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AT THE CAPITOL

Walz pauses funding to providers of housing aid

Governor cites fraud investigation

By Dana Ferguson
Minnesota Public Radio News

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said Monday he paused funding to dozens of housing stabilization recipients, citing concerns about potential misuse of the money.

Walz told reporters at an unrelated event in Delano

that about 50 of the largest recipients of Medicaid funding aimed at helping people get and keep stable housing would not get paid as a result.

The move comes after FBI investigators raided several providers earlier this month, citing suspected widespread fraud in the program. Minnesota was the first state to

adopt the program and since 2020, costs have ballooned far beyond what lawmakers initially expected.

Walz said new laws allowing state agencies to stop grant funding when they detect potential fraud allowed him to pause the payments. It wasn't immediately clear how long they would be on hold if organizations were found to be in good standing.

“The payments that were

scheduled to go today are not going out to them,” Walz said. “I fully expect some of those folks will sue the state of Minnesota, but I think we're in a position right now is a trust but verify that we want you to get in the program.”

The governor thanked acting U.S. Attorney for Minnesota Joe Thompson for investigating misuse of the program. And he said those who had engaged in fraud with

government dollars would face consequences.

He also said the program had an important purpose but bad actors were pulling funding away from those in need.

“I think all of us are going to candidly recognize there is going to be legitimate organizations and legitimate need for people in good programs that are going to just have to be a little bit slower and a little more barriers put

in place, because it's proven right now, the folks can find the loopholes,” he said. “Because there's good folks using these programs and making a difference, but there are folks who are defrauding them.”

Fraud was a key issue that legislators sought to address this year. And Republican legislators have said they would home in on the improper payments and government waste as part of the 2026 campaign.

TWIN CITIES

Residents share stories of life and death in Gaza

‘My family deserved to live with dignity’; U.S. urged to take action

By Kathryn Kovalenko
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Blaine resident Jehad Adwai said he and his wife have lost 20 family members during the war in Gaza.

Last week, he said, seven of his wife's relatives died, including her mother, sister and uncle.

“We don't just need words, because talk is very cheap, but we need action and action now,” Adwai said Monday at a news conference in St. Paul hosted by the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR. “This is a dire situation that must end.”

The news conference was held to raise awareness about

the ongoing hunger and humanitarian situation in Gaza.

“I am, from all my heart, asking all Americans to stand up and look and see what's going on,” Adwai said.

President Donald Trump, speaking Monday during a visit to Scotland, expressed concern over the worsening situation and urged Israel to get people food. But others in the international community, including Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi on Monday, say Trump is “the one who is able to stop the war, deliver the aid and end this suffering.”

Jaylani Hussein, CAIR executive director, urged Minnesotans to call their senators and representatives and

“let them know that Congress needs to act, that the president needs to act.”

Hussein said he has been speaking with other Palestinian families in the Twin Cities.

“This war has numbed many of us in ways we cannot understand,” he said. “What we see, we cannot un-see. The stories that we've heard, we cannot un-hear.”

The war in the Gaza strip began in October 2023, when the Palestinian militant group Hamas led an attack on Israel, killing more than 1,200 and taking 251 hostages. Hamas has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, Canada and the European Union.

Minneapolis resident Do-

nia, who declined to share her last name for privacy reasons, said she found out through a Facebook post that her parents' cousins were killed in their home in northern Gaza.

“This is how we've been finding out about our families for the past two years,” she said. “Through the internet.”

She said she has lost over 35 family members during the war in Gaza.

Donia said she first lost a family member in December 2023 when her cousin was killed by a sniper outside his home. Since then, her relatives have died from lack of medical care, malnourishment and airstrikes.

“My family deserved to live with dignity,” she said.



KATHRYN KOVALENKO — PIONEER PRESS

Blaine resident Jehad Adwai speaks during a Monday news conference in St. Paul hosted by the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations on the war in Gaza.

Local briefing

ST. PAUL

Metro Transit hosting BRT forum

Metro Transit staff will host pop-up open houses to answer questions and gather comments as it plans the next arterial bus rapid transit lines. The next St. Paul event will be held Wednesday.

Project staff are gathering feedback for the Metro Transit's Arterial BRT Plan Update which will identify the next three arterial bus rapid transit lines known as the J, K and L lines. Those lines are planned to open between 2030 and 2035.

St. Paul's event is from 2 to 4 p.m. Wednesday at Sun Ray Transit Station at 463 Pedersen St. in St. Paul and it is one of eight events in the metro area. Another will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Aug. 9 at the University Avenue and Snelling Avenue intersection in St. Paul.

Ten corridors are under consideration and Metro Transit officials began accepting comments on them July 23. That feedback, as well as technical evaluation and input from cities, counties and the Minnesota Department of Transportation will help identify the J, K and L lines later this year.

To learn more about the candidate corridors, future events and how to share feedback, go to [metrotransit.org/arterial-brt-plan](#). Feedback must be submitted by Sept. 1.

— Imani Cruzen

MSP AIRPORT

Delta pilot arrested after landing in Calif.

A Delta Air Lines pilot was arrested on child sex abuse charges and removed from a plane's cockpit immediately after landing in San Francisco on Saturday night, authorities said.

The pilot, Rustom Bhagwagar, 34, was arrested just after 9:30 p.m. on five counts of oral copulation with a child under 10 years of age, the Department of Homeland Security said Monday night. Detectives with the Contra Costa Sheriff's Office had been inves-

tigating Bhagwagar since April, the department said.

The Homeland Security Department had said earlier Monday that the pilot was facing charges involving child sex abuse materials. It was not immediately clear why the charging details had changed; the department did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday night.

Delta Flight 2809, a Boeing 757-300, arrived at San Francisco International Airport at 9:35 p.m. Saturday after departing from Minneapolis-St. Paul.

A passenger on the plane told the San Francisco

Chronicle that several people with “badges, guns and different agency vests/markings” made their way up the aisle and into the cockpit, where they put one of the pilots in handcuffs and escorted that pilot off the plane.

In an emailed statement, Delta said it was “appalled by reports of the charges related to the arrest” and added that the pilot had been suspended pending an investigation. The company directed questions to law enforcement agencies.

Bhagwagar was being held at a Martinez, Calif., detention facility in lieu of \$5 million bail.

— New York Times

MADISON, WIS.

Godlewski sets sights on lieutenant governorship

Wisconsin's Democratic Secretary of State Sarah Godlewski doesn't plan to run for governor or for a full term in her current position, but she is considering running for lieutenant governor next year, an adviser said Monday.

Democratic Gov. Tony Evers announced Thursday that he won't seek a third term in the battleground state, creating an open race next year. Godlewski was one of several Democrats mentioned as a possible contender.

But on Monday, Godlewski made it clear that she is instead looking into running for the state's No. 2 role, instead of governor or secretary of state.

“She is making calls to leaders across the state and will make a final decision on a run in the coming weeks,”

adviser Scott Spector said. “If she gets in this race, it will be with significant support from elected and local Democrats from across Wisconsin.”

Godlewski, 43, was appointed by Evers as secretary of state in March 2023 after the incumbent resigned less than three months into his term. Unlike in most states, the office does not run elections in Wisconsin and has almost no official duties.

Godlewski previously ran for U.S. Senate in 2022 but lost in the Democratic primary.

Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez announced her candidacy for governor on Friday, and Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley said he plans to take steps soon to mount a run. Other Democrats considering a run include Attorney General Josh Kaul, Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson, former Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes and state Sen. Kelda Roys.

Evers told reporters in Milwaukee on Monday that he was unlikely to endorse anyone in the primary.

“I'll never say never, but I want to make sure who the rest of the candidates are before I even make that decision,” Evers said.

There are two announced candidates on the Republican side: Washington County Executive Josh Schoemann and manufacturer Bill Berrien. Other Republicans considering running for governor include U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany and state Senate President Mary Felzkowski.

Former Republican Gov. Scott Walker released a video on Sunday saying he would not be running for

the office he held from 2011 until 2019.

Walker had jokingly hinted that he might consider a run in a post on X last week, but on Sunday said he would instead be focused on his work as president of the Young America's Foundation, which tries to get college-aged conservatives involved in politics.

— Associated Press

PRESCOTT, WIS.

8 injured in weekend boat explosion

Eleven people on board a boat in the Mississippi River in Wisconsin were ejected

when the boat's engine exploded, injuring eight of them, according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The explosion occurred Saturday near Prescott when authorities say the boat's operator attempted to start the engine twice and on the third try the engine exploded.

During efforts to extinguish a blaze sparked by the explosion, the boat drifted into another boat and caused fire damage before all the fires were extinguished, officials said.

The explosion remains under investigation.

— Kristi Miller

LOTTERIES

POWERBALL

Monday: 7, 35, 36, 43, 62

Powerball: 3; **Multiplier:** 3

Est. jackpot: \$364 million

Next drawing: Wednesday

LOTTO AMERICA

Monday: 8, 12, 23, 25, 31

Star Ball: 10; **Bonus:** 2

Est. jackpot: \$3.41 million

Next drawing: Wednesday

MEGA MILLIONS

Friday: 14, 21, 25, 49, 52

Mega Ball: 7

Est. jackpot: \$130 million

Next drawing: Tuesday

GOPHER 5

Monday: 4, 8, 13, 24, 46

Est. jackpot: \$110,000

Next drawing: Wednesday

NORTH 5

Monday: 14, 18, 20, 29, 32

Est. jackpot: \$141,000

PICK 3

Monday: 5, 3, 9

WISCONSIN MEGABUCKS

Saturday: 7, 11,13, 24, 26, 32

Est. jackpot: \$2.5 million

Next drawing: Wednesday

BADGER 5

Monday: 3, 6, 8, 12, 28

Est. jackpot: \$77,000

SUPERCASH

Monday: 5, 15, 18, 25, 27, 36

Doubler: No

ALL OR NOTHING

Monday midday: 1, 2, 3, 6,

7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 19

Monday evening: 3, 5, 7, 8,

11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22

PICK 4

Monday midday: 6, 8, 7, 0

Monday evening: 8, 1, 5, 2

PICK 3

Monday midday: 5, 6, 0

Monday evening: 8, 7, 7

Minnesota's first newspaper

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