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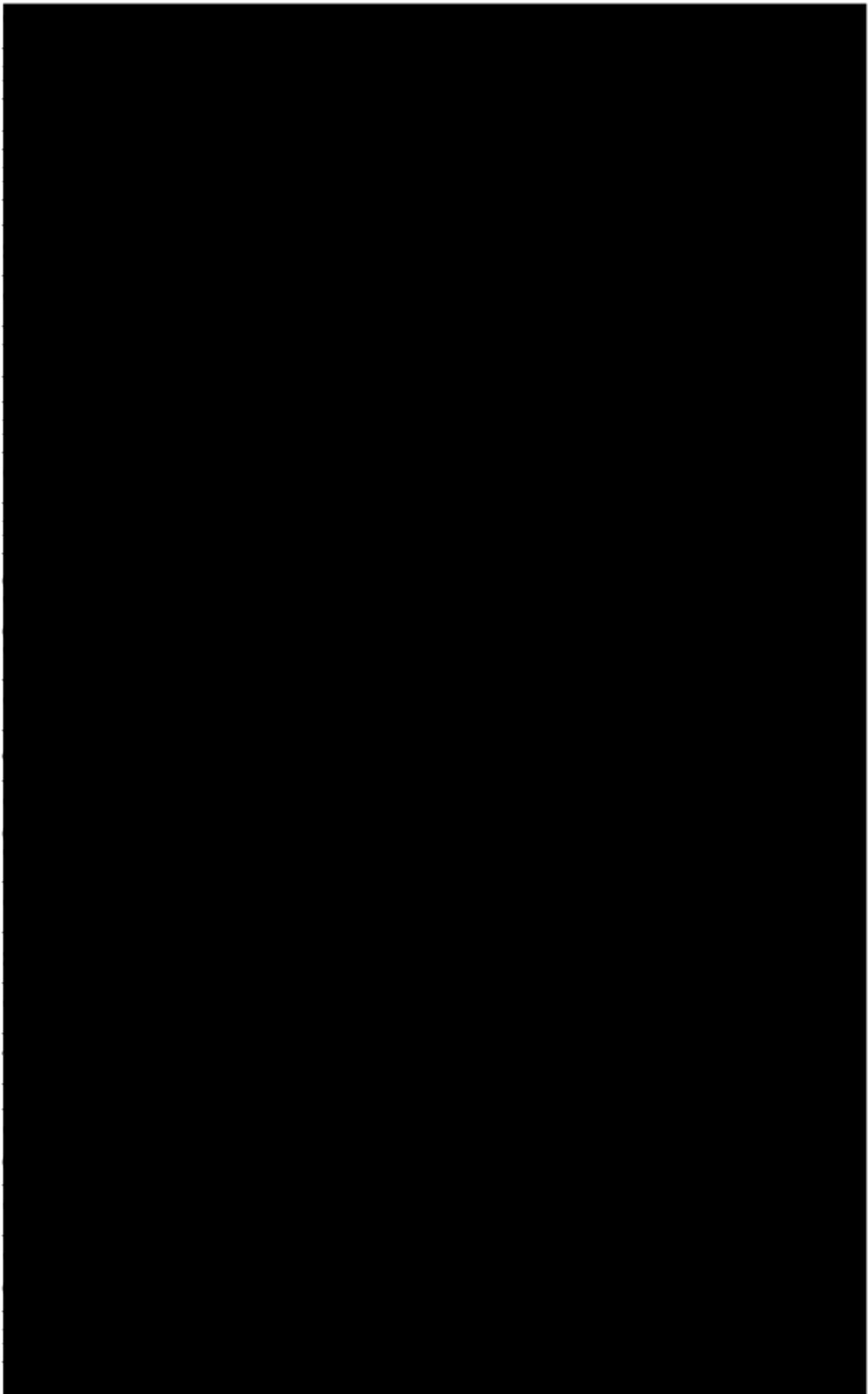
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The [Washington Examiner](#) (12/10, Westwood, 301K) reports that revelations that Peter Strzok, an investigator on special counsel Robert Mueller's team, was demoted after "he allegedly sent anti-Trump, pro-Hillary Clinton text messages to his mistress," and prosecutor Andrew Weissman, also a member of Mueller's team, "sent an email to former acting Attorney General Sally Yates in late January praising her decision to defy Trump's travel ban executive order," have given President Trump's allies an "opportunity to push back" against the Russia investigation. E.J. Dionne writes in the [Washington Post](#) (12/10, 13.32M) that heretofore, "there was an underlying faith in much of the political world that if [Mueller's] investigation...turned up unmistakably damning material about Donald Trump, Republicans in Congress would feel obligated by their commitment to the country's well-being to accept Mueller's findings and challenge the president." However, "we learned last week that Republicans are deepening their complicity in derailing Mueller's investigation and burying the facts. The more Mueller imperils Trump, the more McCarthyite the GOP becomes."

Senate Minority Whip Durbin told [CBS' Face The Nation](#)  (12/10, Dickerson, 3.65M) that he has the "highest confidence in Bob Mueller," and added, "I also have confidence that if he has any questions about motives or conduct of the staff he will act on it decisively and professionally."

Rivkin, Casey: Trump Cannot Be Criminally Prosecuted For Obstruction.

In the [Wall Street Journal](#) (12/10, Subscription Publication, 6.13M), David Rivkin and Lee Casey, who served in the White House Counsel's office and Justice Department in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, write that President Trump cannot be criminally prosecuted for obstruction of justice for firing James Comey as FBI director or for requesting that he, as Comey has said, "can see your way clear . . . to letting Flynn go." They argue that the president's executive authority includes the ability to appoint and remove executive branch officers, and a president is within his rights to ask about and direct FBI investigations.

Judge Jeanine Pirro: FBI, DOJ Need "Cleansing."

[Fox News Insider](#) (12/10) reports that in her "Opening Statement" of her Fox News show Saturday night, "Judge Jeanine Pirro said there needs to be a 'cleansing' at the FBI and the Department of Justice." She listed several official "who she said have been dedicated to protecting Hillary Clinton or destroying President Donald Trump, singling out" Mueller, Comey, Strzok, Deputy FBI Director McCabe, and former Associate Deputy Attorney General Bruce Ohr. She stated, "There have been times in our history where corruption and lawlessness were so pervasive, that examples had to be made. This is one of those times." [Newsweek](#) (12/10, Sinclair, 1.19M) reports that Pirro said the FBI and DOJ need "to be cleansed of individuals who should not just be fired but who need to be taken out in handcuffs."

Schiff: Republicans Using Mueller Team Firings To Discredit Institutions.

[The Hill](#) (12/10, Samuels, 1.6M) reports House Intelligence Committee ranking member Adam Schiff told CNN's "State of the Union" Sunday that recent accusations by Republicans of anti-Trump bias among members of Mueller's team are aimed at "discrediting Mueller, then discrediting the Justice Department, then discrediting the FBI, then discrediting the judiciary should the judiciary convict some of the people Mueller has charged or will charge in the future." Schiff said he thinks former FBI Director James Comey's decision not to disclose the status of the FBI's investigation into Hillary Clinton, but not the one into then-candidate Trump, is more significant than the suggested bias within the Mueller probe against Trump.

[CNN](#) (12/10, Vazquez, 34.45M) reports Schiff said the intent of Republicans' criticisms "is not to do oversight," it's "an effort to tear at the very idea that there is an objective truth." He added, "I think that this President, in an astonishing speed has remade the Republican Party in his own, deeply flawed image, and that will be ruinous to the Republican Party. But as we depend on a two-party system and two functional parties it will also be deeply damaging to the country. The discrediting of our institutions, the justice system, the judiciary, the press, is enormously destructive."

After FBI Agent Removed From Mueller's Team, FBI "Utility Man" Steps In.

[ABC News Radio](#) (12/11) reports that after Strzok was removed from Mueller's team, veteran FBI agent David Archey, who was "briefly involved in the launch of the agency's probe into Hillary Clinton's private email server," has stepped in to join Mueller's ranks. He "quietly" joined the team over the summer. It's unclear what his exact role is, and it's also unclear if "Archey's enlistment had anything to do with Strzok." Colleagues describe Archey as a "utility man of sorts within the FBI." One source who worked along side Archey described him to ABC News as "very seasoned and smart." His only involvement in the Clinton probe was approving the decision for the FBI to actually launch the criminal probe into Clinton's server.

Senator Judiciary Committee Clashing Over Direction Of Russia, Clinton Probes.

[The Hill](#) (12/10, Carney, 1.6M) reports, "Partisan tensions are mounting on the Senate Judiciary Committee, with both parties accusing the other of stonewalling." Democrats are "publicly questioning" whether the panel's chairman, Chuck Grassley, is willing to look into the Trump Administration, including on the matter of potential obstruction of justice. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse also "pounced on a New York Times story that referenced an anonymous GOP senator saying the president had urged them to open up a separate probe into Fusion GPS — the firm tied to a controversial research dossier on Trump." Whitehouse tweeted, "Who is this Republican Senator 'nudged' by the White House? Is this why full Judiciary hearings have veered in this direction instead of Russia/obstruction?" Grassley, meanwhile, "fired back at Democrats" on the panel. He said, "There is a double standard here in the way that they desperately want to go after the president but ignore all other potential wrongdoing in the previous administration," adding that Democrats have "visions of impeachment dancing in their heads."

WSJournal Critical Of Wray's Appearance Before House Panel.

In an editorial titled, "Christopher Wray's FBI Stonewall," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (12/10, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) criticizes FBI Director Wray's testimony last week before the House Judiciary Committee, saying he stonewalled the panel and seems to have joined an effort by the Justice Department to keep from the public the FBI's role in the 2016 election. On the other hand, on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (12/8, 7.58M), Joe Scarborough said Wray "did a masterful job defending the honor and the integrity of the professionals who work in the FBI."

[Breitbart](#) (12/8, Wong, 3.03M) reported that on Thursday, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH), "during a remarkable exchange with...Wray...suggested that Peter Strzok — the FBI official who was removed from the special counsel team — was responsible for using the Clinton-funded dossier to get a warrant to spy on the Trump campaign." Breitbart adds: "If true, it would be a stunning development in the Russia investigation. It would mean that a top FBI official took what was an unverified piece of opposition research funded by Trump's political opponent, and used it to obtain a surveillance warrant on the Trump campaign."

Himes Says House Intel Panel May Subpoena Trump Jr.

[NBC News](#) (12/10, 4.59M) reports on its website that Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT) told NBC's Meet The Press Sunday that the House Intelligence Committee "is considering whether to subpoena Donald Trump Jr. to appear before the panel again in an effort to get more answers from President Donald Trump's oldest son." According to "multiple members of the committee," during a closed-door meeting last week, Trump Jr. "tried to use the defense of 'attorney-client privilege' to avoid having to describe conversations with his father about his meeting last year with a Russian lawyer at Trump Tower." Himes told NBC, "We may need to sort of subpoena him or get him back under a compulsory process." He added that "Trump Jr. was largely 'forthcoming' in his interview," but "because of the sort of novel claim of privilege, we don't know what happened in that conversation."

Eliana Johnson of Politico said on [CNN's Inside Politics](#) (12/10, 748K) that Trump Jr. "was a central player on the campaign and the fact that he's citing an absurd attorney, client privilege because there was an attorney present in the room does seem ridiculous on its face. It seems like a desperate measure to avoid answering questions which is somewhat troubling if, as he the President say, this meeting was completely inconsequential."

Following Trump Jr. Interview, King Sees No Indication Of Collusion.

The [Washington Times](#) (12/10, Sherfinski, 624K) reports that Rep. Peter King (R-NY), who is also a member of the intelligence panel, on Sunday told Fox News that based on Trump Jr.'s interview with the committee it is hard to conclude that any collusion took place between the Trump campaign and Russia. King said, "Nobody listening to that interview could come out of that thinking there was any collusion at all. This is totally phony." King also argued that Trump should not remove special counsel Robert Mueller because doing so would allow Democrats and the media to "blow this up and come up with another phony issue."

Schiff Says Evidence Of Coordination Between Russia, Trump Campaign "Pretty Damning."

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) told [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (12/10, Tapper, 911K) Sunday that evidence of coordination between President Trump's campaign and Russia is "pretty damning," [The Hill](#) (12/10, Savransky, 1.6M) reports. Schiff said, "The Russians offered help. The campaign accepted help. The Russians gave help. And the president made full use of that help. ... And that's pretty damning, whether it is proof beyond a reasonable doubt of conspiracy or not."

Before Plea Deal, Papadopoulos Had Access To High Level Greek Officials.

The [Washington Post](#) (12/10, Witte, 13.32M) reports that in his ancestral homeland of Greece, George Papadopoulos, who pleaded guilty in October to "lying to the FBI about his extensive efforts to connect Trump's presidential campaign with senior Russian officials," was "regarded as a critical interlocutor, first to the Trump campaign and later to the incoming Trump White House." Papadopoulos "received access to officials at the highest levels of the Greek government, many of whom shared links to Russia and sympathies that would be unusual in other Western capitals." However, since his plea was made public in October, "Greek officials have largely avoided talking about him."

Fusion GPS Sought To Link Trump To Convicted Pedophile Epstein.

The [Washington Times](#) (12/10, Scarborough, 624K) reports that in addition to the Russia dossier, Fusion GPS "pitched other stories" about President Trump "to Washington reporters, including an attempt to tie him to a convicted pedophile who was once buddies with former President Bill Clinton." The Times cites "journalist sources" who said the firm's founder, Glenn Simpson "pushed the idea of a close relationship between Mr. Trump and Jeffrey Epstein, who pleaded guilty in 2008 to soliciting sex from an underage girl." Fusion also "pushed the story that a special email server existed between Trump Tower and Moscow's Alfa bank, the journalist source said."

Schools Adopt New Security Measures, Active-Shooter Training Following Newtown Massacre.

The [Washington Post](#) (12/10, Zezima, Svrluga, 13.32M) reports on its front page how in many schools across the country active-shooter training has become "as commonplace as fire drills" following the 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School. While "little about the nation's federal gun laws has changed" in the aftermath of the shooting, the Post says "the Newtown shooting forever altered the way American schools approach safety and assess risk." As a result, schools are increasingly implementing police patrols, lockdown procedures, active-shooter training and other security measures to thwart another potential mass shooting.

Men Accused Plotting To Bomb Kansas Mosque Want Trump Voters On Jury.

The [AP](#) (12/9, Hegeman) reported three men accused of plotting to bomb a mosque and apartment complex housing Somali refugees in Garden City, Kansas, asked a federal judge Friday to "include prospective jurors from rural western Kansas because they are twice as likely to have voted for President Donald Trump." Defense attorneys wrote in their motion, "This case is uniquely political because much of the anticipated evidence will center around, and was in reaction to, the 2016 Presidential election." The US attorney's office said in an email that it was "evaluating the motion."

McCaul Releases December “Terror Threat Snapshot.”

[American Security Today](#) (12/10) reports House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX) released the “Terror Threat Snapshot” for December. American Security Today says some of the key points include testimony from DHS Deputy Secretary Elaine Duke, who said that DHS is “improving almost every stage of the vetting process for U.S.-bound travelers.” Duke added, “Security checks are being brought into the digital age with measures like continuous immigration vetting, a real-time, systematic process that constantly analyzes visa files against law enforcement and intelligence holdings to identify possible matches to derogatory information.”

Pentagon Envisions At Least Two More Years Of Combat In Somalia.

The [New York Times](#) (12/10, Savage, Schmitt, Subscription Publication, 16.07M) reports that as the US escalates its campaign of drone strikes in Somalia, the Pentagon has proposed an operational plan to the White House “that envisions at least two more years of combat against Islamist militants there, according to American officials familiar with internal deliberations.” The plan seeks an exemption to a rule in President Trump’s guidelines requiring annual vetting of operational plans for certain countries, and instead proposes waiting 24 months before reviewing how the Somalia plan is working. Furthermore, the officials said, the Defense Department “wants to conduct that review internally, without involvement from other agencies – a request that would further a Trump-era pattern of giving the Pentagon greater latitude and autonomy.”

Swedish Police Arrest Three Individuals Following Firebombing Attack On Synagogue.

The [New York Times](#) (12/10, Anderson, Subscription Publication, 16.07M) reports three people were arrested in Sweden “after a masked gang hurled Molotov cocktails at a synagogue in the port city of Gothenburg as it hosted an event on Saturday night.” The attack came following a day of protests in Sweden’s third largest city, Malmo, during which protesters shouted anti-Semitic slogans. Swedish National Police Commissioner Dan Eliasson claimed “the threat level against Jewish interests in Sweden had increased” following the US announcement of the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Continuing Coverage: Nielsen Announces Creation Of DHS Countering WMD Office.

In continuing coverage, [Breitbart](#) (12/8, Hayward, 3.03M) reported Secretary Nielsen announces the creation of the DHS Countering Weapons Of Mass Destruction, or CWMD, Office. Nielsen said the CWMD Office will work to “elevate and streamline DHS efforts to prevent terrorists and other national security threat actors from using harmful agents, such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear material and devices to harm Americans and U.S. interests.” Nielsen also said the US “faces rising danger from terrorist groups and rogue nation states. That’s why DHS is moving towards a more integrated approach. As terrorism evolves, we must stay ahead of the enemy and the establishment of this office is an important part of our efforts to do so.”

Kaspersky Lab To Shut Down Washington-Area Headquarters.

In continuing coverage, [Gizmodo](#) (12/9, McKay, 1.77M) reports that Kaspersky Lab “has elected to shut down its D.C.-area headquarters” due to its products being banned from US government systems. Gizmodo says, “U.S. authorities grew concerned about the use of Kaspersky products on sensitive government systems earlier this year as part of an overall security reassessment tied to accusations of Russian meddling in the 2016 elections.” Kaspersky Lab “has chalked up the matter as one big misunderstanding and committed to third-party review of its code,” but “a three-month deadline for federal agencies to delete its software imposed by the Department of Homeland Security in September recently expired.”

US Army Cyber Command Seeks To Build Partnership With University Of Georgia.

The [AP](#) (12/10) reports, “The University of Georgia and the U.S. Army’s Cybersecurity Command could soon be exchanging students and workers.” Civilian Army official Ronald Pontius “said the U.S. Army Cyber Command in east Georgia is looking to build partnerships with the University of Georgia. He suggested that possible collaborations with the university could include internships, research projects and young Cyber Command workers studying at UGA, among other ideas.”

Defense Contractors Have Year-End Deadline To Meet Federal Cybersecurity Standards.

[Newsday \(NY\)](#) (12/10, Schachter, 1.31M) reports, "The clock is ticking for Long Island defense contractors facing a year-end deadline to meet new federal cybersecurity standards." Boeing Co. executive Camille Geiger is cited saying that prime contractors such as her company would be barred from dealing with vendors that do not meet the standards.

Midland Daily News: Local Governments Should Take Cybersecurity Seriously.

The [Midland \(MI\) Daily News](#) (12/9, 26K) editorializes Mecklenburg County, North Carolina's recent ransomware experience, saying the problems it dealt with "could be closer than you think." The Daily News says, "While hackers tend to gravitate toward large government bodies or corporations that could pay a sizable amount of ransom, it reminds us locally that nobody is immune." The Daily News adds, "We trust that the largest local government entities in this area are using best practices to keep our community and its information safe. But even the smallest government bodies must participate in cyber security – or become vulnerable."

Boyd: Internet-Enabled Toys May Pose Cybersecurity Risks.

Mozilla Foundation vice president for advocacy Ashley Boyd writes in the [New York Times](#) (12/8, Boyd, Subscription Publication, 16.07M) about the possibility of Internet-enabled toys being hacked. Boyd says that such toys, if compromised, can be used to spy or transmit messages to children. Boyd adds that the US lacks "very many rules or regulations defending consumers' online privacy," and this, combined with "limited accountability" for the use of consumer data, leads to people being "leery of a more connected future." Boyd says that "in the long term, smart policy and regulations can make a difference," and advises avoiding "products where the risks outweigh the value" in the short term.

SEC Reviews Cybersecurity Protocols, Delays Data Submissions.

[Reuters](#) (12/8, Schroeder) reports the SEC "said on Friday it would delay new submissions of portfolio data by mutual funds, as the regulator beefs up its cybersecurity." The delay "comes as the SEC reviews its cybersecurity protocols after a 2016 hack of its EDGAR filing system." Large mutual funds "will have an extra nine months before they are required to submit monthly details about their portfolio holdings to the agency."

Wisconsin Town Pays Ransom To Decrypt Computer System.

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (12/8, Martinez, 592K) reports the village of Nashotah, Wisconsin "recently paid an unidentified hacker a \$2,000 ransom to decrypt its computer system after a hack in late November that left some residents' personal information exposed."

Some States Extending Cybersecurity Assistance To Local Governments.

[Stateline](#) (12/8, Bergal, 3K) reports that local governments "often don't have the resources to evaluate their cyber defenses or deal with cyberattacks," even though "their networks contain vast amounts of information about residents and businesses." Stateline says, "Some local governments say they can't necessarily rely on states for cyber aid because many are busy trying to deal with their own cyber preparedness," though some states "have decided to extend help to the locals." Stateline adds that the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center is an "option" for local governments subjected to a cyberattack.