

TODAYS TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

JUNE 28, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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A REPUBLIC IN FLUX: PARTISAN
WARFARE AND THE SHADOW OF
WAR LOOM OVER AMERICA'S 250TH
ANNIVERSARY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The United States marks its 250th year as a nation in a state of profound institutional volatility and ideological fragmentation. As the country prepares for the July 4th milestone, the second Trump administration is aggressively consolidating executive power, most notably through the **systemic "decapitation" of the Department of Justice (DOJ)** and the installation of loyalists in key security and regulatory roles. This domestic consolidation coincides with [Operation Epic Fury](#), a costly and increasingly controversial war against Iran that has reportedly cost [over \\$1 billion per day](#) and triggered record oil production outputs to stabilize prices. The administration is currently leveraging the passage of the **S.A.V.E. America Act** as a prerequisite for signing bipartisan domestic legislation, such as the [21st Century Road to Housing Bill](#), effectively bringing the legislative process to a standstill 130 days before the 2026 midterms.

The internal health of the nation is strained by a widening chasm between the executive branch and traditional norms. Critics allege the creation of a [\\$1.776 billion reparations fund](#) for January 6th participants signifies a total collapse of the rule of law, while the administration maintains it is correcting historic injustices. Simultaneously, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) continues its **counter-majoritarian trajectory**, facing intense scrutiny over the "emergency docket" and decisions that have significantly [eroded the Voting Rights Act](#). In the states, primary debates in Arizona and Minnesota reveal deep intra-party rifts: Republicans are divided between traditional fiscal conservatives and populist "warriors," while Democrats struggle to contain a [rising socialist insurgency](#) that threatens established leadership in urban strongholds like New York City.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Institutional Reconfiguration of the DOJ and FBI:** Under Director Kash Patel, the FBI has undergone a [wholesale removal of senior national security personnel](#) on the seventh floor, replaced by staff subjected to political loyalty tests. The Public Integrity Unit has been effectively neutralized following the [forced withdrawal of corruption charges](#) against high-profile allies like Mayor Eric Adams.

- **The Iran War and Global Energy Dynamics:** The administration reports a [record 19 million barrels of oil](#) moved through the Strait of Hormuz recently, citing this as proof of successful naval interdiction. However, the conflict is criticized by the opposition as an [unprecedented foreign policy blunder](#) that has left Iran stronger and drained the U.S. treasury.
- **Legislative Hostage-Taking over Election Law:** President Trump has refused to sign a bipartisan housing package [supported by 358 House members](#) until Congress passes the S.A.V.E. America Act, which would implement [national proof-of-citizenship requirements](#) for voter registration.
- **Middle East Diplomacy Realignments:** Secretary of State Marco Rubio oversaw the signing of a [trilateral peace framework](#) between Israel and Lebanon, aimed at restoring Lebanese sovereignty and marginalizing Iranian proxies like Hezbollah.
- **Commemoration of the Semi-Quincentennial:** The Smithsonian and Library of Congress have launched major exhibits for **America 250**, attempting to [reconcile the "founding contradictions"](#) of the Declaration of Independence with current social tensions [among youth and minority communities](#).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Operation Epic Fury continues to demand massive appropriations, with the Pentagon seeking an [additional \\$80 billion](#) for Middle East operations while domestic veterans' health programs face [billions in proposed cuts](#).
- The use of military and federal agents for domestic border operations remains a flashpoint, with reports of [ICE agents intimidating poll workers](#) in specific districts.

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The administration is pursuing "Peace through Strength," successfully mediating a [Lebanon-Israel framework](#) that explicitly excludes Iran.
- Critics argue that U.S. media is acting as a ["complicit lens"](#) by sanitizing the humanitarian impact of allied actions in Gaza.

Tech Sovereignty & AI

- The **AI WISE Act** has passed the House, aiming to use the Small Business Administration to [train small enterprises in AI usage](#) to keep pace with China and global corporations.
- Conflict persists over the proliferation of **data centers**; some Republican candidates emphasize their necessity for [national security and energy dominance](#), while others view them as a drain on [local water resources](#).

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- SCOTUS heard arguments in **Wolford v. Lopez**, a challenge to Hawaii's handgun regulations that [flips the presumption of consent](#) for carrying firearms on private property open to the public.
- Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson has publicly critiqued the [misuse of the "emergency docket"](#) to issue substantive rulings without full briefing, arguing it undermines public confidence.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Weaponization of History: As the nation approaches its 250th anniversary, history has become a primary battlefield. The administration's focus on **1776 as a singular, redemptive moment** contrasts sharply with scholarly and progressive efforts to highlight the [founding contradictions of slavery](#) and the [monarchy's complicity in the slave trade](#). This trend is evident in the push to ban "divisive concepts" like [Critical Race Theory](#) while simultaneously [utilizing Revolutionary War imagery](#) to recruit for agencies like ICE.

Executive Dominance vs. Parliamentary Decay: The transcripts reveal a Congress that is increasingly [ceding authority to the executive](#). The use of discharge petitions by the minority party and the President's use of pocket veto threats on bipartisan bills signal a breakdown in the legislative machinery. This "regime change" in the **imperial presidency** is further cemented by the [purging of career civil servants](#) in the DOJ and the **politicization of SCOTUS appointments**, making the judiciary a lagging but powerful indicator of the 2024 election's outcome.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Domestic stability is increasingly threatened by a loss of consensus on the **mechanics of democracy**. The debate over the S.A.V.E. America Act has shifted from policy to ["information warfare,"](#) with election experts warning that its implementation would [create mass disenfranchisement](#) for rural and elderly voters. This instability is reflected in the [Minnesota Senate Primary](#), where accusations of rampant welfare fraud and corporate PAC influence have turned the race "ugly." The **socialist insurgency within the Democratic Party** in New York, led by Mayor Mamdani, indicates that the center is not holding, and traditional leadership faces [direct challenges from within](#). On the right, a ["cancer" of rising anti-Semitism](#) is identified as an existential threat to the conservative coalition, complicating the "MAGA" populist mandate.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The U.S. frames the world as an **adversarial arena dominated by a zero-sum race with China**, particularly in AI and energy. The ["Epic Fury" campaign against Iran](#) is portrayed by the President as a necessary move to prevent an apocalypse, yet it has alienated allies and forced the U.S. into a [food-for-oil deal with the regime in Tehran](#). The "special relationship" with the UK is being [re-evaluated through a skeptical lens](#), focusing on historic grievances. Overall, the U.S. global posture is moving away from the liberal international order toward **bilateral, performance-based alliances** and an "Empire of Liberty" rhetoric that emphasizes [economic and technological dominance](#).

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic environment is characterized by a "supply-side" resurgence under Trump, though inflationary pressures persist and the national debt has hit a [critical threshold of \\$40 trillion](#). The administration touts [\\$19.2 trillion in domestic investment](#) over the last year, largely driven by companies fleeing foreign tariffs to build factories on U.S. soil. Market sentiment is increasingly [tracking gold prices](#) as a hedge against unpredictable geopolitical shocks.

- **Energy and Inflation:** Gas prices have [dropped by roughly \\$0.60](#) in recent weeks due to record U.S. output, though critics argue this is a temporary respite before an [expected October spike](#) orchestrated by Iran.
- **Agricultural Hardship:** Farmers face a [\\$50 billion trade deficit](#) inherited from the previous administration, with bankruptcies [rising 55%](#) before recent federal intervention. The President has promised an [\\$11 billion relief package](#).
- **Labor and Social Savings:** The **Trump Accounts** (newborn investment funds) seek to create a [new generation of capitalists](#) by seeding \$1,000 for every newborn to be invested in the S&P 500.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Personnel shifts indicate a consolidated loyalist core and a retreating "establishment" faction across both parties.

- **Kash Patel:** Ascendant as FBI Director, having [summarily dismissed the entire upper echelon](#) of career national security and counterintelligence officials.

- **Julia Letlow:** Emerges as a [major winner](#) after winning the GOP runoff in Louisiana, unseating incumbent Bill Cassidy and representing the complete MAGA takeover of the state party.
- **Hakeem Jeffries:** In a [precarious position](#); while poised to become Speaker if Democrats win, he faces [mounting threats](#) from the far-left "socialist" wing of his party in New York.
- **Ketanji Brown Jackson:** Acting as an ["insurgent" voice on the SCOTUS bench](#), using her memoir and public lectures to challenge the court's current procedural directions.
- **Bill Cassidy & Mitch McConnell:** Identified as [major losers](#) in the current environment, with the President publicly celebrating their departures or primary defeats.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

Lead Stories: The network emphasized the **America 250** anniversary through a barrage of historical features, museum tours, and essays on past leaders like [Rutherford B. Hayes](#) and [Ulysses Grant](#). This celebratory/educational tone served to soften the harder political news of the **Iran War** and the [politicization of the DOJ](#).

Buried Stories: The [ICE intimidation of poll workers](#) and the details of the [\\$80 billion additional war spending request](#) were presented with less urgency than the [Arizona and Minnesota primary bickering](#).

Conspicuous Omissions: While the transcripts discuss the "death of the old order," there was a **notable lack of coverage on the specific legal reasoning** behind the

withdrawal of charges against Eric Adams or the **evidentiary basis** for the proposed \$1.8 billion fund for Jan 6 participants. The network also avoided detailing the **actual ground conditions in Iran** beyond energy shipment statistics.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The world is increasingly viewed through a lens of **neo-imperial competition** where the U.S. is the "indispensable man" but only through aggressive unilateralism.

- **Iran:** Portrayed as an existential, ["apocalyptic" foe](#) that cannot be negotiated with, only "beaten into the sea." Implicitly framed as [incompetent but dangerous](#) for using children as human shields.
- **China:** Framed as a [formidable peer-competitor](#) in the "two-boat race" for AI and energy dominance. Characterized as [corrupt](#) for trying to stop U.S. data center development through disinformation.
- **Israel:** Portrayed as the ["future" of U.S. security](#), a stable partner in a chaotic region, and a world leader in AI and missile defense.
- **Europe:** Implicitly framed as [weak and in decline](#) for its inability to produce start-ups or defend itself without U.S./Israeli technology.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Narrative Seeding:** The administration is seeding the narrative that the 2026 midterms [will be stolen](#) without the passage of the S.A.V.E. America Act, creating a preemptive rationale for contesting results.

- **Media Complicity:** Critics argue that established media is ["normalizing genocide"](#) in Gaza by using passive language and ignoring the ["censorship by murder"](#) of 240 Palestinian journalists.
- **AI Disinformation:** Republican candidates in Arizona warn of [Chinese-backed disinformation](#) campaigns targeting U.S. energy infrastructure and data center construction.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Total Executive Control of Elections:** The executive order attempting to establish a [national voter list](#) through DHS and USPS suggests a move toward federalizing election administration, likely to be litigated up to the SCOTUS before November.
- **The Collapse of the Democratic Center:** The "Mamdani Kingmaker" moment in New York [hypothesizes a broader party split](#) that could mirror the 1968 convention's chaos as the midterms approach.
- **Expansion of the Iran War:** GOP hardliners suggest the U.S. [must "finish the job"](#) in Tehran before the midterms to prevent an Iranian-orchestrated October surprise in the oil markets.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- The President's decision on the **pocket veto** of the housing bill will likely trigger [intense social unrest](#) or a government shutdown over the S.A.V.E. Act.

- Immediate Fallout from the [DOJ's settlement with the President](#) over his tax records will lead to new articles of impeachment or congressional subpoenas.

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- The 2026 midterms will be characterized by [widespread use of AI deepfakes](#) in political advertising, further eroding trust in institutions.
- Implementation of [Medicaid work requirements](#) in states like Idaho will test the capacity of state systems to manage "economic mobility" programs.

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- The [Trump Accounts](#) will begin to structurally alter U.S. wealth distribution, creating a "nation of owners" less susceptible to socialist rhetoric but more dependent on equity market performance.
- The U.S. will likely [supersede China in AI development](#) if the "light touch" regulation and energy dominance strategies are successfully implemented.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Election Legitimacy Crisis:** The persistent seeding of "fraud" narratives combined with [new registration burdens](#) could lead to a contested midterm result. **Triggers:** Narrow margins in swing states and delayed mail-in results. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Catastrophic social unrest and possible second constitutional convention. **Mitigations:** Bipartisan certification oversight and clear SCOTUS procedural rules.

- **Regional Escalation in the Middle East:** The Iran conflict may expand if the [Lebanon-Israel framework](#) is rejected by proxies. **Triggers:** Hezbollah drone strikes or Iranian blockade of the Strait. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Global oil shock and full-scale regional war. **Mitigations:** Swift diplomatic formalization of the trilateral agreement.
- **DOJ Moral Collapse:** The exodus of [4,000 federal prosecutors](#) and the weaponization of the civil rights division. **Triggers:** More forced resignations and loyalty tests. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Loss of state capacity to prosecute non-political crimes and total institutional decay. **Mitigations:** Civil service protection legislation.
- **Cyber-AI Infrastructure Failure:** Over-reliance on [vulnerable data centers](#) and AI-driven decision-making. **Triggers:** Targeted CCP cyberattacks on U.S. energy nodes. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Economic paralysis and loss of "information sovereignty." **Mitigations:** National scale wastewater/biometric security protocols.
- **Hyper-Polarization of the Military:** Pressure on senior officers to [align with political factions](#). **Triggers:** Direct orders to deploy troops to polling stations. **Likelihood:** Low to Moderate. **Impact:** Collapse of civil-military relations and potential military fracture. **Mitigations:** Strong adherence to the Grant model of duty over loyalty.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Ground Truth in Tehran:** Broadcasts lack a **civilian perspective from inside Iran**, making it impossible to assess if the U.S. strategy of "Epic Fury" is actually undermining or strengthening the regime's domestic support.

- **The "\$1.8 Billion Fund" Logistics:** There is a total lack of detail on the **actual disbursement criteria** for the January 6th reparations fund, leaving a void where disinformation regarding "slush funds" can flourish.
- **VRA Gutting Impact:** While "eroding" is mentioned, the **precise geographic impact** of recent SCOTUS decisions on majority-black districts in the South remains unquantified in the transcripts.
- **The 2% No-Vote in the Farm Belt:** The President mentions [98% of the farmer vote](#); there is zero analysis of what the 2% opposition represents or if it signals a growing rural dissatisfaction with tariff volatility.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "Potemkin" Economic Boom: mainstream narratives tout \$19 trillion in investment, but a contrarian view suggests this is "flight capital" from a fracturing global system, not sustainable growth. The record oil production may be a **desperate draw-down of strategic reserves** disguised as production capacity to maintain a veneer of strength before a midterm energy crash.

The "Controlled Opposition" Hypothesis: The rising socialist insurgency in the Democratic party may be a **deliberate psy-op** or narrative seeding by the administration's allies to brand the entire opposition as "communist lunatics," effectively narrowing the "choice" for suburban moderates to MAGA or Marxists.

Black Swan Event: An Iranian-backed [AI "identity theft" attack](#) on the U.S. financial system or a massive ["supernatural" climate event](#) during the 250th anniversary

celebrations that paralyzes D.C. infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Prepare for the possibility of [catastrophic economic shocks](#) if the Iran war continues past the summer.
- **Economic:** States should aggressively pursue [merit-based immigration](#) for skilled labor to offset the national "closed border" stagnation.
- **Diplomatic:** Use the [Lebanon peace framework](#) as a template to peel away other regional actors from the Iranian sphere of influence.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chains:** Factor in [tariff-induced "return to America"](#) trends, but mitigate against a shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz in Q4 2026.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Develop internal [AI safety guardrails](#) now, as state-level patchwork regulation (e.g., in Arizona/Maryland) is imminent in the federal vacuum.
- **Capital Allocation:** Hedge against [market volatility](#) using gold and S&P 500 benchmarks that will be influenced by the massive influx of [Trump Account](#) capital starting July 4th.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Congressional activity is dominated by a stalemate between a **Presidential push for national election overhaul** and the minority's attempt to force domestic

spending. The use of discharge petitions has become the only way for the minority to bypass the [hardline blockade](#) of the House floor.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**

- **S.A.V.E. America Act:** A national election bill requiring [in-person proof of citizenship](#) for all new voter registrations. (Strategic intent: Nationalize election policy).
- **21st Century Road to Housing Bill:** A bipartisan package aimed at [increasing housing supply](#) and reducing red tape. Currently stalled by the President.
- **AI WISE Act:** Directs the SBA to provide [AI training modules](#) to small businesses to combat global competition.
- **Major Richard Starr Act:** Ensures [disability benefits](#) for wounded veterans regardless of retirement duration.
- **The Millstone Act:** Seeks to impose the [death penalty](#) for federal crimes involving the abuse of children.
- **Militia Act of 1862 (Historical Analysis):** Discussed in the context of [integrating black troops](#) and changing civil rights paradigms.

- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**

- **House Democratic Meeting on Election Threats:** Led by Leader Jeffries to [assess Trump's "assault"](#) on the 2026 midterms.
- **Trump Dinner with American Farmers:** A platform to [announce agricultural relief](#) and energy dominance statistics.
- **Arizona and Minnesota Primary Debates:** Highlighting the [fractured nature of party coalitions in competitive states](#).

KEY STORIES

- **DOJ "Decapitation":** Kash Patel oversees the removal of career FBI leaders as the President [withdraws corruption charges](#) against Mayor Eric Adams.
- **The \$1.8 Billion "Rioter" Fund:** Discovery of a massive [settlement fund](#) for January 6th participants, framed as reparations by the administration and corruption by the opposition.
- **Iran War Costs:** Operation Epic Fury reportedly consuming [\\$1 billion a day](#) while triggering record-breaking U.S. oil exports.
- **Israel-Lebanon Framework:** Secretary Rubio signs a [historic peace document](#) to end Hezbollah dominance in northern Lebanon.
- **Obama Presidential Center Dedication:** The 44th President calls for a ["declaration of faith"](#) in democracy as his center opens in Chicago.
- **S.A.V.E. Act Standoff:** The President holds up [middle-class housing relief](#) to force new national voting restrictions.
- **Hawaii Handgun Case (Wolford v. Lopez):** SCOTUS oral arguments on whether [property owners must explicitly consent](#) to guns on their premises.
- **Minnesota Senate Primary Clash:** Angie Craig and Peggy Flanagan engage in a [hostile debate](#) over welfare fraud and AI deepfake ads.
- **NASA Spacewalk:** Successful repair of a [robotic arm joint](#) on the ISS, highlighting efforts to extend the station's life.
- **Arizona GOP Primary:** Republican candidates debate [AI data centers](#) vs. water security in one of the nation's closest swing districts.

- **Go-Go Museum Opening:** A cultural landmark in DC celebrates 50 years of music as a [force for social change](#).
- **Historical Reassessments (America 250):** New books released on [Mary Todd Lincoln](#), the [monarchy's slave ties](#), and [Revolutionary War religion](#).
- **Sanitation Strike 60th Anniversary:** Congressman Clyburn and others mark the [1966 "March on Ballot Boxes"](#) and the persistence of nonviolence.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Trends On Capitol Hill is a public interest experiment in applying deep trend analysis to the daily business of the United States Congress to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists, scholars and Congressional staff better understand the overarching legislative trends, themes and patterns of Congress.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's Congressional activity to tease out its overarching themes and trends into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original source material, allowing

journalists and scholars to understand the legislative themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

This inaugural report is based on deep analysis of CSPAN, CSPAN2 and CSPAN3 coverage in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive. It is currently limited to the Congressional business covered on those three CSPAN channels and thus may not include all major Congressional business, may include activity from previous days that aired on a later date, and/or may include other major federal, state and local governmental business. We will continue to refine this report to incorporate a growing array of Congressional information sources. This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

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