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Worth reading: [Trump RNC speech details assassination attempt: 'I'm not supposed to be here tonight'](#)

View From The Hill



Even though Congress was in recess this week to allow Members to travel to the Republican National Convention (RNC) in Milwaukee, Washington was reeling in the wake of last Saturday's attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump at a rally in Pennsylvania. Multiple congressional committees [announced](#) investigations into the incident, including the Secret Service's handling of security for the event, and House Speaker Mike Johnson [announced](#) plans to create a task force with subpoena authority to investigate what occurred. The attempted shooting of the former president was universally condemned among elected lawmakers, with Members from both sides of the aisle [calling](#) for calm amidst a vitriolic political climate.

Many Republican lawmakers [traveled](#) to the RNC to see Donald Trump officially accept the party's nomination for the presidency, and Sen. J.D. Vance (R-OH) [made](#) headlines after being announced as Trump's running mate. Unlike most of the recent history of the Republican Party, the RNC marked a rare moment of unity for the GOP, as most republicans feel momentum in the presidential race is solidly on Donald Trump's side and that the wind is at the backs of many of the party's candidates for both the House and Senate. Of course, no major GOP event would be complete without some intra-party [drama](#), and there were some [minor](#) technical errors for the convention hall's teleprompters.

While the events over the weekend managed to quell the steady drip of open calls by democrats for President Biden to step aside as the nominee, rumors of rebellion began to [reemerge](#) as the week wore on and more [polling](#) data began sowing doubt in Biden's ability to win reelection in November. That said, most democratic lawmakers see the president as dug-in and the party is moving forward with a virtual nomination process that kicks off next week ahead of the Democratic National Convention.

Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ) was [convicted](#) this week on federal corruption charges,

stemming from his ties to foreign businessmen and official actions he took to aid the government of Egypt.

Aerospace & Defense

[Europe, US worry about Russia's hybrid warfare attacks \(Defense One\)](#)

European and US intelligence officials have noted efforts taken by the Russian government to create chaos across Europe through actions such as recruiting ethnic Russians and Estonia to attack government property, expanding disinformation campaigns to influence French elections, and turning Moldovan citizens against their leaders. The Russian government has also been accused of potential arson and attempted attacks in Lithuania, England, and Poland, as well as an assassination plot to kill the German head of arms manufacturer Rheinmetall, which is a key supplier of military equipment to Ukraine. The NATO Secretary General made a statement last Thursday, "calling Russian attacks as a means to intimidate NATO allies from supporting Ukraine." These ongoing hybrid attacks used by Russia have led NATO allies to make a more significant push for stronger "multilateral security alliances, prepare for domestic resistance units, and create new cyber and intelligence capabilities." However, despite actions taken to prepare better, hybrid attacks are challenging to detect and deter, and allies must work closely together to prevent this threat. Although experts are calling for improving intelligence sharing across government entities, the United States, with the potential of Trump becoming president, may be led in a different direction by curbing intelligence sharing.

[India Unveils Light Tank Designed for Operations Near The China Border](#)

[White House: Biden Expected to Meet Netanyahu Next Week \(US News\)](#)

The White House released a statement Thursday, that President Biden expects to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu next week, despite his diagnosis from COVID-19. Netanyahu will be in DC next week for a July 24 address to a joint session of Congress, and the two governments have tentatively agreed for a meeting on July 22. Biden and Netanyahu have had strained relations for months over Netanyahu's handling of the Gaza conflict where more than 38,000 people have been killed in Israel's military operation in pursuit of Hamas militants responsible for the October 7th attack on Israel. The US has been working with Qatar and Egypt to arrange a ceasefire in the conflict in order to free Israeli hostages and deliver more humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip. Netanyahu's visit will be his first visit to the White House since he returned to office in 2022. The invitation for Netanyahu to address a joint meeting of Congress was driven by

the House of Representatives' Republican leadership who accused the President of being unsupportive of Israel's strategy in the Gaza war. Addresses to Congress by foreign leaders are a rare honor generally reserved for the closest US allies or major world figures. Netanyahu's speech is expected to highlight differences over Israel policy between Biden and some progressive Democrats, especially if some of them follow through on their threat to boycott Netanyahu's appearance.

Budget & Economy

[Stocks, Dollar Gain After US Retail Sales Data; Focus Still on Trump \(Reuters\)](#)

World stock indexes mostly rose and the U.S. dollar strengthened against the yen this week, with investors still waiting for a rate cut from the Federal Reserve. The Fed has been wary of cutting interest rates before the presidential election in November, but Wall Street has been hoping for a September cut of at least 25 bps. Both Trump and Vance's public positions on trade and business policy affected stocks this week, with both Republicans supporting tighter export restrictions to China - something chipmakers both in the U.S. and Taiwan are afraid of. Vance has been particularly hard on China, blaming the Chinese government for the drop in American wages as they try to increase the Chinese middle class. Both the S&P and the Nasdaq Composite rose this week, and UnitedHealth Group boosted both the Dow and the S&P 500.

[Education Department to forgive \\$1.2 billion in student debt for 35,000 borrowers](#)

[Trump's economic plan promises to 'defeat' inflation but leaves out policy, budget specifics \(PBS\)](#)

Presidential candidate Trump has focused part of his campaign on bringing down inflation and bringing back prosperity to the American economy, but has not outlined a policy plan to do so. Based on recent speeches, he wants to impose tariffs on trade partners, remove taxes on tips, and decrease the corporate tax rate. The Republican platform also promises to "defeat" inflation and "quickly bring down all prices," and to pump out more oil, natural gas and coal. Trump has said that he will scrap Biden's policies on renewable energy and incentives for electric vehicle production. Democrats and leading economists say that with the extension of Trump's soon-to-expire tax cuts, these policies would add \$5 trillion-plus

to the national debt. Though Trump is liked by corporations and business leaders, his plans to impose high tariffs on chip manufacturers like Nvidia - the stock that accounted for nearly 30% of stock market growth recently - would severely limit these tech companies. The proposed tariffs would cost the average American household \$1,700 in what would essentially be a tax hike. In contrast to Trump, Biden's campaign has a 188-page policy plan for the economy.

Advanced Technologies

[How Europe's next-generation combat jet aims to catch the AI wave \(Defense News\)](#)

Mainland Europe's Future Combat Air System (FCAS) - an effort to field a suite of warplanes and drones in the 2040s - could become the first large-scale defense program with artificial intelligence baked into its operating structure. A consortium of Germany, France, and Spain, with Belgium observing proceedings, have promised to display airworthy demonstrations by the end of this decade. Expert engineers have stated that artificial intelligence would play a key role in everything from platform development to kill-chain decisions. The novelty of this FCAS system is its use of "loyal wingmen." These wingmen are drones that travel alongside the main manned aircraft and enhance the mission by collecting more data, allowing for more firepower, or assisting in overwhelming enemies. NeuralAgent is a Munich-based start-up tasked with ensuring that data can efficiently and safely flow between each of the system's components, thereby enabling the whole system to be in constant contact. More than anything, Thomas Grohs, Airbus' head of Future Capabilities and Chief Engineer of the FCAS project believes that this project will fundamentally redefine the capabilities of warplanes and what it means to be a fighter pilot. Grohs argues that this project will forever redefine a pilot's duties, stating that the job will be "really about becoming a mission operator; elevating yourself above your asset and operating the mission together with your peers that may be manned or unmanned."

[Embraer banks on Farnborough Airshow to boost C-390 cargo plane sales](#)

[Samsung Electronics and striking union to resume talks on Friday \(Reuters\)](#)

Samsung and representatives of its biggest workers' union who have been on strike for almost two weeks are set to resume negotiations today. The 30,000 members of the National Samsung Electronics Union who make up almost "a quarter of the company's South Korean workforce." The union has been on 'indefinite strike' over pay and benefits. Samsung has said it hopes to resolve the strike as soon as possible, while some in

industry believe it will negatively impact them as they navigate their competition. Samsung has said the strike has caused "no disruption to chip production."

Military Installations & Communities

[The Gaza Aid Pier Is Officially Dead After Being Removed over Weather for a Fourth Time \(Military.com\)](#)

The deputy commander of US Central Command has confirmed that the temporary pier in Gaza that the pier's mission is over and that it will not return. Speaking with reporters, Vice Admiral Brad Cooper was "adamant" that the pier had accomplished its mission and had transported "the highest volume of humanitarian assistance that the US military has ever delivered to the Middle East". The maritime surge mission will now transition from the temporary pier in Gaza to a port in Ashdod, Israel. The mission to bring aid directly to Gaza experienced problems from the beginning, including the breakdown of watercraft as well as weather delays. The move was applauded by some members of Congress, including Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Ala), who called the effort "a gross waste of taxpayer dollars" this past June. Cooper stated that delivering aid to Ashdod will provide a more sustainable path to providing humanitarian assistance, however, other officials in the Biden administration have noted that "delivering aid to Gaza faces issues beyond logistics."

[Navy Exonerates 256 Black Sailors Unjustly Punished in 1944 After a Deadly California Port Explosion](#)

[A Bribery Scheme Abusing a Program for Afghan Allies Ends with the Conviction for a Navy Commander \(Military.com\)](#)

A Navy Reserve officer has been convicted by a federal court for his role in a scheme to falsify documents to get Afghans to live in the United States as part of the State Department's Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) between 2018 and 2020. Cmdr. Jeromy Pittmann signed over 20 falsified letters of recommendations for visa applications. He claimed to have supervised the applicants as they worked as translators for the Army and NATO, that their lives were in jeopardy, and that he did not think they posed a threat to national security. Pittmann received \$500 per person. The scheme began in 2018, when an unnamed conspirator reached out to Pittmann, asking him for letters of recommendation for family members in exchange for payment. Pittmann was convicted by a jury on four charges, including bribery and concealing a money laundering operation. He is currently free ahead of his sentencing set for October 21st. He is required to check in

with federal officials and let the State Department know if he plans to travel. Records indicate that Pittmann is still in the Reserves, and is assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22 in Port Hueneme, California. He was originally arrested in March of 2022, and faces decades in prison.

Homeland Security

[Homeland security chief calls Trump shooting a security 'failure' \(Seattle Times\)](#)

The Secret Service confronts scrutiny as Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas states the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump was a “security failure that cannot happen again.” As President Biden called for an independent review of the security planning for the Trump rally, the Secret Service has been under intense questioning regarding the security of the perimeter, to which the Secret Service has responded that the warehouse where the 20-year-old shooter was located was outside the purview. The local law enforcement was responsible for the oversight. The agency often relies on local law enforcement at events such as rallies; however, federal law enforcement has said that the Secret Service should have ensured the security of that building. Since the shooting, Trump has been given enhanced protection measures, and Robert F. Kennedy, an independent presidential candidate, has also been granted Secret Service protection. Mayorkas has openly expressed his unwavering support for the director of the Secret Service, Kimberly A. Cheatle, who has come forth and released a statement that the agency was “working with federal and local law enforcement to understand what happened and how to prevent it happening again.” She stated that the agency would cooperate with any congressional investigations that came its way.

[AT&T Says Data From 109 Million U.S. Customer Accounts Illegally Downloaded](#)

[IS/ISKP Supporters Harness Generative AI for Propaganda Dissemination \(Homeland Security Today\)](#)

Militant groups such as the Islamic State (IS) are capitalizing on AI capabilities to spread disinformation and propaganda more effectively and at a lower cost. IS is using chatbots and image and audio generators to produce visually appealing and persuasive content for media outlets, further expanding its reach. A prime example of this new development is the

actions taken after the IS Moscow attack, with an IS sympathizer being able to circulate an AI-generated video of the attack imitating well-known news networks. The Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) and supporter communities have now “weaponized generative AI to produce interactive AI news reports and spread propaganda messages. However, the lack of clear technical expertise indicates that this shift to AI is still in its initial stages.” The focus has been on making these generated news broadcasts look as unbiased as possible so as not to attract suspicion. These videos have been seen on “X and TikTok, with one receiving over 150 likes and comments.” As militant groups continue to use and enhance their AI capabilities, it is becoming increasingly important for technology firms, policymakers, and law enforcement agencies to devise strategies to combat terrorist propaganda.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[New York’s Largest Offshore Wind Project Begins Construction \(G-Captain\)](#)

On Wednesday, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced the commencement of construction on New York’s largest offshore wind project, Sunrise Wind. Developed by Ørsted, the 924-megawatt capacity project can generate enough power for approximately 600,000 homes. The project will create over 800 jobs during construction and bring a \$700 million investment to Suffolk County, NY. The project, located about 30 miles east of Montauk, will connect to New York’s electricity grid at the Holbrook Substation in Brookhaven. The offshore wind farm will consist of 84 wind turbine generators, and is expected to be completed in 2026. The project builds on other wind and renewable energy projects in New York, including the first utility-scale offshore wind farm in the U.S. (Ørsted’s South Fork Wind) and the start of construction at the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal. New York’s initiatives have drawn some controversy, as similar to New Jersey wind farm projects, residents express concerns over the turbines being an eyesore or harming birds or boats. However, a federal challenge could also stop funding and expansion of these renewable energy projects, and presidential candidate Trump has said that he would cut all renewable energy programs and funding rolled out by the Biden administration.

[DARPA picks UT Austin to house microelectronics manufacturing hub](#)

[America’s freight recession is nearing its end, logistics executives say, with retail orders and rates headed higher \(CNBC\)](#)

The trucking industry is recovering from a prolonged recession, bolstered by a 30% year-over-year increase in freight volumes in June, particularly in retail and department stores. The uptick is driven by a shift from last year's destocking to current strong restocking trends, notably in discount retail, which is seeing increases of 13%-14%. Capacity constraints are tight due to downsizing and bankruptcies in the trucking industry, but the growth has indicated potential rate increases by late third quarter and into 2025. The Dow Jones Transportation Average is up 8% over the past month, and companies say that while they have reached the rock bottom of trucking rates, they have not been going lower, and may be lifting slightly. Retailers are adapting early to peak season demands like back-to-school, leveraging discounts and early sales to secure market share amidst logistical challenges. The combination of smaller capacity and the increase in order has led to greater demand for existing freight truckers, and the industry will be closely watched to curb further stock volatility.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[45% of Americans unable to afford or access healthcare \(The Hill\)](#)

In a new survey released Wednesday by West Health-Gallup, 55% of Americans report being cost secure when it comes to healthcare, meaning they do not struggle to pay or access medical care and medicine, the lower percentage since West Health-Gallup began tracking healthcare affordability in 2021. Within the cost-secure population, the percentage of people aged 18-47 who were cost secure fell by 5%, and the percentage of those 50-64 and 65 and older who reported being cost secure both fell by 8 percentage points. 45% of those surveyed admitted to skipping a doctor's appointment or not picking up medication because they either couldn't afford the drugs or an appointment or because they couldn't access it. Of that 45%, 37% are considered cost insecure, that they struggle to pay for treatment or medicine, and 8% are considered cost desperate. Younger adults between 18-49 are more likely to have forgone medical treatment due to money and access issues at 53%, and just 29% of older adults, 65 and older, reported skipping medical treatment or medication due to finances or lack of access.

[State officials announce first confirmed measles case in Massachusetts since 2020](#)

[Vermont latest state to sue PBMs for allegedly driving drug prices \(Reuters\)](#)

Vermont's attorney general sued two of the largest US pharmacy benefit managers, CVS Caremark and Cigna Express Scripts, accusing them of driving prescription drug prices for patients in order to enrich themselves. Pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMS, negotiate with drugmakers, health insurance providers, and pharmacies to set prescription drug prices and decide which drugs will be covered by insurance. Together, Caremark, Express Scripts, and UnitedHealth Group's OptumRX make up 80% of the PBM market. The suit, filed Wednesday, alleges that Caremark and Express Script pushed patients to buy more expensive drugs when cheaper ones were available, and took the extra cost through a complex system of fees. Vermont is now the 5th state to bring suit against the PBMs, after Hawaii, California, Ohio, and Kentucky. Additionally, the FTC is expected to sue Caremark, Express Scripts, and OptumRx next week.

Climate & Development

[Melting Ice is Slowing Earth's Spin, Shifting Its Axis and Even Influencing Its Inner Core, Research Shows \(NBC\)](#)

The melting of glacial ice is causing the redistribution of ice toward the equator, slowing the Earth's rotation and leading to longer days. A new study provides evidence supporting the claim that ice melting has had profound impacts on the Earth's axis, affecting the fluids around the molten core. Similar research also shows that humans have impacted "fundamental aspects of the planet's physical properties and will continue to until global temperatures stabilize and melting ice reaches an equilibrium." Benedikt Soja, an author of two new studies, "estimated that climate change was most likely responsible for one meter of change over ten years." This latest research offers insights into how more significant scale action on the surface has the potential to influence the fluid at the Earth's core.

[Hurricane Beryl reaches record winds of 165 mph as the Category 5 storm barrels toward Jamaica](#)

[Explainer: Olympics-Will the Seine be clean enough to swim in at the Paris 2024 Games? \(Reuters\)](#)

The River Seine will be a central element in the Paris 2024 Olympics, with the opening ceremony and two events taking place on the river. The latest data report on July 12 "showed that the river's water quality, measured by looking at the levels of two bacteria, E.

coli, and Enterococcus faecalis, would be suitable for swimming for six out of the seven days of the swimming events.” To ensure the continuous safety of the river, every afternoon, the day before each swim, and before each competition, a technical committee, in addition to having the “Eau de Paris laboratory test the water twice a day,” will meet and make an initial analysis of the water quality and decide on the river’s safety. If the water quality is unsafe for swimming, the contingency plan will be to have the events at the reserve site of Vaires-sur-Marne, and the triathlon will be turned into a duathlon.

Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committee:

House: 7/23, 10:00 AM - Mobility Aircraft Relevance and Survivability in a Contested Environment

Senate: NONE

Appropriations Committee:

House: NONE

Senate: 7/25, 9:30 AM - Markup of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Acts and Fiscal Year 2025 Subcommittee Allocations

Homeland Security Committee:

House: 7/24, 10:00 AM - From Drug Interdictions in the Caribbean to National Security Patrols in the Arctic: Examining U.S. Coast Guard’s Role in Securing the Homeland

Senate:

- 7/23, 3:30 PM - Instant Payments, Instant Losses: Zelle and the big banks fail to protect consumers from fraud
- 7/24, 10:00 AM - Business Meeting

- 7/25, 10:00 AM - Nominations



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