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Table of Contents

IN THE NEWS

- FBI Director Nominee Kash Patel Testifies at Confirmation Hearing
- FBI Collaborates With DHS and DOJ in Federal Immigration Enforcement Efforts
- Collision Between Helicopter and Plane Kills 67 in Nation's Deadliest Air Disaster Since 2001
- Trump Administration Shakes Up Senior FBI Ranks
- Internal Emails Offer Glimpse Into Early Days of Trump Election Inquiry

COUNTERTERRORISM

- Congressional Delegation to Review Super Bowl Security

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

- New Mexico Man Indicted for Allegedly Making Death Threats Against Trump
- Manhunt Underway for Woman Linked to Killing of Vermont Border Patrol Agent
- Sheriff to Announce \$25K Reward in Texas Triple Murder
- Three Indicted for Large Marijuana Operation on Navajo Nation Land
- Alabama Man Sentenced to Over 10 Years for Drug Trafficking and Gun Possession
- California Councilmember Resigns Amid Embezzlement Investigation
- Former Texas FBI Employee Sentenced to Home Confinement for PPP Fraud
- Continued Reporting: FBI Searching for Patients of 'Dr. Mary' From at Least Five States Over Span of Decades
- FBI Agents Seen Near Former Mississippi Home of Teen Who Disappeared in 1992
- SLED, FBI Search Home of Former Atlantic Beach Town Manager
- California Man Sentenced to Prison for Pointing Laser at Police Helicopters
- Maryland Man Accused of Impersonating Police, Federal Agent in Alleged Theft Scheme
- Ex-California Police Officer Convicted of Sexual Assaults While on Duty
- Woman Who Assaulted Flight Attendant During Phoenix-Bound Flight Sentenced
- Washington Authorities Looking for Missing Lummi Nation Elder Last Seen Jan. 21
- Texan Guilty of Cyberstalking Ex-girlfriend
- Former Firefighter, Foster Parent Sentenced for Sex Crimes Against Children
- Former Pennsylvania Journalist Receives Federal Sentence for Soliciting Minors
- Jersey Man Charged With Enticing a Minor
- South Dakota Man Sentenced to Life in Prison on Rape, Sexual Contact Charges

CYBER DIVISION

- U.S. Cybersecurity Agency's Future Role in Elections Remains Murky Under the Trump Administration

LABORATORY

- Man Identified 33 Years After Being Found Stabbed to Death in Boston Harbor

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- DOJ Partners With Dutch Police to Break up Heartsender Network
- Continued Reporting: FBI Seizes Major Cybercrime Forums in Operation Talent

OTHER FBI NEWS

- FBI Wrestles With a Spike in Sexual Misconduct Claims and Male-Dominated Culture
- Continued Reporting: Atlanta Family in Mistaken FBI Raid Gets Case Before U.S. Supreme Court
- Special Agent in Charge Ashley T. Johnson Leads FBI St. Louis
- Jan. 6 Rioter Pardoned by Trump Is Sentenced to 10 Years in Deadly DWI Crash

WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

IN THE NEWS

FBI Director Nominee Kash Patel Testifies at Confirmation Hearing

Trump's FBI Chief Pick, Kash Patel, Insists He Has No 'Enemies List' and Won't Seek Retribution

The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Tucker, Richer, Brown) reported that Kash Patel, President Donald Trump's pick to lead the FBI, insisted to deeply skeptical Democrats on Thursday that he did not have an "enemies list" and that the Bureau under his leadership would not seek retribution against the president's adversaries or launch investigations for political purposes. The article quoted Patel, who said, "I have no interest, no desire and will not, if confirmed, go backwards. There will be no politicization at the FBI. There will be no retributive actions taken." The article stated that the reassurances were aimed at blunting a persistent line of attack from Democrats, who throughout the hearing confronted Patel with a vast catalog of prior incendiary statements on topics that they said made him unfit for the director's job and raised alarming questions about his belief in conspiracy theories and loyalty to the president. Patel, for his part, sought to distance himself from his own words, accusing Democrats of taking them out of context, highlighting only snippets, or misunderstanding his point. The [New York Times](#) (01/30, Goldman, Thrush, et al.) reported that in trying to distance himself from far-right associates and his own public statements, Patel went so far as to suggest he disagreed with Trump's decision to pardon Jan. 6 rioters who attacked law enforcement officials. It was a rare divergence from a president who selected him to run the nation's most powerful law enforcement agency. According to the article, Patel, who has repeatedly accused the Bureau's leadership of weaponizing its vast powers to target Trump, told the committee he believed that 98 percent of the FBI was made up of "courageous apolitical warriors for justice" who "just need better leadership." He did not explain how he determined that the other 2 percent, about 760 people out of a workforce of 38,000 employees, were supposedly partisan. Patel said his main goal as director would be to fight violent crime and protect the country from three principal national security threats — terrorism, Chinese espionage, and Iranian aggression. [Politico](#) (01/30, Cheney) reported that Patel repeatedly refused to say that Joe Biden won the 2020 election — following similar refusals by Trump's nominee to be attorney general, Pam Bondi. "What's so hard about saying Biden won the 2020 election?" said Sen. Peter Welch (D-VT), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee convening Patel's confirmation hearing Thursday. "President Biden was certified and sworn in. I don't know how else to say it," Patel said. The article mentioned that Democrats have hammered Trump nominees over their refusal to acknowledge Biden's victory, saying it demonstrates an implicit unwillingness to adhere to facts and to put loyalty to Trump above telling the truth.

Kash Patel Says Warrant Requirement for Section 702 Searches Isn't Practical

[Politico](#) (01/30, Gerstein) reported that "Get a warrant" has become a battle cry for many conservative and liberal critics of federal government surveillance programs — but President Donald Trump's pick for FBI director said Thursday he opposes such a requirement. The article quoted Patel, who said, "Having a warrant requirement to go through that information in real time is just not comported with the requirement to protect American citizens. It's almost impossible to make that function and serve the national, no-fail mission." According to the article, under questioning by Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), Patel said that ability has been misused, but he opposes making investigators go to a court before doing such searches, as lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have proposed. Patel said he had experience using that sort of data to save Americans being held hostage abroad. "The issue has been those that have been in government service and abused it in the past. And so we must work with Congress to provide the protections necessary for American citizens," Patel said. In a ruling unsealed earlier this month, a federal judge said the use of 702 data in a criminal case is unconstitutional. The 702 provision is set to expire next year, with a major battle expected in Congress over renewing it. [NextGov](#) (01/30, Kelley, Dimolfetta) also reported on the story.

Patel Explains Proposal to Move More FBI Employees Throughout the Country

The [Washington Times](#) (01/30, Pickett) reported that Patel told the Senate Judiciary Committee Thursday that his comment about turning the FBI's Washington headquarters into a museum was meant to convey his belief that more employees should be deployed across the U.S. According to the article, Patel made the comments, to the shock of the Washington, D.C., establishment, in a past online podcast interview. When pressed about the remark by Sen. Christopher Coons (D-DE), Patel said that his statement about closing the agency's Hoover Building was intended to highlight a larger point about where the 38,000 FBI employees should be working. He said that "7,500 FBI employees work in the Washington Field Office in Hoover Building alone, if you increase that aperture just slightly to encompass the national capital region, that is 11,000 FBI employees work in the national capital region." the article quoted Patel, who said, "A third of the workforce for the FBI works in Washington, D.C., I am fully committed to having that workforce go out into the interior of the country, where I live, west of the Mississippi and work with sheriff's departments and local officers, and having one agent prevent one homicide, and having one agent in Washington prevent one rape, and I will do that over and over and over again, because the American people deserve the resources, not in Washington, D.C., but in the rest of the country."

Kash Patel Vows to Investigate Anti-Catholicism Within the FBI During Confirmation Hearing

The [National Review](#) (01/30, Lynch) reported that Patel, sat for a confirmation hearing Thursday where lawmakers focused on high profile instances of FBI misconduct and Patel's inflammatory political commentary. Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) brought up an FBI memo listing Catholic parishes the bureau believed harbored extremists and could offer opportunities for recruiting informants. The article noted that the memo, which was leaked by former FBI agent Kyle Seraphin, targeted "Radical Traditionalist Catholics" and was authored by the FBI's Richmond field office. Appearing before Congress in July of last year, then-FBI Director Wray refused to tell Representative Jim Jordan who specifically authored the memo. Wray initially argued that the memorandum reflected the views of the single field office that released it, though Jordan has disputed the claim, citing internal Bureau communications which suggest multiple offices were involved in crafting the memo. "Mr. Patel, would you commit to me that you will, if you are confirmed, that you will finally and officially withdraw this memo and make it clear that this is not only unacceptable, but that it is an absolute violation of the First Amendment," Hawley asked. "If I am confirmed, Senator, yes," said Patel, a devout Hindu. Hawley followed up by asking Patel if he will oversee an investigation into who authored the memo and how it came about. "Senator you have my commitment to investigate any matter such as this one that are important to Congress," Patel replied. [Fox News](#) (01/30, Miller) also reported on the story.

Kash Patel Vows to 'Do Everything' to Help GOP Senator Expose Epstein Files

[Fox News](#) (01/30, Shaw) reported that Patel, pledged Thursday to work with a top Republican senator on exposing who worked with Jeffrey Epstein in trafficking and exploiting children. The article noted that Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), quizzed Patel about how he would handle the Epstein case. The sex-trafficking financier died in 2019 while awaiting trial. Nearly 200 names that had previously been redacted from court documents in a lawsuit against his accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell were made public last year. However, Blackburn said there is still more to be known, including the names of those who flew on his plane and accomplices. "I want to talk to you about the Epstein case. I have worked on this for years trying to get those records of who flew on Epstein's plane and who helped him build this international human trafficking sex trafficking ring," she said. "Absolutely, Senator," Patel responded.

"Child sex trafficking has no place in the United States of America. And I will do everything, if confirmed as FBI director, to make sure the American public knows the full weight of what happened in the past and how we are going to counter missing children and exploited children going forward," he said.

President Donald Trump's FBI Director Nominee Vows to Re-Establish Memphis Field Office

The [Memphis Commercial Appeal](#) (01/30, Finton) reported that Patel, vowed on Thursday to keep a field office active in Memphis. Patel's assurance, if confirmed, came after Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), voiced concern over the move that the FBI made last October. According to the article, in August, then-Director Wray visited the Memphis and Knoxville field offices. During that visit, a press release from the FBI said Wray discussed consolidating the Memphis and Knoxville field offices as one in Nashville. The move would centralize the FBI, but Wray said that there would still be "a strong presence" in Memphis. In place of the field office, the Memphis branch would become a resident agency. The article noted that resident agencies are generally described as "smaller offices" by the FBI. Despite the change, Joe Carrico, the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Tennessee division, said in October that about 450 FBI employees would remain in Memphis and that only a few leadership positions moved to Nashville.

FBI Collaborates With DHS and DOJ in Federal Immigration Enforcement Efforts

[Fox News](#) (01/30, Ruiz) reported that the FBI is on the ground working alongside agents from the Department of Homeland Security and other law enforcement bodies conducting a nationwide crackdown on criminal aliens ordered by President Donald Trump. The article quoted acting Director Brian Driscoll, who said, "I've talked to every single one of our special agents in charge of all 55 of our divisions. I know that every single one of them has reached out to their DHS counterparts to offer assistance and support. So we here at the FBI are really leaning forward to assist DHS the best that we can, to stand shoulder-to-shoulder." The article stated that the FBI's presence bolsters Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection and other partner agencies with the Bureau's vast resources, including tactical teams and its intelligence network. Those resources worked alongside DHS agents in New York City earlier this week, helping identify and capture dozens of "the worst of the worst" suspects, including a 25-year-old suspected Tren de Aragua gang member. He is believed to have been involved in a violent incident in Colorado before police found him Monday in a Bronx apartment across the street from a school. The article noted that in El Paso, Texas, the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations, ICE and agents from its Enforcement Removal Operations wing were seen on the ground as part of a mission that led to the capture of a suspect accused of running a stash house for human smugglers. The article continued to quote acting Director Driscoll, who said, "Our best chance to protect Americans, whether it's from the threats posed by groups like ISIS or in our efforts to dismantle groups like Tren de Aragua, the best way to do that is to put our heads together, our tools together, our efforts together with DHS, but also with all of our United States intelligence community and law enforcement partners around the country." In a series of targeted raids in Chicago, the FBI provided not just intelligence and tactical SWAT team members, but also legal experts to help round up illegal immigrants with suspected criminal ties. In New York, they provided "advanced tactical support" and helped set up a crisis management coordination center covering the whole city. "We are and will remain postured to support DHS the best that we can over here at the FBI," acting Director Driscoll said. Operations across the country over the past seven days have netted roughly 5,500 suspected criminal aliens, according to figures released by ICE. The [New York Times](#) (01/30, Sadurni, Marcus), [El Paso Times](#) (01/30, Martinez), [KFOX \(Fox-14\)](#) (01/30, Esquivel), [KVIA \(ABC-7\)](#) (01/30, Oza), [KDBC \(CBS-4\)](#) (01/30, Esquivel), and [WJBK \(FOX-2\)](#) (01/30, Dupnack, Vrabel) also reported on the story.

Collision Between Helicopter and Plane Kills 67 in Nation's Deadliest Air Disaster Since 2001

The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Baldor, Copp, et al.) reported that a midair collision between an Army helicopter and a jetliner killed all 67 people aboard the two aircraft, officials said Thursday, as they scrutinized the actions of the military pilot in the country's deadliest aviation disaster in almost a quarter century. At least 28 bodies were pulled from the icy waters of the Potomac River after the helicopter apparently flew into the path of the American Airlines regional jet late Wednesday while it was landing at Ronald Reagan National Airport, just across the river from Washington, officials said. The plane carried 60 passengers and four crew members, and three soldiers were aboard the helicopter. President Donald Trump told a White House news conference that no one survived. Air crash investigations can take months, and federal investigators told reporters they would not speculate on the cause. The article noted that National Transportation Safety Board investigators recovered the cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder from the Bombardier CRJ700 airplane, agency spokesperson Peter Knudson said. They were at

the agency's labs for evaluation. The plane was found upside-down in three sections in waist-deep water, and first responders were searching miles of the Potomac, John Donnelly, the fire chief in the nation's capital said. The helicopter wreckage was also found. Images from the river showed boats around the partly submerged wing and the mangled wreckage of the plane's fuselage. American Airlines CEO Robert Isom said the plane was making a normal approach when "the military aircraft came into the path" of the jet. The article added that Wednesday's crash was the deadliest in the U.S. since Nov. 12, 2001, when an American Airlines flight slammed into a residential area of Belle Harbor, New York, just after takeoff from Kennedy Airport, killing all 260 people aboard and five people on the ground. The last major fatal crash involving a U.S. commercial airline occurred in 2009 near Buffalo, New York. Everyone aboard the Bombardier DHC-8 propeller plane was killed, along with one person on the ground, bringing the total death toll to 50. The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Golden, Collins), [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Foley, Mustian, Biesecker), [Independent](#) (01/31, Liddell, Rissman, Bedigan), [NewsNation](#) (01/31, Ramsey, Dempsey, et al.), [Axios](#) (01/30, Saric, Habeshian), [CNN](#) (01/30, Rigdon, Stiles, et al.), [USA TODAY](#) (01/30, Petras, Padilla, et al.), [Fox News](#) (01/30, Price, Whitten, Koch), [Reuters](#) (01/30, Staff Writer), [Aljazeera](#) (01/30, Staff Writer), [People](#) (01/30, Baker, Adams), [Reuters](#) (01/30, Kawoosa, Zafra, et al.), and the [New York Post](#) (01/30, Nava, Galvin, et al.) also reported on the story.

Trump Administration Shakes Up Senior FBI Ranks

The [New York Times](#) (01/30, Goldman, Barrett) reported that a handful of senior FBI employees have been told to resign in a matter of days or be fired, as the Trump administration moves to shake up the agency's upper ranks, according to people familiar with the discussions. The article stated that the steps came as Kash Patel, the president's nominee to lead the agency, sought to assure lawmakers during a contentious, hourslong Senate confirmation hearing that he would not begin a campaign of retribution or look backward by pursuing perceived rivals. It is unclear whether he was informed of the decisions. The employees given the apparent ultimatum had been promoted under former Director Wray, who stepped down as FBI director this month. In an email to colleagues, one of the senior agents said he had learned he would be dismissed "from the rolls of the FBI" as soon as Monday morning. "I was given no rationale for this decision, which, as you might imagine, has come as a shock," he wrote. [CNN](#) (01/30, Perez, Cohen) reported that the senior officials are at the executive assistant director level or special agent in charge level and include those who oversee cyber, national security, and criminal investigations. According to the article, the leadership changes have drawn internal consternation, in part because these officials didn't have anything to do with prosecutions of Donald Trump, which have been the focus of the president's ire. The article added that Trump has falsely accused agents of abuse in their court-ordered search of his Mar-a-Lago home and of their treatment of Capitol rioters and that some agents say the criticism belies the fact that FBI agents and supervisors can't choose which assignments they are given as part of their job. The FBI workforce is broadly conservative, and many agents initially had qualms about being assigned to the Capitol attack and Trump cases, viewing the prosecutions as heavy-handed, people familiar with the matter say. Some DOJ lawyers leading January 6 cases complained that they believed agents sometimes slow-walked some of their work. [NBC News](#) (01/30, Dilanian, Richards), the [Guardian](#) (01/30, Mackey, Fong, et al.), [Washington Post](#) (01/30, Stein, Roebuck), [Fox News](#) (01/31, Shaw, Spunt), [USA TODAY](#) (01/30, Chambers), and [KGW \(NBC-8\)](#) (01/30, Video) also reported on the story.

Internal Emails Offer Glimpse Into Early Days of Trump Election Inquiry

The [New York Times](#) (01/30, Feuer, Goldman) reported that a series of internal FBI emails released on Thursday showed that agents and officials followed standard procedure nearly three years ago when they opened the historic criminal investigation into Donald J. Trump's attempts to stay in power after he lost the 2020 election. According to the article, the emails were released by the Senate Judiciary Committee in the middle of a contentious hearing for the nominee for FBI director, Kash Patel, at which Republicans sought to paint the FBI as a politicized agency that improperly went after targets like Trump. The article stated that the emails showed that FBI investigators took normal bureaucratic steps and precautions when opening the extraordinarily sensitive inquiry into Trump's attempts to overturn the election using slates of electors pledged to him in states he had actually lost. According to the article, the emails also revealed the names of several FBI agents and Bureau officials who worked on the Trump investigation. The article noted that it is rare for the FBI or the DOJ to disclose the names of specific agents working on cases — particularly at a time when public servants are facing rampant threats. [Fox News](#) (01/30, Singman), and the [Washington Times](#) (01/30, Pickett) also reported on the story.

[Back to Top](#)

COUNTERTERRORISM

Congressional Delegation to Review Super Bowl Security

[Reuters](#) (01/30, Staff Writer) reported that a congressional delegation will visit New Orleans on Friday to inspect security ahead of the Feb. 9 Super Bowl following a New Year's Day attack in the city that killed 14 people and injured scores more. The article noted that the delegation will be led by Alabama Representative Dale Strong, the chair of the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology, the news website reported, citing a spokesperson for the panel. The lawmakers will reportedly visit the site of the attack with officials from the Department of Homeland Security, FBI, and New Orleans police. The article added that they will then tour the city's convention center and Caesars Superdome where they will be briefed by NFL and law enforcement officials. The NFL this week said they modified their security plans including adding more law enforcement support after a U.S. Army veteran rammed a truck into a crowd of revelers in the early hours of Jan. 1 in the city's popular French Quarter district. The FBI said 42-year-old Shamsud-Din Jabbar, who had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State extremist group, acted on his own. NFL Chief Security Officer Cathy Lanier told reporters on Wednesday that law enforcement would number in the "thousands" between state, local, and federal agencies. Lanier said there have not been any credible threats made on the event since Jan. 1. Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry this week renewed a state of emergency established after the New Year's Day attack and said that checkpoints would be in place around the French Quarter. [Axios](#) (01/30, Solender, Brasted) also reported on the story.

[Back to Top](#)

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

New Mexico Man Indicted for Allegedly Making Death Threats Against Trump

[The Epoch Times](#) (01/30, Pan) reported that Tyler Miles Leveque, a 37-year-old man from Albuquerque, New Mexico, has been indicted on charges of making death threats against President Donald Trump and others through social media posts. The article specified that the U.S. Secret Service, FBI, and Albuquerque Police Department began investigating after Leveque posted threatening messages on social media, including a message stating, "you and your rich friends are dead," targeting Trump and Elon Musk. The article detailed that Leveque admitted to making the threats during an interview with authorities on January 6, 2024, and confirmed another post in which he indicated he had purchased a gun and was preparing for violence. If convicted, Leveque faces up to five years in prison. The article explained that the indictment is part of a broader security concern following two incidents where Trump's life was threatened, including a shooting at a campaign rally in July 2024 and another incident in September. A DOJ [press release](#) stated that U.S. Attorney Alexander M.M. Uballez, Ron Emmot, Resident Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service Albuquerque Resident Office, and Raul Bujanda, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Albuquerque Field Office, made the announcement today. The release noted that the U.S. Secret Service investigated this case with the assistance of the FBI, the Albuquerque Field Office, and the Albuquerque Police Department. The [Albuquerque Journal](#) (01/30, Hasman), [KVIA \(ABC-7\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writer), and [KRQE \(CBS-13\)](#) (01/30, Fischer) provided additional reporting.

Manhunt Underway for Woman Linked to Killing of Vermont Border Patrol Agent

[Fox News](#) (01/30, Stimson) reported that a manhunt is ongoing for Michelle J. Zajko, a 32-year-old woman suspected of purchasing the handguns used in the killing of U.S. Border Patrol Agent David "Chris" Maland near the Canada-Vermont border on January 20, 2024. According to the article, Zajko is considered "armed and dangerous," and law enforcement agencies across several states are involved in the search. The FBI's office in Albany previously announced that Teresa Youngblut was charged with assaulting a federal law enforcement officer in connection with the shooting, and the FBI expressed condolences for the loss of Agent Maland. The article mentioned that Zajko is also linked to a double murder in Pennsylvania and another murder in California, with authorities investigating her potential involvement in those cases.

The Woman Charged in a Vermont Border Patrol Officer's Death Has Been Ordered Held Without Bail

The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Ramer, Whittle) added that Teresa Youngblut was ordered held without bail in connection with the January 20, 2024, shooting death of U.S. Border Patrol Agent David Maland in northern

Vermont. Youngblut is facing federal firearms charges for opening fire during a traffic stop, leading to a shootout that also resulted in the death of her companion, Felix Bauckholt. The article revealed that Pennsylvania state police have linked the gun used in the Vermont shooting to a person of interest in the December 2022 murders of Richard and Rita Zajko in Chester Heights, Pennsylvania. The [New York Times](#) (01/30, Russell, Root), [The Independent](#) (01/30, Cavallier), the [New York Post](#) (01/30, Marino, Gibbon), and a second [New York Post](#) (01/30, Ngo) article.

Sheriff to Announce \$25K Reward in Texas Triple Murder

[KPRC \(NBC-2\)](#) (01/30, Newberry) reported that Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez is set to announce a reward increase of up to \$25,000 following the tragic deaths of Kelly Masciarelli, her son Kolin Foster, and his girlfriend Cameryn Richard, who were found dead in a house fire in Cypress. According to the article, investigators believe the victims were murdered before the fire was set, with an accelerant possibly used to spread the flames. The article added that the FBI has been assisting in the investigation, and new surveillance footage is expected to be released showing a suspect leaving the scene in a black car driven by someone else. This will be the first time the FBI has publicly commented on the case. The article noted that the new surveillance video is expected to be released on Tuesday morning during a press conference with the sheriff and the FBI Houston Special Agent in Charge. [KHOU \(CBS-11\)](#) (01/30, McCord) also reported on the story.

Three Indicted for Large Marijuana Operation on Navajo Nation Land

[KOAT \(ABC-7\)](#) (01/30, Catlin) reported that a federal indictment has charged Dineh Benally, his father, Donald Benally, and Irving Rea Yui with manufacturing and distributing large quantities of marijuana, along with polluting federal waters. According to the article, the trio allegedly operated 25 marijuana farms in the Shiprock area, producing over 1,100 cannabis greenhouses and causing environmental damage to the San Juan River. The article added that FBI Special Agent Raul Bujanda said the collaboration of law enforcement agencies was key to ending this marijuana growing operation. The article quoted Bujanda who stated that, "The FBI remains committed to continue to dismantle criminal organizations operating in New Mexico," Bujanda said. "Effective law enforcement requires strong partnerships at every level. This operation is a testament to the power of collaboration between state, local, tribal, and federal agencies to ensure justice is served and our communities are protected." The article noted that following a raid in Estancia, further illegal activities were uncovered, including the discovery of Chinese workers and additional drugs.

Alabama Man Sentenced to Over 10 Years for Drug Trafficking and Gun Possession

[WBMA \(ABC-58\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that Courdarius Lamont Hall, also known as "Skinny," was sentenced to 123 months in prison for drug trafficking and firearm possession in connection with drug offenses. According to the article, in 2023, Hall sold methamphetamine and fentanyl during three controlled drug transactions, which led to a search of his home by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. The article specified that during the search, law enforcement found drugs in his daughter's backpack, along with firearms, including a Glock with a switch and a Draco firearm. A DOJ [press release](#) added that the FBI investigated the case along with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Vice and Narcotics Division. The story was also reported on by [WBRC \(FOX-6\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writers).

California Councilmember Resigns Amid Embezzlement Investigation

The [Times-Standard](#) (01/30, Alexander) reported that Fortuna City Councilmember Kris Mobley resigned from her position on Wednesday amid an ongoing FBI investigation into embezzlement and theft. According to the article, the investigation, confirmed by the FBI San Francisco division, is focused on her non-public employment, specifically her role as a business manager at Beacom Construction Co., with no evidence suggesting that city funds were involved. The article detailed that Fortuna Police Chief Casey Day confirmed the FBI's involvement and stated that the city is cooperating closely with the agency. He also mentioned that city officials are monitoring the situation closely as the investigation unfolds, though they declined to provide details on its timeline. The article added that The FBI spokesperson reiterated that they are unable to share further information at this time. The article noted that city officials are now discussing how to proceed with replacing Mobley on the council, with options including a special election or appointment. The [Lost Coast Outpost](#) (01/30, Vanderheiden) also reported on the story.

Former Texas FBI Employee Sentenced to Home Confinement for PPP Fraud

[KTBC \(FOX-7\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that Christopher James Phillips, a former FBI employee, was sentenced to three months of home confinement and five years of probation for wire fraud related to fraudulent

use of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). According to the article, Phillips used his FBI-issued credentials to submit a false PPP application, claiming a non-existent payroll and submitting a fraudulent IRS Form 941 to support his application. He received \$37,500 in PPP funds but misused them, wiring \$25,000 to a personal trading account and making personal loan payments. The article noted that Phillips was indicted in January 2024, pleaded guilty to wire fraud in September 2024, and was ordered to pay \$39,771 in restitution.

Continued Reporting: FBI Searching for Patients of 'Dr. Mary' From at Least Five States Over Span of Decades

[KDVR \(FOX-31\)](#) (01/30, Willard) reported that the FBI is investigating Mary Blakley, 75, for posing as a doctor and operating fraudulent "body scan" clinics across the U.S. from 2011 to December 2024, with possible operations dating back to 2002. The article explained that Blakley, often using various aliases, and her husband, Floyd "Fred" Blakley, are accused of operating clinics in multiple states, claiming to diagnose and treat illnesses like cancer using ultrasound machines. The article revealed that the FBI is seeking information from anyone who believes they or a loved one may have been affected by the Blakleys' services, urging them to fill out an online form. The article disclosed that the FBI emphasized the importance of identifying victims to further the investigation. [KKTU \(CBS-11\)](#) (01/30, Andrews) also reported on the story.

FBI Agents Seen Near Former Mississippi Home of Teen Who Disappeared in 1992

[WLBT \(NBC-3\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writer) reported that federal and state law enforcement, including officers from the FBI and Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, conducted a search on Wednesday near the former home of Leigh Occhi, a teenage girl who vanished in 1992 during Hurricane Andrew. The article explained that the search took place in Tupelo, Mississippi, where Leigh, then 13, was last seen, and agents were observed digging near a drainage ditch. The article mentioned that despite the presence of K-9s and officers wearing FBI shirts, law enforcement declined to comment on the nature of the search. Although Leigh's parents had her declared legally dead last year, the case has remained open, and the FBI has been involved since the discovery of her glasses, which were mailed to the family after her disappearance. The article elaborated that the FBI tried to DNA test the stamp used on the package containing the glasses. They soon learned that water was used on the stamp, not saliva.

SLED, FBI Search Home of Former Atlantic Beach Town Manager

The [Post and Courier](#) (01/30, Perry) reported that on January 30, FBI and state agents conducted a search at the Conway home of former Horry County councilman and Atlantic Beach Town Manager Orton Bellamy. According to the article, FBI spokesman Kevin Wheeler confirmed that the agents were carrying out "court-authorized law enforcement activity" but provided no further details due to the ongoing nature of the investigation. The article added that Bellamy, when approached by reporters, stated that he had provided information to the FBI but had not disclosed what had been requested. A spokeswoman for the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) confirmed their assistance in the investigation but referred all further inquiries to the FBI. Wheeler reassured the public that there was no threat to their safety. [My Horry News](#) (01/30, Cardinal) explained that Bellamy most recently served as the town manager of Atlantic Beach. He was fired from the position in November after an outdoor meeting in front of locked doors of the community center. This story was also reported on by [WPDE \(ABC-15\)](#) (01/30, West) and [WLBT \(NBC-3\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writer).

California Man Sentenced to Prison for Pointing Laser at Police Helicopters

[City News Service](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that Mark Allen Barger, a 48-year-old Long Beach man, was sentenced to six months in prison for pointing a high-powered laser at police helicopters and aircraft near Long Beach Airport in January 2023. The article detailed that Barger pleaded guilty to two federal counts of aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft in October 2023. The article noted that the FBI, alongside Long Beach Police Department (LBPD) detectives, conducted a stakeout and witnessed Barger pointing the laser at a police helicopter on January 18, 2023. [Patch](#) (01/30, Barnes) also reported on this story.

Maryland Man Accused of Impersonating Police, Federal Agent in Alleged Theft Scheme

[WBOC \(CBS-16\)](#) (01/30, Curtis) reported that Allen Andres, 81, from Hartly, DE, was arrested and charged after allegedly scamming an Easton, MD, couple out of large sums of money by posing as a law enforcement officer. According to the article, the victims reported that Andres, who identified himself as both a police officer and an FBI agent, convinced them to make significant wire transfers, showing them fake law enforcement credentials, including a counterfeit FBI badge. The article explained that the Easton Police confirmed with the FBI that Andres was not an agent, and the badge he used was either stolen or a high-quality counterfeit. The article added that

Andres was extradited from Delaware and charged with multiple crimes, including theft and impersonating a police officer, and was released on bond following a court hearing.

Ex-California Police Officer Convicted of Sexual Assaults While on Duty

[KMPH \(FOX-26\)](#) (01/30, Hawkins) reported that former Sanger Police Department Officer J. DeShawn Torrence was convicted by a federal jury for sexually assaulting four women during his official duties. The article specified that the jury found that Torrence's offenses included kidnapping, aggravated sexual abuse, and attempted aggravated sexual abuse, causing bodily injury. According to the article, Torrence was found guilty of kidnapping a 21-year-old woman, driving outside of town in his police car, and sexually assaulting her at an isolated dead end. He also raped a 67-year-old woman after following her into her home during a DUI investigation and assaulted a third victim by entering her apartment after midnight. The article noted that additionally, he repeatedly visited the home of a fourth victim, a domestic violence survivor, under the guise of investigating a prior incident and sexually assaulted her. The article quoted Special Agent in Charge Sid Patel, who stated that, "The FBI Sacramento Field Office is grateful to the brave victims who came forward and trusted us to investigate the allegations of sexual abuse at the hands of a police officer," adding that, "The FBI is deeply committed to working with our partners to thoroughly investigate such cases to protect the American people and preserve public trust in law enforcement." The article mentioned that Torrence is scheduled to be sentenced on May 7th, facing a maximum penalty of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine for five counts. A DOJ [press release](#) added that the FBI Sacramento Field Office investigated the case, with assistance from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office. The story was also reported on by [KGPE \(CBS-47\)](#) (01/30, Lombardo) and [The Fresno Bee](#) (01/30, Miller).

Woman Who Assaulted Flight Attendant During Phoenix-Bound Flight Sentenced

[KSAZ \(FOX-10\)](#) (01/30, Wong) reported that Aliyah Robyn Stalder, a 24-year-old woman from Seattle, was sentenced to three years of probation for an assault that occurred on a flight to Phoenix in February 2023. According to the article, she pleaded guilty to assaulting a flight attendant during an attempt to open multiple cabin doors mid-flight. The article explained that as part of her sentence, Stalder is prohibited from traveling by commercial aircraft without prior approval and must pay a \$5,000 FAA penalty along with over \$8,000 in restitution. A DOJ [press release](#) added that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Phoenix Police Department conducted the investigation in this case. The United States Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, Phoenix, handled the prosecution. [KTAR \(FM-92.3\)](#) (01/30, Stone) and [KPNX \(NBC-12\)](#) (01/30, Hannah) also reported on the story.

Washington Authorities Looking for Missing Lummi Nation Elder Last Seen Jan. 21

[The Bellingham Herald](#) (01/30, Belcher) reported that the Lummi Nation Police Department, FBI, and Whatcom County Sheriff's Office are actively searching for 62-year-old Besalynn M. James, who was last seen on January 21. The article noted that the FBI is assisting in the search efforts alongside local law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing as they seek information about James' whereabouts.

Texan Guilty of Cyberstalking Ex-girlfriend

The [LoneStarLive](#) (01/30, Gaytan) reported that Huston Tyler McLearn, 29, of Lubbock, Texas, pleaded guilty to cyberstalking his former girlfriend, sending explicit images of her to her father, brother, and employer, and making violent threats. The article specified that McLearn's actions included threatening to kill the woman and sharing derogatory social media posts about her. The article explained that the FBI became involved after the victim reported the harassment to the FBI's National Threat Operations Center, detailing the extensive abuse. The article quoted FBI Dallas Special Agent in Charge R. Joseph Rothrock, who stated, "The defendant's alarming behavior was countered by the bravery of his victim who so courageously reported him to law enforcement despite the threats he made to kill her," adding that, "The FBI and our law enforcement partners will continue to do everything in our power to seek justice for victims and their families, hold perpetrators accountable and protect others from harm." The article noted that the FBI's Dallas Field Office investigated the case with help from the Texas Tech University Police Department.

Former Firefighter, Foster Parent Sentenced for Sex Crimes Against Children

[WTVG \(ABC-13\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that Jeremy Dean Chesser, a former firefighter and foster parent, was sentenced in his federal case on Thursday. The article detailed that the FBI said Chesser admitted to committing sexual acts against young children. The article explained that Chesser was indicted on those federal charges in September 2023 and later indicted on more than a dozen additional charges in Lucas County Common Pleas Court. According to the article, he was arrested in August 2023 after the FBI said he possessed "hundreds if not 1,000 images" of child pornography and allegedly admitted to committing sexual acts against minors to FBI

agents following a raid at his home. The article elaborated that the DOJ says he agreed to an interview in which he allegedly admitted to committing sexual acts against multiple children, including a 2-year-old and a 3-year-old, as well as watching pornography with children. Authorities also say he admitted to posing as a teenager to solicit child pornography from teen girls he knew. The FBI says he admitted to consuming child pornography for more than 10 years. The criminal complaint alleges Chesser communicated with an undercover FBI agent on Kik throughout August 2023. The article mentioned that during those conversations, Chesser allegedly described sexual acts with a minor in detail and sent nude images of minors to the agent. The article disclosed that Kik provided IP address logs associated with Chesser's account to the FBI after agents issued a subpoena. The article noted that Judge James Knepp II sentenced Jeremy Dean Chesser Thursday to serve 30 years in prison for his federal case, ordered to be served concurrently with his existing 14-year sentence for Lucas County charges, and when released from prison, he will have to be under supervised release for the rest of his life.

Former Pennsylvania Journalist Receives Federal Sentence for Soliciting Minors

[The Centre County Gazette](#) (01/30, Blake) reported that Christopher Z. Morelli, a former Centre County journalist who was arrested in the winter of 2023 for allegedly sending sexual messages to an FBI agent he believed to be a teenage girl, has been sentenced to 10 years in federal prison for the crime. According to the article, Morelli was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Matthew Brann on Thursday, Jan. 23. Brann recommended that Morelli serve the time in a federal prison near Pittsburgh and ordered that he be under a supervised release for five years after his time is served in addition to registering as a sex offender. The article explained that Morelli was first arrested on Dec. 20, 2023, following an undercover investigation involving the local police department and the FBI. The article elaborated that Morelli engaged in messaging online with an FBI agent he believed to be a 14-year-old girl starting in July 2022, attempting to meet with the teen, engaging in sexual conversation, and soliciting explicit pictures over about 18 months, according to the criminal complaint. The charges against Morelli included "solicitation to commit the crime of statutory sexual assault and corruption of minors," as stated in the criminal complaint.

Jersey Man Charged With Enticing a Minor

[NJ.com](#) (01/30, Enuco) reported that Ryan Niksa was charged with one count of enticement of a minor to engage in sexual activity and appeared in federal court on Wednesday. The article specified that Enuco had been accused of trying to convince a 14-year-old to run away with him to a foreign country after the two exchanged sexually explicit photos and videos. According to the article, authorities began investigating after receiving information that the girl, a 14-year-old girl from California, had been the target of sexually driven conversations from an adult male, later identified as Niksa. The investigation revealed the two had exchanged sexually explicit messages, videos, and photos since August 2024, according to the complaint. The article noted that Niksa also told the girl he wanted to travel to California to live with her. A DOJ [press release](#) added that Acting U.S. Attorney Khanna credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Terence G. Reilly in Newark, the Jersey City Police Department, and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, with the investigation leading to the charges. The [Hudson County View](#) (01/30, Heinis) also reported on the story.

South Dakota Man Sentenced to Life in Prison on Rape, Sexual Contact Charges

The [Watertown Public Opinion](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley announced on Thursday that a Watertown man had been sentenced to life in prison after earlier pleading guilty to two counts of first-degree rape and one count of sexual contact with a child under 16. The article detailed that he was sentenced to life in prison on each of the first-degree rape charges and received a 15-year suspended sentence on the sexual contact charge. The article noted that South Dakota's Division of Criminal Investigation (DC), FBI, and Watertown Police Department investigated the case. [The Watertown Current](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) and [KELO \(FM-107.9\)](#) (01/30, Rooney) also reported on the story.

[Back to Top](#)

CYBER DIVISION

U.S. Cybersecurity Agency's Future Role in Elections Remains Murky Under the Trump Administration

The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Cassidy) reported that the nation's cybersecurity agency has played a critical role in helping states shore up the defenses of their voting systems, but its election mission appears uncertain amid sustained criticism from Republicans and key figures in the Trump administration. President Donald Trump has not named a new head of the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and for the first time since it was

formed, there are no plans for anyone in its leadership to address the main annual gathering of the nation's secretaries of state, which was being held this week in Washington. On Thursday, a panel on cyberthreats included an update from an FBI official who said the threats remained consistent. The article quoted Cynthia Kaiser, a deputy assistant director in the Bureau's Cyber Division, who said, "I'm often asked what the FBI sees as the top cyberthreats facing the U.S., and really the FBI's answer for the last several years has been the same: China, China, China, ransomware, Russia, Iran, North Korea." Trump's new homeland security secretary, Kristi Noem, said during her Senate hearing that CISA had strayed "far off mission." She pledged to work with senators "should you wish to rein them in" with legislation. The article mentioned that the agency formed in 2018 during the first Trump administration is charged with protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, from dams and nuclear power plants to banks and voting systems. It is under the Department of Homeland Security, but CISA is a separate agency with its own Senate-confirmed director. The agency has received bipartisan praise from many state and local election officials, but Trump and his allies remain angry over its efforts to counter misinformation about the 2020 presidential election and the coronavirus pandemic. The agency's first director, Chris Krebs, was fired by Trump after Krebs highlighted a statement issued by a group of election officials that called the 2020 election the "most secure in American history." That drew Trump's ire as he was contesting his loss to Democrat Joe Biden. Republicans have claimed repeatedly since then that CISA had worked with social media companies to censor conservative viewpoints on issues related to elections and health. Agency officials have disputed that: "CISA does not censor, has never censored," the agency's then-director, Jen Easterly, said last fall in an interview with the Associated Press. Nevertheless, Republicans continue to blame the agency and insist changes are necessary.

[Back to Top](#)

LABORATORY

Man Identified 33 Years After Being Found Stabbed to Death in Boston Harbor

[WBTS \(NBC-10\)](#) (01/30, Staff Writers) reported that investigators have identified a man whose body was found more than 33 years ago in Boston Harbor. The article specified that the man, originally found stabbed to death on December 4, 1991, near Thompson Island, has been identified as Toussaint Gonsalves, who was 21 at the time of his death. According to the article, the Boston Police Department, in collaboration with the FBI's Boston office and its Violent Crimes Task Force, used investigative genetic genealogy to identify Gonsalves. Gonsalves' murder, which was ruled a homicide by autopsy, is still under investigation. The article added that the FBI Laboratory created two images to depict what Gonsalves may have looked like, and these images, along with other information, have been added to the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP) database. The article noted that police suggest that Gonsalves may have been living in Dorchester or Newton, Massachusetts, and possibly worked as a kitchen worker.

[Back to Top](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DOJ Partners With Dutch Police to Break up Heartsender Network

[CYBERSCOOP](#) (01/30, Otto) reported that authorities in the United States and the Netherlands have dismantled a sophisticated Pakistan-based cybercrime network known as Saim Raza. The operation, dubbed "Operation Heart Blocker," culminated Wednesday with the coordinated seizure of 39 domains and servers. Also known as HeartSender, Saim Raza was responsible for developing and selling phishing kits, with the Department of Justice claiming the software resulted in over \$3 million in victim losses. The article added that HeartSender's network operated through a vast array of criminal web shops, advertising its malicious tools across platforms like YouTube. The group specialized in selling an arsenal of tools — including phishing kits, cookie grabbers, and other tools to power spam campaigns — that enabled users to send vast amounts of phishing emails, steal login credentials, and access hacked infrastructure. This global operation attracted thousands of customers seeking to exploit digital vulnerabilities, offering access to services like cPannels, SMTP servers, and WordPress accounts. The investigation uncovered datasets containing millions of victim records, including approximately 100,000 sets of Dutch credentials. The article noted that aside from police, the group has been on the radar of cybersecurity researchers for the past decade. A story from independent journalist Brian Krebs detailed the group's sloppy operations, including malware infections within their own network and security lapses in their HeartSender services, which

reveal customer data and operations to unauthenticated users. The takedown comes shortly after the FBI was also involved in an international operation that seized digital marketplaces known for stolen credentials and hacking tools. A DOJ [press release](#) noted that the FBI Houston Field Office is investigating the case.

Continued Reporting: FBI Seizes Major Cybercrime Forums in Operation Talent

[SC Media](#) (01/30, Staff Writer) provided continued reporting regarding the FBI seizing multiple cybercrime forums and illegal marketplaces as part of an international law enforcement effort called Operation Talent. The article detailed that the domains of major hacking websites Nulled.to, Cracked.to, Cracked.io, StarkRDP.io, Sellix.io, and MySellix.io, were seized in the operation. The article explained that the sites are known to facilitate illegal cyber activities such as distributing stolen credentials, cracked software, and hacking tools. StarkRDP.io, a virtual hosting provider, was taken down due to misuse by cybercriminals, while Italy-based Sellix.io and MySellix.io are financial service platforms that have been linked to illicit transactions. The article noted that Cracked.to administrators acknowledged the seizure on Telegram, calling it a significant loss but suggesting the forum might reappear under a new domain. A DOJ [press release](#) mentioned that the operation involved actions in the United States, Romania, Australia, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Greece. The release stated that Supervisory Official Antoinette T. Bacon of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Trini E. Ross for the Western District of New York, U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza for the Western District of Texas, Assistant Director Brian A. Vorndran of the FBI's Cyber Division, Special Agent in Charge Matthew Miraglia of the FBI Buffalo Field Office, and Special Agent in Charge Aaron Tapp for the FBI San Antonio Field Office made the announcement. The release also explained that the FBI, working in coordination with foreign law enforcement partners, identified a series of servers that hosted the Cracked marketplace infrastructure and eight domain names used to operate Cracked. They also identified servers and domain names for Cracked's payment processor, Sellix, and the server and domain name for a related bulletproof hosting service. The release continued that all of these servers and domain names have been seized pursuant to domestic and international legal processes. Anyone visiting any of these seized domains will now see a seizure banner that notifies them that the domain has been seized by law enforcement authorities. Additional reporting was provided by [Forbes](#) (01/30, Winder), [Cyber Daily](#) (01/30, Croft), [Security Week](#) (01/30, Kovacs), [Tech Crunch](#) (01/30, Franceschi-Bicchieral), [CSO Online](#) (01/30, Sharma) and [PCMag](#) (01/30, Kan).

[Back to Top](#)

OTHER FBI NEWS

FBI Wrestles With a Spike in Sexual Misconduct Claims and Male-Dominated Culture

The [Associated Press](#) (01/30, Mustian) reported that the FBI has recorded a sharp spike in complaints that its own agents and employees have engaged in sexual misconduct, ranging from assault to harassment, despite a pledge by Bureau leaders to eliminate the longstanding problem. An Associated Press investigation found the FBI has received nearly 300 allegations of sexual misconduct since the Bureau announced in 2021 it had launched an agency-wide crackdown. According to the article, the number marked a nearly 50% increase over complaints filed during the preceding four-year period, according to Bureau statistics, an increase advocates and lawmakers described as a sign the Bureau is struggling to protect women in a male-dominated workplace. The FBI, for its part, said the increase shows its reforms are making it easier to report misconduct. The article quoted Sen. Chuck Grassley, who said, he'll be using his role as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee "to get answers and root out further FBI misconduct." He blamed former FBI Director Wray for allowing "the problem of sexual misconduct at the FBI to fester." The article quoted the FBI, which said, "We have come a long way in addressing it in various ways using all the policy tools and legal means at our disposal. But we absolutely have more to do in accomplishing a meaningful and long-lasting cultural evolution that honors FBI Director Wray's commitment to eradicating sexual misconduct throughout the organization." The article added that some allegations were so serious they resulted in criminal investigations or charges. Late last year, an FBI agent in Maryland, Eduardo Valdivia, 40, was charged with sexually assaulting two women he contacted through social media with a promise to give them free tattoos and modeling work. His defense attorney, Robert Bonsib, said Valdivia disputes "all allegations that he engaged in any criminal conduct and expects to be cleared of all charges." The article mentioned that the victims usually were agency employees, though others were women whom agents came across during investigations or met socially. At least a dozen sexual misconduct allegations involved supervisors, the AP found, including at least one top agent. The FBI determined more than half of the claims warranted internal investigations, statistics show, though the Bureau refused to disclose how many resulted in terminations or other discipline.

Continued Reporting: Atlanta Family in Mistaken FBI Raid Gets Case Before U.S. Supreme Court

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (01/30, Manins) reported that an Atlanta family who say they were traumatized by armed FBI agents in an accidental predawn raid on their house have persuaded the U.S. Supreme Court to consider whether their lawsuit against the federal government can proceed. Trina Martin, her then-partner Toi Cliatt, and her son Gabe Watson allege they were startled awake just before 5 a.m. on Oct. 18, 2017, when a six-agent SWAT team busted down their front door, set off a flashbang grenade in their home entryway and pointed guns at them before realizing they had the wrong address. The article mentioned that the target was allegedly a violent gang member reportedly living a block away, case records show. Martin, Cliatt and Watson said they got an apology from the FBI agent who led the raid but were left with lasting trauma. In case filings, the federal government said the lead FBI agent had relied on a GPS device to find the target home in the dark, and later told Martin and Cliatt the FBI would cover the damage to their property. The federal government asked the Supreme Court to reject the family's attempt to revive the case. On Monday, the Supreme Court granted the family's request to review the case. Patrick Jaicomo, an attorney representing the family, said the court's final say will have implications for cases nationwide alleging wrongful actions by federal employees and law enforcement officers in particular.

Special Agent in Charge Ashley T. Johnson Leads FBI St. Louis

The [St. Louis American](#) (01/30, Brown) reported that if not for the old Matlock television series, Ashley T. Johnson may not have become the first Black female and first-ever woman to oversee the local FBI office. In October, former FBI Director Wray appointed Johnson as Special Agent in Charge of the St. Louis Field Office. According to the article, in an interview with the [St. Louis American](#), Johnson chuckled as she admitted it was Matlock, which premiered in the late 1980s, starring the ever-affable Andy Griffith, that drew her into the arena of law enforcement. "I'd literally come inside from playing at 3 o'clock just to watch Matlock and all my friends would tease me and, until this day, I watch it whenever it's on." Johnson, who described herself as an "inquisitive child," explained what drew her to the TV show: "It was the investigative side of it. I was always intrigued how they put the pieces of the puzzle together, how they followed mysteries." The article stated that when asked about negative aspects attributes of the FBI's history -such as its 1950s and '60s-era COINTELPRO program that targeted, among others, Black civil rights leaders, and anti-war opponents or scandalous charges of sexism within the agency, Johnson's answers were matter of fact, without antisepsis or delusion. The article noted that Johnson credited and restated former FBI Wray's candid acknowledgement of the FBI's misdeeds in the past, adding that her position is a positive step in avoiding misdeeds of the future.

Jan. 6 Rioter Pardoned by Trump Is Sentenced to 10 Years in Deadly DWI Crash

[NBC News](#) (01/30, Hesel) reported that a Missouri woman convicted in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot and recently pardoned by President Donald Trump was sentenced to 10 years this week for killing a mother of two in a drunken-driving crash. Emily Hernandez was seen holding the broken nameplate of then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, (D-CA) after the mob of Trump supporters attacked the Capitol in 2021. She served 30 days in federal prison and was released. On Wednesday, she was sentenced in Missouri state court to 10 years in prison for a 2022 drunken-driving crash that killed Victoria Wilson and seriously injured her husband, Ryan Wilson, court records show. The article mentioned that Hernandez, 24, pleaded guilty on Nov. 5 to one count of driving while intoxicated in which a person died, and another count of DWI in which a person was seriously injured. Hernandez was driving the wrong way on an interstate in Missouri on Jan. 5, 2022, when she crashed into a car with Victoria and Ryan Wilson, a couple out celebrating their 15th wedding anniversary. [Newsweek](#) (01/30, Clark), [Huffington Post](#) (01/30, Neammanee), and [USA TODAY](#) (01/30, Hauari) also reported on the story.

[Back to Top](#)

WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

White House

President Trump

- 9:00 AM: In-Town Pool Call Time
- 1:00 PM: Press Briefing by the White House Press Secretary

- 3:00 PM: The President signs Executive Orders
- 3:40 PM: Out-of-Town Pool Call Time
- 5:00 PM: The President departs The White House en route Joint Base Andrews
- 5:10 PM: The President arrives at Joint Base Andrews
- 5:15 PM: The President departs Joint Base Andrews en route Palm Beach International Airport
- 7:20 PM: The President arrives at Palm Beach International Airport
- 7:35 PM: The President departs Palm Beach International Airport en route Mar-a-Lago
- 7:50 PM: The President arrives at Mar-a-Lago

Vice President Vance

- No official presidential schedule released or announced.

US Senate

- No events scheduled.

US House of Representatives

- No events scheduled.

Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of State Rubio** attends meetings and briefings at the Department of State.

Visitors

- No events scheduled.

General Events

- Brookings: Fit to fight: Analyzing women's roles in the US military – Friday, January 31, 2025. Location: Online event, 10:00 AM. Women have served in the U.S. military in various capacities for more than two centuries, overcoming barriers to take on greater roles in leadership, combat, and beyond. While they have officially held combat roles since the 1990s, it was not until 2015 that all combat positions were opened to them, marking a significant breakthrough in their full integration into the armed forces. Today, they make up nearly 18% of the total force, serving in every branch and achieving milestones once thought unattainable.
- Atlantic Council: Screening of "Intercepted" – Friday, January 31, 2025. Location: Atlantic Council, 3:00 PM. On Friday, January 31 at 3:00 p.m. ET, the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center and Grasshopper Film co-host a film screening of Intercepted, a documentary contrasting images of the damage caused by the Russian military in Ukraine with intercepted phone calls between Russian soldiers and their families.
- Hudson Institute: Updating US-Japan Cybersecurity Cooperation – Friday, January 31, 2025. Location: Hudson Institute, 10:00 AM. Japanese cybersecurity strategy has emphasized national security and international cooperation while also addressing new challenges such as the security implications of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and the internet of things (IoT). The Japanese government has intensified discussions on the development of active cyber defense capabilities since the introduction of its 2022 National Security Strategy. These developments provided the government with a strong mandate to draft new legislation, which is slated for consideration during the regular parliamentary session in 2025.

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