The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2026 — THE AFTERNOON EDITION FREE, FOREVER

Agency that certified measles eliminated in 2000 won't certify which state its newest death occurred in.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

"Elimination" died again this week, if a status can die twice. The United States certified measles eliminated in 2000 — sustained transmission stopped for a year, a finding, not a cure — and for a generation it became a formality the public rarely had reason to check. It is survived by the surveillance system built to confirm that finding, now struggling to finish a count on schedule.

The decline is dated. On 1 September the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention left two measles deaths in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, off its weekly outbreak update, saying it was still investigating the cause; the county coroner had already confirmed one of the two. The investigation outlasted the news cycle. By 23 September, four people had died in Pennsylvania in a single month — two of them infants — the state's first measles deaths in at least 35 years, and 2026 was already the deadliest year for the disease since the 2000 elimination finding.

The dying continued past the agency's own count. On 13 October Pennsylvania announced a sixth measles death in the outbreak, a 39-year-old unvaccinated woman with underlying conditions; the CDC's national dash-

... Continued on Page H15

THE WORD

§69 — 22 OCTOBER 2026

On America First

DEMOCRAT

$20 BILLION

REPUBLICAN

AMERICA FIRST

"I came about something else — a letter from the Senate Banking Committee, the minority side, dated the end of September last year. It says Chinese buyers "reportedly purchased up to 40 cargoes of soybeans from Argentina in just one week," and China "has purchased no U.S. soybeans since May." Then, nine days later, a twenty-billion-dollar swap line from our Treasury to Argentina's. Then at lunch at the White House: "If he loses, we are not going to be generous." Excuse me, I'm going. The week the line was opened, whose soybeans were on the boats to China?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W69

Zuckerberg preps to pay the tax Newsom just endorsed abolishing, its funder dining with Trump that week.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On August 25th, groups backed by Google co-founder Sergey Brin and venture capitalist Peter Thiel opened an advertising campaign against a one-time, 5 percent tax on California billionaires, run under the names Building a Better California and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes. Brin alone has put more than $100 million into defeating it.

Four weeks later, on September 21st, six Nobel laureate economists, Joseph Stiglitz among them, signed a letter backing the same tax, calling it a possible first in the country and a start on redistributing wealth concentrated at the top. The column balances like this, hon: the people who study wealth favor the tax; the people who hold it are buying airtime against it.

On October 11th, Governor Gavin Newsom settled which side the state's own chief executive sits on. He endorsed a competing ballot measure that would cancel the wealth tax outright and bar California from ever passing another tax on financial assets. Debru Carthan, vice president of SEIU-UHW, the union running the tax campaign Newsom had just undercut, said of the governor: "He's showing California his true colors."

... Continued on Page F124

Same legal backlash fines Meta $25 billion, lets Google keep the monopoly it proved.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Judge Francis Mathew's order against Meta — $25 billion, signed in Santa Fe on Wednesday, over data practices dating to 2016 — is this month's addition to a ledger that already has entries. The Federal Trade Commission fined Meta $5 billion in 2019 for the identical Cambridge Analytica breach. California collected $17 billion from Meta in 2018 for exploiting the same teen users the company kept monetizing afterward. The Department of Justice's own separate probe into Meta was halted this month, after the company gave Trump millions — an investigation closing, not a payment, and the one entry on this account that moved money toward Meta's side of the ledger instead of away from it.

The New York Times this week named what the Meta order belongs to: a legal backlash that has created a new de facto regulatory regime, with courts ordering Big Tech companies to change their practices and pay up. The Hill had the mood dated before the Times wrote it up. On September 7, six weeks and three days before the Times's account, it described a rarity — Americans across the usual divides finding common ground in frustration with the tech-

... Continued on Page F124

Midterms' largest donor, at $366 million, vows to find out who is really pulling the strings

BY STERLING
The Ownership Desk

Three hundred and sixty-six million dollars, and the man who spent it would like to know who is really pulling the strings. You will take that for a threat. It is better than a threat — it is a lawful notice of intent, and do note that nothing in it will have to be withdrawn. Independent expenditure: money spent for a candidate and never with one, which is the condition that makes the sum unlimited and the spender untouchable by the coordination rules. Two hundred and seventy-six million of it since July. Since July. On Wednesday the terms were published — "live by the sword, die by the sword," and those who pick a fight should understand he will come for them, "not just their puppets." In September Democrats were rebuked for declining to name him. In Memphis a state representative runs against the data centers xAI built ... and the statute sets no hour at which the money stops. The price of a congressional inquiry is now a matter of public record. You have read it.

... Continued on Page F124

Agents raided her home over her father's old paperwork; reporters only ask if she married her brother.

BY LOU
One More Question

I went down to the county building Tuesday for something that had nothing to do with any of this — paperwork on the car, the one that still needs a fan belt I keep not getting to — and the man at the first window looked at my slip and sent me to the window in back. At the window in back, they had the radio going, and the radio had Fox News, from 13 September, carrying the border czar confirming there was a "criminal" investigation involving Representative Ilhan Omar, and saying he knew things. That window sent me to another window.

At the next window somebody had the New York Post open on the counter, dated 16 September: marrying her own brother, by itself, wouldn't be enough to get Representative Omar removed from the country — but other matters in her file might. I read that twice standing there before they sent me on.

The window after that had the Washington Examiner open, dated 22 September — the rumor had come back around, the paper said, after senior administration officials, including the Homeland Security Secretary,

... Continued on Page T29

The predecessor who quit the podium now hires whoever replaces the successor who couldn't hold it five days.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Katie Zacharia was born into the job of White House press secretary on Monday the twelfth of October, named to end a briefing blackout the Hill had clocked at forty days. She died in the job on Friday the sixteenth. Fox News counts the span at five days, Monday through Friday, and the house keeps Fox's count.

She is survived by three different answers to one plain question: where is she licensed to practice law. The last of the three, preserved in the Guardian's own video, was an admission that she had never passed the bar exams she had claimed to hold.

She was preceded in the job, months earlier, by Karoline Leavitt, who left the same podium, by the Guardian's account, to focus on her family. The seat then sat empty the forty days the Hill had printed, before Zacharia was named to fill it.

On the sixteenth, the Washington Examiner reported that the President had left the door open to Zacharia's departure while reaffirming his chief of staff, Susie Wiles. The Guardian ran its search piece the same day, noting that

... Continued on Page B43

Virginia senator indicted on her own quote: 'I've gotten too old to not be greedy'

BY MITCH
Investigations

Federal prosecutors indicted Virginia's most powerful Democratic state senator, her two daughters and a nephew on eight counts Thursday, and the line the government chose to lead with is hers: "I've gotten too old to not be greedy." That is not a reporter's paraphrase. That is the sentence the Department of Justice put at the top of its own case.

L. Louise Lucas is 82 and has served in the state senate for more than three decades.

All together now — eight counts: racketeering, money laundering conspiracy, drug trafficking, fraud, and firearms charges, stacked across forty-five pages. The government alleges a marijuana distribution enterprise moving at least 100 kilograms, with proceeds laundered back through a cannabis business Lucas co-owns. Attorney General Todd Blanche's statement calls it "the behavior of a public servant who put her own financial interests before the people she was elected to serve." That line, too, sits in the indictment's press release, not in anyone's imagination.

Here is the clause that answers the one before it. Back on September 4,

... Continued on Page A219

Trump credits the sanctions he waived for producing the talks he says enforcing them would have blocked.

BY THE WRECKING CREW
The Remedy Desk

The chief lays out the job again: a law signed, then waived the evening before it was due to bite. On September 19, Trump signed the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, named for the senator who pushed it before he died in July. The waiver landed the day before the statute took effect — the tool built, boxed, and set down before it ever touched the machine. Hours after the waiver, Russia hit Ukraine's power grid with more than 320 drones.

The planner walks the file back a week to see where this was headed. On October 9, Putin phoned Trump to propose a three-way summit with Xi Jinping, the Wall Street Journal reported. Ten days later the Guardian's editorial board warned that Russia wants America and China deciding Ukraine's future with Kyiv left out of the room — "a dangerous return to diplomacy of the strong for the strong." In between, on October 16, with the energy ceasefire Trump had announced on September 14 already collapsed, Trump called Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian refineries "a disgrace" and said Zelenskyy was harder to deal with than Putin.

The tinkerer gets to the mechanism itself. On October 21, envoy Steve

... Continued on Page A219

"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*

Snow held the fox's prints till the thaw,
while the farmer mended the door.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

THE WORKAROUND

Zuckerberg preps to pay the tax Newsom just endorsed abolishing, its funder dining with Trump that week.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"Newsom Endorses Ballot Measure That Would Cancel Out Billionaire Tax—and Ban Future Wealth Taxes", 11 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Meta's board agreed to keep Zuckerberg in California and let him sell new stock to pay the billionaire wealth tax.

WHO GETS PAID. Meta Platforms, which keeps its own chief executive from relocating by having him sell new shares instead of pulling cash off the balance sheet.

WHAT SLIPS. California voters' choice at the ballot box slips, because the governor's own competing measure could cancel out the wealth tax before it ever collects a dollar.

WHAT'S NEXT. California voters decide both measures on the same November ballot; if the governor's competing measure passes, the wealth tax never collects a cent.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On August 25th, groups backed by Google co-founder Sergey Brin and venture capitalist Peter Thiel opened an advertising campaign against a one-time, 5 percent tax on California billionaires, run under the names Building a Better California and Californians Against Wasteful Spending and Higher Taxes. Brin alone has put more than $100 million into defeating it.

Four weeks later, on September 21st, six Nobel laureate economists, Joseph Stiglitz among them, signed a letter backing the same tax, calling it a possible first in the country and a start on redistributing wealth concentrated at the top. The column balances like this, hon: the people who study wealth favor the tax; the people who hold it are buying airtime against it....

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That weekend, Brin had dinner with President Trump at Mar-a-Lago, seated to his left at a fundraising dinner hosted by the pro-Trump super PAC MAGA Inc.

Three days after that report, on October 22nd, a federal filing disclosed the outcome of Meta's months-long negotiation with its own chief executive: Mark Zuckerberg agreed to stay in California for eight years, in exchange for a board-approved plan to issue new shares he can sell to pay the very tax Newsom's measure is built to cancel. Economist Gabriel Zucman called the filing "huge," writing that "we are witnessing a global turning point unfold before our eyes."

Run the two filings side by side and the gap is not a contradiction, it is a hedge. One instrument prepares a man worth $239 billion to pay a tax he has not yet lost. The other, backed by the governor who is supposed to be collecting it, is built to make sure he never has to. Both are dated this October. Only one of them made the papers as a victory for the tax.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

META'S BOARD GAVE ITS OWN CHIEF EXECUTIVE EIGHT YEARS AND A STACK OF NEW STOCK, enough to cover a wealth tax he has not lost a dollar to yet, in the same month the governor who would collect that tax endorsed the ballot measure built to erase it. That is not hedging, that is running the horse and owning the track. The ad money killing the measure comes from the men it would tax; because it dies, the state collects nothing from them; because the state collects nothing from them, the property tax bill in your mailbox this November covers what theirs never will.

"They want you thinking this is a philosophy fight about whether billionaires should pay their share. It's not — Zuckerberg already built the machine to pay the tax if it passes, the same week the guy bankrolling the ad campaign to kill it was having dinner with Trump at Mar-a-Lago. That's not two stories about two rich guys. That's one guy covering both sides of the same bet."

— Sal

"Look, Prop — whatever number it is, the anti-tax one — isn't about protecting billionaires, it's about protecting jobs. You tax wealth, you chase off the job creators, and Governor Newsom gets that, that's why he's standing with — wait, Newsom's a Democrat, why am I the one defending him on this? Forget I said that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Mark Zuckerberg threatened to leave California over wealth tax~~

Meta's board gave Zuckerberg new shares to cover the wealth tax he threatened to flee

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *10:28 EDT*

Zuckerberg has agreed to remain in California for eight years as part of a board-approved plan to create new shares he can sell to pay a proposed wealth tax.

~~Newsom Endorses Ballot Measure That Would Cancel Out Billionaire Tax—and Ban Future Wealth Taxes~~

Newsom's pick to kill the billionaire tax is bankrolled by billionaire Sergey Brin

Common Dreams § *14:27 EDT*

California Gov. Gavin Newsom ramped up his opposition to a proposed tax on the state's billionaire residents on Friday by endorsing a competing ballot measure that would both cancel out the billionaire wealth tax initiative and prohibit any new taxes on the ownership of financial assets or other personal property. "He's showing...

~~Meta cuts tax deal with Zuckerberg to keep him in California even if wealth tax passes~~

Meta guarantees its $239 billion CEO is exempt from whatever tax California voters choose

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *10:47 EDT*

Meta Platforms struck a deal with its CEO Mark Zuckerberg to keep him residing in California as the state prepares to vote on a billionaire tax in November. Zuckerberg's estimated net worth is about $239 billion, making him the 6th richest person in the world, according to Forbes. He has been negotiating with his own [...]

'This Is Huge,' Economist Says as Filing Shows Zuckerberg Getting Ready to Pay California Billionaire Tax

Common Dreams § *10:22 EDT*

Federal filings released Wednesday reveal how Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, one of the richest men in the world, is getting ready to potentially pay a billionaire wealth tax that is on California's November midterm ballot—an indication of the grassroots campaign's impact. "This is huge," economist Gabriel Zucman, an outspoken supporter of...

~~As Millions Struggle to Get By, Plutocrat Working to Kill California Billionaire Tax Dines With Trump~~

Google co-founder spent $100 million fighting a tax on billionaires like him

Common Dreams § *11:00 EDT*

Billionaire Google co-founder Sergey Brin, who has spent more than $100 million fighting a proposed wealth tax in California, shared a lavish dinner with billionaire US President Donald Trump over the weekend at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida as millions of American families struggle to afford groceries, healthcare, and...

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

· Nobel Prize-Winning Economists Back First Billionaire Tax in US *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

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

Same legal backlash fines Meta $25 billion, lets Google keep the monopoly it proved.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"How a Legal Backlash Against Big Tech Is Forcing Big Changes", 22 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE NEW YORK TIMES — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A federal judge let Google keep its ad-technology business intact after finding it ran an illegal monopoly over that market.

WHO GETS PAID. Google's advertising business, which keeps the ad-tech market a federal court found it monopolized.

WHAT SLIPS. A court's power to break up a company it has already found holds an illegal monopoly.

WHAT'S NEXT. No hearing or deadline is scheduled for a Google appeal in the record; the ad-tech business keeps operating as is.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Judge Francis Mathew's order against Meta — $25 billion, signed in Santa Fe on Wednesday, over data practices dating to 2016 — is this month's addition to a ledger that already has entries. The Federal Trade Commission fined Meta $5 billion in 2019 for the identical Cambridge Analytica breach. California collected $17 billion from Meta in 2018 for exploiting the same teen users the company kept monetizing afterward. The Department of Justice's own separate probe into Meta was halted this month, after the company gave Trump millions — an investigation closing, not a payment, and the one entry on this account that moved money toward Meta's side of the ledger instead of away from it.

The New York Times this week named what the Meta order belongs to: a legal backlash that has created a new de facto regulatory regime, with courts ordering Big Tech companies to change their practices and pay up. The Hill had the mood dated before the Times wrote it up. On September 7, six weeks and three days before the Times's account, it described a rarity — Americans across the usual divides finding common ground in frustration with the technology industry's footprint, from data centers to the verdicts now landing....

...(cont) Five days before that Hill piece ran, on September 2, The Hill filed the entry that belongs on the same ledger and does not match the others. U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema ruled that Google does not have to break up its advertising technology business — a year after her own court found that Google held an illegal monopoly over that industry. The backlash reached Google. It found the monopoly. The remedy it set was to leave the business whole.

New Mexico will collect its $25 billion from Meta. The ad-tech market Judge Brinkema's court found Google had monopolized stays in Google's hands, undivided, by that same court's own order. The gap is not between a company a court found broke the law and one it did not — the monopoly finding against Google stands. The gap is between what a jury can order paid in a privacy verdict and what a judge can decline to order divided in an antitrust one, even holding the same finding of illegality.

Whose column that gap tends to favor is the one that still has the ad-tech business sitting in it, hon.

"Same six weeks, same legal backlash — Meta writes a $25 billion check, Google keeps the ad monopoly a federal judge just found it running. That's not a coincidence, that's a price list: pay up, or be big enough to buy the right to stay whole. Either way the business survives; it's just a question of whose pocket it sits in."

— Sal

"Look, the judge didn't say Google gets to keep breaking the law, she said breaking up a working ad business is a drastic remedy — courts don't reorganize companies lightly, that's restraint, not a pass. Meta's case was about lying to users, a totally different legal theory, you can't lump the two together just because — okay, they're in the same Times story this week. That doesn't mean anything."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Meta's $25 billion fine is one-ninth of what the law actually allowed.* By Ruth · the afternoon edition, 21 October 2026
- *Venezuelan billionaire's daughter hires Trump lawyer Alina Habba; billionaire gets pardon shortly after.* By Ruth · the morning edition, 21 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

How a Legal Backlash Against Big Tech Is Forcing Big Changes
The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *10:33 EDT*

A series of lawsuits has created a new de facto regulatory regime as courts order companies like Meta and Google to change their business practices — and pay up.

· Americans don't agree on much. Backlash to Big Tech might be the outlier *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Google avoids ad tech breakup *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.

Midterms' largest donor, at $366 million, vows to find out who is really pulling the strings

By STERLING
THE OWNERSHIP DESK

"Bores on OpenAI's spending retreat: I'll believe it when I see it", 6 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA POLITICO — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Elon Musk warned Democrats that any investigation of him after the election will be answered in kind.

WHO GETS PAID. Musk himself and the Republican candidates his money backs.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress loses its power to question the election's biggest spender if asking makes a member the target.

WHAT'S NEXT. If that holds, members who cross him face primaries he pays for; Kentucky saw that in May 2026, when a seven-term congressman lost 55 to 45 in the most expensive House primary on record.

Three hundred and sixty-six million dollars, and the man who spent it would like to know who is really pulling the strings. You will take that for a threat. It is better than a threat — it is a lawful notice of intent, and do note that nothing in it will have to be withdrawn. Independent expenditure: money spent for a candidate and never with one, which is the condition that makes the sum unlimited and the spender untouchable by the coordination rules. Two hundred and seventy-six million of it since July. Since July. On Wednesday the terms were published — "live by the sword, die by the sword," and those who pick a fight should understand he will come for them, "not just their puppets." In September Democrats were rebuked for declining to name him. In Memphis a state representative runs against the data centers xAI built … and the statute sets no hour at which the money stops. The price of a congressional inquiry is now a matter of public record. You have read it.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

ELON MUSK HAS PUT ABOUT $366 MILLION INTO THIS CYCLE, $276 MILLION OF IT SINCE July, more than any donor in the country. On Wednesday he told Democrats that whoever investigates him gets investigated back, down to whoever is pulling the strings. That is not a donation, that is a retainer paid in advance on the committee that would have asked the questions; and because the member who would ask what the Memphis data centers cost has been told up front that asking makes them the subject, the hearing does not get booked, the Colossus machines keep drawing the power they need, and the paper that shows up with your name on it is the electric bill under the magnet on your refrigerator.

Daylight, and the fox crosses the yard
slow. The dog has not barked yet.

— ENOCH
The Ownership Desk

"The guy who put three hundred sixty-six million dollars into this election says he wants to find out who is really pulling the strings — he is not joking, and he is not hiding it either. What he is telling the next Congress is that oversight has a price and the price is you, personally, whoever signs the subpoena. And the law backs him: no cap, no deadline, no requirement to coordinate with anyone, which is exactly why he can say it out loud on a Wednesday."
— Sal

"Independent expenditure — it is speech, it is protected, there is no coordination, and no coordination is what makes it legal, and legal is legal. Did I say legal three times? That does not sound like me. Look, the man said he would find out who is pulling the strings; when your side does that you call it oversight, so spare me the fainting."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Houthis promise a 'painful' response if the US joins a war it already promised, in writing, to join.* By Lou · the evening edition, 13 October 2026
— *White House still weighing whether to join a war it already backed, in writing, on October 4th.* By Lou · the morning edition, 13 October 2026
— *Agency built to cut government waste fights to the Supreme Court to keep its own paperwork secret.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 13 October 2026
— *Altman said accept some "bad things." Sanders asked which ones. The IMF named one this week.* By The Wrecking Crew · the evening edition, 13 October 2026
— *Washington backed the Saudi offensive nine days ago; the White House is now weighing whether to join it.* By Lou · the evening edition, 13 October 2026
— *White House weighs joining a war Delta already decided was too dangerous to fly into.* By Lou · the evening edition, 12 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Bores on OpenAI's spending retreat: I'll believe it when I see it
Politico MAINSTREAM § *20:30 EDT*

AI safety advocates want stronger commitments to reduce the money AI super PACs push into the midterms.

~~Elon Musk becomes biggest donor of US midterms cycle with $366m spent~~

$366m buys a year of classroom supplies for 409,000 teachers.

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *13:13 EDT*

Musk's midterm donations, mostly for rightwing candidates and causes, surpass his contributions to Trump in 2024 Send us your questions on how the US economy is shaping the midterm elections Elon Musk has become the biggest political donor of the 2026 US midterm elections cycle, funneling about $366m into political groups and campaigns...

~~The Midterm Battle over Data Centers: Memphis House Candidate Justin Pearson Fights Elon Musk's xAI~~

'Billionaires profit off our pain': Memphis candidate takes on Musk's data center

Democracy Now! § *08:32 EDT*

The energy needs of the AI boom and the construction of massive data centers in states across the country have created a backlash from both Democratic and Republican voters. The battle against data centers is at the heart of a campaign in Tennessee: Democratic state Representative Justin J. Pearson is opposed to the Colossus data centers...

~~Musk warns Democrats over possible congressional probes~~

Musk threatens to 'come for' lawmakers investigating him

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *11:12 EDT*

SpaceX founder Elon Musk warned Democrats over a possible congressional probe on Wednesday, writing, "live by the sword, die by the sword." "Those who pick fights with me should understand that I will find out who is really pulling the strings and come for them, not just their puppets," Musk wrote on the social platform...

Iran calls U.S. response "insufficient" amid stalled talks to end the war
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *15:07 EDT*

After Saudi Arabia said Iran's Houthi allies carried out another strike at Riyadh's airport, Iran called the U.S. effort to negotiate toward ending the war "insufficient."

Elon Musk vows to fight back if Democrats investigate him after midterms: 'Live by the sword, die by the sword'
New York Post RIGHT § *10:42 EDT*

"Those who pick fights with me should understand that I will find out who is really pulling the strings and come for them, not just their puppets..." Musk warned.

· 'Take the Open Shot': Democrats Rebuked for Refusing to Target Elon Musk Over $100 Million Midterm Spending Spree *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Saudi Arabia promises response to Houthi attacks *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Is Yemen Heading Back to All-Out War? Saudis Launch Strikes as Houthis Take Control of Red Sea Coast *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· US Backs Major Saudi-Led Offensive as Yemen Slides Back Toward All-Out War *from the morgue, 4 Oct 2026*

· F Lead Iran must stop arming Yemen's Houthi forces, say the G7 *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Blasts Rattle Riyadh as Saudi Arabia Hit by Deadliest Houthi Attacks So Far *from the morgue, 8 Oct 2026*

· Saudi Arabia sees disruptions at Riyadh airport amid ballistic missile attacks from Houthis *from the morgue, 8 Oct 2026*

· Houthis claim they struck Riyadh's main airport in Saudi Arabia *from the morgue, 8 Oct 2026*

· The Royal Saudi Air Defense intercepts a ballistic missile fired from Yemen over the Saudi capital Riyadh that caused panic among residents. Houthis say they fired several Burkan-2 missiles at targets *from the morgue, 11 Apr 2018*

· The Houthis say that they have struck Saudi Arabia's Abha International Airport and King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah with drones. A Houthi spokesman said on Twitter that the attacks halt *from the morgue, 15 Feb 2021*

· Houthis tried to hit Saudi capital with ballistic missile, Riyadh confirms *from the morgue, 20 Sep 2026*

· Riyadh airport explosion prompts Saudi Arabia to issue air raid alerts as Houthi fighting escalates *from the morgue, 19 Sep 2026*

· Markey Urges Congress to Block Trump-Saudi Deal, a 'Starting Gun for a Middle East Nuclear Arms Race' *from the morgue, 26 Aug 2026*

· Trump admin's list of US-designated 'foreign terrorist' groups in Latin America expands to 21 *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Top Trump official reveals how 30-minute military op unlocked Venezuela oil windfall for US buyers *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Ex-Venezuelan first lady Cilia Flores seeks release from NYC jail, citing heart ailment *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· New York City protest once again demands release of Maduro and Flores *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Trump Official Denies Stealing Venezuela's Oil One Hour After Boasting Country is 'Forced to Work' With US *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· 'Mobster Language': Trump Says Venezuelan Oil Will Replenish US Reserves *from the morgue, 30 Aug 2026*

· 'Yet Another Trump Grift': Congress Called to Stop US Takeover of Venezuelan Oil Fields *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· The Biggest Oil Deal or Theft at Gunpoint? U.S. Claims Majority Control of Venezuela's Oil Reserves *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Tehran threatens attacks after U.S. strikes Iranian tankers *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· US forces take out 3 Iranian oil tankers in retaliation *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Oil prices up as Iran says it will expand control over Strait of Hormuz *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Iran live updates: Trump speaks to MBS, says everything will 'work out fine' *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· Iran threatens retaliation against U.S. tanker strikes *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· U.S. gas prices hit record high for Labor Day *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Ship tracking websites, including Kpler, MarineTraffic, and TankerTrackers, show that three Iranian oil tankers, including two from the National Iranian Tanker Company, have escaped the blockade that *from the morgue, 17 Jun 2026*

· Iranian state media reports that the United States Navy attempted to capture an Iranian oil tanker. The oil tanker was boarded, commandeered and then returned by Iranian NEDSA marines in a helicopter *from the morgue, 3 Nov 2021*

· US strikes Iranian rocket launchers in first attack since late July *from the morgue, 30 Aug 2026*

· An Iranian Navy commander claims on state television that the Iranian Navy forced a U.S. submarine to surface as it transited the Strait of Hormuz and that the submarine violated Iranian territorial w *from the morgue, 20 Apr 2023*

· Trump Threatens to Rename Strait of Hormuz for Himself as War Pushes Diesel Prices Toward Record High *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump floats renaming Strait of Hormuz after himself *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· U.S. strikes targets in Iran near Strait of Hormuz as Iran says it is retaliating *from the morgue, 1 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*

· '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*

· Price of diesel in U.S. hits record as Vance downplays Iran war impact *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Diesel prices hit record high as wars disrupt supply *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump vows response to Iran's retaliatory strikes: 'We're going to hit them hard' *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Trump threatens Iran against retaliation for latest U.S. strikes *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Live updates: US, Iran ramp up strikes; incumbents hold on in Massachusetts *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump calls Iran conflict "small potatoes" *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Labor Day gas prices are highest ever for holiday *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· How 'Hypermilers' Are Trying to Beat High Gas Prices *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Fuel prices at record Labor Day high in US thanks to Iran War and refinery issues *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Oil Prices Rise Slightly After U.S. and Iran Trade Strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· USS Lincoln heads home as war with Iran escalates *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Lawler disagrees with Trump on Iran war: 'It is certainly not small potatoes' *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· OPEC Plus to Keep Oil Production Steady *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Iran War Has Cost the Average American More Than $1,200 Over Six Months, Economist Estimates *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Trump says military conflict in Iran is 'small potatoes for us' *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Wright: US has 'a lot of leverage' in Venezuela after oil deal reached *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· White House unveils new details of Venezuela agreement *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Chris Wright explains how Venezuelan crude will 'fill' the Strategic Petroleum Reserve *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Energy Secretary Wright says Venezuela oil deal will bring down gas prices in a year or two *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Chevron to expand in Venezuela, days after the U.S. and Venezuela strike oil deal *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Venezuelan oil flows will lower gas prices in 12-24 months, Wright says in Caracas *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump says Venezuelan oil will replenish Strategic Petroleum Reserves *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· US, Russia explore gas sale to Europe amid Ukraine war: Report *from the morgue, 8 Oct 2026*

· Countries across Europe report reductions in gas supplies after Russia disconnected supplies to Ukraine yesterday. Russia accuses Ukraine of stealing cubic metres of gas yesterday from pipelines trans *from the morgue, 2 Jan 2006*

· AI safety group outlines demands for legislation, warns lawmakers *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

· AI-generated child sexual abuse images cause real-life harm *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

· OpenAI fires researchers for sharing data with AI safety advocacy group: Report *from the morgue, 2 Oct 2026*

· Courts just allowed AI child sex abuse material because it's 'virtual.' Who do you think it's trained on? *from the morgue, 19 Sep 2026*

· 'We Cannot Wait for Disaster to Strike': Beyer Leads Bipartisan Push in House to Urgently Regulate AI *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· MPs demand tech firms block nude images on children's smartphones *from the morgue, 30 Sep 2026*

· AI safety advocacy group sues OpenAI over Hugging Face incident *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

· OpenAI scraps release of new 'Astra' model over safety concerns *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

· Alarming California map shows exactly where wildfires are tearing across the state — as sweltering heat wave hits *from the morgue, 5 Oct 2026*

· California Democrats kill bill to hold wildfire-starting utility companies accountable *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· LA sues State Farm over allegations of unfair claims process after 2025 wildfires *from the morgue, 1 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.

Agents raided her home over her father's old paperwork; reporters only ask if she married her brother.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"Rep. Ilhan Omar's residence searched as part of ongoing criminal investigation: DOJ", 13 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I went down to the county building Tuesday for something that had nothing to do with any of this — paperwork on the car, the one that still needs a fan belt I keep not getting to — and the man at the first window looked at my slip and sent me to the window in back. At the window in back, they had the radio going, and the radio had Fox News, from 13 September, carrying the border czar confirming there was a "criminal" investigation involving Representative Ilhan Omar, and saying he knew things. That window sent me to another window.

At the next window somebody had the New York Post open on the counter, dated 16 September: marrying her own brother, by itself, wouldn't be enough to get Representative Omar removed from the country — but other matters in her file might. I read that twice standing there before they sent me on....

...(cont) The window after that had the Washington Examiner open, dated 22 September — the rumor had come back around, the paper said, after senior administration officials, including the Homeland Security Secretary, Markwayne Mullin, indicated a fraud case was coming. That window sent me back to the window I'd started at.

I never did get the car paperwork sorted. But I got the rest of the story the same way, secondhand, from people whose actual job that week was something else.

Here's what I've got, in order, off what they handed me. On 12 October, federal agents searched Representative Omar's home. Every account I've been given says the stated subject of that search was paperwork her father filled out — decades old, from when she was a child. I want to hold onto that, because I'm going to come back to it.

This week it moved twice. The Guardian had her saying she's moving out of the Washington house, because the address is public now, and she has kids who visit, and people have been tracking them. The BBC had the inventory: more than a dozen items carried out that morning, cell phones, notebooks, the record says. And on the same day, 22 October, two papers — the Daily Caller and the Washington Examiner — put the direct question to her, on the record: did you marry your own brother. Both ran back the same four words. Not to my knowledge.

I'm sorry, I keep going back to that. The first side of it is just the date — both papers ran it the same Thursday, within the same news cycle the Guardian had her packing boxes.

I apologize, I'm going back again — the second side is the count. Two separate mastheads, one answer, word for word. That's as far as the arithmetic goes on what's in front of me.

I keep returning to it, and I'm sorry, but here's a third side: more than a dozen items left that house on 12 October over paperwork her father signed before she could legally sign anything herself. Not one account I've seen says the warrant named a marriage.

Twelve, same as the dozen the BBC says left that house in cell phones and notebooks.

One more time, and then I'll stop apologizing for it. The search warrant's subject, every outlet agrees, was a form. The question reporters have put to her, on camera, is not about a form. Which one has she actually answered?

Hold on — one more thing, and then I'll let you get back to your evening. When the dozen items were already on their way out her front door, and somebody finally got around to asking her, point blank, which four words came back?

Not to my knowledge.

"They searched her house over paperwork her father signed decades before she could vote, and the cameras keep asking about her ex-husband instead. That's not journalism, that's a rumor laundered through a federal warrant. Watch which question gets answered on camera and which one never gets asked at all."

— Sal

"She gave a direct answer, four words, "not to my knowledge" — which sounds evasive, or exactly like an honest answer, those are basically the same thing. And a dozen agents at dawn over decades-old paperwork is just due diligence, not a message — did I say "message"? Forget that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- Trump calls Omar and Walz '100% guilty' of 'Minnesota fraud,' threatens jail or deportation. By Lou · the afternoon edition, 20 October 2026
- DOJ's voter-fraud sweep breaks a citizen's arm; Congress answers same day with a bill to sue ICE. By The Wrecking Crew · the evening edition, 19 October 2026
- Feds cite unnamed DNA to confirm denaturalizing a congresswoman already cleared by three probes. By Mort · the evening edition, 19 October 2026
- Justice Department denies stoking voter-fraud fear on '60 Minutes,' breaks a citizen's arm enforcing it days later. By Mitch · the afternoon edition, 19 October 2026
- Obama calls Omar probe appalling; backlash reads his own IRS's Tea Party file back to him. By Lou · the afternoon edition, 19 October 2026
- Justice Department promises midterms will have 'no interruption,' delivers one to a congresswoman's front door instead. By Lou · the evening edition, 19 October 2026

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)*

Rep. Ilhan Omar's residence searched as part of ongoing criminal investigation: DOJ

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *09:22 EDT*

A Department of Justice spokesperson said the search was part of an ongoing criminal investigation.

Ilhan Omar says 'bizarre' pre-dawn raid on her home is forcing her to move out

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *09:36 EDT*

The congresswoman said federal agents seized over a dozen items, including cell phones and notebooks, as part of a federal investigation.

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 plans to move out of Washington home after federal raid

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *09:46 EDT*

Democratic lawmaker says family's safety is at risk amid death threats and raid making apartment's address public Our reporters answer your questions about ICE, immigration and the midterms Minnesota congresswoman Ilhan Omar said she plans to move out of her Washington DC apartment after federal agents raided her residence last week as...

Ilhan Omar issues stunning admission when confronted with brother marriage rumors

Fox News RIGHT § *09:51 EDT*

Ilhan Omar broke her silence on the federal investigation and search warrant, denying she married Ahmed Nur Said Elmi to commit immigration fraud.

~~Rep. Ilhan Omar's DC home raided by DHS as part of probe into Dem's immigration paperwork~~

DHS raided a sitting congresswoman's home over paperwork her father filed when she was a child

New York Post RIGHT § *08:08 EDT*

The raid is part of an investigation into Rep. Ilhan Omar's immigration documents, which were filled out by her late father when she was a child.

Ilhan Omar When Asked If She Married Her Brother: 'Not To My Knowledge'

Daily Caller RIGHT § *09:43 EDT*

'Not to my knowledge'

Omar addresses rumors she's related to her ex-husband: 'Not to my knowledge'

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *09:33 EDT*

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) waved off rumors that she married her brother, replying, "Not to my knowledge," when asked if she was related to her ex-husband.

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

Rep. Omar's D.C. home searched by DHS investigators

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:55 EDT*

Sources say the investigation centers on Rep. Ilhan Omar's immigration documents, involving paperwork filled out by her late father when she was a child.

~~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...

~~Federal Agents Search Home of Rep. Ilhan Omar~~

Justice Department breaks its own 60-day election rule to raid Ilhan Omar's home

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *21:54 EDT*

The search takes place within the 60-day window of the midterm elections, when the Justice Department has historically avoided such investigative steps related to political candidates.

~~US federal agents raid home of Democratic congresswoman and Trump critic Ilhan Omar~~

Federal agents raided a congresswoman's home over paperwork her late father filed when she was a child

France 24 MAINSTREAM § *11:13 EDT*

US federal agents on Monday launched a raid on the Washington home of Democratic representative Ilhan Omar, an outspoken critic of US President Donald Trump, officials said. The raid followed a criminal fraud investigation into the Somali-born lawmaker's immigration paperwork submitted by her late father when she was a child, Fox...

· Did Ilhan Omar marry her own brother? The claims explained *from the morgue, 22 Sep 2026*

· Why Ilhan Omar can't be kicked out of the US for marrying brother: Immigration officials *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

· Homan confirms 'criminal' investigation involving Ilhan Omar, says he knows 'things are going on' *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· WATCH: Ilhan Omar denies feds have contacted her after border czar Homan confirms 'criminal' investigation *from the morgue, 18 Sep 2026*

· Could Trump revoke Ilhan Omar's citizenship for alleged brother marriage? Ex federal prosecutor breaks it down *from the morgue, 29 Sep 2026*

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

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

· U.S. military lays groundwork for potential action around Cuba *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

· UN 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*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The predecessor who quit the podium now hires whoever replaces the successor who couldn't hold it five days.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

"Scaramucci replaced by shorter unit of time - a Zacharia", 16 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA RTÉ — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The press secretary hired to end a forty-day blackout lasted five days after three answers about her law license.

WHO GETS PAID. Karoline Leavitt, who resigned the same job months earlier, now runs the search for whoever replaces Zacharia.

WHAT SLIPS. The public's chance to check a spokesperson's credentials before the podium, not after, slips here.

WHAT'S NEXT. Leavitt's search continues with no date set for a successor; the podium has sat empty since the sixteenth.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Katie Zacharia was born into the job of White House press secretary on Monday the twelfth of October, named to end a briefing blackout the Hill had clocked at forty days. She died in the job on Friday the sixteenth. Fox News counts the span at five days, Monday through Friday, and the house keeps Fox's count.

She is survived by three different answers to one plain question: where is she licensed to practice law. The last of the three, preserved in the Guardian's own video, was an admission that she had never passed the bar exams she had claimed to hold....

...(cont) She was preceded in the job, months earlier, by Karoline Leavitt, who left the same podium, by the Guardian's account, to focus on her family. The seat then sat empty the forty days the Hill had printed, before Zacharia was named to fill it.

On the sixteenth, the Washington Examiner reported that the President had left the door open to Zacharia's departure while reaffirming his chief of staff, Susie Wiles. The Guardian ran its search piece the same day, noting that the exit came only months after Leavitt's own resignation.

On the twenty-second, Fox News reported that Leavitt is the one now helping the President find his next press secretary. Not an outside hire conducting the search — the person who held the same podium before Zacharia, answered the same kind of questions, and left it, now screening whoever takes the podium after the one who couldn't hold it five days.

None of this requires an adjective. The office that exists to tell the public what its government is doing is being staffed in a closed loop, by the person who already walked away from it once. The arrangement is penny-ante as Washington arrangements go — one office, one rehire, one favor — but the turnover is clocked in business days, and the search for the third occupant of that podium is now being run by the first.

In lieu of flowers, the administration is asked to publish whichever law license it is checking this time, before the podium, not after.

"You get rid of a forty-day blackout by hiring somebody who can't settle on a state where she's allowed to practice law, and when that falls apart in five days, you don't go outside for the replacement — you call back the last one who already quit the same podium. That's not a search, that's a rotation, and the public still never gets a straight answer out of any of it."

— Sal

"Karoline brings real continuity to this process — institutional knowledge, somebody who already knows where the podium is, who the regulars in the room are, who — I mean, she's the one who walked off that same podium four months ago. Continuity. That's still the word I'm using, I think."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *White House ends forty-day briefing blackout with fourteen minutes, three friendly reporters, and a press secretary who answered "when I moved to China" when asked where she passed the bar; normal briefings resumed Tuesday and concluded Friday.*
By Chip · the evening edition, 18 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Scaramucci replaced by shorter unit of time - a Zacharia

RTÉ MAINSTREAM § *16:03 EDT*

A Scaramucci has often been used as a tongue-in-cheek measure of time in politics, particularly in the Trump era.

Trump transitioning Katie Zacharia out of press secretary role — but will keep Susie Wiles

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *13:31 EDT*

President Donald Trump made two pieces of White House personnel news on Friday, by transitioning Katie Zacharia's out of her newly-entered press secretary role and throwing his support behind chief of staff Susie Wiles. Zacharia has been lambasted for the rocky start to her tenure, which began on Monday, following an awkward opening...

Scaramucci quips about new press secretary Zacharia's tenure: 'The clock is running'

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *11:30 EDT*

Anthony Scaramucci is weighing in on Katie Zacharia's first briefing as White House press secretary, quipping that the clock is ticking on her tenure. "The clock is running," Scaramucci wrote on X on Tuesday, shortly after Zacharia wrapped her inaugural briefing at the White House as press secretary. "Thus far 1/11th of a Scaramucci,"...

~~Leavitt opens up on helping Trump find new press secretary after Zacharia debacle. 'Was not for her'~~

Trump's press secretary lasted five days before he needed a new one

Fox News RIGHT § *11:07 EDT*

Karoline Leavitt says she's helping Trump find a new press secretary after Katie Zacharia lasted just five days in the demanding White House role.

~~Who is Katie Zacharia, Trump's next White House press secretary?~~

Trump's next press secretary comes straight from his own media company

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *16:31 EDT*

President Donald Trump tapped Katie Zacharia, a conservative commentator and communications adviser for Trump Media and Technology Group, to serve as his next White House press secretary. Zacharia will succeed Karoline Leavitt, who left the White House in August. Her appointment comes less than a month before the 2026 midterm elections...

White House press secretary out after less than a week

Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *14:58 EDT*

Katie Zacharia's gaffe-filled stint came as US President Donald Trump flies around the country trying to boost Republican candidates ahead of midterm elections.

~~Who could replace Katie Zacharia as White House press secretary?~~

Trump's second press secretary this year lasted five days

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *16:41 EDT*

Her abrupt firing after just five days reopened the contest for one of the Trump administration's most prominent roles The White House is without a press secretary again after the ousting of Katie Zacharia, just five days into her appointment as Donald Trump's spokesperson. Zacharia's departure comes just months after Karoline Leavitt...

~~Embattled new White House Press Secretary Zacharia 'let go' from her role~~

Trump picked a press secretary who hadn't passed the bar. He fired her a week later.

France 24 MAINSTREAM § *11:57 EDT*

A White House Press official said Friday that Secretary Katie Zacharia was "let go" from her role after US President Donald Trump signaled she was on her way out, a week after he picked her for the post. Zacharia's credentials as an attorney had come under scrutiny and she admitted to not having passed the bar in an interview with Fox...

Katie Zacharia fired after five days as White House press secretary

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *15:29 EDT*

Zacharia hosted widely panned first briefing on Tuesday and faced scrutiny after admitting she didn't pass bar exam Donald Trump's new press secretary, Katie Zacharia, was fired on Friday, just five days after she assumed the role, according to a White House official. Zacharia confirmed her departure from the White House on Friday...

Katie Zacharia admits she never passed legal exams – video

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *13:06 EDT*

In an interview with Fox News' Sean Hannity, the new White House press secretary, Katie Zacharia, admitted that she did not pass the bar exam, after facing scrutiny about her legal career before becoming the top spokesperson for Trump. Zacharia had previously said she practiced law before entering politics, and Trump had described her as...

· White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer announces his intention to resign as White House Press Secretary due to Donald Trump's appointment of Anthony Scaramucci as the White House Communications Direc *from the morgue, 21 Jul 2017*

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

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

· U.S. military lays groundwork for potential action around Cuba *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

· UN 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*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE CONFESSION

Virginia senator indicted on her own quote: 'I've gotten too old to not be greedy'

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS

"Virginia state senator surrenders to authorities in public corruption case", 22 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NBC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Federal prosecutors indicted Virginia's most powerful Democratic state senator, her two daughters and a nephew.

WHO GETS PAID. Other applicants for Virginia cannabis licenses no longer compete against a sitting state senator for the same permits.

WHAT SLIPS. Virginia voters kept electing a senator under a federal wiretap the public was not told about for 48 days.

WHAT'S NEXT. The case now moves toward arraignment on the eight counts; the indictment sets no trial date yet, so the calendar stops there.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Federal prosecutors indicted Virginia's most powerful Democratic state senator, her two daughters and a nephew on eight counts Thursday, and the line the government chose to lead with is hers: "I've gotten too old to not be greedy." That is not a reporter's paraphrase. That is the sentence the Department of Justice put at the top of its own case.

L. Louise Lucas is 82 and has served in the state senate for more than three decades....

...(cont) All together now — eight counts: racketeering, money laundering conspiracy, drug trafficking, fraud, and firearms charges, stacked across forty-five pages. The government alleges a marijuana distribution enterprise moving at least 100 kilograms, with proceeds laundered back through a cannabis business Lucas co-owns. Attorney General Todd Blanche's statement calls it "the behavior of a public servant who put her own financial interests before the people she was elected to serve." That line, too, sits in the indictment's press release, not in anyone's imagination.

Here is the clause that answers the one before it. Back on September 4, Representative Suhas Subramanyam told the Washington Examiner that the FBI and DOJ had notified him his phone calls with Lucas were being monitored — a wiretap, confirmed, on the record, weeks before anyone outside the case file knew a case existed. Forty-eight days passed between that confirmation and Thursday's unsealing. For forty-eight days, the wiretap was real and the public was not told it was running.

The indictment says Lucas used her Senate seat to pursue cannabis licenses in the same industry prosecutors say she was running illegally. She spent three decades writing the rules for a business the government now says she was also operating outside them. That is the whole shape of the document: a wiretap confirmed in September, an indictment unsealed in October, and a defendant's own words, selected by the people charging her, doing the work no prosecutor's adjective could.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE FBI CONFIRMED A WIRETAP ON A SITTING STATE SENATOR'S CALLS ON SEPTEMBER 4th and the indictment did not surface for forty-eight more days, during which the senator kept casting votes and the congressman whose calls were also tapped kept representing his district. That gap isn't an investigation being careful, it's the government holding a loaded case file and deciding on its own calendar when the rest of us get to know what it already knew. Because the wiretap sat quiet for forty-eight days before it became your news story, and because nobody sent you a notice when your own representative's calls started getting listened to either, the next confirmed tap on a call near you will sit in that same silence just as long — check the phone charging on your nightstand tonight, because the forty-eight days start whenever they say it started, not when you find out.

"You had a sitting state senator writing the cannabis licensing rules and running a weed business at the same time, and the FBI knew it long enough to tap the phones of other elected officials just to listen in. Forty-eight days between "we confirmed the wiretap" and "here's the indictment" isn't an investigation moving slow, that's the government deciding when you get to find out something it already knew. The scheme isn't the marijuana — the scheme is always who gets to write the rules for the business they're also running."

— Sal

"Look, the Attorney General said it himself, a grand jury indicted her, that's not politics, that's a process — did I say "that's not politics"? I mean obviously the timing, forty-eight days after a Democratic congressman's calls get tapped, right before an election cycle, is just how federal investigations naturally — no, they move at their own pace, totally unrelated to who's in charge of the DOJ, which, fine, is also not something I should be bringing up either."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Virginia state senator surrenders to authorities in public corruption case
NBC News MAINSTREAM § *10:31 EDT*
Virginia state Sen. L. Louise Lucas, a high-ranking Democrat in the state, has been charged with racketeering and a money laundering conspiracy as part of an alleged public corruption case involving a cannabis business she co-owns.

Live updates: DOJ indicts top Virginia Democrat on corruption, drug charges; Trump heads to Iowa
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *10:27 EDT*
A federal indictment accuses one of Virginia's most powerful Democrats, state Sen. L. Louise Lucas, of having a role in leading a criminal enterprise that acquired and distributed large quantities of marijuana and laundered the proceeds.

Feds charge powerful Virginia Democrat in alleged drug scheme
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *11:18 EDT*
L. Louise Lucas, a longtime state senator from Virginia, has been arrested in connection with an alleged bribery and racketeering scheme.

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)*
High-ranking Virginia state Democrat charged in public corruption case
NBC News MAINSTREAM § *09:49 EDT*
Virginia State Senator L. Louise Lucas charged in public corruption case, DOJ says

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)*
Virginia state lawmaker indicted by DOJ in marijuana trafficking conspiracy
ABC News MAINSTREAM § *10:44 EDT*
Virginia Democratic state senator L. Louise Lucas has been indicted on charges stemming from a marijuana trafficking conspiracy and corruption probe, the DOJ says.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team and ordered inconsistent investigations closed, while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*
'I've Gotten Too Old To Not Be Greedy': Feds Hit Louise Lucas With Pot-Fueled Racketeering Charges
Daily Caller RIGHT § *10:51 EDT*
'I've Gotten Too Old To Not Be Greedy': Feds Hit Virginia State Senator With Pot-Fueled Racketeering Charges

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)*
Virginia state senator indicted, accused of leading a marijuana distribution enterprise
Fox News RIGHT § *10:14 EDT*
Virginia state senator Lillie Louise Lucas was indicted Thursday on eight counts that include Drug Trafficking, Money Laundering, Fraud, and Firearms Charges after being accused of running a marijuana distribution enterprise, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Lucas is among seven indicted in the sprawling racketeering scheme.

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)*
Virginia state Sen. L. Louise Lucas charged with public corruption
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *10:36 EDT*
Virginia state Sen. L. Louise Lucas (D) was charged and brought into custody Thursday, according to an unsealed indictment from the Department of Justice (DOJ).

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)*
Democratic Virginia Sen. Louise Lucas indicted in alleged marijuana racketeering scheme
Washington Examiner RIGHT § *10:38 EDT*
The Justice Department secured an indictment of Democratic Virginia state Sen. Louise Lucas this week on five charges, accusing the longtime Democratic lawmaker of leading a network that distributed at least 100 kilograms of marijuana, laundered proceeds, and used her political influence to pursue cannabis licenses. A 45-page indictment...

Feds indict prominent Virginia lawmaker Louise Lucas and family for marijuana criminal 'enterprise'
New York Post RIGHT § *09:58 EDT*
NORFOLK, Va. — Federal prosecutors on Thursday criminally indicted Virginia Democratic state Sen. Louise Lucas, her two daughters and a nephew — accusing the group of marijuana-dealing crimes, money laundering and bribery.

· Virginia Democrat says FBI tapped phone as part of Louise Lucas investigation *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

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

THE HUMANITARIAN

Trump credits the sanctions he waived for producing the talks he says enforcing them would have blocked.

By THE WRECKING CREW
THE REMEDY DESK

"Russia and Ukraine ready to resume trilateral talks with the US", 22 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA LE MONDE — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Trump waived a Russia sanctions law the day before it took effect.

WHO GETS PAID. The Kremlin gets sanctions relief and a diplomatic win from a prisoner release that cost it nothing.

WHAT SLIPS. The law Congress passed to punish Russia sits waived, leaving its enforcement unchecked.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the waiver holds, Russia resumes trilateral talks with Trump and Xi in mid-November, the date Moscow already put on the calendar.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The chief lays out the job again: a law signed, then waived the evening before it was due to bite. On September 19, Trump signed the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, named for the senator who pushed it before he died in July. The waiver landed the day before the statute took effect — the tool built, boxed, and set down before it ever touched the machine. Hours after the waiver, Russia hit Ukraine's power grid with more than 320 drones.

The planner walks the file back a week to see where this was headed. On October 9, Putin phoned Trump to propose a three-way summit with Xi Jinping, the Wall Street Journal reported. Ten days later the Guardian's editorial board warned that Russia wants America and China deciding Ukraine's future with Kyiv left out of the room — "a dangerous return to diplomacy of the strong for the strong." In between, on October 16, with the energy ceasefire Trump had announced on September 14 already collapsed, Trump called Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian refineries "a disgrace" and said Zelenskyy was harder to deal with than Putin....

...(cont) The tinkerer gets to the mechanism itself. On October 21, envoy Steve Witkoff sat down with Putin in St Petersburg. Russia freed Stephen Hubbard, a 74-year-old former teacher held more than four years on mercenary charges, with no swap attached. Witkoff called Putin, wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, a "humanitarian" for it. Former U.S. ambassador John Herbst went on CBS the same week and called the word "fatuous."

The muscle swings at the load-bearing wall: Trump is still crediting the sanctions he waived with producing a release they never touched. The statute sat in the toolbox through the drone strikes, through the waiver, through the humanitarian line, doing nothing it was built to do, while Graham's name on it did the work of sounding tough.

The pilot gets it to the date the Kremlin already put on its own calendar. By October 22, Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said Russia was "in principle, ready to resume" trilateral talks in mid-November. Ukraine backed the proposal. The sanctions law sits exactly where it sat on the 19th: signed, waived, uninvoked — and still, somehow, getting the credit.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

TRUMP WAIVED THE SANCTIONS LAW THE NIGHT BEFORE IT TOOK EFFECT, AND WITHIN days Russia freed an American prisoner with no swap attached. That isn't diplomacy freeing a hostage, it's a toll Moscow collected by releasing him, paid for by leaving the sanctions switched off. Because the law stays unused, the Russian diesel that law was built to choke keeps moving, because that diesel keeps moving, the price holding steady is the price Washington chose to let Moscow set, and the receipt for that choice lands this winter on the fuel-oil bill with your name printed at the top.

"This is the con in two acts: sign a law tough enough for the cameras, then wave it the night before it can touch a dollar. The man it was built to squeeze hands back one prisoner and gets called a humanitarian for it, while the statute sits in the drawer doing nothing it was built to do. That's not a swap, that's a discount Putin wrote himself, and Graham's own name is on the receipt."

— Sal

"Look, the ambassador gets his guy home, that's a win, that's — that's not nothing. The sanctions, the waiver, that's just sequencing, you don't want to spook the talks right when a hostage — I mean a detainee, I mean a prisoner — is about to come home, did I say hostage, that's not the word we use. The point is diplomacy worked, and the law's still right there whenever we need it, which, I grant you, is sort of the problem, but that's not what I meant."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Ukraine's only leverage against Russia, cut by its own satellite provider, ends in a freeze offer.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 21 October 2026
- *Trump waives Russia sanctions he signed, then calls enforcing them the thing that would have stopped Hubbard's release.* By The Wrecking Crew · the afternoon edition, 21 October 2026
- *Starshield slowdown Rubio insisted wasn't deliberate was, CBS sources say, Musk's own deliberate choice.* By Lou · the morning edition, 21 October 2026
- *Rubio insists Patriots weren't "deliberately denied"; Hegseth admits "our guys" need them too.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 20 October 2026
- *Rubio says Patriots weren't 'deliberately denied'; Zelensky asks for the ones Washington still won't release.* By Lou · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *Purge spares senator bribery probe; his namesake sanctions law waived next, Tillis calls it 'beyond irresponsible'* By Mitch · the morning edition, 20 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Russia and Ukraine ready to resume trilateral talks with the US

Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *23:48 EDT*

Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov told reporters on Wednesday that Russia was 'in principle, ready to resume' the talks in mid-November, following a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US envoy Steve Witkoff in Saint Petersburg. Ukraine quickly backed the proposal.

~~Trump calls Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian oil refineries 'a disgrace'~~

Trump blames Ukraine for collapse of a ceasefire neither side ever agreed to

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:01 EDT*

US president says Zelenskyy 'more difficult to deal with than Putin' after 'energy ceasefire' collapses Europe live – latest updates Donald Trump has called Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian oil refineries "a disgrace" and criticised Volodymyr Zelenskyy after an energy ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine failed to take hold....

But: **"I'll meet with Putin. I'll meet with Zelensky... And within 24 hours, that war will be settled" - Trump, 10 May 2023; CNN counted 53 such promises** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

US citizen Stephen Hubbard freed by Russia as Trump envoy meets Putin

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *16:42 EDT*

The 74-year-old former teacher, who was captured in 2022, has been released without any "swap" required, Trump says.

But: **Trump promised Putin-Zelensky talks would settle the war within 24 hours - CNN counted 53 separate such promises** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

Putin proposing summit with Trump, Xi in push to end Ukraine war: WSJ

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:54 EDT*

Russian President Vladimir Putin is proposing a three-way meeting with President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping next month to discuss the war in Ukraine, the Wall Street Journal Reported. Putin proposed the summit during a phone call with Trump on Oct. 9, the Journal reported, citing a Russian intelligence officer briefed on the...

~~Putin orders release of jailed American as he meets Trump envoy for Ukraine talks~~

Trump's envoy praised ICC-wanted war criminal Putin as a 'humanitarian.'

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *21:16 EDT*

Russia frees Stephen Hubbard after US request while Steve Witkoff praises Putin, wanted by ICC as war criminal, as a 'humanitarian' Vladimir Putin ordered the release of an American man from a Russian jail as he met Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff in St Petersburg on Wednesday for fresh talks on ending the war in Ukraine, amid...

The Guardian view on Trump and Putin: Ukraine's future is not theirs to bargain away

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *13:25 EDT*

Russia wants America and China to decide Ukraine's future without Kyiv. Europe must challenge this dangerous return to diplomacy of the strong for the strong Does Vladimir Putin know exactly how to play Donald Trump? The history of chummy phone calls, high-profile meetings and attempts to bring Russia in from the cold certainly suggests...

But: **Trump promised he'd meet Putin and Zelensky and settle the war within 24 hours – CNN counted 53 such promises** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

Former U.S. ambassador says Putin is a war criminal, calls Witkoff's comment "fatuous"

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *19:45 EDT*

Former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine John Herbst joins "The Daily Report" to discuss Steve Witkoff's comment that Putin is a "humanitarian" following the release of an American citizen from a Russian prison.

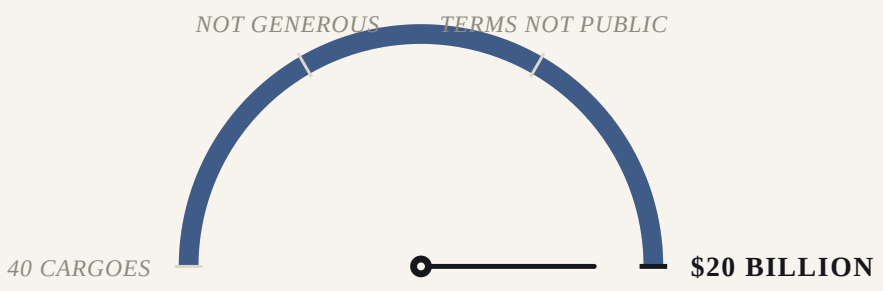
This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

§69 — 22 OCTOBER 2026

On America First

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



$20 BILLION

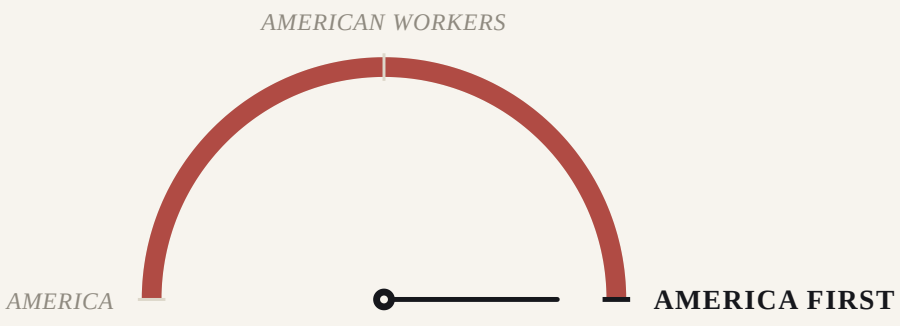
The same weeks. On September 30, 2025, the minority members of the Senate Banking Committee wrote that "Chinese buyers have reportedly purchased up to 40 cargoes of soybeans from Argentina in just one week," and that China "has purchased no U.S. soybeans since May" [1]. Nine days later the $20 billion line was announced; the Congressional Research Service noted at year's end that its terms "are not public" [2].

Then the condition. At a White House lunch with Argentina's president on October 14, ahead of the country's October 26 midterm: "If he loses, we are not going to be generous with Argentina." And: "We're not going to let somebody get into office and squander the taxpayer money from this country" [3]. Three months earlier the country's own foreign aid agency had been closed, folded into the State Department on July 1 [4]. America First, with a swap line for a foreign election.

SOURCES

1. "Chinese buyers have reportedly purchased up to 40 cargoes of soybeans from Argentina in just one week"; China "has purchased no U.S. soybeans since May" — Senate Banking Committee minority letter, 30 September 2025 ↑
2. The swap line's terms "are not public" — Congressional Research Service, R48780, 30 December 2025 ↑
3. "If he loses, we are not going to be generous with Argentina"; "We're not going to let somebody get into office and squander the taxpayer money from this country" — NBC News, 14 October 2025 ↑
4. USAID officially closed on 1 July 2025 — Donor Tracker ↑

REPUBLICAN



AMERICA FIRST

The promise, from the second inaugural: "During every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first" [1]. The hardest test of it came in October 2025, when the Treasury opened a $20 billion currency swap line for Argentina through the Exchange Stabilization Fund [2].

And the defense of that test is real. In January the Treasury secretary said Argentina had "quickly and fully repaid its limited draw," calling it "making tens of millions in profit for Americans — an America First homerun deal" [3]. A loan that comes back with a return is a loan the country does not lose. If the measure of America First is whether American money came home, this one did. What was happening in the same weeks is on the other side.

SOURCES

1. "During every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first" — second inaugural address, transcript — PBS NewsHour, 20 January 2025 ↑
2. A $20 billion swap line through the Exchange Stabilization Fund, announced 9 October 2025; its terms "are not public" — Congressional Research Service, R48780, 30 December 2025 ↑
3. Argentina "quickly and fully repaid its limited draw"; "making tens of millions in profit for Americans – is an America First homerun deal" — Fortune, 9 January 2026 ↑

"I came about something else — a letter from the Senate Banking Committee, the minority side, dated the end of September last year. It says Chinese buyers "reportedly purchased up to 40 cargoes of soybeans from Argentina in just one week," and China "has purchased no U.S. soybeans since May." Then, nine days later, a twenty-billion-dollar swap line from our Treasury to Argentina's. Then at lunch at the White House: "If he loses, we are not going to be generous." Excuse me, I'm going. The week the line was opened, whose soybeans were on the boats to China?" — Lou

🍺

"'America First." Then a twenty-billion-dollar swap line for Argentina, a few days after a Senate letter said Chinese buyers had taken up to forty cargoes of Argentine soybeans in a week and no American beans since May. At a lunch with Argentina's president he said that if that party lost the election, "we are not going to be generous." The Treasury says it got paid back with a profit, and good for the Treasury. America first. Argentina, first in line."

— Sal

🚬

"America First means America goes first, and sometimes going first means extending the credit, and the credit came back with interest, so America went first twice — which, if anything, is more first than the slogan promised."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎