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SPOTLIGHT

Send in the Troops

The Democratic response has shades of 2020

By Kirk A. Bado

President Trump federalizing the D.C. police force and mobilizing the National Guard to combat crime in the nation's capital has refocused the media narrative on much more comfortable ground for the administration: combating crime in blue cities.

This is a tried and true playbook for Trump—if you don't like what's being said, change the conversation. The tough news on the economy, the unrelenting drip of stories surrounding convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, and the difficulties of mid-cycle redistricting could have spurred Trump to take drastic action. The highly-visible display of force unfolding in D.C. as Guardsmen and federal law enforcement officials patrol the streets is a nice piece of made-for-TV red meat the president can toss to his base.

Combating crime has been an effective message for Republicans in recent election cycles. Despite losing the White House in 2020, Republicans gained 13 House seats which helped set them up to flip the lower chamber two years later. The GOP's message in both cycles focused heavily on painting Democrats as supporters of the "defund the police" movement. Democrats aggressively pushed back on those accusations, and tried to highlight their support for law enforcement in paid media.

Democrats are struggling to respond in the first few hours of Trump's power grab in D.C. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries focused his response on Trump, posting on X that "The crime scene in D.C. most damaging to everyday Americans is at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave." Other Democrats, particularly leaders eying a 2028 presidential campaign, focused on the threat Trump mobilizing the National Guard could pose to democratic institutions.

These responses are lightly skirting around voters' concerns about violent crime and safety. While recent polling has shown these concerns are not as high as they were in the years immediately following the pandemic, crime and safety still rank high on voters' priorities right after economic issues. A saving grace for Democrats is that voters are still very much concerned about health care, an issue that has traditionally favored their party.

— Kirk A. Bado

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Quote of the Day

" Instead of awaiting the punch thrown by these would-be fascists I want us to punch first. " — 2022 Texas GOV nominee Beto O'Rourke (D) on Democratic gerrymandering, Semafor, 8/12

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Trump uses military to solve domestic problems

By Erika Filter

DEMOCRATS: Party Unsure How to Approach D.C. Takeover

Democrats responding to President Trump's D.C. takeover run the risk of minimizing voters' feelings surrounding crime and safety, similarly to their downplaying of inflation last cycle.

- **FOUR COURSES.** The Democrats' response so far has fallen into four categories: taking the action seriously, dismissing it as a distraction, fighting the grounds it's based on, and treating it as a harbinger for other cities.
- **THE 2028 FIELD.** Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said, "It is a legitimately important thing that he's taking power in this way" and said, "Distraction is part of his goal." Maryland Gov. Wes Moore (D) called it "deeply dangerous." Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker (D) alluded to the Nazi takeover in the 1930s, adding that Trump "has absolutely no right and no legal ability to send troops into the city of Chicago." Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz (D) said: "The road to authoritarianism is littered with people telling you you're overreacting." On the other coast, California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) said Trump "will gaslight his way into militarizing any city he wants in America." (*Politico*)
- **DNC WANTS TO TACKLE BIG MONEY.** DNC Chair Ken Martin sent a proposal to DNC members seeking "to have a new reforms committee propose 'real, enforceable steps the D.N.C. can take to eliminate unlimited corporate and dark money in its 2028 presidential primary process' by the summer of 2026."
- **HE'S GOT THE SPIRIT.** "It is unclear how the" DNC "could enforce possible penalties against candidates who have support from outside groups with whom they may not be coordinating."
- **MARTIN SAYS:** "As Democrats fight to win back the branches of government, the D.N.C. must take immediate steps to demonstrate our party's commitment to this issue and show that we will 'walk the walk' at every opportunity. The D.N.C. encourages Democratic officeholders and candidates at all levels of government to support efforts to reduce the influence of corporate and dark money in their campaign policy platforms, and to lead by example in rejecting such donations." (*New York Times*)

- **DEMS SEEK TO WOO THE WORKING CLASS.** “Democrats hope to bring” working-class voters “back into the fold for the midterm elections in 2026, betting on a backlash to” Trump “and his party’s far-reaching moves to slash the social safety net.” But working-class voters who supported former President Biden in 2020 and Trump in 2024 say just because they now dislike Trump does not mean they support Democrats again.
- **PAST MISTAKES.** Working-class voters described a lack of trust in Democrats following Biden’s exit from the 2024 campaign and his swift replacement with former Vice President Kamala Harris. They also said Democrats went too far on promoting transgender rights, especially at the expense of their economic concerns. (*New York Times*)

WHITE HOUSE: Trump Uses Military for Domestic Problems

President Trump’s deployment of the National Guard in D.C. “is the latest example of how the president has used the military to advance domestic policy priorities.”

- **THE BIG GUNS.** “The U.S. military responds quickly to executive directives. For that reason, it is a preferred institution for a president who presents himself as tough on crime, undocumented immigrants, drugs, ‘woke’ culture and other perceived domestic enemies. But in recent months that has put the military at the center of a series of partisan political issues, traditionally where its leaders in the past have least wanted to be.”
- **NOT USUALLY THEIR JOB.** “For the troops, and for the military in general, there could be risks in calling on them for matters traditionally handled by other institutions. In some cases, troops could feel pitted against their own neighbors.” (*New York Times*)
- **THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE.** Trump’s “personal involvement in a deal on U.S. chip sales in China highlights his ongoing determination to directly manage the American economy—an approach that is especially striking for a Republican president and could carry political and substantive risk.” (*Washington Post*)
- **EPSTEIN CASE HALTED.** A federal judge rejected the Justice Department’s request that the grand jury transcripts in convicted Epstein ally Ghislaine Maxwell’s case be unsealed. (*Axios*)

2028 WATCH: Cory Booker Pivots to Rough and Tumble

Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ), who refused to go negative during his 2020 campaign, is taking a different tune now.

- **PROFITABLE TUNE.** His “liberal fighter look is working with donors. He raised \$10 million in the second quarter of 2025 between his campaign and a joint fundraising committee. He is the second-best fundraiser overall among the Senate candidates running in 2026, despite not having a very competitive race, according to campaign finance data.” (*Wall Street Journal*)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Sherrod Brown set to launch comeback Senate bid

By Nicholas Anastácio

ALABAMA: Barry Moore Launches Senate Bid

Rep. Barry Moore (R-01) announced his run to succeed Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R) as he campaigns for governor. Moore will kick off his campaign on Friday in northeast Alabama, miles away from his southern district.

- **MAGA DAY ONE.** The congressman touted his decadelong support of President Trump in his launch video, while arguing he'd be a "true Trump ally in the Senate." Boasting his MAGA credentials, Moore said in the video that he isn't "one of those MAGA pretenders suddenly coming to be conservative."
- **GETTING HEATED.** Moore joins state Attorney General Steve Marshall (R), former Navy SEAL Jared Hudson (R), and cleaning company owner Jeremy Spratling (R) in the GOP primary. (*1819 News*)

IOWA: Another Democrat Enters the Race

State Rep. Josh Turek (D) kicked off his challenge to Sen. Joni Ernst (R), becoming the fifth Democrat to join the crowded Democratic primary.

- **POPULISM.** Turek said he's modeling his campaign after former Sen. Tom Harkin (D), taking a populist approach and focusing on "kitchen table issues." He also pointed to his 2024 reelection despite President Trump winning his state House district.
- **'UNDERDOG.'** In his campaign launch video, Turek said he was "born an underdog," highlighting his spina bifida, his Paralympian background, and his wheelchair campaigning. Turek also calls back to the senator's "we are all going to die" comment at a May town hall.
- **THE FIVE.** Turek faces state Sen. Zach Wahls (D), 2020 IA-04 nominee J.D. Scholten (D), former Knoxville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Nathan Sage (D), and Des Moines School Board Chair Jackie Norris (D) in the primary. (*Des Moines Register*)
- **TO A THEATER NEAR YOU.** Ernst said during the Iowa State Fair on Sunday that her reelection decision is "coming soon." (KCCI)

ILLINOIS: Raja Krishnamoorthi's 'Trump Accountability Plan'

Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-08) released a 17-point "Trump accountability plan" on Monday that would restrict ICE agents from wearing masks, block President Trump's "radical" judicial nominations, and "introduce constitutional amendments to block self-pardons and a potential presidential third term." Krishnamoorthi likened the plan to "the post-Watergate reforms that helped to rein in the presidency following" President Nixon's abuses of power. (*Chicago Sun-Times*)

- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** The congressman is looking to distinguish himself from Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton (D) and Rep. Robin Kelly (D-02) as all three compete in the Democratic primary to replace retiring Sen. Dick Durbin (D). In a blue state like Illinois, maximizing your Trump opposition can make the difference.

MICHIGAN: Dem Senate Hopefuls Respond to State GOP's Slotkin Swipe

The Michigan Republican Party asked Rep. Haley Stevens (D-11), state Sen. Mallory McMorrow (D), and 2018 GOV candidate Abdul El-Sayed (D) on X whether they agreed with Sen. Elissa Slotkin's (D) decision to miss votes to appear on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* last month. (X) El-Sayed and McMorrow took the bait; Stevens did not.

- **MCMORROW.** McMorrow called out the state GOP and the NRSC on whether they agreed with President Trump and his administration's decision to not release the Epstein files. (X)

- **EL-SAYED.** El-Sayed responded with a 2021 picture of Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) at the Cancún International Airport while his state faced a winter disaster. The post was captioned: “This yours?” (X)
- **STEVENS.** Stevens didn’t respond to the state GOP’s post. Instead, Stevens posted about her opposition to the OBBB, adding that she’s “focused on the issues that matter to Michiganders.” (X)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Much like Democrats across the spectrum, El-Sayed and McMorrow are testing out different messaging to reach their party’s base. Stevens, on the other hand, has honed in on Michigan-centric messaging throughout her campaign, avoiding trending tactics used by national Democrats.

MINNESOTA: Navy Veteran Enters GOP Primary

2022 MN-03 nominee Tom Weiler (R) launched his campaign to replace retiring Sen. Tina Smith (D), joining 2024 nominee Royce White (R) and former Navy SEAL Adam Schwarze (R) in the primary. Weiler, a Navy veteran, said in an X post that he would “lead with integrity, dedication, and a commitment to the people of Minnesota.”

- **ELECTORAL HISTORY.** Former Rep. Dean Phillips (D) defeated Weiler, 60%-40%, in 2022. (KSTP)

OHIO: Sherrod Brown Launches Comeback Bid

Former Sen. Sherrod Brown (D) is set to launch a comeback bid against Sen. Jon Husted (R) after losing reelection to Sen. Bernie Moreno (R) last year. Brown gives “Ohio Democrats perhaps their best hope of unseating” Husted, “a Columbus-area Republican appointed to the job earlier this year.”

- **A SWITCH.** Widely speculated to run in the open governor’s race, Brown decided to run for the Senate again according to three unnamed labor leaders. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer lobbied Brown several times this year to launch a Senate bid.
- **ONLY TWO YEARS.** If Brown wins the special election next year, he would be up for election again in 2028 for a full six-year term. (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*)
- **NOT SCARED.** The NRSC is boasting confidence in Husted’s odds against Brown in a new memo.
- **‘TWO-TIME LOSER.’** The memo touts President Trump’s endorsement of Husted, his past statewide wins, his consolidation of GOP support, and the state’s rightward trend since 2016. The memo also brandished Brown as a “two-time loser,” pointing to his 2024 loss against Moreno.
- **NRSC SAYS:** “We will defeat him by an even wider margin the second time around with a proven winner in Senator Husted.” (*Punchbowl News*)

TEXAS: Senate GOP Projected to Spend Between \$25M to \$70M to Save Cornyn

Senate Republicans are prepared to spend at least eight figures to save Sen. John Cornyn (R) in the GOP primary against state Attorney General Ken Paxton (R).

- **EIGHT FIGURES (OR MORE).** The GOP-aligned SLF urged donors last week to donate towards rescuing the senator, projecting in a slideshow that it could cost between \$25 million to \$70 million to save Cornyn in the primary or \$200 million to \$250 million to help Paxton win the general election.
- **WRITING ON THE WALL.** SLF’s presentation pointed to 13 public and private polls conducted between January and June that found Paxton ahead of Cornyn. Another slide warned that Paxton, unlike Cornyn, could be vulnerable in a general election against 2024 nominee Colin Allred (D).

- **ALL FOR HIM.** The GOP super PAC is set to spend millions defending Cornyn, taking advantage of the attention towards Paxton's high-profile divorce. SLF emphasized the state's many media markets and the upcoming March primary increases the costs of this contest.
- **ONE SLF SLIDE SAYS:** "The not great news: this is an expensive state with an early timeline. Resources will need to be committed starting *this August.*" (*Punchbowl News*)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Ron DeSantis moves closer to redraw in Florida

By James A. Downs and Amelia Monroe

REDISTRICTING ROUNDUP: Greg Abbott Threatens More Seats

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) said Republicans are considering expanding beyond the originally proposed map, which could eliminate up to five Democratic-held seats. Texas Republicans have discussed a plan that could eliminate up to three more seats. (CBS News) Abbott said in an interview with CNN if California responds with redistricting of its own, Texas has the ability to draw 10 Democrats out of seats. (CNN)

- **FLORIDA.** Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) said "he's prepared to redraw Florida's congressional districts—with or without new census numbers." Republican leaders such as DeSantis and President Trump have said the Census produced incorrect numbers and have demanded a new count.
- **GOP JUSTIFICATION.** A 2022 study of the Census found some states were undercounted while others were overcounted. The governor believes a new Census would give Florida four new congressional seats. He said "defects in the current maps" gives Republicans reason to consider a remap. (*Tallahassee Democrat*)
- **HEELS DUG IN.** The redistricting arms race "shows no sign of abating, with both sides dug in as Republicans try to ensure their party controls Congress for all of Trump's four-year term." California leaders plan to release their map this or next week, while the special session in Texas winds down with legislators still out of state. Abbott said he would continue to call special sessions, which last 30 days.
- **THE MATH.** "They would need to remain out of state off and on for months to prevent the plans from being passed for the 2026 elections. Texas Democrats have not said whether they have the will to do that and have sidestepped answering how long they will hold out."
- **IN AUSTIN.** The Texas Senate may consider the map this week, as Democrats are present for quorum. But the map would remain in the House if lawmakers continue to be absent. (*Washington Post*)
- **THIS MEANS WAR.** Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX 37) "has declared war" on Rep. Greg Casar (D-TX-35) after the Republican-led Texas redistricting map looped the two members into one district. Doggett confirmed plans to run in the new version of the states 37th district, which is safely blue and would comprise "a large portion of his current voters."
- **WON'T BACK DOWN.** Doggett called for Casar to run in the new TX-35, "a San Antonio-area seat that Trump won by 10 points in 2024." The lawmaker claimed that the new version of the district would be "more Hispanic" than the current variation that Casar represents. But, the new district would have "very little of Casar's current turf" and, based on his background in the Congressional Progressive Caucus, he would not be "a particularly natural fit for a red district near San Antonio."

- **IRKED ALLIES.** Many Democrats are “privately surprised” that Doggett, a 78-year-old lawmaker, would try and “box out a 36-year-old Casar.” This is especially true when considering that Doggett was the first House Democrat to urge former President Biden to not seek reelection in 2024. (*Punchbowl News*)
- **COMMISSIONER SPEAKS OUT.** Meanwhile in California, political science professor Sara Sadhwani served on the California independent commission that drew the state’s congressional lines, but she supports Gov. Gavin Newsom’s (D) efforts to counter Texas and other states’ potential plans to redraw. She said the act is necessary to push back against the “Republican power grab.”
- **HERE’S THE CATCH.** Sadhwani said she would not support a California plan if Texas opted against redrawing its maps. She hopes to see partisan gerrymandering banned in all 50 states but called the times “extraordinary.” (*California Playbook*)
- **INDIANA LEGISLATOR SPEAKS OUT.** State Rep. Daniel Lopez (R) said he does not support a redistricting process in the Hoosier State. In a social media post, Lopez said the “General Assembly undertook the complex redistricting process based on up-to-date census data, drawing fair maps that ensure every Hoosier vote counts. We should stand by that work.” He added he is a “hard” no. (X) The statement comes after Vice President JD Vance met with Gov. Mike Braun (R) and legislative leaders to discuss the prospect of redistricting.
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** The escalating redistricting arms race seems poised to benefit Republicans as several states around the country prepare to reconfigure congressional lines. Even if Democrats respond in kind, they may not be able to match the amount of districts retooled by Republicans. The development means Democrats have a greater impetus to win their reach districts. Some of these seats—CO-05 and VA-01, for example—trended left last election, while others such as KY-06 were competitive in previous cycles. The candidate situation in each of these seats varies, but the outskirts may need to become the center if Republicans nuke several seats.

PRIMARY ROUNDUP: A Pair of Comebacks Await

Former Rep. Jerry Carl (R) teased a comeback bid on social media. He posted he has a “MAJOR announcement” scheduled for Aug. 18. (X) Carl has been floating another run for Congress, including filing with the FEC, over the past few weeks as Rep. Barry Moore (R-AL 01) considered a run for Senate. Moore announced his bid this morning.

- **RECALL.** Court-ordered redistricting forced Carl and Moore into each other’s districts and into a member-on-member primary. The at-times bitter race ended with Moore narrowly defeating Carl.
- **FL-19.** Former Rep. Chris Collins (R-NY) launched his campaign to succeed Rep. Byron Donalds (R), who is running for governor. Collins previously represented a Buffalo-area seat before his arrest and imprisonment for insider trading and lying to the FBI. President Trump pardoned Collins in 2020, just two months into his 26-month term. (Spectrum News)
- **IL-07.** Former Obama administration official Thomas Fisher (D) launched his bid in the open race for retiring Rep. Danny Davis’ (D) seat. Fisher touted his two decades of health care experience in his campaign launch, where he described his commitment to fighting for universal health care.
- **DEMOCRATIC TIDE.** Fisher is the latest Democrat to enter the race. The Cook County district has at least eight other Democratic candidates levying a bid, including former Cook County Commissioner Richard Boykin (D), 2024 candidate Melissa Conyears-Ervin (D), state Rep. La Shawn Ford (D), and Marine Corps veteran John McCombs (D). (release)

PENNSYLVANIA: Two Outside Groups Slam Two Republicans on Budget Bill

In PA-08, liberal outside group Unrig Our Economy launched a \$300,000 ad buy against Rep. Rob Bresnahan (R). The ad, titled “Molly,” scorns Bresnahan for his vote on the budget bill and “prioritizing billionaires.” (*Punchbowl News*)

- **PA-10.** Liberal outside group Affordable Pennsylvania launched another ad as part of its \$4 million ad buy. The spot, titled “Merrick,” features a veteran named Merrick Green, who criticizes Rep. Scott Perry (R) for his vote on the GOP reconciliation bill. (release)

WISCONSIN 01: Democrat Hops into Race

Emergency room nurse Mitchell Berman (D) launched a campaign to challenge Rep. Bryan Steil (R). Berman has worked in health care for more than 20 years, including as an emergency room nurse at the VA. (release) Steil has won handily in recent cycles, winning by 10 points last year.

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

DeSantis appoints Jay Collins as lieutenant governor

By Abby Turner

ALASKA: Eighth Candidate Jumps into GOP Field

Former Revenue Commissioner Adam Crum (R) entered the governor’s race, becoming the eighth Republican to enter the field to succeed Gov. Mike Dunleavy (R). “Crum ended his tenure as revenue commissioner on Friday” and announced his run for governor yesterday. He jumps into a crowded field that includes Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom (R), conservative activist Bernadette Wilson (R), and former state Sen. Click Bishop (R). (*Anchorage Daily News*)

FLORIDA: DeSantis Appoints Jay Collins as Lieutenant Governor

Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) appointed state Sen. Jay Collins (R) as lieutenant governor today. (*Hotline* reporting)

- **COLLECTING DUST.** The seat has been vacant since former Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nuñez (R) stepped down to become president of Florida International University earlier this year.
- **FROM LT GOV TO GOV.** “Collins also had occasion at several points this year to demonstrate his interest in not just the current No. 2 job, but also in perhaps running for the office next year” to succeed DeSantis. If he enters the race for governor, he’ll face Rep. Byron Donalds (R-19) in the primary. (*Florida Politics*)

GEORGIA: Trump Endorses Burt Jones in Primary Against Chris Carr

President Trump endorsed Lt. Gov. Burt Jones (R) in his bid to succeed Gov. Brian Kemp (R).

- **WHERE HE STANDS.** “Jones now wields a prized endorsement” and “and a \$14 million war chest fueled by his personal fortune” ahead of a primary against state Attorney General Chris Carr (R), the only other Republican in the field.
- **COURTING MAGA.** “It’s a setback for” Carr, who “has made four visits to the White House since Trump’s return, trying to bridge the MAGA and mainstream wings of the GOP.” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

- **HE BEAT MAGA BEFORE.** But Carr “has long planned for this scenario. He beat a Trump-backed challenger in 2022 by running on his record. Now, he could try to frame Trump’s snub as proof of his independence to woo more swing voters.” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

MAINE: Bush Family Holds Fundraiser for Cousin Exploring Gov Bid

Former President George W. Bush and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush (R) held a fundraiser yesterday for health care executive Jonathan Bush (R), “their cousin who is exploring a run for Maine governor.”

- **IT’S ABOUT TIME.** The private fundraiser “all but confirms Jonathan Bush will eventually enter the race to succeed” Gov. Janet Mills (D).
- **THE BUSH FAMILY TAKES ON MAINE.** “It was an early invocation of a Bush political dynasty that has been relatively quiet in recent years,” but “Jonathan Bush could put the family back in the picture for high office in a state where it has long had a summer presence but no political foothold.” (*Bangor Daily News*)

MICHIGAN: Voters Sue Whitmer to Schedule Special Election in Vacant Senate Seat

A group of Michigan voters filed a lawsuit against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D), accusing her “of disenfranchising voters in Michigan’s 35th state Senate district.” The lawsuit argues “that her refusal to call a special election for a long-vacant seat ‘undermines public trust ... and erodes the legitimacy of enacted laws.’”

- **SEVEN MONTHS EMPTY.** The seat has been vacant since Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-08) was sworn into the House in January. “The complaint asks a judge to order Whitmer to call a special election within seven days.”
- **IN THE STATE SENATE.** “Critics have accused Whitmer of playing politics: Democrats currently hold a 19-18 edge in the state Senate. Republicans are hoping to flip the seat, which could give them a chance to block bills.” (*Bridge Michigan*)

NEW YORK: Hochul, Zohran Mamdani Lead in Siena College Poll

A Siena College poll (Aug 4-7; 813 RVs; +/-4.2%) found Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) leading Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-21), 45%-31%, in a head-to-head matchup. 3% said they would vote for someone else and 20% didn't know who they would vote for or refused.

- **IN THE BIG APPLE.** In the New York City mayoral race (Aug 4-7; 317 RVs; +/-6.7%), Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani (D) led with 44%, followed by former Gov. Andrew Cuomo (I) with 25%, Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa (R) with 12%, and New York City Mayor Eric Adams (I) with 7%. 2% said they would vote for someone else and 10% didn't know who they would vote for or refused. (release)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Stefanik gained on Hochul since the June Siena College poll, where Hochul led Stefanik, 47%-24%. This is the first Siena College poll taken after Rep. Mike Lawler (R-17) announced he would run for reelection instead of challenging Hochul. Still, if Nassau County executive Bruce Blakeman (R) jumps into the race, voters may again split among the Republican primary field.

OHIO: Vivek Ramaswamy Leaves DOGE Out of Gubernatorial Campaign

2024 presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy (R) emphasized slashing the federal workforce and eliminating federal agencies in his presidential run, but has stayed quiet on the issue in his run for governor.

- **IN OTHER STATES.** While gubernatorial candidates and governors propose “DOGE-ing” their own state governments, the brief DOGE co-chair has yet to offer detailed policy proposals on how he will reform the Ohio bureaucracy.
- **VOTERS WANT OHIO DOGED.** “Ohio strategists say that DOGE-style proposals might not be needed: The state constitution requires a balanced budget, and Republicans have controlled the governor’s mansion for 15 years. Still, voters want Ramaswamy to reform the Buckeye State government, and are awaiting his policy proposals on the front he previously championed.”
- **IT’S THE TAXES, STUPID.** Ramaswamy has instead leaned into tax cuts, proposing to eliminate the state income tax and reduce property taxes. Strategists say he can focus on this avenue because Ohio is in a better financial place than the federal government. (*Hotline* reporting)

PENNVYLVANIA: Stacy Garrity Hints at Bid to Challenge Shapiro

State Treasurer Stacy Garrity (R) criticized Gov. Josh Shapiro (D) in a campaign-style video posted on X with the caption “Help is on the way. Stay tuned.” Between Garrity and 2022 nominee Doug Mastriano (R), “many in the GOP see Garrity as a promising candidate to oust Shapiro.” Neither Garrity or Mastriano have officially launched campaigns. (WHTM)

VIRGINIA: Winsome Earle-Sears Dodges Questions on a Free Donor Flight

Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears’ (R) “office and campaign won’t say whether she took a free flight in 2023 from a donor whose business was regulated by the state.”

- **JETTING OFF.** “Earle-Sears’ travel between her home in Winchester and Abingdon on April 29, 2023 came on the same day and times as flights by a private plane owned by Gary Duncan, a Southwest Virginia car dealer” who has donated to her campaign.
- **REVISE.** She corrected an earlier conflict of interest report after a previously unreported trip she took to Israel paid for by an outside group surfaced. (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)
- **ON THE BATTLEFRONT.** In response to Earle-Sears’ framing her campaign to voters as a military style operation, Trump adviser Chris LaCivita said the campaign is “More like the Bay of Pigs.” (X)

OVERLOOKED

District Dilemmas

By Amelia Monroe

President Trump announced the deployment of 800 National Guard troops throughout D.C. by invoking the Home Rule Act on Monday. The move is the latest escalation in Trump’s antagonistic relationship with blue states and cities, and the first time the District’s police force has been taken over. Until 1973, D.C. lacked a government where they could elect their officials and vote in general elections. The Home Rule Act was created as a compromise between Congress, who didn’t want to govern the city, and residents, who wanted more

control. Despite the freedom to adopt laws and approve an annual budget, all of which are typical in a state or local government, Congress maintains complete authority over the adoption of the laws in the District. The government has intervened in D.C. before, with Congress stopping several laws like the 1976 handgun ban and repealing the 2023 D.C. criminal code.