The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2026 — THE AFTERNOON EDITION FREE, FOREVER

CBS Sports' 'proven model' predicts four football winners and the wind with equal certainty, same day.

BY GUS
The Sports Desk

HOT MIC MOMENT

Four of today's five headlines pair the word "prediction" with the word "odds" in the same breath, SportsLine selling the bet and the story in one sentence, no label, no wall between the newsroom and the sportsbook. This reporter is begging somebody to move this to the business desk, because sports can't police its own betting arm.

... Continued on Page S18

THE WORD

§63 — 16 OCTOBER 2026

On the worst of the worst

DEMOCRAT

70.6 PERCENT

REPUBLICAN

THE WORST OF THE WORST

"I read the phrase in three places. The press secretary: "a focus on the worst of the worst criminals." The department, on the anniversary: ICE "unleashed" on "the worst of the worst." Then I went to the clearinghouse that counts the detention population, just to meet a few of them. July: sixty-five thousand seven hundred sixty-five people in detention. Forty-six thousand four hundred thirty-six with no criminal conviction. Seventy point six percent. Excuse me — I'm going — one question. If the worst of the worst are thirty percent of the beds, who's in the other seventy?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W63

U.S. cuts Cuba's fuel in January, runs a $100 million hearts-and-minds program there by September

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

You will be told the embargo has failed. Sixty-seven years of it, and the government it was written against is still standing, so the thing is a ruin. Do not mistake me. Nothing here has broken. It was drafted to deny one island hard currency and fuel, and against that specification it performs ... quite exquisitely. Sixty-seven years. Sixty-seven.

In January the fuel shipments stopped. And what travels the other way? A hundred million dollars, Marco Rubio's programme, for hearts and minds on the island, reported the tenth of September. A hundred million for the hearts, and no fuel for the houses.

Forty-five groups wrote to Hakeem Jeffries on the ninth of September asking the House to vote on the war powers resolution covering the de facto oil embargo. The House has not voted. The caucus is divided over squeezing harder.

Carlos Fernández de Cossío says the aim is to "asphyxiate the people of Cuba into submission." The grid goes down and comes back and goes down. That is the instrument working.

... Continued on Page A214

Republicans' 'enormous' financial advantage buys them eleven more lost seats this week alone.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On Tuesday, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer circulated a letter to his colleagues. Republican Senate candidates, he wrote, carry an "enormous" financial advantage into the final three weeks of the cycle, a tsunami of late spending that could drown Democratic chances outright. The ledger under that warning checks out. AdImpact's tracking, reported the same week, puts the 2026 cycle on pace to beat the $11.2 billion spent across the entire 2024 presidential election — the most expensive midterm on record, with three weeks of invoices still to clear.

Two days after Schumer's letter, James Carville looked at the same ledger and filed the opposite conclusion. On NewsNation, the Democratic strategist called it "highly likely" that Republicans lose the House and the Senate both, financial advantage and redistricting gains notwithstanding. He was not guessing ahead of the data. The nonpartisan Cook Political Report had already been moving House seats away from Republicans for weeks, and on Thursday it moved eleven more — three districts once rated solid Republican slid to merely likely, five more slid further still, most of them in states that

... Continued on Page F120

Ilhan Omar's childhood paperwork draws a federal raid and the right's own concession it changes no votes.

BY LOU
One More Question

I wonder if somebody over at the Daily Caller could do me a favor and walk me through something, because I've been turning it over since Monday and the pieces won't sit still — undisturbed, that's the word that's been rattling around my glovebox since I read it, and I want to get this right before I say anything else.

The Daily Caller does this every day. Writes up how deportation law actually works, walks through what a case does and doesn't touch once it's decided. I do this maybe once a year, when I can't work a thing out on my own, so I'm asking them straight, because on this one they know more than I do.

Here's what I've got written down, more or less, off the wire and off the DOJ's own statement: agents in HSI jackets went through Ilhan Omar's house Monday morning, on a warrant a judge signed. Nobody's arguing that part. What they were there for, according to CBS, is paperwork — not last year's paperwork, paperwork her father filled out when she was a kid, whatever a family fills out coming into this country in whatever year that was. That's the file under investigation.

... Continued on Page T27

CDC meets 4,400-case measles outbreak with a plan to send one detective.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Measles elimination, the certificate the United States earned in 2000 after decades of vaccination work, is being lived through backward this month, and the nation's reinforcement is one employee.

Pennsylvania's health department counted 903 cases on September 28, after 115 new infections in a single week. By October 3 the count stood at 977, across 39 counties. Two days later it passed 1,004 — the largest outbreak any state has recorded in more than thirty years — and five Pennsylvania residents had already died of it. New York, watching its own numbers rise, declared a state of emergency the same week the national total passed 3,800.

On October 10 the CDC set the national count at 4,080 cases across 47 states and Washington, D.C., with more than a quarter of them in Pennsylvania alone. Today the national count is 4,400. The agency's response, announced this week, is a single "disease detective," who the CDC says it plans to send to Pennsylvania.

One detective, promised to one state, for an outbreak now standing in 47 states and the capital. The staffing was the problem from the start. A disease

... Continued on Page H14

Protester interrupts Maine Senate debate about data centers; debate about data centers interrupted by jokes about the protester

BY THE WRECKING CREW
The Remedy Desk

THE WRECKING CREW kept the blueprints from last week's job open on the bench. The chief ran the inventory out loud, because the job kept growing drawers. On September 25, Palm Beach County's commission reached into its own code and pulled out permitting authority that had been sitting there the whole time: a 6-0 vote, a one-year moratorium on any data center over 50 megawatts. Memphis had already used a different tool from a different drawer, a zoning fight paired with a primary ballot, to slow down Elon Musk's xAI. Washington State had its own tool, a utility-siting statute that predates this entire fight by years, still sitting on the shelf, never retired. Then two more tools turned up on the bench: Ohio Senator Bernie Moreno's bill to tax local data-center subsidies at 100 percent, and Texas governor candidate Gina Hinojosa's promise of a moratorium of her own if she wins.

Thursday night the job moved to a stage in Maine. The planner stood back and admired how the pieces kept finding each other without anybody planning it: zoning board, primary ballot, utility statute, a tax bill in Congress, a campaign promise in Texas, and now a debate floor. A protester stood up

... Continued on Page A214

Nine agents who probed Trump's classified documents case are fired by his FBI, no cause cited.

BY MITCH
Investigations

Nine names, one case file, and a lawsuit that reads like a document built to answer a single question: why. That is the complaint nine former FBI agents filed this week over their own firings, and answering that question is apparently the hardest part.

All nine worked the investigation into classified documents found at the president's Florida estate. All together now — that is the only fact they share on paper: one case, nine names, nine firings. The complaint does not describe nine separate disputes. It describes one case file walking out the door nine times.

The complaint says what the agency did not say. What the complaint alleges instead is a dismissal tied to the work itself: the investigation, and the fact of having worked on it.

That is not an isolated personnel decision. Nine of those removals now carry a docket number, and a request that a judge read whatever file the agency produces and decide whether it amounts to cause.

The president has called those investigations "political witch hunts," pub-

... Continued on Page B41

Federal officials disband election-threat unit, then investigate powdery letters sent to election offices

BY LOU
One More Question

There's a sentence in this report I'd like to say something nice about, if I can get there without tripping over the next one. The Guardian published it October 1st. It says, in plain language, that the current administration has abandoned key security bodies meant to investigate direct threats to U.S. elections from foreign actors and domestic terrorists. That's a complete sentence. Subject, verb, object, no hedging. You don't see government writing that clean very often, and I mean that the way it sounds.

Here's the number that gets in the way of admiring it any further: zero. "Abandoned" is the word on the page, past tense, no asterisk next to it, but past tense covering what exactly? I read it twice to make sure I hadn't skimmed past a date and just missed it. I hadn't.

I've got a lock on my garage somebody installed for free a few years back, after a run of break-ins down the block. Lock goes in, the trouble stops, and after a while you forget there was ever a reason for it — it's just there, doing a job you don't think about, until the morning you notice it's gone and you can't put your finger on when it left. Was it there in June? You'd have to ask

... Continued on Page A214

"Read the page top to bottom and notice what connects it: somebody priced something you thought was yours — your ballot, your checkup, your tank of gas — and mailed you the bill with a flag stamped on it. I started circling the good news. Still holding the pen."

— *Sal*

"Every story on this page is a success that hasn't been explained to you properly yet."

— *Chip*

The hens, a man counts in spring. The fox counted in winter.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

U.S. cuts Cuba's fuel in January, runs a $100 million hearts-and-minds program there by September

By **STERLING**
THE OWNERSHIP DESK



"Rising Trump administration pressure on Cuba divides Hill Democrats", 16 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

You will be told the embargo has failed. Sixty-seven years of it, and the government it was written against is still standing, so the thing is a ruin. Do not mistake me. Nothing here has broken. It was drafted to deny one island hard currency and fuel, and against that specification it performs … quite exquisitely. Sixty-seven years. Sixty-seven.

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❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

FUEL SHIPMENTS TO CUBA STOPPED IN JANUARY, AND BY LATE SEPTEMBER THE ISLAND had been through at least six major blackouts, with new sanctions landing on the state bank that clears payments. That is not a sanctions policy, that is a hand on a national light switch, operated from Washington with a press office attached to it. Forty-five groups asked the House to hold the war powers vote that exists for exactly this, House leadership has not scheduled it, and so a policy that cuts the power to millions of people runs on without a single roll call — which leaves the ballot you signed your own name to paying for a seat in a room where the question is kept off the floor.

The well, they capped. The rope a man keeps, coiled, not yet thrown.

— ENOCH
The Ownership Desk

🍺

"They shut off an island's fuel in January, the grid collapses half a dozen times by September, and then somebody wires a hundred million dollars to win over the hearts of people sitting in the heat with no refrigerator. Sixty-seven years in and they still call this unfinished business, like the squeezing is a bug. The money for the charm offensive exists; the money was never the problem, and the people blacked out in Havana are not a side effect, they are the lever."
— Sal

🚬

"The sanctions are targeted — targeted at the regime, not the people, and the bank is state-run, so technically that is the regime. Did I say the bank clears everything? That does not sound like me. And look, a hundred million dollars in humanitarian outreach tells you exactly where our heart is, so if the lights are out, that is a grid-maintenance story in Havana, not a Washington story."
— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Life in Cuba worsens amid U.S. sanctions and electrical grid chaos~~
U.S. sanctions are deepening Cuba's blackouts
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *10:45 EDT*

CBS News' Matt Gutman breaks down the worsening conditions in Cuba as U.S. sanctions contribute to deteriorating circumstances.

A look at Cuba's humanitarian crisis
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *09:42 EDT*

The U.S. blockade of oil imports to Cuba has been blamed for a worsening economic and humanitarian crisis. The Trump administration is targeting Cuba's communist government, imposing new sanctions against Cuba's state-run bank.

Rising Trump administration pressure on Cuba divides Hill Democrats
Washington Examiner RIGHT § *08:08 EDT*

Intensifying efforts by President Donald Trump's administration to end 67 years of communist rule in Cuba are drawing fierce criticism from many congressional Democrats. But not all. Since Fidel Castro seized power in the 1959 Cuban revolution, the country has been a preeminent cause célèbre for the global Left.

· Cuba: The "Pandora's Box" of US Humanitarian Assistance *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· End Trump Oil Embargo on Cuba With War Powers Vote, Coalition Urges House Democrats *from the morgue, 12 Sep 2026*

· Could Cuba Become a "Silent Gaza"? U.S. Fuel Blockade Aims to "Asphyxiate" Island: Top Cuban Diplomat *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

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Republicans' 'enormous' financial advantage buys them eleven more lost seats this week alone.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"Carville: Republicans could lose House, Senate despite 'huge financial advantage'", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE HILL — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Republicans hold a record spending advantage in the midterms; independent handicappers keep moving House seats toward Democrats anyway.

WHO GETS PAID. Television and digital ad sellers collect the record haul no matter which party ends up holding the seats.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet; the nonpartisan seat count is moving independent of the record spending, not because of it.

WHAT'S NEXT. The next fixed date is Election Day, three weeks off, when the ad spending stops and the seat count stands as the only ledger that matters.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On Tuesday, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer circulated a letter to his colleagues. Republican Senate candidates, he wrote, carry an "enormous" financial advantage into the final three weeks of the cycle, a tsunami of late spending that could drown Democratic chances outright. The ledger under that warning checks out. AdImpact's tracking, reported the same week, puts the 2026 cycle on pace to beat the $11.2 billion spent across the entire 2024 presidential election — the most expensive midterm on record, with three weeks of invoices still to clear.

Two days after Schumer's letter, James Carville looked at the same ledger and filed the opposite conclusion. On NewsNation, the Democratic strategist called it "highly likely" that Republicans lose the House and the Senate both, financial advantage and redistricting gains notwithstanding. He was not guessing ahead of the data. The nonpartisan Cook Political Report had already been moving House seats away from Republicans for weeks, and on Thursday it moved eleven more — three districts once rated solid Republican slid to merely likely, five more slid further still, most of them in states that voted the other way just two years ago....

...(cont) Run the subtraction and the gap does not close. It widens. The side carrying the enormous advantage is the side losing ground, seat by seat, the same week its spending sets the record. Nine days before that Thursday shift, on 7 October, Washington Examiner correspondent Byron York told Hugh Hewitt's audience that Republicans were already unlikely to hold the House, with the Senate still a toss-up. The direction was set before this week's eleven seats ever moved. The spending did not reverse the trend. It has been running the same way since before the most expensive ad buy in American history cleared the bank.

Whoever is buying the airtime, hon, is not buying the outcome the airtime is supposed to produce. The receipts show the spending and the receipts show the seats, filed the same week, by the same nonpartisan shop, and they do not reconcile. When a ledger this size fails to purchase the result it was built to purchase, the gap has an address. It is not a mystery. It goes in the column marked Democrats, eleven seats at a time, this week alone, with three weeks still left on the invoice.

🍺

"Sal: They drop eleven billion dollars on the most expensive midterm ever and the seats still slide the other way — that's not a messaging problem, that's a receipt. The same week Schumer calls his own side's cash pile a tsunami, the nonpartisan guy who counts districts for a living moves eleven more to the other column. Follow the money long enough and you stop asking why it isn't buying the outcome, and start asking who already got paid regardless."

— Sal

🚬

"Chip: A financial advantage is a financial advantage, it's structural, the reserve ad time is booked through Election Day — Cook Political Report, well, that's just one nonpartisan shop's read, these ratings bounce around all the time, did I say "nonpartisan"? Strike that. The fundamentals are sound, the money is historic, ask me again after the votes are actually counted."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Talarico outraises Paxton three to one; Musk closes the gap with a $158 million check.* By Ruth · the evening edition, 16 October 2026
— *Rumor that Talarico died collapses in hours; his record $64 million quarter doesn't.* By Ruth · the morning edition, 15 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

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*

Carville: Republicans could lose House, Senate despite 'huge financial advantage'

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *10:28 EDT*

Democratic strategist James Carville said Thursday that Republicans are "highly likely" to lose House control next month, despite a significant financial advantage and several successful redistricting measures. Carville, in an appearance on NewsNation's "Cuomo," doubled down on his analysis giving Democrats the leg up with the midterm...

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*

Cook Political Report shifts 11 House seats away from GOP

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:56 EDT*

Cook Political Report, a nonpartisan election handicapper, shifted 11 more House seats toward Democrats this week, many in red states as the midterms inch closer. Cook has moved dozens of House seats away from Republicans in recent weeks as the political environment improves for Democrats, driven by President Trump's unpopularity in the...

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

11 more seats shift toward Democrats, including three in previously safe red areas, major projection shows

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *11:20 EDT*

Projections for 11 more House seats have shifted in favor of the Democratic Party, as talks of a blue wave in the 2026 midterm elections have reached a crescendo. The Cook Political Report shifted 11 races nationwide, including three traditionally GOP seats that went from solid Republican to likely Republican. Five more GOP seats went [...]

Schumer: Republicans heading into midterms with 'enormous' financial advantage

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *11:50 EDT*

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) warned his Democratic colleagues that Senate Republican candidates have an "enormous" financial advantage heading into the final three weeks before Election Day and could drown Democrats' chances of winning the Senate in a "tsunami" of last-minute spending.

2026 midterm could be the most expensive ever: AdImpact

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:06 EDT*

This year's total spending may exceed the $11.2 billion spent during the 2024 presidential election cycle.

· Republicans unlikely to keep House, but Senate remains 50/50: Byron York *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

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Ilhan Omar's childhood paperwork draws a federal raid and the right's own concession it changes no votes.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"Trump's Attempt to Deport Ilhan Omar Is Another Leap Toward the Abyss", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Federal agents raided Representative Ilhan Omar's home under a warrant tied to paperwork from her childhood.

WHO GETS PAID. The Trump administration gets a federal case against one of its most prominent elected critics.

WHAT SLIPS. The wall between federal law enforcement and the president's political critics slips a little further here.

WHAT'S NEXT. No trial date or deportation hearing has been set; the investigation stays open with no further date on the public record.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I wonder if somebody over at the Daily Caller could do me a favor and walk me through something, because I've been turning it over since Monday and the pieces won't sit still — undisturbed, that's the word that's been rattling around my glovebox since I read it, and I want to get this right before I say anything else.

The Daily Caller does this every day. Writes up how deportation law actually works, walks through what a case does and doesn't touch once it's decided. I do this maybe once a year, when I can't work a thing out on my own, so I'm asking them straight, because on this one they know more than I do....

...(cont) Here's what I've got written down, more or less, off the wire and off the DOJ's own statement: agents in HSI jackets went through Ilhan Omar's house Monday morning, on a warrant a judge signed. Nobody's arguing that part. What they were there for, according to CBS, is paperwork — not last year's paperwork, paperwork her father filled out when she was a kid, whatever a family fills out coming into this country in whatever year that was. That's the file under investigation.

I've got a shoebox on the shelf above my workbench with every title and registration going back to a Buick I don't even own anymore. There's a form in there I know I filled out wrong, in a year I couldn't tell you offhand. If somebody in a jacket came up my porch steps tomorrow with a warrant for that shoebox, I expect they'd find something. I don't know what. I'm saying there's probably something, the way there probably is in most shoeboxes, most garages, most families that have been filling out forms for forty years.

So I asked the people who'd know, and the Daily Caller — not exactly her corner on a good day — told me the part I actually needed, which answers my own question better than I could: even if this paperwork case goes all the way, even if she's deported over it, every vote she's cast on that floor stays exactly where it was. The acts stand. Nothing about the record moves. I wrote that down twice because I didn't believe it the first time.

Which is what I need the favor on. If the floor record doesn't change — if nothing she's done as a sitting member of Congress gets touched no matter which way the paperwork case comes out — what does Monday morning change? Common Dreams has this raid landing after years of Trump and other Republicans saying, out loud, more than once, that they wanted her deported. Did the warrant come after those years of saying it, or before? The timeline's right there if somebody wants to check it; I did, and it comes after.

I drove the Buick through the toll plaza this morning. The transponder's been iffy since spring, and I always brace a little going through, waiting on the red light, somebody somewhere deciding to open a file on four dollars and an E-ZPass. Nothing happened. It never does. That's the whole arrangement at a toll plaza — you go through, the gate lifts, and the record just sits there, closed, not doing anything to you one way or the other.

Hold on, actually — one more thing, before you put this down. The investigation is into paperwork from when she was a child. The outcome, by the Daily Caller's own account, leaves every vote she's cast as a grown woman in Congress exactly where it was. So whatever Monday morning was about, does the floor record, by their own word, stay undisturbed?

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

FEDERAL AGENTS RAIDED ILHAN OMAR'S HOME OVER IMMIGRATION PAPERWORK FILED when she was a child, under a warrant a judge signed. That is not a fraud investigation, it is a loyalty test with a search warrant. Because the Daily Caller itself admits deporting her would not undo one vote she has cast, the file was never really about the paperwork — and if paperwork from decades ago is reason enough to search a sitting member of Congress, the immigration paperwork sitting in your own drawer is the only thing standing between your door and the same knock.

🍺

"They sent federal agents to search a sitting congresswoman's home over paperwork her father filled out when she was a kid — and their own paper admits deporting her wouldn't undo a single vote she's cast. That's not a fraud case, that's muscle dressed up in a warrant so it reads like one. The question isn't whether Omar keeps her seat, it's whether DOJ can be aimed at anybody on the list next."

— Sal

🚬

"This was a judicially authorized warrant, part of a legitimate ongoing fraud investigation — nothing political about the timing at all. Sure, our own people over at the Caller are pointing out that even deporting her wouldn't touch a single vote she's cast, but that just proves the system still works — wait, if deporting her changes nothing, what exactly was Monday for? Forget I asked that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

But: **The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business** *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*

Ilhan Omar raid concerns immigration paperwork from when she was a child, sources say

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:53 EDT*

Federal agents searched Rep. Ilhan Omar's Washington, D.C., home Monday morning. Sources tell CBS News a yearslong probe into Omar involves immigration paperwork that was completed by her late father when she was a child.

Trump's Attempt to Deport Ilhan Omar Is Another Leap Toward the Abyss

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *09:33 EDT*

This is more than just another persecution of one of the president's political enemies.

But: **The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business** *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*

Ilhan Omar says she will not be silenced after federal agents raid her home

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *12:20 EDT*

Trump and key allies have accused Omar of immigration fraud, and have called to expel her from the country Federal agents searched Representative Ilhan Omar 's home on Monday morning as part of a criminal investigation, according to the Department of Justice and reports in the Associated Press and Fox News. In a social media post later...

~~Ilhan Omar's Home Raided by DHS Following Trump-GOP Deportation Threats~~

DOJ raided a sitting congresswoman's home over a claim an immigration expert calls 'even weaker than it already seems'

Common Dreams § *11:04 EDT*

Following years of threats from President Donald Trump and other Republicans to deport Rep. Ilhan Omar, the Minnesota congresswoman's Washington, DC home was raided on Monday morning by agents with the Department of Homeland Security. The US Department of Justice (DOJ) has confirmed that the raid was carried out as part of a judicially...

Democratic leaders condemn federal raid on Ilhan Omar as she vows not to be silenced

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:55 EDT*

Minnesota congresswoman criticized raid as attempt by Trump administration 'to target political enemies and weaponize law enforcement'. Plus what is to be done about the world record in the women's marathon? Don't already get First Thing in your inbox?

Ilhan Omar Being Deported Would 'Likely' Open Pandora's Box Over Laws Passed By Narrow Margin

Daily Caller RIGHT § *11:03 EDT*

'Her official acts would be undisturbed'

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CDC meets 4,400-case measles outbreak with a plan to send one detective.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

"4,400 measles cases reported in US as CDC to send 'disease detective' to Pennsylvania", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The CDC said it will send one "disease detective" to Pennsylvania as the national measles count reached 4,400 on October 16.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's protection from a spreading, preventable disease slips, since the CDC's entire reinforcement for an outbreak in 47 states and the capital is one staffer.

WHAT'S NEXT. The CDC has not set a date to send more staff than the one detective. The next public check on whether the outbreak keeps climbing is Pennsylvania's own dashboard, which has tracked every hundred-case jump since September without federal help showing up in the numbers.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Measles elimination, the certificate the United States earned in 2000 after decades of vaccination work, is being lived through backward this month, and the nation's reinforcement is one employee.

Pennsylvania's health department counted 903 cases on September 28, after 115 new infections in a single week. By October 3 the count stood at 977, across 39 counties. Two days later it passed 1,004 — the largest outbreak any state has recorded in more than thirty years — and five Pennsylvania residents had already died of it. New York, watching its own numbers rise, declared a state of emergency the same week the national total passed 3,800....

...(cont) On October 10 the CDC set the national count at 4,080 cases across 47 states and Washington, D.C., with more than a quarter of them in Pennsylvania alone. Today the national count is 4,400. The agency's response, announced this week, is a single "disease detective," who the CDC says it plans to send to Pennsylvania.

One detective, promised to one state, for an outbreak now standing in 47 states and the capital. The staffing was the problem from the start. A disease the country certified gone in 2000 does not come back on malarkey; it comes back when nobody keeps paying the people whose job is to notice it early, county by county, the way Pennsylvania's own dashboard has been doing without federal reinforcement since September.

Measles elimination is survived by every county health office doing its own contact tracing this month, and by the dashboard Pennsylvania keeps updating on its own. It is preceded in death by the assumption, good through early October, that one state's count could not run to a quarter of the nation's; Pennsylvania passed that mark on the 10th. In lieu of flowers, fund the detectives ahead of the outbreak, not after the fourth thousandth case.

"They always find money for a ballroom or a tax break, but a disease we beat twenty-six years ago gets one guy with a notebook sent to a state already past a thousand cases. That's not a budget gap, that's a decision somebody signed off on, and the kid in the ER with the rash is the one who pays the difference."
— Sal

"The CDC is being efficient — why saturate a state with bureaucrats when one highly trained investigator can — well, cover four thousand four hundred cases across close to fifty states, I'll grant that math sounds thin out loud. Did I say "one investigator"? That's not — look, resources are being right-sized, and that's a perfectly normal sentence to say about a disease we eliminated."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *A disease the United States certified gone in 2000 just confirmed a sixth death in Pennsylvania this year.* By Mort · the evening edition, 12 October 2026
— *The country takes two finished projects back out of service: measles elimination, certified in 2000 and now at 1,004 cases in Pennsylvania, and the decades-old ownership limit, repealed 2-1 the week a coalition invoked it.* By Mort · the evening edition, 11 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

But: The last two years carry more measles cases than the rest of the century combined - the worst count since 1991 *The Hill / CDC measles data, July 2026*

4,400 measles cases reported in US as CDC to send 'disease detective' to Pennsylvania

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *10:51 EDT*

More than 4,400 measles cases have been reported in the U.S. as the CDC says it plans to send a "disease detective" to Pennsylvania.

ABC News Issues Correction After Appearing To Quietly Delete Story About Don Jr's Business Dealings

Daily Caller RIGHT § *15:45 EDT*

'ABC deleted this article in less than 24 hours because it's false'

~~ABC News quietly republishes gutted version of story on Trump sons it had deleted without explanation~~

Trump sons' investments tied to Pentagon contracts prompted ABC's correction

Fox News RIGHT § *11:18 EDT*

ABC News issued an editor's note admitting errors in its report on Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump's investments tied to Pentagon contracts.

~~Coalition Files Emergency Motion to Stop Trump FCC From Unleashing Media Consolidation Spree~~

Coalition sues to stop Trump's FCC from scrapping the cap keeping one company under 39% of US TV households

Common Dreams § *10:08 EDT*

A coalition of nonprofit groups and labor unions filed an emergency petition on Friday aimed at blocking the Federal Communications Commission's recent repeal of a decades-old rule that limited consolidation among television broadcasters, a move that would allow media conglomerates to seize even more control over local news stations. The...

But: The last two years carry more measles cases than the rest of the century combined - the worst count since 1991, after elimination was declared in 2000 *The Hill / CDC measles data, July 2026*

U.S. measles cases surpass 4,000, with over 25 percent coming from Pennsylvania

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *17:41 EDT*

U.S. measles cases this year have surpassed 4,000, with over 25 percent of the nation's reported infections coming from Pennsylvania, according to recently released data from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are currently 4,080 measles cases reported across 47 states and Washington, D.C., the CDC confirmed...

· Pennsylvania nears 1,000 measles cases, state health department reports *from the morgue, 3 Oct 2026*

· Pennsylvania faces largest measles outbreak in decades as case count rises to 1,000 *from the morgue, 5 Oct 2026*

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

· GOP senator calls for subpoenaing Donald Trump Jr. and Hunter Biden over their business dealings *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Republican senator calls for Don Jr. and Hunter Biden to be subpoenaed over business dealings *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· GOP Sen. John Curtis calls for Trump Jr., Hunter Biden investigations *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Is Trump's son-in-law and top negotiator a midterm liability for Republicans? *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

· Companies Backed by Trump Sons Have Scored Over $6 Billion in Pentagon Contracts: Analysis *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

· White House Claims in Court Filing That Press Coverage of Trump Is a 'Privilege,' Not a Right *from the morgue, 23 Sep 2026*

· 'Dangerous for Democracy': Paramount Merger Opponents File Emergency Motion to Fight Settlement Deal *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· Trump-Appointed Judge Orders President to Restore White House Access to CNN, MS NOW, and Politico *from the morgue, 24 Sep 2026*

· With Elon Musk's Return to Washington, Possible Conflicts of Interest Resurface *from the morgue, 3 Oct 2026*

· Hegseth puts the future of warfare in the hands of major Maga donors *from the morgue, 1 Oct 2026*

· Pete Hegseth appoints Elon Musk to US taskforce on future of warfare *from the morgue, 30 Sep 2026*

· Elon Musk boosts GOP spending advantage with return as 2026 juggernaut *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· An Elon Musk insider shares what he found in Washington — and it should terrify you *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Trump Accord Enshrines Light-Touch Regulation of AI *from the morgue, 3 Oct 2026*

· Trump says tech CEOs signed 'morally binding' document to self-regulate artificial intelligence *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

· READ IN FULL: Trump and tech leaders' White House Accord on Super Intelligence *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

· Soaring diesel prices take their toll on US farmers in midwest corn belt *from the morgue, 3 Oct 2026*

· Inflation Could Soon 'Get a Lot More Painful' as Trump's Iran War Drives Diesel Over $6 a Gallon *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

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

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

· States take matters into their own hands to curb record-high diesel prices *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

· UN Inquiry Finds US Strike on Minab, Iran That Killed 123 Children Was War Crime *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

· Since 2025, Trump Made More Stock Trades Than All 535 Congress Members Combined *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Protester interrupts Maine Senate debate about data centers; debate about data centers interrupted by jokes about the protester

By THE WRECKING CREW
THE REMEDY DESK



"Oh, shut up!': Democrat snaps at Collins after heckler drives Maine Senate debate off the rails", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA FOX NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A protester interrupted a Maine Senate debate on October 16 shouting about AI data centers; Collins and Jackson traded jokes instead.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The debate floor, the one place voters could hear both candidates answer the question, slipped into a punchline exchange instead.

WHAT'S NEXT. Local governments already have the tools to act without waiting on Congress or a campaign promise; that is what Palm Beach County got on September 25, 2026: a 6-0 vote using existing permitting code to pause data centers over 50 megawatts.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

THE WRECKING CREW kept the blueprints from last week's job open on the bench. The chief ran the inventory out loud, because the job kept growing drawers. On September 25, Palm Beach County's commission reached into its own code and pulled out permitting authority that had been sitting there the whole time: a 6-0 vote, a one-year moratorium on any data center over 50 megawatts. Memphis had already used a different tool from a different drawer, a zoning fight paired with a primary ballot, to slow down Elon Musk's xAI. Washington State had its own tool, a utility-siting statute that predates this entire fight by years, still sitting on the shelf, never retired. Then two more tools turned up on the bench: Ohio Senator Bernie Moreno's bill to tax local data-center subsidies at 100 percent, and Texas governor candidate Gina Hinojosa's promise of a moratorium of her own if she wins.

Thursday night the job moved to a stage in Maine. The planner stood back and admired how the pieces kept finding each other without anybody planning it: zoning board, primary ballot, utility statute, a tax bill in Congress, a campaign promise in Texas, and now a debate floor. A protester stood up shouting about AI data centers. Security moved to remove them. While they worked, Senator Susan Collins quipped: "So this is obviously one of Troy's supporters." Challenger Troy Jackson snapped back: "Oh, shut up."...

...(cont) The tinkerer looked at what was actually on the table once the noise cleared: no new law, no new statute, nothing built for the occasion. Just an old permitting code, an old zoning map, an old utility statute, a new federal tax bill, and a promise on a gubernatorial trail, all aimed at the same industry from five different directions.

The pilot is the one who gets a story like this to print, and tonight the only cargo worth carrying was the question nobody on that stage asked out loud: which drawer does Maine open next, the one Palm Beach already used, or one nobody's found yet. The tools are out of the box. The industry hasn't been stopped in Maine. It has been stopped in Memphis, Palm Beach County, and the state of Washington, by people who already had what they needed before anyone announced a plan.

"You got a protester screaming about data centers and the two people running for Senate turn it into a sitcom bit — "oh shut up," "that's one of his supporters" — meanwhile three different governments already used the stuff sitting in their own filing cabinets to actually stop this thing. Nobody needed a debate stage. Palm Beach didn't wait for permission, they just read their own zoning code. The con is making you think this needs a hero on a podium when it just needs somebody to open a drawer they already have the key to."

— Sal

"Collins didn't dodge anything — she made a joke. That's what you do when security's hauling someone out, you lighten the mood. As for the data-center fights, those are local matters — zoning, permitting, that's for cities and counties to sort out, not something that needs a federal... well, I guess Moreno's bill is federal. And the tax. Okay, maybe it does need Washington. Forget I said local."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Trump threatens towns with 'backward and poor'; his own party's senator moves to leave data centers broke instead.* By The Wrecking Crew · the afternoon edition, 15 October 2026
- *Trump warns data-center holdouts go 'backwards and poor,' watches his own county vote 6-0 to join them.* By The Wrecking Crew · the morning edition, 15 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

'Oh, shut up!': Democrat snaps at Collins after heckler drives Maine Senate debate off the rails

Fox News RIGHT § *21:13 EDT*

A protester yelling about AI data centers sparked a fiery clash between Republican Sen. Susan Collins and Democratic challenger Troy Jackson.

Anti-data center protester crashes Maine Senate debate between Susan Collins and Troy Jackson

New York Post RIGHT § *21:38 EDT*

As the demonstrator was being dealt with by security, Collins quipped: "So this is obviously one of Troy's supporters."

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Nine agents who probed Trump's classified documents case are fired by his FBI, no cause cited.

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS

“FBI agents who worked on Trump classified docs case sue over firings”, 16 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA LE MONDE — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Nine former FBI agents who investigated Trump's classified documents sued the FBI over their firings.

WHO GETS PAID. The administration gains an FBI cleared of the agents who built the case against the president.

WHAT SLIPS. The shield that is supposed to stop federal investigators from being fired for the cases they work slips here.

WHAT'S NEXT. The case moves next to a judge, who will decide whether firings with no stated cause can stand; no hearing date appears in the record yet.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Nine names, one case file, and a lawsuit that reads like a document built to answer a single question: why. That is the complaint nine former FBI agents filed this week over their own firings, and answering that question is apparently the hardest part.

All nine worked the investigation into classified documents found at the president's Florida estate. All together now — that is the only fact they share on paper: one case, nine names, nine firings. The complaint does not describe nine separate disputes. It describes one case file walking out the door nine times....

...(cont) The complaint says what the agency did not say. What the complaint alleges instead is a dismissal tied to the work itself: the investigation, and the fact of having worked on it.

That is not an isolated personnel decision. Nine of those removals now carry a docket number, and a request that a judge read whatever file the agency produces and decide whether it amounts to cause.

The president has called those investigations "political witch hunts," publicly, repeatedly, on the record. That characterization exists in the world. It does not, according to anything the nine plaintiffs have produced, exist on a termination notice. The complaint's claim is narrower, and for that reason harder to wave off: not that the agency gave a bad reason, but that it gave none.

Nine plaintiffs, one shared case file, and a blank line where a reason should be. The lawsuit asks a court to read that blank line as the point. That is the complaint, clause by clause, paragraph by paragraph, and now it is a court's to answer.

“Nine people worked the case against a sitting president and got fired with no misconduct on the page, no explanation, nothing — just gone, nine times, same case file. That's not downsizing, that's a message to anyone left in that building: work the wrong case and the box marked "reason" stays empty. The guy at the end of the bar doesn't work there, but he better hope somebody still does the job without looking over their shoulder first.”

— Sal

“Look, personnel decisions at a law enforcement agency are routine, happens every administration, nothing to see here — and if nine of them happen to be the nine agents who built the documents case, well, that's — okay, that does sound like something. But nobody put "witch hunt" on any termination letter, so legally speaking there's no there there. Did I just argue that the absence of a reason is the defense? That doesn't sound like me.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~FBI agents who worked on Trump classified docs case sue over firings~~

Trump's administration fired the agents who investigated him. Now they're suing.

Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *23:36 EDT*

Since returning to the White House in January 2025, Trump's administration has fired dozens of FBI and other law enforcement personnel associated with the investigations, which the president has denounced as 'political witch hunts.'

~~9 former FBI agents who worked on Trump classified docs case sue over their firings~~

Agents who worked Trump's documents case say they were fired for it

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *21:09 EDT*

Nine former FBI agents who worked on President Trump's classified documents case have filed suit alleging that they were unlawfully fired over their role in the probe.

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.

Federal officials disband election-threat unit, then investigate powdery letters sent to election offices

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

“FBI investigates letters with ‘unknown substance’ sent to US election officials”, 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

There's a sentence in this report I'd like to say something nice about, if I can get there without tripping over the next one. The Guardian published it October 1st. It says, in plain language, that the current administration has abandoned key security bodies meant to investigate direct threats to U.S. elections from foreign actors and domestic terrorists. That's a complete sentence. Subject, verb, object, no hedging. You don't see government writing that clean very often, and I mean that the way it sounds.

Here's the number that gets in the way of admiring it any further: zero. "Abandoned" is the word on the page, past tense, no asterisk next to it, but past tense covering what exactly? I read it twice to make sure I hadn't skimmed past a date and just missed it. I hadn't....

...(cont) I've got a lock on my garage somebody installed for free a few years back, after a run of break-ins down the block. Lock goes in, the trouble stops, and after a while you forget there was ever a reason for it — it's just there, doing a job you don't think about, until the morning you notice it's gone and you can't put your finger on when it left. Was it there in June? You'd have to ask whoever took it off, and they're not the one who tells you.

What I can tell you is what moved into that space. One day after the report ran — October 2nd — Georgia's State Election Board, Republican-led, sent a letter to the Justice Department. What did it ask for? An investigation into the state's voting systems, additional security measures, a little over a month before the midterms. So the machines got a federal ask, in writing, with a date attached to it.

Two weeks after the report ran, three wire services had something new on the desk. The Guardian's version is specific: Louisiana and Oklahoma received envelopes with a powdery substance and evacuated their offices; a similar package addressed to the Ohio secretary of state was intercepted by the Postal Service before anyone opened it. The BBC confirms all three states by name — Louisiana, Oklahoma, Ohio. CBS's item is shorter: state election officials and congressional offices, unknown substances, and it doesn't name a single state. Three wire services on the same week's story. Two of them name the same three states. One of them, asked to say where, doesn't.

The FBI and the Postal Inspection Service are on the letters now, which is the right agency doing the right job, same as it would be whether or not a different body had stopped doing a related job sometime earlier this year. I'm not going to tell you those two facts are connected, because I don't have a date that lines them up, and neither, as far as I can find, does the report.

Oh — and before I let you go. That sentence I liked so much, the one with the clean subject and the clean verb? Go back and read it one more time. It doesn't say "bodies were allowed to lapse." It doesn't say "oversight lapsed." It names who did it: the administration. Not a passive sentence hiding the actor behind a semicolon — an actor, doing a verb, to an object that used to watch the mail for exactly this. The report already told you who closed it. I just think a sentence that clean is worth reading twice before you fold the page.

“They didn't lose the unit that watches for threats to election offices, they packed it up and called it a reorganization. Same week a Republican-run board in Georgia gets the Justice Department's full attention for a voting-machine probe, nobody opening an envelope full of powder gets that kind of speed. Follow the floor space: there's federal urgency for the fraud story nobody's proven, and silence for the mail room where something already landed in three states.”

— Sal

“Nobody closed anything, departments get streamlined, that's just good government, and if a county clerk in Louisiana opens an envelope she shouldn't have, that's a Postal Inspection Service matter, always has been — it's not like we abandoned — okay, the report does say "abandoned." That's not the word I would've used. I wouldn't have used that word.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Feds probing suspicious letters to election officials, lawmakers

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:21 EDT*

Federal investigators said they are looking into suspicious letters containing unknown substances that were mailed to state election officials and congressional offices.

FBI investigates letters with ‘unknown substance’ sent to US election officials

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *21:55 EDT*

Election officers in Louisiana and Oklahoma receive a powdery substance, prompting evacuations The FBI and the US Postal Inspection Service are investigating letters sent to state officials and election offices across the country containing an “unknown substance”. Just weeks before November’s US midterm elections , election officers in...

Letters with 'suspicious substances' sent to US senators and election offices

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *18:46 EDT*

A number of states have confirmed they were targeted by the mailings, including Oklahoma, Ohio and Louisiana.

· Trump officials abandon effort to investigate election threats, experts warn *from the morgue, 1 Oct 2026*

· Alarm as GOP-Led Election Board Asks Trump Administration to Probe Georgia Voting Systems *from the morgue, 2 Oct 2026*

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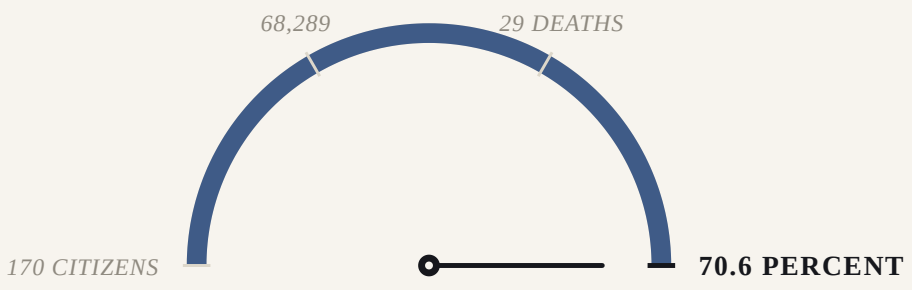
§63 — 16 OCTOBER 2026

On the worst of the worst

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



70.6 PERCENT

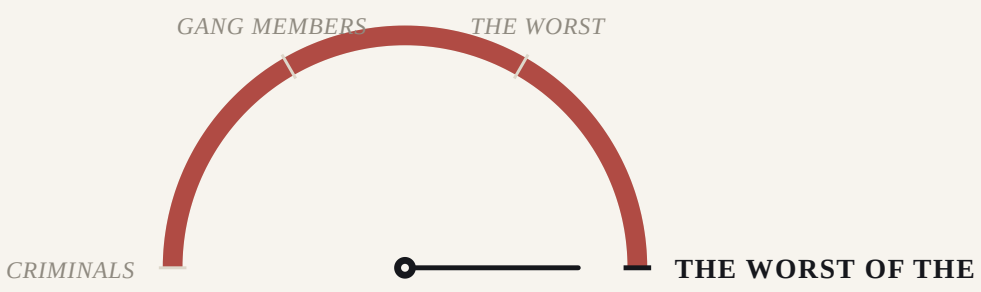
The beds. In July, TRAC counted 65,765 people in ICE detention; 46,436 of them, 70.6 percent, had no criminal conviction [1]. A year earlier the AP's count was 71.7 percent [2]. The population peaked at 68,289 in early February [3].

The people in them. NPR reported in April that 29 people had died in ICE custody since October, surpassing the previous record of 28, set in 2004 [4]; Human Rights Watch counted 52 deaths from January 20, 2025 through June 4, 2026 [5]. ProPublica documented more than 170 U.S. citizens held by immigration agents, nearly 20 of them children [6]. The phrase is the worst of the worst. The count is seven in ten with no conviction at all.

SOURCES

1. 46,436 of 65,765 in ICE detention (70.6 percent) with no criminal conviction — TRAC Immigration, 11 July 2026 ↑
2. 41,495 of 57,861 detainees (71.7 percent) with no conviction — AP, 12 July 2025 ↑
3. "At its recent high point in early February 2026, ICE held 68,289 people in detention" — TRAC, 10 April 2026 ↑
4. "Twenty-nine people have died in ICE custody since October … surpassing 2004's toll of 28" — NPR, 17 April 2026 ↑
5. 52 deaths in immigration detention from 20 January 2025 to 4 June 2026 — Human Rights Watch, 25 June 2026 ↑
6. "More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents," nearly 20 of them children — ProPublica, 16 October 2025 ↑

REPUBLICAN



THE WORST OF THE WORST

The phrase is the administration's own, and it is repeated on purpose. The Associated Press reported the president's pledge to deport "the worst of the worst" [1]. His press secretary, in February: "The Trump administration will continue our focus on deporting all illegal aliens present in our country, with a focus on the worst of the worst criminals" [2]. The Homeland Security Department, on the anniversary of the inauguration: ICE was "unleashed" to "target the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens" [3].

And there are real people behind the phrase. The same detention data that measures the whole population also counts about 19,000 people held in July who do have criminal convictions [4]. Removing people convicted of crimes is a job every administration claims, and this one names it first. How much of the detention system that job fills is on the other side.

SOURCES

1. Trump "has pledged to deport 'the worst of the worst'" — AP, 12 July 2025 ↑
2. "With a focus on the worst of the worst criminals" — White House press secretary — Fox News, 12 February 2026 ↑
3. "He unleashed ICE to target the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens" — Department of Homeland Security, 20 January 2026 ↑
4. 65,765 people in ICE detention, of whom 46,436 had no criminal conviction — TRAC Immigration, quick facts, 11 July 2026 ↑

"I read the phrase in three places. The press secretary: "a focus on the worst of the worst criminals." The department, on the anniversary: ICE "unleashed" on "the worst of the worst." Then I went to the clearinghouse that counts the detention population, just to meet a few of them. July: sixty-five thousand seven hundred sixty-five people in detention. Forty-six thousand four hundred thirty-six with no criminal conviction. Seventy point six percent. Excuse me — I'm going — one question. If the worst of the worst are thirty percent of the beds, who's in the other seventy?" — Lou

🍺

"""The worst of the worst." Beautiful phrase. It's on the podium, it's in the press releases, it's the first thing out of the briefing room. Then the research clearinghouse that counts detention looks at who's actually in the beds: seventy point six percent with no criminal conviction. That's not the worst of the worst. That's the most of the most. And more than a hundred seventy of the people they've held were American citizens."

— Sal

🚬

"A person without a conviction is simply a person who hasn't been convicted yet, and the administration is being proactive, which is the worst of the worst thing you can say about an administration that is doing its job."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎