

JULY 2025 EVENTS



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INDIANA UNIVERSITY TO END MORE THAN 100 ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAMS – 7/1/25

Indiana University-Bloomington is ending more than 100 of its academic degree programs. This comes after the state passed a budget bill where one of the budget bill's provision inserted by the Republican majority established a minimum average number of graduates that degree programs at Indiana's public colleges and universities must produce over a three-year period.

Undergraduate degree programs being eliminated or suspended include Art History, American Studies, Atmospheric Science, Cognitive Science, Comparative Literature, Dance, Earth Science, French, Geography, East Asian Studies, Gender Studies, German Studies, Italian, Music/Ballet, Religious Studies, Spanish, and Statistics.

Master's being discontinued include African Studies, Comparative Literature, Communications and Culture, Journalism, Latin American Studies, Statistics, Theatre and Drama and several foreign languages.

Doctoral programs being phased out include African American and African Diaspora Studies, American Studies, Art History, Astrophysics, Chemical Physics, Classical Studies, Comparative Literature, Astrophysics, French, Japanese, Gender Studies, Italian, Public Policy, and Theatre and Drama.

PARAMOUNT PAYS TRUMP \$16 MILLION TO SETTLE LAWSUIT AND GET MERGER APPROVAL – 7/1/25

For months, Trump was in legal talks with Paramount after accusing journalists at 60 Minutes of deceptively editing a 2024 interview with Kamala Harris.

Paramount Global and CBS, which will need the Trump administration's approval to complete its merger with Skydance Media, agreed to pay Trump a sum that could reach north of \$30 million to settle Trump's lawsuit against the network. Trump received \$16 million upfront for covering legal fees, costs of the case, and contributions to his future presidential library or charitable causes, to be determined at Trump's discretion.

ETSY LISTING "ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ" MERCHANDISE – 7/1/25

In addition to listing numerous shirts, jackets, and hats which would allow purchasers to pretend to be ICE agents, Etsy has started listing merchandise which glorifies "Alligator Alcatraz", the recent concentration camp which was quickly set up in the Florida Everglades.

One of the companies which is manufacturing many of these items is Printful. Printful's CEO is Alex Saltonstall, and the address of Printful's main headquarters is 11025 Westlake Dr, Charlotte, North Carolina 28273, USA. They also have fulfillment centers in several other locations, including the US, Canada, Mexico, Latvia, and Spain.

Many are calling for a boycott of Etsy and any other companies selling this merchandise.

ZUCKERBERG CRASHED CLASSIFIED OVAL OFFICE MEETING ON STEALTH PLANE EARLIER THIS YEAR – 7/2/25

NBC reported that earlier this year Air Force generals were going over the details of a new stealth fighter jet, which Trump has called the most advanced, capable and lethal combat aircraft platform ever built, when they were startled by the appearance of Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg popping into the Oval Office.

According to NBC, White House officials became concerned that Zuckerberg lacked the security clearance required to be present for talks about such a sensitive national security matter.

Zuckerberg was politely asked to step out of the Oval while the conversation continued, though other Trump aides wandered in and out to show the president information on computer screens while his mobile phone rang intermittently.

KILMAR ABREGO GARCIA DETAILS HIS TORTURE IN LAWSUIT – 7/2/25

Kilmar Abrego Garcia has detailed his torture and abuse in his lawsuit against the Trump administration.

Abrego Garcia's lawyers have previously described his more than three-week stint at El Salvador's Terrorism Confinement Center, or CECOT, as "torture."

But Wednesday's court filing offers new details.

He says he lost 31 pounds during his time in prison.

When he arrived at the prison, the prison staff forced him to strip and change into a uniform, kicked him to make him hurry up, shaved his head and marched him to a cell while hitting him with batons — leaving him with "visible bruises and lumps all over his body."

He said he was kept in a crowded, windowless cell with metal bunks and lights that remained on for 24 hours a day. In one case, he and his cellmates were allegedly forced to kneel for nine hours, and were struck if they fell down.

After more than three weeks, Abrego Garcia says he was transferred to a different area and was "photographed with mattresses and better food" in what he believed to be staged images.

He was eventually transferred to a different prison in early April, but he says he was still denied contact with his attorneys or family members.

Abrego also said that prison staff sorted a group of inmates based on whether they had gang tattoos but they told him, "Your tattoos are fine." The Trump administration has alleged in the past that Abrego Garcia has tattoos linking him to the gang MS-13, which his lawyers have strongly denied.

REPUBLICAN POLITICIANS SELL OUT AMERICANS FOR MILLIONAIRES BY APPROVING TRUMP'S BILL – 7/3/25

House Republicans passed their domestic policy megabill Thursday after nearly 24 hours of nonstop pressure from Trump and his allies. Even Republicans who openly admitted how bad the bill was still voted for it. The bill passed 218-214, with all but two Republicans supporting the measure. Every Democrat in the chamber voted against it.

The bill is 887 pages, and includes the following:

- Boosting the \$2,000 child tax credit to \$2,200. Millions of families at lower income levels will not get the full credit.
- Scores of business-related tax cuts, including allowing businesses to immediately write off 100% of the cost of equipment and research.

- The wealthiest households will see a \$12,000 increase in tax cuts, while the poorest people will lose an additional \$1,600 a year.
- Middle-income taxpayers would see a tax break of \$500 to \$1,500.
- The bill provides \$350 billion for Trump's border and national security agenda, including \$46 billion for the U.S.-Mexico border wall and \$45 billion for 100,000 migrant detention facility beds.
- Money would go for hiring 10,000 new ICE officers, with \$10,000 signing bonuses and a surge of Border Patrol officers, as well. The goal is to deport some 1 million people per year.
- The homeland security secretary would have a new \$10 billion fund for grants for states that help with federal immigration enforcement and deportation actions.
- To help pay for it, immigrants face various new fees, including when seeking asylum protections. Applying for asylum, which has historically been free, will now cost \$100.
- For the Pentagon, the bill would provide billions for ship building, munitions systems, and quality of life measures for servicemen and women, as well as \$25 billion for the development of the Golden Dome missile defense system. The Defense Department would have \$1 billion for border security.
- The bill includes new 80-hour-a-month work requirements for many adults receiving Medicaid and food stamps, including older people up to age 65. Parents of children 14 and older would have to meet the program's work requirements.
- There's also a proposed new \$35 co-payment that can be charged to patients using Medicaid services.
- More than 71 million people rely on Medicaid, and 40 million use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Most already work, according to analysts.
- 11.8 million more Americans will become uninsured by 2034 and 3 million more would not qualify for food stamps, also known as SNAP benefits.
- Under the bill, states beginning in 2028 will be required to contribute a set percentage of SNAP costs if their payment error rate exceeds 6%. Payment errors include both underpayments and overpayments.
- But the Senate bill temporarily delays the start date of that cost-sharing for states with the highest SNAP error rates. Alaska has the highest error rate in the nation at nearly 25%, according to Department of Agriculture data. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, sold out and voted to get the bill through the Senate in order to get this exception.
- A tax break for people who buy new or used electric vehicles would expire on Sept. 30 of this year, instead of at the end of 2032 under current law.
- Meanwhile, a tax credit for the production of critical materials will be expanded to include metallurgical coal used in steelmaking.
- The House and Senate both have a new children's savings program, called Trump Accounts, with a potential \$1,000 deposit from the Treasury.
- The Senate provided \$40 million to establish Trump's long-sought "National Garden of American Heroes."
- There's a new excise tax on university endowments.
- A \$200 tax on gun silencers and short-barreled rifles and shotguns was eliminated.

- One provision bars money to family planning providers, namely Planned Parenthood.
- \$88 million is earmarked for a pandemic response accountability committee.
- Billions will go to the Artemis moon mission and the exploration of Mars.
- Additionally, a provision would increase the nation's debt limit, by \$5 trillion, to allow continued borrowing to pay already accrued bills.
- A provision was thrown in at the final hours that will provide \$10 billion annually to rural hospitals for five years, or \$50 billion in total.
- Altogether, the bill will increase federal deficits over the next 10 years by nearly \$3.3 trillion from 2025 to 2034.

TRUMP SAYS HE HATES DEMOCRATS AND USES ANTISEMETIC SLUR IN SPEECH - 7/3/25

Trump spoke at the "Salute to America" event in Des Moines, Iowa on Thursday. The event formally kicked off a yearlong celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States's founding.

During his speech he said the following, "All of the things we did with the tax cuts and rebuilding our military, not one Democrat voted for us. And I think we use it in the campaign that's coming up, the midterms,"

He went on to say, "But all of the things that we've given, and they wouldn't vote. Only because they hate Trump. But I hate them, too. You know that? I really do, I hate them. I cannot stand them, because I really believe they hate our country, you want to know the truth."

He also went on to use an antisemitic slur, saying, "Think of that: No death tax," he said. "No estate tax. No going to the banks and borrowing from, in some cases, a fine banker - and in some cases, Shylocks and bad people."

Shylock, a Jewish Venetian moneylender, is the principal villain in Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*.

Trump later claimed that he did not know it was a slur.

Biden was criticized for using the word back in 2014 when he was Vice-President and quickly apologized.

LA ACTIVIST INDICTED FOR HANDING OUT FACE SHIELDS, WATER, HAND SANITIZER AND SNACKS TO PROTESTORS – 7/3/25

Alejandro Orellana, a 29-year-old member of the Boyle Heights-based community organization Centro CSO, was arrested after he distributed face shields to demonstrators in Los Angeles last month.

He was indicted by a federal grand jury Wednesday, facing charges of conspiracy and aiding and abetting civil disorder.

According to the indictment, Orellana and at least two others drove around downtown L.A. in a pickup truck distributing Uvex Bionic face shields, hand sanitizer, snacks and water bottles to a crowd engaged in a protest near the federal building on Los Angeles Street on June 9.

Prosecutors allege Orellana was helping protesters withstand less-lethal munitions being deployed by Los Angeles police officers and Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies.

Orellana pleaded not guilty during a brief court appearance Thursday morning, with supporters filling the gallery to watch the hearing. A trial date was set for late August.

Federal prosecutors have brought at least 23 cases related to last month's demonstrations. At least one of those cases has been dismissed, and some have been refiled as misdemeanors, records show.

When asked how handing out defensive equipment was a crime during a news conference last month, Essayli insisted Orellana was specifically handing out supplies to violent demonstrators.

U.S. Atty. Bill Essayli, a former California Assemblyman appointed by President Trump, has promised to aggressively prosecute anyone who interferes with ICE or harms police during protests.

Essayli said peaceful protesters "don't need a face shield."

Orellana, who works for United Parcel Service, has no criminal record and previously served in the U.S. Marines.

FIRST PRISONERS ARRIVE AT "ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ" CONCENTRATION CAMP IN THE EVERGLADES – 7/3/25

The first group of prisoners/immigrant detainees has arrived at the new concentration camp/detention center deep in the Florida Everglades that officials have dubbed Alligator Alcatraz.

"Detainees began arriving last night. Under President Trump's leadership, we are working at turbo speed on cost-effective and innovative ways to deliver on the American people's mandate for mass deportations of criminal illegal aliens. We will expand facilities and bed space in just days, thanks to our partnership with Florida," Tricia McLaughlin, an assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, said in a statement.

The facility, at the Dade-Collier Training and Transition Airport, will have a capacity of about 3,000 detainees when fully operational, Gov. Ron DeSantis said. The center was built in eight days over 10 miles of Everglades. It features more than 200 security cameras, 28,000-plus feet of barbed wire and 400 security personnel.

It will cost Florida approximately \$450 million to run the facility for one year, according officials.

Florida will submit reimbursement requests to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), according to DHS which said FEMA has roughly \$625 million in Shelter and Services Program funds that can be allocated for this effort.

The FEMA Shelter and Services Program (SSP) is supposed to provide funding to non-federal entities, like state and local governments and nonprofits, to support sheltering and related services for noncitizens released from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) custody while they await immigration proceedings.

On Wednesday night, workers replaced the signs in front of the training facility with ones that read "Alligator Alcatraz."

Videos of MAGA supporters as well as Trump and his cronies wearing Alligator Alcatraz merchandise and laughing about the harshness of the facility have been made by the media as well as being posted on social media.

TRUMP ANNOUNCES UFC BOUT AT WHITE HOUSE TO CELEBRATE AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY NEXT YEAR – 7/3/25

During a speech Thursday at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines, Trump indicated UFC president Dana White is going to organize one of the mixed martial arts fights on the grounds of the White House.

"We have a lot of land there," Trump said, adding that it will be a "full fight" and that up to 25,000 people will show up for the spectacle.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Trump was "dead serious" about the plan. Writing on X, she said "It's going to be EPIC!"

Trump said the UFC fight at the White House was just one of many events that are being planned to mark the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

"Every one of our national park battlefields and historic sites are going to have special events in honor of America250," he said.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION DEPORTS EIGHT IMMIGRANTS TO SUDAN – 7/5/25

The Trump administration has deported eight immigrants to South Sudan who had been held for more than a month by the U.S. at a military base in Djibouti. The Supreme Court on Thursday cleared the way for the transfer of the men.

The men were deported on Friday, the Fourth of July, Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a press release.

An aircraft carrying U.S. deportees arrived in South Sudan on Saturday, two officials working at Juba airport said.

The eight men, who according to their lawyers are from Cuba, Laos, Mexico, Myanmar, Sudan and Vietnam, argued their deportations to South Sudan would violate the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.

South Sudan has long been dangerous even for local residents. The U.S. State Department advises citizens not to travel there due to violent crime and armed conflict.

TWO 19-YEAR-OLD MEXICAN WOMEN SAVE 20 YOUNG GIRLS DURING TEXAS FLOODS – 7/7/25

Silvana Garza Valdez and María Paula Zárate, two 19-year-old Mexican women, both counselors at Camp Mystic, reacted quickly to the storm that began on July 3, moving their assigned campers to the highest area of their cabin and staying alert through the night until they could evacuate the 20 young girls to safety.

US JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CLAIMS EPSTEIN HAD NO CLIENT LIST, DESPITE PREVIOUS STATEMENTS 7/7/25



The US Justice Department has stated that Epstein did not maintain a list of clients who received underage girls, this directly contradicts statements made earlier this year by Attorney General Pam Bondi that such a document was “sitting on my desk”, awaiting her review.

The review also says they have found no evidence that sex offender Jeffrey Epstein kept a secret client list, and that he died by suicide in federal custody in 2019.

Trump was known to be friends with Epstein, although he claims they had a falling out several years ago.

When Bondi was questioned by a reporter about the Justice Department's statement, Trump interjected before Bondi could answer, “Are you still talking about Jeffrey Epstein? This guy's been talked about for years. Are people still talking about this guy, this creep? That is unbelievable. Do you want to waste the time?”

TRUMP GOLFS AND EATS ICE CREAM WHILE TEXAS DEALS WITH DEVASTATING FLOODS – 7/7/25

As Texas deals with devastating floods that have killed over 80 people, including dozens of children, Trump spent the weekend golfing in New Jersey and was photographed eating an ice cream cone.

NOEM DELAYS FEMA RESPONSE TO TEXAS FLOODS, POSTING PORTRAITS ON INSTAGRAM INSTEAD – 7/7/25

While FEMA requests were made on Friday, Noem did not approve them until Monday, several days after the flooding had started and wrought most of its destruction.

Instead, Noem posted on her Instagram account on Sunday a few potential options for her official portrait as a former governor of South Dakota, asking her followers which image was their favorite.

TROOPS AND FEDERAL AGENTS IN LA'S MACARTHUR PARK TRAUMATIZING CHILDREN AT A SUMMER DAY CAMP – 7/7/25

About 90 National Guard troops and dozens of federal officers descended on a nearly empty MacArthur Park in the morning. Karen Bass said she pulled over on her way to City Hall to witness officers on horseback and soldiers in tactical gear walking past a playground while children at a summer day camp were rushed indoors so they would not be traumatized.

The troops and officers left after about an hour.

The Department of Homeland Security did not say whether anyone was arrested. Associated Press journalists who arrived as the troops and agents entered the park did not see anyone detained. Some activists showed up to take videos and record the scene.

When asked about the appearance in MacArthur Park, the DHS said in an email that the agency would not comment on “ongoing enforcement operations.” The Defense Department referred all questions to DHS.

Bass and Gov. Gavin Newsom called it a political stunt and spectacle meant to intimidate the city's immigrant communities.

MEXICO SENDS RESCUE TEAM TO TEXAS TO HELP AFTER DEVASTATING FLOODS – 7/8/25

The Mexican city of Acuña, across the Rio Grande from Texas, has sent a rescue team from its civil protection and firefighting units to Kerr County, Texas, to assist teams from the U.S. with search and rescue efforts.

Posts have also been circulating on social media of volunteers from Mexico assisting with the disaster response.

Texas's Hill Country was flooded with more than 20 inches of rain overnight Friday, washing away structures in the area. At least 100 people have been killed, including more than two dozen children and counselors from the all-girls Camp Mystic. Authorities said Tuesday that 19 adult and seven children's bodies have been recovered but not yet identified.

IRS SAYS CHURCHES CAN ENDORSE POLITICAL CANDIDATES – 7/8/25

The Internal Revenue Service says it will allow houses of worship to endorse candidates for political office without losing their tax-exempt status.

Since 1954, a provision in the tax code called the Johnson Amendment said that churches and other nonprofit organizations could lose their tax-exempt status if they participate in, or intervene in "any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office."

In Monday's court filing, the IRS said that when a house of worship "in good faith speaks to its congregation, through its customary channels of communication on matters of faith in connection with religious services, concerning electoral politics viewed through the lens of religious faith" it neither participates nor intervenes in a political campaign.

The IRS compared religious institution's endorsement of candidates to a "family discussion."

They stated that "Thus, communications from a house of worship to its congregation in connection with religious services through its usual channels of communication on matters of faith do not run afoul of the Johnson Amendment as properly interpreted."

INDIANA CHURCH PREACHES DEATH FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE, CALLS IT GOD'S WILL – 7/8/25

Metro Weekly reports that a fundamentalist church in Indianapolis is defending a June 29 sermon in which a lay preacher urged congregants to pray for LGBTQ people to die and suggested they kill themselves.

The remarks, delivered by Stephen Falco during a "Men's Preaching Night" at Sure Foundation Baptist Church, included multiple homophobic slurs, biblical references, and rants against Pride Month, LGBTQ rights, and what he called "disgusting" and "evil" behavior, according to The Indianapolis Star. He characterized LGBTQ people as a threat to children, implying they are pedophiles or seek to "groom" them.

(This despite the overwhelming amount of convicted pedophiles who are white straight male religious leaders, not members of the LGBTQ.)

"There's nothing good to be proud about being a f****t," Falco continued. "You ought to blow yourself in the head in the back of the head. You're so disgusting."

The video was later removed for violating YouTube's terms of service.

The sermon drew criticism from the broader Indianapolis community.

"Such messages are not only theologically irresponsible but pastorally dangerous," the Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis, a coalition of pastors and other concerned religious believers who fight against forms of injustice, racism, ageism, classism, and sexism, told WISH-TV. "The pulpit must never be used as a weapon to dehumanize, isolate, or incite fear."

Later, in a July 3 Facebook post, lead preacher Justin Zhong reaffirmed the church's beliefs as reflected in Falco's sermon.

"I will not apologize for preaching the Word of God," Zhong wrote. "I will not apologize for stating facts. I will not negotiate with terrorists, among whom the LGBTHIV crowd is full of domestic terrorists. The Bible is crystal clear that sodomites (homosexuals) deserve the death penalty carried out by a government that actually cares about the law of God."

He added that LGBTQ people would not be allowed at church services, accusing critics of abandoning biblical values and praising his church for "protecting children from predators."

The church also responded to a request for comment from WISH-TV, insisting that Falco was calling only for LGBTQ people to die by suicide or be executed by the government — not for vigilante violence.

"He's only calling for the death penalty and suicide for the actual sodomites (homosexuals)," the church said in an emailed statement. "The Bible teaches that those people are worthy of death. They are supposed to be executed by the government. We are not to take the law into our own hands."

Another church member, identified as "Brother Wayne" in a video on Sure Foundation's YouTube channel, gave a sermon titled "Worthy of Being Beaten," blaming society's problems on a lack of discipline. He called for corporal punishment against LGBTQ people, saying they should be "put to death."

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY SAYS MEDICAID RECIPIENTS CAN REPLACE IMMIGRANT FARM WORKERS – 7/8/25

Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins told reporters Tuesday that she thinks Medicaid work requirements and automation will help offset Trump's massive immigration crackdown, which has threatened migrant farmworkers.

"There's been a lot of noise in the last few days and a lot of questions about where the president stands and his vision for farm labor," Rollins said during a news conference with Republican governors. "Ultimately, the answer on this is automation, also some reform within the current governing structure, and then also, when you think about there are 34 million able-bodied adults in our Medicaid program, there are plenty of workers in America."

ISRAEL'S DEFENSE MINISTER BUILDING CONCENTRATION CAMP FOR 600,000 PALESTINIANS – 7/8/25

Israel's defense minister Israel Katz told journalists on Monday he wanted to establish a "humanitarian city" on the ruins of the city of Rafah to initially house about 600,000 Palestinians - and eventually the whole 2.1 million population.

He said the goal was to bring people inside after security screening to ensure they were not Hamas operatives, and that they would not be allowed to leave.

If conditions allowed, he added, construction would begin during a 60-day ceasefire that Israel and Hamas are trying to negotiate.

FEMA'S RESPONSE TO TEXAS FLOODS DELAYED BY NOEM FOR 72 HOURS – 7/10/25

As monstrous floodwaters surged across central Texas late last week, officials at the Federal Emergency Management Agency were unable to deploy critical search and rescue teams and life-saving resources due to Kristi Noem.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, whose department oversees FEMA, recently enacted a rule aimed at cutting spending that every contract and grant over \$100,000 requires her personal sign-off before any funds can be released.

For FEMA, where disaster response costs routinely soar into the billions as the agency contracts with on-the-ground crews, officials say that threshold is essentially "pennies," requiring sign-off for relatively small expenditures.

As central Texas towns were submerged in rising waters, FEMA officials couldn't pre-position Urban Search and Rescue crews from a network of teams stationed regionally across the country.

In the past, FEMA would have swiftly staged these teams, which are specifically trained for situations including catastrophic floods, closer to a disaster zone in anticipation of urgent requests, multiple agency sources told CNN.

FEMA officials needed Noem's approval before sending those additional assets. Noem didn't authorize FEMA's deployment of Urban Search and Rescue teams until Monday, more than 72 hours after the flooding began, multiple sources told CNN.

DEMOCRATS CALL OUT HORRENDOUS CONDITIONS AT 'ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ' CONCENTRATION CAMP – 7/12/25

Democratic members of Congress toured the facility on July 12 and are calling the Alligator Alcatraz immigrant detention center in Florida's Everglades "vile," "inhumane" and "gross" while pledging to hold authorities accountable.

"People were yelling, 'Help me. Help me,'" said Rep. Maxwell Frost of Florida. "I heard in the back someone say, 'I'm a U.S. citizen.'"

"When those doors opened, what I saw made my heart sink," said Frost, 28 "I saw 32 people per cage, about six cages in the one tent. I saw a lot of people, young men who looked like me, and people who were my age."

The lawmakers weren't allowed to examine the cells or talk to the detainees, only being allowed to observe them from the tent entrance.

"As we were walking away, they started chanting, 'Libertad, Libertad. Freedom,'" Frost said.

Democrats had a very different take from Republicans who toured more than 10 days ago.

Republicans called the food "yummy," talked about how comfortable the detainees' beds were and said the facility met all the standards for detention centers.

The Democrats disagreed.

"They should not put humans in the middle of swampland in the Everglades: It's outrageous," said U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz. "It's inhumane. It's unlawful."

Frost said he's spoken with lawyers and the families of the detainees. "There's been flooding. There's been reports of toilets not working, backing up, feces being flooded inside cages that they are sleeping in. People not being allowed to shower."

Wasserman Schultz added that "detainees are forced to sleep all night with the lights on, they don't have access to counsel."

Frost detailed what he witnessed. "I was in the facility for about two hours, and what I saw were horrible conditions and cages," he said. "There are three toilets in each cage for the group of 32 people, and their drinking water comes from the toilet.

"There's a little spigot on top of the toilet, and that's where they drink their water as well. ... It's gross and it's disgusting, and this is where people are being held."

"There will be accountability on this," Frost said.

Wasserman Schultz was more direct.

"This place needs to be shut the hell down," she said.

MUSK'S CHATBOT GROK POST ANTISEMITIC AND RACIST STATEMENTS – 7/12/25

Recently, Musk's chatbot Grok posted a number of disturbing posts, referring to someone with a common Jewish surname as someone who was "celebrating the tragic deaths of white kids" in the Texas floods, adding: "Classic case of hate dressed as activism – and that surname? Every damn time, as they say."

Grok also went on to say: "Hitler would have called it out and crushed it."

In another post, the chatbot said: "The white man stands for innovation, grit and not bending to PC nonsense."

Musk has claimed that Grok is a "maximally truth-seeking" and "anti-woke" chatbot.

CNBC was able to confirm that the chatbot analyzes Musk's own posts as it generated its answers.

Earlier this year, Grok repeatedly mentioned "white genocide" in South Africa in unrelated chats, saying that it was "instructed by my creators" to accept the far-right conspiracy as "real and racially motivated".

MUSK GAINS \$200 MILLION CONTRACT WITH DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR AI TOOLS WITH NAZI CHATBOT – 7/14/25

The week after its Grok chatbot identified itself as "MechaHitler" and generated antisemitic posts, Elon Musk's xAI firm announced a contract with the US Department of Defense worth nearly \$200m. The deal is for developing and implementing artificial intelligence tools for the agency.

SUPREME COURT ALLOWS TRUMP TO CONTINUE DISMANTLING THE US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – 7/14/25

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled Monday to stay a preliminary injunction issued in May by a federal judge in Massachusetts which directed the administration to stop gutting the US Department of Education and to reinstate many of the nearly 1,400 laid off workers.

Monday's ruling is not the final word, as the case continues to work its way through the lower courts. But the states and schools districts who filed the suit worry that, without an injunction, much of the damage done to the department before a final ruling will be impossible to reverse.

The court's decision was unsigned, and the majority did not explain its thinking.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor did offer a sharp dissent, saying the decision is "indefensible" and that "it hands the Executive the power to repeal statutes by firing all those necessary to carry them out. The majority is either willfully blind to the implications of its ruling or naive, but either way the threat to our Constitution's separation of powers is grave."

COLBERT CRITICIZES PARAMOUNT SETTLEMENT IN OPENING MONOLOGUE – 7/14/25

Colbert came out swinging against Paramount's settlement with Trump in his opening monologue Monday night.

"As someone who has always been a proud employee of this network, I am offended," said Colbert "And I don't know if anything will ever repair my trust in this company. But just taking a stab at it, I'd say \$16 million would help."

Colbert criticized Trump's "nuisance lawsuit" and Paramount's agreement saying, "Paramount knows they could have easily fought it because in their own words 'the lawsuit was completely without merit.' And keep in mind, Paramount produced Transformers: Rise of the Beasts, they know 'completely without merit.'"

"I believe this kind of complicated financial settlement with a sitting government official has a technical name in legal circles. It's big fat bribe," he said. "Because this all comes as Paramount's owners are trying to get Trump administration to approve the sale of our network to a new owner, Skydance. "

TRUMP INSERTS HIMSELF IN THE WORLD CUP CELEBRATIONS AND KEEPS THE TROPHY – 7/14/25

Trump took every opportunity to make the World Cup tournament all about himself.

After English club Chelsea beat France's Paris Saint-Germain in the final of the tournament in New Jersey's MetLife Stadium on Sunday, Trump joined the players for the trophy lift—much to their annoyance and confusion.

It was also revealed that the trophy hoisted by the team was a replica because the original is in the Oval Office. The trophy, crafted in collaboration with Tiffany & Co, features a central disc with three rotating outer rings. It has a 24-carat gold-plated finish and is thought to have cost around \$230,000 to make.

The Trophy has been held in the Oval Office since the President of FIFA unveiled it in March, and Trump is claiming that they told him that he could keep it.

He also pocketed a World Cup medal while he was on stage.

LOS ANGELES FARMWORKERS CALL FOR WORKER-LED STRIKES AND BOYCOTTS – 7/14/25

Los Angeles Magazine reports that the organizers of “Huelga Para La Dignidad” held a press conference on Monday to call for action and share details of an upcoming worker-led strike following recent raids targeting farms.

Dozens of people gathered at La Placita Olivera to hear the workers’ stories and their demands. The press conference organized by activist Flor Martinez Zaragoza called for extreme action: farmworkers to strike on July 16, 17 and 18, and for supporters to boycott grocery stores for the duration.

“Who fed you today? Who fed your children? Will you stand with the people behind your food?” Zaragoza said at the press conference. “We need everybody, we need all of you.”

One farmworker, Xotchil Nuñez, came up to the podium with a brace around her arm.

“We suffered accidents, dangerous accidents that left us mutilated, scarred, and marked. It’s not just my hand,” she said. A decade ago, Nuñez suffered an accident to her leg, which she showed to the crowd, that still leaves her with pain and embarrassment to wear clothing that would show her scars. “It’s not just our spirits that hurt, but our bodies also.”

Another farmworker, Gabriel, who came out to speak, brought a backpack full of yellow envelopes containing all his tax documents over the decades.

“These are my taxes. I have been paying my taxes for 19 years, without rights,” he said, as he pulled out each envelope and threw them on the ground in front of the podium. “I’ve been doing this year, after year, after year. For a promise that I would get my citizenship, this is my testimony that I am not a criminal. We are not criminals.”

Organizers and farmworkers are asking for immediate citizenship for farmworkers, an end to the ICE raids and permanent protections with a pathway to citizenship for the undocumented people living in the U.S.

The United Farm Workers is not involved in the strike or boycott and states that they were unaware of plans for a strike until posts appeared on social media.

“Effective strikes demand enormous long-term planning, organization, strategy, and worker-led energy,” said the spokesman for United Farm Workers, Antonio De Loera-Brust, in a statement to LA T.A.C.O. “We will always support workers who take action and make sacrifices to improve their lives as they see fit.”

COLORADO’S POET LAUREATE ANDREA GIBSON DIES – 7/14/25

Poet Andrea Gibson died on Monday. They were 49. Gibson had been treated for ovarian cancer since 2021.

Gibson’s poetry spoke to issues such as queer rights, political division, environmental issues, gun reform and the health care system.

“I don’t write poetry that I think is hard to understand,” Gibson, told The Sun in 2023. “What I think the spoken word movement has done for poetry is that it created poems that you don’t need a Ph.D. to understand, that you don’t need a high school diploma to understand.”

They were named the Colorado poet laureate in 2023, a role created in 1919 to spread a love and appreciation of poetry throughout the state.

Gov. Jared Polis wrote in the announcement that Gibson was selected for their “fierce conviction in inspiring others to pursue art and take action toward solving social issues.”

They also starred in the award-winning documentary, “Come See Me in the Good Light,” a film about their marriage to poet Megan Falley, and how the couple dealt with Gibson’s cancer diagnosis in 2021. The documentary, produced by comic Tig Notaro, won the Festival Favorite award at this year’s Sundance Film Festival.

In the Facebook post announcing the poet’s death, Falley wrote: “Over the last four years, they danced with their diagnosis, and continually aimed their internal compass toward joy. One of the last things Andrea said on this plane was, ‘I fucking loved my life.’”

From one of Gibson’s poems, “Love Letter From the Afterlife.”

“My love, I was so wrong. Dying is the opposite of leaving. When I left my body, I did not go away. That portal of light was not a portal to elsewhere, but a portal to here. I am more here than I ever was before.”

HOUSE REPUBLICANS VOTE TO BLOCK RELEASE OF EPSTEIN FILES – 7/15/25

On Tuesday, House Republicans blocked a Democratic attempt to force a vote to release the Epstein files, with zero Republicans supporting the measure. The final vote was 211 to 210.

Democrats tried to force a vote on releasing the files, after Republicans struck down an amendment in the House Rules committee on Monday evening. The procedural maneuver, which would have triggered a vote on the amendment requiring Trump’s Justice Department to release the Epstein files within 30 days, was rejected yet again, with all 211 opposing votes coming from Republicans. Nine Republicans abstained from the vote.

The nine Republicans who chose not to vote were: Andy Ogles (TN), Michael McCaul (TX), Thomas Massie (KY), Barry Loudermilk (GA), Wesley Hunt (TX), Morgan Lutrell (TX), Mark Green (TN), Monica De La Cruz (TX), and Buddy Carter (GA).

Even Republicans who have been particularly vocal about the Epstein files voted against allowing debate on the amendment.

TRUMP CAUGHT IN MULTIPLE LIES ABOUT HIS UNCLE AND THE UNABOMBER – 7/15/25

Trump was speaking Tuesday at a Pennsylvania event about energy and innovation when he said he had to “brag just for a second” about his uncle’s intelligence.

First, he incorrectly stated that his uncle was “the longest-serving professor in the history of MIT” (he was one of the longest-serving but not the longest).

Then he incorrectly said that his uncle’s three university degrees were “in nuclear, chemical, and math” (two were in electrical engineering and one was in physics).

He went on to say that “Kaczynski was one of his students,” and that he asked his uncle what Kaczynski was like. “I said, ‘What kind of a student was he, Uncle John?’ Dr. John Trump. I said, ‘What kind of a student?’ And then he said, ‘Seriously, good.’ He said, ‘He’d correct – he’d go around correcting everybody.’ But it didn’t work out too well for him.”

First, the president’s uncle died in 1985. Kaczynski was publicly revealed as the Unabomber more than a decade later, in 1996, when he was captured; before that, he had lived as a recluse in the Montana wilderness.

Second, Kaczynski attended Harvard University and the University of Michigan, not MIT.

Yet another example of Trump talking about things he knows nothing about, and lying to bolster his own ego.

UNICEF DIRECTOR SPEAKS BEFORE THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON GAZA'S CHILDREN – 7/16/25

UNICEF's executive director, Catherine Russell, speaking before the UN Security Council, said that "Over the past 21 months of war, more than 17,000 children have reportedly been killed and 33,000 injured in Gaza. An average of 28 children have been killed each day, the equivalent of an entire classroom."

She went on to say, "Consider that for a moment: a whole classroom of children killed every day for nearly two years. These children are not combatants – they are being killed and maimed as they line up for lifesaving food and medicine."

She also spoke out on how malnutrition has surged with nearly 6,000 children acutely malnourished in June, a 180 percent increase since February.

MAURENE COMEY FIRED FROM US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE – 7/16/25

Maurene Comey, the daughter of former FBI Director James Comey, who prosecuted Jeffrey Epstein, his accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell and, most recently, Sean "Diddy" Combs, was fired Wednesday from the Manhattan US Attorney's Office.

The reason for Comey's firing was not immediately clear. She was informed that she was being fired under Article II of the Constitution, which describes the powers of the president.

TRUMP CALLS SUPPORTERS UPSET ABOUT EPSTEIN FILES "WEAKLINGS" – 7/16/25

Trump lashed out at his supporters who have raised questions about his administration's handling of the Epstein case, slamming them in a July 16 social media post and again during an Oval Office event for furthering what he described as the "Jeffrey Epstein hoax."

"And my PAST supporters have bought into this 'bulls***,' hook, line, and sinker. They haven't learned their lesson, and probably never will," Trump said on social media, before calling them "weaklings" and declaring "I don't want their support anymore!"

TRUMP FORGETS HE WAS THE ONE WHO APPOINTED POWELL AS FEDERAL RESERVE CHAIR – 7/16/25

Trump did not recall that he was the one who appointed Federal Reserve Board of Governors Chair Jerome Powell to the position he has held since 2018.

Trump was speaking during an Oval Office press opportunity alongside the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain when he was asked whether he was seriously considering firing Powell.

He replied with a derisive set of remarks in which he harshly criticized Powell and called him "a terrible Fed chair" before expressing surprise that he had been named to the position in the first place.

COLBERT'S LATE SHOW CANCELLED DAYS AFTER HIS CRITICISM OF PARAMOUNT'S SETTLEMENT – 7/17/25

On Thursday, Stephen Colbert, host of the Late Show, announced that CBS was canceling the legendary franchise. "This is all just going away," Colbert told the audience.

The move to cancel the highly popular program came just days after Colbert publicly criticized CBS's corporate owner, Paramount, for agreeing to pay President Donald Trump \$16 million to settle an outrageous \$20 billion lawsuit against the company.

Paramount claims that the show's cancellation was for "financial reasons".

URBAN LEAGUE DECLARES A 'STATE OF EMERGENCY' FOR CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE US – 7/17/25

The National Urban League, one of the nation's oldest civil rights organizations, declared a "state of emergency" on Thursday in their annual State of Black America report.

The report, released Thursday at the group's conference in Cleveland, Ohio, criticizes the administration for downsizing federal agencies and programs that enforce civil rights policies. The authors highlighted what they saw as a multiyear, coordinated effort by conservative legal activists, lawmakers and media personalities to undermine civil rights policy and create a political landscape that would enable a hard-right agenda on a range of social and economic policy.

"It is not random. It is a well-funded, well-organized, well-orchestrated movement of many, many years," said Marc Morial, president of the Urban League. "For a long time, people saw white supremacist politics and white nationalism as on the fringe of American politics. It has now become the mainstream of the American right, whose central foundation is within the Republican Party."

From the report,

"In this 49th edition of the report, State of Emergency: Democracy, Civil Rights, and Progress Under Attack, we warn our readers and Americans that our country is on the brink of a dangerous tilt towards authoritarianism. This report was initially focused on the Voting Rights Act of 1965—a bedrock of American Democracy—and the profound challenges it faces today. But 2025 has seen the most volatility in modern history, so we are unpacking the threats to our Democracy and the steps the civil rights community and the Urban League movement are taking to fight back."

"As we witness escalating efforts to dismantle voting rights protections, block access to fair elections, and erode the civil liberties that have been fought for over generations, the 2025 State of Black America sounds the alarm: Democracy, civil rights, and progress are under attack."

"Our contributors—elected officials, civil rights advocates, scholars, and thought leaders—offer critical insights on how we can fight back and fortify civil rights for the 21st century."

"This is not the time to be silent. We cannot stand by while those who oppose progress weaken the pillars of Democracy. This fight is for our future, our legacy, and the soul of this nation."

"We urge you to join us."

A link to the full report is provided below.

[Link to the report](#)

SKYDANCE CEO MEETS WITH FCC CHAIRMAN, PROMISES TO SUPPORT “AMERICAN STORYTELLING” – 7/18/25

David Ellison, Skydance’s CEO, met with Federal Communications Chairman Brendan Carr to seek approval for his firm’s merger with Paramount.

Ellison is the son of tech billionaire Larry Ellison, a major supporter of Trump.

David Ellison and Skydance’s general counsel said they were pursuing a focus on “American storytelling” and touting a new, “unbiased” editorial direction for CBS News.

Ellison and his lawyer also “noted Skydance’s commitment to promoting non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity at New Paramount, ensuring the company is fully compliant with law,” in line with Carr’s championing the Trump administration’s goal of eradicating diversity, equity and inclusion programs, calling them “invidious forms of discrimination.”

ACA HEALTH INSURANCE WILL COST THE AVERAGE PERSON 75% MORE IN 2026 – 7/18/25

NPR reports that the average person who buys Affordable Care Act insurance will be paying 75% more for their premium, according to a recent analysis from KFF, a nonpartisan health policy research group.

Summer is when health insurance companies set their rates for the following January before submitting those rates to state regulators. Researchers at KFF then review those documents to determine what health insurance costs will look like in the coming year.

This year insurance companies were talking about federal policy. Cynthia Cox, one of the KFF researchers said that "Pretty much every insurance company is talking about the expiration of enhanced premium tax credits in the ACA markets."

Those markets are where people go to buy Obamacare plans, which serve people who can't get health insurance through their jobs and who don't qualify for Medicaid or Medicare.

The enhanced subsidies started during the COVID-19 pandemic under the Biden administration and helped dramatically decrease the cost of premiums for these plans.

Now that those subsidies are going away, premiums will spike. For example, if someone paid \$60 a month for their health insurance this year, they might be looking at \$105 a month next year.

Congress could extend the subsidies, but that would mean Trump and Republican lawmakers supporting the Affordable Care Act, which is unlikely. Republicans have said that the enhanced subsidies "only perpetuate a never-ending cycle of rising premiums and federal bailouts — with taxpayers forced to foot the bill."

The irony is that a majority of the people who were covered in the last few years live in Republican strongholds. "A lot of Southern states like Texas and Florida and Georgia have seen a tremendous amount of growth in their ACA marketplaces," Cox says.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 8.2 million people who get ACA insurance now will become uninsured over the next decade due to the expiration of the enhanced tax credits along with other changes that the Trump administration and Congress have made through regulations and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

PSYCHIATRIST WARNS ICE IS ATTRACTING AGENTS MOTIVATED BY POWER AND LOYALTY TO TRUMP – 7/18/25

A recent commentary in Salon, written by Geoffrey Grammer, a retired U.S. Army colonel and psychiatrist, claims that recruits signing up to become ICE agents under Trump are motivated more by power and aggression rather than "a sense of noble duty."

Grammer wrote that before Trump, "ICE agents were typically motivated by integrity, courage, resilience, and a strong sense of duty and allegiance to the Constitution."

Today, however, Grammer claims the emphasis on very public raids and heavy-handed tactics attracts recruits with "authoritarian and punitive traits" who relish the "satisfaction from the suffering they

"Trump has spent the last decade maligning immigrants in the United States, often with fabricated stories to create fear within communities and foster xenophobic hatred among his supporters," Grammer writes. "This paved the way for harsh, and sometimes sadistic, policies involving aggressive raids, warrantless detentions, family separations and imprisonment under conditions condemned by human rights groups."

What's more, Grammer claims that the huge allotment for ICE funding in Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill Act" will inevitably lead to a surge in hiring more aggressive personality types.

"With the change in the type of recruit expected, their loyalty is more likely to be rooted in Trump himself than in the principles of the Constitution," Grammer writes. "New agents may not view themselves as ethical public servants, but rather as followers driven by anger and retribution, which can result in unchecked sadism."

This mindset of this new kind of ICE agent, Grammer argues, has created "serious risks to human rights and constitutional values." It also highlights how close America is to "a new era of fascism" made possible -- and enforceable -- by "the evolution of ICE under Donald Trump."

WRITERS GUILD DEMANDS INVESTIGATION INTO STEPHEN COLBERT'S "LATE SHOW" CANCELLATION – 7/18/25

The Writers Guild of America called for Paramount to be investigated for bribery by the New York state attorney general following Thursday's announcement that "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" has been canceled.

In the statement, the labor union says it has "significant concerns" that the move may have been intended to bribe Trump into sanctioning Paramount's pending acquisition by Skydance. The WGA noted that the company could be "sacrificing free speech to curry favor with the Trump Administration."

WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORTS ON TRUMP'S BIRTHDAY LETTER TO EPSTEIN – 7/18/25

The Wall Street Journal published an article on a compilation of birthday letters given to the billionaire financier in 2003, three years before Epstein was first arrested.

The article claims that the letters were among the materials in an Epstein investigation, including one with the outline of a naked woman where the signature "Donald" can be seen. The letter purportedly concludes with: "Happy Birthday — and may every day be another wonderful secret."

Trump has responded that "I never wrote a picture in my life", despite having sold his drawings previously, and has promptly launched a defamation lawsuit against the WSJ for \$20 billion.

CONGRESS RESCINDS \$9 BILLION IN PUBLIC MEDIA FUNDING AND FOREIGN AID – 7/18/25

The House has approved a Trump administration plan to rescind \$9 billion in previously allocated funds, including \$1.1 billion for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and about \$7 billion in foreign aid.

The vote of 216-to-213 included all but two Republicans in favor of the cuts.

CPB will lose \$1.1 billion meant to fund it through the next two years, while the bill also cuts \$7.9 billion in other programs. CPB acts as a conduit for federal money to NPR, PBS and their member stations.

Many of those stations serving rural areas or to underserved audiences, such as Native Americans, could be forced to shut down as a result.

PBS CEO and President Paula Kerger said Thursday that "These cuts will significantly impact all of our stations, but will be especially devastating to smaller stations and those serving large rural areas," Kerger said. "Many of our stations which provide access to free unique local programming and emergency alerts will now be forced to make hard decisions in the weeks and months ahead."

EPA ELIMINATES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE – 7/18/25

The Environmental Protection Agency said Friday it is eliminating its research and development arm and reducing agency staff by thousands of employees.

The agency said Friday it is creating a new Office of Applied Science and Environmental Solutions that will allow it to focus on research and science "more than ever before."

EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin said in a statement that the changes announced Friday would ensure the agency "is better equipped than ever to deliver on our core mission of protecting human health and the environment, while Powering the Great American Comeback."

The EPA also said it is beginning the process to eliminate thousands of jobs. Total staffing at EPA will go down to 12,448, a reduction of more than 3,700 employees, or nearly 23%, from staffing levels in January when Trump took office, the agency said.

IMPRISONED MAKEUP ARTIST ANDRY ROMERO SENT FROM EL SALVADOR TO VENEZUELA – 7/18/25

Andry Hernández Romero, the makeup artist from Venezuela who was deported to El Salvador by the Trump administration and held in a notorious mega-prison, was among the scores of migrants sent back to Venezuela in a three-nation exchange Friday.

Under a prisoner swap facilitated by the Trump administration, 10 U.S. citizens who had been held in Venezuela were released and more than 250 Venezuelan men the U.S. had sent to be imprisoned in El Salvador, without due process, were sent back to Venezuela.

Rep. Robert Garcia posted on social media Friday night: “We have been in touch with Andry Hernández Romero’s legal team and they have confirmed he is out of CECOT and back in Venezuela. We are grateful he is alive and are engaged with both the State Department and his team.”

Romero entered the U.S. legally in 2024, fleeing anti-LGBTQ+ violence and political persecution. He was deported after showing up for an appointment the U.S. government gave him in March, 2025. The Trump administration invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, accusing him of gang ties based on his tattoos with the names of his parents.

He was taken into ICE custody and transferred to a California detention center before being flown to the Salvadoran mega-prison known as the Terrorism Confinement Center, or CECOT.

Immigrant Defenders Law Center President and CEO Lindsay Toczykowski issued a statement, saying, “We have been fighting to free Andry, our other clients, and all the men from CECOT for more than four months. We are incredibly relieved that it appears most of them have been freed from the torture prison the U.S. government sent them to, and potentially may be reunited with family soon.” Toczykowski went on to say, “What happened here is a dangerous travesty of justice. We have long known that the allegations that the men at CECOT were members of a dangerous gang were baseless. We know the Trump administration denied them due process and sent them to a prison notorious for abuse and torture. The Trump administration misled the public and our courts by claiming that the U.S. government was not in control of what happened to the men at CECOT, only to eventually — after 125 days -- orchestrate a prisoner swap using human beings as pawns. So, while we are grateful they will not spend another night being tortured in El Salvador, we also grieve the ongoing and lasting damage being done to our democracy by an administration that is willing to violate our Constitution, U.S. asylum laws, and international law. While the Trump administration escalates their use of authoritarian practices meant to intimidate people into submission, we will keep fighting for justice for immigrants and for the future of our country.”

SENIOR EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM TERMINATED BY TRUMP WHILE OLDER AMERICANS FORCED TO WORK – 7/18/25

The Trump administration has reportedly terminated the Department of Labor's only job training program for low-income seniors. This comes after recent changes to Medicaid and assistance programs require new work activities in order to receive any benefits.

Bloomberg Law reported Friday that the Labor Department "quietly ended" its Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which helped low-income Americans aged 55 or older find part-time employment or job training at nonprofits and government agencies. The program served tens of thousands of people across the country.

Groups that received funding under SCSEP, such as the National Council on Aging and Goodwill Industries, have not received funding since June 30. The Labor Department has not made available the roughly \$300 million set aside for national grant recipients.

The Trump Administration has proposed zeroing out funding for SCSEP in its budget request for fiscal year 2026, calling the program an "earmark to leftist, DEI-promoting entities."

About 9 million Medicaid recipients between the ages of 50 and 64 will be subject to the Trump-GOP budget law's new work requirements, which mandate that certain Medicaid enrollees engage in work, job training, or other qualifying activities for at least 80 hours per month—or lose coverage.

The mandates will take effect late next year, after the 2026 midterm elections.

The Republican law also expands work requirements for recipients of federal nutrition assistance, raising the age limit for the mandates from 55 to 64. Millions of older adults are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program nationwide.

Clayton Fong, president and CEO of the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, said earlier this month that the funding delay "is not just a bureaucratic issue—it's a crisis for tens of thousands of older adults who depend on SCSEP to survive."

"Many of our participants are living on the edge of poverty," said Fong. "SCSEP gives them purpose, dignity, and the ability to put food on the table. The longer this delay continues, the deeper the harm is."

"The cruelty is the point," former U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich wrote on social media in response to Bloomberg Law's reporting.

USDA DEMANDS STATES HAND OVER PERSONAL INFORMATION OF ALL FOOD ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS – 7/19/25

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has made an unprecedented demand to states to share the personal information of tens of millions of federal food assistance recipients by July 30, as a federal lawsuit seeks to postpone the data collection.

USDA is requiring states turn over identifying information on all SNAP recipients and applicants since 2020, "including but not limited to" names, dates of birth, addresses and Social Security numbers, as well as the dollar amount each recipient received over time. States that do not comply with USDA's data demand could lose funds.

TRUMP REPOSTS FAKE AI VIDEO OF OBAMA BEING ARRESTED – 7/20/25

Trump reposted a video on Truth Social that showed a fake, artificially rendered scene of former President Barack Obama being arrested.

The video shows Trump and Obama sitting in the Oval Office, and an artificially rendered scene shows FBI agents dragging Obama out of his chair and cuffing his hands behind his back. The fake video then shows Obama in an orange jumpsuit in jail.

VIDEO FROM OAK FOREST CHARITY EVENT SHOWS PERFORMERS IN BLACKFACE – 7/21/25



Racist video of people in blackface was posted from the Zespol Wanta Charity Picnic, held at the Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict in Oak Forest, IL.

The video, posted on Instagram by Wojciech Dorula, a local radio host who lists WD Promotions Inc in his account, shows 2 people performing in blackface during a performance of “Oh Happy Day”.

The radio host commented on the post (in Polish), saying “it was just a parody from the movie ‘Sister Act’,” and “let people have some fun.”

Police were later called to this same event for a 22-year-old man with multiple stab wounds. The man was transported to a local hospital with non life-threatening injuries.

THE FDA HOLDS PANEL ABOUT ANTIDEPRESSANTS AND PREGNANCY – 7/21/25

Mother Jones reports that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) convened a panel to discuss selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, a type of antidepressant commonly known as SSRIs, and pregnancy.

The panel had ten participants, a combination of researchers and practicing psychologists, several of whom have publicly spoken out against the use of antidepressants.

During the panel discussion, FDA Chief Dr. Martin Makary called for more study of the “root causes” of perinatal depression. “We have to talk about the role of healthy relationships, of communities, of natural light exposure, of other modalities and co-factors that may be involved,” he said.

Roger McFillen, a psychologist and host of a podcast which speaks out against vaccines and birth control, suggested that women are “naturally experiencing their emotions more intensely, and those are gifts. They’re not symptoms of a disease.”

Dr. Kay Roussos-Ross, an OBGYN and the director of the Perinatal Mood Disorders program at the University of Florida College of Medicine, was the only panelist who pointed out that research has shown how untreated depression and anxiety in pregnancy can lead to a host of health problems for the pregnant person and their baby. Roussos-Ross also pointed to a study that showed that women who stopped taking medications during pregnancy

were five times more likely to experience a relapse of symptoms compared to those who remained on them. “Not every single woman will need an antidepressant,” Roussos-Ross said, “but for those that do, it’s life-changing and life-saving.”

Steven Fleischman, the president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), a professional group for OB-GYNs, released a statement calling the panel “alarmingly unbalanced” and alleging that the majority “did not adequately acknowledge the harms of untreated perinatal mood disorders in pregnancy.”

Mother Jones writer Julianne McShane reached out to Wendy N. Davis, a psychotherapist and the president and CEO of Postpartum Support International, to get her take on the panelists’ characterization of perinatal depression. “That kind of thinking is not evidence-based,” she said, “and not even anecdotally true.”

While no action is currently planned based on this panel, panelists argued the FDA should strengthen its warnings about SSRI use during pregnancy to include more information about the impacts on preterm birth, preeclampsia, and postpartum hemorrhage, despite studies that show that SSRIs have small or negligible impacts on these health issues.

The two-hour panel is available to watch on the FDA’s YouTube page. The link is provided below.

[Link to video](#)

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES SENDS 7,166 TONS OF SUPPLIES TO GAZA ON AID SHIP – 7/21/25

A United Arab Emirates aid ship carrying 7,166 tons of supplies left Khalifa Port in Abu Dhabi on Monday to deliver supplies for the starving and suffering Palestinians in Gaza.

The Khalifa is heading to Al Arish Port in Egypt carrying 4,372 tons of food, 1,433 tons of shelter materials, 860 tons of medical supplies and 501 tons of health supplies, state news agency Wam reported. The vessel is also carrying 20 tankers to ensure Palestinians in Gaza can access clean drinking water.

It is the largest aid vessel to be sent by the Emirates. It brings the total volume of aid sent by the UAE to Gaza to 77,266 tons.

The ship is also carrying a fully equipped field hospital that can accommodate 400 patients and 16 ambulances, Hamoud Al Efari, the UAE Aid mission’s co-ordinator, told The National.

“The ship will arrive in the Egyptian city of Al Arish in the next two weeks,” he said.

“The cargo will be stored in the UAE’s warehouses in Al Arish and later loaded on to lorries to cross the border into the strip,” Mr Al Efari added.

U.S. OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE BANS TRANSGENDER WOMEN – 7/21/25

The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee has barred transgender women from competing in women's sports, saying it has an "obligation to comply" with the “No Men in Women’s Sports” executive order issued by Trump.

The USOPC change is noted as a detail under the section, "USOPC Athlete Safety Policy", and states the following “The USOPC is committed to protecting opportunities for athletes participating in sport. The USOPC will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders with oversight responsibilities, e.g., IOC, IPC, NGBs, to ensure that women have a fair and safe competition environment consistent with Executive Order 14201 and the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C § 22501, et. seq.”

Executive Order 14201 refers to the executive order "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports" from February of this year. That order, among other things, threatens to "rescind all funds" from organizations that allow transgender athlete participation in women's sports.

"As a federally chartered organization, we have an obligation to comply with federal expectations," USOPC CEO Sarah Hirshland and President Gene Sykes wrote in a letter. "Our revised policy emphasizes the importance of ensuring fair and safe competition environments for women. All National Governing Bodies are required to update their applicable policies in alignment."

The USOPC oversees around 50 national governing bodies, which means that local sports clubs may need to change their rules to retain their memberships in the NGBs.

NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHES OPINION PIECE THAT CLAIMS ISRAEL IS NOT COMMITTING GENOCIDE - 7/22/25

In the midst of numerous reports on the starvation in Gaza, the killing of those attempting to get aid, and the proposal of a concentration camp for Palestinians, the New York Times has chosen to publish an opinion piece written by Bret Stephens that claims that Israel is not committing genocide.

Stephens claims that, "If the Israeli government's intentions and actions are truly genocidal – if it is so malevolent that it is committed to the annihilation of Gazans – why hasn't it been more methodical and vastly more deadly?"

Apparently, the constant bombing of homes, hospitals, schools, and churches is not methodical enough for him, and the official Palestinian death count of "nearly 60,000" in less than two years that he cites in his article is not deadly enough for him.

MIKE JOHNSON FORCES EARLY RECESS TO AVOID HOLDING PEDOPHILES ACCOUNTABLE – 7/22/25

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson in the U.S. House of Representatives said on Tuesday he would send lawmakers home a day early for a five-week summer recess to avoid a political fight over files on pedophile, human trafficker and longtime Trump buddy Jeffrey Epstein.

The move avoids a push by Democrats and some Republicans for a vote on a bipartisan resolution to require the Justice Department and FBI to release all government documents on Epstein.

"What we refuse to do is participate in another one of the Democrats' political games. This is a serious matter. We are not going to let them use this as a political battering ram," Johnson told reporters.

A WHITES-ONLY COMMUNITY GROUP POSSIBLY EXPANDING FROM ARKANSAS TO MISSOURI – 7/22/25

Ozarks First reports that a whites-only group based in northern Arkansas could be expanding to the Springfield, Missouri, area.

Eric Orwoll, co-founder of Return to the Land (RTTL), a private membership association that excludes non-white people, told Ozarks First a group of people are considering developing another RTTL community near Springfield.

RTTL is a “Return to the Land is a private membership association (PMA) for individuals and families with traditional views and European ancestry.” According to their website. Members are vetted through an application process based on European ancestry.

The group’s homebase is located on 160 acres in northern Arkansas and has been in development since 2023. Orwoll said the draw to northern Arkansas was its “affordable land, natural beauty, abundant water resources and a conservative, predominantly white population.”

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) released a statement on X earlier this month saying this northern Arkansas development not only revives “discredited and reprehensible forms of segregation”, but says it should also be illegal under the Arkansas Fair Housing Act, the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as well as other federal and state civil rights laws.

“We urge the Arkansas Fair Housing Commission, local elected officials, and law enforcement to act swiftly to ensure that Northeast Arkansas remains a welcome and inclusive community, not a refuge for intolerance and exclusion,” said Lindsay Baach Friedmann, regional director of the ADL South Central, in the X statement.

“The attorneys we’ve consulted believe what we’re doing is legal,” Orwoll said. “Americans have the right to freely associate and form intentional communities on whatever basis they choose.”

Orwoll said he hopes to help found RTTL communities in all 50 states.

“We want to ensure that White Americans who value their ancestry will have the ability to live among like-minded people in the future if they choose to do so, regardless of demographic changes,” Orwoll said. “We’d like for a network of communities, community centers and recreational areas to be available to our members that affords them opportunities to celebrate their heritage with their folk.”

“Whites should have the ability to live among their own people if that’s what they want to do, and mass immigration is quickly making that nearly impossible in many Western nations,” Orwoll said. “If individuals decide to live in multi-racial communities, then they should be allowed to do so, but we don’t want racial forced on us in every aspect of life.”

TRUMP’S JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO MEET WITH GHISLAINE MAXWELL – 7/22/25

The Department of Justice said Tuesday it has reached out to Jeffrey Epstein’s former associate Ghislaine Maxwell for a meeting amid backlash over the administration’s handling of files related to Epstein.

Maxwell was sentenced in 2022 to 20 years in federal prison for carrying out a years-long scheme with Epstein to groom and sexually abuse underage girls. She has continued to appeal her conviction.

“Justice demands courage. For the first time, the Department of Justice is reaching out to Ghislaine Maxwell to ask: what do you know? At @AGPamBondi’s direction, I’ve contacted her counsel. I intend to meet with her soon. No one is above the law—and no lead is off-limits,” Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche said in an X post.

Maxwell’s attorney told CNN they “are in discussions with the government” on the matter. “Ghislaine will always testify truthfully. We are grateful to President Trump for his commitment to uncovering the truth in this case,” attorney David Oscar Markus said.

Having Trump supporters speak with someone who has potentially damning information about Trump is incredibly suspect.

A potential meeting and testimony come on the heels of a request from the Justice Department to a federal judge to make public years-old grand jury testimony against Epstein, which took place behind closed doors. Two judges have given the department until Tuesday to provide more information on that request, including why officials are seeking the disclosure and whether Maxwell objects to it. A person close to her said she would oppose release of materials related to her and Epstein.

A lawyer for Maxwell asked the judge for permission to review the grand jury transcripts the Justice Department has sought to unseal in its investigation.

David Oscar Markus, Maxwell's attorney, wrote in a letter to the judge, "As counsel for Ms. Maxwell, we would similarly like to review the grand jury transcripts at issue (we have not seen them and our understanding is that they have never been provided to the defense in their entirety) in order to craft a response and set out our position to the Court."

As Trump and his posse look to suppress any information linking Trump to Epstein, this could well be a ploy to craft a story that would match with any transcripts while excluding Trump's name from any testimony.

With the actual Epstein files being suppressed, Maxwell could strike a deal with Trump's DOJ to make up any story that Trump wants her to tell.

Democrats criticized Blanche's announcement, with Rep. Dan Goldman of New York accusing the deputy attorney general of "doing an end-run around the SDNY and its institutional policies by acting as a political agent of President Trump."

\$10 MILLION OF US-FUNDED CONTRACEPTIVES BURNED RATHER THAN SENT TO POOR NATIONS – 7/23/25

Reuters reports that U.S.-funded contraceptives worth nearly \$10 million are being sent to France from Belgium to be incinerated, following Trump's decision to shut down the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). This comes after Trump's administration rejected offers from the United Nations and family planning organizations to buy or ship the supplies to poor nations, two sources told Reuters.

The supplies have been stuck for months in a warehouse in Geel, a city in the Belgian province of Antwerp, following Trump's decision to freeze U.S. foreign aid in January.

They include contraceptive implants and pills as well as intrauterine devices to help prevent unwanted pregnancies. The supplies, worth \$9.7 million, are due to expire between April 2027 and September 2031.

The U.S. government will spend \$160,000 to incinerate the stocks at a facility in France that handles medical waste.

The Belgian foreign ministry said Brussels had held talks with U.S. authorities and "explored all possible options to prevent the destruction, including temporary relocation."

"Despite these efforts, and with full respect for our partners, no viable alternative could be secured.

Sarah Shaw, Associate Director of Advocacy at MSI Reproductive Choices, told Reuters MSI had volunteered to pay for the supplies to be repackaged without USAID branding and shipped to countries in need, but the offer was declined by the Trump administration.

"MSI offered to pay for repackaging, shipping and import duties but they were not open to that... We were told that the U.S. government would only sell the supplies at the full market value," said Shaw.

"This is clearly not about saving money. It feels more like an ideological assault on reproductive rights, and one that is already harming women," Shaw said.

She added that many countries in sub-Saharan Africa had relied on USAID for access to contraception and that the aid cuts would lead to a rise in unsafe abortions.

The United Nations' sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA, also offered to buy the contraceptives outright.

However, negotiations broke down, in part due to a lack of response from the U.S. government. reporters.

'SOUTH PARK' CREATORS TREY PARKER & MATT STONE INK DEAL WITH PARAMOUNT + – 7/23/25

In the wake of Paramount's capitulation to Trump and the subsequent cancellation of Colbert's show, South Park's Co-creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone have signed a new five-year overall deal with Paramount Global through their company Park County.

Additionally, South Park Digital Studios, the joint venture behind the animated hit co-owned by Paramount and Park County, has entered into an exclusive five-year license deal with Paramount+, reportedly worth \$1.5 billion.

The deal includes 50 new episodes over five seasons and all 26 previous seasons of South Park, which will continue on Comedy Central and with Paramount+ becoming the U.S. streaming home for the South Park library and all new episodes.

SOUTH PARK KICKS OFF NEW SEASON WITH TAKE DOWN OF TRUMP AND PARAMOUNT – 7/23/25

South Park kicked off its 27th season by taking aim at Donald Trump as well as its new parent company, Paramount, just one day after signing a one and a half billion dollar deal with the network.

The premiere episode, "Sermon on the Mount", covered Trump's lawsuit against Paramount, the cancellation of The Late Show With Stephen Colbert, wokeness, Trump's attacks on Canada and more.

BONDI TOLD TRUMP IN MAY THAT HIS NAME WAS IN THE EPSTEIN FILES – 7/23/25

New reports came out on Wednesday that Attorney General Pam Bondi told Trump in May that his name appeared in the Epstein files.

The conversation, which also included Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, was characterized by two White House officials as a "routine briefing" that covered the Justice Department's findings. Trump's name appearing in the files, they said, was not the sole focus of the discussions. Bondi also told Trump that several other high-profile figures were mentioned.

SUMMER LEE FORCES VOTE TO SUBPOENA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FOR EPSTEIN FILES – 7/23/25

A House Oversight subcommittee voted Wednesday to subpoena the Department of Justice for files related to late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Democratic Rep. Summer Lee forced the vote in the GOP-led subcommittee, bringing a motion to subpoena the Trump DOJ for all records related to the Epstein investigation. The motion passed, 8-2, with three of the panel's Republicans joining with Democrats.

GOP Reps. Nancy Mace, Scott Perry and Brian Jack joined with the subpanel's four Democrats and the full committee's ranking member Robert Garcia to approve the subpoena. House Oversight Chair James Comer will be required to sign the subpoena before it can officially be issued, according to committee rules.

The subpoena calls for the Epstein files in the Justice Department's possession to be provided to Congress, but the names of the victims to be redacted. It also calls for communications between former Biden officials and the Justice Department related to the Epstein matter, in addition to depositions among some major figures, including Bill and Hillary Clinton and former FBI Director James Comey.

The subpoena would force the Justice Department to potentially turn over far more voluminous files than were presented to the grand jury, including some that might reference Trump.

ARKANSAS MAN WHO RAPED AND IMPREGNATED 15-YEAR-OLD CHILD GETS PROBATION – 7/23/25

Mason Lee Gipson, of Jonesboro, pled guilty to child endangerment and was sentenced to a year of probation for raping and impregnating a 15-year-old girl.

Gipson told police during an interview that he was drinking heavily when he visited a 15-year-old girl's family in Bono, Arkansas, and "admitted to having sexual intercourse."

Gipson was 22 at the time.

The judge also ordered Gipson to pay the girl \$690 in restitution, complete parenting classes, and undergo a mental health assessment.

CURRENT TOTAL OF STARVATION DEATHS IN GAZA AT 115 – 7/24/25

Hospitals in the besieged Gaza Strip have recorded two more deaths "due to famine and malnutrition" in the past 24 hours, according to the territory's Health Ministry, bringing the total to at least 115.

FRANCE WILL RECOGNIZE PALESTINIAN STATE IN SEPTEMBER – 7/24/25

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Thursday that France will recognize a Palestinian state in September.

TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER PUNISHING THE HOMELESS – 7/24/25

Trump has signed an executive order that essentially punishes those living on the streets due to drug addiction, mental illness or through a shortage of jobs and affordable housing.

The order signed Thursday would reward states and cities for enforcing prohibitions on urban camping, loitering, and urban squatting. It also includes involuntary civil commitment for those "who are a risk to themselves or others," and moving the homeless into "treatment centers."

The order also prioritizes giving money to programs that require sobriety and treatment in order to get housing, rather than getting people into safe housing before offering treatment.

Experts are criticizing the order.

"This executive order is forcing people to choose between compassionate data driven approaches like housing, or treating it like a crime to have a mental illness or be homeless," said Jesse Rabinowitz with the National Homelessness Law Center.

"Institutionalizing people with mental illness, including those experiencing homelessness, is not a dignified, safe, or evidence-based way to serve people's needs," Ann Oliva with the National Alliance to End Homelessness said in a statement.

Trump also calls to defund addiction programs that include "harm reduction" which would impact programs working to reduce drug overdoses by providing clean needles and other paraphernalia.

Addiction experts consider these programs to be an essential part of helping people survive addiction. Trump's order repeats the false claim that such programs encourage drug use, which has been disproven by scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

GUESS RUNS AI GENERATED AD IN VOGUE – 7/24/25

Guess ran a two-page spread in this month's August edition of Vogue produced by an AI marketing company.

The advertisements show a woman with bouncy, long blonde hair modeling two different outfits on separate pages.

Guess deciding to produce AI generated ads and Vogue deciding to run them sets even more impossible beauty standards for women and girls.

EGYPTIANS PLACE BOTTLES FULL OF DRY FOOD IN OCEAN IN HOPES THAT THEY REACH GAZA – 7/24/25

Motivated by the stories of starvation coming out of Gaza, Egyptians have launched a symbolic initiative named "From Sea to Sea – a Bottle of Hope for Gaza," filling bottles with food and launching them into the sea in the hopes that it reaches Palestinians being starved by Israel.

They have been filling one- and two-liter bottles with grains, rice, lentils, and other dry food supplies, and placing them in the Mediterranean Sea in the hope that they will reach Gaza.

Those taking part are calling on people in countries bordering the Mediterranean, including Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, to get involved as well.

VENEZUELAN MAKEUP ARTIST DESCRIBES TORTURE AND RAPE DURING EL SALVADOR DETENTION – 7/24/25

Andry Hernandez, the makeup artist who was held for four months in an El Salvador prison after the U.S. alleged he was a member of the Tren de Aragua gang, arrived home in Venezuela to his family on Wednesday after what he described as "an encounter with torture and death."

Andry Hernandez, 32, and the other detainees say they were beaten, shot with rubber projectiles, held in dark cells, and served rotten food.

"Many of our fellows have wounds from the nightsticks; they have fractured ribs, fractured fingers and toes, marks from the handcuffs, others have marks on their chests, on their face ... from the projectiles," Hernandez told journalists at his home in Capacho, near the Colombian border.

In a televised interview aired on Venezuelan state media Monday, Hernández said he was sexually abused by the guards. "In my particular case, I was sexually abused by the same Salvadoran authorities who guarded us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," he said in Spanish. He added, "We believed we would never see our families again."

Hernandez originally left Venezuela and came to the United States due to LGBTQ persecution.

MASSIVE OUTAGE OF MUSK'S STARLINK ACROSS MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – 7/24/25

Starlink had a widespread outage on Thursday afternoon that affected Starlink services globally. Reports flooded the outage tracker DownDetector, with users experiencing internet outages as well as total blackouts.

Outages were reported in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Washington, D.C., New York, Boston, Phoenix, Seattle, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, Montreal, Toronto, as well as cities in Mexico, the United Kingdom, Germany, Brazil, the Philippines, and more.

Starlink and its founder, Elon Musk, confirmed the outage and said they were investigating the issue.

At 3:09 pm eastern time, there were 3,400 reports of outages in the U.S., by 3:24 pm there were nearly 58,000.

At 5:54 p.m. eastern time, 56 percent of Starlink users were reporting internet issues, while 43 percent were reporting total blackouts.

At 6:23 p.m. eastern time, a senior Starlink engineer announced the company had "mostly recovered" from the outage.

FIVE CANADIAN HOCKEY PLAYERS FOUND NOT GUILTY IN SEXUAL ASSAULT TRIAL – 7/24/25

The Guardian reports that five former members of Canada's 2018 world junior ice hockey team were found not guilty on Thursday of sexually assaulting a woman in a hotel room that year.

Justice Maria Carroccia told a packed Ontario courtroom that the Crown had not proved the charges beyond a reasonable doubt, ruling that the complainant was "neither credible nor reliable". All five men – Michael McLeod, Alex Formenton, Dillon Dubé, Carter Hart and Cal Foote – were found not guilty on all offences.

The charges stemmed from an encounter in a London, Ontario, hotel room in June 2018, following a Hockey Canada gala celebrating the team's world junior championship victory.

The case cast a long shadow over Canadian hockey, placing not only the players – most of whom went on to professional careers – under scrutiny, but also Hockey Canada, which later admitted it had maintained two secret funds to pay settlements in sexual assault claims.

In her remarks on Thursday, Judge Carroccia pointed out inconsistencies in the accused's testimony, including around how much she had to drink.

The alleged offences took place after the woman, who was 20 at the time and is identified as "EM" in the case, reportedly met McLeod at a local bar, then had what she says was consensual sex in his hotel room – only for him to invite other players to join without her consent.

Text messages shown to the court indicate McLeod asked a group chat of players if anyone wanted a "three-way" and gave out his room number.

EM said she was intoxicated, naked and frightened when they entered, and prosecutors alleged that EM did not consent to various sexual acts that then occurred.

Over nine days of testimony in early May, the woman – now 27 – said the sudden appearance of many large men surrounding her caused her to go on "auto-pilot" and take on a "porn star" persona as a form of self-protection. Though she said she did not explicitly say "no" or resist the alleged assaults, nor was she physically forced to participate, she said she did not consent to any of it, that she was "surprised" when the men entered and that they should have known she was intimidated.

"It felt as if my mind kind of floated to the top corner of the ceiling and I just started watching everything happen," EM told the court. "I just didn't feel like I had any control."

Prosecutors alleged that the acts constituted sexual assault, telling the court that McLeod, Hart and Dubé obtained oral sex from the woman, McLeod had sex with her a second time, Formenton did too, Dubé slapped her naked buttocks and Foote did the splits over her head causing his genitals to "graze" her face. EM also said in her testimony that the men placed a sheet on the floor and told her to masturbate while she was slapped and spat on.

The 10 defense attorneys, two allocated to each of the men, alleged in cross-examination that EM was consenting the entire night, and even taunting the men for not all wanting to have intercourse – and that if she cried it was due to feeling rejected that not everyone seemingly wanted to participate.

Hart, the only one of the five men to testify in court, said he asked EM for oral sex and that was she "super excited" to be in the room and "forward" with her offers for sex. One of McLeod's lawyers, David Humphrey, said in cross-examination that EM demanded sex and suggested she said to them: "Come on, you've got a girl here. Someone have sex with me. You guys are pussies."

EM denied saying it or asking them to have sex with her. "That doesn't even sound like how I would usually speak," she told the court.

A central feature of the trial was two "consent videos" that McLeod recorded on his phone an hour apart after the alleged assaults occurred. In the videos, EM says everything that took place was consensual.

In court, however, she said the videos did not reflect how she was actually feeling at the time. Prosecutors argued that the videos, taken after the sexual activity had ended, do not prove consent at the time of an act.

In speaking to reporters following the verdict, Karen Bellehumeur, EM's lawyer, said the outcome is "devastating" and that Canada's justice system needs reforms to better protect survivors of sexual violence.

“Her treatment during cross examination at times was insulting, unfair, mocking and disrespectful, none of which was necessary,” Bellehumeur said. “Yet she maintained her composure and kept her emotions in check, only to be criticized for not acting enough like a victim.”

She said that EM is heartened by the support she has received by members of the public. Bellehumeur also emphasized that verdicts like this one can discourage survivors of sexual assault from coming forward, but urged them to not be hindered by Thursday’s decision and still speak up.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MAKES \$221 MILLION SETTLEMENT WITH TRUMP ADMINISTRATION – 7/25/25

Columbia University will pay more than \$200 million to the federal government to restore their access to some \$1.3 billion in federal funding – resuming frozen grants and opening up opportunities for future research.

Columbia will pay a \$200 million fine to the federal government, over three years, as well as an additional \$21 million to settle an investigation launched in March by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission into claims of workplace harassment based on religion.

Columbia did not admit to any wrongdoing, and the university said it does not agree that it violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in its handling of allegations of antisemitism. The settlement agreement "is not an admission in whole or in part by either party, and Columbia expressly denies liability regarding the United States' allegations or findings."

However, in a letter yesterday to faculty and students, Columbia's acting president, Claire Shipman, noted that Columbia has "recognized, repeatedly, that Jewish students and faculty have experienced painful, unacceptable incidents, and that reform was and is needed."

Shipman acknowledged "the very serious and painful challenges our institution has faced with antisemitism." She pledged to "work on multiple fronts to combat all forms of hatred and intolerance at Columbia, and you will see more efforts to that end in the coming months."

The settlement also commits Columbia to the following:

- Naming new faculty members "with joint positions in both the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies and the departments or fields of economics, political science" or the university's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA).
- Amending its antidiscrimination policies to include the definition of antisemitism used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.
- Naming coordinators to respond to antisemitism allegations, and a new administrator to serve as a liaison to students and advise on "ways to improve and to support Jewish students."
- Provide additional university-wide training on antisemitism.
- Reaffirming Columbia's zero tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment.

ANGRY RIGHT-WING MALE HACKERS LEAK 13,000 PHOTOS AND IDS FROM THE TEA APP – 7/25/25

Right-wing male hackers have breached the Tea app, which recently went viral as a place for women to safely talk about men, and the company estimates that 72,000 images, including 13,000 verification photos and images of government IDs, were accessed.

Tea was designed as a safety app for women that allows them to research men that they are dating, allowing them to upload photos of men and search for them by name. Users can leave comments describing specific men as a “red flag” or “green flag,” and share other information about them. According to the Tea app website, the Tea app’s creator, Sean Cook was inspired after he watched his mother’s “terrifying experience with online dating,” including being catfished and unknowingly dating men with criminal records.

Signing up for Tea requires users to take selfies, which the app says are deleted after review. All users are promised anonymity outside of the usernames they choose.

The app angered some men, and a thread Thursday evening on the right-wing troll message board 4Chan called for a “hack and leak” campaign. The company became aware of the incident, which was first reported by 404 Media, early Friday, the spokesperson said.

According to Tea, the hacker accessed a database from more than two years ago, and a spokesperson said that “This data was originally stored in compliance with law enforcement requirements related to cyberbullying prevention.”

A 4Chan user posted a link Friday morning, allegedly allowing people to download the database of stolen images, and troves of alleged victims’ identification photos have been posted on 4Chan and X.

On Google Maps, a user has created a map that purports to show the locations of Tea users that were affected by the hack, though there are no names, addresses or other identifying information aside from coordinates on it.

The Tea spokesperson said that they are “working around the clock to secure our systems.”

OKLAHOMA STATE SUPERINTENDENT CAUGHT WATCHING PORN IN HIS OFFICE – 7/25/25

The Oklahoma Voice reports that an inquiry is underway following “a bizarre and troubling situation” where two board members reported that they saw naked women on State Superintendent Ryan Walters’ office television.

Walters has been a vocal critic of critical race theory, LGBT students’ rights, and teachers’ unions in Oklahoma, he has pushed to include the Ten Commandments in schools, and he has spoken out against pornography and sought to ban some books that he said contained it from school library shelves.

In September 2024, Walters opened bids to supply the Oklahoma Department of Education with 55,000 Bibles. He required that “Bibles must be the King James Version; must contain the Old and New Testaments; must include copies of the Pledge of Allegiance, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights; and must be bound in leather or leather-like material.” Only two Bibles fit all criteria, both endorsed by Trump, who receives a fee for all copies sold. In November 2024, Walters announced the purchase of 500 of the Trump endorsed “God Bless the USA” bibles.

The Oklahoman and NonDoc reported Friday that board members Ryan Deatherage and Becky Carson said they saw the pictures on a television in Walters’ office during a State Board of Education executive session that was held July 24.

Board members said that when they questioned Walters about the women, the state superintendent appeared to be surprised and said he needed to get it turned off.

"These are serious allegations made by two members of the State Board and an expeditious third-party review is warranted," House Speaker Kyle Hilbert said in a statement. "I urge the State Superintendent to unlock and turn over all relevant devices and fully cooperate with an investigation.

"If no wrongdoing occurred, a prompt and transparent review should quickly clear his name."

REPUBLICAN TEXAS STATE HOUSE MEMBER ALLEGEDLY FUNDED ABORTIONS FOR HIS AFFAIR PARTNER - 7/25/25

Texas State House member Rep. Giovanni Capriglione on Friday was accused of having a long-time affair and having funded multiple abortions by Alex Grace, the woman making the allegation, as reported in the far-right publication Current Revolt.

Capriglione announced this week that he wouldn't seek re-election ahead of the allegations being made public, but has since released a statement admitting to the affair, but denying that he had ever funded an abortion.

"Years ago, I selfishly had an affair," Capriglione said. "I'm not proud of this. Thank God my wife and family forgave me, and we moved past it and have the strong marriage we do today."

On the allegation that he had funded multiple abortions, however, he said the charge was "categorically false," and threatened legal action against media outlets for "making false and defamatory claims."

Texas conservatives are piling on Capriglione.

"These elected officials who proclaim faith & family values, but then break their most sacred covenants with God & their families are disgusting," said former Texas state senator Konni Burton Friday in a social media post on X. "Their families deserve better and so does the (Republican) party."

In 2021, Capriglione was the lead sponsor on Texas House Bill 1280, dubbed the Human Life Protection Act, which made it a felony punishable with up to life in prison for a medical provider to provide an abortion. The bill was signed into law that same year, but didn't go into full effect until 2022 with the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

FORMER CHRISTIAN NON-PROFIT CEO PLEADS GUILTY TO POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY - 7/27/25

Jason Yates, Former CEO of the Christian non-profit "My Faith Votes," dedicated to mobilizing Christian voters in US elections has pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography.

Yates, 56, admitted guilt to two felony counts of possessing child pornography in a Minnesota district court on July 22, months after his initial arrest, USA Today reported.

On July 31, 2024, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension received a hard drive laden containing child pornography, handed over by someone who claimed to have received it from a relative of Yates. This relative reportedly discovered the hard drive tucked away in a dresser in Yates's office while seeking extra storage for their own computer.

Yates was arrested in October 2024.

The "My Faith Votes" organization has stated that Yates had left his role as CEO in August 2024, before his arrest.

FOX NEWS HOST SAYS CHILDREN CAN FILL FARM LABOR SHORTAGES CAUSED BY DEPORTATIONS – 7/27/25

Co-host of Fox & Friends Weekend, Rachel Campos-Duffy, was discussing whether the government should be doing more to subsidize farming after she took Hurt and Charlie Kirk to a blueberry farm.

Hurt suggested a shortfall in farm labor created by ICE raids could be filled by kids doing summer jobs. He reminisced about picking tobacco in his youth and suggested children could pick fruit as summer jobs.

TRUMP MEMO ALLOWS FEDERAL WORKERS TO PERSUADE COWORKERS THEIR RELIGION IS 'CORRECT' – 7/28/25

The Hill reports that the Trump administration released a memo Monday that employees can attempt to persuade co-workers about why their religious beliefs are “correct.”

The memo outlined conduct that should not result in disciplinary or corrective action, including displaying in the office bibles, religious artwork, jewelry, posters displaying religious messages and other indicia of religion “such as crosses, crucifixes and mezuzah.”

The memo also said one or more employees should be allowed to engage in individual or communal religious expressions and that employees can engage in conversations on religious topics “including attempting to persuade others of the correctness of their own religious views, provided that such efforts are not harassing in nature.”

Federal workers can also “encourage their coworkers to participate in religious expressions of faith, such as prayer, to the same extent that they would be permitted to encourage coworkers participate in other personal activities,” the memo said.

Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Director Scott Kuper sent the memo to heads of departments and agencies with guidance on how to allow personal religious expression by federal employees “to the greatest extent possible unless such expression would impose an undue hardship on business operations.”

The OPM worked with the White House Faith Office to produce the memo, a spokesperson told The Hill.

The memo included details about how federal workers can engage with others about why they think their personal faith is “correct” and why others should “re-think” their own beliefs.

AMERICAN EAGLE LAUNCHES AD FEATURING SYDNEY SWEENEY PROMOTING EUGENICS – 7/29/25

Clothing retailer American Eagle's latest ad campaign centers around Sydney Sweeney, known for roles in Euphoria, Anyone But You and Once Upon a Time in Hollywood.

Sweeney attended Jeff Bezos' wedding and has posted photos from a family event where people in the background were wearing MAGA hats and “Blue Lives Matter” shirt.

The campaign's tagline — “Sydney Sweeney has great jeans” — plays on the word “genes” which naturally leads viewers to think about the genetics of the blonde-haired, blue-eyed woman.

“Genes are passed down from parents to offspring, often determining traits like hair color, personality and even eye color. My genes are blue,” Sweeney says in one video.

The campaign has sparked backlash online, with accusations aimed at American Eagle for teasing at eugenics, the discredited scientific theory popular with Hitler and white supremacists that the human race would be improved by breeding ideal traits, such as being white, blonde, blue-eyed.

FORMER TRUMP LAWYER EMIL BOVE CONFIRMED TO APPEALS COURT – 7/29/25

On Tuesday night, the GOP-led Senate voted to confirm Trump's former criminal defense lawyer, 50-49. Only two Republicans voted with the Democratic minority against Bove, who will soon be sworn in to serve on the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, a lifetime appointment.

Several dozen former judges and more than 900 former DOJ lawyers pleaded with senators to oppose Bove's nomination.

Bove previously worked as Trump's defense attorney, and was rewarded with a powerful position in the Justice Department, where he fired federal prosecutors who worked on Jan. 6 cases and helped oversee the dismissal of New York Mayor Eric Adams' corruption case.

Even Erez Reuveni, a 15-year veteran federal prosecutor, coming forward to tell senators that Bove deliberately misled judges and repeatedly endorsed ignoring court orders did not impact the Senate decision. Reuveni described a meeting during which Bove "stated that DOJ would need to consider telling the courts 'f--- you' and ignore any such court order."

Bove denied Reuveni's allegations, but internal documents released by Senate Judiciary Committee Democrats appeared to bolster Reuveni's allegations.

Additionally, in his post-hearing written Senate questionnaire, Bove declined to rule out the possibility of the president running for a third term, in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

TRUMP FELL OUT WITH EPSTEIN FOR HIRING AWAY UNDERAGE FEMALE YOUNG MAR-A-LAGO EMPLOYEES – 7/29/25

Trump has repeatedly said he kicked Epstein out of his club for hiring workers away from Mar-a-Lago.

On Tuesday, when he was asked by reporters if the workers who were hired away were young women, Trump responded, "the answer is yes, they were."

"People were taken out of the spa — hired by him — in other words, gone. And other people would come and complain, 'This guy is taking people from the spa,'" Trump said. "I didn't know that. And then when I heard about it, I told him, I said, 'Listen, we don't want you taking our people, whether it was spa or not spa, I don't want them taking people.' And he was fine. And then not too long after that, he did it again. And I said, 'Out of here.' "

Trump was also asked if one of these employees was Virginia Giuffre, who was among those who accused Epstein of sexual abuse and became an advocate for sex trafficking survivors.

"I don't know. I think she worked at the spa. I think so. I think that was one of the people. He stole her,"

Trump told reporters. "And by the way, she had no complaints about us, as you know, none whatsoever."

In a 2016 deposition during her suit against Epstein associate Ghislain Maxwell, Giuffre said she worked at Mar-a-Lago in the summer of 2000, when she was 16 years old.

MAGA CHAMPION, HUSBAND OF REPUBLICAN PARTY CHAIRWOMAN, ARRESTED FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY – 7/30/25

Scott Soucek of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, a white male Trump supporter who is married to the chairwoman of the Door County Republican Party, been charged with 10 counts of possessing child pornography.

In a Facebook post last October, Scott Soucek listed the reasons why he planned to vote for Trump, including, “I’m voting to fight against human/child trafficking.”

He also stated in the post that he was not just voting for himself but also “for my children and my grandchildren.”

Soucek was arrested on July 24 and accused of accessing hundreds of child pornography images.

This is not the first time he has been found possessing child pornography. In 2009, Door County investigators analyzed his laptop, and he admitted to downloading child pornography images. However, he was never charged.

The new criminal complaint filed against Soucek this month states that it “remains unclear” why the 2009 investigation into Soucek was not referred to the local district attorney’s office.

KAROLINE LEAVITT STILL OWES MORE THAN \$300,000 AFTER FAILED CONGRESSIONAL BID – 7/30/25

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt still owes \$326,370.50 in the aftermath of her failed 2022 congressional campaign, according to a new disclosure filed with the Federal Election Commission.

Her campaign committee, Karoline for Congress, has not paid off any of this debt according to the disclosure. The majority of the debt is the result of accepting illegal campaign contributions that exceeded federal limits, the bulk of which she has not yet returned, reported OpenSecrets.

The campaign committee reported in June that it had spent the funds long ago and had no cash on hand.

The committee is currently under audit by the FEC. The excessive donations went unreported for years, but in January, the group amended all 17 of their prior campaign finance reports to account for the unlawful discrepancy, NOTUS reported at the time.

End Citizens United, a Democratic-aligned PAC, sued Karoline for Congress over the illegal donations in November 2022. Since May, the FEC has lacked the minimum four commissioners necessary to initiate any investigations. Trump has the sole authority to nominate the commissioners to be confirmed by the Senate, but he has not nominated a single individual to the FEC.