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 Federal Bureau of Investigation - Seal

July 26, 2023  
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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### **Kevin McCarthy Says House on Track to Pursue Biden Impeachment Inquiry**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Mascaro) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (07/25, Linskey, Harrison) reported that House Speaker Kevin McCarthy says Republican lawmakers may consider an impeachment inquiry of President Joe Biden over unproven claims of financial misconduct, responding to enormous GOP pressure to demonstrate support for Donald Trump ahead of the 2024 presidential election. According to the articles, while at the Capital on Tuesday, McCarthy stated that the questions House Republicans are raising about the Biden family finances must be

investigated. He mentioned that so far, he acknowledged, the House's probes have not proven any wrongdoing, but an impeachment inquiry "allows Congress to get the information to be able to know the truth." During an interview on Tuesday with [Fox News](#) (07/25, Raasch, Gillespie), McCarthy stated, "I've said that if they withhold information, the impeachment inquiry allows Congress to have the apex of power to get all the information they need. All this information people are finding out now is only because Republicans have investigated," McCarthy told Fox. According to the Fox News report, when asked whether McCarthy thought a sitting president of the United States could be impeached based on actions that didn't even occur until after they took office, McCarthy shrugged off the question as hypothetical. "We are looking to determine if [Attorney General Merrick] Garland lied to the American public and whether he did so by putting up false statements in front of American residents. We know the statements were made in these meetings, and we will get the answers," he said. The article also mentions that the White House has maintained that President Biden wasn't involved in Hunter Biden's business affairs. Democrats say Republicans are engaged in baseless speculation about Biden in retribution for the two impeachments and criminal prosecutions of former President Donald Trump, who is currently the front-runner for the 2024 GOP presidential nomination. "Their eagerness to go after [President Biden] regardless of the truth is seemingly bottomless," tweeted White House spokesman Ian Sams. At a briefing Tuesday, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said: "We're not going to get into hypotheticals," when asked about GOP efforts to impeach Biden. The story was also reported on by the [New York Times](#) (07/25, Broadwater), the [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Wagner), [ABC News](#) (07/25, Axelrod), [CBS News](#) (07/25, Broadcast), [CNN](#) (07/25, Zanona, Raju, Grayer), [Bloomberg](#) (07/25, House), [Business Insider](#) (07/25, Griffiths), [Axios](#) (07/25, Solender), [USA TODAY](#) (07/25, Herszenhorn), [NBC News](#) (07/25, Concepcion), [Reuters](#) (07/25, Morgan), [The Guardian](#) (07/25, Sainato), [Forbes](#) (07/25, Bohannon), [Politico](#) (07/25, Carney), [NPR](#) (07/25, Walsh), [Al Jazeera](#) (07/24, Staff Writer), [The Daily Beast](#) (07/25, Uebelacker), [The Hill](#) (07/25, Crisp), and the [New York Post](#) (07/25, Nelson).

#### **Director Wray Gives House Judiciary FBI Documents on School Board Memo After Contempt Threat**

The [New York Post](#) (07/25, King) and the [Washington Examiner](#) (07/25, Oliver) reported that the FBI provided crucial documents to the House Judiciary Committee concerning its investigations into domestic Catholic extremism and threats against school administrators. According to the articles, the documents were handed over after Committee Chairman Jim Jordan threatened to hold Director Wray in contempt for failing to comply with his subpoena. The files detail a Justice Department directive to the FBI to investigate a surge in threats against school officials in 2021 and a since withdrawn memo that linked "radical-traditionalist Catholics" to domestic terrorism. The articles noted that in an accompanying letter, the FBI's Acting Assistant Director, Christopher Dunham, urged Jordan to avoid sharing the files without prior consultation with the FBI. The articles added that while there are no direct quotes from Director Wray in the articles, the FBI's communication highlights the breadth of Jordan's requests, stating that since the beginning of the year, the bureau has received 14 letters and three subpoenas from Jordan's committee and requested testimony from over two dozen FBI officials.

#### **Marine Veteran Trevor Reed, Released by Russia in Prisoner Swap, Hurt While Fighting in Ukraine**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (07/25, Forrest, Radnofksy) reported that Trevor Reed, an American who was freed from Russian detention in 2022, has sustained injuries while participating in the conflict in Ukraine. The U.S. State Department announced that Reed has been subsequently evacuated to Germany with the assistance of a nongovernmental organization for medical treatment. According to the article, the department's spokesperson, Vedant Patel, stressed that Reed was not operating on behalf of the U.S. government when he chose to fight in Ukraine. Despite Reed's decision, it doesn't appear to affect the ongoing diplomatic efforts to secure the release of other U.S. citizens currently detained in Russia. The article noted that each case, including those of businessman Paul Whelan and journalist Evan Gershkovich, is being considered and pursued separately. [CBS News](#) (07/25, Brennan, Cordes), [NBC News](#) (07/25, Jester, Siemaszko), [New York Times](#) (07/25, Patil, Cooper), [CNN](#) (07/25, Hansler), [NPR](#) (07/25, Kelemen), [USA TODAY](#) (07/25, Bacon), [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Tucker, Lee), [ABC News](#) (07/25, Shapiro, Gittleston), [BBC News](#) (07/25, Matza), [The Daily Beast](#) (07/25, Uebelacker, Vavra), [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Horton, Lamothe), [Axios](#) (07/25, Saric), [The Hill](#) (07/25, Mitchell), [Fox News](#) (07/25, Herlihy), [People](#) (07/25, Chamlee), [Forbes](#) (07/25, Pequeno IV), [New York Post](#) (07/25, Farberov), [Independent](#) (07/25, Marcus), [Daily Mail](#) (07/25, Bhole), and [New York Daily News](#) (07/25, Wilkinson) also reported on the story.

#### **British Billionaire Joe Lewis Charged With Insider Trading**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Peltz) reported that Joe Lewis, British billionaire and owner of the Tottenham soccer team, has been indicted on charges of insider trading by U.S. prosecutors. According to the article, Lewis is accused

of leveraging his corporate access to obtain confidential information, which he allegedly shared with close associates, prompting them to execute stock transactions that reaped millions in profits. Lewis's lawyer maintains his client's innocence and plans to fight the charges, which include securities fraud and conspiracy. The article noted that the indictment details several instances of Lewis allegedly passing on confidential information to insiders, including his girlfriend, private pilots, and friends, to trade on it. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (07/25, Ramey), [Reuters](#) (07/25, Stempel, Cohen), [CNN](#) (07/25, Delouya), [NBC News](#) (07/25, Richards), [Forbes](#) (07/25, Pequeno IV), [Axios](#) (07/25, Falconer), [Independent](#) (07/25, Marcus), [The Times](#) (07/25, Lawton), [BBC News](#) (07/25, Drenon), [New York Daily News](#) (07/25, Fisher), [The Guardian](#) (07/25, Rushe), [The Daily Beast](#) (07/25, McDougall), [Financial Times](#) (07/25, Miller, Agini), [New York Post](#) (07/25, Oliveira), [Bloomberg](#) (07/25, Benny-Morrison), [Daily Mail](#) (07/25, Keegan), [Telegraph](#) (07/25, Stephens), and [The Athletic](#) (07/25, Kay-Jelski) also reported on the story.

### **Judge Blocks Biden Administration Asylum Rules**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Santana) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (07/25, Hackman, Caldwell) reported that a federal judge in California blocked the Biden administration's newest immigration rules limiting who can seek asylum at the border, the central pillar of President Biden's post-Title 42 enforcement strategy, but delayed the effect of his decision for two weeks. The reports mention that the U.S. District Judge Jon Tigar, appointed by former President Obama, ruled Tuesday that the new policy violates asylum laws approved by Congress that allow anyone who enters the U.S. to ask for protection—regardless of how they arrived. The reports stated that the Biden administration adopted the policy—which closely resembles a measure used by the Trump administration—as it cobbled together a strategy to keep illegal border crossings at bay after the expiration of Title 42, a pandemic-era step that allowed officials to turn away asylum seekers at the border. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the Justice Department is appealing the ruling, and the transit ban remains in effect. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the decision “does not limit our ability to deliver consequences for unlawful entry,” including prompt removal, a future bar on admission, and potential criminal prosecution. According to the [New York Times](#) (07/25, Jordan, Sullivan), asylum seekers near the U.S.-Mexico border are instructed to use a U.S. government app to schedule an appointment to present themselves at land ports of entry. Even though there are some glitches in the program, and many people wait months for an appointment, there has been a steady increase in the number of appointments available each month, up to about 40,000, which in turn has helped calm the border, where federal agents are working diligently where they apprehended 2.4 million people fleeing poverty, political repression and violence in the 2022 fiscal year, which ended on Sept. 30. Nevertheless, Judge Tigar was not swayed, however, by the administration's new legal alternatives, or parole programs, saying that they were not “meaningful options” for many people seeking asylum. The story was also reported on by the [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Sacchetti), [CBS News](#) (07/25, Montoya-Galvez), [CNN](#) (07/25, Alvarez), [Fox News](#) (07/25, Shaw, Sorace), [Reuters](#) (07/25, Hesson, Cooke), [NBC News](#) (07/25, Ainsley), [NPR](#) (07/25, Rose), [Politico](#) (07/25, Ward, Gerstein), [Axios](#) (07/25, Kight), [Al Jazeera](#) (07/25, Staff Writer), the [New York Post](#) (07/25, Martinez), [The Hill](#) (07/25, Beitsch), [USA TODAY](#) (07/25, Garrison), and the [Washington Examiner](#) (07/25, Giaritelli).

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## **COUNTERTERRORISM**

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### **Eight Men Are Convicted in 2016 Terrorist Bombings in Brussels**

The [New York Times](#) (07/25, Pronczuk) reported that eight men were convicted in Belgium for organizing the deadly terrorist bombings in Brussels in March 2016, claimed by the same Islamic State cell responsible for the Paris attacks in 2015. According to the article, the attacks killed 35 people and injured hundreds, causing significant trauma in Belgium and sparking a debate about the place of Islam in Europe's largely secular societies. The article noted that six of the men found guilty of murder or attempted murder could face life sentences, two others were acquitted of murder but found guilty of participating in the activities of a terrorist group, and two brothers were fully acquitted; the verdicts cannot be appealed. [The Guardian](#) (07/25, O'Carroll), [Politico](#) (07/25, Camut), [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Charlton, Corder), [Wall Street Journal](#) (07/25, Norman, Mackrael), [Bloomberg](#) (07/25, Stolton, Gerace), [Reuters](#) (07/25, Strauss, Blenkinsop), [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Westfall), [BBC News](#) (07/25, Kirby), [CNN](#) (07/25, Kennedy), [Financial Times](#) (07/25, Dubois), and [Al Jazeera](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) also reported on the story.

### **Lawmakers Say the UK Should Ban Russia's Wagner as a Terrorist Group**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Lawless) reported that the UK's House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee has recommended that the country should declare the Russian Wagner mercenary group a terrorist organization due to its destabilizing activities, especially in Africa. According to the article, the Committee criticized UK's current sanctions as "underwhelming," noting that the Wagner group has carried out military operations in at least seven countries since 2014 and has had non-military involvements, including election interference in various countries. The article noted that lawmakers have urged for stronger actions and sanctions against the Wagner group, which they consider a serious national security threat.

### **Man Known to the FBI as Early as 2018 for Making Threats Associated With Mass Shootings and Bomb-Making Gets 30 Years**

[Star Tribune](#) (07/25, Berg) reported that a Minnesota man, Manuel R. Buck, was sentenced to 30 years in prison for a 2021 pawn shop break-in attempt to steal guns and machete assault on two bystanders. According to the article, court documents revealed Buck was known to local authorities and the FBI since 2018 for making threats related to mass shootings and bomb-making, including a threat against the Ku Klux Klan and planning a mass shooting at the Mall of America. In 2019, Buck called police to tell them he created explosive devices; a bomb squad removed several improvised bombs and other bomb parts from his house, documents state. Then, in 2020, the FBI received a tip that someone with the username "kutekitty333" in Zimmerman was planning a mass shooting at the Mall of America on the day after Thanksgiving, according to court documents. When questioned by authorities, Buck admitted he was talking to someone online about planning a mass shooting at the mall and thought he could kill 10 people before police shot him, documents state. The article noted that Sherburne County Attorney Kathleen Heaney commended the actions of the victims in this case, asserting their actions potentially prevented further harm.

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## **COUNTERINTELLIGENCE**

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### **FISA Report Prompts Renewed Calls for Spy Tool Reforms**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (07/25, Oliver) reported that a declassified court ruling has revealed that the FBI misused the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) in 2022, prompting lawmakers to demand revisions to the law. According to the article, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court ruled that an FBI analyst inappropriately searched the names of a U.S. senator and a state senator. The FBI stated that these violations were unintentional and pointed to improvements in compliance since reforms in 2021 and 2022. Despite this, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan (R-OH) and Rep. Jerry Nadler (NY) are both seeking reforms to section 702 of FISA, which allows the FBI to conduct warrantless surveillance for foreign intelligence. The article noted that Director Wray defended the importance of section 702 to national security, but must contend with significant opposition to its reauthorization in its current form from key members of Congress.

### **Moldova Summons Russian Ambassador After Media Reporting on Alleged Spy Devices on Embassy's Rooftop**

[CNN](#) (07/25, Pennington, Pokharel) reported that Moldova has summoned the Russian ambassador in response to reports that spying devices were installed on the rooftop of the Russian embassy in Chisinau. According to the article, Moldovan media and Insider media outlet's joint investigation found 28 satellite dishes and other communication devices installed at the embassy and a neighboring residential building used by embassy staff. The article noted that Moldovan foreign ministry is currently assessing the situation and is considering several response options. [Reuters](#) (07/25, Tanas, Pruchnicka) and [Newsweek](#) (07/25, Brugen) also reported on the story.

### **Senate Targets China, Voting to Restrict Farmland Purchases and U.S. Investment**

The [New York Times](#) (07/25, Demirjian) reported that the U.S. Senate has voted to prevent businesses based in China from buying U.S. farmland and to impose new requirements on American investments in China's national security industries, in an effort to counter Beijing's economic power and alleged espionage. According to the article, the legislation, which must also be passed by the House to become law, requires Americans to inform the Treasury Department within 14 days of making investments in the national security sectors of China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, including artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and hypersonics production. The article noted that the legislation aligns with efforts to address security and espionage concerns in relation to foreign investment in key U.S. sectors.

## **Where the 2024 Republican Presidential Candidates Stand on China**

[CBS News](#) (07/25, Yilek) reported that the 2024 presidential election candidates are each expressing their stances on the U.S.-China relationship, seen as a significant foreign policy issue due to China's growing influence. According to the article, former President Donald Trump calls for a decoupling of the U.S. and Chinese economies and intends to intensify counter-intelligence efforts against China, including hunting down Chinese spies and implementing new visa and travel restrictions. The article noted that other candidates, such as Ron DeSantis, Nikki Haley, and Vivek Ramaswamy, also advocate for stricter policies towards China, including limiting trade and China's ability to buy U.S. land, and enhancing counter-intelligence activities, all while expressing uncertainty about defending Taiwan against a Chinese invasion.

## **Lawmakers to Grill State Department Officials Over Biden's Iran Envoy Probe**

[Politico](#) (07/25, Gould, Toosi) reported that the Biden administration's decision to sideline Iran envoy Rob Malley, who has been under investigation regarding his access to classified information, has prompted a scheduled briefing with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, led by Rep. Michael McCaul. According to the article, Malley's suspension came in late June due to a probe involving the FBI and Diplomatic Security, and it has been met with criticism by Republican lawmakers who have questioned the decision to allow him to continue working after his security clearance was suspended. The article noted that although the State Department hasn't clarified why Malley was removed, McCaul suggested, without providing evidence, that Malley may have transferred intelligence to foreign adversaries, a claim Malley has denied.

## **Editorial: Congress Should Protect Journalists From Government Prying**

[Dallas News](#) (07/25, Editorial) reported that the Protect Reporters from Exploitative State Spying (PRESS) Act, a bill recently proposed in Congress, seeks to prohibit federal agencies from compelling journalists to reveal confidential information or demanding such information from third parties like telecommunication companies, with exceptions for terrorism or imminent violence. According to the article, the bill comes in light of increased targeting of journalists worldwide, and concerns about potential misuse of surveillance software like the Pegasus spyware by NSO Group, which the FBI had reportedly tested for potential use in domestic surveillance. The article noted that while nearly every state in the U.S. offers legal protection for journalists' sources and records, the PRESS Act addresses the current lack of federal protection, which allows federal agencies to obtain journalists' records and communications through third parties, a practice the Act aims to prevent.

## **Opinion: Unveiling China's Interference in U.S. Higher Ed Is Not 'Anti-Asian Bias'**

An opinion piece from [Newsweek](#) (07/25, Moore) argued that the American higher education system's lax enforcement of Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which mandates the disclosure of foreign gifts and contracts above \$250,000, creates vulnerabilities in the country's academic research. The article highlighted China's potential exploitation of these vulnerabilities, echoing Director Wray's testimony that China presents a significant threat to American innovation, economic security, and democratic ideals. The author rejected claims of anti-Asian bias in discussions around these issues, urging instead for stronger enforcement of Sec. 117 and full disclosure of foreign ties by American universities to protect national security.

## **Opinion: Defense Authorization Bill Takes Important Steps To Fight China's Growing Influence**

An opinion piece from [The Hill](#) (07/25, Steel) warned about the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) espionage and data collection efforts, particularly through LOGINK, a Chinese state-owned logistics platform. The author stressed that LOGINK's extensive partnerships give the CCP insights into US businesses, strategic assets, and supply chains, thereby bolstering China's global economic influence. The author applauded the inclusion of their legislation in the FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would prevent the Department of Defense from contracting with ports using LOGINK, require the Secretary of State to provide LOGINK alternatives to allies and ensure any international agreement excludes LOGINK usage, as critical steps in countering CCP espionage.

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## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS**

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### **Grassley Faces Criticism Over Release of FBI Document**

The [Hill](#) (07/25, Weaver) reported that Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) is in the political spotlight as Democrats and critics attack him for releasing a lightly-redacted document detailing unfounded allegations of Biden family

corruption and bribery and conservatives praise his move in the name of transparency. The article added that critics say his decision late last week to release the tip to the FBI, memorialized in an FD-1023 form, put a chink in that armor. The FBI admonished Grassley and other senators for releasing the form, saying it “risks the safety” of the confidential source, who claims the Bidens “pushed” a Ukrainian oligarch to pay them \$10 million.

### **Eight Search Warrants Issued in Trump Classified Documents Case, New Filings Show**

[NBC News](#) (07/25, Winter, Dienst, Shabad) reported that eight search warrants and affidavits were filed in connection with the federal case involving former President Donald Trump's handling of classified documents, which resulted in a slew of criminal charges against him, according to recently unsealed court motions. The article added that the motions were filed in connection with the ongoing efforts by media organizations, including NBC News, to obtain access to much of the information in the search warrant served at Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Palm Beach, Florida, last year. The article noted that prosecutors filed a motion last month with the federal court overseeing the case, requesting permission to disclose the warrants and accompanying documents to the legal teams representing Trump and his aide Walt Nauta as part of disclosure requirements now that both men have been charged. The article mentioned that the existence of one of the warrants was already known because it was executed on Trump's estate last year, and he announced it on his social media website. The seven other search warrants do not necessarily mean the FBI agents and the DOJ officials searched seven other physical locations. The article stated that federal prosecutors argued in the motion that those warrants should remain secret to prevent sensitive information from becoming public.

### **Gynecologist Accused of Sexually Abusing Over 200 Patients Is Sentenced to 20 Years in Prison**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Neumeister) reported that a gynecologist who sexually abused vulnerable and trusting patients for over two decades at prestigious New York hospitals cried before he was sentenced Tuesday to 20 years in prison by a federal judge who called his crimes unprecedented. The article added that the sentence for Robert Hadden, 64, was a measure of vindication for hundreds of former patients who accused the doctor of molesting them during examinations but saw an earlier prosecution end with a plea bargain that spared him from jail. A DOJ [press release](#) noted that the FBI participated in the investigation. The [New York Times](#) (07/25, Meko), [Guardian](#) (07/25, Sasani), [CBS News](#) (07/25, Kates), [Gothamist](#) (07/25, Kriegstein), [New York Post](#) (07/25, DeGregory), [CNN](#) (07/25, Del Valle), [ABC News](#) (07/25, Katersky), [Fox News](#) (07/25, Wallace), and the [New York Daily News](#) (07/25, Crane-Newman) also reported on the story.

### **New Witness Of Malcolm X's Assassination Comes Forward**

The [Huffington Post](#) (07/25, Mitchell) reported that a man claiming to work for Malcolm X's security detail the day of his assassination spoke publicly about the activist's death for the first time at a press conference on Tuesday. The article noted that the civil rights leader was shot more than a dozen times while delivering a speech at the Audubon Ballroom in New York City on Feb. 21, 1965. Mustafa Hassan, who spoke at the press conference hosted by civil rights attorney Ben Crump, claims that what he saw and heard that day substantiates the theory that the FBI and the NYPD were involved in the civil rights leader's killing. The article added that following the assassination, three men were charged and convicted in connection to the civil rights leader's death. Mujahid Abdul Halim, also known as Talmadge Hayer or Thomas Hagan, confessed to the killing. He has maintained that the two people convicted of the killing — Muhammad Aziz and Khalil Islam — were not involved. Hassan claimed in an affidavit signed last month that he stopped Hagan from escaping after the shooting despite what he believes was an attempt from the authorities to allow him to flee the scene. The article mentioned that Aziz was released in 1985 and Islam in 1987, but it wasn't until late 2021 that they were exonerated after a two-year long investigation conducted by the Manhattan District Attorney's office. And earlier this year, the family of the late Malcolm X filed a wrongful death lawsuit seeking \$100 million in damages, and accusing the CIA, FBI, and NYPD of playing a role in his assassination. [Axios](#) (07/25, Ortiz), [New York Daily News](#) (07/25, Tracy), [Fox News](#) (07/25, Betz), [Independent](#) (07/25, Baio), [Guardian](#) (07/25, Helmore), [Gothamist](#) (07/25, Venugopal), [WCBS \(CBS-2\)](#) (07/25, Williams), and the [Rolling Stone](#) (07/25, Madarang) also reported on the story.

### **Defense Wants Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooter's Long-Dead Father Exhumed to Prove Paternity**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that lawyers for the gunman who killed 11 people at a Pittsburgh synagogue requested a court order Tuesday to exhume the body of his long-dead father. Robert Bowers' lawyers want the body exhumed for a DNA test after federal prosecutors raised questions about paternity during the penalty phase of Bowers' trial for the 2018 massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue. The article added that Bowers, a 50-year-old truck driver from suburban Baldwin, was convicted in June on 63 criminal counts in the

nation's deadliest antisemitic attack. A federal jury has to decide whether to sentence him to death or life in prison without parole. The article noted that in an attempt to show that Bowers has a family history of mental illness, the defense has introduced evidence that his father, Randall Bowers, was diagnosed with schizophrenia. The defense asserts Robert Bowers also has schizophrenia and opened fire at the synagogue out of a delusional belief that Jews were helping to commit genocide against white people. The article mentioned that Randall Bowers died by suicide in 1979 on the eve of his own rape trial. At trial last week, prosecutors sought to cast doubt on whether he was Robert Bowers' biological father. The defense asked a judge on Tuesday to clear up the matter by ordering the exhumation of Randall Bowers' body.

### **Bryan Kohberger Defense Hints at Alibi in Idaho Murders as Deadline Passes**

The [Independent](#) (07/25, Sharp) reported that Bryan Kohberger has hinted that he has evidence placing him in another location at the time of the University of Idaho murders – but has stopped short of revealing whereas the deadline for him to submit an alibi to the court passed. The article noted that in a filing in Latah County Court on Monday, attorneys for the 28-year-old criminology Ph.D. student suggested that he has an alibi for the night of 13 November which may come to light at trial. The article added that Mr Kohberger's attorneys have sought to cast doubts on the strength of this DNA evidence, in particular the use of genetic genealogy. According to the affidavit in the case, the FBI used genetic genealogy databases to try to identify the DNA source.

### **Rashad Trice Indicted on Federal Charges in Kidnapping, Death of Wynter Cole-Smith**

[WWJ \(CBS-62\)](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan announced on Tuesday a federal indictment against 26-year-old Rashad Maleek Trice in the kidnapping and death of 2-year-old Wynter Cole-Smith. The article added that the indictment comes after a federal criminal complaint filed on July 7 alleged Trice stabbed and sexually assaulted Wynter's mother before taking the child from her Lansing home on July 2. Trice was arrested in the early morning hours of July 3; however, Wynter was not with him, prompting an Amber Alert. The article quoted Devin J. Kowalski, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Field Office, who said, "There is no greater responsibility for the FBI than to investigate those who commit senseless acts of violence against young children, while today's indictment cannot erase the pain her family is experiencing, it is the next step in the process of securing justice for Wynter."

### **New York Drug Dealer Sentenced in Overdose Death of 'The Wire' Actor**

[Reuters](#) (07/25, McKay) reported that the man who sold a fatal fentanyl-laced bag of heroin to actor Michael K. Williams, who played the shotgun-toting drug dealer Omar Little in the HBO crime drama "The Wire," was sentenced on Tuesday to 30 months in prison, according to court records. Carlos Macci, 72, was part of a four-man crew selling drugs from Brooklyn, and he sold the lethal dose to Williams, federal prosecutors said in court documents. The article stated that prosecutors had asked for a longer sentence of 48 months. "For decades the defendant has been selling deadly narcotics: heroin and now heroin laced with fentanyl," they wrote in court papers. An autopsy and court records show that Williams, 54, died of a drug overdose and was found in his Brooklyn apartment on Sept. 6, 2021. Drug paraphernalia was discovered at the scene, police said. In a plea agreement, Macci pleaded guilty in April to narcotics conspiracy, according to court papers. The article mentioned that fentanyl was associated with 70,600 of drug overdoses in the U.S. in 2021, according to the National Institutes of Health. The [New York Times](#) (07/25, Cramer), and [NBC News](#) (07/25, Schapiro) also reported on the story.

### **Bannon Co-Defendant Shea Sentenced to 5-1/4 Years Over 'We Build the Wall' Fraud**

[Reuters](#) (07/25, Cohen) reported that the sole person convicted at trial of defrauding donors to an online campaign to build Donald Trump's signature wall along the U.S.-Mexico border was sentenced on Tuesday to 5-1/4 years in prison. The article added that Timothy Shea's sentence was the longest imposed over the "We Build the Wall" campaign, which federal prosecutors said raised more than \$25 million from hundreds of thousands of donors. Two other defendants, who pleaded guilty, received shorter prison terms. Former Trump adviser Steve Bannon was also charged in the case, but Trump pardoned him in the final hours of his presidency.

### **NASA Employee Admits to Using COVID-19 Relief Loans to Fund Illegal Marijuana Cultivation**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (07/25, Hernandez) reported that a NASA employee admitted to using federal COVID-19 relief loans to pay off his real estate debt and help fund an illegal marijuana cultivation project, according to federal prosecutors. The article added that Armen Hovanesian, a budget-planning resource analyst for NASA-JPL, allegedly lied in multiple loan applications and received \$151,900, which was meant to be used to alleviate some of the financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses he controlled. Instead, the 32-year-old resident of

Glendale used the money to pay off personal real estate debts and buy equipment for an illegal marijuana grow operation, according to a federal complaint. The article noted that in 2021, the U.S. attorney general established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to tackle pandemic-related fraud.

### **Man Who Tried to Hire Hit Man to Kill Is Wife Gets 10 Years in Prison, Prosecutors Say**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that a Massachusetts man who tried to hire a hit man to kill his wife after she sought a restraining order has been sentenced to 10 years in prison. The sentence for Massimo Marengi, 57, handed down Monday in federal court in Boston was the maximum possible under sentencing guidelines, federal prosecutors said. Marengi's conduct was "despicable," acting U.S. Attorney Joshua Levy said in a statement. The article added that authorities began investigating in January 2021 when someone went to law enforcement and reported that Marengi had complained about the restraining order and asked for assistance in killing his wife, prosecutors said. Federal investigators directed that person to introduce Marengi to an undercover agent posing as a contract killer. The Malden man met with the agent in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, discussed a price of \$10,000, provided the agent with a photo of his wife's home, and explained how to evade surveillance cameras.

### **Federal Prison Counselor Agrees to Plead Guilty to Accepting Illegal Benefits From Wealthy Inmate**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that an inmate counselor at a federal prison in Massachusetts received about \$140,000 in illegal benefits and loans through a wealthy prisoner in his care, federal prosecutors said. The article noted that William S. Tidwell, 49, of Keene, New Hampshire, has agreed to plead guilty to bribery in violation of official duties, making false statements to a bank, and identity theft, the U.S. attorney in Boston said Monday. The article stated that Tidwell has worked for the Bureau of Prisons since 2000 and since 2008 has been at the Federal Medical Center-Devens. As a counselor, his duties included working closely with inmates on their work and housing assignments. Under Bureau of Prisons rules, employees are not allowed to receive payments, gifts, or personal favors from inmates. The article added that one of the inmates Tidwell supervised was what prosecutors described as an "ultra-high net worth" individual serving time for financial crimes. That inmate, identified only as "Individual 1" in court documents, in 2018 directed a close friend and business associate to wire \$25,000 to a member of Tidwell's family, prosecutors said. Starting in 2019, Tidwell and the wealthy inmate entered into a property management agreement that resulted in \$65,000 in benefits to Tidwell, prosecutors said. A DOJ [press release](#) quoted Christopher DiMenna, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI, Boston Division, who said, "William Tidwell is alleged to have abused his authority and abandoned his duty after he befriended an inmate in his care and accepted tens of thousands of dollars from him, today's arrest underscores the importance the criminal justice system places on policing its own. Make no mistake, the FBI will continue to work with our partners to root out public corruption wherever it may lie because it not only undermines the integrity of our government but is a violation of the public's trust."

### **Mother Punched by Sheriff's Deputy Files Federal Lawsuit**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (07/25, Blakinger) reported that a woman who was punched in the face by a sheriff's deputy last year while holding her baby in her arms filed a federal lawsuit on Tuesday, accusing Los Angeles County of failing to train or discipline the deputies who she says used excessive force and wrongfully arrested her last year after a traffic stop. The article noted that days after footage of the violent arrest went viral, the LA Times obtained an internal county email showing that the FBI is investigating and has visited Sheriff's Department headquarters to take documents related to the probe. The article mentioned that in recent weeks, the department has also faced criticism for two other violent arrests caught on camera. One, involving a woman thrown to the ground by a deputy in Lancaster, is also under FBI investigation. The other, involving a transgender man who was beaten during a traffic stop, has generated calls for further scrutiny even though the department already cleared the deputy involved.

### **Virginia Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Conspiring To Violate Iranian Sanctions**

[DC News Now](#) (07/25, Allen) reported that a U.S. District Judge sentenced Behrouz Mokhtari, 72, of McLean, Va. and Tehran, Iran, to 41 months in federal prison for violating U.S. sanctions against Iran. The article noted that he pled guilty earlier this year to two counts of conspiracy to violate the International Emergency Economic Power ACT (IEEPA). Mokhtari conspired to engage in prohibited business activities on behalf of persons and entities in Iran. After serving time in prison, he will undergo three years of supervised release and will have to forfeit over \$2.85 million in proceeds derived from his criminal activities – \$1.5 million of which he used to purchase a residence in California. A DOJ [press release](#) reported that the FBI investigated the case.

## **A Politician's Downfall Reveals a Disney Exec and a Secret 'Cabal's' Power Over Anaheim**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (07/25, Elmahrek, Roman, Fenno) reported that the role of powerful business interests in Anaheim — home to Disneyland Resort and Angel Stadium — has come under renewed scrutiny amid an ongoing federal corruption investigation that became public last year. FBI affidavits detail strong alliances between city leaders and several unelected power brokers, alleging that a covert, self-described cabal “wielded significant influence over the inner workings of Anaheim’s Government.” The article noted that in a criminal complaint filed last year against Todd Ament, then the president of the city’s Chamber of Commerce, the FBI alleged that he and Jeff Flint, a lobbyist, were “ringleaders of a covert group that appeared to exert significant influence over the City of Anaheim.”

## **The Downfall and FBI Raid of NYC's Sherry-Lehmann Wine Store**

The [New York Post](#) (07/25, Kaplan) reported that the once-respected name Sherry-Lehmann — long known as New York City’s premiere wine seller — has been smeared with mud after being shut down in March following a failure to renew its liquor license led to a cease-and-desist order from the State Liquor Authority. The article added that the shop owes New York state some \$2.76 million in back taxes. The shop, now owned by Shyda Gilmer and Kris Green, stands accused of scamming by customers. Last week, the FBI raided both the shuttered shop and an underground, climate-controlled room at a suburban office park in search of rare bottles that may have been stashed away.

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## **FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS**

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### **FEC Asked to Investigate Flower Shop's \$500,000 Contribution to Super PAC Backing Suarez's 2024 Bid**

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Licon) reported that a government watchdog group is asking federal regulators to investigate a \$500,000 contribution to a super PAC backing Miami Mayor Francis Suarez’s presidential bid, citing possible campaign finance laws violations. The article noted that the nonpartisan group Campaign Legal Center said it filed the complaint with the Federal Election Commission on Tuesday. The complaint says the business PassionForest, LLC, which sells artificial flowers on Amazon.com, did not have the financial means to make such a large contribution and was instead used to hide the identities of the true contributors to the political action committee America for Everyone, now called SOS America. The article mentioned that Campaign Legal Center also says the artificial flower shop accused in the scheme filed a trademark application listing a Chinese address and the seller information listed by Amazon.com shows a ZIP code in Shenzhen, in southeastern China. The group says the scheme could have been meant to hide foreign contributions, which are prohibited.

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## **CYBER DIVISION**

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### **Ukrainian Man Pleads Guilty in Dark Web Scheme That Stole Millions of Social Security Numbers**

[USA TODAY](#) (07/25, Arshad) reported that a Ukrainian national who prosecutors say was part of a dark web network that illegally sold millions of personal Social Security numbers has pleaded guilty to cybercrime charges and is facing up to 15 years in federal prison. The article added that Vitalii Chychasov made more than \$19 million through a series of websites, known as the SSNDOB Marketplace that sold names, dates of birth, and Social Security numbers belonging to people in the United States, according to a news release Tuesday from the U.S. Attorney’s Office. The SSNDOB scheme, which stands for social security number date of birth, impacted about 24 million people across the U.S., the Internal Revenue Service says. The article noted that police in Cyprus and Latvia worked with the FBI and Internal Revenue Service on dismantling the scheme.

### **White House To Nominate Former NSA, CIA Official as Next National Cyber Director**

The [Hill](#) (07/25, Kagubare) reported that President Biden will nominate Harry Coker to be the country’s next national cyber director and replace Chris Inglis, who resigned earlier this year, the White House announced Tuesday. The article added that Coker, a national security expert, has more than four decades of experience in public service. He served in the U.S. Navy for 20 years before moving to the CIA and the NSA, where he held various positions. He currently works as a senior fellow at Auburn University’s McCrary Institute for Cyber and Critical Infrastructure Security.

## Researchers Uncover a Malware Network Possibly Linked to Nation-State Cyberattacks

[Axios](#) (07/25, Sabin) reported that an unknown nation-state appears to be laying the foundation for its next hacking campaign, but little is known yet about what its motivations may be and who's at risk, security researchers say. The article stated that researchers at Infoblox released new details Tuesday about a malware campaign they're calling Decoy Dog that has all the characteristics of a potential espionage campaign. The article mentioned that many of the suspicious domain names linked to the campaign are tied to Russian IP addresses, according to the report, but researchers can't say with certainty that Russia is behind the attack. But Infoblox, which scans domain name systems (DNS) for malicious activity, has only discovered the underlying foundation of the campaign so far. The article noted that Infoblox estimates that more than 100 devices are infected with the Decoy Dog malware already — and the company's researchers believe as many as four groups could be deploying the malware. Those groups might not all be tied to the same nation-state either, Infoblox CEO Scott Harrell.

## Analysis: Judge Tells Hacked Law Firm to Hand Over Some (But Not All) Client Names

An analysis piece published by the [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Schraffer) stated that a federal judge ordered a hacked law firm to give a federal regulator a list of seven clients whose material nonpublic information may have been accessed by Chinese hackers. The article added that the judge also ruled that the regulator — the Securities and Exchange Commission — shouldn't be able to get a list of nearly 300 other clients whose material nonpublic information the law firm found wasn't accessed by the hackers. The article noted that the Monday afternoon ruling is the latest development in a case that raises thorny questions about the role of cyber regulators, law firms, client secrets and the willingness of victims to report cyberattacks to the federal government.

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### 500-Year-Old Manuscript Signed by Spanish Conquistador Hernando Cortés Returned to Mexico

The [Associated Press](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that a nearly 500-year-old manuscript signed by the Spanish conquistador Hernando Cortés in 1527 has been returned to the Archivo General de la Nación de México — Mexico's national archives in Mexico City, U.S. officials said Tuesday. The article added that the manuscript is a payment order signed by Cortés on April 27, 1527, authorizing the purchase of rose sugar for the pharmacy in exchange for 12 gold pesos. It is believed to be one of several pieces unlawfully removed from a collection of documents concerning a Spanish expedition to Central America in 1527 that is housed in Mexico's national archives. The article noted that last week officials from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts and the FBI participated in a formal repatriation ceremony at Mexico's national archives, where the manuscript is believed to have been unlawfully removed sometime before 1993. It is a violation of federal law to transport or receive stolen goods valued at more than \$5,000 that have traveled in foreign or interstate commerce.

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## CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

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### Prosecutors Follow Multiple Strands as Jan. 6 Indictment Decision Looms

The [New York Times](#) (07/25, Feuer, Haberman) reported that Special Counsel Jack Smith and his team continue to investigate former President Donald J. Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election, with Bernard B. Kerik, former New York City police commissioner and associate of Rudolph W. Giuliani, recently submitting documents that detail efforts to investigate alleged election fraud. According to the article, Smith's team interviewed Richard P. Donoghue, former Justice Department official under Trump, who confirmed his resistance to Trump's widespread fraud claims and shared Trump's attempts to replace acting attorney general Jeffrey Rosen with Jeffrey Clark, a Justice Department loyalist. The article noted that in a related line of inquiry, Smith's prosecutors are examining a meeting where FBI and other agency officials briefed Trump on election security preparations for the 2020 race, potentially revealing his knowledge and mindset when spreading claims about election fraud later. [NBC News](#) (07/25, Collier, Winter, Korecki), [CBS News](#) (07/25, Herridge, Quinn, Kates), and [Fox News](#) (07/25, Wallace) also reported on the story.

### DOJ Has Reached 'End Game' in Trump Jan. 6 Probe: Kirschner

[Newsweek](#) (07/25, Stanton) reported that the DOJ, under the leadership of Special Counsel Jack Smith, is reportedly nearing the conclusion of its investigation into former President Donald Trump's potential role in the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot. According to the article, Smith has sent a "target letter" to Trump, indicating the final stages of the investigation, which has explored Trump and his allies' alleged attempts to present false pro-Trump electors from states narrowly won by Biden. The article noted that the possible indictment arrives weeks after Trump was indicted in a case involving classified documents found at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, a case he also maintains his innocence in. "When we deliver target letters to somebody that prosecutors have been investigating in the grand jury for a very long time, that signals that the prosecution team is pretty much at the investigative end game," former federal prosecutor Glenn Kirschner said Tuesday.

### **Unanswered Questions About Trump's Looming Jan. 6 Indictment**

[Independent](#) (07/25, Sommerlad) reported that while Donald Trump is likely to face his third indictment this year related to attempts to overturn the 2020 US election results and his involvement in the January 6 Capitol riot, several uncertainties persist. According to the article, although Justice Department Special Counsel Jack Smith has informed Trump that he is the focus of a grand jury investigation, it remains unclear what exact charges will be brought against him. The article noted that the grand jury probe reportedly listed three federal statutes for possible charges, but it's uncertain whether these will include allegations of inciting or aiding an insurrection, obstructing an official proceeding, conspiring to defraud the United States, or making a false statement.

### **Takeaways From Mike Pence Interview Concerning Jan. 6**

[USA TODAY](#) (07/25, Groppe) reported that former Vice President Mike Pence, during a discussion with USA TODAY, revealed his stance on the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, stating that it may have shown the American public a part of him they were previously unaware of. According to the article, Pence remembered the day as a testing period where he upheld his oath to the Constitution, even at the cost of his personal standing, and suggested that the event revealed his character. The article noted that despite facing criticism from some Trump supporters who felt he betrayed the President, Pence asserted his actions on Jan. 6 were in line with his duty while leaving the question of what other GOP candidates would have done in his place to the media.

### **Trump's Lead Grows After Receiving Jan. 6 Target Letter, New Poll Says**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (07/25, Johnson) reported that former President Donald Trump's lead in a hypothetical 2024 Republican primary matchup has grown, despite receiving a second target letter from special counsel Jack Smith regarding the Jan. 6 Capitol riot and efforts to overturn the 2020 election results. According to the article, Trump announced on social media his receipt of the letter and characterized it as a political attack from the Biden administration. The article noted that despite these developments, recent polls show that over half of Republican voters believe Trump is innocent of any related charges and that a potential indictment could actually bolster his chances in the 2024 election.

### **U.S. Capitol Rioter Who Beat Officer With Flagpole Sentenced**

[BBC News](#) (07/25, Cabral) reported that Peter Francis Stager, an Arkansas man who used an American flag's pole to assault a police officer during the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, has been sentenced to 52 months in prison. According to the article, an informant identified Stager to the FBI six days after the riot, referencing videos on Twitter that showed Stager participating in the violence. The article noted that Stager, who pleaded guilty to a felony charge of assaulting police with a dangerous weapon, was part of a violent mob that dragged the officer down the Capitol steps and attacked him. [Telegraph](#) (07/25, Sabur) and [CNN](#) (07/25, Lynch, Mizelle) also reported on the story.

### **Man Who Traveled From State College to Washington D.C. For Jan. 6 Riot Sentenced to Prison**

[NBC News](#) (07/25, Reilly, Barnes) reported that Brian Gundersen, a participant in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot who was identified by his high school football letterman jacket, has been sentenced to 18 months in federal prison. According to the article, Gundersen was found guilty of two felony counts related to obstruction and assault on officers. The article noted that his arrest took place after the police chief of North Castle Township, New York, alerted the FBI that members of the Byram Hills High School community recognized the varsity jacket worn by Gundersen in the riot crowd. [PennLive](#) (07/25, Beauge) and [Centre Daily Times](#) (07/25, Perry) also reported on the story.

### **Florida Couple Pleads Guilty to Involvement in Jan. 6 Capitol Riot**

[Ocala-News](#) (07/25, Staff Writer) reported that Jamie and Jennifer Buteau from Ocala have pleaded guilty to their roles in the Jan. 6 Capitol breach, with Jamie admitting to a felony offense of assaulting, resisting, or impeding

certain officers and Jennifer to a misdemeanor offense of parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building. According to the article, the couple entered the Capitol building and joined the rioters, with Jamie Buteau throwing a chair at U.S. Capitol police officers, which subsequently hit an officer. The article noted that the Buteau's case adds to the tally of over 1,060 individuals who have been arrested in connection with the Capitol riot, including more than 350 charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement officers.

### **No Jail for N.J. Man Who Watched Rioters Break Into Pelosi's Office on Jan. 6**

[NJ.com](#) (07/25, Shea) reported that Michael Gianos, a man from Burlington County who streamed into the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6 riot and entered then U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi's office, has been sentenced to 24 months of probation and ordered to pay \$500 restitution after pleading guilty to entering or remaining in a restricted building. According to the article, prosecutors alleged that Gianos had joined the right-wing group Proud Boys a few days before the riot and had previously bragged about fighting with members of left-wing Antifa in Washington, D.C. At Pelosi's office, after others kicked in the door, Gianos walked in and recorded footage of others and later said he'd watched someone walk away with her laptop. The article noted that it was also noted that Gianos was charged alongside Rachel Myers, who also pleaded guilty and received a similar sentence of 24 months of probation earlier this year.

### **Opinion: If Trump Is Indicted for Jan. 6, It Will Be Clear Why**

An opinion piece from the [Washington Post](#) (07/25, Marcus) discussed the potential charges against former president Donald Trump for his actions related to the Jan. 6, 2021 Capitol riot and the potential challenges in prosecuting him. The author asserted that while Trump's actions may have violated democratic principles, they present difficulties in fitting within established legal frameworks for criminal prosecution. Emphasizing the need for accountability, the article underscored the fact that more than 1,000 individuals, incited by Trump's rhetoric, have already been charged in connection with the Jan. 6 riot, raising questions about the fairness of not prosecuting the individual perceived as their leader.

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## **OTHER FBI NEWS**

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### **Epstein Victim Explains Why She's Suing FBI After Agency Ignored Her Claims for 10 Years**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (07/25, Notheis) reported that Maria Farmer, a victim of Jeffrey Epstein who is suing the FBI, explained on Monday that she is suing the agency for ignoring her case for a decade. The article added that Farmer, who was Epstein's first victim to go to the authorities regarding the sex offender, is one of two plaintiffs who are suing the FBI over the agency's failure to investigate Epstein. Farmer's attorney, Jennifer Freeman, explained that they are in the process of getting a notice of claim, also known as a precursor, filed with the FBI. The article noted that Farmer explained that when she was working for Epstein in 1996, she had been asked to give a foot massage to Epstein while he was watching a math program on television. She was then directed by the New York Police Department to call the FBI, and she discussed with an FBI agent for 45 minutes that she had been kidnapped.

### **Jim Jordan Pushes FBI Move to Huntsville**

The [Alabama Political Reporter](#) (07/25, Stettheimer) reported that House Judiciary Committee chairman Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, advocated for the FBI to move its primary quarters to Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, or another location. The article added that earlier this month, Jordan sent a letter to the appropriations committee advocating for power of the purse reform of federal law enforcement. The letter recommends Congress "eliminate any funding for the FBI that is not absolutely essential for the agency to execute its mission" to reign in FBI abuses. Jordan did not define "absolutely essential," but he did suggest cutting all funding for a new FBI headquarters facility and relocating the bureau outside the Washington D.C. area. The article mentioned that Jordan chairs the House Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government, created in January in response to FBI investigations of former President Donald Trump and the release of the Twitter files. According to Jordan, subcommittee inquiries into those political issues yielded "startling testimony about egregious abuses, misallocation of federal law-enforcement resources, and misconduct within the leadership ranks of the FBI." The article stated that the recommendation implies moving FBI headquarters to Huntsville would stop the bureau from committing crimes. The FBI has planned to relocate its headquarters for 15 years to consolidate work into a single

facility, but the process has stalled. Sites in Maryland and Virginia have remained popular options due to their proximity to the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### **Still No Sign of Qin Gang as China Says Foreign Minister Has Been Replaced**

- The Guardian: Still No Sign of Qin Gang as China Says Foreign Minister Has Been Replaced

### **Blinken Arrives in Tonga, Warns of 'Predatory' Chinese Aid**

- VOA News: Blinken Arrives in Tonga, Warns of 'Predatory' Chinese Aid

### **Israel's Supreme Court Could Strike Down a Bill Aimed at Limiting Its Power. But Will It?**

- Wall Street Journal: Israel's Supreme Court Could Strike Down a Bill Aimed at Limiting Its Power. But Will It?

### **Israel in Political and Economic Tumult; Doctors Strike, Stocks Tumble**

- Wall Street Journal: Israel in Political and Economic Tumult; Doctors Strike, Stocks Tumble

### **'They Shoot Without Stopping:' Where Russia Is on the Attack in Ukraine**

- New York Times: 'They Shoot Without Stopping:' Where Russia Is on the Attack in Ukraine

### **An Investigation Into Mexico's 43 Missing Students Ends in 'Falsehoods and Diversions'**

- New York Times: An Investigation Into Mexico's 43 Missing Students Ends in 'Falsehoods and Diversions'

### **Taliban Shut Beauty Salons, One of Afghan Women's Last Public Spaces**

- New York Times: Taliban Shut Beauty Salons, One of Afghan Women's Last Public Spaces

### **Russia Moves to Expand Conscription, Bolstering Its Army**

- New York Times: Russia Moves to Expand Conscription, Bolstering Its Army

### **Land Mines Are in Place Around a Russian-Occupied Nuclear Plant in Ukraine, UN Watchdog Warns**

- Associated Press: Land Mines Are in Place Around a Russian-Occupied Nuclear Plant in Ukraine, UN Watchdog Warns

### **Chinese and Russian Officials to Join North Korean Commemorations of Korean War Armistice**

- Associated Press: Chinese and Russian Officials to Join North Korean Commemorations of Korean War Armistice

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### **Continued Reporting: Hunter Biden Investigation**

- New York Post: Hunter Biden-Tied Delaware Companies That Received \$34M in Taxpayer Money Under Scrutiny Ahead of Plea Hearing
- New York Post: Opinion: Will Judge Toss Hunter Plea Deal, the Rise of Low-Level Crime and Other Commentary

### **Ron DeSantis To Cut a Third of Staff Amid Flagging Primary Campaign**

- The Guardian: Ron DeSantis To Cut a Third of Staff Amid Flagging Primary Campaign

### **More Say Violence Could Be Necessary To Restore Trump to White House: Survey**

- The Hill: More Say Violence Could Be Necessary To Restore Trump to White House: Survey

### **Chris Christie Sharpens Jabs at Trump Defenders in 2024 Primary**

- NBC News: Chris Christie Sharpens Jabs at Trump Defenders in 2024 Primary

### **U.S. Judge Chides Trump, Tosses Bowe Bergdahl Desertion Conviction**

- Washington Post: U.S. Judge Chides Trump, Tosses Bowe Bergdahl Desertion Conviction

### **The Rise of Vivek Ramaswamy: A Long-Shot Candidate Ascends in the GOP Campaign**

- NBC News: The Rise of Vivek Ramaswamy: A Long-Shot Candidate Ascends in the GOP Campaign

### **Puerto Rican Bank Sues NY Fed for Suspending Account in Venezuela-Linked Crackdown**

- Reuters: Puerto Rican Bank Sues NY Fed for Suspending Account in Venezuela-Linked Crackdown

### **Opinion: The Stakes Are Far Too High To Allow Gambling on U.S. Elections**

- The Hill: Opinion: The Stakes Are Far Too High To Allow Gambling on U.S. Elections

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## **BIG PICTURE**

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### **New York Times**

- Education Dept. Opens Civil Rights Inquiry Into Harvard's Legacy Admissions
- Biden Takes His Battle for Democracy Case by Case
- Warming Could Push the Atlantic Past a 'Tipping Point' This Century
- How War Destroyed a 'Long and Happy Marriage'
- Once Praised, Jails Chief Draws Ire Over Lack of Transparency on Rikers

### **Wall Street Journal**

- Google's Growth Gets Boost From Ad Spending
- Regional Bank Deal Bolsters Sector Shadowed by Turmoil
- Soap Maker Cracks the Code To 'Made in America'
- Recall of Jet Engines Hits Airbus And Sinks RTX Stock
- China Replaces Absent Foreign Minister
- The Manpri Summer: How Men's Shorts Got So Long

### **Washington Post**

- California's Cup Runneth Over
- UPS and Union Stave off a Strike
- Biden's Asylum Restrictions Are Tossed
- Putin Froze During Mutiny
- A New Front Opens in the Battle Over Books

### **Financial Times**

- Investors Shun U.S. Consumer Stocks Over Recession Fears
- Federal Reserve Set to Resume Rate Rising Campaign
- A Different Way to Understand the U.S. Economy

## ABC News

- Bronny James Suffers Cardiac Arrest During Basketball Practice at USC; Ocean Temperatures off Florida Top 100 Degrees; American Freed From Russia in Prisoner Swap Hurt While Fighting in Ukraine.

## CBS News

- Deadly Heat Dome Continues to Expand; Biden's Dog, Commander, Bit Secret Service Agents.

## NBC News

- UPS Reaches Deal With Teamsters Union to Avoid Strike; Record Summer Heat Endangering Coral Reefs Near Miami; U.S. Troops Training Soldiers in Niger to Take on Islamic Extremist Groups.

## Fox News

- U.S., Australia, Japan, Germany Show Force During Military Exercise Amid China Fears; Is an Impeachment Inquiry Into Biden Around the Corner?; If Biden Impeachment Starts, Process Could Last Into Election Season.

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## WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

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### White House

#### President Biden

- 9:00 AM: President receives the Presidential Daily Briefing

#### Vice President Harris

- No events scheduled.

### US Senate

- Hearings to examine the nominations of Lieutenant General Gregory M. Guillot, USAF, to be general and Commander, United States Northern Command/Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command, and Lieutenant General Stephen N. Whiting, USSF, to be general and Commander, United States Space Command, both of the Department of Defense. – 9:00 AM – Host: Armed Services Committee
- Hearings to examine opportunities for Congress to reform the process for permitting electric transmission lines, pipelines, and energy production on Federal lands. – 9:30 AM – Host: Energy and Natural Resources
- Hearings to examine taking account of fees and tactics impacting Americans' wallets. – 9:30 AM – Host: Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee
- Hearings to examine the fiscal consequences of climate change on infrastructure. – 9:30 AM – Host: Budget Committee
- Hearings to examine rescuing Ukrainian children and women from Russia's aggression. – 10:00 AM – Host: Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
- Hearings to examine pathways to women's entrepreneurship, focusing on understanding opportunities and barriers. – 10:00 AM – Host: Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee
- Hearings to examine the nominations of Margaret M. Garnett, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, Jennifer L. Hall, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the District of Delaware, Brandy R. McMillion, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of

Michigan, Karoline Mehalchick, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, and Joseph Albert Laroski, Jr., of Maryland, and Lisa W. Wang, of the District of Columbia, both to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade. – 10:00 AM – Host: Judiciary Committee

- Hearings to examine U.S. economic security, focusing on addressing economic coercion and increasing competitiveness. – 10:00 AM – Host: Foreign Relations Committee
- An oversight hearing to examine the United States Patent and Trademark Office. – 2:30 PM – Host: Judiciary Committee
- Hearings to examine cleaner trains, focusing on opportunities for reducing emissions from America's rail network. – 2:30 PM – Host: Environment and Public Works Committee
- Hearings to examine the nominations of Dennis B. Hankins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti, James C. O'Brien, of Nebraska, to be an Assistant Secretary (European and Eurasian Affairs), Nathalie Rayes, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia, and Tobin John Bradley, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala, all of the Department of State, and other pending calendar business. – 2:30 PM – Host: Foreign Relations
- Hearings to examine Native priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill reauthorization. – 2:30 PM – Host: Indian Affairs Committee
- Hearings to examine implementing the PACT Act. – 3:00 PM – Host: Veterans' Affairs Committee
- A joint oversight hearing with the Committee on House Administration to examine the Capitol Police Board. – 3:30 PM – Host: Rules and Administration Committee
- Hearings to examine potential budgetary efficiencies achieved through improvement to management and planning processes within Department of Defense personnel programs. – 4:00 PM – Host: Armed Services Committee

## US House of Representatives

- Hearing: Oversight of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on the Judiciary
- Hearing: Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena: Implications on National Security Public Safety and Government Transparency – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Oversight and Accountability
- Hearing: Rural Entrepreneurship: Examining the Challenges and State of Rural Small Businesses – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Small Business
- Hearing: "Generational Learning Loss: How Pandemic School Closures Hurt Students" – 10:15 AM – Host: Committee on Education and the Workforce
- Hearing: Self-Driving Vehicle Legislative Framework: Enhancing Safety Improving Lives and Mobility and Beating China – 10:30 AM – Host: Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Hearing: Getting Nowhere: DoDs Failure to Replace the Defense Travel System – 1:00 PM – Host: Committee on Oversight and Accountability
- Hearing: Unearthing Innovation: The Future of Subsurface Science and Technology in the United States – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
- Hearing: The Real Cost of an Open Border: How Americans are Paying the Price – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Homeland Security
- Hearing: Committee on House Administration and Senate Committee on Rules and Administration joint hearing: Oversight of the Capitol Police Board – 3:30 PM – Host: Committee on House Administration
- Hearing: "Commanding Heights: Ensuring U.S. Leadership in the Critical and Emerging Technologies of the 21st Century" – 7:00 PM – Host: Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States

and the Chinese Communist Party

## Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of Defense Austin's** remarks at a joint press conference at 9 p.m. EDT with Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, will be livestreamed on [Defense.gov](https://www.defense.gov).
- **Secretary of State Blinken** participates in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Monument to the Fallen in Nuku'alofa, Tonga at 9:30 AM.
- Secretary Blinken meets with Tongan Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni and Tongan Foreign Minister Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamanu in Nuku'alofa, Tonga at 9:45 AM.
- Secretary Blinken holds a joint press availability with Tongan Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni in Nuku'alofa, Tonga at 10:50 AM.
- Secretary Blinken participates in the U.S. Embassy Nuku'alofa dedication ceremony in Nuku'alofa, Tonga at 12:00 PM.
- Secretary Blinken meets with Peace Corps volunteers and partners in Nuku'alofa, Tonga at 1:30 PM.
- Secretary Blinken meets with the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team in Wellington, New Zealand at 6:45 PM.
- **Secretary of Education Cardona** will give remarks at the National Summit on Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, a one-day summit that will bring together senior Biden-Harris Administration officials and national educational institutions and leaders to discuss innovative strategies and resources for colleges and students to expand access to higher education in the wake of the recent Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action at 9:00 AM.
- Secretary Cardona will give remarks at the Puerto Ricans United 2023 Annual Awards Gala at 8:00 PM.

## Visitors

- No events scheduled.

## General Events

- **Brookings Institution: US-China proximate military operations in the maritime, air, and space domains** – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Brookings Institution, 10:00 AM. In recent years, the People's Liberation Army has grown more capable, assertive, and willing to take risks, leading to a notable rise in the frequency, complexity, and significance of U.S.-China military encounters in the maritime, air, and space domains. As the United States and China continue to assert their national interests and regional and global ambitions, the proximity of their operations in these domains remains a considerable challenge. Amid heightened geopolitical tensions, the potential for misunderstanding, miscalculation, and escalation makes managing diplomatic relations with Beijing ever more crucial. On July 26, join the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology at Brookings for a conversation with policy experts about the delicate balance between the two powers in these domains and the regional and wider strategic implications of their proximate operations.
- **Brookings Institution: Who gets into college and why does it matter?** – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 2:00 PM. Do colleges act as escalators of upward mobility, or as perpetuators of elite advantage? This question lies at the heart of the current debate over college admissions, especially at highly selective colleges. Such colleges have a double-edged effect on inequality and mobility. On the one hand, their students come predominantly from more privileged backgrounds; on the other, they can potentially provide upward mobility opportunities for those from middle-class and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The debate about college admissions has come to the forefront with the Supreme Court's recent decision to end race-based affirmative action, which has placed the goal of fairer college admissions firmly on the policy agenda. But what exactly does fairness look like, and how would fairer admissions impact our society? On

July 26, join Governance Studies in the Brookings Institution for a webinar on college admissions reform. This event will focus on new research from Raj Chetty, David Deming, and John Friedman of Opportunity Insights that leverages big data on college admissions and outcomes to identify policy changes in higher education that could increase the socioeconomic diversity of America's leaders and increase upward mobility in the United States. Following a presentation from the Opportunity Insights team, panelists will discuss the implications of this new research and broader questions of college admissions reform.

- [CSIS: Spanish Elections & the Future of European Politics](#) – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 10:00 AM. Please join the CSIS Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 from 10am EDT to 11am EDT, for conversation between Max Bergmann, Charles Powell and Carlota García Encina, to discuss the recent elections in Spain and what the implications mean for the future of European politics.
- [CSIS: The Impossible State Live Podcast: A Week of Detention and Deterrence on the Korean Peninsula](#) – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 11:00 AM. What happened to the detained U.S. soldier in North Korea? Why did North Korea conduct missile tests? How will the Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) play out? Please join the Impossible State live podcast for a special discussion on the Korean Peninsula. The conversation is moderated by Dr. Victor Cha and featured Dr. Andrew Yeo, Senior Fellow and the SK-Korea Foundation Chair at the Brookings Institution's Center for East Asia Policy Studies. In this episode, they discuss a U.S. soldier who crossed into North Korea, two short-range ballistic missile tests conducted by North Korea, and the newly formed NCG between the United States and South Korea.
- [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: A Conversation With the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates From Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia](#) – Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 11:00 AM. Lasting peace in Ukraine will require justice and accountability. How can the world break the cycle of state repression, violence, and impunity that enabled Russia and its ally, Belarus, to launch their criminal war of aggression against Ukraine? Join the Carnegie Endowment, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize laureates for a conversation about human rights, historical memory, and accountability. The program will feature leaders from the Ukrainian Center for Civil Liberties and Russian human rights organization Memorial, as well as a representative of jailed Belarusian activist and director of the human rights organization Viasna, Ales Bialiatski. This event is being organized in partnership with eQualitie, a Canadian digital security organization focused on promoting free speech and human rights. The conversation will be moderated by CNN's Bianna Golodryga.
- [AEI: A Conversation with US Commerce Secretary Gina M. Raimondo and Sen. Todd Young \(R-IN\) on the Future of US Semiconductor Policy](#) – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: AEI, 2:00 PM. Computer chips are crucial to American national security. As we approach the one-year anniversary of the CHIPS and Science Act, how do policymakers view its implementation so far? How can policymakers boost domestic innovation and the manufacturing of computer chips? How do we ensure a reliable and secure supply chain, currently under threat by China? Join AEI's Derek Scissors and Chris Miller for a conversation with US Commerce Secretary Gina M. Raimondo and Sen. Todd Young (R-IN) to address these questions and explore a crucial aspect of US national and economic security. Following, a panel will continue the conversation. This event is part of AEI's "A New China Playbook," a series that seeks to highlight America's chance to exploit the Chinese Communist Party's failures and guard against an increasingly vulnerable, yet less predictable, China.
- [Atlantic Council: Guatemala's choice: A conversation with presidential candidate Bernardo Arévalo](#) – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 11:00 AM. The raid of the Movimiento Semilla party headquarters on Friday was the latest controversial move in a closely watched Guatemalan election. Bernardo Arévalo, who will contend in the second round on August 20, will represent Movimiento Semilla – a political option that emerged in response to demonstrations against widespread corruption uncovered by the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). Arévalo has served as a deputy in Congress since 2020 and has occupied multiple roles within Guatemala's foreign service, including minister counselor in Israel, ambassador to Spain, and deputy minister of foreign affairs. What are Arévalo's policy proposals to address Guatemala's political and economic reality? How can trust be restored in Guatemala's political and electoral systems? And what is needed from the international community in order to see a free and fair electoral process on August 20th?

- Atlantic Council: USAID Equitable AI Community of Practice workshop 2: Gender inclusive AI governance – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 10:00 AM. On Wednesday, July 26th, the Equitable AI Community of practice will host the second public webinar in its series, focusing on integrating gender equity into AI governance. This public, virtual workshop will feature a moderated panel discussion on inclusive AI governance, as well as multiple flash presentations from individuals speaking to the challenges and solutions to achieving equitable governance structures across multiple countries, including Zimbabwe and Peru. Following the brief presentations, there will be a moderated Q&A session for audience members.
- Wilson Center: The Current Challenges and Future of OSCE: A Conversation with OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Wilson Center, 11:00 AM. Over the last three decades, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has played a vital role in European security architecture and the rules based international order more broadly. However, the geopolitical tensions brought by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine have disrupted its work. Several major decisions, including the adoption of the organization’s budget and the extension of the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, have been blocked by Russia. This has raised the question of how can OSCE continue to contribute to peace and security in the region? Join us for a discussion with Helga Maria Schmid, the Secretary General of the OSCE, on current challenges facing the OSCE and how the Organization sees its future role in European and Eurasian security, including in post- conflict Ukraine. The discussion will be chaired by Ambassador (ret.) Philip Reeker, Chair of the Wilson Center’s Global Europe Program.
- Wilson Center: Argentina Elige: A Conversation with Diana Mondino, Senior Economic Adviser to Presidential Candidate Javier Milei – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Online Event, 12:30 PM. Argentina is the second-largest economy in South America, one of the world’s major food exporters, and a rapidly expanding producer of energy and minerals. Yet as it prepares to elect a new president, the country is struggling to address a formidable set of challenges, including triple-digit inflation, a slumping economy, high debt, and a shortage of hard currency made more severe by a historic drought. These conditions have led to frustration with the ruling Peronist coalition, now known as the Unión por la Patria, and provided an opening for the center-right opposition coalition, Juntos por el Cambio, to return to power. But strong anti-incumbent sentiment has also benefited the libertarian candidate Javier Milei. Milei, a lawmaker who rails against traditional political parties he derides as the “political caste,” promises radical solutions such as dollarization, sharp cuts to public spending, and privatizations. Though he is not the frontrunner, his unexpectedly competitive campaign has already influenced his competitors. To learn more about Milei’s economic platform and his prospects in the October election, please join the Wilson Center’s Latin America Program, in partnership with McLarty Associates, for a virtual dialogue with Diana Mondino, congressional candidate, senior economic adviser to Milei, and director of institutional relations at the Universidad del CEMA in Buenos Aires, on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, from 12:30pm to 1:30pm ET. This is the first event in the Latin America Program’s “Argentina Elige” series. Future conversations will feature senior economic advisers to the other leading candidates, Sergio Massa, Patricia Bullrich, and Horacio Rodríguez Larreta. The conversation will be in Spanish, with no interpretation available.
- Hudson Institute: Space and US National Security – Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Location: Hudson Institute, 2:00 PM. Space-based critical infrastructure is emerging as a vital area for national security. Join Hudson Senior Fellows Arthur Herman and Peter Huessy for a discussion on dual-use technologies, America’s industrial base, and the emerging role of commercial industry in space security. The panel will include Even Rogers, CEO of True Anomaly; Col. (ret.) Dean Bellamy, Executive Vice President, National Security Space, Redwire; Chris Shank, Vice President of Defense and Space Programs, Maxar; and Jason Kim, a senior policy analyst at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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