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January 11, 2024  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Daily News Briefing

(In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs)

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### IN THE NEWS

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#### **How the FBI, NSA Are Preparing for Deepfakes and Misinformation Issue Ahead of 2024 Elections**

**CNBC** (01/10, Kong) reported that in a past discussion at the CNBC CEO Council Virtual Roundtable, Director Wray and NSA Director General Paul Nakasone emphasized the growing concern of election security amid the proliferation of deepfakes and misinformation globally. Director Wray highlighted, "It wasn't a new weapon. It's just a new way of making that weapon more effective," with threat actors able to create more credible fake personas, more sophisticated false messages, and manufacture evidence that's harder to discern as phony. He also stated, "We're not the truth police. We don't aspire to be. What we're focused on is foreign intelligence services, hostile foreign intelligence services creating fake personas, attempting to persuade people that they're something they're not, right, appearing to be American when they're actually the Chinese, the Russian, or Iranian intelligence services." Regarding private sector involvement in detecting deepfakes, Director Wray stressed, "In some ways, A.I. is quite good at detecting A.I." He further emphasized the importance of sharing information to maintain confidence in the election system, stating, "the best way to build resilience in the system is sharing information, sharing information with election officials, sharing information with the public, sharing information with other partners who can take action." Additionally, Director Wray highlighted the FBI's role in arming states with information to invest wisely in their own cybersecurity, stating, "The election infrastructure in this country is in the hands of the states. And so we view our role as trying to arm them with information so that they can invest wisely in their own cybersecurity to protect against the possibility of disruption or interference."

## **Continued Reporting: Director Wray at the 10th International Conference on Cyber Security in New York City**

[The Record](#) (01/10, Greig) and [Cybernews](#) (01/10, Radauskas) reported that at the 10th International Conference on Cyber Security in New York City on Tuesday, Director Wray highlighted the increasing international interest in interfering with the 2024 U.S. elections. Director Wray stated, "What we have seen since 2018 is that we've seen more foreign actors, more nation-states want to get in the business of trying to interfere or at least influence elections. And we've seen the techniques evolve. In that sense, every election cycle presents bigger challenges." According to the article, Director Wray mentioned the enhanced U.S. defenses and sophisticated partnerships with federal agencies, state election officials, and private industry. He asserted, "All those partnerships are exponentially more sophisticated and effective than they were in each prior election cycle. So we are, in that sense, much more on guard than we were in earlier cycles. So the threats are more challenging but the defense is better." He refrained from specifying which new countries are involved in election interference but noted the quick thwarting of Iranian hackers' efforts in the last election. Additionally, Director Wray acknowledged that China and Russia continue to lead in disinformation campaigns and cyberattacks against U.S. election infrastructure. Director Wray addressed the issue of hacking attempts aimed at sowing chaos and undermining confidence in election results. He reassured, "Americans can and should have confidence in our election system. None of the election interference efforts that we've seen over the cycles that [Gen.] Paul [Nakasone] and I have been working on together have put at jeopardy the integrity of the vote count itself in any material way... The ability to generate chaos is very much part of the playbook that some of the foreign adversaries engage in and there is a potential, if we're not all collectively on guard, that chaos can ensue at varying levels." When questioned about Americans doubting the legitimacy of the 2020 election and the FBI's involvement in the January 6 attack, Director Wray urged the public to become more discerning information consumers. Additionally, Director Wray and Gen. Paul Nakasone discussed artificial intelligence's role in amplifying threats. Director Wray noted the FBI's ethical and responsible use of AI in countering threats and highlighted the issue of nation-states, especially China, stealing AI technology. He mentioned the significant threat China poses to U.S. innovation, intellectual property, and national security, with the FBI being vastly outnumbered in the cyber realm.

## **Suspected Chinese Hackers Target U.S. Research Organization in Latest Spying Spree**

[CNN](#) (01/10, Lyngaas) reported that suspected Chinese hackers targeted a US-based research organization last month using two previously undiscovered software flaws as part of a persistent spying campaign aimed at gathering intelligence aligned with China's interests, according to researchers. According to the article, the hackers exploited these coveted flaws to gain "unfettered access" to the unnamed victim organization, a US cybersecurity firm called Volexity reported. The victim organization focuses on geopolitics, including China-related issues, and is regularly targeted by state-backed hackers. The article noted that Director Wray has previously highlighted China's extensive cyber espionage activities, with Chinese hacking teams reportedly outnumbering FBI cyber agents 50 to 1. The article explained that Volexity alerted the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to the activity, but there is concern that the exploit code may leak publicly, potentially enabling less skilled hackers to replicate it.

## **American Intel Officials Warn of Risk of Hezbollah Attacking U.S.**

[Politico](#) (01/10, Banco, Seligman) reported that U.S. officials warned of the increasing likelihood of Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed militant group, attacking U.S. interests, both in the Middle East and potentially on American soil. These officials, speaking under anonymity, stressed Hezbollah's superior capabilities compared to other terrorist groups like ISIS. The article explained that the FBI, along with the National Security Council and the National Counterterrorism Center, declined to comment on this sensitive intelligence. However, Director Wray, in a November 15 congressional hearing, emphasized the gravity of the threat, "The arrests of individuals in the United States allegedly linked to Hezbollah's main overseas terrorist arm, and their intelligence-collection and procurement efforts, demonstrate Hezbollah's interest in long-term contingency planning activities here in the homeland."

## **FBI, SEC Join Probe of Fake Social Media Post From Regulator**

[Reuters](#) (01/10, Prentice, Gillison) reported that the FBI joined an investigation into a fake post made on the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) social media account, which falsely stated the SEC had approved trading of spot bitcoin exchange-traded funds (ETFs). According to the article, this announcement, later disavowed by the SEC, caused significant volatility in the bitcoin market. The article noted that an SEC spokesperson revealed

that the SEC is coordinating with law enforcement, including the FBI, to probe the incident, stating, "The unauthorized content on the @SECGov account was not drafted or created by the SEC." [CNN](#) (01/10, Egan, Goodkind), [New York Times](#) (01/10, Goldstein), [Politico](#) (01/10, Harty, Mueller, Goodman), [The Hill](#) (01/10, Klar), [Gizmodo](#) (01/10, Zeff), [The Daily Beast](#) (01/10, McDougall), [CyberScoop](#) (01/10, Groll), [The Guardian](#) (01/10, Montgomery), [Benzinga](#) (01/10, Cingari), and [Law 360](#) (01/10, Keely) also reported on the story.

### **U.S., U.K. Warships Shoot Down Houthi Barrage in Red Sea**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/10, Gambrell) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (01/10, Mauldin, Grove) reported that the U.S. and British warships shot down one of the largest barrages of missiles and drones fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels into the Red Sea shipping lane on Wednesday. According to officials, the U.S. is considering conducting strikes against land-based Houthi targets in Yemen in response to the attacks in the Red Sea. The assault happened off the Yemeni port cities of Hodeida and Mokha, according to the private intelligence firm Ambrey. In the Hodeida attack, Ambrey said ships described over radio seeing missiles and drones, with U.S.-allied warships in the area urging "vessels to proceed at maximum speed." According to the reports, the U.S. military's Central Command said the "complex attack" launched by the Houthis included bomb-carrying drones, anti-ship cruise missiles and one anti-ship ballistic missile. It said 18 drones, two cruise missiles, and the anti-ship missile were downed by F-18s from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, as well as by American Arleigh Burke-class destroyers the USS Gravelly, the USS Laboon and the USS Mason, as well as the United Kingdom's HMS Diamond. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed the gravity of the Houthi threat to global commerce and renewed U.S. warnings of a response. The story was also reported on by [ABC News](#) (01/09, Martinez), [Al Jazeera](#) (01/10, Staff Writer), [BBC](#) (01/10, Gritten), [CBS News](#) (01/10, Tanyos), [CNN](#) (01/10, Liebermann), [The Guardian](#) (01/10, Wintour, Sabbagh), [NBC News](#) (01/10, Staff Writer), [New York Times](#) (01/10, Staff Writer), [Politico](#) (01/10, Hulsemann), and [Reuters](#) (01/10, Staff Writer).

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## **COUNTERTERRORISM**

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### **Help Committee Chair Bernie Sanders Urged to Hold Hearing Examining Antisemitism on College Campuses**

[The Hill](#) (01/10, Fortinsky) reported that the Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism requested that the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, chaired by Bernie Sanders, hold a hearing on increasing antisemitism on college campuses. According to the article, this request came amid a significant rise in antisemitic incidents, particularly following an attack by Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization, on Israel. Additional reporting from [The Hill](#) (01/10, Beitsch) noted that Director Wray testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee, stating that antisemitic hate crimes had increased by 60 percent since the beginning of the conflict. He noted that the FBI had opened 60 percent more hate crime investigations post-October 7 compared to the same period before the attack, with a significant focus on threats against the Jewish community. The [Washington Times](#) (01/10, Kellner) also reported on the story.

### **Undercover FBI Agents Helped Autistic Teen Plan Trip to Join ISIS**

[The Intercept](#) (01/10, Hussain) reported that Humzah Mashkooor, an 18-year-old diagnosed with a developmental disability, was arrested by the FBI at Denver International Airport for attempting to join ISIS. According to the article, Mashkooor had been interacting online with four individuals, who he believed were ISIS members, since he was 16, but they were actually undercover FBI agents. The article explained that these interactions led to his plan to fly to Dubai and potentially Syria or Afghanistan, culminating in his arrest on terrorism charges. The article noted that despite his autism diagnosis and the defense's criticism of the FBI's methods, Mashkooor now faces charges for attempting to provide material support to a terrorist organization.

### **FBI Arrests Florida Man Accused of Threatening 'Mass Casualty Event'**

[CNN](#) (01/10, Campbell, Lynch) reported that a Florida man named Alexander Lightner was arrested and charged with making an interstate threat and a weapon violation by the FBI. He was accused of posting online threats indicating his intention to carry out a racially or ethnically motivated mass casualty event. According to the article, FBI agents from the Tampa Field Office interviewed him on January 5 and executed a search warrant at his home, where they found an unlawful firearm suppressor and propaganda related to white supremacist and accelerationist ideology. During the interview, Lightner admitted to making the threatening posts and explained that he did it for attention while drunk. He also mentioned that the term "saint" in his posts referred to becoming a "saint" after his

death. The article noted that a judge ordered Lightner to remain in custody due to strong evidence and his history of prior convictions and probation violations, as well as testing positive for cocaine upon arrest.

### **Florida Schools Latest Target Of Mysterious Bomb Threats—But No Credible Danger**

[Forbes](#) (01/10, Farrell) reported that schools across Florida were the latest recipients of bomb threats Wednesday, a day after schools in Colorado reported similar threats, continuing a trend of anonymous and unsubstantiated threats targeting public institutions in recent weeks that the FBI has described as hoaxes. According to the article, Lee County School District confirmed to [Forbes](#) that it received a threat that targeted “Florida school districts” and was apparently circulated statewide, though the district noted that the FBI and local law enforcement were aware of the situation and investigating. “We take hoax threats very seriously because it puts innocent people at risk. While we have no information to indicate a specific and credible threat, we will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to gather, share, and act upon threat information as it comes to our attention,” the FBI Tampa Division told [Forbes](#) in a statement.

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## **COUNTERINTELLIGENCE**

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### **Continued Reporting: Sen. Bob Menendez Seeks Dismissal of Criminal Charges. His Lawyers Say Prosecutors ‘Distort Reality’**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/10, Neumeister) reported that on Wednesday, Senator Bob Menendez sought dismissal of charges, including bribery, arguing that New York federal prosecutors' claims were “outrageously false” and distorted reality. According to the article, Menendez's lawyers contested the updated indictment, which alleged that Menendez used his influence to secretly advance Egypt's interests and acted favorably towards Qatar's government for a businessman's benefit. The article noted that they emphasized that the novel charge of Menendez acting as an agent of the Egyptian government undermines legislative independence, stating that the senator was independent of any foreign official and had challenged Egypt on various issues. [Bloomberg](#) (01/10, Voreacos) and [The Daily Beast](#) (01/10, McDougall) also reported on the story.

### **U.S. Navy Sailor Took at Least 14 Bribe Payments to Spy for China**

[Cybernews](#) (01/10, Naprys) reported that Petty Officer Wenheng Zhao, aka Thomas Zhao, was sentenced to 27 months in prison and fined \$5,500 for transmitting sensitive US military information to a Chinese intelligence officer. According to the article, Zhao's actions, involving at least 14 separate bribe payments totaling \$14,866, constituted a betrayal of his duty to protect sensitive information, including plans for maritime training exercises, operational orders, and blueprints of critical military infrastructure. “Make no mistake, the PRC is engaged in an aggressive effort to undermine the national security of the US and its partners,” Executive Assistant Director Larissa L. Knapp of the FBI's National Security Branch added. “The Chinese Communist Party has repeatedly shown it will freely break any law or norm to achieve a perceived intelligence advantage. Today's sentencing demonstrates, yet again, the inability of China's Intelligence Services to prevent the FBI and our vital partners from apprehending and prosecuting the spies China recruits.” [Newsweek](#) (01/10, McCartney) also reported on the story.

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## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS**

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### **Hunter Biden Expected to Plead Not Guilty in Los Angeles Hearing on Federal Tax Charges**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/11, Long) reported that President Joe Biden's son will head back to court on Thursday for arraignment in Los Angeles on federal tax charges filed after the collapse of a plea deal that could have spared him the spectacle of a criminal trial during the 2024 campaign. The article noted that Hunter Biden is expected to plead not guilty to nine felony and misdemeanor tax offenses. The charges stem from what federal prosecutors say was a four-year scheme to skip out on paying the \$1.4 million he owed to the IRS and instead use the money to fund an extravagant lifestyle that by his own admission included drugs and alcohol. The article mentioned that the court appearance will also include a discussion over future court dates and filing deadlines. Meanwhile, Hunter Biden has also been charged in Delaware with lying in October 2018 on a federal form for gun purchasers when he swore he wasn't using or addicted to illegal drugs. He was addicted to crack cocaine at the time. He's also accused of possessing the gun illegally and has pleaded not guilty in that case. The article added that the accusations all come

from a yearslong federal investigation into Hunter Biden's tax and business dealings that had been expected to wind down over the summer with a plea deal in which he would have gotten two years' probation after pleading guilty to misdemeanor tax charges. He also would have avoided prosecution on the gun charge if he stayed out of trouble.

### **SAP to Pay Over \$220M to Resolve Foreign Bribery Investigations**

[CNBC](#) (01/10, Goswami) reported that SAP, the \$192 billion German enterprise tech company, will pay more than \$230 million to settle investigations into worldwide "recidivist" foreign bribery practices, U.S.

authorities announced Wednesday. The article noted that the company will enter into a three-year deferred prosecution agreement with federal prosecutors, who accused SAP of violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act to allegedly bribe government officials in Indonesia and South Africa. A DOJ [press release](#) quoted Assistant Director in Charge Donald Always of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office, who said, "This successful resolution against SAP is another example of the power of relationships and persistence, the sustained diligence by the prosecution team and continuous collaboration with South African law enforcement, regulators, and prosecutors identified corrupt activity in multiple countries. The FBI will continue our nonstop efforts to identify, investigate, and prosecute companies willfully engaging in corrupt activities around the world."

### **Jeffrey Epstein FBI Records Targeted in Senate Judiciary Probe After Document Dump**

[Fox News](#) (01/10, Ruiz) reported that Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which has congressional oversight of the FBI, are pushing to subpoena the bureau for all records pertaining to sex traffickers Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell a day after a federal court in New York finished unsealing more than 200 files regarding the pair. The article noted that FBI agents raided properties including Epstein's New York City mansion and Little St. James, his private island in the U.S. Virgin Islands, after his arrest in early 2019. His death in a federal jail cell was officially ruled a suicide – although his brother is among many Americans who have questioned that conclusion. The article added that last year, a group of Epstein's victims sent a letter to the FBI demanding an investigation into the bureau's early handling of the investigation. A lawyer for the accusers said they flagged federal investigators to Epstein's crimes as early as 1996. The [Independent](#) (01/10, Ross) also reported on the story.

### **Police Say DNA Links Man to Killings in 'Colonial Parkway Murders' Case**

The [Washington Post](#) (01/10, Schneider) reported that DNA evidence has finally produced a suspect in three killings in the Hampton Roads region in the late 1980s, including the shooting of a young couple often connected to a string of crimes known as the "Colonial Parkway murders." The article noted that state and federal investigators said this week that Alan W. Wilmer Sr., a waterman with no felony record who died in 2017 at his home in Lancaster County, Va., was linked to evidence left at the scene of the shooting deaths of David L. Knobling, 20, and Robin M. Edwards, 14, whose bodies were found at the Ragged Island wildlife refuge in Isle of Wight County in 1987. The article mentioned that similar evidence also tied Wilmer to the killing of Teresa Lynn Spaw Howell, 29, in Hampton in 1989, authorities said. Howell's death was not thought to be part of the parkway string of murders, which involved couples killed or missing from remote parking areas from 1986 to 1989. According to the article, FBI Norfolk Special Agent in Charge Brian Dugan said investigators are continuing to look for other crimes that Wilmer may be responsible for and declined to go into further detail about his movements, his connection to the crime scenes or his possible motives. Dugan appealed to the public for more information. The article quoted Dugan, who said, "If you had any encounters with him or his vehicle or watercraft, hunted with him, farmed oysters or clams, docked next to him in marinas, spent time with him on a personal basis or at work, or even romantically at some point, we want to hear from you,".

### **Ex-West Virginia Health Manager Scheduled for Plea Hearing in COVID-19 Payment Probe**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/10, Raby) reported that a former West Virginia state health office manager who was indicted on charges related to coronavirus pandemic relief payments is due to enter a plea later this month. Timothy Priddy is set to appear in federal court on Jan. 22, a day before his trial had been scheduled to start. Federal prosecutors said he is expected to plead guilty. The article mentioned that an indictment filed in October charged Priddy with making false statements about the payments to federal agents in August 2022 and in grand jury testimony the following month. On both occasions, Priddy knew his statements were false because he made no efforts to verify the invoices before approving them, according to the indictment. According to the article, prosecutors said the federal investigation was trying to determine whether one or more vendors providing COVID-19 tests and mitigation services to the state overbilled or otherwise received payment from federal funds disbursed through the state's main health agency, the Department of Health and Human Resources. That agency was

reorganized into three separate departments effective Jan. 1. The article added that prosecutors said the vendor reported the results of about 49,000 COVID-19 tests between October 2020 and March 2022 but submitted invoices reflecting the cost of about 518,000 test kits. Despite the discrepancy, Priddy certified at least 13 of the invoices totaling about \$34 million.

### **Sexual Assaults on Cruise Ships Are Rising**

The [Washington Post](#) (01/10, Hiatt) reported that sex crimes on cruise ships sailing to and from the United States increased last year, according to numbers released by the Transportation Department. From January to September 2023, the FBI received 39 reports of sexual assault and 58 reports of rape from passengers. The article noted that the incidents represent less than 1 percent of the tens of millions of passengers who take cruises each year. However, sexual assaults continue to be the most commonly reported crimes on cruise ships. According to the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, more than two out of three sexual assaults are not reported. The article mentioned that the 2023 statistics mark the first time those reports distinguished between sex assault and rape. The Transportation Department began publishing the numbers after Congress passed the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2010. That law requires that passengers have access to a written guide to where to report crimes that occur on a ship, the ability to receive a sexual forensic exam onboard, and confidentiality while requesting or receiving support. The article stated that the law mandates that eligible cruise lines report missing persons and criminal allegations made onboard to the FBI. Incidents listed on the 2023 reports also include assault with serious bodily injury, setting fire to or tampering with a vessel, thefts in excess of \$10,000, and one "suspicious" death.

### **Authorities Investigating Tupac Shakur Murder Suspect Duane Davis' Jailhouse Calls**

[ABC News](#) (01/10, Pezenik, Margolin) reported that authorities are investigating jailhouse phone calls from the man charged with orchestrating the killing of rapper Tupac Shakur, after hearing remarks they say indicate he might have been conspiring to harm witnesses cooperating with the prosecution. The article noted that word of the investigation into what Duane "Keffe D" Davis meant in those conversations comes on the heels of a Las Vegas judge deciding to set his bail at \$750,000 – a sum far above what his lawyers had asked for in advocating for his release to house arrest, pending trial. The article quoted Judge Carli Kierny, who said, "When we talk about the nature and the seriousness of danger to any victims or other people in this case, as the state has indicated, this could be very high, I don't believe that the FBI is stepping in and providing coverage or assistance for people in situations where they don't think it's a credible threat."

### **Suspected Chicago Gang Member on FBI's Most Wanted List Arrested**

[KSDK \(NBC-5\)](#) (01/10, Clancy) reported that a suspected gang member who has been on the FBI's most wanted list for nearly 15 years was arrested by Missouri police this week. The article noted that Missouri police arrested Jesus Sanchez on Sunday at a home in north St. Louis County, according to a probable cause statement. Sanchez was reportedly living in St. Charles at the time of his arrest and was wanted by the Cook County Sheriff's Office and the FBI for a 2003 murder in Chicago. The article stated that according to the FBI's most wanted entry for Sanchez, he was believed to be a member of the Latin Saints street gang and was arrested for the 2003 beating death of a rival gang member. The FBI said he was released on bond before trial and did not report to court dates related to the case. He was convicted in absentia and was sentenced to 27 years in prison. According to an FBI wanted poster, investigators believed he may have fled to Mexico.

### **FBI Declines Investigation Into Massachusetts Mayoral Voter Fraud Claims**

[WWLP \(NBC-22\)](#) (01/10, Collins) reported that Wednesday, the FBI has opted out of investigating claims of voter fraud in Springfield's mayoral election. The article noted that Springfield Election Commissioner Gladys Oyola-Lopez said the FBI does not intend to investigate the October 28th voter fraud claims. Oyola-Lopez was among the group of election workers who gave sworn affidavits alleging members of Justin Hurst's campaign team paid people for their votes. The article mentioned that the FBI was in Springfield last month, just weeks after the alleged voter fraud incident was caught on camera at city hall, though at the time there wasn't much public information on whether or not they'd conduct an investigation of their own. News of the FBI's decline was a let-down to City Solicitor John Payne, who said, "I think that's disappointing given the fact that issues of election fraud and paying people to vote is something that's very serious and I wish it had been investigated."

### **Man Admits to Killing Teenager Who Disappeared in 2016**

The [Independent](#) (01/10, Sharma) reported that Johnathan Alexander Warren, one of the suspects in the killing of 19-year-old woman who went missing in 2016 in Georgia, has pleaded guilty to murder and necrophilia. Morgan Bauer was reported missing two weeks after moving from South Dakota to Georgia. Seven years after she vanished, police arrested two suspects in the case in August 2023. Warren pleaded guilty to the charges of murder, concealing death, tampering with evidence, and necrophilia on Wednesday, according to the Newton County district attorney's office. The article added that in July last year, the FBI and a number of law enforcement agencies searched a Georgia property for the human remains of a teen. Police said they uncovered "items of evidentiary interest". Her remains have not been found.

### **American Airlines Flight Attendant Punched, Officers Assaulted, Police Say**

The [Hill](#) (01/10, Robertson) reported that a man assaulted an American Airlines flight attendant and later kicked and spit on police officers last week during a rowdy flight that was diverted to Amarillo, Texas, according to the criminal complaint submitted by the FBI. The article noted that Keith Fagiana started an argument with a flight attendant during a flight on Jan. 3 from Dallas to Bozeman, Mont. last week, "yelling expletives" after he was asked to stop kicking the seat in front of him. Fagiana then punched the flight attendant multiple times before being restrained by nearby passengers and crew in flex cuffs, per the complaint. When police took Fagiana off the plane in Amarillo, he complained of the cuffs hurting him and then kicked an officer in the groin and spit on another before while the cuffs were being changed, the complaint alleges.

### **Videos Surface of Large Group Sexually Assaulting Toddlers in Texas Mall, FBI Says**

The [Charlotte Observer](#) (01/10, Willetts) reported that disturbing videos emerged showing numerous men sexually assaulting toddlers at a Texas mall, leading to the arrest of a kiosk worker whom friends trusted to watch the children, according to the FBI. The article noted that the bureau launched an investigation in early December after the videos were shared with agents by the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation, according to a criminal complaint filed Dec. 14 in the Southern District of Texas. The videos were found on a "private, by invitation only" online forum. The article stated that Arthur Hector Fernandez worked at a kiosk at the Galleria and was friends with two women who also had jobs at the mall, often offering to watch their kids for them while they worked, the FBI said. Fernandez even took one of the toddlers trick-or-treating in October, documents said. The children, who were both under 3 years old, were assaulted in the videos, documents said.

### **FBI Charges Pennsylvania Man With Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud**

[WTOL \(CBS-11\)](#) (01/10, Video) reported that Darren Barr was accused by the FBI of stealing \$622,000 from the Lucas County Auditors Office in 2020.

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## **LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES**

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### **Spate of Swatting Incidents Ensnarers High-Profile Targets: Politicians, Prosecutors and Judges**

[NBC News](#) (01/10, Gutierrez, Ploss, Gallagher) reported that political figures and members of the judiciary have been ensnared in swatting incidents in recent weeks — what law enforcement experts say is a product of a hostile political climate during an intense presidential election season. The article noted that in remarks last week addressing violent crime across the U.S., Attorney General Merrick Garland said the DOJ is committed to investigating threats to FBI agents, federal judges, members of Congress, election workers, and others. He pointed to the arrest of a Florida man on Jan. 3 in connection with threats to kill Rep. Eric Swalwell, (D-CA), and his children. According to the article, the FBI added that it "takes these types of threats very seriously as it puts innocent people at risk." In May, the FBI launched a national online database so that police departments and law enforcement agencies can share information pertaining to swatting incidents. People making the calls often use technology to mask their true voice, caller information, and location. The article added that the FBI's database is important for agencies to "connect the dots" on who is making the phone calls and if incidents are linked, said Frank Figliuzzi, a former FBI assistant director and a national security analyst for NBC News.

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## **CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS**

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### **Jan. 6 Committee Helped Guide Early Days of Georgia Trump Probe**

[Politico](#) (01/10, Swan, Cheney) reported that in the spring of 2022, the House Jan. 6 select committee assisted Georgia prosecutors, led by Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, in their investigation into Donald Trump's efforts to subvert the 2020 election. According to the article, the committee staff provided insights and evidence related to Trump's false electors gambit and his pressure on Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, crucial to the charges brought against Trump and his allies. The article noted that this cooperation was detailed by two former committee officials, emphasizing the committee's reluctance to share similar information with the Justice Department due to concerns it might need to be disclosed in ongoing criminal cases related to the Jan. 6 Capitol Riot.

### **GOP Senators Slap Down Trump on Jan. 6 'Hostages'**

[The Hill](#) (01/10, Bolton) reported that Republican senators, including John Thune, John Cornyn, and Mitch McConnell, have rejected President Trump's claim that individuals convicted of Jan. 6 Capitol Riot-related crimes are "hostages" who should be pardoned. According to the article, they emphasized their faith in the justice system and dismissed the notion of these convicts as political prisoners or hostages. The article explained that these sentiments have come three years after the Capitol Riot, with senators recalling the violence and chaos of the day, and firmly standing by the legal processes that have led to the convictions of those involved.

### **Montana Fire Chief Who Had Refused Vaccine Mandate in Washington State Charged in Jan. 6 Riot**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/10, Whitehurst) reported that Frank Dahlquist, a Montana fire chief previously terminated over a COVID-19 vaccine mandate, has been charged with assaulting police officers during the Jan. 6 Capitol Riot. The article explained that after being identified partly through his distinctive facial hair and a previous TV news story, Dahlquist was accused of spraying a chemical irritant at officers and throwing lumber toward them, though it didn't hit anyone. The article noted that the FBI confirmed his identity by speaking with firefighters who had worked with him in Washington and analyzing text messages he sent on the day of the riot, leading to his arrest and court appearance in Montana. [NBC News](#) (01/10, Reilly) also reported on the story.

### **Las Vegas Man Arrested in Connection With Jan. 6 Attack at Capitol**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (01/10, Lane) reported that Mario Gonzalez, a 51-year-old man from Las Vegas, was arrested by the FBI for his involvement in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. Charged with several felonies, including assaulting police officers, Gonzalez was identified from video footage where he filmed himself clashing with police and using a fire extinguisher against them. The article noted that this arrest is part of a broader investigation by U.S. authorities, which has led to over 1,265 people being charged, with more than 440 facing felony charges for assaulting or impeding law enforcement.

### **Independent Journalist Sentenced to Probation for Entering US Capitol on Jan. 6**

[The Epoch Times](#) (01/10, Ozimek) reported that North Carolina independent journalist Stephen Horn was sentenced to 12 months of probation, a fine, and 90 hours of community service for entering the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and later releasing a documentary incorporating footage from that day. According to the article, prosecutors argued that Horn was a protestor rather than a journalist, citing his actions during the riot, including scaling a statue and entering Nancy Pelosi's office. The article noted that the case is part of a wider DOJ effort to pursue convictions related to the Jan. 6 Capitol Riot, which includes other independent journalists who were also prosecuted for their involvement.

### **Sen. Johnson Praises New Epoch Times Jan. 6 Documentary At Capitol Screening**

[The Epoch Times](#) (01/10, Lord) reported that Senator Ron Johnson hosted a screening of The Epoch Times' new documentary, "The Real Story of Jan. 6 Part 2: The Long Road Home," at the Capitol, praising its exploration of the Jan. 6 events and their impact on America. According to the article, the documentary, which highlights the DOJ's extensive post-Jan. 6 prosecutorial efforts, includes a segment on FBI whistleblowers like Garrett O'Boyle, who faced retaliation for speaking out against the FBI's response to Jan. 6. The article explained that the panel discussions following the screening focused on changes in federal law enforcement and intelligence post-Jan. 6, with emphasis on the DOJ's altered processes and the use of SWAT teams for arresting Jan. 6 defendants, even for misdemeanors.

### **Opinion: Donald Trump Isn't Coming for Us. The Rule of Law Is Coming for Him**

An opinion piece from the [Washington Post](#) (01/10, Comey) emphasized that while threats of political violence should always be taken seriously, the FBI's domestic terrorism section is actively working to identify and defuse potential threats. The article highlighted that the threats from Trump supporters, in response to his legal troubles,

are more about intimidation than actual violence, as evidenced by the relative absence of his supporters at his various arraignments. The author's overall takeaway is that the rule of law must be upheld, regardless of threats, and that while Trump and his followers pose challenges, it's the rule of law that is finally coming for Trump, not the other way around.

### **Analysis: Trump Often Passively Encourages Violence — And Actively Rationalizes It**

An analysis from the [Washington Post](#) (01/10, Bump) highlighted Donald Trump's pattern of passively encouraging and actively rationalizing violence among his supporters. According to the article, this pattern, evident from his 2016 campaign rhetoric to his indirect role in the Jan. 6 Capitol Riot, has consistently stoked anger and potential violence. The article pointed out that Trump's recent "bedlam" comment in response to his legal challenges continues this trend, subtly escalating perceived threats to democracy among his followers. The author assessed that this approach effectively manipulates and mobilizes his base, as seen in the involvement of groups like the Proud Boys in the Capitol Riot, without Trump explicitly directing violence.

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## **OTHER FBI NEWS**

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### **SLC FBI Urges Hate Crime Reporting, Releases PSA in Eight Foreign Languages**

[KTVX \(ABC-4\)](#) (01/10, Brugger) reported that after 2022 saw an uptick in reported hate crimes, the Salt Lake City Division of the FBI is releasing public service announcements in eight foreign languages to encourage people to report the crimes. The article noted that the PSAs will be released in Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, Persian-Afghan (Dari), Persian-Iranian (Farsi), Pashto-Afghani, Somali, and Spanish to expand reach into diverse communities, an FBI press release states. This campaign reportedly aims to connect with community members of various backgrounds, including those who face literacy challenges. The article added that in the English PSA, Special Agent in Charge Shohini Sinha said recent events in the U.S. and overseas have led to increased harassment and intimidation. While he understands some people may be scared or hesitant to come forward to law enforcement, Sinha said he wants to assure people the FBI is there to serve all communities and keep everyone safe. The PSAs will reportedly be shared with various religious, civic, and community organizations, as well as refugee service providers in Utah. The article quoted Sinha, who said, "Crimes motivated by hate and bigotry have no place in our society, and we won't tolerate them, the FBI works with our law enforcement partners to ensure everyone, regardless of race, faith, sexual orientation, or disability, feels secure and protected."

### **GAO Rules FBI Protests Are Premature**

[Washington Technology](#) (01/10, Wakeman) reported that the Government Accountability Office has dismissed a set of protests involving a \$5 billion FBI blanket purchase agreement, but that does not stop future challenges from happening. The article noted that Ernst & Young, General Dynamics IT, and Qbase filed protests in November after the FBI suggested they should no longer compete for the IT Supplies and Support Services 2nd Generation BPA. However, the FBI did not eliminate them from the competition, which is ongoing. They have not been eliminated and no awards have been made yet, so GAO ruled that the protests were premature. The article mentioned that the FBI made an "advisory" evaluation and gave the companies the option of withdrawing or continuing. Once awards are made, the companies can come back with protests if they don't win a seat.

### **Lawsuit Against Parkland School Deputy Over 2018 Massacre Can Go to Trial**

The [Associated Press](#) (01/10, Spencer) reported that a lawsuit filed by families of the 17 people killed and other victims of the Parkland, Florida, school massacre against a former sheriff's deputy who failed to intervene can go forward, a judge ruled, rejecting his motion to dismiss the case before trial. The article noted that circuit Judge Carol-Lisa Phillips, in a ruling posted Wednesday, said a jury should decide whether fired Broward County Deputy Scot Peterson displayed a "wanton and willful disregard" for the students' and teachers' safety when he failed to confront the shooter during the six-minute attack inside a classroom building at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The article mentioned that the families and survivors have already settled claims with the FBI — whose agents failed to investigate a warning about Cruz — and the Broward school district for a combined \$153 million. Peterson, the first U.S. police officer to be charged criminally with failing to act during a school shooting, was acquitted of child neglect in June. Legal experts said the Florida law that prosecutors applied wasn't written to address Peterson's actions.

## **Analysis: Enemies of the Administrative State**

An analysis piece by the [Epoch Times](#) (01/10, Weingarten) stated that Washington, D.C.'s most powerful agencies have been weaponized against their critics, one organization has not only played a key role in helping marshal evidence of such malfeasance but found itself at the center of an emerging government targeting scandal that would seem to only further substantiate the claims of administrative state critics. According to the author, that organization is Empower Oversight Whistleblowers & Research. It has represented whistleblowers at the heart of some of the most consequential and contentious congressional investigations in recent years, touching on matters ranging from the impeachment inquiry into President Biden, to alleged FBI inflation of the domestic terror threat. The author mentioned that notable clients aided by Empower Oversight recently include current or former FBI officials Marcus Allen, Steve Friend, and George Hill. These men testified about how the nation's premier law enforcement agency had engaged in "egregious abuse, misallocation of law-enforcement resources, and misconduct with the leadership ranks," according to a House Judiciary Committee and Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government majority report.

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## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

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### **China's Shadowy Information-Manipulation Tactics Seen Targeting Taiwan Vote**

- [Washington Times: China's Shadowy Information-Manipulation Tactics Seen Targeting Taiwan Vote](#)
- [Wall Street Journal: China's Messaging to the U.S.: Don't Rock the Boat](#)
- [Reuters: U.S. Urges China to Not Interfere in Taiwan Elections](#)

### **Ecuador Is at War With Drug Gangs, President Says**

- [Wall Street Journal: Ecuador Is at War With Drug Gangs, President Says](#)
- [New York Times: Ecuadoreans Split on President's Drastic New Measure to Combat Drug Gangs](#)

### **South Africa Accuses Israel of Genocide in U.N. Court**

- [Wall Street Journal: South Africa Accuses Israel of Genocide in U.N. Court](#)

### **Chinese Drug Companies, Not Rogues, Poison America**

- [Higher Ground: Chinese Drug Companies, Not Rogues, Poison America](#)

### **Israel's Far Right Calls for Palestinians to Resettle Outside Gaza**

- [Wall Street Journal: Israel's Far Right Calls for Palestinians to Resettle Outside Gaza](#)

### **As U.S. Support for Ukraine Falters, Europe Splits on Filling the Gap**

- [New York Times: As U.S. Support for Ukraine Falters, Europe Splits on Filling the Gap](#)

### **Al Shabab Terrorist Group Captures U.N. Helicopter in Somalia**

- [New York Times: Al Shabab Terrorist Group Captures U.N. Helicopter in Somalia](#)

### **Knife Attacker Hoped to End South Korean's Presidential Bid, Police Say**

- [New York Times: Knife Attacker Hoped to End South Korean's Presidential Bid, Police Say](#)

### **The Female Marines Japan Is Training for War**

- [Reuters: The Female Marines Japan Is Training for War](#)

### **Ukraine's President in Estonia on Swing Through Russia's Baltic Neighbors**

- [Associated Press: Ukraine's President in Estonia on Swing Through Russia's Baltic Neighbors](#)

## OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

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### House Republicans Advance Contempt Of Congress Resolution

- Forbes: House Republicans Advance Contempt Of Congress Resolution
- Associated Press: Republicans Push Ahead With Hunter Biden Contempt Charge After His Surprise Visit to Capitol Hill
- CNN: Hunter Biden's Visit to Capitol Hill Is Part of a More Aggressive, Forward-Leaning Legal Strategy
- CBS News: House Committees Advance Contempt of Congress Resolutions for Hunter Biden
- Reuters: House Republicans Move Toward Holding Hunter Biden in Contempt of Congress

### Iowa Caucus 2024: Takeaways From the Republican Presidential Debate in Iowa

- Reuters: Iowa Caucus 2024: Takeaways From the Republican Presidential Debate in Iowa
- Axios: How the Iowa Caucuses Work and Why This Year Is Different
- CNN: 2024 Voting Is About to Begin. Do You Know What a Caucus Is?
- Associated Press: What to Expect in the Iowa Caucuses
- Washington Post: Understanding the Iowa Caucuses and Why They're Important to the Election

### Trump Cannot Deliver Closing Arguments at NY Fraud Trial, Judge Says

- Reuters: Trump Cannot Deliver Closing Arguments at NY Fraud Trial, Judge Says
- CBS News: Trump Can't Deliver Closing Argument in New York Civil Fraud Trial, Judge Rules
- CNN: Trump Can't Speak During Closing Arguments in NY Civil Fraud Trial, Judge Says
- Associated Press: Judge Says Donald Trump Won't Give Own Closing Argument at Civil Fraud Trial After Disputing Rules
- Rolling Stone: Trump's Lawyers Kill His Bid to Deliver Closing Argument in Fraud Trial

### A Secret Tunnel in a NYC Synagogue Leads to a Brawl Between Police and Worshippers

- Associated Press: A Secret Tunnel in a NYC Synagogue Leads to a Brawl Between Police and Worshippers
- Washington Post: Nine Charged in Brawl Over Attempt to Close Secret Tunnel at NYC Synagogue
- ABC News: DOB Issues Vacate Orders Over 'Underground Tunnel' After Chaos Erupts at NYC Synagogue
- New York Times: 60-Foot Tunnel Under Synagogue Left 2 Buildings Unstable, Officials Say
- USA TODAY: Secret Tunnel Found in NYC Synagogue Leads to 9 Arrests After Confrontation

### Avalanche Kills One, Injures Three at California Ski Resort That Once Hosted Winter Olympics

- Associated Press: Avalanche Kills One, Injures Three at California Ski Resort That Once Hosted Winter Olympics
- Wall Street Journal: Avalanche in Tahoe-Area Ski Resort Leaves One Dead
- CNN: One Man Was Killed and Another Person Injured in an Avalanche at a Tahoe-Area Resort
- Reuters: Avalanche at California Ski Resort Kills One Person, Injures Another
- ABC News: One Dead in Avalanche at Palisades Tahoe Resort in California

### Republicans Hammer Biden Border Chief During Impeachment Hearing

- Reuters: Republicans Hammer Biden Border Chief During Impeachment Hearing

### U.S. Adults Across Racial Groups Agree the Economy Is a Top Priority, AP-NORC and AAPI Data Polls Show

- Associated Press: U.S. Adults Across Racial Groups Agree the Economy Is a Top Priority, AP-NORC and AAPI Data Polls Show

### Michigan GOP Senate Candidate Mike Rogers Endorses Trump for President

- The Epoch Times: Michigan GOP Senate Candidate Mike Rogers Endorses Trump for President

### **Speaker Johnson ‘Strongly Encouraged’ Biden to Move On Border Security Demands in Phone Call**

- Washington Examiner: Speaker Johnson ‘Strongly Encouraged’ Biden to Move On Border Security Demands in Phone Call

### **White House Vows to ‘Use Every Tool at Its Disposal’ to Counter Election Violence**

- Washington Examiner: White House Vows to ‘Use Every Tool at Its Disposal’ to Counter Election Violence

### **U.S. Prosecutors’ Message for Whistleblowers: Let’s Make a Deal**

- Bloomberg: U.S. Prosecutors’ Message for Whistleblowers: Let’s Make a Deal

### **Chris Christie Skewers Haley and DeSantis on Hot Mic Before Ending 2024 Campaign**

- CNN: Chris Christie Skewers Haley and Desantis on Hot Mic Before Ending 2024 Campaign

### **Trump Says He Has Decided on 2024 Running Mate but Refuses to Name Them: ‘Can’t Tell You’**

- New York Post: Trump Says He Has Decided on 2024 Running Mate but Refuses to Name Them: ‘Can’t Tell You’

### **AI Helps U.S. Intelligence Track Hackers Targeting Critical Infrastructure**

- Wall Street Journal: AI Helps U.S. Intelligence Track Hackers Targeting Critical Infrastructure

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## **BIG PICTURE**

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### **New York Times**

- Israel to Fight Genocide Claims At World Court
- A New Breed of Evangelical Finds a Defender in
- Trump Trump Rebutts Himself in Bid For Immunity
- Ecuador Buckles Under Gang Violence, and Fear
- Elixirs Peddled At Gas Stations Provoke Alarm
- Power Shift Jolts ESPN as a Shouting Star Derides an Executive
- The Day Hamas Came

### **Wall Street Journal**

- SEC Vote Broadens Investors’ Access to Bitcoin
- Skydance Backers Weigh Deal To Gain Control of Paramount
- Potent Pot Hurts Kids; ‘I Was in Full-Blown Psychosis’
- Doomed Battle Tells Story of Stalled War
- Haley, DeSantis Trade Barbs To Be Alternative to Trump
- The Last Living-Room Caucus: Iowa Mayor Keeps Up Tradition

### **Washington Post**

- Ecuador in ‘State of War’ a Day After Gang Bedlam
- Airlines Ground Max 9s Longer
- She Just Turned 16. The War in Ukraine Wrecked Her City — And Her Childhood.
- GOP Rhetoric Fills Iowa’s Immigrants With Dread
- Christie Ends His Long-Shot Campaign

### **Financial Times**

- Joe Biden to Send Delegation to Taipei After Taiwan’s Election
- U.S. Companies and Chinese Experts Engaged in Secret Diplomacy on AI Safety

- U.S. House Republicans Move to Hold Hunter Biden in Contempt of Congress

### ABC News

- Chris Christie Drops Out of Presidential Race; California Avalanche Leaves 1 Dead, 1 Injured; Closing Arguments Set for Trump Civil Case.

### CBS News

- One Skier Dead in Northern California Avalanche; Chicago Struggles to Shelter Thousands of Migrants, With More Arriving Each Day.

### NBC News

- Tens of Millions Still Reeling From Monstrous Winter Storm That Walloped Much of the u.s.; Chris Christie Suspends Campaign for 2024 Presidential Race; Hunter Biden Surprises GOP Members by Showing up to House Contempt Hearing.

### Fox News

- U.S. and British Forces Say They Shot Down 21 Drones From Yemen; Hunter Biden Causes Mayhem at Hearing; Chris Christie Withdraws From 2024 Election Run.

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## WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

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### White House

#### President Biden

- 11:30 AM: The President receives the Presidential Daily Briefing

#### Vice President Harris

- 11:30 AM: Secretary of Education Cardona will join Vice President Harris in Charlotte, NC to highlight the latest actions by the Biden-Harris Administration to reduce gun violence. She will convene educators, counselors, parents, gun safety advocates, and local and state leaders, and will announce new funding from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act that will help schools throughout the state and across the country increase access to mental health resources for their students.

### US Senate

- Hearings to examine federal electric vehicle incentives including the federal government's role in fostering reliable and resilient electric vehicle supply chains. – 10:00 AM – Host: Energy and Natural Resources Committee
- Hearings to examine stopping the flow of fentanyl, focusing on public awareness and legislative solutions. – 10:00 AM – Host: Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee

### US House of Representatives

- Hearing: Safeguarding Americans' Communications: Strengthening Cybersecurity in a Digital Era – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Hearing: "Exploitation and Enforcement Part II: Improving Enforcement in Countering Uyghur Forced Labor" – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Homeland Security

- [Hearing: Hearing Entitled: Oversight of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Housing Administration](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Financial Services
- [Hearing: Proposals for a Water Resources Development Act of 2024: Members Day Hearing](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- [Hearing: Crime on the Rise: How Lawlessness is Impacting Main Street America](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Small Business
- [Hearing: The Risks of Progressive Ideologies in the U.S. Military](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Oversight and Accountability
- [Hearing: Oversight hearing titled Examining the Biden Administrations Limits on Access to the OCS: Impacts on Consumers States and Operators](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Natural Resources
- [Hearing: The Impact of Illegal Immigration on Social Services](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on the Judiciary
- [Hearing: "Lowering Costs and Increasing Access to Health Care with Employer-Driven Innovation"](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Education and the Workforce
- [Hearing: Rural Access: Is VA Meeting All Veterans Where They Live?](#) – 10:15 AM – Host: Committee on Veterans' Affairs
- [Hearing: Examining the Biden Administrations Afghanistan Policy Since the U.S. Withdrawal: Part II](#) – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Foreign Affairs

#### Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of State Blinken** meets with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in Cairo, Egypt at 9:30 AM.
- **Secretary of Education Cardona** will join Vice President Harris in Charlotte, NC to highlight the latest actions by the Biden-Harris Administration to reduce gun violence at 11:30 AM. She will convene educators, counselors, parents, gun safety advocates, and local and state leaders, and will announce new funding from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act that will help schools throughout the state and across the country increase access to mental health resources for their students.

#### Visitors

- No events scheduled.

#### General Events

- [The Heritage Foundation: Inflation: Today's Financial Pandemic](#) – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: The Heritage Foundation, 11:00 AM. Every American has felt the effects of the staggering surge in inflation in the past few years. In the U.S. and other countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the rise in inflation strongly relates to increases in transfer payments since 2020, the start of the COVID pandemic. Heritage Distinguished Fellow in Economic Thought Dr. Robert Barro has researched this significant inflation spike, and his conclusions may surprise you. Through a conceptual framework based on the government's intertemporal budget constraint, we can see that the inflation surge is a way to "pay for" part of added government spending by depreciating the real value of public debt. In this framework, more spending triggers more inflation, but higher initial debt and longer debt duration mean lower inflation. This can explain recent inflation rates in 21 economies (20 non-European countries and the Euro area considered as an aggregate). The U.S. is not an outlier, with inflation and the spending surge both moderately above average. The bottom line? Recent inflation surges were triggered by the surges in government spending – i.e., expanded government caused inflation. Learn more about how big government makes your everyday expenses more costly as Dr. Barro joins Heritage Executive Vice President Derrick Morgan.
- [CSIS: The CommonHealth Live! IRC President David Miliband: A New Crisis Landscape](#) – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: Online Event, 8:00 AM. In the second episode of the CommonHealth Live! series, J. Stephen

Morrison speaks with International Rescue Committee (IRC) President and CEO David Miliband about the recently released IRC 2024 Emergency Watchlist. The onset of 2024 has brought with it record levels of humanitarian crises. How and why are global humanitarian crises evolving? How do we address these unprecedented global challenges? What can be done to reduce the impact on affected communities?

- CSIS: North Korea in 2024: What to Expect? – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: Online Event, 9:30 AM. Please join us for a special discussion on what to expect from North Korea in 2024 with Mr. Sydney Seiler, senior adviser with the CSIS Korea Chair, and formerly the National Intelligence Officer for North Korea at the National Intelligence Council from 2020 to 2023.
- CSIS: Prospects for Digital Trade in the Asia-Pacific in 2024 – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: Online Event, 10:00 AM. The Asia-Pacific digital trade panorama is evolving rapidly. Several countries such as Australia and Singapore have been forming digital trade and digital economy agreements with each other; in July 2023 the UK joined the 11-member Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and numerous countries including China have requested to follow; and in September the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is negotiating the Digital Economy Framework Agreement. Meanwhile, strong headwinds are gathering – the regional digital policy landscape is increasingly fragmented as restrictive data transfer and other policies emerge and some countries still fall short of meeting their digital trade obligations. And in a major blow, the United States appears to be retreating: the U.S.-backed Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) did not make expected progress with digital trade 2023, and in October the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) reversed U.S. support for key IPEF and WTO digital trade rules, on cross-border flow of data, data localization, and protection of source code. This panel will discuss the prospects of the Asia-Pacific digital trade agenda, the status of the implementation of key agreements such as the CPTPP, and the prospects for a robust IPEF in light of the USTR's decision and imminent U.S. elections.
- CSIS: Navigating Security Challenges in the Black Sea Region – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: CSIS, 11:30 AM. Please join the CSIS Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program on Thursday, January 11th from 11:30am ET at CSIS HQ, for an in-person panel discussion between Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Elizabeth M. Allen, Max Bergmann, Dr. Jeffrey Mankoff, and Dr. Lisa Aaronson, on managing security risks in the Black Sea Region. The conversation will touch on the current U.S. Black Sea Strategy, security challenges faced by U.S. Allies and partners in the Black Sea region, and the importance of strengthening democratic institutions and ties between our people.
- CSIS: The National Defense Industrial Strategy: The Way Ahead – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: CSIS, 3:30 PM. The CSIS Defense-Industrial Initiatives Group (DIIG) will welcome the country's first Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy (ASD(IBP)), the Honorable Dr. Laura D. Taylor-Kale, for a discussion on the new National Defense Industrial Strategy (NDIS) moderated by DIIG Director Dr. Cynthia R. Cook. The Department of Defense, which has never put forth a strategy specifically for the U.S. defense industry, is launching their plan in early January for strengthening U.S. industrial capacity. This event will discuss the new strategy and what steps will need to be taken to see it to fruition. Dr. Seth G. Jones, Senior Vice President and Director of the International Security Program at CSIS, will offer introductory remarks for this discussion.
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Our Enemies Will Vanish: Book Talk with Yaroslav Trofimov – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 5:00 PM. No journalist has covered the war in Ukraine with greater knowledge, compassion, and insight than Yaroslav Trofimov, the chief foreign affairs correspondent of the Wall Street Journal. Born and raised in Kyiv, Trofimov has written a powerful new book about the war entitled *Our Enemies Will Vanish: The Russian Invasion and Ukraine's War of Independence*, which will be published by Penguin Press in January 2024. Drawing on his vast experience covering wars and conflicts in various parts of the world since 2001, Trofimov explains how the people of Ukraine against all odds have withstood one of the most powerful militaries in the world and endured unspeakable horrors. His account captures the bravery of ordinary Ukrainians risking their lives to preserve their country's independence. In his book, Trofimov combines his first-hand experience at the front lines with profound military analysis, providing unique insight into all levels of Ukraine's fight for survival. Please join Trofimov and Susan Glasser of the New Yorker for an engaging discussion of *Our Enemies Will Vanish*:

The Russian Invasion and Ukraine's War of Independence. A book signing and reception will follow the event. Copies will be available for purchase.

- CATO Institute: The Case for Shareholder Capitalism: How the Pursuit of Profit Benefits All – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: CATO Institute, 12:00 PM. At its essence, shareholder capitalism is a means for mutually beneficial trade. It fosters specialization, fuels innovation, and propels economic growth. While shareholder capitalism is a central theme in Finance 101 courses, it is increasingly criticized, especially with the popularization of sustainability, ESG investing, and stakeholder capitalism. In this engaging new book, author David McLean, the William G. Droms Professor of Finance at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, explains how shareholder capitalism benefits all. Edward Rock, the Martin Lipton Professor of Law at New York University School of Law and the codirector of the university's Institute for Corporate Governance & Finance, will join McLean for a lively discussion on the nature of shareholder capitalism and its role in society. Norbert Michel, vice president and director of the Cato Institute's Center for Monetary and Financial Alternatives, will moderate the discussion.
- CAP: Overturning Precedent: Examining the Regulatory Protections at Stake in the Loper Bright and Relentless Cases – Thursday, January 11, 2024. Location: Online Event, 12:15 PM. The Supreme Court will hear arguments on January 17 to overturn a 40-year-old legal precedent known as Chevron deference in the upcoming cases Loper Bright v. Raimondo and Relentless v. Department of Commerce. The ramifications of overturning Chevron deference are broad and would strip federal agencies' ability to react quickly to address new problems and looming threats as society grows evermore complex. Please join the Center for American Progress and Democracy Forward Foundation for a virtual event in which an expert keynote and panel will discuss the significant threat these cases pose to the ability of federal agencies to serve the American people and to protect them from bad actors and societal volatility.

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