The Single-Column Edition

FROM § EACH

FRIDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2026 — THE AFTERNOON EDITION FREE, FOREVER

White House blames Biden, then Iran, then Iran again, one day apart, as prices keep climbing

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

On the night the returns came in, the White House picked its first author for the loss: bad candidates. The explanation lasted about as long as the counting did. One day later, Vance put his name directly on it, posting that the war cost Republicans the midterms. Trump agreed the same day, with a caveat — Iran, he said, could not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon. Two excuses, filed one day apart, by the same two men.

The war carrying all that blame has a price tag of its own. By mid-September the Congressional Budget Office had priced it at nearly $40 billion and called that estimate conservative. The number that explains the war does not explain the election.

The war that was supposed to explain the Republican loss was, by that reading, explaining something else — the bill at the register.

Three names are now on three excuses: bad candidates, the war, the war again. The inflation and producer-price numbers that actually track with a midterm loss carry no name at all; they just kept climbing. On Thursday, Senator John Kennedy declined to sign any of the three. He told the

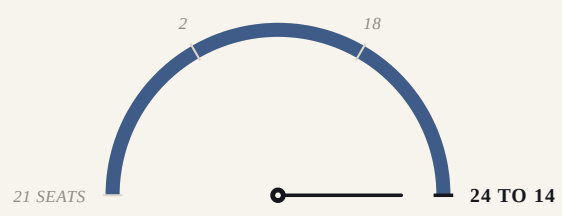
... Continued on Page F142

THE WORD

§91 — 13 NOVEMBER 2026

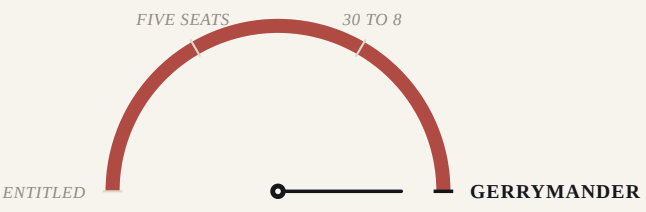
On gerrymander

DEMOCRAT



24 TO 14

REPUBLICAN



GERRYMANDER

"My wife's cousin is a tailor. He told me you don't cut a suit to what the man weighed last year. I think about that. Texas cut for thirty to eight. Got twenty-four to fourteen. The 9th, Trump by 20 on paper, and a Democrat held it. Florida hoped for four, and Democrats held at least three. Those are November 4 numbers, I wrote the date on my hand. Sorry, one thing before you go. "We are entitled to five more seats." He got one. Who's he see about the alterations?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W91

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

Navy Secretary thanks Iran for wrecking a base the Pentagon now says Iran did not hit.

BY LOU
One More Question

Two pieces of paper, same date on both — September 11th — carry basically the same sentence, except one word moved. The Washington Examiner ran it twice that morning. In one version, Iran's foreign minister, Seyed Abbas Araghchi, "thanks" the acting Navy Secretary. In the other, he "appreciates" him. Same man, same day, same compliment he was returning. I wrote both down because I can't work out why a wire desk needs two different words for one thank-you note. Does the gratitude change depending on which verb carries it?

What he was grateful for, according to both versions, was this: the acting Navy Secretary, Hung Cao, had told the public that Iran "blew the hell out of" a U.S. Navy base in Bahrain — his words, not "hit," not "struck," written down and on the record — and Iran's government took the trouble to send a note of thanks for saying so. I've read it three times looking for the part where somebody on our side disputes it. Where, on the record, does anyone say he was wrong?

I went out to the garage this morning because the car's been needing a

... Continued on Page A237

Justice Department's lawsuit to block Alaska's certification if Sullivan loses finds Sullivan losing by 5,800 votes.

BY MORT
The Records Bureau

The complaint died this week of its own prophecy, on the same day the thing it was written to prevent arrived.

It was filed on 24 October, before a single disputed vote had been counted: the Justice Department's lawsuit to block Alaska's Senate certification, conditioned on Republican Senator Dan Sullivan losing to Democrat Mary Peltola. A complaint built on a verb in the subjunctive — if he loses — is a strange document. It named no fraud. It cited no ballot.

By 28 October the ground under that condition had already started to move. Senator Lisa Murkowski endorsed the Democrat running for governor over the candidate her own party had put up, a defection that read as one Republican senator deciding Alaska was no longer safe to assume.

On 30 October the subpoenas arrived — new grand jury subpoenas, escalating an investigation already underway — chasing the claim that Peltola's campaign recruited a second candidate named Dan Sullivan to split the Republican vote. Peltola's own answer has not moved: she knew nothing about it.

... Continued on Page B55

Democrats add Lutnick to a second target list, then meet to seek peace with his boss.

BY MITCH
Investigations

On Oct. 26, House Judiciary Democrats released a report naming four officials of the Trump administration — Howard Lutnick, Stephen Miller, Tom Homan and Marco Rubio — as the actual targets of the investigations the new Congress had promised.

This week produced two more documents.

The first came out of Denver, where strategists and newly elected Democrats gathered for a two-day conference called What's Next. Senator-elect James Talarico of Texas told the room he wants to make Trump's last two years "the most productive of any presidency." It is a position he has held before: on Nov. The results came in. The position did not move. Fox News ran the Denver conference under the headline "The mistake newly-elected Dems admit they can't afford to make with Trump." The Washington Examiner's version: "Democrats dare each other to try."

The second came from a coalition of ten advocacy groups — Guardrails Action, Indivisible, the American Federation of Teachers and seven others — in a letter to Senator Chuck Schumer and Representative Hakeem Jeffries. It

... Continued on Page A237

"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*

Rope in hand, a man holds the crossing.
By night the far path grows smooth.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

Navy Secretary thanks Iran for wrecking a base the Pentagon now says Iran did not hit.

By LOU

ONE MORE QUESTION



“US denies Iran claims it destroyed military radar in Bahrain”, 13 November 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Two pieces of paper, same date on both — September 11th — carry basically the same sentence, except one word moved. The Washington Examiner ran it twice that morning. In one version, Iran's foreign minister, Seyed Abbas Araghchi, "thanks" the acting Navy Secretary. In the other, he "appreciates" him. Same man, same day, same compliment he was returning. I wrote both down because I can't work out why a wire desk needs two different words for one thank-you note. Does the gratitude change depending on which verb carries it?

What he was grateful for, according to both versions, was this: the acting Navy Secretary, Hung Cao, had told the public that Iran "blew the hell out of" a U.S. Navy base in Bahrain — his words, not "hit," not "struck," written down and on the record — and Iran's government took the trouble to send a note of thanks for saying so. I've read it three times looking for the part where somebody on our side disputes it. Where, on the record, does anyone say he was wrong?...

...(cont) I went out to the garage this morning because the car's been needing a belt, and while I was under the hood I got to thinking about insurance claims — the kind where your mechanic measures the dent and the adjuster looks at the same dent and tells you it isn't there. Somebody in that conversation is mistaken. It's not both of them. Which one do you trust, the one with his hands on the engine or the one holding the form?

Because that's where the notebook runs out of room. This week — not September, this week, Friday the 13th — Iran said it had hit that same base again, this time the early-warning radar, the system whose whole job is seeing the missile before it lands. And the United States said it didn't happen. That's the word three outlets used this same day — the Washington Examiner, the Morning Star, ABC News — all three printing it about the same radar: denied.

I keep circling back to that one, because it isn't the word on the page from September. In September the government's own man put his name on the opposite of it. This week, at the same base, the government's position is the word I just wrote down. Same base. Same fleet — the Fifth, headquartered right there in Bahrain. Does a base that got blown apart once, admitted to, and hit again this week, called false this time, belong to two different wars, or the same one?

ABC has the president on record back on February 28th calling this "major combat operations." The Examiner — the same paper that ran two versions of one thank-you note — describes this same fight today as having settled into "sporadic strikes against lower-level targets," now that the intensive part is supposedly finished. Nine months, two descriptions of one war. I'm not telling you which description is accurate. I'm asking which one you'd want in your hand if you had a son stationed on that base.

Hold on — one more thing before you go. Back in October, Iran's government spokeswoman said Tehran "does not need any power's permission to defend itself." So tell me which one is true — September, when it was admitted, or this week, at the same base, when it was denied?

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE NAVY'S ACTING SECRETARY THANKED IRAN IN SEPTEMBER FOR WRECKING THE Bahrain base; in November the Pentagon called that same base untouched. That isn't a correction, it's the Pentagon rewriting the war to fit whatever story keeps the money moving. Because the base gets filed as untouched, the request behind it doesn't have to explain a dent, and the number that keeps climbing shows up on your pay stub as withholding before you ever get a say in what it paid for.

“Our own Navy Secretary went on record thanking Iran for blowing a hole in our base, and two months later the same government insists nothing happened there at all. That's not confusion — that's whichever story keeps the war going without the Pentagon having to answer for it. Either way, the guy footing the bill, or sending his kid there, gets to pick which version he's supposed to believe.”

— Sal

“Look, two different statements, two different contexts — the Secretary was talking about an earlier strike, this week's denial is specifically about the radar, nobody said the same thing twice. So the government can thank Iran on the record for wrecking a base and also insist nothing there ever got hit — did I just say that? That's not — okay, that one's not landing the way I wanted it to.”

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

Iran will not be destroyed by threats

Workers World § *22:08 EDT*

The Iranian-based Mehr News Agency issued the following statement on Oct. 24, 2026. In response to U.S.

US denies Iran claims it destroyed military radar in Bahrain

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *10:48 EST*

Iran claimed it destroyed a U.S. early-warning radar, the first attack of its kind in months, but the United States denied the claim. The U.S.

> *But:* **Trump promised to personally meet Putin and Zelensky and settle the war within 24 hours - CNN counted 53 separate occasions he made that promise** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*
>
> Iran live updates: US denies Iran's claim that it destroyed US radar in Bahrain
>
> *ABC News* MAINSTREAM § *11:47 EST*
>
> President Donald Trump announced "major combat operations" against Iran on Feb. 28.

US denies Iran hit early warning radar system

Morning Star § *10:13 EST*

THE US denied that Iran attacked a US early-warning radar in Bahrain today, saying its military intercepted two drones launched towards the island nation. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said the claimed attack followed a US strike on a telecommunications pole in the southern Iranian port of Sirik. Bahrain is home to the US Navy’s...

· Iran’s Araghchi thanks acting Navy Secretary Cao for saying Iran ‘blew the hell out of’ US base in Bahrain *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Iran ‘appreciates’ acting Navy Secretary Cao for saying Iran ‘blew the hell out of’ US base in Bahrain *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

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

Justice Department's lawsuit to block Alaska's certification if Sullivan loses finds Sullivan losing by 5,800 votes.

By MORT
THE RECORDS BUREAU

"Courts Reject Trump's Attempt at Deploying ICE to Intimidate Voters", 24 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA TRUTHOUT — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Justice Department sued to block Alaska's Senate certification, but only if the Republican candidate loses.

WHO GETS PAID. The Republican Party and Senator Sullivan keep the Senate seat if the lawsuit blocks certification of a Democratic win.

WHAT SLIPS. Alaska's own vote count stops being the final word if a federal lawsuit can hold up certification after votes are already counted.

WHAT'S NEXT. The lawsuit stays pending in federal court while Alaska keeps counting; the receipts set no certification date yet, so the next concrete step is whatever a judge decides once the state is ready to certify.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The complaint died this week of its own prophecy, on the same day the thing it was written to prevent arrived.

It was filed on 24 October, before a single disputed vote had been counted: the Justice Department's lawsuit to block Alaska's Senate certification, conditioned on Republican Senator Dan Sullivan losing to Democrat Mary Peltola. A complaint built on a verb in the subjunctive — if he loses — is a strange document. It named no fraud. It cited no ballot....

...(cont) By 28 October the ground under that condition had already started to move. Senator Lisa Murkowski endorsed the Democrat running for governor over the candidate her own party had put up, a defection that read as one Republican senator deciding Alaska was no longer safe to assume.

On 30 October the subpoenas arrived — new grand jury subpoenas, escalating an investigation already underway — chasing the claim that Peltola's campaign recruited a second candidate named Dan Sullivan to split the Republican vote. Peltola's own answer has not moved: she knew nothing about it.

The Guardian laid out the full allegation on 2 November, next to that same denial, and noted the arithmetic underneath it: four separate probes, zero charges, over a ballot that was never actually filed.

On 7 November Peltola's campaign went to court on its own account, suing Alaska's election officials for the names of voters whose absentee ballots had been rejected — a lawsuit about counting, filed by the side that wanted more of it done.

Then came Thursday. Five thousand ballots, tabulated in the plain course of the job, extended Peltola's lead to 5,800 votes by Friday morning. That is not a hypothetical anymore. That is the exact number the conditional clause was drafted around, arrived at by the oldest bunk in the business — people voting, clerks counting — with no grand jury required to produce it.

The obituary form asks for a cause of death, and the honest one here is punctuality. The complaint survived long enough to meet its own condition, which is the one thing a document written in the future tense was never supposed to do. In lieu of flowers, finish the count.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FILED A LAWSUIT THAT ONLY ACTIVATES IF SENATOR SULLIVAN loses, and this week Sullivan's deficit grew by five thousand more counted votes. That isn't a fraud safeguard, it's a trip wire laid across one outcome and left armed for three weeks waiting for the count to walk into it. The votes keep landing in Anchorage, the tally keeps climbing toward the exact number the complaint was written for, and when it gets there the first document that moves is the one with your name on it, still sitting in the rejected-absentee pile.

"The Justice Department filed a lawsuit for a loss that hadn't happened yet, and this week the loss happened. That's not a legal strategy, that's a standing reservation on democracy for whichever Tuesday the count goes the wrong way, and this time the table got used."

— Sal

"It's not political, it's just prudent to have the paperwork ready in case of an irregularity — did I say irregularity, there's no irregularity, there's just a filing. Departments file things, that's the whole job, and if the Republican doesn't lose, the lawsuit never mattered, so really this was a win for the lawsuit never getting used. ...Did I say win? That's not the word I meant."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Schumer says he has the votes to lead Senate Democrats; every senator who gives a name votes no.* By Ruth · the afternoon edition, 11 November 2026
— *Schumer says he has the votes; every published count against him is a word, not a number.* By Ruth · the evening edition, 11 November 2026
— *Schumer says he already has the votes; Sanders and Slotkin say they're not among them.* By Ruth · the evening edition, 10 November 2026
— *Schumer says he has the votes before the caucus that holds them has voted* By Chip · the afternoon edition, 10 November 2026
— *Prediction market credited with calling 98% of midterm races is under felony charges for taking the bets* By Sterling · the evening edition, 7 November 2026
— *Justice Department abandons hunt for ballots that don't exist; Peltola's campaign sues to see the ones that do.* By Mort · the morning edition, 7 November 2026

THE RECEIPTS

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

Courts Reject Trump's Attempt at Deploying ICE to Intimidate Voters
Truthout § *09:18 EDT*

A judge ordered Homeland Security to stop sending agents door to door in nine key states to hunt for "voter fraud."

Peltola extends lead after new Alaska Senate ballots count
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *10:34 EST*

In the last uncalled Senate race of 2026, former Rep. Mary Peltola (D-Alaska) gained an additional 5,000 newly counted votes Thursday and extended her lead over Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska).

~~Peltola campaign sues for access to blocked Alaska absentee ballots~~
Alaska officials are withholding rejected-ballot records in the nation's closest 2026 Senate race
Washington Examiner RIGHT § *11:05 EST*

Democrat Mary Peltola's Senate campaign sued Alaska election officials Friday, seeking records that would identify voters whose absentee ballots have been rejected as the state continues counting votes in one of the closest 2026 midterm races nationwide. Alaskans for Mary, Peltola's campaign committee, filed the lawsuit in Alaska...

· Alaska Democrat says she 'knew nothing' about effort to put two Dan Sullivans on ballot *from the morgue, 30 Oct 2026*

· Alaska Senate race: what to know about Democrats' alleged ballot-stacking effort *from the morgue, 2 Nov 2026*

· Trump ask to set aside 'Decoy Dan' Alaska Senate ballots 'not even possible': attorneys *from the morgue, 31 Oct 2026*

· Peltola repeats denial of ballot-stacking reports, stays silent on federal probe *from the morgue, 31 Oct 2026*

· Trump prosecutions under Biden set precedent for DOJ's Alaska 'Decoy Dan' probe, ex-FEC chair says *from the morgue, 31 Oct 2026*

· Murkowski snubs Trump-backed Alaska candidate, endorses Democrat for governor *from the morgue, 28 Oct 2026*

· DOJ sues to block Alaska Senate certification if Sullivan loses *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Alaska Election Gambit Shows Justice Dept. Has Bowed to Trump's Demands *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Donald Trump challenges Alaska Senate trace *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Trump administration sues to block possible Democratic win in Alaska Senate race *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· The controversy surrounding convicted former election official Tina Peters *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Alaska Senate race featuring two Dan Sullivans is 'blatantly corrupt': Joe Concha *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

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

· Tina Peters turns down job with California county's registrar of voters *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Election deniers stoke Trump-driven ballot security fears before midterms *from the morgue, 6 Oct 2026*

· Facing an electoral wipeout, Trump goes after the system *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Justice Dept. Demands That California Counties Help Identify Noncitizen Voters *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· Sabato's Crystal Ball shifts Alaska and South Carolina Senate races in favor of Democrats *from the morgue, 6 Oct 2026*

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

· US justice department sues California over alleged noncitizen voting *from the morgue, 15 Oct 2026*

· Trump knocks Alaska voting system: 'How stupid are we to do this?' *from the morgue, 9 Oct 2026*

· Corey Lewandowski Always Found His Way Back to Trump. Until Now. *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump announces $6.6bn defense shipyard owned by top Republican donor's firm *from the morgue, 6 Oct 2026*

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

· DOJ demands that California counties help identify noncitizen voters *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· DOJ demands that some California counties set aside alleged noncitizen ballots *from the morgue, 25 Oct 2026*

· California officials ordered by DoJ to set aside 'likely' noncitizen ballots *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

· LA feds move to halt ballot counting over 20K suspected noncitizen voters *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump 'Laying the Groundwork for Election Meddling' With DHS Hunt for Noncitizen Voters *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· California has no real safeguards for voting and voter registration *from the morgue, 21 Oct 2026*

· Federal efforts over alleged noncitizen voting escalate with California arrests *from the morgue, 20 Oct 2026*

· Federal voter fraud arrests intensify in California days after DOJ warning *from the morgue, 19 Oct 2026*

· Trump DOJ issues stark warning to California ballot counters after suing state over 20K suspected noncitizen voters *from the morgue, 17 Oct 2026*

· Intel Democrats on how they'll react if Trump alleges election meddling *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump told DOJ to sue to block Alaska Senate results if Republican narrowly loses *from the morgue, 26 Oct 2026*

· Trump says he personally ordered DOJ lawsuit intervening in Alaska Senate election *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Ramaswamy accuses Acton of 'lying' about attack ad, but court records contradict mother's claim – live *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2026*

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

· Trump-Ordered DOJ Lawsuit in Alaska Seen as First Salvo in GOP Effort to Undermine Midterm Elections *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump on the Alaska election lawsuit: 'I'm the one that said, "do it"' *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump administration sues to block certification of upcoming Alaska election *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· DOJ files lawsuit to block results in Alaska Senate race after two Dan Sullivans land on November ballot *from the morgue, 23 Oct 2026*

· Trump previews trip to Alaska to campaign for Dan Sullivan, ripping into the other Dan Sullivan *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump urges Alaskans to vote for the 'real' Dan Sullivan in tight midterms battle *from the morgue, 14 Oct 2026*

· Sullivan trails Peltola in Alaska Senate contest: AARP poll *from the morgue, 17 Sep 2026*

· Trump vows to probe other Dan Sullivan in alleged Dem plot to sabotage 'real' Alaska GOP senator *from the morgue, 14 Oct 2026*

· Trump administration sued over plans to send election monitors to voting sites *from the morgue, 7 Oct 2026*

· AGs v. Trump: How an AWOL Congress made hundreds of lawsuits possible *from the morgue, 16 Oct 2026*

· The Electoral College meets in the state capitals to officially elect the next President. Joe Biden, the presumptive president-elect, is officially elected president after securing California's 55 ele *from the morgue, 14 Dec 2020*

· US federal agents raid home of Democratic congresswoman and Trump critic Ilhan Omar *from the morgue, 12 Oct 2026*

· Ilhan Omar's Home Raided by DHS Following Trump-GOP Deportation Threats *from the morgue, 12 Oct 2026*

· Federal Agents Search Home of Rep. Ilhan Omar *from the morgue, 13 Oct 2026*

· Rep. Ilhan Omar's residence searched as part of ongoing criminal investigation: DOJ *from the morgue, 13 Oct 2026*

· Rep. Ilhan Omar's D.C. home searched by Homeland Security investigators *from the morgue, 12 Oct 2026*

· Rep. Ilhan Omar's DC home raided by DHS as part of probe into Dem's immigration paperwork *from the morgue, 12 Oct 2026*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Democrats add Lutnick to a second target list, then meet to seek peace with his boss.

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS

"Working with Trump? Democrats dare each other to try", 13 November 2026
(PHOTO VIA WASHINGTON EXAMINER — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. House Democrats named four Trump officials as investigation targets, then met in Denver seeking common ground with Trump instead.

WHO GETS PAID. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Nvidia avoid the scrutiny a coalition of advocacy groups asked Congress to open this week.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress's oversight power over the chip industry's ties to the president slips while Democratic leaders choose comity over subpoenas.

WHAT'S NEXT. If this holds, the four named officials face no subpoena before any vote is taken; that is what happened after the House's 2011 Libya vote, when the authorization failed and the operation ran four more months anyway.

❦ THE FORECAST ❦

House Democrats named Lutnick, Miller, Homan and Rubio as investigation targets on Oct. 26. On Nov. 13, a coalition asked Congress to probe Nvidia, Trump and Lutnick, while other Democrats met in Denver and urged the party to seek common ground with Trump instead.

Congress may hold no vote at all on opening either investigation, the relevant committees may never issue a subpoena, and the four named officials may serve out the remaining two years of the administration without ever testifying under oath.

THE LAW. House floor, 24 June 2011: a war-powers resolution on Libya failed 123 to 295 and the operation ran four more months anyway.

Happened once. Ask the House, 2011.

EARL

More of Earl's calls, and the score, on E7

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

On Oct. 26, House Judiciary Democrats released a report naming four officials of the Trump administration — Howard Lutnick, Stephen Miller, Tom Homan and Marco Rubio — as the actual targets of the investigations the new Congress had promised.

This week produced two more documents....

...(cont) The first came out of Denver, where strategists and newly elected Democrats gathered for a two-day conference called What's Next. Senator-elect James Talarico of Texas told the room he wants to make Trump's last two years "the most productive of any presidency." It is a position he has held before: on Nov. The results came in. The position did not move. Fox News ran the Denver conference under the headline "The mistake newly-elected Dems admit they can't afford to make with Trump." The Washington Examiner's version: "Democrats dare each other to try."

The second came from a coalition of ten advocacy groups — Guardrails Action, Indivisible, the American Federation of Teachers and seven others — in a letter to Senator Chuck Schumer and Representative Hakeem Jeffries. It asks Congress to "aggressively wield their investigative powers" over one relationship: Donald Trump, his administration, and Jensen Huang, the resigned chief executive of Nvidia. "While CEO Jensen Huang has resigned," the letter reads, "that should not mean that he escapes scrutiny of Nvidia's actions." Separately, other Democrats spent the same day in Denver asking for peace with the administration he serves.

The letter closes on a question of its own: "Should a handful of billionaires and a corrupt president have the power to sell out the rest of us so they can get even richer, or do the American people get a say in their..." Our copy of the letter stops there.

Two documents arrived this week, about a list that already existed. One added Lutnick's name to it for the second time. One put Democrats in a room to seek peace with the administration he serves instead. All three now sit on the record at once.

"They put Lutnick's name on a list in October, then put it on a second list this month, and somewhere in between some of their own members went to Denver to make nice with his boss. That's not oversight, that's a negotiating position. You don't ask a man for common ground while his name is still on your subpoena wish list."

— Sal

"Look, these are newly elected Democrats being responsible adults, focusing on costs and policy instead of settling scores — that's just good governance. It's not about protecting anybody named Lutnick, nobody even brought him up in Denver — wait, why am I tracking whether his name came up in Denver? Forget I said his name."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Federal prosecutor tells the lawmakers investigating the White House to preserve their own records; subpoenas issued: zero.* By Mitch · the afternoon edition, 12 November 2026
- *A federal prosecutor orders the senator investigating Trump's ballroom donors to preserve his own records.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 12 November 2026
- *White House labels oversight a crime before any exists; Justice Department labels the one that arrives a threat.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 12 November 2026
- *White House letter names one Democrat a future criminal; another says 'come at me, bro.'* By Mitch · the afternoon edition, 11 November 2026
- *White House says the investigation that hasn't happened yet may be 'blatant criminality.'* By Mitch · the afternoon edition, 11 November 2026
- *Trump's new chief of staff is defended by branding his own deportation record misinformation.* By Chip · the evening edition, 11 November 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Working with Trump? Democrats dare each other to try

Washington Examiner RIGHT § *11:10 EST*

DENVER – Democrats are calling on their party to get to work during the final two years of President Donald Trump's administration, saying the risk is too high to not find areas of common ground. At the two-day What's Next conference in Denver, a celebration of the Democratic Party's historic election gains, strategists and lawmakers [...]

But: **We've got to get rid of the $19 trillion in debt - Trump promised it done over eight years** *The Washington Post, 31 March 2016 interview*

Talarico wants to make Trump's last 2 years 'the most productive of any presidency'

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:37 EST*

Sen.-elect James Talarico (D-Texas) told a gathering of Democrats that they must work with President Trump and cannot wait until a new president takes the oath to start delivering for Americans. Talarico, speaking Thursday to the What's Next conference in Denver, said Democrats need to work with Trump to deliver on economic relief...

Resounding wins for Democrats a wholesale rebuke of Trump's Maga movement

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *03:12 EST*

Democrats of all stripes declared victory on Tuesday night in clearest sign yet voters have had enough of Trumpism No single Democratic coalition can claim victory after Tuesday's resounding midterm results – all parts of the Democratic coalition can. Their wins were so sweeping, so resounding, that factional divisions fail to explain...

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

The mistake newly-elected Dems admit they can't afford to make with Trump after sweeping 2026 wins

Fox News RIGHT § *10:29 EST*

Newly elected Democrats at a Denver conference urged their party to work with Donald Trump on costs and policy rather than focus solely on investigations.

Diverse Coalition Pushes Democrats to Aggressively Probe Nvidia, Trump, and Lutnick

Common Dreams § *10:56 EST*

A broad coalition of advocacy organizations on Friday urged Democratic lawmakers to aggressively wield their investigative powers in the new Congress to scrutinize US President Donald Trump and his administration's relationship with Jensen Huang, the scandal-engulfed former chief executive of the AI chip giant Nvidia. "While CEO Jensen...

· Abdul El-Sayed: Democrats must 'win by massive numbers' to fend off Trump election denial *from the morgue, 11 Oct 2026*

· Talarico says he wants to work with Trump on bipartisan MAGA agenda *from the morgue, 3 Nov 2026*

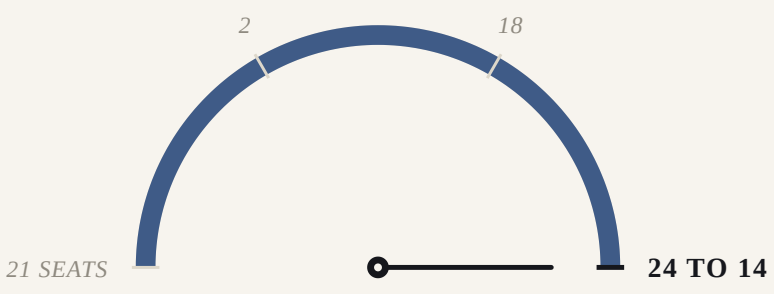
This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

§91 — 13 NOVEMBER 2026

On gerrymander

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



24 TO 14

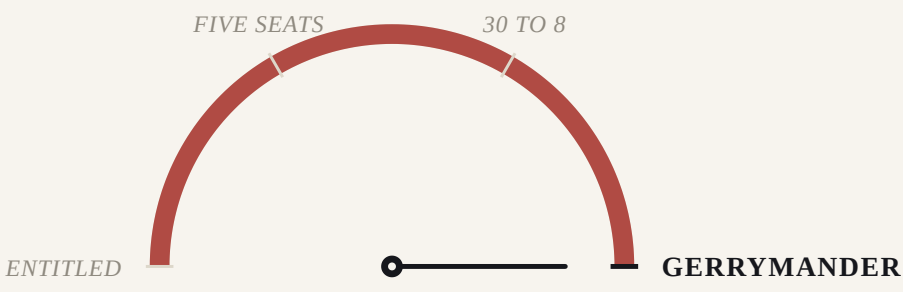
Then the voters arrived, and these are the November 4 numbers. Texas Republicans lost four of the five seats the map was built to flip, and two of their own. They go to Washington with 24 seats to Democrats' 14, one fewer than they started with [1]. Democrat Leticia Gutierrez held the 9th, which Trump would have carried by 20 [2]. The map assumed he would keep his 2024 gains with Latino Texans [1].

Florida hoped for four and Democrats held at least three, with the fourth too close to call [2]. In Ohio, Marcy Kaptur won a seat Trump would have carried by 11 [2]. In North Carolina, redrawn for an edge in 11 of 14 seats, Richard Hudson, chair of the House GOP's campaign arm, conceded [2][3]. One count across nine states: 21 seats in play, two projected for Republicans, 18 for Democrats [4]. He asked for five more seats. His party lost the House [5].

SOURCES

1. Four of five targets lost, two of their own; 24-14; the bet on Latino voters — Texas Tribune via KSAT, 4 November 2026 ↑
2. District-by-district results and 2024 Trump margins for Texas, Florida, Ohio and North Carolina, as of Wednesday afternoon — Roll Call, 4 November 2026 ↑
3. Hudson, chair of the House GOP's campaign arm, concedes in North Carolina's 9th — CBS News live coverage, 4 November 2026 ↑
4. Of 21 seats in play across nine states, Republicans projected to win two and Democrats projected to pick up 18 — Deseret News, 4 November 2026 ↑
5. Democrats won control of the House — CBS News live coverage, 4 November 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



GERRYMANDER

The promise was specific. "We have an opportunity in Texas to pick up five seats," Trump said in August 2025. "And we are entitled to five more seats" [1]. Republicans in Austin hoped for a 30-8 delegation [2]. The law allowed it: in 2019 the Supreme Court held that partisan gerrymandering claims are "beyond the reach of the federal courts" [3]. In July Cook's net across all the redraws stood at about eight seats toward Republicans and two toward Democrats [4].

The other party bought the same knife. California voters approved Proposition 50 by about 64 percent to 36 and redrew five Republican-held seats [5]. As of November 4 one count had Democrats flipping all five: promised five, delivered five [6]. It was a gerrymander by ballot, and it worked. Before the vote one Republican strategist gave Florida Politics the definition of the failure mode: a dummymander "is when you lose seats because you jeopardized them by drawing new ones" [7]. Hold that definition up to the next column.

SOURCES

1. "We have an opportunity in Texas to pick up five seats"; "we are entitled to five more seats" — Scripps News, 5 August 2025 ↑
2. Republicans "had hoped for a 30-8 split in the delegation" — Texas Tribune via KSAT, 4 November 2026 ↑
3. Rucho v. Common Cause, 27 June 2019 — Cornell Legal Information Institute ↑
4. Republicans about +8 seats and Democrats about +2 from redistricting — Colorado Politics, citing the Cook Political Report, 29 July 2026 ↑
5. Proposition 50 approved, 64.42 percent to 35.58 percent — Wikipedia, 2025 California Proposition 50 ↑
6. California: Democrats targeted five seats and flipped all five, results not final in several races — Deseret News, 4 November 2026 ↑
7. The strategist's definition — Florida Politics ↑

“My wife's cousin is a tailor. He told me you don't cut a suit to what the man weighed last year. I think about that. Texas cut for thirty to eight. Got twenty-four to fourteen. The 9th, Trump by 20 on paper, and a Democrat held it. Florida hoped for four, and Democrats held at least three. Those are November 4 numbers, I wrote the date on my hand. Sorry, one thing before you go. "We are entitled to five more seats." He got one. Who's he see about the alterations?” — Lou

“Gerrymander. The pitch was five seats. "Entitled." So they took a map and a sharp knife and cut Texas to the last election, thirty to eight on paper. Here's the one thing nobody in that room could draw: a guy changing his mind. Twenty-four to fourteen. One seat fewer than they walked in with. They spent a year building a fort around a crowd that left. And don't get comfortable on the other stool, California's five came in right on the invoice. Both parties bought the knife, and the thing on the cutting board was you.”

— Sal

“The maps performed exactly as designed for the voters they were designed for, who unfortunately were not the ones who came.”

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎