

Chicago Tribune



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SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2026

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Experts: Feds are 'masked monster'

Illinois panel hears testimony detailing officers' overreach

By Rebecca Johnson
Chicago Tribune

Author and journalist Garrett Graff once called Border Patrol the "Green Monster," America's most "out-of-control law enforcement agency."

On Friday, he testified that Border Patrol has only grown more menacing since writing about the agency in a 2014 Politico article, in large part because they have recently focused on policing the country's cities — such as Chicago — rather than the border.

"Today, we're creating something even more dangerous to our country, a masked monster of a law enforcement agency, one uniquely unsuited for its new power, authority, reach and funding levels," Graff said at the second public hearing of the Illinois Accountability Commission.

Gov. JB Pritzker launched the commission in October to scrutinize federal immigration agents' actions during Operation Midway Blitz, the monthslong aggressive immigration enforcement campaign waged in Chicago. Agents arrested thousands of immigrants, most of whom didn't have a criminal record, and repeatedly deployed tear gas and pepper spray during the operation.

"Unjustified" use of chemical crowd-control weapons was the commission's main topic of conversation at its December meeting. An ICE Accountability Project launched by former Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and a commission helmed by faith leaders are also attempting to publicly document agents' actions.

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■ Seven detained outside West Loop Target as protesters demand retailer stand against ICE. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

Senate OKs budget deal

Republican backlash to carved out DHS funds had threatened agreement to avoid shutdown

By Mary Clare Jalonick and Lisa Mascaro
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted Friday to fund most of the government through the end of

September after President Donald Trump made a deal with Democrats to carve out Homeland Security funding and allow Congress to debate new restrictions on federal immigration raids across the U.S.. With a weekend shutdown loom-

ing, Trump made the rare deal with Senate Democrats on Thursday in the wake of the deaths of two protesters at the hands of federal agents in Minneapolis. Under the agreement, the Homeland Security money will continue at current levels for two weeks while lawmakers consider Democratic demands to unmask agents, require more warrants and allow local authori-

ties to help investigate any incidents. The bill passed in a 71-29 vote. It will now head to the House, which is not due back until Monday. That means the government could be in a partial shutdown temporarily over the weekend until they pass it.

As lawmakers in both parties called for investigations into the

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Riverside rambling

A woman walks her dog during snowy weather along the Chicago Riverwalk on Friday. A burst of accumulating lake effect snow swept through the Chicago area, beginning in the morning and continuing along the lakefront and into Indiana by afternoon and evening. The storm spurred warnings from the National Weather Service, and was expected to bring localized snow totals in excess of 6 inches to parts of the lakefront, adding to what has been an unusually white winter in Chicagoland. As of Thursday afternoon, more than 28 inches of snowfall had been observed at O'Hare International Airport. This time last year, O'Hare had accumulated 9.9 inches of snow, putting accumulations to date nearly three times higher so far this winter.

JOSH BOLAND/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

ELECTION 2026 US SENATE



U.S. Senate candidates U.S. Reps. Robin Kelly, from left, Raja Krishnamoorthi and Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton prepare before their debate Thursday at WLS-Ch. 7. CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Dem hopefuls take differing lanes

By Rick Pearson and Dan Petrella
Chicago Tribune

The three leading Democratic candidates vying for the March 17 primary nomination to the U.S. Senate agree the nation is facing a constitutional crisis under Presi-

dent Donald Trump's leadership and each argues they would be best equipped to rein in his administration if elected to Washington.

But in an hourlong debate Thursday, small yet distinct differences emerged among U.S. Reps. Raja Krishnamoorthi of Schaumburg and Robin Kelly of Lynwood

and Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton.

Stratton repeated her lone call to "abolish" the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, while Krishnamoorthi called for ending "Trump's ICE" and Kelly, who launched an effort

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CTU alleges conspiracy to threaten bargaining

By Kate Armanini and Talia Soglin
Chicago Tribune

In an escalation of an ongoing turf war over low-wage school district employees, the Chicago Teachers Union has accused the Chicago Board of Education of conspiring with a rival union to undermine its bargaining unit.

The allegation is the latest example of ongoing acrimony between the two once-allied progressive labor unions, a fracture with major implications for city politics and for Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson. Local 73 of the Service Employees International Union called the accusation of conspiring with the boss "unfortunate, baseless, and unsupported by any evidence" and said its goal was only to improve the wages and working conditions of the workers.

A spokesperson for CPS said the district is "committed to transparent, good-faith

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INSIDE



RYAN PFLUGER/
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Actress brought 'light' to world

Actress Catherine O'Hara, who starred as the harried mother in two "Home Alone" movies and won an Emmy Award as the ditzy matriarch in "Schitt's Creek," died Friday at 71. **Nation & World in Business, Page 6**

HARVEY MAYOR DIES: Officials remember Clark as a dedicated public servant. **Chicagoland, Page 2**

JOURNALIST ARRESTED: Don Lemon faces charges after covering ICE protests in Minnesota. **Nation & World in Business, Page 4**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 25 Low 11

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 8

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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