

DECEMBER 2025 EVENTS



ARTIST TRANSFORMS 'HARRY POTTER' BOOKS INTO PORTRAITS HONORING MURDERED TRANS WOMEN – 12/1/25

Vermont-based artist Tai Ericson has been creating portraits of transgender women who were murdered from the pages of Harry Potter books.

Ericson's project began earlier this year, in response to J.K. Rowling's statements on trans issues. "Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Trans rights are human rights," the artist declares on their website. Each portrait is a tribute to lives lost and a statement against ongoing anti-trans rhetoric.

Prints of Wright's portrait are available for purchase, with 20% of proceeds going to Advocates for Trans Equality, a New York-based nonprofit.

The Human Rights Campaign reports that at least 32 trans and gender-expansive people were killed in acts of violence in 2024.

TRUMP FREES FRAUDSTER EXECUTIVE DAYS INTO PRISON SENTENCE – 12/2/25

Trump has commuted the sentence of former investment manager David Gentile, who was just days into a seven-year prison sentence for fraud.

Bureau of Prisons records show that Gentile was released on Wednesday, less than two weeks after he reported to prison.

Gentile, the former chief executive and founder of GPB Capital, was convicted last year in a multi-year scheme to defraud more than 10,000 investors by misrepresenting the performance of private equity funds. His co-defendant, Jeffrey Schneider, was sentenced to six years on the same charges and is due to report to prison in January.

He's the latest in a string of white-collar criminals whose sentences Trump has commuted.

US attorney Joseph Nocella said at the time of Gentile's sentencing that GPB Capital was built on a "foundation of lies" and that the company made \$1.6bn (£1.2bn) while using investor capital to pay distributions to other investors.

But the White House says the Department of Justice under former President Joe Biden made multiple missteps - and that investors were aware that their money could be going towards other people's dividends.

Trump's commutation of Gentile's sentence does not clear him of his crimes like a full presidential pardon would, and it does not get rid of other potential penalties imposed.

So far in his second term, the president has pardoned or commuted the sentences of multiple people convicted of different types of fraud, including wire, securities, tax and healthcare fraud.

Last month, he pardoned Tennessee state House Speaker Glen Casada who was convicted of fraud, money laundering and conspiracy charges.

OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITY TA SUSPENDED FOR FAILING STUDENT'S UNSCIENTIFIC ANTI-TRANS ESSAY – 12/2/25

Oklahoma University has placed a trans graduate instructor on administrative leave after a student received a zero on a psychology assignment that did not satisfy the assignment prompt or basic academic writing expectations.

The paper described transgender people as “demonic” and asserted that gender roles are “Biblically ordained.”

The controversy began when junior Samantha Fulnecky submitted a 650-word reaction paper for a course on how social expectations shape gender. Instead of addressing the assignment’s questions using data, her essay claimed society is “pushing lies” about gender, warned that eliminating strict gender roles would be harmful, and described transgender identities as “demonic,” Them reports.

Graduate teaching assistant Mel Curth, who graded the paper, wrote that the zero was based on academic criteria, not retaliation for the student’s religious views. Curth wrote that the essay “does not answer the questions for this assignment, contradicts itself, heavily uses personal ideology over empirical evidence in a scientific class, and is at times offensive.” Curth also noted that portraying a marginalized group as “demonic” is “highly offensive,” and urged the student to use empirical sources rather than doctrinal statements when critiquing course material.

A second instructor, Megan Waldron, independently reviewed the paper and agreed that it did not satisfy the assignment prompt or basic academic writing expectations.

Fulnecky then filed a religious discrimination complaint with the university.

OU confirmed Sunday in a new public statement that it “takes seriously concerns involving First Amendment rights, certainly including religious freedoms.”

The university said it “immediately began a full review” after receiving the student’s complaint, maintained regular communication with the student, and ensured “no academic harm” resulted from the disputed grade. OU also said the student filed a discrimination claim based on religious belief, that the review process “has been activated,” and that the graduate instructor was placed on administrative leave “to ensure fairness.” A full-time professor is now teaching the course for the rest of the semester. OU said the instructor will not face academic or financial harm during the review.

On Sunday, Oklahoma Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt urged OU’s Board of Regents to investigate and warned that students should not be “penalized” for their religious beliefs, in a social media post.

His intervention helped transform a grading dispute into a statewide ideological battle over higher education governance and LGBTQ+ inclusion.

On Monday, the campus chapter of Turning Point USA posted on Instagram that Curth was placed on leave for “blatant discrimination” and framed the grade as punishment “for quoting the Bible,” claiming the university’s Sunday statement confirmed its position.

MAGNET COMPANY BACKED BY DONALD TRUMP JR. GETS \$620M GOVERNMENT CONTRACT – 12/3/25

TechCrunch reports that Vulcan Elements, a rare-earth magnets startup backed by Donald Trump Jr.’s VC firm 1789 Capital, has secured a \$620 million contract from the U.S. Department of Defense, as reported by the Financial Times.

The contract is part of a \$1.4 billion partnership with the U.S. government and ReElement Technologies to expand and boost the domestic supply of magnets, according to the company.

Trump Jr. joined 1789 Capital as a partner in 2024. The firm is said to have invested in Vulcan Elements around three months ago, according to Bloomberg. In August, the company announced a \$65 million Series A led by Altimeter Capital.

This government contract represents the largest ever made by the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Capital, the FT reported. This year alone, at least four 1789 companies have received government contracts, FT reported. The firm is also a backer of SpaceX and Anduril, two long-time sellers of tech to the government.

Vulcan denied to FT that Trump Jr. had involvement with the contract negotiations, as did a spokesperson for Trump Jr., who said he "had no involvement in negotiations with the government on behalf of 1789's portfolio companies."

SUPREME COURT ALLOWS TEXAS TO USE A CONGRESSIONAL MAP FAVORABLE TO GOP IN 2026 – 12/4/25

A divided Supreme Court on Thursday will allow next year's elections to be held under the state's congressional redistricting plan favorable to the GOP.

With conservative justices in the majority, the court acted on an emergency request from Texas for quick action because qualifying in the new districts already has begun, with primary elections in March.

The Supreme Court's order puts the 2-1 ruling blocking the map on hold at least until after the high court issues a final decision in the case. Justice Samuel Alito had previously temporarily blocked the order while the full court considered the Texas appeal.

In dissent, Justice Elena Kagan wrote for the three liberal justices that her colleagues should not have intervened at this point. Doing so, she wrote, "ensures that many Texas citizens, for no good reason, will be placed in electoral districts because of their race. And that result, as this Court has pronounced year in and year out, is a violation of the Constitution."

The high court's vote "is a green light for there to be even more re-redistricting, and a strong message to lower courts to butt out," Richard Hasen, an election law expert at the University of California at Los Angeles law school, wrote on the Election Law Blog.

The Texas congressional map enacted last summer at Trump's urging was engineered to give Republicans five additional House seats.

Texas was the first state to meet Trump's demands in what has become an expanding national battle over redistricting. Republicans drew the state's new map to give the GOP five additional seats, and Missouri and North Carolina followed with new maps adding an additional Republican seat each. To counter those moves, California voters approved a ballot initiative to give Democrats an additional five seats there.

The redrawn maps are facing court challenges in California and Missouri. A three-judge panel allowed the new North Carolina map to be used in the 2026 elections.

US INSTITUTE OF PEACE RENAMED AFTER TRUMP – 12/4/25

Trump's name has been added to the US Institute of Peace (USIP) building in Washington, after the Department of State rebranded the organization on Wednesday.

Trump's name was added ahead of a peace agreement signing ceremony between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, to be held at that location on Thursday.

The institute was founded as an independent, non-profit think tank funded by Congress, but efforts by Trump's administration to exert control by cutting staff and budgets has resulted in a legal battle between the two sides.

The Department of State announced the renaming to "Donald J. Trump Institute of Peace" on social media with a post that said it was done "to reflect the greatest dealmaker in our nation's history" and added "the best is yet to come".

White House deputy press secretary Anna Kelly shared the post and wrote: "Congratulations, world". Secretary of State Marco Rubio also commented on social media, saying that Trump is the "President of Peace" and it was time for the state department to "display that".

TRUMP CALLS PEOPLE FROM SOMALIA 'GARBAGE' – 12/4/25

In his two-hour Cabinet meeting Tuesday, Trump called Somali immigrants in the United States "garbage" four times in seven seconds.

"We don't want 'em in our country," Trump said five times of the nation's 260,000 people of Somali descent. "Let 'em go back to where they came from and fix it." The assembled Cabinet members cheered and applauded. Vice President JD Vance could be seen pumping a fist. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, sitting to the president's immediate left, told Trump on-camera, "Well said."

Somali Americans, he said, "come from hell" and "contribute nothing." They do "nothing but bitch" and "their country stinks." Then Trump turned to a familiar target. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., an outspoken and frequent Trump critic, "is garbage," he said. "Her friends are garbage."

His remarks on Somalia drew shock and condemnation from Minneapolis to Mogadishu.

Omar called Trump's "obsession" with her and Somali-Americans "creepy and unhealthy."

"We are not, and I am not, someone to be intimidated," she said, "and we are not gonna be scapegoated."

Trump said he isn't worried about others think of what he says.

"I hear somebody say, 'Oh, that's not politically correct,'" Trump said, winding up his summation Tuesday. "I don't care. I don't want them."

PANTONE PICKS A SHADE OF WHITE AS THEIR 2026 COLOR OF THE YEAR – 12/4/25

On Dec. 4, the global color authority Pantone introduced what they consider the defining shade of the year to come: Cloud Dancer (PANTONE 11-4201), which they described on Instagram as a "lofty white neutral whose aerated presence acts as a whisper of calm and peace in a noisy world."

The shade has sparked an online debate, with many claiming it shows a lack of creativity and cultural insensitivity.

This is the first time the company has chosen a shade of white for the Color of the Year.

Pantone elaborated further on the choice on their website, writing, "In a world where color has become synonymous with personal expression, this is a shade that can adapt, harmonize, and create contrast, bringing a feeling of airy lightness to all product applications and environments, whether making a standalone statement or combined with other hues."

HHS CHANGED THE NAME OF ADM. RACHEL LEVINE TO HER DEAD NAME ON HER OFFICIAL PORTRAIT – 12/5/25

On the seventh floor of the Humphrey Building in Washington, D.C., photos of every four-star admiral who has led the Public Health Corps at the federal Department of Health and Human Services are displayed.

One of those portraits is of Adm. Rachel Levine. She served for four years as President Biden's assistant secretary for health. She was the first transgender person to win Senate confirmation, and her portrait has been displayed since 2021.

Levine's official portrait was recently altered, a spokesperson for HHS confirmed to NPR.

"During the federal shutdown, the current leadership of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health changed Admiral Levine's photo to remove her current legal name and use a prior name," says Adrian Shanker, former deputy assistant secretary for health policy in the Biden administration who worked with Levine and is now her spokesperson. He called the move an act "of bigotry against her."

Levine told NPR that it was an honor to serve the American people as the assistant secretary for health "and I'm not going to comment on this type of petty action."

When NPR asked HHS about the change, HHS spokesperson Andrew Nixon responded, "Our priority is ensuring that the information presented internally and externally by HHS reflects gold standard science. We remain committed to reversing harmful policies enacted by Levine and ensuring that biological reality guides our approach to public health."

CHURCHES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES ARE USING THEIR NATIVITY SCENES TO CALL OUT ICE – 12/5/25

At a church in Massachusetts, their Nativity scene has a sign that reads "ICE was here," and baby Jesus is noticeably missing from the manger, presumably taken by immigration agents.

A Nativity scene on display at an Evanston, IL church depicts baby Jesus with zip-tied wrists and Mary and Joseph in gas masks in what its organizers called "a scene of forced family separation" amid a federal crackdown on crime and undocumented immigrants.

The display also shows the infant in a mylar-style emergency blanket and immigration agents with covered faces in helmets and robes to make them look like Roman soldiers.

SUPREME COURT WILL HEAR ARGUMENTS IN BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP CHALLENGE – 12/5/25

The United States Supreme Court on Friday agreed to take up one of Trump's most contentious policies by reviewing the American legal principle of "birthright citizenship," potentially upending a 127-year-old understanding of who gets to be a U.S. citizen.

On his first day back in office, Trump signed an executive order withholding citizenship from children born to non-citizens "unlawfully present" in the U.S., or non-citizens in the country on a temporary basis, such as tourists, applying to people born 30 days after the order was signed.

Four federal courts and two appeals courts have blocked implementation of the executive order. Courts have cited the 14th amendment, which was passed after the Civil War and grants citizenship to "[a]ll persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof."

In one of those cases, the Supreme Court earlier this year handed down a ruling limiting the ability of lower courts to issue universal injunctions. But it did not rule on the constitutionality of Trump's executive order, or the validity of birthright citizenship in these cases.

The Supreme Court will now hear arguments this spring.

KASH PATEL MADE FBI AGENTS DRIVE HIS GIRLFRIEND'S INTOXICATED FRIEND HOME – 12/5/25

Sources claim FBI Director Kash Patel demanded demanding agents drive the allegedly drunken friend of his girlfriend, Alexis Wilkins, home after partying in Nashville, according to a MS NOW report

Patel's use of agents to protect his girlfriend has been widely criticized, specifically his use of SWAT team members as her security detail

MS NOW reported that three sources claimed Wilkins, 27, asked her security detail at least twice to escort her friend home, including one instance in the spring. When the agents said no, Patel demanded they do so, according to the sources.

Patel allegedly called the lead agent on Wilkins' security team and yelled at him to drive Wilkins' friend home, MS NOW reported. The sources claimed such incidents have raised alarm among FBI agents, who "have grown increasingly concerned by Patel's use of the bureau's strapped resources," according to MS NOW.

FBI spokesperson Ben Williamson denied the events described in the MS NOW report, telling the outlet, "This is made up and did not happen."

MS NOW separately reported that Wilkins' security team — which includes elite agents typically assigned to Nashville's FBI field office — had sparked worry about potential delays in law enforcement response to emergency situations, citing two people "with direct knowledge" of the situation.

The use of such agents also raised concerns about abuse of power and misuse of resources. The New York Times reported in November that resources had been diverted from the SWAT team to Wilkins multiple times in a matter of months.

TRUMP "WINS" MADE UP AWARD – 12/5/25

Trump received the inaugural Fifa Peace Prize before the draw for the 2026 Fifa World Cup.

The award has been introduced this year by Fifa president Gianni Infantino, designated for a person who has "taken exceptional and extraordinary actions for peace" and "united people across the world".

As well as receiving a large golden trophy, Trump was also given a medal and certificate by Infantino before making a speech.

Trump stated he had saved "tens of millions of lives" through diplomatic interventions and had "stopped wars happening just before they started".

"This is truly one of the great honours of my life," Trump said, before claiming that the 2026 World Cup has set a new record for ticket sales.

"The world is a safer place now. The USA was not doing well a year ago; now we are the hottest country in the world right now."

The 2026 World Cup will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico, and will take place between June 11 and July 19.

Trump and Infantino have appeared together at many public events in recent months.

REP. GRIJALVA SAYS ICE PEPPER SPRAYED HER DURING RAID AT ARIZONA RESTAURANT – 12/5/25

U.S. Rep. Adelita Grijalva says federal agents pepper sprayed her during a Friday demonstration against an ICE raid at a popular restaurant on Tucson's west side.

In a video posted on X, the southern Arizona Democrat says she was sprayed in the face by a federal agent as she attempted to get more information about the raid.

"We just came up on a community that was protecting their people. We had, I would say maybe 40 ICE agents, most of them masked, in several vehicles, that the community had stopped right here," Grijalva said. "The biggest problem we have in this community, is that we have Trump, that has no regard for any due process, the rule of law, the constitution, they're literally disappearing people from the streets."

In an interview with the radio station KVOI, she said that the raid drew a crowd of some 60 people who were trying to stop ICE vehicles from leaving with two people they'd arrested inside.

Video on social media shows masked agents firing pepper balls as plumes of smoke engulf the road. ICE confirmed multiple people were in custody.

Federal officials said on Friday that Grijalva was not pepper sprayed and that agents with Homeland Security Investigations were targeting multiple Tucson restaurants as part of a years-long investigation into immigration and tax violations.

WOMEN GAMERS BOYCOTT GLOBAL VIDEO GAME TOURNAMENT OVER TRANS BAN – 12/5/25

After learning that trans women are banned from competing in an upcoming tournament for the video game Dead by Daylight, many female professional gamers have announced they will drop out of the event scheduled to take place in 2026.

Streamer and artist Julia Canda was the first to draw attention to the story. She posted on X on December 3 that she is withdrawing from Team USA in the tournament, officially known as the Dead by Daylight Women's World Cup.

"I love the idea of a fem tourney but one run by a male Kick streamer who has a history of using AI graphics doesn't sit right at all & if a percentage of women aren't allowed to participate (these being mostly trans women), I certainly won't be either," she wrote.

"None of the women participating were aware of any of this when signing up (including myself), so please do not fault any of the players," she continues. "If the tourney changes the rule regarding trans women, great. I'm hoping that bringing some attention to this can change that faster. I will still be leaving but good luck to everyone involved."

Canda also shared alleged screenshots from a Discord conversation with tournament organizer Fishcadito. In the conversation, Canda asked whether trans women are allowed to participate.

"For the World Cup, we've decided not to allow transgender women to participate, but we hope to include them in future tournaments," Fishcadito responded.

Twitch streamer Jiggledeath, who was going to be captain for the U.K.'s team in the DBD Women's World Cup, announced she will withdraw from the event on December 4.

"Unfortunately, I've been made aware that Trans Women are not allowed to participate, so I am withdrawing myself from this tournament," she wrote on X. "I stick by my community, and I don't want to take part in something which excludes some incredible women."

That same day, Squish, the captain for Team Canada in the tournament, announced that her team will be withdrawing from the competition as well.

"Trans women are women and we as a team do not stand with excluding trans women," Squish stated.

NETFLIX TO ACQUIRE WARNER BROS. FOR \$82.7 BILLION, GETS \$59 BILLION LOAN FOR THE DEAL – 12/5/25

Netflix, Inc. (the Company) and Warner Bros. Discovery, Inc. (WBD) announced they have entered into a definitive agreement under which Netflix will acquire Warner Bros., including its film and television studios, HBO Max and HBO.

The cash and stock transaction is valued at \$27.75 per WBD share (subject to a collar as detailed below), with a total enterprise value of approximately \$82.7 billion (equity value of \$72.0 billion). The transaction is expected to close after the previously announced separation of WBD's Global Networks division, Discovery Global, into a new publicly-traded company, which is now expected to be completed in Q3 2026.

Netflix Inc. has lined up \$59 billion of financing from Wall Street banks to help support its planned acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery Inc., which would make it one of the largest ever loans of its kind.

SUDANESE PARAMILITARY DRONE ATTACK KILLS 50, INCLUDING 33 CHILDREN – 12/6/25

A drone attack by the Sudanese paramilitary forces hit a kindergarten in south-central Sudan on Thursday, killing 50 people, including 33 children, a doctors' group said.

Paramedics on the scene in the town of Kalogi in South Kordofan state were targeted in "a second unexpected attack," the group said in a statement late Friday.

The death toll is expected to be higher, but communication blackouts in the area have made it difficult to report casualties.

Thursday's attack is the latest in the fighting between the paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, also known as the RSF, and the Sudanese military, who have been at war for over two years.

Hundreds of civilians were killed throughout the Kordofan states in the last few weeks as intensified fighting shifted from Darfur after the RSF took over the besieged city of el-Fasher.

Sudanese military aerial strikes on Sunday killed at least 48 people, mostly civilians, in Kauda, South Kordofan.

The RSF and the Sudanese military have been fighting for power over Sudan since 2023. More than 40,000 people were killed in the war, according to the World Health Organization, and 12 million displaced. However, aid groups say the true death toll could be way higher.

PRESSURE GROWS ON HEGSETH FOR WAR CRIMES AND MISHANDLING CLASSIFIED INFORMATION – 12/6/25

The Guardian reports that Pete Hegseth is facing allegations of war crimes in the Caribbean and a blistering inspector general report accusing him of mishandling classified military intelligence, with lawmakers from both parties calling for his resignation.

Despite this, Hegseth shows no signs of stepping down and still has Trump's support.

Lawmakers, policy experts and former officials say this reveal a pattern of dangerous recklessness at the helm of the Pentagon. Democratic legislators have reignited calls for his ouster after revelations that survivors clinging to wreckage from a September boat strike were deliberately killed in a "double-tap" attack, while a defense department investigation released on Thursday concluded he violated Pentagon policies by sharing sensitive details via the Signal messaging app hours before airstrikes in Yemen.

The Trump administration's strikes against suspected drug smugglers have killed at least 87 people across 22 attacks since September. Trump has justified the operation as essential to combating fentanyl trafficking, claiming each destroyed vessel saves 25,000 American lives, though factcheckers, former officials and drug policy experts have called this figure absurd, noting that fentanyl primarily enters the United States overland from Mexico, not via Caribbean boats from Venezuela.

The legality of the strikes came under intense scrutiny after the public learned that two men who survived the initial 2 September attack could be seen amid the wreckage when a lethal follow-up strike was ordered. While Hegseth initially dismissed the reporting as fabricated, he later confirmed the basic facts during a cabinet meeting this week, saying he acted in the "fog of war" but "didn't stick around" to observe the rest of the mission.

Senator Patty Murray, the Democratic vice-chair of the Senate appropriations committee, called for Hegseth's firing following a bipartisan briefing on the incident on Thursday. "Between overseeing this campaign in the

Caribbean, risking US servicemembers' lives by sharing war plans on Signal, and so much else, it could not be more obvious that Secretary Hegseth is unfit for the role, and it is past time for him to go," Murray said.

The New Democrat Coalition, the largest Democratic caucus in the House with 116 members, issued their own statement calling Hegseth "incompetent, reckless, and a threat to the lives of the men and women who serve in the armed forces". The Coalition chair, Brad Schneider, and national security working group chair, Gil Cisneros, accused the defense secretary of lying, deflecting and scapegoating subordinates while refusing to take accountability. "Time and time again, the secretary has lied, dodged, deflected, and shockingly scapegoated his subordinates," they said. "He is a disgrace to the office he holds and should resign immediately before his actions cost American lives."

Jake Braun, who helped design and implement the nation's first counter-fentanyl strategy, questioned why the administration was focusing military resources in the Caribbean rather than on primary trafficking routes.

While the White House initially suggested Adm Frank Bradley, commander of Southern Command special operations, ordered the follow-up strike in self-defense, Hegseth later said Bradley made the call with his authorization but had complete authority to act independently. Trump claimed to know nothing about the operational details, and even suggested he would not have wanted the second strike.

The defense department inspector general report released on Thursday also concluded that he violated Pentagon policies by using Signal to share precise details about upcoming airstrikes in Yemen, including the quantity and strike times of manned US aircraft over hostile territory, approximately two to four hours before the missions were executed on 15 March.

The report determined that Hegseth's actions "created a risk to operational security that could have resulted in failed US mission objectives and potential harm to US pilots". The information, which was marked as secret and not to be shared with foreign nationals, was transmitted via Hegseth's unclassified personal device in group chats with other Trump administration officials. The investigation also found he failed to retain all associated messages, violating federal record-keeping requirements.

Senator Jack Reed, the top Democrat on the armed services committee, said the report made clear that "Secretary Hegseth violated Department of Defense policies and shared information that was classified at the time it was sent to him. These were precise strike timings and locations that, had they fallen into enemy hands, could have enabled the Houthis to target American pilots."

Despite the inspector general's findings, Hegseth claimed he was vindicated on social media, posting from his personal account that there was "no classified information. Total exoneration. Case closed."

While the vast majority of calls for Hegseth's resignation have come from Democrats, some Republicans have expressed their own concerns. Senator Rand Paul suggested Hegseth had lied about the September boat attack, saying the defense secretary either "was lying to us or he's incompetent and didn't know it had happened". The Republican congressman Don Bacon told CNN he had "seen enough" to conclude Hegseth was not the right leader for the Pentagon.

Despite the twin controversies creating what those lawmakers have described as an untenable situation for the secretary, Trump has continued to back Hegseth publicly, with the White House expressing "the utmost confidence" in its national security team. Since the Senate is controlled by Republicans and Trump is maintaining his support, Hegseth is unlikely to face meaningful consequences.

At a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Hegseth showed no signs of backing down, saying the military has “only just begun striking narco-boats and putting narco-terrorists at the bottom of the ocean”, though he noted a pause because “it’s hard to find boats to strike right now”. Since then, a new strike killing four people was announced on Thursday.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ENDS FREE ENTRY FOR MLK DAY AND JUNETEENTH, ADDS TRUMP'S BIRTHDAY – 12/6/25

The National Park Service has eliminated free entry to all of its parks on Juneteenth and Martin Luther King Jr. Day, but has added Trump’s birthday as a free entry date.

The calendar of free entry dates on the National Park Service website confirms this change for 2026 and covers 116 parks, from Yellowstone, Yosemite and Grand Canyon to Everglades National Park and beyond.

DOJ STOPS ENFORCING PRISON RAPE PROTECTIONS FOR TRANS AND INTERSEX PEOPLE – 12/6/25

The Independent reports that the U.S. Department of Justice will "immediately" stop enforcing federal regulations protecting trans and intersex prisoners from rape and sexual assault, according to leaked documents.

In a memo obtained by the non-profit news outlet Prism, DoJ official Tammie M. Gregg told prison auditors across the nation to "immediately pause" all "compliance determinations" for key safety rules concerning LGBTQI+ inmates, and advise prisons to “disregard” them.

The memo, dated Dec. 2, addresses existing standards of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) that the department says conflict with Trump's January executive order declaring that trans people should always and only be treated as their birth sex under U.S. law. PREA was passed in 2003, and Obama’s administration added new protections for LGBTQIA+ people in 2012.

Those protections include requiring trans and intersex prisoners to be allowed separate showers, banning body searches purely for the purpose of finding out what genitals prisoners have, and requiring prison staff to consider their safety when assigning trans and intersex prisoners to male or female wings.

The proposed changes would affect all facilities that are subject to PREA standards, including adult prisons and jails, lockups, community confinement facilities such as halfway houses, and juvenile facilities that are operated by the DOJ, state, or local governments or by corporate or nonprofit organizations.

While the changes are not yet official, the memo instructs all PREA auditors to ignore those challenged provisions in their audits.

The DoJ's own data suggests that trans and intersex prisoners are at much higher risk of sexual violence in prison.

The DoJ has not commented publicly on the leaked memo, and The Independent has asked it to confirm or deny the memo’s authenticity. NPR also obtained a copy, corroborating its legitimacy.

[Link to the Memo and DoJ report](#)

TRUMP PARDONS FOR 2025 – 12/7/25

Since taking office in 2025, Trump has been handing out pardons like candy, favoring his supporters and campaign contributors.

He pardoned nearly all defendants charged with offenses related to the riot at the Capitol on January 6, 2021, a total of roughly 1,500 people. The pardons included people convicted of violent crimes against law enforcement.

He pardoned 23 anti-abortion activists who were convicted in 2023 under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act for blockading the entrance to a Washington, D.C., abortion clinic and intimidating staff and patients.

He has pardoned people who committed fraud to the tune of millions of dollars.

He also preemptively pardoned 77 people in a presidential proclamation announced November 9, 2025, for conduct relating to the Trump fake electors plot.

[Link to a List of Trump Pardons](#)

NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY ESTABLISHES THE US AS A SELFISH, CONSERVATIVE, RACIST BULLY – 12/6/25

The new National Security Strategy is out, and it is everything you would expect from this administration. It glorifies Trump, contains numerous lies, disparages “woke lunacy”, defines foreign policy as “the protection of core national interests” and says that is the “sole focus” of the document. It frames mass migration as a driver of crime, social breakdown, and economic distortion, and calls for a world where sovereign states cooperate to “stop rather than facilitate destabilizing population flows” and tightly control whom they admit.

The strategy states that the United States will “assert and enforce a ‘Trump Corollary’ to the Monroe Doctrine” to keep the Western Hemisphere free of “hostile foreign incursion or ownership of key assets”.

It also talks about protecting American culture, “spiritual health,” and “traditional families” as part of national security. The strategy states that “restoration and reinvigoration of American spiritual and cultural health” are prerequisites for long-term security and links this to an America that “cherishes its past glories and its heroes” and is sustained by “growing numbers of strong, traditional families” raising “healthy children.”

The strategy also stresses the “primacy of nations” and vow to resist “sovereignty-sapping incursions of the most intrusive transnational organizations,” promising to “reform” those institutions so they “assist rather than hinder individual sovereignty and further American interests.” It also warns against foreign attempts to “manipulate our immigration system to build up voting blocs loyal to foreign interests within our country.”

[Link to the 2025 National Security Strategy](#)

HEGSETH DECLARES END OF US 'UTOPIAN IDEALISM' WITH NEW MILITARY STRATEGY – 12/6/25

Politico reports that Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, speaking at the annual Reagan Defense Forum on Saturday, launched an attack on previous U.S. foreign policy, castigating former presidents and generals by name while declaring the age of American “utopian idealism” over.

His remarks reflected the points outlined in the new National Security Strategy released late Thursday and previewed the Pentagon's own upcoming strategy, which will lay out the military's global priorities.

"Out with idealistic utopianism," he said. "In with hard-nosed realism."

The U.S. should not be "distracted by democracy building, interventionism, undefined wars, regime change, climate change, woke moralizing and feckless nation-building," Hegseth said. "We will instead put our nation's practical, concrete interests first."

Hegseth praised countries such as South Korea, Poland and Germany for increasing defense spending in recent years, citing Trump's push to ensure countries pay more on their own defense.

"Allies are not children," he said. "We can and should expect them to do their part."

The Defense secretary also spoke about "supercharging the U.S. defense industrial base" with new investments in ships, drones and air defense systems such as the nascent Golden Dome project. They are part of the \$1 trillion defense budget that includes a \$150 billion boost from the megabill passed by Congress this year.

The National Security Strategy criticizes European allies for not embracing far-right parties that espouse ethnic nationalism, and says Washington will support efforts aimed at "restoring Europe's civilizational self-confidence and Western identity." But Hegseth on Saturday also rejected U.S. interventions in other countries' affairs.

The Trump administration will "rightly prioritize our homeland and hemisphere," he said. "Threats persist in other regions, and our allies need to step up, and step up for real."

CINNABON EMPLOYEE FIRED AFTER RACIST TIRADE CAUGHT ON VIDEO, RAISES \$20,000 ON GIVESENDGO – 12/7/25

A Cinnabon employee was fired after she went on a racist tirade that was caught on video.

The video shows a worker named Crystal mocking a woman's hijab and using racist language toward the customers. The couple began recording the interaction after the worker's comments.

The clip then shows the employee continuing to hurl insults and making obscene gestures before the exchange ends.

The video has nearly 10 million views on X. It was not stated when the video was taken, but it was posted on December 6.

Cinnabon posted on X in response to the video.

"We've seen the disturbing video from the Cinnabon bakery in Ashwaubenon, WI, and we do not condone this behavior. The former employee was immediately terminated by the franchise owner. Their actions do not reflect our values or the welcoming experience every guest deserves."

A GiveSendGo fundraiser supporting the fired worker appeared online soon after the video circulated. Organizers set the page up to collect donations for the employee's legal and living expenses. The fundraiser totalled over \$20,000 within days of the clip going viral.

TEXAS AND FLORIDA SUE FDA IN NEW BID TO BLOCK ABORTION PILL ACCESS – 12/9/25

Texas and Florida have launched a lawsuit against the U.S. Food and Drug Administration over the agency's approval of mifepristone, marking the state's latest effort to crack down on access to abortion pills.

Mifepristone, when used with misoprostol, is the most common way Americans end their pregnancies. Studies have also shown the drug to be safe and effective.

Joined by Florida, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton filed the case on Dec. 9 in federal court in Wichita Falls. The two states argued in a 120-page complaint that the FDA did not properly evaluate mifepristone's safety and effectiveness when approving the drug in 2000.

In addition, the lawsuit argues that the Comstock Act of 1873 prohibits the mailing or delivery of anything intended for producing abortion, which could affect more than just mifepristone. The Biden administration interpreted this law, which has been unenforced for decades, to only cover unlawful abortions.

The FDA said in a statement that it does not comment on litigation.

The lawsuit comes days after Texas House Bill 7, which allows private citizens to sue anyone who manufactures or distributes abortion drugs to or from the state, went into effect.

TRUMP WINE AND CIDER BEING SOLD AT COAST GUARD EXCHANGES – 12/9/25

Coast Guard Exchanges at the Coast Guard's headquarters in Washington, D.C. and in Centreville, Virginia recently stocked and sold Trump-branded wine and cider for sale to federal employees.

The United States Constitution's Domestic Emoluments Clause prevents the president from receiving profits, gains or advantages from the federal government outside of his government salary and benefits.

CREW (Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington) reports that it has requested records from the U.S. Coast Guard concerning the sale of Trump-branded alcoholic beverages at Coast Guard Exchanges, a network of retail stores providing tax-free goods and services to authorized military and DHS personnel and their families. In addition, CREW is requesting all communications between the Coast Guard and Trump family businesses involved in the production and distribution of these products.

PROPOSAL REQUIRES TOURISTS TO SUBMIT 5 YEARS OF SOCIAL MEDIA HISTORY TO ENTER U.S.– 12/10/25

The Trump administration is proposing to require visitors from 42 nations that enjoy visa-free travel to the U.S. to submit additional personal information before entering the country, including five years of their social media history, the Department of Homeland Security said in a notice this week.

Citizens of 42 countries enrolled in the visa waiver program can generally come to the U.S. for up to 90 days for tourism or business travel, without needing to apply for a visa.

The list of countries in the program includes many European nations like the United Kingdom, Germany and France, as well as some U.S. allies around the world, including Australia, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.

Citizens of these nations submit an application online using a process known as the Electronic System for Travel Authorization, or ESTA, before entering the country. That system is designed to ensure applicants are eligible for visa-free travel to the U.S., and that they don't pose security concerns.

The Trump administration is proposing to overhaul the ESTA system, mainly to transform it into a mobile-only process. The plan was outlined in a notice posted in the federal government's journal of regulations by Customs and Border Protection, a branch of DHS.

The notice said CBP plans to ask visa waiver travelers to share their social media history for the past five years, emails they have used for the past 10 years and the personal information of immediate family members, including phone numbers and residences. The submission of social media history from the last five years will be a mandatory requirement under the proposal, according to the notice.

CBP said the changes, which still have to be reviewed by the White House's budget office, are designed to enforce an executive order Trump issued earlier this year with the stated objective of denying entry to foreigners who may pose a threat to national security or public safety.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has previously instructed officials to investigate the social media history of several classes of immigrants, including for views and activities deemed to be "anti-American." It has also directed adjudicators to more intensely probe the "good moral character" of legal immigrants requesting U.S. citizenship.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONGO – 12/11/25

Reuters has recently published an investigative report on the current sexual violence in Congo.

Their report states that sexual assaults have soared in the Democratic Republic of Congo since the Rwanda-backed rebels of M23 seized a large swathe of eastern Congo in their bid to topple the government in Kinshasa. Earlier this year, the United Nations children's agency UNICEF stated that a child is raped there every 30 minutes.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the U.N.'s reproductive and sexual health agency, through the first nine months of 2025, a reported 81,388 rapes occurred in eastern Congo, a 31.5% increase over the same period in 2024. It also said one-third of the victims were under the age of 18, and that these assaults were largely committed by armed men from all parties in the conflict.

Rape has long been used as a weapon of war through decades of strife between the DRC's military, ethnic Hutu militias and Tutsi insurgents.

Those figures are almost certainly a fraction of the actual toll, said Noemi Dalmonte, UNFPA's deputy representative in Congo. Women and girls there often don't disclose their assaults out of fear of reprisals by their attackers, she said. Hospital and aid workers who collect victim testimonies are likewise fearful of being targeted. Shame and social stigma inhibit victims, too. Yet each week hundreds more Congolese women and girls come forward to report sexual violence by armed combatants, Dalmonte said.

UNICEF spokesman James Elder said in April that "the rate of sexual violence against children has never been higher" in Congo, calling it a "deliberate tactic of terror."

The detailed report can be found here: https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/congo-security-rapes/?utm_social_post_id=620472388&utm_social_handle_id=1652541&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=twitter

HUD ACCUSES BOSTON OF DISCRIMINATING AGAINST WHITE PEOPLE – 12/12/25

Mother Jones reports that The Department of Housing and Urban Development announced Thursday that it is opening an investigation into Boston’s housing policies, accusing the city of discriminating against white people.

“No person or entity—the City of Boston included—is permitted to violate civil rights protections in the name of ‘Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,’” Craig Trainor, the assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity, wrote in a letter to Mayor Michelle Wu. The department is alleging that the city government had prioritized people of color in its affordable housing strategy and encouraged industry leaders to work with those communities.

Wu’s office, in a statement to Boston 25 News, said, “Boston will never abandon our commitment to fair and affordable housing, and we will defend our progress to keep Bostonians in their homes against these unhinged attacks from Washington.”

In HUD’s letter, Trainor repeatedly mentions sections from a 2022 report from the city. That document, “City of Boston Assessment of Fair Housing,” details efforts to combat gentrification and outlines specific programs targeting Black and Latino residents, who the report says face increased risks of eviction and housing discrimination.

Boston has already been fighting against the Trump administration since May of this year.

In May, Boston joined a lawsuit to challenge the Trump administration’s decision to cancel \$3.6 billion in housing and homelessness prevention grants if communities didn’t fall in line with the president’s executive orders.

Earlier this month, Wu also announced that the City of Boston would join 11 other jurisdictions and nonprofit organizations in filing a lawsuit to “stop the Trump administration from creating unlawful and unreasonable restrictions on funding for proven solutions to homelessness, threatening to push hundreds of thousands of families and individuals onto the street as cold winter months arrive.”

TSA HAS BEEN FORWARDING NAMES, PHOTOS, AND FLIGHT DETAILS TO ICE SINCE MARCH 2025 – 12/13/25

Since March 2025 the Transportation Security Administration has been forwarding passenger lists to Immigration and Customs Enforcement in order to detain and deport travelers, according to documents obtained by the New York Times.

A Times report Friday revealed that the TSA provided the information that led to ICE’s arrest of university student Any Lucía at Boston’s Logan airport while she was on her way to visit her family for Thanksgiving. She has since been deported.

On a near-daily basis since March, the agency has been sending files to ICE that include photographs of the person targeted for deportation, and flight information that ICE employs to detain people before they board.

The Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to a request for comment regarding the TSA’s collaboration with ICE and the secrecy around it.

TSA MOVES TO END THEIR WORKFORCE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT – 12/15/25

The TSA says that starting in 2026, it will officially rescind the collective bargaining agreement it reached with its workforce in 2024.

The collective bargaining agreement was formed by the agency and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the union representing TSA workers, in May 2024. The agreement covered 47,000 TSA officers, guaranteeing them benefits like fewer restrictions on sick leave and increased uniform allowances, and was supposed to last for seven years.

The agency has announced that a “new labor framework” will instead be put in place as of January 11, 2026.

The elimination of the agreement is based on a determination from Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem from September 2025 entitled “Eliminating Collective Bargaining at TSA Due to its Incompatibility with TSA’s National Security Mission and its Adverse Impact on Resources, Flexibility, Mission Focus, Security Effectiveness, and Traveler Experience.”

The text of that determination has not been released.

Noem had previously tried to cancel the agreement in March 2025, but that action was blocked by a Washington U.S. District Court in June.

The AFGE has called the end of the agreement “a slap in the face” and “an illegal act of retaliatory union-busting that should cause concern for every person who steps foot in an airport.”

The union says that it will continue to challenge the move to end the agreement in court.

LAWSUIT ALLEGES KRYSTAL RIVERA'S PARTNER “LEFT HER TO DIE” AFTER RELATIONSHIP ENDED – 12/15/25

Block Club Chicago reports that the mother of Chicago Police Officer Krystal Rivera has filed a lawsuit against the department and her police partner — alleging he “left her to die” after shooting her in a botched police chase shortly after Rivera ended their romantic relationship.

The wrongful death lawsuit filed in Cook County court Thursday claims Rivera, 36, planned to tell the live-in girlfriend of her police partner, Officer Carlos Baker, about their “on-and-off romantic relationship” that went on for almost two years. Baker had lied to Rivera, who started to decline his advances, about being romantically involved with someone else, according to the lawsuit.

Baker, 28, showed up at Rivera’s home uninvited the day before her death. On June 5, the two officers were back working together when they chased a man into a Chatham apartment building, where they encountered another armed man. Baker then fired a single fatal shot that hit Rivera in the back.

Baker made an “intentional decision” not to give Rivera medical aid, call for back-up or request an ambulance, attorney Antonio Romanucci, representing Rivera’s mother Yolanda Rivera, said in a press conference Thursday announcing the lawsuit. Instead, Baker “immediately ran to the third floor of the apartment building,” according to the lawsuit. Police officials have previously said he continued to chase the suspect in the building.

That left Rivera to radio in her own shooting, but police dispatch could not understand her due to the severity of her wounds, according to the lawsuit. Dispatch eventually requested a backup car at the location where Rivera radioed in.

Responding officers got Rivera into a police car and tried to rush her to a hospital, but they crashed and the car caught fire. Rivera was moved into another car and taken to the hospital, where she died from the gunshot wound.

“Baker’s failure to render aid to Rivera was motivated by Baker’s knowledge that Rivera’s death would prevent her from making disclosures that would likely destroy his relationship with his long-term girlfriend,” the lawsuit reads.

The department was aware of Rivera and Baker’s romantic relationship and break-up but kept them on the same tactical team, Romanucci said. That’s despite Rivera previously asking to be reassigned because of concerns that Baker was “reckless,” he said.

The lawsuit claims Rivera was granted a new partner in June 2023, but Baker was reassigned to her specialized tactical team in April 2024. A month later, Baker was removed from the team because of his “lack of years of service,” according to the lawsuit. But around March, he was reassigned to the team — with Rivera as his partner.

“This tragedy was absolutely foreseeable,” Romanucci said. “Not only foreseeable as result of Baker’s willful and wanton conduct, but also because of the city of Chicago’s own negligence with respect to the retention and supervision of Baker.”

The Chicago Police Department has described Rivera’s killing as an accident. A police spokesperson said it would not comment on pending litigation. Baker’s attorney did not immediately return a request for comment Thursday.

Baker was stripped of policing powers in August following a separate case where the department claimed he tried to use his position to obtain surveillance footage of a fight he got into with another female police officer outside a Wicker Park bar.

Baker racked up 11 misconduct complaints in under three years on the force, making him one of the department’s “worst performers,” Romanucci said Thursday. The officer faced five misconduct complaints while he was still on probationary status, a time when he could have more easily been fired, according to the lawsuit.

Romanucci said Baker should have never been a police officer — let alone advanced to the Gresham District tactical team.

The first major warning sign came in 2022, when Baker was accused of flashing a gun at a woman while she was on a date with another man, which Romanucci said should have “ended” his police career. The Civilian Office of Police Accountability, Chicago’s police watchdog agency, closed an investigation into the matter “unusually fast” in 3.5 months, according to the lawsuit.

Jennifer Rottner, a spokesperson for the watchdog group, said in a statement sent Thursday the investigation was closed because of a lack of evidence and cooperation from the woman.

In a previous press conference with her attorneys, Yolanda Rivera called on the Chicago Police Department to release body camera and dash cam footage of the incident, as well make public the personnel files on Baker. She also called for Illinois State Police to conduct an independent investigation in the police shooting.

A Chicago police spokesperson said Thursday the Rivera shooting was under the jurisdiction of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability. The police watchdog agency still has an open investigation into Rivera's death, Rottner said in a statement Thursday.

TRUMP RANTS IN EGO-CENTRIC POST ABOUT ROB REINER AFTER HIS KILLING – 12/15/25

Following the tragic killing of actor-director Rob Reiner and his wife, Trump decided to rant on social media, simultaneously blaming their deaths on their opposition to him as well as praising his own greatness.

In his post on Monday, Trump said Reiner and his wife were killed "reportedly due to the anger he caused others through his massive, unyielding, and incurable affliction with a mind crippling disease known as TRUMP DERANGEMENT SYNDROME."

He said Reiner "was known to have driven people CRAZY by his raging obsession of President Donald J. Trump, with his obvious paranoia reaching new heights as the Trump Administration surpassed all goals and expectations of greatness."

TRUMP CALLS FOR BLOCKADE OF ALL VENEZUELAN OIL TANKERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA – 12/16/25

Trump said Tuesday he is ordering a blockade of all "sanctioned oil tankers" into Venezuela.

This comes after U.S. forces seized an oil tanker off Venezuela's coast last week, as well as a recent buildup of military forces in the region. In a post on social media Tuesday night announcing the blockade, Trump alleged Venezuela was using oil to fund drug trafficking and other crimes and vowed to continue the military buildup until the country gave the U.S. oil, land and assets, bizarrely claiming that the assets were stolen from the United States.

"Venezuela is completely surrounded by the largest Armada ever assembled in the History of South America," Trump said in his post on social media. "It will only get bigger, and the shock to them will be like nothing they have ever seen before — Until such time as they return to the United States of America all of the Oil, Land, and other Assets that they previously stole from us."

Pentagon officials referred all questions about the post to the White House.

HOUSE PASSES BILL SUBJECTING UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILDREN TO BODY SEARCHES – 12/16/25

On 12/16/25, The House of Representatives narrowly passed H.R. 4371, which would subject unaccompanied immigrant children to invasive body searches and prolonged immigration detention, preventing their release to loved ones in the U.S.

This bill now moves on to the Senate for approval.

SENATE PASSES \$901 BILLION DEFENSE BILL – 12/17/25

The Senate passed the annual National Defense Authorization Act Wednesday, authorizing \$901 billion in defense programs.

Included in the act is:

- Legislation allowing military aircraft to obtain a waiver to operate without broadcasting their precise location, as an Army helicopter had done before a midair collision with an airliner in Washington, D.C., in January that killed 67 people.
- Language that threatens to withhold a quarter of Hegseth's travel budget until he provides unedited video of the strikes with the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, as well as the orders authorizing them.
- Requirements that Congress be kept in the loop on decisions such as intelligence sharing and reductions in troop presence going forward, as well as when top military brass are removed.
- Requiring the Pentagon to keep at least 76,000 troops and major equipment stationed in Europe unless NATO allies are consulted and there is a determination that such a withdrawal is in U.S. interests. Around 80,000 to 100,000 U.S. troops are usually present on European soil. A similar requirement also keeps the number of U.S. troops stationed in South Korea at 28,500.
- Authorizing \$400 million for each of the next two years to manufacture weapons to be sent to Ukraine.
- Repealing all military diversity, equity and inclusion offices and trainings, including the position of chief diversity officer.
- Cutting \$1.6 billion in climate-change related programs at the Pentagon.
- Repealing the authorization for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Now that Iraq is a strategic partner of the U.S., lawmakers in support of the provision say the repeal is crucial to prevent future abuses.
- Repealing the 1991 authorization that sanctioned the U.S.-led Gulf War.
- Permanently lifting U.S. sanctions on Syria.

PRAIRIE BAND POTAWATOMI NATION'S LLC BACKS OUT OF ICE CONTRACT – 12/17/25

In an address to the Potawatomi Nation today, tribal board chair Joseph “Zeke” Rupnick announced they have backed out of their previous contract with ICE.

"I am happy to share that our nation has successfully exited all third party related interest affiliated with ICE," Rupnick said. "As a result, Prairie Band LLC is no longer a direct or indirect donor or participant in or otherwise affiliated with any ICE projects, contracts or operations."

He also said the Tribal Council will discuss steps to ensure issues like this do not happen in the future.

Prairie Band LLC earned a yearlong \$29,914,916 contract on October 31 to design Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers and "concept designs of processing centers and mega centers throughout the US."

On Dec. 9, the tribe announced that senior leadership of the LLC would be fired as a result of the contract.

NOEM CALLED OUT FOR LYING ABOUT DEPORTING VETERANS AT CONGRESSIONAL HEARING – 12/17/25

Noem was called into Capitol Hill last Wednesday to testify to members of Congress concerning recent actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The hearing took a surprisingly awkward turn when Rep. Seth Magaziner (D-Rhode Island) quizzed Noem on recent deportations involving veterans.

“Madam Secretary, how many U.S. military veterans have you deported?” Magaziner asked.

“Sir, we have not deported U.S. citizens or military veterans,” Noem said.

That’s when an assistant to Magaziner brought up an iPad with Sae Joon Park’s face on the screen. The veteran was on live video from South Korea. After living in Hawaii for more than two decades, Park self-deported back to his native Korea in June, a place he hasn’t called home for nearly 50 years.

Park, 55, received a Purple Heart for his service in 1989 to overthrow Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega.

Park was shot twice. After being transported back to the U.S., Park was honorably discharged. Like many other veterans, for Park, physical wounds healed, but mental scars remained.

Instead of receiving mental health treatment, he began abusing drugs to try to numb his pain. One night in New York, he was arrested while trying to purchase drugs. Park skipped a court hearing and, along with drug possession, he was charged with bail jumping.

Park turned his life around and maintains he’s been drug-free for more than 15 years. However, Park’s criminal past made becoming a citizen harder. Typically, the U.S. allows expedited naturalization for veterans who served a year in the military. Park was discharged prior to completing 12 months, and the Panamanian invasion was not considered a “period of hostility.”

ICE is currently detaining other veterans who fear they will be deported, such as Godfrey Wade, an Army veteran who has spent the past three months in a Georgia detention center, fearing he will soon be sent to his native Jamaica.

BROWN UNIVERSITY SHOOTING LEAVES TWO DEAD AND NINE INJURED, SHOOTER STILL AT LARGE – 12/17/25

On Saturday, 12/13/25, a gunman opened fire at the Barus & Holley building on Brown University’s campus where students were preparing for finals.

The shooting left two students dead and nine injured at the Ivy League school in Providence, Rhode Island.

One shooting victim remains in critical condition, two have been discharged from the hospital and the six others are in various stable conditions.

The shooter remains at large, although the police are currently looking for assistance from the public in identifying a person of interest.

JACK SMITH SPEAKS TO COMMITTEE ABOUT DROPPED CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST TRUMP – 12/17/25

Former Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith told the House Judiciary Committee in a closed-door interview Wednesday that his investigators “developed proof beyond a reasonable doubt” that Trump criminally conspired to overturn 2020 election results. Trump also acted illegally by removing and storing classified

documents from his first term as president at his Mar-a-Lago estate, and by obstructing government efforts to recover the records, according to portions of his opening statement obtained by The Associated Press.

“I made my decisions in the investigation without regard to President Trump’s political association, activities, beliefs, or candidacy in the 2024 election,” Smith said. “We took actions based on what the facts and the law required — the very lesson I learned early in my career as a prosecutor.”

The deposition before the House Judiciary Committee gave lawmakers of both parties their first chance to question Smith about his investigations into Trump.

Smith was appointed in 2022 to oversee the Justice Department investigations into Trump’s efforts to overturn his 2020 loss to Biden and Trump’s hoarding of classified documents at Mar-a-Lago. Smith’s team filed charges in both investigations but dropped the charges after Trump was elected in 2024, citing Justice Department legal opinions that say a sitting president cannot be indicted.

Smith was subpoenaed by the Republican-led committee this month to provide testimony and documents as part of a GOP investigation into the Trump inquiries during the administration of Democratic President Joe Biden.

Smith volunteered previously to answer questions publicly before the committee, an option which was rebuffed by Republicans.

TRUMP ADDS HIS OWN PETULANT LABELS TO WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENTIAL PORTRAITS – 12/17/25

Trump has added his own plaques to the portraits of all U.S. commanders in chief on his Presidential Walk of Fame at the White House, deriding those he dislikes and trying to tie himself to other Republican presidents. This includes describing Joe Biden as “sleepy,” Barack Obama as “divisive” and Ronald Reagan as a fan of a young Trump.

EUROPE PARLIAMENT VOTES TO EXPAND ABORTION ACCESS IN HISTORIC BALLOT – 12/17/25

On 12/17, the European Parliament voted in support of an EU fund to expand access to abortion for women across the bloc, in a historic ballot that divided lawmakers.

The plan would establish a voluntary, opt-in financial mechanism to help countries provide abortion care to the thousands of European women travel every year to another EU country to access abortion care. European citizens presented the plan in an EU petition through the campaign group “My Voice, My Choice.”

Lawmakers in Strasbourg voted 358 in favor and 202 against the proposal, while 79 MEPs abstained.

“This vote is a huge win for every woman in Europe. The EU has finally shown that sexual and reproductive health care is a basic human right,” Sweden’s Abir Al-Sahlani said after the vote. Al-Sahlani tabled the resolution on behalf of the women’s rights and gender equality committee.

Equality Commissioner Hadja Lahbib said that this initiative “does not seek to interfere with national laws on abortion.”

Abortion laws vary greatly across Europe, from near-total bans in Poland and Malta to liberal rules in the Netherlands and the U.K.

The Commission has until March 2026 to respond, but does not have to support the proposal.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION FIRES ABOUT TWO DOZEN BIDEN-ERA CAREER AMBASSADORS – 12/19/25

The Trump administration is recalling about two dozen career ambassadors appointed by former President Joe Biden.

John Dinkelman, president of the American Foreign Service Association, the diplomats' union, said the group had been getting reports from numerous ambassadors who were told via phone calls that they had to be gone by Jan. 15 or Jan. 16. They were not given a reason.

While it is normal for presidents to replace political appointees serving as ambassadors, career diplomats are typically allowed to continue serving.

But the Trump administration has called the State Department a bastion of liberalism, and has already pushed out thousands of department employees.

The State Department released a statement insisting that the recalls were “a standard process in any administration.”

“An ambassador is a personal representative of the president and it is the president’s right to ensure that he has individuals in these countries who advance the America First agenda,” the department said in the statement.

The removals by the Trump administration have already left numerous posts vacant, with about 80 ambassadorships currently vacant.

BULGARIAN CITIZEN DIES IN ICE CUSTODY AT WEST MICHIGAN FACILITY – 12/19/25

A Bulgarian citizen died Monday while in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency at a West Michigan facility. He had been living in Illinois before his arrest.

Nenko Stanev Gantchev, 56, was found unresponsive on the floor of his cell Sunday evening in the North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin, ICE said in a press release.

According to the press release, facility medical staff began CPR and EMS arrived shortly afterwards. A doctor pronounced him dead at about 9:54 p.m. His death is believed to be from natural causes, the agency said, with the underlying issue remaining under investigation.

Gantchev did have lawful permanent resident status from 2005 until 2009, the press release said. But in 2023, an immigration judge ordered him to leave the U. S. and return to Bulgaria.

On Sept. 30, ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations unit in Chicago arrested him on a warrant. An immigration judge denied a custody re-determination, and Gantchev appealed that decision.

Two Democratic House Representatives — Rashida Tlaib (Michigan-District 12) and Delia C. Ramirez (Illinois-District 3) — released a joint statement on the incident and response, saying:

"We are deeply concerned about the death of Mr. Gantchev, an Illinois resident who was detained at the for-profit GEO Group's North Lake Processing Center. While ICE claims he died of natural causes, the circumstances surrounding his death are not yet clear, and we know there have been numerous complaints from family members and advocates about inhumane conditions and inadequate medical care at North Lake. We demand an immediate, transparent investigation into the circumstances of Mr. Gantchev's death, including an investigation into reports from other detainees that he asked for medical assistance and did not receive it in time to save his life."

TRUMP ILLEGALLY ADDS HIS NAME TO THE KENNEDY CENTER – 12/19/25

Trump's name has been added to signage on the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts. Trump's self-appointed board gave its approval to a Trump Kennedy Center name change.

The logo on the website was also updated on Thursday to read, "The Trump Kennedy Center."

Kennedy Center spokeswoman Roma Daravi confirmed the decision and also described it as unanimous.

However, Rep. Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, an ex-officio member of the board, disputed that the vote was unanimous.

"For the record. This was not unanimous. I was muted on the call and not allowed to speak or voice my opposition to this move," the congresswoman wrote in a post on X

This name change is illegal and such a change would require an act of Congress.

The original laws that guided the creation of the Kennedy Center during the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations specifically prohibited the renaming of the building.

ICE ARRESTS US CITIZEN, CLAIMS HER BIRTH CERTIFICATE IS FAKE - 12/19/25

Huffpost reports that Dulce Consuelo Diaz Morales, 22, who was born in Maryland, has spent days in ICE detention despite being a U.S. citizen with a valid birth certificate and other documentation, because ICE claims her documents aren't authentic.

Shirley Elvirita, Diaz Morales' 17-year-old sister, told HuffPost that she, her sister and their father were surrounded by several vehicles filled with law enforcement personnel, who pulled them over. Officers ignored Shirley's questions and took her sister "forcefully" into one of the vans.

"I kept shouting at them that she was from here, but they wouldn't listen to me," the younger sister said. "I showed them our identifications, and they didn't pay me any attention, they went straight to my sister because she's darker than me."

"To me, it seemed like racial profiling. I have not been given a legitimate reason why she would have been picked up," Victoria Slatton, one of the attorneys working on her case, said. "I have not seen any evidence that they went there to find her, or that she was doing anything wrong."

Diaz Morales was sent to a holding room at Baltimore's ICE office. ICE then transferred her to Louisiana, a state with a reputation as a deportation hub.

Diaz Morales' father, Manuel Madrigal, said that while he had been in touch with his daughter's legal team, she still hadn't had the chance to speak to a lawyer. Diaz Morales' legal team told HuffPost that they were able to schedule a virtual appointment for Monday, Dec. 22.

“We spent, I think, close to five hours waiting in Baltimore to speak to her, before we were told they had moved her out of state in the middle of the night,” said Zachary Perez, another attorney working on Diaz Morales’ case. “We suspect — we don’t have proof — we suspect they did this because they knew we were going to file the lawsuit.”

“The court entered an order enjoining ICE from removing her,” Slatton said.

TRUMP'S FDA SENDS WARNING LETTERS TO COMPANIES SELLING CHEST BINDERS – 12/19/25

The Advocate reports that Trump's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has sent warning letters to nearly a dozen companies that sell chest binders, claiming that they have "misbranded" medical devices.

The FDA sent the letters on Tuesday to 11 companies — TransGuy Supply, the Fluxion, GenderBender, ShapeShifter Apparel, Marli Washington Design, TomboyX, FLAVNT Streetwear, Early to Bed, TOMSCOUT, For Them, and UNTAG (formerly Trans-Missie) — for not registering their products as Class I medical devices for 2026. The companies have not been required to do so in previous years, as chest binders have never before been considered medical devices, and three of the companies are not even located in the United States.

In the letters, FDA Director Michael J. Hoffmann claimed that "these products are devices because they are intended for use in the diagnosis of disease or other conditions or in the cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, or to affect the structure or any function of the body." Hoffman referenced information from the companies' websites that claim the products can alleviate gender dysphoria.

The letters were sent as part of the Department of Health and Human Services' recent crackdown on gender-affirming care for youth. The agency announced at a press conference Thursday that it is issuing proposals to ban the life-saving care for those under age 18, and to prevent both Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) from covering the treatment.

Gender dysphoria is classified as a medical condition. However, chest binders have no use beyond temporary aesthetics. They are also frequently used for cosplay and theater costumes, similar to wearing shapewear, compression clothing, or sports bras.

DOJ ONLY RELEASES SOME EPSTEIN FILES, FILES ALREADY REMOVED FROM DOJ WEBSITE – 12/20/25

The DOJ released a limited, heavily redacted trove of Jeffrey Epstein files in violation of the law mandating the near-complete disclosure of these documents by Friday.

“The justice department’s document dump this afternoon does not comply with Thomas Massie and my Epstein Transparency Act,” Ro Khanna, the California Democratic congressman who co-authored the law requiring full disclosure of all Epstein files by 19 December, said in a video statement.

“It is an incomplete release, with too many redactions. Thomas Massie and I are exploring all options,” he also said, among them possible impeachment of justice department officials, finding them in contempt of Congress.

On Saturday the justice department released some new files, including transcripts, but also removed more than a dozen others from its website related to Epstein, with no explanation.

At least 16 files disappeared from the department's public webpage, according to an Associated Press tally. The documents included images of paintings depicting nude women, and one showing a series of photographs along a credenza and in drawers. In that image, inside a drawer among other photos, is a photograph of Trump, alongside Epstein, Melania Trump and Epstein's longtime associate Ghislaine Maxwell.

Democrats on the House oversight committee pointed to the missing image featuring a Trump photo in a post on X, writing: "What else is being covered up? We need transparency for the American public."

Trump's justice department was required to release all investigative files involving Epstein by 19 December under the Epstein Files Transparency Act. The legislation does allow for records to be withheld or redacted if their disclosure would imperil present criminal investigations, threaten national security or identify Epstein's victims – but otherwise it mandates disclosure of everything else.

Todd Blanche, Trump's former criminal defense lawyer turned deputy attorney general, said the justice department would not release all its files on Friday.

"I expect that we're going to release more documents over the next couple of weeks, so today several hundred thousand and then over the next couple weeks, I expect several hundred thousand more," Blanche also said in a Fox News interview. "There's a lot of eyes looking at these and we want to make sure that when we do produce the materials we are producing, that we are protecting every single victim."

New York congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was among the lawmakers slamming Trump's justice department.

"Now the coverup is out in the open. This is far from over. Everyone involved will have to answer for this," Ocasio-Cortez, a New York Democrat, said on X on Friday. "Pam Bondi, Kash Patel, whole admin. Protecting a bunch of rapists and pedophiles because they have money, power, and connections. Bondi should resign tonight."

BUDDHIST MONKS ON DAY 56 OF TREK FROM TEXAS TO DC IN 'WALK FOR PEACE' PILGRIMAGE – 12/20/25

The group of Buddhist monks on a 120-day, 2,300-mile journey on foot from Fort Worth, Texas, to Washington D.C. has reached Hayneville, AL on Day 56.

The are joined in their walk by their loyal dog, Aloka.

The purpose of the walk is to promote unity, compassion, and healing across the nation.

NICKI MINAJ APPEARS AT TURNING POINT USA'S AMFEST, PRAISES TRUMP AND VANCE – 12/21/25

Nicki Minaj made a surprise appearance at Turning Point USA's AmericaFest on Sunday in Phoenix alongside Erika Kirk. The pair arrived onstage to Minaj's song "Super Bass," entering the venue holding hands. They hugged before a Q&A session, which involved Minaj fawning over Trump and J.D. Vance.

"This administration is full of people with heart and soul, and they make me proud of them. Our vice president, he makes me ... well, I love both of them," Minaj said. "Both of them have a very uncanny ability to be someone that you relate to."

She also called Trump “dashing” and “handsome”.

JD VANCE SAYS WHITES DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR BEING WHITE ANYMORE – 12/21/25

In his speech at Turning Point USA’s AmericaFest on Sunday in Phoenix, JD Vance said the following, “In the United States of America, you don’t have to apologize for being white anymore.”

DONALD TRUMP JR. ENGAGED TO DAUGHTER OF BANKER BUDDY OF EPSTEIN – 12/21/25

The father of Donald Trump Jr’s fiancée once wrote a letter of recommendation on behalf of Jeffrey Epstein, a report has claimed.

Harry Loy Anderson Jr, the late father of socialite Bettina Anderson, vouched for the pedophile in 1999 in a letter submitted to the authorities in the US Virgin Islands.

Bettina’s engagement to Don Jr. was announced at the White House on Monday.

Anderson, president of the Palm Beach National Bank & Trust Company in Florida, wrote that Epstein should be entitled to some generous tax incentives, which would have saved him tens of millions of dollars a year, because he was 'a gentleman of the highest integrity', adding that Epstein 'enjoys an excellent reputation in our community', the New York Times Magazine reported.

Epstein wanted to locate his “financial advisory company” to the US Virgin Islands and applied for a generous tax break – but needed somebody to vouch for him, the Times Magazine reported.

Harry Loy Anderson stepped up to do just that. Epstein had kept his accounts at the Palm Beach National Bank & Trust Company for years by that point.

Epstein made large payments to Ghislaine Maxwell through his accounts at the Palm Beach National Bank, including a \$5 million transfer in September 2002.

60 MINUTES PULLS STORY ABOUT EL SALVADOR PRISON HOURS BEFORE SCHEDULED BROADCAST – 12/21/25

60 Minutes was scheduled to air a story on 12/21/25 about deportees who were sent by the Trump administration to prison in El Salvador, covering the notorious conditions at the prison. A notification was posted hours before the scheduled broadcast, stating that the segment was postponed and would be broadcast at a later date.

TRUMP SAYS ‘WE HAVE TO HAVE’ GREENLAND AFTER NAMING LANDRY AS SPECIAL ENVOY – 12/22/25

Trump is antagonizing Denmark again after appointing Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry as special envoy to Greenland.

Trump said the US needed Greenland for "national protection" and that "we have to have it".

Landry, he said, would "lead the charge" as special envoy to Greenland, a semi-autonomous part of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Denmark's Foreign Minister, Lars Lokke Rasmussen, described the appointment of Landry as "deeply upsetting" and warned Washington to respect Danish sovereignty.

Greenland's Prime Minister, Jens-Frederik Nielsen, said, "The appointment of a special envoy does not change anything for us. We decide our own future. Greenland belongs to Greenlanders, and territorial integrity must be respected."

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a post on X that the EU stands in "full solidarity with Denmark and the people of Greenland".

Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has revived his long-standing interest in Greenland, citing its strategic location and mineral wealth.

He has refused to rule out using force to secure control of the island.

Trump tried to buy Greenland during his first presidential term. Both Denmark and the Greenlandic government rejected the 2019 proposal, saying: "Greenland is not for sale."

CHINA AND RUSSIA PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR VENEZUELA AGAINST U.S. ACTIONS – 12/22/25

On Monday, Russia expressed "full support" for Venezuela as it confronts a blockade of sanctioned oil tankers by U.S. forces deployed in the Caribbean.

In a phone call, the foreign ministers of the two allied countries blasted the U.S. actions, which have included bombing alleged drug-trafficking boats and more recently the seizure of two tankers.

"The ministers expressed their deep concern over the escalation of Washington's actions in the Caribbean Sea, which could have serious consequences for the region and threaten international shipping," the Russian Foreign Ministry said of the call between ministers Sergei Lavrov and Yván Gil.

"The Russian side reaffirmed its full support for and solidarity with the Venezuelan leadership and people in the current context," it added.

China also condemned the US's latest moves as a "serious violation of international law".

Lin Jian, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said Beijing "opposes any actions that violate the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and infringe upon the sovereignty and security of other countries".

"Venezuela has the right to develop independently and engage in a mutually beneficial cooperation with other nations. China understands and supports Venezuela's stance in safeguarding its legitimate rights and interests," he added.

The UN Security Council is to meet Tuesday to discuss the mounting crisis between Venezuela and the United States after a request from Caracas, backed by China and Russia.

Since September, U.S. forces have launched strikes on boats they claimed, without evidence, were trafficking drugs.

More than 100 people have been killed, many of them fishermen, according to their families and governments.

GIRL EXPELLED AFTER BOYS AT HER SCHOOL SHARED AI-GENERATED NUDE IMAGES OF HER— 12/22/25

ABC 7 News reports that nude images of a 13-year-old girl and her friends, generated by artificial intelligence, were circulating on social media and had become the talk of a Louisiana middle school.

The girls begged for help, first from a school guidance counselor and then from a sheriff's deputy assigned to their school. But the adults couldn't find them and the principal had doubts they even existed.

The pictures continued spreading. When the 13-year-old girl stepped onto the Lafourche Parish school bus at the end of the day, a classmate was showing one of them to a friend, and she attacked a boy on the bus, joined by several others.

She was then kicked out of Sixth Ward Middle School for more than 10 weeks and sent to an alternative school. The boy whom she and her friends suspected of creating the images wasn't sent to that alternative school with her. The 13-year-old girl's attorneys allege he avoided school discipline altogether.

When the sheriff's department looked into the case, they took the opposite actions. They charged two of the boys who'd been accused of sharing explicit images - and not the girl.

In Lafourche Parish, the school district followed all its protocols for reporting misconduct, Superintendent Jarod Martin said in a statement. He said a "one-sided story" had been presented of the case that fails to illustrate its "totality and complex nature."

Ultimately, the weeks-long investigation at the school uncovered AI-generated nude images of eight female middle school students and two adults, the district and sheriff's office said in a joint statement.

"Full nudes with her face put on them" is how the girl's father, Joseph Daniels, described them.

At the disciplinary hearing, the girl's attorney asked why the sheriff's deputy didn't check the phone of the boy the girls were accusing and why he was allowed on the same bus as the girl.

"Kids lie a lot," responded Coriell, the principal. "They lie about all kinds of things. They blow lots of things out of proportion on a daily basis. In 17 years, they do it all the time. So to my knowledge, at 2 o'clock when I checked again, there were no pictures."

When the girl stepped onto the bus 15 minutes later, the boy was showing the AI-generated images to a friend. Fake nude images of her friends were visible on the boy's phone, and video from the school bus showed at least a half-dozen students circulating the images.

After seeing the boy and his phone, she slapped him, said Coriell, the principal.

She hit him a second time. Then, the principal said, the girl asked aloud: "Why am I the only one doing this?" Two classmates hit the boy, the principal said, before the 13-year-old climbed over a seat and punched and stomped on him.

The girl had no past disciplinary problems, but she was assigned to an alternative school as the district moved to expel her for a full semester - 89 school days.

It was on the day of the girl's disciplinary hearing, three weeks after the fight, that the first of the boys was charged.

The student was charged with 10 counts of unlawful dissemination of images created by artificial intelligence under a new Louisiana state law, part of a wave of such legislation around the country. A second boy was charged in December with identical charges, the sheriff's department said. Neither was identified by authorities because of their ages.

The girl would face no charges because of what the sheriff's office described as the "totality of the circumstances."

At the disciplinary hearing, the principal refused to answer questions from the girl's attorneys about what kind of school discipline the boy would face.

The district said in a statement that federal student privacy laws prohibit it from discussing individual students' disciplinary records. Gregory Miller, an attorney for the girl, said he has no knowledge of any school discipline for the classmate accused of sharing the images.

Ultimately, the panel expelled the 13-year-old. She wept, her father said.

"She just felt like she was victimized multiple times - by the pictures and by the school not believing her and by them putting her on a bus and then expelling her for her actions," he said in an interview.

After she was sent to the alternative school, the girl became depressed and completed none of the school's online work for several days before her father got her into therapy for depression and anxiety.

Her attorneys appealed to the school board, and another hearing was scheduled for seven weeks later.

By then, so much time had passed that she could have returned to her old school on probation. But because she'd missed assignment, the district wanted her to remain at the alternative site another 12 weeks.

"She's already been out of school enough," one of the girl's attorneys, Matt Ory, told the board on Nov. 5. "She is a victim.

"She," he repeated, "is a victim."

Martin, the superintendent, countered: "Sometimes in life we can be both victims and perpetrators."

But the board was swayed. They allowed her to return to campus immediately. Her first day back at school was Nov. 7, although she will remain on probation until Jan. 29, which means no dances, no sports and no extracurricular activities.

ICE DETENTION OFFICER ADMITS TO SEXUALLY ABUSING DETAINEE AT ICE FACILITY – 12/29/25

KSNBC Local 4 reports that David Courvelle, 56, a former detention officer at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Louisiana pleaded guilty Monday to sexual abuse of a ward or individual in federal custody.

The charge carries a sentence of up to 15 years in prison.

Courvelle worked as a contract detention officer at the South Louisiana ICE Processing Center in Basile, which is operated by GEO Group Inc., between Jan. 1 and July 30.

Between May and July, Courvelle had sexual contact with a Nicaraguan detainee multiple times while she was under his custodial supervision, according to court documents, allegedly trading food, jewelry, letters and pictures of the woman's daughter.

The encounters took place inside the detention center, including in a janitorial closet while other detainees acted as lookouts.

On July 16, detention center staff saw Courvelle and the detainee exiting a janitorial closet, prompting his transfer to another housing unit.