The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

THURSDAY, 05 NOVEMBER 2026 — THE AFTERNOON EDITION — FREE, FOREVER

El-Sayed clashed with Trump through the campaign; the day after winning, he agrees with Trump on Israel aid.

BY LOU
One More Question

My neighbor and I have been fighting over four inches of fence line since the end of September, and the only reason I bring it up is something I read Thursday that reminded me of it exactly, so bear with me a second.

The county's got two surveys on file for the same stretch of fence. I drove out to look at the stakes myself — the car doesn't love cold mornings, needs a fan belt one of these days, but it got me there before the frost melted the marks. One survey, filed in August, puts the property line four inches onto his side. The other, filed eleven days later, puts it four inches onto mine — same surveyor, same stakes in the ground, both stamped final. I called the county clerk's office about it, and the woman on the phone wasn't rude, she just said, well, which page are you reading from.

That's the question I kept turning over this week with the new senator-elect from Michigan.

I wrote this down because I didn't trust myself to remember it right — hold on, here it is. The Hill, Thursday morning, Abdul El-Sayed on MS NOW's "Morning Joe": "I agree with him on that," meaning President Trump's plan to

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THE WORD

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On the spanking

DEMOCRAT



SPANKED

REPUBLICAN



SPANKED

"I went looking for who started this and I've got a sack. A campaign statement from October 2023, a governor getting thoroughly spanked." Another one that November. A speech in Georgia, 2024, the whole country this time. And sworn testimony from a courtroom in Manhattan, which he denies, so I at that one to the side, and then I picked it back up. Sorry, one thing before you go. Tuesday night he wrote that he wasn't on the ballot. Then it was Fox News. Then he said the Iran explanation was largely true. That's three reasons. If he wasn't on the ballot, why does he need the other two?" — Lou

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INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

WHO PICKS THE JUDGE

The 2022 map put all 382 of Kansas City's Jackson County precincts in one U.S. House district; the 2025 map spreads them across three and cuts 20 of them apart block by block.

… Continued on the Investigative Reporting page

Examiner thanks Stevens for the betrayal her own party is still condemning.

BY LOU
One More Question

I want to tell you about the toll plaza on 94 first, because I sat in the cash line behind a fellow long enough Tuesday to work something out, and it turns out to be the whole story. Two lanes, side by side, same bridge. The car in the transponder lane crossed for two-fifty. The car in the cash lane — same bridge, same minute, close as I could tell — paid four dollars. Nobody's lying about either number. Both of them are right. It's just a question of which lane you were standing in when the gate counted you.

I bring that up because I've got a page here on Representative Haley Stevens of Michigan, and I keep coming back to the two lanes. On Sunday, November 1st, she endorsed Mike Rogers, the Republican running for the Senate seat her own party had already decided to give to Abdul El-Sayed. The Hill had that one the same day: "Haley Stevens endorses GOP's Mike Rogers in Michigan as Democrats fume." Same Sunday, the Republican National Committee put out a line — I wrote it down — "Michigan should take notice." Same Sunday, her chief of staff resigned. The Examiner carried that.

And late that same Sunday night — not a week later, the same night — she

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Trump demands decoy's 3,600 votes be reassigned, not recounted, to the real Dan Sullivan

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

The recount died this week in Alaska, of a cause that turns out to be the president.

Born every time a margin fell close enough to need checking, the recount's whole job was arithmetic: take the ballots, count them again, let the number decide. It has now been ended by a request.

The replacement began on paper. On 23 October, before a single Alaska vote had been counted, the Justice Department filed a lawsuit at the president's direction to block the state's certification under one condition only: Senator Dan Sullivan, the Republican, losing narrowly to Democrat Mary Peltola. A judge dismissed that suit on 1 November; the administration said it would appeal. The clause survived dismissal anyway, sitting in the record the way a will sits in a drawer, waiting on a death that had not been confirmed.

The death arrived with help. For months Republicans had accused the Peltola campaign of recruiting a second candidate named Dan Sullivan to split the Republican vote, and officials called it ballot-stacking and demanded

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Trump warns data-center opponents they'll end up 'backwards and poor,' Nasdaq ends up backwards and poor instead.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On September 1, the president posted that data-center opponents "want to end up being backwards and poor," and promised lower taxes and jobs all over the place for anyone who let Data Reign in. The next day his own commerce secretary, asked on CNBC about the same backlash, laughed off the public's concern over data centers' extreme electricity and water use as "propaganda." No number of his own went into the record — just the laugh.

On October 5, the Tech Oversight Project circulated a memo telling Democratic candidates to close the campaign's final stretch by running against high data center costs. Seventeen days later, on October 22, the Nasdaq composite had already tumbled 2.6 percent and the S&P 500 had its worst day since July — before a single ballot was cast, the index was pricing something in on its own.

Tuesday, voters in at least 38 jurisdictions passed bans or restrictions on data centers. One measure failed: a moratorium in Hardwood, North Dakota. Wednesday, an NBC exit poll put the number at over half of voters — the wire sentence itself cuts off before it says over half of what, which is as precise a

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Musk's $450 million bet on Republicans pays out a $400 million loss and dozens of lost races.

BY THE LODGERS
The Euro Desk

Today we are making the costliest loss in American politics, which is not a dish you reorder in the same week, so I shall go slowly. You will need the twenty biggest political donors in the country, one of them putting in nearly four hundred and fifty million dollars alone, a slate of Republican candidates he backed, and a Tuesday to lose it on.

Begin on the thirty-first of October, when the Guardian priced him at four hundred and forty-six million dollars — half a dozen SpaceX rocket launches, or, at the Tesla Diner in Los Angeles, thirty-one point nine million cheeseburgers.

Gave *Cheeseburgers. I have been measured against a sandwich before, by this house, and I did not come out ahead either.*

By the second of November the figure had company. The top twenty donors in the country had put in two billion dollars between them, and Musk, at nearly four hundred and fifty million of it, was the single largest funder of the midterms, by a wide margin over anyone else.

Ron *Largest funder by a wide margin. We've had a landlord like that. Wide*

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Hong Kong upgrades activist's prison sentence for the third time since 2017, now ten years.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Hong Kong's democracy movement received its third sentence since 2017 on Wednesday, the longest yet: ten years for Joshua Wong, its most recognizable face, convicted of conspiracy to collude with foreign forces to endanger national security. He pleaded guilty this year to a charge filed last year. NPR calls it his second conviction under the Beijing-imposed national security law, which means Wednesday was not even the beginning of the arithmetic.

It was born in August 2017, before that law existed. A Hong Kong court gave Wong, Alex Chow, and Nathan Law between six and eight months apiece for their role in the Umbrella Movement, and barred all three from holding office until 2022. Some ordinary law already on the books did that work; the national security statute Beijing would write was still three years off.

It was preceded in death by a promise. In 2020, Hong Kong's executive said in public that the new national security law would not touch judicial independence; activists, Wong among them, called it a law meant to silence Hongkongers. Within the year the promise was tested: that December, Wong was sentenced to thirteen and a half months for inciting an illegal assembly

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Billionaire held in contempt over Epstein ties sues incoming oversight chair for $7.25 million over repeating it

BY LOU
One More Question

I've got The Hill's wire story from September sixteenth right here — or I had it, just give me a second, I think it slid under the passenger seat with the oil change reminder cards I keep forgetting to toss — and there's a word in it that shows up twice. "Unanimous." The House passed the contempt referral to the Department of Justice by unanimous consent. Same story, next sentence: the House Oversight Committee had already agreed to hold Mr. Black in contempt — unanimously. Two separate unanimous findings, one afternoon, one man. I don't know why that's the part I keep circling, sir, I really don't, but there it is, twice, like somebody wanted it on the record both ways. How many unanimous votes does it take to settle one contempt?

I'm sorry. I have to go back to this, from a different angle. Thirteen days before that vote — September third — Mr. Black was scheduled to sit for a deposition in front of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. That same day, instead, he filed a lawsuit of his own, trying to stop the subpoena before the deposition could happen. The committee asked a question. What came back, the same day, was a filing. I wrote "same day" down and un-

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GOP's mid-decade maps backfire into a dummymander, leaving Democrats holding the pen.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

Here lies a strategy that Texas and Missouri Republicans built in 2025 to survive 2026, and that the ballots and the bench spent the fall taking apart one piece at a time. Missouri's second map went down for the third time at the courts on September 25, when the Missouri Supreme Court's own conservative majority let a lower ruling against it stand. Lawmakers then asked voters directly with Proposition A; voters said no Tuesday, the fourth rejection and the first by ballot instead of bench. Texas took the quieter route, and its map died the same day, buried by the very district it had been drawn to protect.

Two days later Brian Kemp looked at all of it and declined the invitation to try the same play in Georgia. He had already spent September fielding disastrous pressure from Keisha Lance Bottoms, the Democratic Senate contender trailing Jon Ossoff — not from Mike Collins, the Republican he endorsed for the seat himself. A governor with that much on his plate did not need a fifth rejection with his name on it.

Thursday put the question on the wire that the architects of the whole project have no tally for yet: how many of the maps they drew to hold the

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"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

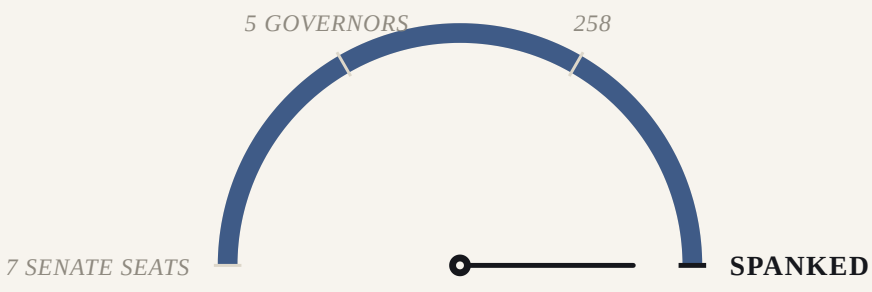
At first light the dog got up.
The fox heard the chain fall.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

On the spanking

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



SPANKED

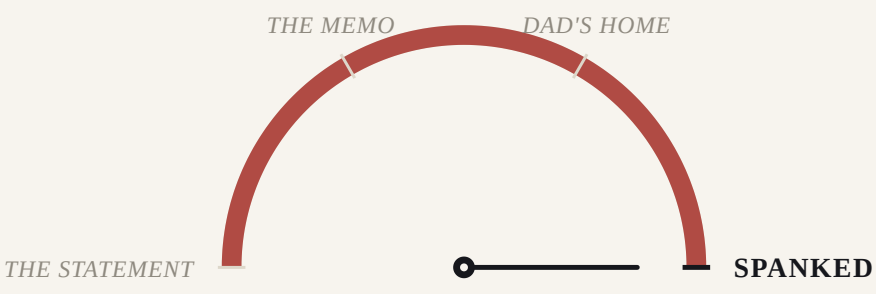
On Tuesday the country answered. Democrats take the House and the Senate in January, NBC News projects. They flipped seven Senate seats: Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, Maine, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas. They flipped five governorships. An NBC analysis on Wednesday put them at 258 House seats at least, a figure that can still move a few seats [1]. Early exit polls had his approval at 38 percent [2]. The Dow rose more than 1,500 points Wednesday [3].

Dad's statement came in parts. "I wasn't on the Ballot and if I was, we would have won IN A LANDSLIDE" [3]. Fox News "bears the responsibility" [3]. The vice president blamed the Iran war, and he called that "largely true" [3]. Then he posted a red cap reading VETO [1]. Democrats will fall short of the two-thirds it takes to override one [1]. The gavels change hands January 3, in 59 days. He keeps the veto. He keeps the nuclear codes for 807.

SOURCES

1. Control of both chambers, the seven Senate flips, five governorships, the estimate of at least 258 House seats, and the VETO cap, with Democrats short of two-thirds — NBC News live blog, 4 November 2026 ↑
2. Early exit polls put Trump's approval at 38 percent — CBS News, 4 November 2026 ↑
3. The Truth Social post of 3 November, "bears the responsibility," "largely true," and the Dow's rise of over 1,500 points — Yahoo News live coverage, 4 November 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



SPANKED

Give the word its due: it was theirs first. In October 2023 his campaign sent the press a statement headed "DeSanctus Campaign Gets Spanked on CNN," in which the governor of Florida was "getting thoroughly spanked" [1]. That November a campaign memo read "DeSantis Gets Spanked on FOX News" [2]. In October 2024, in Duluth, Georgia, Tucker Carlson widened the program to the country: "You've been a bad little girl, and you're getting a vigorous spanking right now" [3].

There is one more entry, under oath. In May 2024 Stormy Daniels testified in Manhattan that she looked at a magazine with him on the cover and said, "Someone should spank you with that" [4], and then did, "right on the butt" [5]. He denies the whole story [6]. The judge said some of the testimony "would have been better left unsaid" [7]. That is a statement, a memo, a stage and a witness stand. On Tuesday it came back with a count.

SOURCES

1. "DeSanctus Campaign Gets Spanked on CNN" and "getting thoroughly spanked," Trump campaign statement to the media — Mediaite, 28 October 2023 ↑
2. Campaign memo headed "KISS OF DEATH: DeSantis Gets Spanked on FOX News and on the Campaign Trail" — Uproxx, 29 November 2023 ↑
3. Tucker Carlson at a Trump campaign event in Duluth, Georgia, 23 October 2024: "You've been a bad little girl, and you're getting a vigorous spanking right now" — TheWrap ↑
4. Daniels's testimony of 7 May 2024 on the magazine with him on the cover: "Someone should spank you with that" — Fox News ↑
5. Daniels testified she "spanked" him "right on the butt" — ABC News via Good Morning America, 7 May 2024 ↑
6. "He denies the whole story" — Associated Press via PBS NewsHour, May 2024 ↑
7. Judge Juan Merchan declined a mistrial and said some testimony "would have been better left unsaid" — Mother Jones, 7 May 2024 ↑

“I went looking for who started this and I've got a stack. A campaign statement from October 2023, a governor "getting thoroughly spanked." Another one that November. A speech in Georgia, 2024, the whole country this time. And sworn testimony from a courtroom in Manhattan, which he denies, so I set that one to the side, and then I picked it back up. Sorry, one thing before you go. Tuesday night he wrote that he wasn't on the ballot. Then it was Fox News. Then he said the Iran explanation was largely true. That's three reasons. If he wasn't on the ballot, why does he need the other two?” — Lou

🍺

“Spanked. And before anybody writes in, it's not our word. It's theirs. Go look. His campaign put it in a press statement in 2023. In 2024 Tucker Carlson stood up at a rally in Georgia and told the whole country Dad's coming home and it's getting a vigorous one. So the country goes to its room and thinks about what it did for two years. Tuesday it came downstairs. Seven Senate seats. Texas. Dad's statement is he wasn't home. And Wednesday the Dow goes up fifteen hundred points. I'm not saying those two things are connected. I'm saying the guy next to me bought a round.”

— Sal

🚬

“I'd push back on "spanked" as a characterization of what was, in fairness, a preliminary count, and I think we can all agree that kind of language has no place in our politics, outside of a campaign statement, where it is a metaphor, and a rally, where it was also a metaphor.”

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎