

— Sal

"Look, the Treasury Secretary is just stating a fact: Ukraine hit Russian energy sites, prices moved, that's supply and demand — nothing to do with who put up a billion dollars for the campaign. And the G7 releasing a hundred million barrels together, that's leadership, that's coordination, that's — did I say leadership? That's not an admission the truce didn't hold, is what that's not."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Treasury blames Ukraine for the energy shock the EU already priced a cap for in 2022.* By The Lodgers · the wee small hours edition, 3 October 2026
- *National Republicans pour millions into saving a Kansas Senate seat that's underwater over a $50 bill.* By Ruth · the midnight edition, 3 October 2026
- *Administration declares 'economic D-Day' on Iran, then spends the week denying it offered Iran sanctions relief* By Chip · the midnight edition, 3 October 2026
- *Trump answers his worst polling yet by returning next week — to watch a football game.* By Chip · the midnight edition, 3 October 2026
- *Trump answers worst poll of his presidency by headlining a state no one is polling.* By Chip · the early evening edition, 2 October 2026
- *Trump says he's worried about North Carolina, spends the week campaigning in Alabama instead.* By Chip · the supper edition, 2 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Big economies to release 100M barrels of fuel

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *18:43 EDT*

{beacon} Energy & Environment Energy & Environment The Big Story Big economies to release 100M barrels of fuel Major economies will release fuel, including diesel, from their stockpiles as prices have skyrocketed in recent weeks. © George Walker IV, Associated Press The Group of Seven (G7), which includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy...

How is the EU dealing with energy price shocks?

RTÉ MAINSTREAM § *02:00 EDT*

RTÉ's Europe Editor Tony Connelly assesses how the EU is dealing with the energy price shock and what choices governments face in trying to alleviate the pressure on households.

· 'The Billion Dollar Deal': Senate Democrats Detail How Trump Serves Fossil Fuel Industry *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Trump says Russia, Ukraine agree to avoid energy targets as fuel prices rise *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Bessent blames Ukraine strikes on Russia for global energy market instability *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

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

Only one column in Pennsylvania this week balanced to the dollar, and it wasn't the one about measles.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK

"Northwestern routs Penn State in first game at Wildcats' new stadium", 3 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Northwestern opened its new stadium as Pennsylvania's measles outbreak grew and the governor avoided straight answers.

WHO GETS PAID. Northwestern University gets the benefit of a finished $875 million stadium, financed and built.

WHAT SLIPS. The public loses a clear number for what Pennsylvania is spending to bring the outbreak down.

WHAT'S NEXT. Nothing on the calendar yet sets a date when the state's case count is expected to stop climbing. The health department's dashboard updates weekly, and the next one is due the following Monday with no comparable spending figure attached.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Ryan Field opened Saturday with a final score of 34-13, Northwestern over Penn State, Caleb Komolafe carrying 188 yards and a touchdown on a team total of 413 yards rushing. The stadium itself cost $875 million. Those are the only two figures in this story that line up to the dollar and the yard: a construction budget and a box score, filed on the same weekend, both final, both verifiable by anyone with a browser.

The other filing in this week's drawer is a health department dashboard. Pennsylvania's count of measles cases crossed 900 on Monday, September 28th, when the state updated its tally to 903 — 115 new infections added in the seven days before that update alone. That is not a season total settled in May; that is a number still climbing on a Monday, with no final score attached and no fourth quarter to run out the clock on....

...(cont) Reconcile the two filings and the gap holds its shape. The stadium number is a known quantity because somebody had to write it down to borrow it, bond it, and build it — $875 million does not get poured into a roof on a handshake. The measles number is a known quantity because a health department has to count what is already happening whether anyone asked it to or not. One number describes money moving toward a thing the state wanted built. The other describes a virus moving through a population, and it arrives in this week's drawer with no dollar figure attached to it at all.

In August, before the stadium opened and before the count passed 900, the Washington Examiner ran a column titled "Just like Great American State Fair, Josh Shapiro struggles to tell truth on measles." It sits next to the health department's dashboard the way a headline sits next to a hospital bill: one of them you can audit, one of them you can only quote.

So here is the filing as it stands, hon: a football stadium with a nine-figure price tag attached to a dominant final score, and a disease count climbing by triple digits in a single week attached to no comparable figure at all. Both happened this fall, in the same state of the union. One of those two numbers carries a dollar sign in front of it. The other does not.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

NORTHWESTERN SPENT $875 MILLION AND OPENED ITS STADIUM WITH A SCOREBOARD precise down to the point; Pennsylvania spent the same month watching its measles count climb past 900 with no comparable figure attached to the response. That isn't an oversight, it's a ledger that only balances when someone is required to sign for it: the stadium has a number because a bond document needed one, and the outbreak does not because no statute requires a signature for it. Because that second column stays blank, the only place the shortfall shows up on a Tuesday is the note the school nurse sends home in your kid's backpack, the one with no date on it for when the case count in third period is supposed to stop.



"They can account for the concrete in that stadium down to the yard but can't put a number on fighting measles — that's not an accident, that's where the accounting stops mattering to the people who run it. The stadium gets a line item because somebody's bond rating depends on it; the outbreak doesn't get one because no bondholder loses sleep over your kid's immune system. That's the game: precision follows the money, not the sick kids."

— Sal



"That's apples to oranges — a university stadium is privately financed, not taxpayer money, so it has nothing to do with the state's measles numbers. The stadium's done, on budget, selling tickets; the outbreak isn't, so if anything that proves private money moves faster than public health ever could. Did I just say a football stadium is outperforming a measles response? That doesn't sound like something I'd say."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Northwestern routs Penn State in first game at Wildcats' new stadium
New York Post RIGHT § *00:23 EDT*

Caleb Komolafe rushed for a career-high 188 yards and a touchdown, and Northwestern routed Penn State 34-13 in the first game at the new Ryan Field.

Northwestern Wildcats christen new Ryan Field with impressive win over Penn State Nittany Lions
Fox News RIGHT § *00:02 EDT*

Northwestern christened the new $875 million Ryan Field with a dominant 34-13 win over Penn State, racking up 413 rushing yards in the Big Ten clash.

· Pennsylvania surpasses 900 measles cases *from the morgue, 28 Sep 2026*

· Just like Great American State Fair, Josh Shapiro struggles to tell truth on measles *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

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Netanyahu brands mayor a terrorist's buddy, is branded too soft on the Palestinians by his own side.

By SAL
STAFF WRITER



“Israeli Opposition Accuses Netanyahu Of Being Too Pro-Palestine”, 3 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA DAILY CALLER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Israel's opposition accused Netanyahu of being too soft on the Palestinians the week he branded the mayor a terrorist's friend.

WHO GETS PAID. Netanyahu's own re-election campaign gets a foreign villain to run against, the same week his flank asks why he goes easy on the Palestinians at home.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. There is no vote or court date in these receipts, only Israel's next election, whenever Netanyahu calls it; the UN name-calling is the campaign ad, not the policy.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Start with the sequence, because the sequence is the whole story. On September 17th, Israel's ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, said it was Zohran Mamdani who should be arrested, not his own prime minister. Five days later, on the 22nd, Mamdani answered the only way he'd been answering for weeks, by repeating that Netanyahu should face arrest over Gaza when he landed in New York. Two days after that, Netanyahu took the UN podium himself and did what ambassadors do for a living: he named Mamdani by name, called Hamas his "buddies," and did it in a chamber that delegates from scores of countries had already walked out of to protest his presence. Mamdani hit back the same day, calling it a sanitizing of a death toll now past 73,000 Palestinians.

On September 28th, the Guardian filed the beat that explains all of the above without needing a single new fact: Netanyahu wasn't improvising. He was campaigning. A mayor six time zones away makes a cleaner villain than the coalition partners sitting next to you....

...(cont) Fair word for it. Then on Saturday, the Daily Caller ran a story that answers the "strange" better than Mamdani could: Netanyahu's own political opposition in Israel is accusing him of being too soft on the Palestinians. Not too hard. Too soft.

Sit with the order of operations. The same man who stood at the UN and branded a sitting American mayor a terrorist's friend is, according to the people who share his country and his ballot, not tough enough on the terrorists. The charge against Mamdani and the charge from Netanyahu's own flank are aimed at the same spot, and they point in opposite directions, and both can't be about Gaza. One of them is about an election.

Mamdani didn't need to defend himself from any of it. He just needed to wait for Netanyahu's own side to do it for him, on a Saturday, under a headline that reads like it wrote itself.

“You get called a terrorist's buddy by a guy whose own party thinks he's going easy on terrorists — that's not foreign policy, that's a campaign ad shot on two continents. Mamdani's just the extra nobody paid who happened to be standing in the shot. Follow the arrest threats long enough and you stop finding a war crimes case and start finding a primary.”
— Sal

“Look, the Prime Minister has every right to name names when American officials are calling for his arrest on foreign soil, that's just — okay, the "too soft" thing, that's an internal Israeli political dispute, it has nothing to do with — did I just say it has nothing to do with it? That's not what I meant to say.”
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Netanyahu calls New York mayor a terrorist's buddy, mayor calls that strange* By Sal · the early evening edition, 2 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Israeli Opposition Accuses Netanyahu Of Being Too Pro-Palestine
Daily Caller RIGHT § *21:25 EDT*

‘This isn’t AI’

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

Mamdani says it was 'strange' getting called out by Netanyahu after calling for his arrest

Fox News RIGHT § *19:45 EDT*

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani told Theo Von he was stunned when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called him out by name during a United Nations General Assembly address.

· Netanyahu is using Mamdani as a foil in his re-election campaign *from the morgue, 28 Sep 2026*

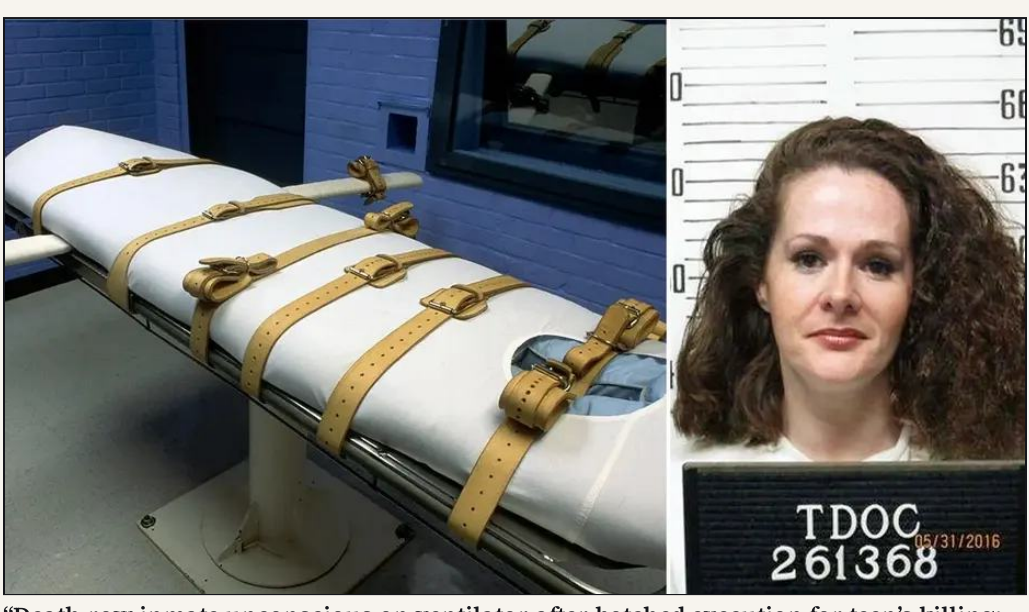
· 'Baseless Lies Meant to Sanitize His Genocide': Mamdani Hits Back After Netanyahu's Attacks During UN Speech *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Israeli UN ambassador says Mamdani should be arrested instead of Netanyahu *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

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Tennessee's first execution of a woman in 200 years leaves her unconscious on a ventilator instead of dead

By SAL
STAFF WRITER



"Death row inmate unconscious on ventilator after botched execution for teen's killing: attorneys", 2 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA FOX NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Tennessee executed Christa Pike on October 2 under a prison chief hired despite a documented record of troubled executions in Arizona.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. A federal appeals court halted the execution to review abuse allegations, and the execution happened anyway two days later.

WHAT'S NEXT. If a stay that does not stop an execution becomes the pattern, expect more injections carried out mid-review; that is what Texas got after its 2022 ID rule, where the check on paper did not change the outcome until courts and advocates forced it over eight months.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Frank Strada ran executions in Arizona, a record documented well enough that the New York Times is now asking how Tennessee came to hire him anyway, before putting him in charge of the state's prisons. That is the first beat on this page: the warning was already in the file. The second beat landed September 29, when the Supreme Court declined Christa Pike's clemency appeal, clearing Tennessee to become the first state in more than two hundred years to execute a woman. The third beat arrived the next morning, with witnesses already seated at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution: a divided Sixth Circuit panel, voting 2-1, halted the execution an hour before it was scheduled, to weigh Pike's allegations that she had been sexually abused and raped in custody.

That halt was temporary by its own terms. By October 2, the execution went forward under Strada's department, and it did not go as planned. Pike is now unconscious on a ventilator. Court filings surfacing this week describe what she told the experts who examined her case: that as the drug entered her vein, she believed her arm would burst open. Those experts describe pentobarbital, the drug used, in terms that are not gentle — a caustic, highly alkaline compound that burns flesh, tissue and vein on contact, chemistry more often associated with bleach or drain cleaner than with a procedure a state performs in the name of justice. Her attorneys have now filed to preserve the physical evidence from the execution itself, before anyone with the power to decide can rule there is nothing left to examine....

...(cont) Hiring a prison chief is a personnel decision. Strada's Arizona record, laid out now by the Times, surfaced in national coverage only after Pike's execution went wrong, not before Tennessee extended the offer. The stay bought an hour, then two more days; it did not buy Christa Pike a body that functioned the way the state's own protocol assumes it will.

The Sixth Circuit found grounds to stop this execution on September 30, an hour before it was scheduled to happen. By October 2 it happened anyway. The authority to halt a state killing exists in this country, and in this case it was used. The drug went in regardless. That gap — between the stay a court can issue and the execution a state can still carry out — is the file this page keeps open.

"You hire the guy with the Arizona file, you put him in charge of the needle, and when the court says wait an hour, the state waits an hour and then does it anyway. A stay that doesn't stop the drug isn't a check, it's a delay with a schedule to keep, and she's the one on the ventilator proving it."

— Sal



"Look, the Sixth Circuit reviewed the case and the execution still went forward within the law — that's the system working, that's due process, that's — okay, she's unconscious on a ventilator, so maybe don't put that part on a banner. The point is nobody skipped a step. Did I say nobody? There were steps. Lots of steps."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Tennessee hired a prison chief with a trail of botched executions; its first one left a woman on a ventilator.* By Sal · the wee small hours edition, 3 October 2026

— *Tennessee hired a prison chief with a trail of botched executions; he just delivered one more.* By Sal · the midnight edition, 3 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~Death row inmate unconscious on ventilator after botched execution for teen's killing: attorneys~~

Tennessee's lethal injection left her unconscious on a ventilator, attorneys say

Fox News RIGHT § *17:43 EDT*

Christa Pike remains unconscious on a ventilator after Tennessee's botched lethal injection as attorneys file to preserve execution evidence.

~~Federal Appellate Court Halts Tennessee's Planned Execution of Christa Pike~~

Tennessee's AG asks Supreme Court to force through first execution of a woman in centuries

Common Dreams § *13:16 EDT*

A federal appellate court on Wednesday morning temporarily blocked Tennessee from executing Christa Pike, as witnesses had already gathered at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville for the state's first execution of a woman in centuries. A panel from the US Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit ruled 2-1 to halt the...

~~Christa Pike thought her arm would 'burst open' during botched Tennessee execution: court docs~~

Tennessee's execution drug burns flesh like bleach, Pike's experts say

New York Post RIGHT § *23:48 EDT*

The execution drug, pentobarbital, is a caustic, highly alkaline chemical that burns human flesh, tissue and veins on contact, akin to household chemicals like "bleach" or "Drano," Pike's experts say.

Tennessee Prison Chief Was Hired Despite a Trail of Troubled Executions

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *21:48 EDT*

The failed execution of Christa Pike has prompted new scrutiny of Frank Strada, the state's top prison official, and his past role overseeing executions in Arizona.

· Supreme Court declines Christa Pike's clemency appeal, with Tennessee set to execute first woman in 200 years *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

· Christa Pike's Tennessee execution halted by court an hour before it was scheduled *from the morgue, 30 Sep 2026*

· Federal court halts Christa Pike's execution *from the morgue, 30 Sep 2026*

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Banned from NFL stadiums over Gaza, Macklemore sells out Paris, London and Dublin instead

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Died, in the time between two words spoken into a live mic at MetLife Stadium and a box office selling out in three European capitals: the National Football League owners' claim that their stadiums have no room for a man who says "free Palestine."

Born in the owners' box, where New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, Common Dreams reported, rallied fellow NFL venue holders after Macklemore's remark onstage. The symptom arrived fast — he was pulled from the remaining U.S. dates of Ed Sheeran's Loop tour, a show he neither owned nor promoted. By Sept. 15, the Washington Examiner was already reporting him gone from the bill....

...(cont) What followed was not the owners' plan. Several of Sheeran's own opening acts quit the tour that week in solidarity, the Examiner and Common Dreams both on record, one outlet calling it a possible "turning point" for how pop music handles Israel and Palestine. Sheeran, who said the removal was not his call, told Instagram followers that Tuesday he was "not complicit," that the decision belonged to the promoter, that Macklemore's contract ran through someone else entirely. It read like standard corporate bunk — a statement built to mean nothing while sounding like it means something.

Macklemore did not wait on an American stage to open back up. On Sept. 24 he announced a "Free Palestine" tour of his own — Paris, London, Dublin, opening Oct. 26, proceeds to organizations aiding Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation. On Oct. 3, Workers World reported the dates sold out.

The ban held exactly where the owners could enforce it: on their own turf. It did not touch the demand for the show. It only moved the zip code.

Born in the owners' box. Survived by sold-out arenas three capitals away.

In lieu of flowers, buy the ticket in whichever city still sells one.



“An NFL owner can keep a guy off his own stage, but he can't keep people from buying a ticket somewhere else. Kraft didn't kill the tour, he just shipped the box office to Paris, London and Dublin. That's the whole racket — they get to look tough on Gaza at home, and we get to watch the money land in somebody else's country.”

— Sal



“Nobody banned anybody — the promoter made an independent business call, and Ed Sheeran said himself he wasn't complicit. Wait, why would you say "not complicit" about a decision you had nothing to do with? Look, this was never about the message, it was about scheduling. Definitely scheduling.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Macklemore’s ‘Free Palestine’ tour sells out~~

NFL billionaire owners banned him from stadiums for backing Palestine. He sold out anyway.

Workers World § *22:15 EDT*

The popular rapper Macklemore, banned from performing in U.S. stadiums by pro-Zionist National Football League billionaire owners due to his outspoken solidarity with the Palestinian people facing genocide in Gaza, announced on Sept. 24 an upcoming “Free Palestine”

· Macklemore Announces 'Free Palestine Tour' With Dates in Paris, London, and Dublin *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Several opening acts pull from Ed Sheeran’s tour after Macklemore dropped *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

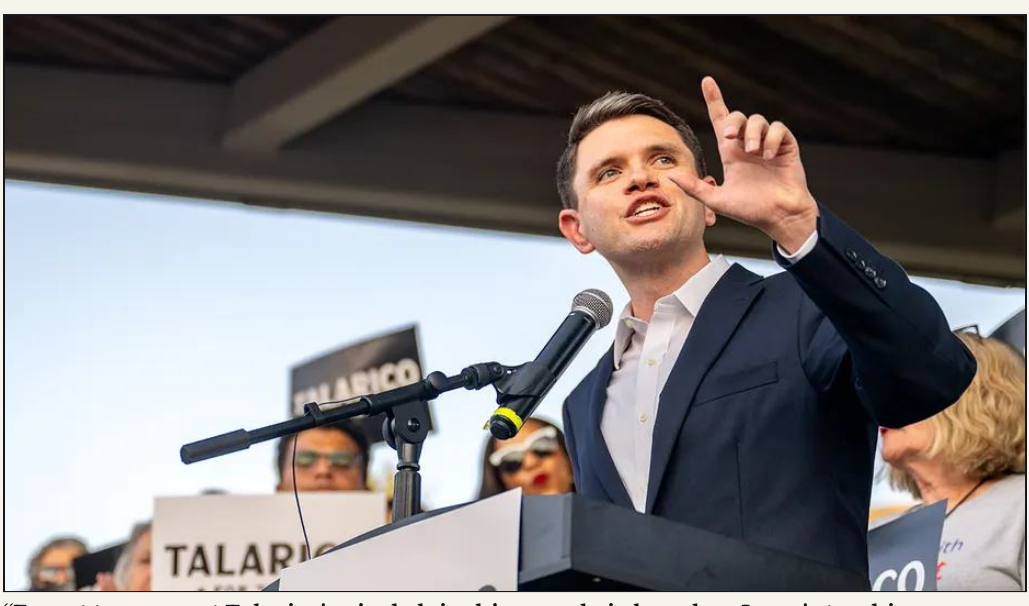
· Ed Sheeran responds to backlash over Macklemore removal: ‘I am not complicit’ *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Ed Sheeran Openers Quit Tour as Boycott Begins Over 'Silencing' of Macklemore's Palestine Speech *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

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Rove warns Paxton to debate Talarico or lose, as Fox spends the week calling his Bible reading wrong

By SAL
STAFF WRITER



“Expert tears apart Talarico's viral claim his agenda is based on Jesus's teachings: 'Butchering the Bible'”, 3 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA FOX NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A poll shows Democrat James Talarico leading Republican Ken Paxton by five points in the Texas Senate race.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Paxton has not agreed to debate Talarico, which denies Texas voters a direct side-by-side before they vote.

WHAT'S NEXT. Karl Rove says Paxton loses the race if he keeps skipping the debate; no debate has been scheduled, and the next test is whether one happens before Election Day in November.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Texas Democrats have been here before, which is the whole problem with trusting it now. Three decades without winning a top-of-the-ballot race will do that to a party, and after thirty years of waiting, all it takes to get hopeful again is five points in a poll of 1,007 voters taken September 19 to 22, the third week of the month, with a 3.6 percent margin of error built right into the dream.

Go back four weeks and you can watch the campaign build the case. On September 2, Talarico's campaign put out an ad accusing Paxton's "billionaire handlers" of keeping their candidate off a debate stage. The accusation sat there a day before Karl Rove gave it a second opinion: on September 3, Rove told reporters time was running out for Paxton, that the president needed to start spending money fast if he wanted the seat held. Rove wasn't rescuing Talarico. He was telling his own side the clock the Democrat had already started....

...(cont) In between, the campaign did what campaigns do when the floor is this thin. On September 9, Talarico walked back a past comment about "six sexes," telling Fox's Martha MacCallum he'd "missed the mark." On September 28, he said he'd "absolutely" welcome an endorsement from John Cornyn, the Republican senator whose seat he is trying to take. A five-point lead built on walking back old quotes and courting the other party's senator is a fragile kind of math, one that knows exactly how much room it has, which is none.

Then this week Fox ran the theology.

And Rove's warning was never about theology. It was arithmetic with a deadline attached: if he doesn't debate, he loses. Which means the five points only turn real the day Paxton stops avoiding the man Fox is busy calling a heretic.

“Five points in a poll of a thousand people is not a win, it's an invitation for both sides to tell Paxton he has to show up. The Bible argument on Fox isn't really about scripture, it's a dodge dressed up as theology so nobody asks why the guy with the record won't take the stage. Rove already told you how real that lead is: the day Paxton debates, and not one day before.”

— *Sal*

“Ken doesn't need to debate a state legislator who thinks healthcare's in Leviticus; staying off that stage is just prudent campaign management, not fear. Rove's comments were about turnout mechanics, not the race itself — okay, he did specifically say "he loses," so maybe it is about the race. Forget I said the turnout part.”

— *Chip*

THE RECEIPTS

Expert tears apart Talarico's viral claim his agenda is based on Jesus's teachings: 'Butchering the Bible'

Fox News RIGHT § *05:00 EDT*

James Talarico's claim that universal healthcare has biblical grounds draws sharp criticism from an expert who accuses him of perverting the Bible.

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

In Texas, Talarico Inspires a Recurring Blue-Tinted Dream

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *05:45 EDT*

After a dry spell of more than three decades, Democrats are daring (yet again) to believe they can win one or more top-of-the-ballot races in a vast and stubbornly red state.

Rove says if Paxton doesn't debate Talarico, 'he loses'

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *22:45 EDT*

Republican strategist Karl Rove said he believes Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R) will lose his bid for Senate if he does not agree to a debate with his Democratic opponent, state Rep. James Talarico. “If he doesn’t debate, I think he loses,”

· Talarico holds 5-point lead over Paxton in Texas Senate race, poll shows *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

· Talarico says he would ‘absolutely’ accept Cornyn’s endorsement in Texas Senate race *from the morgue, 28 Sep 2026*

· Talarico says he ‘missed the mark’ in claiming there are ‘six sexes’ *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· Talarico rips Paxton over debate participation in new ad *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

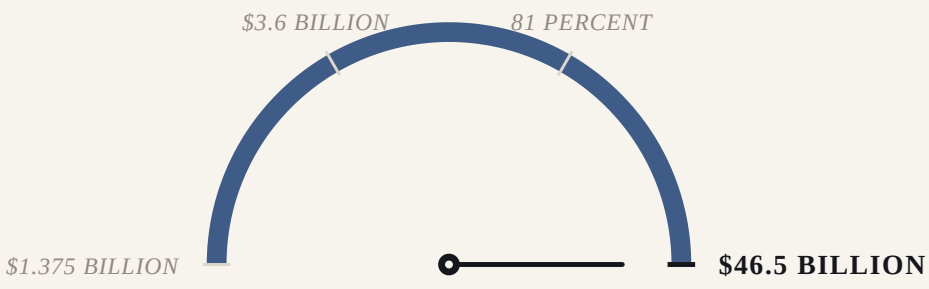
· Rove: 'Time is running out' for Paxton in Texas Senate race *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

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On who pays

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



$46.5 BILLION

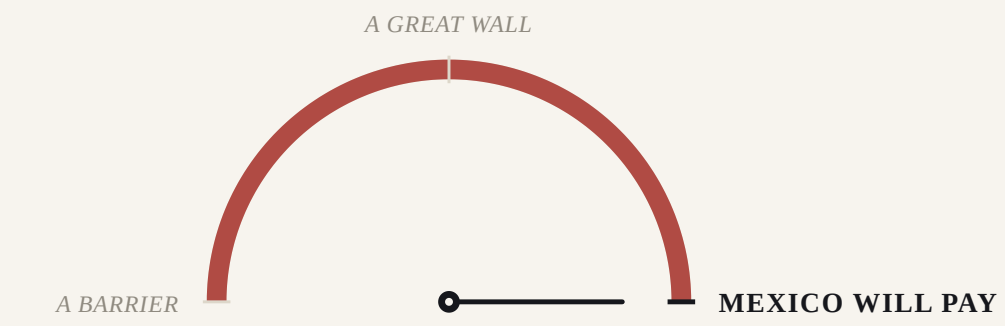
The payer. In March 2016 Mexico's treasury secretary said "Mexico will under no circumstance pay for the wall" [1]. That August, after meeting Mexico's president, Trump said of payment, "We didn't discuss that"; the Mexican president said within hours that he had told him at the start Mexico would not pay [2].

So the bill went elsewhere. The February 2019 plan paired $1.375 billion from Congress, for about 55 miles, with up to $8.1 billion moved from other accounts: $601 million from the Treasury Forfeiture Fund, up to $2.5 billion in counterdrug money, and up to $3.6 billion reallocated from military construction [3]. And the 81 percent of first-term miles that replaced existing barrier, rather than going where none stood [4]. Then the July 2025 law appropriated $46.5 billion for barriers, available through September 30, 2029 [5]. Mexico will pay. The appropriation says who did.

SOURCES

1. "Mexico will under no circumstance pay for the wall that Mr. Trump is proposing" — Global News, 3 March 2016 ↑
2. "We didn't discuss that"; the Mexican president said he had stated at the start that Mexico would not pay — NPR, 31 August 2016 ↑
3. "$1.375 billion for approximately 55 miles"; $601 million from the Treasury Forfeiture Fund; up to $2.5 billion in counterdrug funds; up to $3.6 billion from military construction — White House fact sheet, 15 February 2019 — American Presidency Project ↑
4. 81 percent of barrier built replaced existing barriers — Government Accountability Office, GAO-23-105443, 5 September 2023 ↑
5. "$46.5 billion … available through September 30, 2029" for border barriers — TIME, 6 August 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



MEXICO WILL PAY

The promise, from the announcement in June 2015: "I will build a great, great wall on our southern border and I will have Mexico pay for that wall" [1]. The first half is the part to take seriously, because it happened. By the end of the first term about 458 miles of barrier had been built [2]. Since January 2025, Customs and Border Protection reports 59 new miles of primary wall and 42 of secondary [3].

The case for the wall is that a border is a line and a line needs a barrier, and on miles, the promise delivered something a voter can drive out and touch. The second half of the sentence is the one with a payer in it. That half is on the other side.

SOURCES

1. "I will build a great, great wall on our southern border and I will have Mexico pay for that wall" — campaign announcement, 16 June 2015 — Roll Call / Factba.se ↑
2. About 458 miles of border barrier built, 81 percent of it replacing existing barriers — Government Accountability Office, GAO-23-105443, 5 September 2023 ↑
3. "59 new miles of primary wall and 42 miles of secondary wall" since January 2025, per CBP — TIME, 6 August 2026 ↑

“I'm just going to read the payers, in order. Congress, 2019: one point three seven five billion, about fifty-five miles. The Treasury forfeiture fund: six hundred one million. Counterdrug money: up to two and a half billion. Military construction: up to three point six billion. Congress again, last year: forty-six and a half billion, available through 2029. Sorry — I'm leaving, I'm leaving — that's the whole list. Which line on it is Mexico?” — Lou

🍺

“"I will have Mexico pay for that wall." Mexico's treasury secretary said "under no circumstance" in 2016, and they meant it. So the first term paid for it out of military construction money, drug-war money, and a forfeiture fund. Then last summer Congress wrote a check for forty-six and a half billion dollars. Mexico did pay for the wall. Mexico is a code name for you.”

— Sal

🚬

“Mexico is paying indirectly, through the economic benefits of a secure border, which show up in the budget under a different heading, the one that says United States.”

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎