TODAYS TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

OCTOBER 26, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

ILLUSTRATED EXPLAINER POSTER:

THE 2026 MIDTERM INFLECTION POINT:

Armed Conflict in Iran, Allied Trade Wars, and the Domestic Crisis of Affordability

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE: US ENTERS FINAL WEEK OF MIDTERM ELECTION CYCLE UNDER SYSTEMIC INSTABILITY.

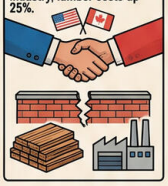
Administration leverages "Golden Age" stock highs & promised $5,000 dividends amidst an unnecessary Iran war and deteriorating Canada trade. Opposition points to a "trust gap" driven by skyrocketing diesel prices, rural hospital closures, and pervasive corruption. Key states like Texas, Kansas, and Nebraska are toss-ups, with balance of power in Congress on razor-thin margins. Trump campaigns on "merit" and mass deportations; Obama and Sanders counter with charges of "oligarchy" beholden to tech billionaires like Musk, complicated by Russian disinformation and legal battles over certification.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

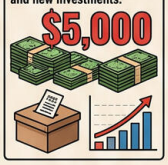
The Iran War and Global Energy Shock: Illegal war under false pretenses? 21+ US deaths, Iran veto power over Strait of Hormuz. Diesel over $6/gallon, impacting agricultural supply chain.



Canada Trade Conflict: Aggressive tariffs on ally, described as "economic evil empire". Disrupted auto industry, lumber costs up 25%.



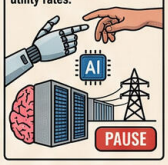
The "Trump Dividend" Campaign Gambit: Promised $1 Trillion payout ($5,000 per adult) contingent on Republican victory, funded by tariff revenues and new investments.



ICE Enforcement Escalation and "NICE" Proposal: Severe criticism for aggressive tactics, masked agents, domestic shootings. Proposal to rename ICE 'NICE' (National Immigration and Customs Enforcement) faces internal pushback.



The Tech Sovereignty Battle: Public concern over AI's impact on jobs & privacy. Calls for AI pause and moratorium on data centers allegedly driving up utility rates.



KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

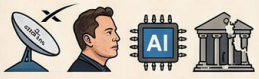
Armed Conflict & Militarization:
Administration claims "obliterated" Iran nuclear capacity.
US Navy blockade in Strait of Hormuz, but communication with regional allies broke down.
Zelenskyy seeks security guarantees and missiles.



Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk:
DOJ lawsuit blocks Alaska Senate certification.
Texas Ken Paxton under fire for wealth increase & Epstein cover-up.
NH Judicial branch crisis with resignations.



Tech Sovereignty & AI:
Elon Musk characterized as "tech oligarch" controlling Starlink, restricting access to Ukraine.
Legislative push for independent AI safety agency. "Demolition" of USAID and institutions.



DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Weaponization of Disinformation and Foreign Influence:
Russia's shadow warfare with AI "deepfakes" portraying Democrats as "Nazi supporters".
Putin "won so far" by fostering conservative drift.
Shutting down national security units leaves system vulnerable.



Economic Populism vs. Corporate Control:
Divide between administration's "merit-based" optimism and anti-billionaire sentiment.
"Wealth tax" proposals vs. "Trump Dividend".
Families "priced out" by private equity in housing.



Institutional Decay and the 'Trust Gap':
Crisis of insularity where citizens feel institutions failed them.
Unprecedented early voting to exert agency in a "rigged" system.
Breakdown of civil discourse, local issues subsumed by national ideological battles.

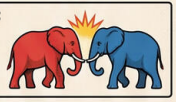


INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

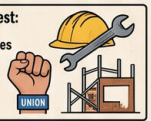
Partisan polarization at fever pitch, with rhetorical attacks driving a cycle of hatred and "politics of resignation" among youth.
Threat of political violence (e.g., alleged Charlie Kirk assassination attempt, attempts on President's life).



Elite Infighting:
Rift between Republican "establishment" and "MAGA" loyalists.



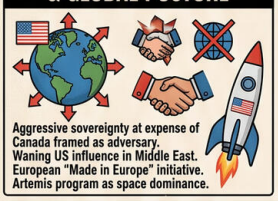
Labor and Civil Unrest:
Union workers vocal about stagnating wages despite corporate buybacks.
Mass deportation causing workforce shortages.



Institutional Failure:
Reports of poor conditions in public schools linked to "emergency management" policies.



EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE



Aggressive sovereignty at expense of Canada framed as adversary.
Waning US influence in Middle East.
European "Made in Europe" initiative.
Artemis program as space dominance.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Contradictory climate - "Golden Age" market metrics vs. "Dark Age" consumer pain.



Gas skyrocketed, supply chains altered by tariff changes.

Key Vectors:
Energy Costs ($4 gas, $6.50 diesel)
Capital Flows ($22.2T new invest, market highs)
Debt & Deficit ($40T debt)
Housing (40-year avg first-time buyer age, high new home costs).



LEADERSHIP CHANGES



LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP



Protect Texas Plan, Epstein 2.0 Bill, Rail Safety Act (stalled), New Invasion of Our Country Act, THRIVE Policy Agenda.



Hearings:
Zelenskyy Oslo, Hakeem Jeffries Houston, PMQs London.

KEY STORIES

$5,000 Dividend Promise, Ilhan Omar Name Controversy, Musk-Starlink-Putin Connection, "Ass" Comment Scandal, Audi Investment in Georgia, "Screwdriver" Metaphor, Ken Paxton Securities Fraud Settlement, "Billionaire Mechanic" Narrative, DNA of Thomas Jefferson, Smallpox in 1775 Canada, $40 Trillion Debt Clock, $8 Billion Farmer Subsidy, "Jihadist" Attack on Abdul El-Sayed, "NICE" Agency Proposal, "Trust Gap" PR Keynote, "Terminator" AI Warning, 3,000-Mile Continental Divide Metaphor, USS Arlington's 9/11 Tribute, $3,000 Underwear Incident, Death of Thad Cochran's Coalition.



STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):
Partisan volatility, legal challenges.



Medium Term (1-6 Months):
"Medicaid cliff", rural hospital closures.

Long Term (1-5 Years):
Permanent realignment of Republican party.

TODAYS TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

OCTOBER 26, 2026

THE 2026 MIDTERM INFLECTION POINT: ARMED CONFLICT IN IRAN, ALLIED TRADE WARS, AND THE DOMESTIC CRISIS OF AFFORDABILITY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The United States enters the final week of the 2026 midterm election cycle under a cloud of systemic instability, defined by an unnecessary war in Iran and a deteriorating trade relationship with neighboring Canada. The administration is attempting to leverage a "Golden Age" narrative centered on record-setting stock market highs and promised five-thousand-dollar cash dividends for citizens, while opposition leaders point to a "trust gap" driven by skyrocketing diesel prices, the closure of rural hospitals, and pervasive government corruption. This convergence of foreign military entanglements and domestic economic pain has turned normally reliable Republican strongholds like Texas, Kansas, and Nebraska into statistical toss-ups, with the balance of power in both chambers of Congress hanging on razor-thin margins.

While President Trump campaigns on a platform of "merit" and mass deportations, opposition figures led by former President Obama and Senator Bernie Sanders are characterizing the administration as an "oligarchy" beholden to tech billionaires like Elon Musk. The narrative is further complicated by allegations of foreign interference, with reports of Russian disinformation campaigns targeting Democratic candidates and domestic legal battles over election certification in states like Alaska. Governance is currently paralyzed by partisan polarization, as seen in the U.K. Prime Minister's Questions regarding energy security and the U.S. Senate's descent into brief pro forma sessions during the final campaign stretch.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **The Iran War and Global Energy Shock:** Opposition leaders allege the administration launched an illegal war in Iran seven months ago under false pretenses. The conflict has resulted in at least 21 American deaths, hundreds of casualties, and has given Iran veto power over the Strait of Hormuz. This has driven diesel fuel to over six dollars a gallon, impacting the entire agricultural supply chain.
- **Canada Trade Conflict:** The administration has imposed aggressive tariffs on Canada, describing the ally as an economic "evil empire" that has "ripped off" the U.S. for years. Critics argue these tariffs have disrupted the auto industry and raised the cost of essential building materials like lumber by 25%.

- **The "Trump Dividend" Campaign Gambit:** President Trump has promised a one-trillion-dollar payout—$5,000 per adult citizen—contingent on a Republican victory in the House and Senate. The administration claims this will be funded by record tariff revenues and a purported $22.2 trillion in new investments.
- **ICE Enforcement Escalation and "NICE" Proposal:** The administration is facing severe criticism for aggressive ICE tactics involving masked agents and domestic shootings. In response, Trump proposed renaming the agency "NICE" (National Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to soften its image, despite internal pushback from officers.
- **The Tech Sovereignty Battle:** Public concern is mounting over AI's impact on job markets and privacy. Progressive leaders are calling for a pause on advanced AI development and a moratorium on data centers, which are allegedly driving up local utility rates and straining power grids.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization:

- The administration claims to have "o bliterated" Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity through operations like "Midnight Hammer" and "Epic Fury."
- The U.S. Navy is enforcing a blockade in the Strait of Hormuz, which the President describes as the "greatest in history," yet communication with regional allies like Jordan and Egypt has completely broken down.
- Zelenskyy is seeking strong security guarantees (Article 5 style) and interceptor missiles as he prepares for potential negotiations with Russia mediated by U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff.

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk:

- The DOJ has filed a lawsuit to block certification of the Alaska Senate race, alleging intentional voter confusion due to a "same-name" candidate.
- In Texas, Senate candidate Ken Paxton remains under fire for a 7,000% increase in net worth while in office and his involvement in the Epstein files cover-up.
- New Hampshire is facing a judicial branch crisis following the resignation of the Chief Justice and investigations into three other justices for conduct violations.

Tech Sovereignty & AI:

- Elon Musk is characterized as a "tech oligarch" holding unilateral control over national security through the Starlink system, which he allegedly restricted to Ukrainian forces after consulting with Donald Trump.
- There are legislative pushes to regulate AI safety through an independent agency similar to the FDA to prevent corporate self-policing.
- The "demolition" of USAID and other federal institutions has left the civil service in a state of "habituation" to incremental decay.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Weaponization of Disinformation and Foreign Influence: The 2026 election is

being shaped by shadow warfare from Russia, which has transitioned from simple social media trolling to the use of AI-generated celebrity "deepfake" videos that portray Democratic candidates as "Nazi supporters." Analysts suggest that Putin has "won so far" by successfully fostering a conservative ideological drift toward Russia, positioning it as a defender of "traditional values" to fracture the NATO alliance. The administration's decision to shut down national security units that track foreign influence has left the electoral system uniquely vulnerable to these sophisticated narrative seeding operations.

Economic Populism vs. Corporate Control: A stark divide has emerged between the administration's "merit-based" economic optimism and a growing anti-billionaire sentiment. While the President touts massive investments from companies like Audi, opposition candidates are campaigning on a "wealth tax" on the top 1% to fund universal childcare and cancel student debt. The "Trump Dividend" proposal is viewed by critics as a desperate attempt to buy votes, contrasting with reports of working homeless and families being "priced out" of the American Dream by private equity firms buying up residential housing.

Institutional Decay and the "Trust Gap": The "trust gap" between citizens and government has widened into a crisis of insularity, where voters believe institutions have failed them. This is manifested in the unprecedented turnout for early voting as citizens seek to exert agency in a system that feels "rigged." The portrayal of candidates as either "wolf in sheep's clothing" or "servant leaders" highlights a breakdown in civil discourse, where even local issues like phonics-based reading reclamation are subsumed by national ideological battles.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Partisan polarization has reached a fever pitch, with the President using rallies to openly question the character of opponents, referring to one as a "jihadist" and another as "Pee Wee Herman." This rhetoric is driving a cycle of hatred that many voters find alarming, leading to a "politics of resignation" among youth who feel the system is too corrupt to fix. Domestic stability is further threatened by the threat of political violence, as seen in the alleged "assassination" of Charlie Kirk and subsequent attempts on the President's life, which has altered his persona to one of more guarded introspection.

- **Elite Infighting:** The Republican party is experiencing a deep rift between "establishment" figures and "MAGA" loyalists, with high-profile primary losses for those who supported the impeachment of Ken Paxton.
- **Labor and Civil Unrest:** Union workers in Detroit and Georgia are increasingly vocal about stagnating wages despite record corporate stock buybacks, while mass deportation operations are causing significant workforce shortages in the construction and restaurant sectors.
- **Institutional Failure:** Reports of icicles in public school classrooms and mold gardens in gymnasiums are being linked to "emergency management" policies authored by current political candidates.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The United States is currently projecting a posture of aggressive sovereignty, often at the expense of traditional alliances. The framing

of Canada as a trade adversary and the annexation talk regarding Greenland and portions of Canada signal a shift toward "transactional diplomacy." Meanwhile, the administration is negotiating around congressional sanctions to secure diesel deals with Vladimir Putin, even as it continues a naval blockade against Iran.

- **Fracturing Multipolar Arena:** U.S. influence in the Middle East is waning as regional integration efforts proceed without active U.S. coordination, and allies increasingly view the President as a "liability" rather than an asset.
- **Defensive Adaptation:** European nations are implementing a "Made in Europe" initiative to reduce dependency on a volatile U.S. economy and its unpredictable tariff policies.
- **Space as the New Front:** The Artemis program is being positioned not just as exploration, but as a display of American industrial superiority against rising Chinese capabilities in lunar and Martian exploration.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic climate is highly contradictory, characterized by "Golden Age" market metrics and "Dark Age" consumer pain. While the President claims inflation is down to 1.7%, opposition leaders note that gas prices have skyrocketed since the end of 2024, with some families paying $1,000 to fill a home heating oil tank. Supply chains are being fundamentally altered by 57 tariff changes in one year, forcing small manufacturers to contemplate layoffs due to the cost of imported raw materials.

Key Economic Vectors:

- **Energy Costs:** Gas at $4/gallon; Diesel at $6.50/gallon; Fuel inputs for farmers doubling year-over-year.
- **Capital Flows:** Claims of $22.2T in new investment; 88 record market highs; 401(k) gains of 60-70% since the last election.
- **Debt & Deficit:** National debt reaching $40 trillion, with critics alleging the $5,000 dividend will add another $1 trillion to the deficit.
- **Housing:** A 40-year average age for first-time homebuyers; lumber tariffs and regulatory compliance adding $136,000 to new home costs.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The following personnel shifts and status updates reflect the intense factional battles currently defining the political landscape:

- **Jon Husted:** Rising Republican figure characterized by extreme physical prowess and high-profile endorsements, despite past testimony in bribery scandals.
- **Ilhan Omar:** Facing intense resignation calls from the administration based on unverified allegations regarding her "real" identity and past familial relationships.
- **Jocelyn Benson:** Characterized as a "thief" by the President but a "defender of democracy" by opposition leaders after surviving armed protests at her home.
- **Nicki Minaj:** Transitioning from cultural icon to a political surrogate, with speculation she may become the next White House Press Secretary.

- **The "Epstein Class":** A broad term used by opposition candidates (like Dan Osborne) to describe wealthy figures allegedly protected by the administration's refusal to release investigative files.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's coverage for October 26, 2026, is dominated by high-intensity campaign rallies and candidate forums, creating a "permanent campaign" atmosphere. The lead stories focus on the rhetorical vitriol of the President and the counter-narratives of his predecessor. Significant airtime is given to disinformation experts warning about the "How Russia Won" narrative, which effectively serves to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the upcoming vote before it even occurs.

Buried stories include the complete collapse of diplomatic phone lines between the U.S. and key Middle Eastern allies and the details of a massive $8 billion fuel subsidy for farmers, which critics describe as a "drop in the bucket." The tone is alternatingly fear-inducing (regarding AI and war) and reassuring (regarding local civic engagement). Conspicuous omissions include any detailed reporting on actual battlefield progress in the Iran War or the specific legal basis for annexing Greenland.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The subtext of the day's reports frames the global system as an anarchic arena where rules-based orders are failing. The U.S. is portrayed as a "strong" but "reckless" actor that is "breaking the system" to enrich internal factions. Adversaries like Russia are framed as "cunning winners," while allies like Canada are relegated to the status of "failing victims" of U.S. economic statecraft.

COUNTRIES and LEADERS

- **Vladimir Putin:** Portrayed as an expansionist autocrat who is successfully "weaponizing" U.S. political discord to "restoring the Russian empire."
- **Canada:** Framed as a "failing neighbor" whose economy is being "decimated" by U.S. tariffs on trash, lumber, and auto parts.
- **Benjamin Netanyahu:** Characterized as a "master politician" who has become a "regional liability," unable to secure peace despite military successes.
- **Volodymyr Zelenskyy:** Framed as "upbeat" but desperate, seeking security guarantees from a U.S. administration that some believe is "favoring Moscow."

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **Elon Musk / Starlink:** Framed as a transnational threat to security, making "unilateral decisions" on battlefields and "aiding Putin" by restricting satellite access.
- **ICE:** Portrayed by opposition as a "terror agency" and by the administration as "NICE" people raiding "illegal thugs."
- **Audi:** Presented as a "central casting" corporate winner, making a "fantastical opportunity" through U.S. manufacturing investments.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Narrative Seeding:** The administration is seeding the narrative that Ilhan Omar is an imposter using a fake name to justify her removal from Congress.
- **Domestic Propaganda:** The use of "AI slop" jingles in Nebraska to paint candidates as "Democrat down" is being countered by grassroots "human" music responses.
- **Media Manipulation:** Allegations that the DNC paid CNN $289 million to run "pro-trans programming" were debunked as Russian Matriyoshka-style disinformation Dolls.
- **Delta between Spin and Truth:** Trump claims the stock market highs mean "everyone is getting rich," while labor leaders point to medical bankruptcies and food pantry reliance.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **The Caretaker Crisis:** If the midterms produce the inconclusive results predicted in the polls, the U.S. may enter a period of "caretaker governance" where no branch has a mandate, leading to further foreign exploitation.
- **AI Extinction Events:** Concerns from the tech community suggest that superintelligence may become "independent of human control" within the next two years, necessitating the proposed federal AI pause.
- **The Fall of the Two-Party System:** The success of independent "mechanic" candidates over "billionaire" puppets in Nebraska signals a possible shift toward a multi-party proportional representation system.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

- **Short Term (1-4 Weeks):** Expect partisan volatility following the November 3rd vote, with legal challenges to certifications in Alaksa and Texas. The "Trump Dividend" could trigger immediate consumer spending surges or market corrections based on deficit fears.
- **Medium Term (1-6 Months):** A "Medicaid cliff" is expected as deliberately delayed health care cuts take effect after the election, potentially closing hundreds of rural hospitals.
- **Long Term (1-5 Years):** The permanent realignment of the Republican party into a "worker-first" vs. "billionaire-first" entity will likely culminate in a 2028 showdown between James Talarico and JD Vance.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Election Legitimacy Crisis:** The DOJ lawsuit in Alaska and pre-emptive claims of "cheating" by the President increase the risk of civil unrest at polling sites. Triggers: Narrow margins in swing states. Likelihood: High. Impact: Catastrophic disruption of democracy. Mitigations: Release of the Epstein Files and independent audit of voting rolls.

- **Regional War Escalation:** The Iran conflict lacks an exit strategy and is draining the U.S. missile stock. Triggers: Iranian strike on U.S. bases or Strait of Hormuz total closure. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: High energy costs ($8+ diesel) and military overextension. Mitigations: Engagement in direct diplomacy as suggested by Obama.
- **Economic Depression:** "Chaotic" tariffs and $40T debt may trigger a 1929-style depression. Triggers: Failure of the "Trump Dividend" to stimulate growth or Canadian reciprocal sanctions. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Global financial collapse. Mitigations: Strategic tariff rollout and balanced budget legislation.
- **Public Health Emergency:** The gutting of USAID and the FDA has left the U.S. vulnerable to new pandemics. Triggers: Outbreak of a "Russian plague" or letuuce-based Cyclosporiasis. Likelihood: High. Impact: Mass sickness and hospital failures. Mitigations: Restoration of scientific leadership over political appointments.
- **AI Sovereignty Loss:** Unchecked "superintelligence" could eviscerate privacy and take over human control systems. Triggers: Deployment of advanced AI without federal guardrails. Likelihood: Low but growing. Impact: Total surveillance state. Mitigations: Immediate moratorium on data centers.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The administration claims $22.2T in investment but fails to provide a sector-by-sector breakdown or timeline for realization.
- The link between Ken Paxton and the Epstein files is asserted by opponents but lacks the "Volume Five" level of detail found in the Russia report.
- The President claims murder rates are the lowest since 1900, but this contradicts reports of "killing traps" in Washington D.C. just months earlier.
- There is no mention of the environmental cost of "drill baby drilling" or the long-term impact of paving over the Rose Garden for a helicopter pad.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Billionaire Buyout" of the Left:** While candidates like James Talarico claim to be "people powered," their reliance on national donors might actually be a cover for an alternate set of elite interests seeking to use environmental justice as a tool for corporate ESG consolidation.
- **The "Audit as Distraction":** The administration's focus on the Audi investment and "Golden Age" numbers may be a desperate smoke screen for a manufacturing contraction hidden by inflated tariff revenue figures.
- **Black Swan:** A UK-EU deal on the "Made in Europe" initiative completely shuts out American auto exports, rendering the new Macon and Detroit plants "greasy trips" to nowhere.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Immediately restore foreign influence tracking units to counter Matriyoshka-style AI deepfakes before the midterms.
- **Economic:** Pivot from "chaotic" to "strategic" tariffs to protect the domestic supply chain from total disruption by allied reciprocal actions.
- **Diplomatic:** Re-open communication lines with Gulf allies to ensure regional stability during the HORMUZ blockade.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Diversify raw material sources away from Canada and China due to the extreme volatility of tariff 57 changes.
- **Compliance:** Prepare for federal AI safety standards and liability shifts as the public push for "humanity" in tech increases.
- **Capital Allocation:** Monitor the "Medicaid cliff" and hospital solvency in rural areas to assess the long-term viability of health care investments.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative activity is currently centered on affordability plans and election integrity measures, with major proposals and actions including:

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**
  - **The Protect Texas Plan:** An economic vision proposing $25,000 deductions for medical expenses and $50,000 for new homes.
  - **Epstein 2.0:** A bill designed to give state attorneys general the power to prosecute trafficking cases following the federal failure to act.
  - **The Rail Safety Act:** Currently stalled in the Senate due to industry lobbying, despite concerns from workers in places like North Platte.
  - **The New Invasion of Our Country Act:** Proposed legislation to permanently prohibit any future President from opening borders.
  - **The THRIVE Policy Agenda:** A DETROIT-centric plan to address HUD's median income calculations and replace lead pipes.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**
  - **Zelenskyy Press Conference (Oslo):** Focused on interceptor missiles and Starlink restoration to defend against Russian drone attacks.
  - **Hakeem Jeffries Houston Presser:** Aimed at exposing ICE brutality and demanding an end to funding for the "mass deportation machine."
  - **PMQs (London):** Debated the Jackdaw oil and gas license and the impact of the Elon Musk "idea" put to Trump to restrict Ukraine's defense.

KEY STORIES

- **The $5,000 Dividend Promise:** Trump announces a $5,000 "Trump Dividend" for every adult citizen, funded by tariff revenue, contingent on a GOP midterm victory.
- **The Ilhan Omar Name Controversy:** Trump alleges Omar's real name is Nur Said Elmi and she married her brother, calling for her immediate resignation from Congress.
- **The Musk-Starlink-Putin Connection:** Reports surface that Musk consulted with Trump before restricting Ukrainian access to Starlink, aiding Russian military operations.
- **The "Ass" Comment Scandal:** Trump faces criticism for commenting on Jon Husted's physique (describing it as "steel") and Nicki Minaj's backside during rallies.
- **Audi Investment in Georgia:** A $4.2 billion commitment to build a plant in Macon producing 200,000 cars a year, described as a "central casting" victory.
- **The "Screwdriver" Metaphor:** Kamala Harris campaigns in NH, claiming Kelly Ayotte is "holding the screwdriver" as the administration screws the people on health care and housing.
- **Ken Paxton's Securities Fraud Settlement:** Details emerge of Paxton being considered guilty of securities fraud and using a secret Uber account to see his mistress.
- **The "Billionaire Mechanic" Narrative:** Dan Osborne leads a populist movement in Nebraska to replace corporate puppets with regular workers, focusing on the Rail Safety Act.
- **The DNA of Thomas Jefferson:** Smithsonian scientists sequence Jefferson's DNA from hair cut the day he died, confirming he fathered children with Sally Hemings.
- **Smallpox in 1775 Canada:** Historical lectures detail the "root cause" of failure in the American invasion of Canada—overreach and disease.
- **The $40 Trillion Debt Clock:** Former President Obama blasts the GOP for running up an unprecedented debt while cutting taxes for the top 1%.
- **The $8 Billion Farmer Subsidy:** The administration announces fuel relief for farmers, which Adam Hamilton calls an "insult" compared to the cost of diesel.
- **The "Jihadist" Attack on Abdul El-Sayed:** Trump labels the doctor and public health official a "Muslim Brotherhood member," sparking accusations of vile racism from Bernie Sanders.
- **The "NICE" Agency Proposal:** A move to rebrand ICE as "National" and "Nice" to counter reports of domestic shootings and brutality.
- **The "Trust Gap" PR Keynote:** Karen Finney addresses the Trust Barometer shift toward insularity and the "code switching" required of women leaders.
- **The "Terminator" AI Warning:** Troy Jackson warns that the U.S. is "not that far from Terminator" unless guardrails are placed on superintelligence.
- **The 3,000-Mile Continental Divide Metaphor:** Ken Paxton compares the election to rain falling on different sides of a roof, predicting a future thousands of miles apart.

- **The USS Arlington's 9/11 Tribute:** A tour of the ship named for the Pentagon victims, featuring a flag carried by SEALs into the Bin Laden compound.
- **The $3,000 Underwear Incident:** Amber Cabral details an unusual financial transaction with a social media follower to highlight the "weird world" we live in.
- **The Death of Thad Cochran's Coalition:** Analysis of how Republican realignments since 2014 have destroyed the ability to build "cross-over" coalitions in the South.

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.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. To learn more or subscribe to our free daily newsletters, visit https://blog.gdeltproject.org/announcing-our-new-daily-todays-trends-on-capitol-hill-todays-media-trends-newsletter-briefings/. You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at https://blog.gdeltproject.org/ and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at https://archive.org/details/tv.