The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

☼ FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2026 — THE AFTERNOON EDITION FREE, FOREVER

Trump calls record diesel prices proof of a fortune; Exxon and Chevron just made exactly that.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

In August, the average gallon of diesel in the United States had not yet reached its most expensive hour, but the average gallon of gasoline had: four dollars and eight cents, every day of the month, the first time that had happened in the nation's history, and ninety cents more than the same gallon cost a year before. The war the United States was running against Iran was the reason given for the record.

The diesel gallon caught up fast. On September 4th it reached five dollars and eighty-five cents, an all-time high, and the economist Dean Baker wrote on social media that "Trump did it," putting a byline on the record. The gallon broke that record again the next day, to five dollars and eighty-eight cents — two records in two days, both of them set before Labor Day had even arrived. Axios reported that incumbent Republicans were fretting over what the number would do to them in November; their own internal polling showed that when voters were asked whom to blame for it, they answered with the president's name.

Six weeks later, at a rally in Arizona, hours after new federal data showed

... Continued on Page F131

THE WORD

§77 — 30 OCTOBER 2026

On the Sharpie

DEMOCRAT

NO UPDATES BEYOND 2024

REPUBLICAN

STATE AND LOCAL

"It's the little loop that bothers me. The forecast map from August 29th, and then on September 4th there's this extra curve in black marker, reaching into Alabama. The forecast gave southeastern Alabama about a five percent chance of tropical-storm winds; the Birmingham office said Alabama would "NOT" see any impacts." Two days later, an unsigned statement took his side. The next year the inspector general wrote it "did not further NOAA's or NWS's interests." Excuse me — I forgot my umbrella. The loop was drawn in 2019. Who's drawing the map now?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W77

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

THE LEDGER FILES AFTER THE VOTE

In the last nineteen days of the Cornyn–Paxton runoff, the law gave a quarterly-filing super PAC one day to report an ad and until fifty days after the vote to report the money it raised in those nineteen days.

... Continued on the Investigative Reporting page

Branded a jihadist by the president, El-Sayed is defended by his party, then corrected by its own elder.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

The arithmetic on this one is simple enough to do on a napkin, which is more than can be said for most of what crosses this desk. On October 26, President Trump told a crowd in Port Huron that Michigan's Democratic Senate nominee, Abdul El-Sayed, is a "jihadist" and a "Muslim Brotherhood member," then — because the line had room — invoked September 11. The man El-Sayed is trying to become would be the first Muslim senator in the country's history.

The next day, Vice President Vance ran the ledger forward: not just a "jihadist," now a man who would lead rioters in "burning down" Detroit. No fire has been lit. The claim is the product.

Here is where the filing should have moved and didn't. El-Sayed answered for himself, telling the crowd he'd be "Senator Mohamed" to them, which is one man carrying a charge alone that an entire party apparatus exists to help carry.

Then, with six days left before the vote, the column finally moves. Representative Haley Stevens — who ran against El-Sayed in one of the bitter-

... Continued on Page F131

Justice Department offers $1 million for voter fraud tips; the pope's mail ballot isn't among them.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

I keep the running file on who gets investigated for this election and who doesn't, and this week it needed a new tab.

Start on September 10th, when the First Circuit Court of Appeals called the president's mail-in voting executive order "likely unlawful," leaving it dead before a single midterm ballot could be cast. On October 15th, Texas got sued after a computer failure stranded nearly 600,000 voter registrations days before early voting opened — the state's own system, not a foreign hand, produced that backlog. On October 26th the president posted that anybody who reports voter fraud, past or upcoming, gets $1 million, paid out on arrest and conviction, with no cases named yet to collect it on. The same Monday, a federal appeals court declined to let the Justice Department set aside 20,000 mail ballots in California that officials called noncitizen votes, and the department opened the identical inquiry in Washington state before the ruling's ink dried.

Six wire services carried it by Friday morning — Fox, CBS, Le Monde, ABC, the Washington Examiner, the New York Post — each one noting the

... Continued on Page F131

Justice Department charges Comey a third time, days after a judge ruled it illegally fired his daughter.

BY LOU
One More Question

My wife told me to leave it alone. I did not leave it alone.

I was up past midnight with this one, not because it's complicated — it isn't — but because I kept doing the arithmetic in the dark and getting the same answer. Two investigations into the same leak, both closed with nothing. A third one, open as of Monday. I'd write that down as my case notes if I could find where I put the notebook, so I'm doing this from memory, and you can check it against what's printed, because I did.

Here's what I keep running into, and maybe you can tell me where I've got it wrong. The two investigations that looked at this same leak closed without charges — no indictment, nothing. Did the people running the third one have anything in front of them that the first two didn't? Were there new documents nobody had the first two times? Because if there weren't, what's different about the file now.

I went out to the car around one in the morning, the way I do when I can't sleep — the fan belt's been making that sound again — and I ended up standing there with the glovebox open, going through it for no reason except my

... Continued on Page B48

Judge asks how suspects were found; Justice Department answers with subpoenas, a $1 million bounty, and friendly judges.

BY LOU
One More Question

I didn't sleep last night, and I want to blame the fan belt — the car's been making that whine since July, the one that means a replacement I keep saying I'll get to on a Saturday — but it wasn't the belt. It was a court date. I lay there doing arithmetic in the dark until my wife told me to leave it alone and get some sleep, which I have never once in forty years managed to do when she says it that way.

Here's the arithmetic she told me to leave alone. Three employees of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder's office were subpoenaed this week and ordered to appear in federal court on November 4th. Is November 3rd the date sixty of the country's most contested House and Senate races are scheduled to be decided? If the ballots get counted on the 3rd and the court date is the 4th, which one happens first — the count, or the explaining of the count?

I took the car in last month for a noise under the hood and asked the man a plain question: what's wrong with it. He didn't answer that. He wrote up an invoice for parts he hadn't ordered yet and told me to come back Thursday. I

... Continued on Page A225

Four federal and state probes into Alaska's two Dan Sullivans yield zero charges, zero ballots, one denial.

BY MITCH
Investigations

Clause by clause, all together now, once through the paper trail. On 31 August, the Washington Examiner reported that Alaska Democrats had found a candidate named Dan J. Sullivan — a Democrat-affiliated man running under Republican branding, sharing a name with the state's sitting Republican senator.

Then the apparatus arrived. On 23 October the Justice Department sued to block certification of Alaska's Senate result — read the condition twice — only if the Republican incumbent loses. On 27 October, Peltola's lawyers filed a motion to dismiss that very suit, Democracy Now reported. Two days later, on 29 October, the New York Times reported that Peltola's campaign had recruited the second Sullivan directly. Peltola denied it that day and has denied it every day since.

Thursday brought the paperwork. The Department of Justice sent out dozens of subpoenas, The Hill reported — more subpoenas, by any count, than ballots currently in dispute, which remains zero. Peltola stood in a bar in Juneau and said what she now says on a loop: "I knew nothing about any

... Continued on Page B48

Called out by name for trying to buy Texas, Musk raises his spending to $445 million.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Set the two weeks on the table and the numbers settle by themselves, hon, before anyone says a word about them.

On September 25th, the Supreme Court let the Department of Homeland Security run its SAVE database against state voter rolls for the final ninety days before the election, while a student ID law in New Hampshire lost its chance twelve days out. Ninety days to clean a list. Twelve to prove a name belongs on it. The filing on that gap already ran once, so it stays on the table here, not the front of the ledger.

On October 12th, the tally for Elon Musk's midterm giving came back at $276 million, "absolutely insane" was the word used at the time. The next day, October 13th, it closed at $366 million, the largest single total in the cycle, ahead of his own 2024 account to Donald Trump.

On October 24th, at a rally in Austin, Senate candidate James Talarico stood in front of his own alma mater and said the quiet part: "Texas is not for sale," naming the money behind his opponent, Ken Paxton, by its source.

On October 27th, a newspaper editorial called him "Exhibit A" for billion-

... Continued on Page F131

Trump's own county votes 6-0 against the data centers he calls the cure for 'backwards and poor.'

BY LOU
One More Question

You're smart enough to count to six, and six is the whole test this week — six is how many commissioners in Palm Beach County voted, unanimously, to block the very thing the president says is the alternative to towns turning 'backwards and poor.'

I wrote something down, hold on — I know I have it here — a column in Fox News, October 30th, a man named Chris Johnson, writing that the data center boom is rescuing forgotten towns, Ellendale, North Dakota, all the way to Loudoun County, Virginia — his sentence, not mine — 'billions in tax revenue and lower property taxes.' Both claims, one breath. I read it three times to make sure I had it right.

Then I got in the car — the one with the belt that squeals on cold mornings — and I sat there a minute with the glovebox open, because I keep clippings in there too, the ones that don't fit in my jacket, and I found this one: a Gallup poll, reported September 4th, that found Americans would rather live next to a nuclear power plant than next to a data center. Not by a little. By more than twenty points. I don't know what you do with a number like that

... Continued on Page F130

"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*

By spring the dog sleeps in the shed.
A man finds fewer hens at dusk.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

Branded a jihadist by the president, El-Sayed is defended by his party, then corrected by its own elder.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK



"As Trump escalates extreme attacks, Democrats – finally – rally round El-Sayed", 30 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Democratic leaders endorsed Abdul El-Sayed only after Trump and Vance called him a jihadist.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Voters went five days hearing no Democratic leader answer the jihadist charge against their own nominee.

WHAT'S NEXT. Michigan votes in six days. Whether the party's defense came in time will be decided then, not before.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The arithmetic on this one is simple enough to do on a napkin, which is more than can be said for most of what crosses this desk. On October 26, President Trump told a crowd in Port Huron that Michigan's Democratic Senate nominee, Abdul El-Sayed, is a "jihadist" and a "Muslim Brotherhood member," then — because the line had room — invoked September 11. The man El-Sayed is trying to become would be the first Muslim senator in the country's history.

The next day, Vice President Vance ran the ledger forward: not just a "jihadist," now a man who would lead rioters in "burning down" Detroit. No fire has been lit. The claim is the product....

...(cont) Here is where the filing should have moved and didn't. El-Sayed answered for himself, telling the crowd he'd be "Senator Mohamed" to them, which is one man carrying a charge alone that an entire party apparatus exists to help carry.

Then, with six days left before the vote, the column finally moves. Representative Haley Stevens — who ran against El-Sayed in one of the bitterest Democratic primaries of this cycle — agreed to campaign with him in the race's final stretch. The Guardian's own word for the turn was "finally." That word is doing the job a press release usually does: marking the gap between when help was needed and when help arrived.

And in that same window, Representative Nancy Pelosi, one of her party's longest-serving power brokers, did not spend her capital closing that gap. She spent it rebuking El-Sayed's refusal to affirm that Israel should exist, calling the position "wrong." Trump had just called the nominee a "jihadist" on national television. The most senior Democrat to weigh in that week was not answering that charge. She was filing a different one, against her own side's candidate, six days before Michigan votes.

The receipts don't say why the help was late or why Pelosi chose that week to break from her party's closing argument. Reconcile that against what a party is supposedly for, hon, and the gap is the story.

"They let Trump call the man a jihadist on camera for five straight days before anybody with a microphone said a word, and the one leader who did finally speak up that week used it to go after El-Sayed, not Trump. That's not a party rallying around its guy — that's a party covering its own flank while he takes the hit alone. The seat's still open in six days; the question is whether anybody shows up before the polls do."

— Sal

"Nobody's defending the "jihadist" line, that's not — I didn't write that talking point. But Pelosi raising concerns about Israel is a legitimate policy disagreement, not proof anybody abandoned him; a closing argument covers the whole slate, not just one race. Two different stories, really — did I just call them the same thing? Forget I said that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Midterms analysis on Trump, El-Sayed

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *10:08 EDT*

Major Garrett has the latest political analysis in the last days of midterm elections campaigning.

~~As Trump escalates extreme attacks, Democrats – finally – rally round El-Sayed~~

Trump calls Senate candidate a 'jihadist,' invokes 9/11 at Michigan rally

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

Endorsement not always full-throated but party backing marks major turn after bitter split over nomination Facing a barrage of extreme attacks from Donald Trump and his allies, the Democratic establishment is finally rallying around progressive Abdul El-Sayed, the party's candidate in the closely watched US Senate election in Michigan....

Pelosi slams el Sayed's refusal to say Israel should exist: 'It's wrong'

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *10:24 EDT*

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) rebuked Michigan Democratic Senate nominee Abdul el Sayed's views on Jews and Israel on Thursday, marking notable pushback in the battleground race from one of his party's top power players. Pelosi, a longtime leader of House Democrats, sent the message that some of el Sayed's positions are alarming as he hits [...]

Haley Stevens to campaign with Abdul el Sayed in final stretch of Michigan Senate race

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *08:44 EDT*

With less than a week remaining until Election Day, Rep. Haley Stevens (D-MI) committed to campaigning with her former rival, Michigan Democratic Senate candidate Abdul el Sayed. El Sayed and Stevens fought one of the most bitter Democratic primaries of the 2026 cycle, pitting the progressive wing of the party against the...

· Trump and Vance step up attacks on Abdul El-Sayed as president tours Texas in final midterms push – live *from the morgue, 27 Oct 2026*

· The Memo: El-Sayed allies argue Trump's anti-Muslim attacks will backfire *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· 'I'll Be Senator Mohamed to You, Bro': El-Sayed Hits Back at Trump's Islamophobic Attacks *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· JD Vance steps up extreme attacks on Democratic Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed *from the morgue, 27 Oct 2026*

· El-Sayed says Trump is making him 'main character of the midterms' *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.

Justice Department offers $1 million for voter fraud tips; the pope's mail ballot isn't among them.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"Pope Leo XIV makes history as first pope to vote in US general election", 30 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Pope Leo XIV mailed a ballot from Vatican City to vote in Illinois' midterm election.

WHO GETS PAID. The Justice Department, which expands its subpoena power over California's county election clerks while leaving the pope's ballot unexamined.

WHAT SLIPS. Equal enforcement slips: the department's subpoenas and $1 million bounty reach county clerks, while the one ballot from a head of state carries a scrutiny count of zero.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the California subpoenas hold, expect mail-ballot rejections to spike before any relief arrives; that is what Texas got after its 2022 ID rule: a 12.4 percent rejection rate in March that fell to 1.78 percent only by the November vote.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I keep the running file on who gets investigated for this election and who doesn't, and this week it needed a new tab.

Start on September 10th, when the First Circuit Court of Appeals called the president's mail-in voting executive order "likely unlawful," leaving it dead before a single midterm ballot could be cast. On October 15th, Texas got sued after a computer failure stranded nearly 600,000 voter registrations days before early voting opened — the state's own system, not a foreign hand, produced that backlog. On October 26th the president posted that anybody who reports voter fraud, past or upcoming, gets $1 million, paid out on arrest and conviction, with no cases named yet to collect it on. The same Monday, a federal appeals court declined to let the Justice Department set aside 20,000 mail ballots in California that officials called noncitizen votes, and the department opened the identical inquiry in Washington state before the ruling's ink dried....

...(cont) Six wire services carried it by Friday morning — Fox, CBS, Le Monde, ABC, the Washington Examiner, the New York Post — each one noting the same fact: no sitting pope had voted in a U.S. election before. None of the six mentioned a subpoena. None mentioned the $1 million reward, or an inquiry, or a request for his registration file. The ballot traveled from a city-state with no voter rolls of its own, filled out by a head of state with diplomatic immunity, and as of Friday it carries a subpoena count of zero, a lawsuit count of zero, and a reward-claim count of zero.

Twenty thousand names in California drew a federal lawsuit and, within the week, a grand jury. A single ballot from Vatican City drew six headlines and a wire photo. Hon, that's not a loophole. That's the whole ledger, open on the counter, for anyone who wants to read which address gets you scrutiny and which one gets you a souvenir story.

"They put a million-dollar bounty on voter fraud and a grand jury on county clerks, and the one mail ballot that actually crossed an international border sails through without a phone call. That's not an oversight — that's who the dragnet was built to catch, and it was never going to be a guy in a white robe in Rome. Follow the subpoenas and you'll find they stop exactly where the power does."
— Sal

"Look, the Justice Department is simply following the data on noncitizen registration — nothing political about a grand jury the day after a judge asked how they picked their suspects, that's just diligence. And sure, a ballot that physically crossed an ocean from a sovereign city-state technically clears every box they're worried about everywhere else, but he's an American citizen, so that's fine, that's totally fine. Did I just argue the Vatican's rolls are cleaner than Fresno County's? That doesn't sound like me."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Justice Department charges Comey a third time, days after a judge ruled it illegally fired his daughter.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 30 October 2026
- *Judge asks how suspects were found; Justice Department answers with subpoenas, a $1 million bounty, and friendly judges.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 30 October 2026
- *Asked how it identified suspects, Justice Department responds with criminal subpoenas instead of an answer.* By Lou · the morning edition, 30 October 2026
- *Justice Department's voter list, rejected in three courts, promoted to grand jury subpoenas five days before the election.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Group called the Department of Peace publishes names of 10,000 ICE and Border Patrol agents* By Mitch · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Justice Department calls ballot counting disenfranchisement, loses its bid to stop the count six days before the vote.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Pope Leo becomes first pontiff to vote in a U.S. election

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *10:20 EDT*

The Vatican said Pope Leo exercised his right as a U.S. citizen, submitting a mail-in ballot in his native Chicago ahead of the midterm elections next week.

Pope Leo XIV makes history as first pope to vote in US general election

New York Post RIGHT § *09:35 EDT*

Pope Leo XIV has become the first pope to vote in a U.S. general election.

~~Trump DOJ Brings 'Tired, Desperate' Attempt to Find Noncitizen Voting to Washington State~~

DOJ brings 'tired, desperate' noncitizen voter hunt to Washington, 7 days before the vote

Common Dreams § *08:10 EDT*

As a federal appeals court on Monday refused to order California officials to set aside 20,000 mail-in ballots that the Trump administration claimed were cast by noncitizens, the US Department of Justice was already pushing a similar effort in Washington state—the latest of what one advocate called "tired, desperate attempts by a...

Leo XIV cast Midterms ballot, Vatican says

Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *09:55 EDT*

The Catholic Church's first US-born pontiff submitted his mail-in ballot in Chicago. It is the first known time a pope has voted in a political election.

Pope Leo XIV requested a ballot to vote by mail in 2026 elections

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *09:37 EDT*

Pope Leo XIV may become the first-ever pope to vote in a secular election, let alone a U.S. one, as he ordered a mail-in ballot for the 2026 midterm elections. Kim Fladhammer, Will County clerk's office chief of staff, told the Chicago Sun-Times that the leader of the Roman Catholic Church requested a mail-in ballot [...]

Pope Leo XIV has become the first pope in history to vote in a US election

ABC News MAINSTREAM § *09:43 EDT*

Pope Leo XIV has become the first pope in history to vote in a U.S. general election

Pope Leo makes history in US election with move confirmed by Vatican

Fox News RIGHT § *10:45 EDT*

Pope Leo XIV requested a mail ballot from Vatican City to vote in Illinois' midterm elections, potentially the first pope to vote in a U.S. election.

· Trump issues $1m reward for reporting voter fraud in past or upcoming elections *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Trump dangles $1m reward for reporting voter fraud in past or upcoming elections *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Texas sued after glitch delays almost 600,000 voter registrations *from the morgue, 15 Oct 2026*

· Appeals Court Rejects 'Likely Unlawful' Trump Push to Undermine Mail-In Voting as Supreme Court Looms *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

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Justice Department charges Comey a third time, days after a judge ruled it illegally fired his daughter.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"James Comey lawyers seek to have third criminal case dismissed", 30 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Justice Department filed a new criminal case against former FBI director James Comey over a leak.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. The next step is Friday's hearing, where a federal judge decides whether the third case against Comey goes forward.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

My wife told me to leave it alone. I did not leave it alone.

I was up past midnight with this one, not because it's complicated — it isn't — but because I kept doing the arithmetic in the dark and getting the same answer. Two investigations into the same leak, both closed with nothing. A third one, open as of Monday. I'd write that down as my case notes if I could find where I put the notebook, so I'm doing this from memory, and you can check it against what's printed, because I did....

...(cont) Here's what I keep running into, and maybe you can tell me where I've got it wrong. The two investigations that looked at this same leak closed without charges — no indictment, nothing. Did the people running the third one have anything in front of them that the first two didn't? Were there new documents nobody had the first two times? Because if there weren't, what's different about the file now.

I went out to the car around one in the morning, the way I do when I can't sleep — the fan belt's been making that sound again — and I ended up standing there with the glovebox open, going through it for no reason except my hands needed something to do. There's an old inspection sticker in there, a parking ticket I never paid, the registration, and an owner's manual I've never once opened. Four things. I know exactly what's in there because it's small enough to know, start to finish, in under a minute. A federal leak investigation isn't a glovebox. It has more people looking into it than I have hands. And it still came up with nothing, twice, before somebody opened it a third time.

The charges against Comey — two counts about leaking information related to national defense, where the charges themselves, the Guardian wrote, provide few details about what Comey is alleged to have leaked — were filed Monday, the same day Judge Jesse Furman ruled that Comey's daughter, Maurene Comey, had been illegally fired from her job as a federal prosecutor in New York, a job she'd held for a decade, with work the Guardian calls widely praised. She worked the Epstein case. She was let go in July of last year. The filing date and the ruling date land on the same square of the calendar, and that's not me reading something into it — that's what the paper printed.

He's on camera about it from that same week. "I'm still innocent. I'm still not afraid of these people and I still believe in the independent federal judiciary." That's him, saying that about himself, which a person is entitled to do, and I'm only passing it along, not grading it.

His lawyers are due in front of a federal judge this Friday, asking that the third case be thrown out before it goes any further. Nobody had to stand in front of a judge to throw out the first two. This one needs a courtroom. What does a case need a hearing for, that the other two never needed one for?

I was about done for the night — glovebox shut, coffee cold, notebook still missing — when I remembered the other thing. Actually, hang on, one more before you go. The judge who ruled Monday that Comey's daughter was illegally fired — that was the same Monday they filed count three against her father. Same calendar. Same square. Was it?

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CLOSED ITS LEAK CASE AGAINST JAMES COMEY TWICE, charged him a third time, and did it the same day a federal judge ruled the department had illegally fired his daughter from her own prosecutor's job. That isn't a prosecution, it's a lock the department keeps picking until it finally turns, whatever happens to be behind the door. A department that can reopen a file it already closed twice without new evidence can reopen yours the same way, which means the appeal they denied you last year isn't closed, it's sitting in the drawer waiting for round three.

"Two investigations into the same leak closed with nothing, so this week the Justice Department opened a third — the same Monday a federal judge said that same department broke the law firing the prosecutor working the Epstein case. That's not bad luck for them, that's a pattern: find nothing on him twice, go to court anyway, lose in court on his kid the same day. The guy they can't make a case against twice runs the Justice Department that can't win one against his daughter either."

— Sal

"Look, two investigations closing doesn't mean nothing happened, it means the first two prosecutors just didn't have the goods yet — that's not exoneration, that's an ongoing process, which, okay, I hear how "ongoing" sounds after the third try, let me rephrase. The daughter situation is a personnel matter in one courtroom, it has nothing to do with a separate prosecution in another courtroom, they're just unrelated. Did I just say a federal ruling doesn't count because the timing is inconvenient? That doesn't sound like me."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Judge asks how suspects were found; Justice Department answers with subpoenas, a $1 million bounty, and friendly judges.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 30 October 2026
- *Asked how it identified suspects, Justice Department responds with criminal subpoenas instead of an answer.* By Lou · the morning edition, 30 October 2026
- *Justice Department's voter list, rejected in three courts, promoted to grand jury subpoenas five days before the election.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Group called the Department of Peace publishes names of 10,000 ICE and Border Patrol agents* By Mitch · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Justice Department calls ballot counting disenfranchisement, loses its bid to stop the count six days before the vote.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Minecraft billionaire lists $70 million mansion seventeen days after Newsom endorsed a measure cancelling the billionaire tax* By Sterling · the evening edition, 28 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)*
>
> James Comey lawyers seek to have third criminal case dismissed
>
> *The Guardian* MAINSTREAM § *08:26 EDT*
>
> Federal judge to hear arguments on Friday over leak case that was twice previously investigated with no action taken Lawyers for the former FBI director James Comey will ask a federal judge on Friday to block the US justice department from pursuing its third criminal case against him. Comey is an outspoken critic of Donald Trump, in open...

· Trump DOJ Charges Ex-FBI Chief James Comey a Third Time *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Maurene Comey was illegally fired as federal prosecutor, judge rules *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Justice department charges ex-FBI director James Comey for third time *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· DOJ trying to charge Trump-foe James Comey for third time, records show *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

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Judge asks how suspects were found; Justice Department answers with subpoenas, a $1 million bounty, and friendly judges.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"Election-Denying Trump Judges Preside Over Nearly Every Battleground Midterm Race: Analysis", 27 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Justice Department subpoenaed three Los Angeles County election workers to federal court on November 4, the day after the midterms.

WHO GETS PAID. The Justice Department's election-fraud effort gains subpoena power over the local officials who count the votes.

WHAT SLIPS. A federal judge's question about how suspects were identified gets answered with a subpoena, and the county workers who count ballots lose the chance to answer to the public first.

WHAT'S NEXT. If this pattern holds, a court steps in: that is what happened in Washington after March 2025, when the citizenship-proof provisions of the president's election order were permanently blocked fifteen months later, in June 2026.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I didn't sleep last night, and I want to blame the fan belt — the car's been making that whine since July, the one that means a replacement I keep saying I'll get to on a Saturday — but it wasn't the belt. It was a court date. I lay there doing arithmetic in the dark until my wife told me to leave it alone and get some sleep, which I have never once in forty years managed to do when she says it that way.

Here's the arithmetic she told me to leave alone. Three employees of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder's office were subpoenaed this week and ordered to appear in federal court on November 4th. Is November 3rd the date sixty of the country's most contested House and Senate races are scheduled to be decided? If the ballots get counted on the 3rd and the court date is the 4th, which one happens first — the count, or the explaining of the count?...

...(cont) I took the car in last month for a noise under the hood and asked the man a plain question: what's wrong with it. He didn't answer that. He wrote up an invoice for parts he hadn't ordered yet and told me to come back Thursday. I paid him anyway, because apparently that's how it goes now — you ask a question, a bill comes back instead — and I didn't think much of it until this week, when I noticed it isn't only my garage.

Go back to October 17th. The Justice Department sent a letter to California election officials warning that anyone who "knowingly tabulates" ballots cast by noncitizens risks prosecution. Did the letter explain how the department had identified which ballots those were? Or did it only say what happens to the people counting them?

Two days earlier than that, on October 15th, in Texas, a computer failure had left almost six hundred thousand voter registration applications stuck in the system, just as early voting was set to open. Is a stuck application the same thing as a fraudulent one? Did the state call the glitch itself a crime, or just a glitch?

On October 26th, the president posted that a million dollars would go to anyone reporting voter fraud, past elections or the midterms — payable, the post specifies, upon the arrest and conviction of whoever's responsible. Has an arrest been announced yet, anywhere, against anyone? Has a conviction?

The next day, October 27th, a nationwide review of judicial assignments found that fifty-three of those sixty marquee races sit in districts or states with at least one Trump-appointed, election-denying judge seated to hear whatever challenge comes. Fifty-three of sixty — is that most of the map, or some of it?

So: a warning letter on the 17th. A bounty with no name attached to it on the 26th. A judge roster on the 27th. That's the sequence I had laid out last night, if you want to call a glovebox full of gas receipts a dashboard.

Oh — one more thing, and I nearly left without it, same as I nearly left that garage without reading my own invoice closely enough to catch the line items I hadn't agreed to. A nationwide reporting project published today found this isn't only a California story. It found the same shape — officials questioned, then subpoenaed, then left to explain themselves in a courtroom instead of to the public — running through election offices in more than one battleground state at once. The question a federal judge in California asked this month was how the department identified its suspects in the first place. Before you go: in any of those states, has anybody answered that yet?

🍺

"They asked the Justice Department a simple question — how'd you find these people — and got a subpoena back instead of an answer, the day after the votes get counted, with a bounty on the books for fraud nobody's named and judges already seated for whatever fight comes next. That's not an investigation, that's a chokehold with a filing fee, and it's running the same way in more than one battleground state right now. The workers who count your ballot are the ones getting the court date."

— Sal

🚬

"Look, the Department is simply following up on a letter it sent — that's not harassment, that's due diligence, and if these election workers have nothing to hide they have nothing to — did I just say that, that's not even — okay, the reward is for real fraud, we take fraud seriously, we just haven't paid anybody yet, which honestly proves the system is working exactly as — it's working. It's working."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Asked how it identified suspects, Justice Department responds with criminal subpoenas instead of an answer.* By Lou · the morning edition, 30 October 2026
- *Justice Department's voter list, rejected in three courts, promoted to grand jury subpoenas five days before the election.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Group called the Department of Peace publishes names of 10,000 ICE and Border Patrol agents* By Mitch · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Justice Department calls ballot counting disenfranchisement, loses its bid to stop the count six days before the vote.* By Lou · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Minecraft billionaire lists $70 million mansion seventeen days after Newsom endorsed a measure cancelling the billionaire tax* By Sterling · the evening edition, 28 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Election-Denying Trump Judges Preside Over Nearly Every Battleground Midterm Race: Analysis

Common Dreams § *10:52 EDT*

If the Trump administration decides to challenge the outcome of any of the dozens of battleground contests in next week's midterms, there's a significant chance that one of the president's handpicked, election-denying judges will oversee the case. That's according to a report published Tuesday by the advocacy group Demand Justice, which...

> *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)*
>
> DOJ subpoenas California officials in voter rolls investigation escalation
>
> *The Hill* MAINSTREAM § *10:23 EDT*
>
> The Department of Justice (DOJ) has issued subpoenas to California officials in its latest move in scrutinizing voters in the state who aren't U.S. citizens. Three subpoenas were sent to employees of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder, ordering them to appear in court on Nov.

Trump Has Tried to Exert More Control Over Elections. Here Are the Key Findings From Our Reporting.

ProPublica § *11:10 EDT*

The post Trump Has Tried to Exert More Control Over Elections. Here Are the Key Findings From Our Reporting. appeared first on ProPublica .

· Trump administration threatens California officials if noncitizens vote in midterms *from the morgue, 17 Oct 2026*

· Trump issues $1m reward for reporting voter fraud in past or upcoming elections *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Texas sued after glitch delays almost 600,000 voter registrations *from the morgue, 15 Oct 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.

FOUR AGENCIES, ZERO CHARGES

Four federal and state probes into Alaska's two Dan Sullivans yield zero charges, zero ballots, one denial.

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS

"Alaska Democrat says she 'knew nothing' about effort to put two Dan Sullivans on ballot", 30 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Justice Department sued to block Alaska's Senate certification only if Republican Dan Sullivan loses.

WHO GETS PAID. Senator Dan Sullivan's reelection, shielded by a Justice Department suit that only activates if he loses.

WHAT SLIPS. Certification of the vote, usually automatic, now depends on which candidate wins rather than on the count itself.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the certification suit moves toward a ruling, courts have acted fast on election orders before; that is what happened after 25 March 2025, when the administration's broader election order was partly enjoined within thirty days.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Clause by clause, all together now, once through the paper trail. On 31 August, the Washington Examiner reported that Alaska Democrats had found a candidate named Dan J. Sullivan — a Democrat-affiliated man running under Republican branding, sharing a name with the state's sitting Republican senator.

Then the apparatus arrived. On 23 October the Justice Department sued to block certification of Alaska's Senate result — read the condition twice — only if the Republican incumbent loses. On 27 October, Peltola's lawyers filed a motion to dismiss that very suit, Democracy Now reported. Two days later, on 29 October, the New York Times reported that Peltola's campaign had recruited the second Sullivan directly. Peltola denied it that day and has denied it every day since....

...(cont) Thursday brought the paperwork. The Department of Justice sent out dozens of subpoenas, The Hill reported — more subpoenas, by any count, than ballots currently in dispute, which remains zero. Peltola stood in a bar in Juneau and said what she now says on a loop: "I knew nothing about any other candidate on the ballot except for me and the incumbent." Sullivan told Fox News she is "still lying." CBS sent a reporter to the second Dan Sullivan's street; his neighbors could not agree whether he is "a nice guy" or "a hoaxer" — which is more consensus than four agencies have reached on whether he is a criminal. And the Guardian's First Thing newsletter, filing the story for its own readers Thursday morning, included the one sentence that outruns all the subpoenas combined: ballot stacking, it noted plainly, "is not illegal."

Four government bodies. Dozens of subpoenas. Zero ballots altered, zero charges filed. Follow the document to where it actually stops: a lawsuit that only activates if the Republican loses, aimed at a scheme a wire service already calls lawful, answered on schedule by a woman who says she knew nothing — and four agencies deep, nobody has yet filed a single page that says otherwise.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SUED TO BLOCK CERTIFYING ALASKA'S SENATE RESULTS ONLY if the Republican senator loses, then sent out dozens of subpoenas on a scheme a news service already called legal. That is not an investigation, it is an insurance rider written into federal law, payable only if the preferred candidate comes up short. Because that same department decides what counts as confusion worth subpoenas, the next county it finds confusing could be yours, and the thing pulled for review off your kitchen counter will be the signature on your own absentee envelope.

🍺

"They tell you there's no money for your kid's school lunch program, but there's plenty for four separate inquiries into a guy who hasn't hurt anybody. The Justice Department wrote its own lawsuit so it only wakes up if the Republican loses — that's not law enforcement, that's a backstop for one guy's seat. The thing they're chasing isn't even a crime, a wire service said so in writing, and there's nobody left to charge."

— Sal

🚬

"Look, when you've got two guys named Dan Sullivan on one ballot, that's a legitimate voter confusion issue, full stop, any Secretary of State would tell you that. And sure, the lawsuit only kicks in if our guy loses, but that's — okay, I hear how that sounds, that's not a double standard, that's prudent contingency planning. The subpoenas aren't persecution, they're due diligence, and if due diligence happens to produce zero charges after two months, well — did I just say zero? Let me check my notes."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Alaska's four-agency probe into a same-name candidate has produced zero charges, one on-air clarification: not illegal.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 30 October 2026
- *Bolsonaro loses Brazil's election, flees to US with Trump's help, declares himself its leader.* By The Lodgers · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Sullivan tells Alaskans to mark Decoy Dan, the candidate at the center of Thursday's grand jury subpoenas.* By Sterling · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Governor opens criminal probe into the one Alaska candidate whose win a federal suit seeks to void* By Sterling · the morning edition, 29 October 2026
- *Peltola's campaign was 'definitely aware' of its decoy scheme; DOJ needs an anonymous analyst to prove it worked.* By Lou · the evening edition, 28 October 2026
- *Justice Department prepares to nullify Alaska's Senate race only if Republicans lose; Democrats spent months engineering that outcome.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 28 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Alaska Democrat says she 'knew nothing' about effort to put two Dan Sullivans on ballot

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *11:00 EDT*

Senate candidate Mary Peltola speaks out as US justice department escalates criminal investigation Alaska Senate race: what to know about Democrats' alleged ballot-stacking effort Mary Peltola has denied that she knew anything about an effort to put another candidate on the Alaska ballot with the same name as the Republican incumbent, as...

Peltola denies knowing about Alaska spoiler candidate Dan J. Sullivan

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:03 EDT*

Alaska Senate candidate Mary Peltola (D) on Thursday again denied knowing anything about her campaign's alleged recruitment of Dan J. Sullivan to challenge her GOP opponent, incumbent Sen. Dan Sullivan (R), in an effort to dilute the incumbent's vote share.

DOJ issues subpoenas in Alaska Senate race: Reports

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:23 EDT*

The Department of Justice (DOJ) issued dozens of subpoenas in connection with the ballot-stacking allegations against Alaska's Democratic Senate candidate Mary Peltola. On Wednesday, The New York Times reported that Peltola's campaign was directly involved in recruiting someone with the same name as her opponent, Sen. Dan Sullivan (R).

~~First Thing: Alaska Senate race descends into legal acrimony over second Dan Sullivan~~

Justice Department sues to block Alaska's election results before voters even decide

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *07:54 EDT*

DoJ reportedly issues subpoenas after reports Democrat campaign sought candidate with same name as Republican incumbent. Plus, tributes pour in for Patrick Stewart Don't already get First Thing in your inbox? Sign up here Good morning.

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)*

Justice Department seeks new subpoenas in Alaska Senate race probe on Dan Sullivan confusion

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *08:51 EDT*

The Justice Department continues to pursue legal avenues related to the Alaska Senate race, alleging potential confusion on the ballot. CBS News' Olivia Rinaldi reports.

Trump Is Already Undermining Confidence in Midterm Election Results from Alaska to California: ACLU

Democracy Now! § *08:17 EDT*

A competitive Senate race has gripped the once reliably Republican state of Alaska. If Democratic challenger Mary Peltola wins the election against incumbent Republican Senator Dan Sullivan, it could tip the balance of power in Washington. Attorneys for Peltola and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee have submitted a motion to...

Neighbors of Alaska's second Dan Sullivan can't agree on if he's "a nice guy" or "a hoaxer"

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *11:07 EDT*

The New York Times alleges that the campaign of Alaska Democratic Senate nominee Mary Peltola recruited a man with the same name as her opponent Sen. Dan Sullivan to run for the seat. Peltola denies the report.

Peltola insists 'I knew nothing' about alleged 'Decoy Dan' scheme as Sullivan alleges she is 'still lying'

Fox News RIGHT § *08:27 EDT*

Mary Peltola claims she "knew nothing" about the alleged scheme to recruit candidates named Dan Sullivan, but the incumbent says she is "still lying."

· DoJ sues to block certification of Alaska Senate results if Republican incumbent loses *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Alaska Democrats couldn't beat Dan Sullivan, so they ran their own *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· 'Decoy Dan' Sullivan illegally colluded with liberal group attacking Alaska GOP Sen. Sullivan, watchdog alleges *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Peltola, Sullivan spar in fiery final Alaska Senate debate: 'Let's have some decorum' *from the morgue, 16 Oct 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.

Called out by name for trying to buy Texas, Musk raises his spending to $445 million.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"AIPAC Is Spending Millions — Just Not Under Its Own Name", 24 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA THE LEVER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Elon Musk increased his midterm political spending again, with most of the new money aimed at Texas's Senate race.

WHO GETS PAID. Ken Paxton's Senate campaign in Texas gets the single biggest piece of that new money.

WHAT SLIPS. No law caps how much one person can spend on a Senate race, so that check never engages.

WHAT'S NEXT. Election Day is four days away, on November 3, and nothing currently limits how much more Musk can add before the polls close.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Set the two weeks on the table and the numbers settle by themselves, hon, before anyone says a word about them.

On September 25th, the Supreme Court let the Department of Homeland Security run its SAVE database against state voter rolls for the final ninety days before the election, while a student ID law in New Hampshire lost its chance twelve days out. Ninety days to clean a list. Twelve to prove a name belongs on it. The filing on that gap already ran once, so it stays on the table here, not the front of the ledger....

...(cont) On October 12th, the tally for Elon Musk's midterm giving came back at $276 million, "absolutely insane" was the word used at the time. The next day, October 13th, it closed at $366 million, the largest single total in the cycle, ahead of his own 2024 account to Donald Trump.

On October 24th, at a rally in Austin, Senate candidate James Talarico stood in front of his own alma mater and said the quiet part: "Texas is not for sale," naming the money behind his opponent, Ken Paxton, by its source.

On October 27th, a newspaper editorial called him "Exhibit A" for billionaire wealth generally, nothing new in the argument, but it ran the week before the figure moved again.

It moved again. As of today, the filing reads $445 million, $189 million of it marked for the Texas race alone. That is seventy-nine million dollars added in seventeen days — nearly four million seven hundred thousand dollars a day, close to a hundred and ninety-three thousand dollars an hour, around the clock, for just over two weeks, while a candidate in that same race was telling a packed auditorium the state wasn't for sale.

A separate story ran the same morning asking how Musk's influence compares with past American moguls. Historians quoted in it said he is not unique. The ledger does not carry a comparison column. It carries a number, and the number is $445 million, and $189 million of it sits under one name on one ballot in one state.

Four days remain before the polls that list decides. Nothing on file caps what gets added to it between now and then.

"Ninety days to scrub the rolls, twelve to check a kid's ID — that's the court doing math that only runs one way. Same two weeks, Musk tacks on $79 million, $189 million of it aimed at one Texas seat, while the guy running against it stands in a packed room and calls it what it is. Four days left to decide if that math wins."

— Sal

"It's basic First Amendment math: a private citizen gets to spend his own money on candidates he supports, full stop, and nobody put a dollar limit on that for a reason. Sure, $189 million lands on one Senate race the same stretch the court's calendar gave a voter-ID law twelve days to live, but that's an unrelated coincidence of timing, not a — well, it's not like anyone planned the two of them together. Did I just connect those? Forget I said that."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *President cancels two rallies, upgrades to a 19-state phone sprint, warns voters Democratic wins mean less federal help.* By Mort · the morning edition, 30 October 2026
- *Trump's third rally in a state he carried by 18 points opened on culture war, not the economy.* By Mort · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Trump carried South Carolina by 18 points; Fox News rated the seat a toss-up with a week left.* By Mort · the morning edition, 29 October 2026
- *America Next paid an adviser's firm $250,000 for canvassing and influencer marketing; his son heckled El-Sayed* By Ruth · the morning edition, 29 October 2026
- *Jewish Democrat defects to the campaign calling El-Sayed a jihadist, says it protects Jewish Michiganders.* By Ruth · the evening edition, 29 October 2026
- *Health Secretary RFK Jr.'s false Arab-prize claim and Rogers' Muslim Brotherhood smear hit the same Michigan stage.* By Sal · the afternoon edition, 28 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~AIPAC Is Spending Millions — Just Not Under Its Own Name~~

AIPAC is hiding its millions inside women's and Latino advocacy groups

The Lever § *14:01 EDT*

A Lever investigation traces how the Israel lobby is routing millions through groups promoting women, reproductive rights, and Latino candidates — and how AI interests and other power brokers are adopting the strategy.

~~ARTHUR HERMAN: Musk and others prove that this election cash is King. Will it be enough?~~

Musk put $445 million into the GOP this cycle - $189 million on one Texas race

Fox News RIGHT § *05:00 EDT*

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has given over $445 million to Republican causes this cycle, including an estimated $189 million for Ken Paxton in Texas.

How powerful is Elon Musk? How his political influence compares to past U.S. moguls

NPR MAINSTREAM § *05:00 EDT*

Critics say the tech entrepreneur's enormous wealth has given him too much political power. But when stacked up against other notable American moguls, historians say he's not unique.

· Elon Musk becomes biggest donor of US midterms cycle with $366m spent *from the morgue, 13 Oct 2026*

· Democrat James Talarico targets Elon Musk at rally: 'Texas is not for sale' *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Defund Elon Musk *from the morgue, 27 Oct 2026*

· Elon Musk's 'Absolutely Insane' $276 Million Midterm Spending Exposed in New Report *from the morgue, 12 Oct 2026*

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

· Ketanji Brown Jackson issues public dissent in New Hampshire voting case *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· 'Major Win' for Democracy as Supreme Court Rejects Trump Attack on Mail-In Voting *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Supreme Court slams brakes on Trump's mail-in voting plan *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Supreme Court blocks use of student IDs as voter identification in New Hampshire *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Supreme Court rules New Hampshire can ban use of student IDs for voters *from the morgue, 22 Oct 2026*

· Supreme Court allows New Hampshire to bar student IDs for voting *from the morgue, 22 Oct 2026*

· SCOTUS Says New Hampshire Can Close Student ID 'Loophole' In Elections *from the morgue, 22 Oct 2026*

· US Citizens 'Could Lose Their Right to Vote' After Supreme Court Gives Green Light to Trump's Voter Purge Database *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· New Hampshire urges Supreme Court to reinstate student ID voting ban ahead of election *from the morgue, 20 Oct 2026*

· Supreme Court allows Trump admin to use federal voter eligibility database during appeal *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· After airport strike, Trump considering whether to join fight against Houthis *from the morgue, 11 Oct 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*

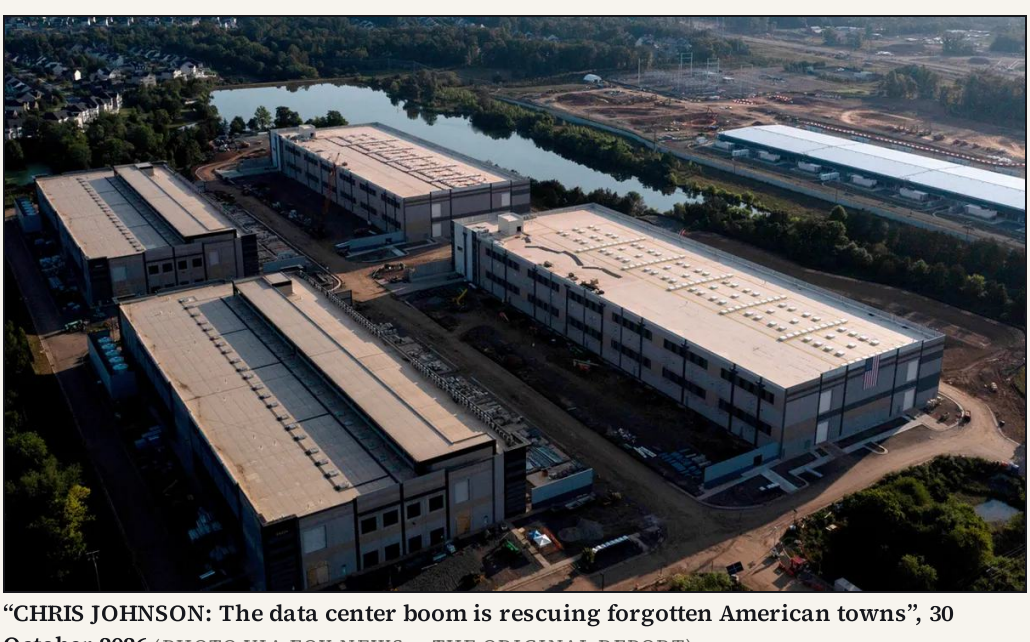
· AI safety groups aren't buying OpenAI's spending retreat *from the morgue, 6 Oct 2026*

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.

Trump's own county votes 6-0 against the data centers he calls the cure for 'backwards and poor.'

By LOU

ONE MORE QUESTION



"CHRIS JOHNSON: The data center boom is rescuing forgotten American towns", 30 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA FOX NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Palm Beach County, home to Mar-a-Lago, passed a moratorium blocking large data centers from the area.

WHO GETS PAID. Data-center developers and the tech industry are the ones counting on towns to accept the projects op-eds call a rescue.

WHAT SLIPS. Nothing slips here yet.

WHAT'S NEXT. If more counties pass bans like Palm Beach's, state preemption could follow; that is what Texas got after Denton's 2014 fracking ban, overturned by a state law barring cities from regulating oil and gas within 195 days.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

You're smart enough to count to six, and six is the whole test this week — six is how many commissioners in Palm Beach County voted, unanimously, to block the very thing the president says is the alternative to towns turning 'backwards and poor.'

I wrote something down, hold on — I know I have it here — a column in Fox News, October 30th, a man named Chris Johnson, writing that the data center boom is rescuing forgotten towns, Ellendale, North Dakota, all the way to Loudoun County, Virginia — his sentence, not mine — 'billions in tax revenue and lower property taxes.' Both claims, one breath. I read it three times to make sure I had it right....

...(cont) Then I got in the car — the one with the belt that squeals on cold mornings — and I sat there a minute with the glovebox open, because I keep clippings in there too, the ones that don't fit in my jacket, and I found this one: a Gallup poll, reported September 4th, that found Americans would rather live next to a nuclear power plant than next to a data center. Not by a little. By more than twenty points. I don't know what you do with a number like that except write it down twice, which I did.

So here's a question for you, and I think you can answer it from what's already on the page: if the boom is rescuing towns, why would a Gallup poll find people would rather take the reactor?

I kept going. That's their sentence. The thing that thinks against the building that houses it, and the building is losing.

Then there's the other column, the New York Post, October 29th, 'build, baby, build,' it says, measuring us against the United Kingdom, like the UK is the warning and we still have time. I don't know the UK well enough to argue with that part. I just know what's in my own glovebox.

And the president — I had this on a torn corner, August 31st, a social media post — warned towns that refuse will end up worse off. He used two specific words for it. I'm not going to use them yet. I wrote them down separate, on their own line, for later.

Here's where I get stuck, and maybe you won't — Palm Beach County is the president's own county. Mar-a-Lago sits in it. Six commissioners, zero dissents, a one-year moratorium on anything over fifty megawatts, passed September 25th. Not a poll this time. A vote. On the record. By his own neighbors.

Oh — before you go — one more thing, because I almost forgot I had it, right here, under the Fox piece, in my own handwriting even: if the towns that take the deal are the ones getting rescued, what do you call the county that voted no and happens to be his?

I don't have a word for it. I only have the two he gave me: backwards and poor.

"They tell you data centers are gonna save your town, then the guy with the biggest driveway in Florida votes six-nothing to keep one out of his own backyard. Call it what it is — a sales pitch for a house the salesman never buys himself."

— Sal

"Look, Palm Beach isn't rejecting data centers, it's just pausing for "appropriate siting review" — totally different thing, very standard, very technical. And it's only a one-year moratorium, not a ban, so — okay, a year is basically a ban, forget I said that."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Data centers, AI, and the 2026 elections. Ft. Paris Marx.

Blood in the Machine § *05:02 EDT*

Plus, three things we should be watching as Americans head to the polls on Tuesday.

CHRIS JOHNSON: The data center boom is rescuing forgotten American towns

Fox News RIGHT § *05:00 EDT*

From Ellendale, North Dakota, to Loudoun County, Virginia, data centers are transforming communities with billions in tax revenue and lower property taxes.

Shunning AI data centers will cost the US far more than embracing them. Just look at the UK.

New York Post RIGHT § *19:26 EDT*

When it comes to AI data centers, I believe that the right policy, give or take a few caveats, is simple: build, baby, build.

· 'Maybe Trump's Neighbors Know Something He Doesn't': Palm Beach County, Home to Mar-a-Lago, Passes Data Center Moratorium *from the morgue, 25 Sep 2026*

· Panic! At the Data Center: Americans would rather live next to a nuke than an AI facility *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Out-of-Touch Trump Says Communities That Reject AI Data Centers Will Be 'Backwards and Poor' *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Data center developers should have known how much Americans love their land *from the morgue, 28 Sep 2026*

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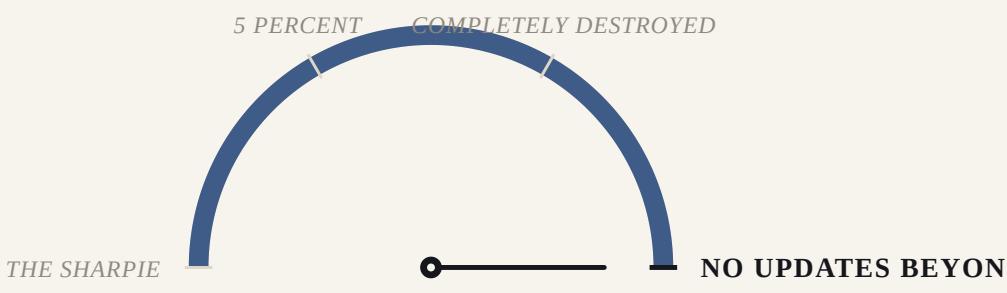
§77 — 30 OCTOBER 2026

On the Sharpie

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



NO UPDATES BEYOND 2024

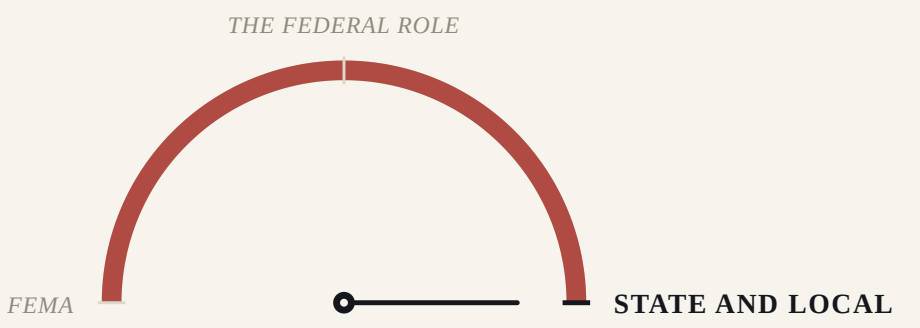
The map. The forecast gave southeastern Alabama about a 5 percent chance of tropical-storm-force winds, and the Birmingham weather office had posted that "Alabama will NOT see any impacts"; two days after the marker, an unsigned NOAA statement said Birmingham "spoke in absolute terms" [1]. The Commerce Department's inspector general found in 2020 that "the Department required NOAA to issue a Statement that did not further NOAA's or NWS's interests" [2].

The count. On May 8, 2025, NOAA announced that its Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters product "will be retired, with no updates beyond calendar year 2024" [3]. After losing staff, the National Weather Service was allowed to hire 450 meteorologists, hydrologists and radar technicians that August [4]. And the council's recommendation for the agency that pays out after a storm: aid only for homes "completely destroyed" [5]. In 2019 the storm was drawn somewhere else. In 2025 the tally of storms was stopped.

SOURCES

1. About a 5 percent chance of tropical-storm-force winds in southeastern Alabama; Birmingham: "Alabama will NOT see any impacts"; NOAA: Birmingham "spoke in absolute terms" — WSFA, 6 September 2019 ↑
2. "The Department required NOAA to issue a Statement that did not further NOAA's or NWS's interests" — Commerce Department inspector general, OIG-20-032-I — Nextgov, July 2020 ↑
3. The Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters product "will be retired, with no updates beyond calendar year 2024" — NOAA NESDIS, 8 May 2025 ↑
4. The National Weather Service allowed to hire 450 meteorologists, hydrologists and radar technicians — House press release from Reps. Flood and Sorensen, 7 August 2025 ↑
5. Aid only for homes "completely destroyed" — Government Executive, 7 May 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



STATE AND LOCAL

The administration's case on disasters is not the Sharpie; it is a theory of who should respond. Executive Order 14239, March 2025: "State and local governments and individuals play a more active and significant role in national resilience and preparedness" [1]. The argument is that the people closest to a flood or a fire know it best, and that a federal agency in Washington is a slower first responder than a county.

That is a real position, and it is being put into practice: the FEMA Review Council's recommendations this spring called for block grants to states and a strategic review of the agency's staff [2]. On the day of the marker, in September 2019, the president asked about the loop said, "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know" [3]. What happened to the forecasters since is on the other side.

SOURCES

1. "State and local governments and individuals play a more active and significant role in national resilience and preparedness" — Executive Order 14239, 18 March 2025 — The White House ↑
2. The FEMA Review Council recommended block grants, a two-to-three-year staff strategic review, and aid only for homes "completely destroyed" — Government Executive, 7 May 2026 ↑
3. The Dorian forecast map extended into Alabama in black marker; asked about it: "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know" — CBS News, 4 September 2019 ↑

"It's the little loop that bothers me. The forecast map from August 29th, and then on September 4th there's this extra curve in black marker, reaching into Alabama. The forecast gave southeastern Alabama about a five percent chance of tropical-storm winds; the Birmingham office said Alabama would "NOT see any impacts." Two days later, an unsigned statement took his side. The next year the inspector general wrote it "did not further NOAA's or NWS's interests." Excuse me — I forgot my umbrella. The loop was drawn in 2019. Who's drawing the map now?" — Lou

🍺

"The Sharpie. September 2019, the official forecast map in the Oval Office, and there's a black loop drawn into Alabama. "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know." Then the weather agency was made to back him, and the Commerce Department's inspector general said the statement didn't serve the agency. Last year they found a better pen. They retired the count of billion-dollar disasters — "no updates beyond calendar year 2024." You don't have to redraw the storm if you stop keeping the map."

— Sal

🚬

"The president was simply being cautious about Alabama, and caution is what you want from a leader during hurricane season, and retiring the disaster count is caution too, since you can't be alarmed by a number no one publishes."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎