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## SPOTLIGHT

### State Spotlight: Minnesota Shooting Prompts States to Reevaluate Security

**Following the assassination of two state legislators, the Minnesota Legislature will cover increased security for members**

By Hannah Thacker

Former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman (D) and her husband Mark were killed last month in a politically charged attack. Two other victims, state Sen. John Hoffman (D) and his wife Yvette, survived being shot nine and eight times, respectively.

In the wake of the tragedy, both chambers of the Minnesota Legislature will now cover enhanced home security for its members and raise the limit members can pull from their campaign accounts for security.

“We are normal people in normal neighborhoods,” Minnesota state Rep. Emma Greenman (D) told NBC News shortly after the shootings. “We are not members of Congress, who have a lot more resources. Frankly, there’s just been a lot more thinking about how to protect members of Congress, or a governor, probably even a mayor.”

According to the United States Capitol Police, threats against lawmakers reached an all-time high in 2024, with the agency investigating 9,474 credible threats against congressmembers, their families, and staff.

The uptick in political violence is forcing states to act.

The Brennan Center for Justice found that in 2023, 43% of state legislators experienced threats last year and 18% of local officeholders experienced threats.

“We are public servants, but we are also people—with families, staff, and communities who count on us to be safe,” said Minnesota state Sen. Heather Gustafson (D) in a statement calling for a review of the state capitol’s security and emergency response.

State and local lawmakers don’t have a Capitol Police they can point to and ask to keep them safe. The safety of state and local officials is up to a patchwork of differing departments, budgets, and individual capacities.

In the wake of the Minnesota shootings, North Dakota lawmakers removed their home addresses from legislative sites and are planning to meet with state law enforcement to discuss enhanced security; Wisconsin legislators, some of whom were targeted on the same list as Hortman and Hoffman, are having discussions about the state capitol's safety; The Ohio Legislature worked with the governor to better security through things like increasing patrols from the state highway patrol.

If the trend of increased violence toward elected officials at every level continues, more states across the country may be forced to make a move to protect its own members.

— *Hannah Thacker*

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## Quote of the Day

" Gaza, unfortunately, has become a Rorschach test for values. " — 2018 GOV candidate Abdul El-Sayed (D), Politico, 8/7

## HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

### Trump Cabinet embarks on national tour to promote OBBB

By Erika Filter

### DEMOCRATS: Harris Sends Book Promo to Campaign List

Last weekend, former Vice President Kamala Harris' "team sent a promotional email about the book, '107 Days,' that was paid for by the Harris Victory Fund—a collaboration between her presidential campaign, the DNC and state Democratic parties."

- **UP TO CODE.** "A DNC spokesperson said the committee did not send the Harris email," and campaign finance experts said the FEC advises only using campaign lists if the candidate personally reimburses the committee for the list's fair-market value. A Harris adviser said "use of the list adheres with that guidance."
- **STILL OPEN.** "Harris has kept open her campaign's joint fund with the DNC 10 months after the election to continue raising money and pay off debts the campaign and the DNC built up during the 2024 campaign. The Victory Fund raised \$7.2 million during the first six months of this year and transferred \$5.5 million to the DNC in that period, according to filings with the FEC."
- **PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ACCOUNT STILL RUNNING.** "Harris also has kept open the Harris for President committee. It raised \$6.7 million over the first six months of the year, but that committee wasn't used to promote Harris' book." (*Axios*)

### REPUBLICANS: Vance to Visit Indiana to Discuss Redistricting

Vice President JD Vance will visit Indiana “to discuss redistricting with Republican leaders,” holding meetings with Indiana Gov. Mike Braun (R) “and others before attending a GOP fundraiser Thursday night in the solidly Republican state.” (AP)

- **STRATEGY MEETING OFF.** The meeting set at Vance’s residence to discuss the administration’s response on convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein was seemingly moved or rescheduled.
- **TOO CLOSELY WATCHED.** “There were discussions about moving, canceling or rescheduling the meeting amid intense media scrutiny.” (CNN)

## WHITE HOUSE: Trump Enacts Global Tariffs

President Trump “enacted a new wave of tariffs on dozens of America’s trading partners, marking a substantial escalation in ongoing trade tensions that could constitute the biggest change to the global economy in nearly a century.”

- **FOR REAL THIS TIME.** “The historic new trade policy follows months of false starts to Trump’s so-called ‘reciprocal’ tariff rollout and countless bilateral trade negotiations, a handful of which resulted in agreements that fended off even higher tariffs.” (CNN)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Trump does not appear to have chickened out on tariffs this time around. As turmoil surrounding the economy deepens, it’s now likely that the costs of everyday goods will go up. Even if it’s difficult to attribute price increases directly to tariffs, voters will feel the impact on their pocketbooks. If there’s one thing Trump could learn from former President Biden, it’s that even if the government says the economy is doing fine, voters won’t believe them until their grocery bills go down. The question now is how long Trump permits tariffs to go on and how much economic pain consumers can stomach in the meantime.
- **TRADE DEALS LACKING IN DETAILS.** “For lawmakers and foreign leaders searching for the details of the multibillion-dollar trade deals” Trump “has been making with a number of foreign governments, the president says there are none. That’s by design—to give himself even more powers.” (*Roll Call*)
- **TRUMP TESTS INFLUENCE IN THE STATES.** Trump’s “pressure campaign on Republican-led states to redraw congressional maps in his party’s favor is testing his power over governors and state legislators at a time when Republicans in Washington have largely rubber-stamped the president’s agenda and acquiesced to his demands. ... As he tries to secure more G.O.P. seats, he is challenging state leaders to defy him and risk paying the price if they do.” (*New York Times*)
- **CIA ADVISES AGAINST DECLASSIFICATION.** Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard “overrode arguments from the CIA and other intelligence agencies that more of the document should remain classified to obscure U.S. spy agencies’ sources and methods” when she released a report she claims proves “that spy agencies’ finding that Moscow intervened in the 2016 presidential contest to help Trump was a ‘hoax’ concocted by the Obama administration.” (*Washington Post*)
- **CABINET HITS THE TRAIL.** “The White House is sending nine Cabinet secretaries across the country to try to sell” Trump’s “big, beautiful bill.”
- **BATTLEGROUND.** Stops on the tour list include Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, and Virginia. (*Axios*)

## HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

## **GOP congressmen jockey for Marsha Blackburn's seat**

By Nicholas Anastácio

### **FLORIDA: Dem Leaders Foresee Jennifer Jenkins Challenging Moody**

Democratic leaders are rallying behind former Brevard County School Board member Jennifer Jenkins (D) as she prepares to challenge Sen. Ashley Moody (R).

- **GO GIRL!** 2024 nominee Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (D), state Sen. Tina Scott Polsky (D), and Miami-Dade County Democratic Party Chair Laura Kelley (D) are backing Jenkins ahead of an expected announcement.
- **SUNSHINE EXPERIENCE.** Jenkins has assembled a campaign team that has worked on the campaigns of 2022 nominee Val Demings (D), 2022 GOV nominee Charlie Crist (D), and 2018 GOV nominee Andrew Gillum (D). (*Florida Politics*)

### **IOWA: Dems Believe They Can Make Iowa Happen, GOP Doubts It**

Democrats view Iowa as their “most likely of the unlikely” pickup opportunities for the party, targeting Sen. Joni Ernst (R) over her OBBB vote and her grim comments at a May town hall. Republicans believe Democrats aren’t being serious, pointing to the state’s trend toward Republicans and a crowded Democratic primary.

- **BACK TO THE RANCH.** Democrats are hoping to push Ernst on the effect of President Trump’s tariffs to the agricultural industry and farming exports, and target the state’s elderly population amid reductions to Medicaid spending.
- **JUST JOKING.** Sen. Chuck Grassley (R), who won reelection in 2022 by more than 12 points, said Democrats are “joking” and “dreaming” about defeating Ernst, who won reelection in 2020 by more than 6 points. (*NOTUS*)

### **ILLINOIS: Two Dem Elders Endorse Juliana Stratton**

Former Rep. Bobby Rush (D) and former Secretary of State Jesse White (D), two influential leaders with decades of experience in Illinois politics, endorsed Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton (D) to replace retiring Sen. Dick Durbin (D). Rush served in Congress alongside Reps. Robin Kelly (D-o2) and Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-o8), who are also running for the vacant seat. (WFLD)

### **KENTUCKY: Nate Morris Wants a JD Vance Moment**

Waste removal entrepreneur Nate Morris (R) “is running with a family story and anti-establishment pitch similar to” Vice President JD Vance as he runs to replace retiring Sen. Mitch McConnell (R).

- **TWINS.** Both Morris and Vance became friends several years ago over their Kentucky roots. Both had single mothers, a lack of a father figure, and grandparents who played an influential role in teaching Appalachian culture and shaping their values. Morris and Vance, 44 and 41, respectively, are close in age and received an elite education.
- **WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.** Morris attended a fundraiser Vance organized for President Trump last year in Ohio, where Vance reportedly encouraged Morris to look at the Kentucky Senate race.

- **BYE INCUMBENT.** Morris, a former McConnell intern, has focused his campaign on bashing the senator, tying Rep. Andy Barr (R-o6) and 2023 GOV nominee Daniel Cameron (R) to McConnell at every turn. His campaign has already outpaced his primary rivals on air, spending nearly \$1.6 million in ads through Wednesday. (NBC News)
- **ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BLESSING.** It's unclear if President Trump will wade into the GOP primary in ruby-red Kentucky, but the three contenders wouldn't pass up the opportunity to tout his endorsement. Barr and Morris said they've held conversations with the president, but Cameron said he hasn't spoken with Trump directly, holding conversations with the White House. (*Louisville Courier Journal*)

## MICHIGAN: Dem Primary Contenders Can't Avoid Gaza

Rep. Haley Stevens (D-11) is the preferred candidate among several national Democrats to succeed retiring Sen. Gary Peters (D), but "it's not clear that Democrats are trending in Stevens' direction."

- **MORE MONEY, MORE PROBLEMS.** State Sen. Mallory McMorrow (D) and 2018 GOV candidate Abdul El-Sayed (D) are running as outsiders against Stevens, raising more money than the congresswoman during the second quarter, being more critical of the Israeli government amid the war in Gaza, and honing in on the new media landscape.
- **LONE WOLF.** Stevens said she would have opposed two Senate resolutions last week that would have blocked aid to Israel, declining to say whether her positions would affect her performance among the state's Arab American communities. Sen. Elissa Slotkin (D), El-Sayed, and McMorrow supported the resolutions. (*Semafor*)
- **HER CORNER.** A spokesperson for the pro-Israel AIPAC signaled its support for Stevens, calling her a "a strong leader in advancing the U.S.-Israel relationship." AIPAC spent heavily for Stevens in her member-on-member primary against former Rep. Andy Levin (D) in 2022.
- **DEM SPECTRUM.** McMorrow is looking to ride the center lane between El-Sayed and Stevens, holding some progressive views while remaining favorable among establishment Democrats. (*Politico*)

## TENNESSEE: Shadow Race for Blackburn's Seat Kicks Off

Several GOP congressmen are interested in Sen. Marsha Blackburn's (R) seat as she runs for governor. Blackburn could have the power to appoint her Senate successor if she's elected next November.

- **EAGER.** Rep. Tim Burchett (R-o2) voiced his interest in the seat, saying he's considering a run. (CNN)
- **THE PROBLEM.** Blackburn was reelected in 2024, meaning she wouldn't be up for election until 2030. If the senator is elected next year and resigns from the Senate to be sworn in as governor, she would have the power to fill the vacancy under state law. Her successor would have to run in a special election in 2028 in order to retain the seat.
- **ANOTHER ONE.** Rep. Andy Ogles (R-o6) said he's expressed his interest in the seat as well, joking about going up against Burchett for the seat. (*The Hill*) A source familiar told independent journalist Juliegrace Brufke that Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (R-o3) "is in the mix" of individuals interested in Blackburn's seat. (X)
- **OTHER CONTENDERS.** Other potential appointees to the seat include Reps. Diana Harshbarger (R-o1), John Rose (R-o6)—who's running against Blackburn in the GOP gubernatorial primary, and David Kustoff (R-o8), Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs (R), state House Speaker Cameron Sexton (R), and Secretary of State Tre Hargett (R). (*RRH Elections*)

## TEXAS: NRSC Releases Anti-Ken Paxton Ad

Amid the Texas redistricting battle, the NRSC is releasing a digital attack ad against state Attorney General Ken Paxton (R), accusing him of undermining President Trump's efforts to gerrymander the state's congressional maps in favor of the GOP.

- **NOT A FIGHTER.** The 30-second ad argues Paxton "folded" when he said prosecuting state House Democrats that fled the state to deny a quorum would be a "challenge." The spot, titled "Cornyn Fights—Paxton Folds," highlights Sen. John Cornyn's (R) yearslong support for Trump.
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** The NRSC's first attack ad against Paxton is a risky bet for the committee. Paxton is on track to win the GOP nomination if he holds his support among the state's Republican voters. A Paxton win would put the campaign arm in the difficult position of fighting to hold the seat for Republicans while confronting its recent attacks against the party's nominee.

## HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

### Nebraska could soon enter redistricting fray

By James A. Downs and Amelia Monroe

#### REDISTRICTING ROUNDUP: Texas Democrats Forced to Evacuate After Bomb Threat

Texas lawmakers staying in Illinois were evacuated from their hotel Wednesday after the location received a threat. A local bomb squad assisted and ultimately found no threat. Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker (D) said he authorized state police to offer more security for the legislators, who left the state to deny Republicans a quorum to pass new congressional maps. (NBC News)

- **PLAY BALL.** Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) ordered the Texas Rangers to investigate fleeing Democrats for potential bribery charges. The governor said "reports indicate that many absentee Texas House Democrats have solicited or received funds to evade conducting legislative business." (KVIA) "Some Republicans in the Texas House have been discussing the possibility of starting their own investigation" into the Democratic lawmakers. (*New York Times*)
- **FBI UPDATE.** Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) announced this morning that FBI Director Kash Patel approved his "request for the FBI to assist state and local law enforcement in locating runaway Texas House Democrats." (release)
- **I'M WATCHING YOU.** EMILYs List, an outside group which backs women who support abortion rights, added "all Republicans in Texas's U.S. congressional delegation" to its "On Notice" list, the group's targeted Republicans. The group says if Republicans follow through with their plan in Texas it will recruit candidates in "potentially competitive districts." (release)
- **DISTRICTS OF THE CORN.** Nebraska may join the redistricting dance. Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE 02) said "national and state conversations are happening about Cornhusker State legislators potentially redrawing" his Omaha-based seat. But, the retiring representative said, "nothing serious" has occurred so far. A few legislators said they had not heard of talks about redistricting. The state's GOP chair said redistricting would be "interesting." (*Nebraska Examiner*)
- **INDIANA.** Vice President JD Vance meets with GOP leaders today as the Hoosier State possibly considers redistricting. Rep. Frank Mrvan (D-01) would be the obvious target, but they could also look at Rep. Andre Carson's (D-07) Indianapolis-based seat. Cracking Indy, however, would place

Democratic voters in otherwise GOP strongholds, and it's "not clear if Indiana's Republican House members would accept that kind of change." (*Indianapolis Star*)

- **ON THE BAYOU.** The Supreme Court asked this week whether the creation of a second majority-Black seat violates the U.S. Constitution as it considers a Voting Rights Act case in Louisiana. "Bringing the Voting Rights Act into question makes the case among the most important the court will rule on in its upcoming term. The decision could have nationwide implications, as it could set the standard for the degree to which race can be considered when drawing election maps after each decennial census." (*Louisiana Illuminator*)
- **ON THE BAY STATE.** Massachusetts took center stage in the redistricting fight on Wednesday as Gov. Maura Healey (D) defended the idea that other Democratic states follow Texas' lead and redistrict. The state map drew the ire of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R), who posted on social media about Massachusetts' delegation, which has nine Democrats and no Republicans, despite President Trump earning 36% of the vote. Healey defended the map for garnering bipartisan support and then signed by a GOP governor. (*Massachusetts Playbook*)
- **A THOUGHT EXERCISE.** Building a Republican-controlled district in the Bay State is "practically impossible," anyway. Former Vice President Kamala Harris won each of the commonwealth's 14 counties. Moreover, the state's most populous areas vote Democratic. "A red congressional district, no matter how wonkily drawn, would likely lack the required population size to qualify." (*Boston Globe*)
- **SOUTH CAROLINA.** Rep. Ralph Norman (R-05), who's running for governor, "wants the South Carolina General Assembly to redraw its district lines." Republicans hold a 7-1 advantage in the delegation.
- **HISTORY.** A federal court ruled that the 2021 Republican-draw map diluted Black voting power in SC-01, but the Supreme Court overturned the ruling along partisan gerrymandering lines. The current SC-06, held by Rep. Jim Clyburn (D), was drawn in the 1990s to give Black voters better representation in the Palmetto State. (Fox News)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Unless the Supreme Court guts the Voting Rights Act as a result of a landmark ruling in the aforementioned Louisiana case, it's hard to imagine any changes to Clyburn's seat surviving a court challenge.

## RACE FOR THE HOUSE: Republicans are Reeling From Massive OBBB Backlash

In a memo from the DCCC, the campaign committee alleged that Republicans' goal to sell President Trump's "big, beautiful bill" to voters will be no easy feat. In the last couple of months the Republican Party has been inundated with reconciliation backlash, making many Democrats—including the DCCC—speculate this will be "THE defining issue of the midterms."

- **UPHILL CLIMB.** A new Fox News poll shows that nearly 58% of voters oppose the new spending bill, sending the Republican Party scrambling to mitigate backlash as much as possible. Slowing down the spread of disapproval is essential, especially as Democrats make it clear that their strategy is to ride the wave of Medicaid cuts solidified in the law.
- **HARD SELL.** The DCCC memo notes that Republicans have steered away from town halls in recent months. But, those that have, have been met with extreme constituent backlash. The DCCC referenced an event with Rep. Mike Flood (R-NE 01), "where the Republican representative was booed by a crowd of roughly 700 people as he attempted to sell voters." In a leaked memo from the NCCC, it said the Republican strategy is to "maximize time during recess—without town halls." (*NOTUS*)

## KENTUCKY 04: All Is Fair in Love and Legislating

During the leadup to pass the GOP tax bill, Rep. Thomas Massie (R) entered Speaker Mike Johnson's office to say the pro-Trump super PAC ads against him "were devastating." Massie, a frequent "no" vote on GOP priorities, drew President Trump's ire for opposing parts of his agenda. "He was open to advancing the bill, though not voting for its final passage, in exchange for a truce."

- **DETENTE.** Johnson, Massie, and Trump took a phone call and brokered a deal. If Massie voted for the procedural rule, Trump would stop the ads. (*TIME*)
- **SHOTS FIRED.** Evidently, the peace did not last long. Earlier this week, MAGA Kentucky, the super PAC, released a new ad criticizing Massie for his vote against the reconciliation bill. The ad responds to Massie's own ad about voting against the bill and trying to force a vote to release the Epstein files.

### **MICHIGAN 10: Christina Hines Makes EMILYs List**

EMILYs List endorsed former special victims prosecutor Christina Hines (D) in the primary to succeed Rep. John James (R), who's running for governor. (release)

- **THE FIELD.** Hines is running against former Biden administration official Eric Chung (D), Army veteran Alex Hawkins (D), and Pontiac Mayor Tim Greimel (D).

### **OHIO 13: A Likely Rematch Waits on Redistricting**

Ohio Republicans have their candidate to take on Rep. Emilia Sykes (D), but now await the lines to change.

- **MANDATED REDRAW.** The Ohio General Assembly is set to redraw its congressional map later this fall due to a legal statute that forced a remap. The district that Sykes defeated 2024 nominee Kevin Coughlin (R) in last cycle may look drastically different the next time around.
- **HOW TO CHANGE A DISTRICT.** "The most logical maneuver for Republicans would be to move some of the Democratic voters from Sykes's Summit County into nearby districts held by" Reps. Max Miller (R-07) and Dave Joyce (R-14).
- **LINE OF DEFENSE.** "If Republicans ultimately pass a map along party lines and Democrats obtain enough signatures, the map could be subject to a ballot referendum. The current lines would likely be left in place while voters decide whether to approve or reject the new map—and the new map might face an uncertain future at the polls."
- **LESSONS LEARNED.** Coughlin "says there's a certain comfort in running a second time—especially with the promise of new lines on the horizon. Coughlin doesn't expect to out-raise an incumbent, but he's looking to see growth in his fundraising this time around." Moreover, the entire delegation has lined up behind him, whereas last cycle he ran in a contested primary.
- **FROM THE OTHER SIDE.** Democrats are prepared to hit Coughlin on previous comments about cuts to entitlements, especially after the passage of the GOP reconciliation bill. Coughlin says he doesn't support cuts to benefits. (*Hotline* reporting)

### **PENNSYLVANIA 08: Republicans Hit the Road to Mitigate OBBB Criticism**

Conference Chair Lisa McClain and Rep. Rob Bresnahan (R) made a pit stop at i2M, a plastic film coating manufacturing plant, as part of a larger Republican effort to promote President Trump's controversial legislative agenda.

- **TOUGH SELL.** There was no Democratic support for the tax and spending bill in the House. So, the burden of selling it to voters falls entirely on the Republican majority who were instrumental in ensuring its passage by Trump's July 4 deadline.



- **TALKING POINTS.** McClain and other Republicans seeking reelection are focusing on the law's overtime tax deduction, individual and corporate tax cuts, up to \$25,000 tax deduction on tips, and the elimination of taxes on Social Security benefits. This comes after Democrats across the country pledged to highlight the package's slashing of Medicaid benefits, which McClain claimed isn't true. (WIA)
- **ON THE AIR.** The Natural Resources Defense Council Action Fund launched a six-figure broadcast and digital ad buy against Bresnahan. The ads criticize the freshman for his continued stock trading and "detail how Bresnahan sold clean energy stocks and purchased fossil fuel ones days before he voted for the GOP's recent megabill." The bill curtailed clean-energy initiatives and directed money toward drilling. (*Semafor*)

### **WISCONSIN 03: Feud Between Van Orden and Mark Pocas Escalates with Explicit Social Media Post**

The feud between Reps. Mark Pocan (D-02) and Derrick Van Orden (R) hit an all-time high after Van Orden posted explicit photos on social media of a "naked man wearing a ski mask and carrying a sex toy tied to a walking stick and told his 74,000 followers that it was Pocan." The post was soon met with back-and-forth jabs of alcoholism accusations and continued circulation of the photos from the two members.

- **CONGRESSIONAL FEUD.** This was the most recent installment of an almost 3-year-old online feud between the two members. It originally started at "a campaign trail spat" in 2022 until it "evolved into a full-blown fight." The very public arguments are typically full of below-the-belt jabs: like name-calling, alcoholism speculation, and the revival of rape claims that were dismissed.
- **CRITICISM.** Former Rep. Reid Ribble (R) criticized the two for "fighting for fighting's sake" asserting that it "does nothing." He followed up with, "The fastest way to make stuff like this stop is to let go of the chain on one end." (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*)

### **HOTLINE LATEST EDITION**

## **DNC to invest \$1.5 million in New Jersey governor's race**

By Abby Turner

### **CALIFORNIA: Biden Admin Officials Host Fundraiser for Xavier Becerra**

Ron Klain, chief of staff under former President Biden, and other Democrats "will hold a fundraiser for" former Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra (D) next month. Top Becerra aides from his time in the Biden administration and in the House are "on the fundraiser host committee, which is still being formed." (*California Playbook*)

### **CONNECTICUT: GOP State Rep Forms Exploratory Committee for Gov Run**

State Rep. Ryan Fazio (R) said he's exploring a run for governor and "filed paperwork to form an exploratory committee." Gov. Ned Lamont (D) has not officially announced if he will run for reelection. On the Democratic side, state Rep. Josh Elliot (D) launched his campaign last month to challenge Lamont. (WFSB)

### **NEW JERSEY: DNC Pledges \$1.5M in GOV Race**

The DNC is pledging more than \$1.5 million in New Jersey's gubernatorial race as "recent polls show another close governor's race this year," this time between Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-11) and 2021 nominee Jack Ciattarelli (R). The DNC "has not made a similar investment in Virginia." (*New York Times*)

- **KEMP IN NJ.** Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp (R), the RGA chairman, raised around \$1 million with Ciattarelli at fundraising events across North Jersey yesterday. (*New Jersey Globe*)
- **REGISTERED REPUBLICANS INCREASE.** Over Gov. Phil Murphy's (D) "two terms as governor, New Jersey Republicans saw significant growth in voter registration compared to Democrats—but Democrats maintain a voter advantage that tops 860,000."
- **DEMS DECREASE.** Registered Republicans increased by 433,000 voters, while Democrats increased by 427,000 registered voters from 2017 to 2025. "Compared to August 2021—three months before Murphy won reelection—there are 167,000 more Republicans statewide, an 11% increase, while the number of Democrats has dropped by 47,000, about 2%." (*New Jersey Monitor*)
- **DLCC BACKS 12 CANDIDATES.** In a release first shared with Hotline, the DLCC announced twelve spotlight candidates for the New Jersey State Assembly, where Democrats currently hold the majority, along with a five-figure investment.
- **WHO'S ON THE LIST.** The candidates include: Assemblymembers Dave Bailey Jr. and Heather Simmons in LD-03, Assemblymembers Dan Hutchison and Cody Miller in LD-04, Assemblymember Andrea Katz and U.S. History teacher Anthony Angelozzi in LD-08, Assemblymembers Margie Donlon and Luanne Peterpaul in LD-11, Assemblymembers Roy Freiman and Mitchelle Drulis in LD-16, and Assemblymembers Lisa Swain and Chris Tully in LD-38. (*Hotline* reporting)

## NEW YORK: Eric Adams Denied Public Matching Funds

New York City Mayor Eric Adams (I) "was denied public matching funds for his re-election campaign, again, on Wednesday as his chances to tap into potentially millions of dollars are dwindling before the general election."

- **CASHING OUT.** Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani (D) received \$1.7 million, Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa (R) received \$1.9 million, and attorney Jim Walden (I) received \$237,000.
- **NO FUNDS FOR YOU.** Former Gov. Andrew Cuomo (I), who "did not fill out the necessary paperwork needed," did not receive public matching funds. (*The City*)
- **BACK IN THE BIG APPLE.** President Trump "has privately discussed whether to intercede in" the "fractious race for mayor to try to stop" Mamdani. "In a previously undisclosed call in recent weeks," Trump "spoke about the race directly with" Cuomo, who Trump's associates see as a "competitive independent candidate."
- **IN OR OUT.** Trump's involvement "could inject a new element of unpredictability into an already fractious contest," but "Republicans close to the administration have indicated that the president might simply sit it out." (*New York Times*)
- **KEEP YOUR ENEMIES CLOSER.** Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-21) "is helping raise campaign cash for" Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman (R), both seen as contenders in the Republican gubernatorial primary.
- **PART OF THE PAC.** "Stefanik's political team on Wednesday blasted out a fundraising email for Blakeman, who is running for a second term to lead the bellwether Long Island county," as she "has been boosting local-level Republican candidates this year with a recently formed political action committee." (*New York Playbook*)

## TENNESSEE: Marsha Blackburn Held Strong Lead Over John Rose Before Her Official Bid

An August poll (1,200 RVs; +/-2.7%) conducted by the Beacon Center of Tennessee, a conservative think tank, before Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R) announced her gubernatorial bid yesterday found her leading Rep. John Rose (R-06), 66%-14%, with 19% undecided. (release)

- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Blackburn entered the race as a clear frontrunner as this poll shows. But Rose, who has already lent his campaign \$5 million, has time to catch up as both will compete for President Trump's endorsement.

## **VIRGINIA: Abigail Spanberger Drops First Negative TV Ad**

Former Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D) released her first negative ad against Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears (R). The 30-second spot, titled "Real Issues," features footage of Earle-Sears' recent CNN interview, where she "dodged a question about whether she supported" federal government layoffs "and said she wanted to talk about 'real issues.'"

- **WHERE TO WATCH.** The ad "is backed by a six-figure expenditure and will air in the Richmond and Norfolk media markets and on digital platforms throughout the state, according to Spanberger's campaign." (NBC News)
- **DOWN THE BALLOT.** The RSLC PAC and "the Republican Attorneys General Association teamed up with" Gov. Glenn Youngkin's (R) "Secure Your Vote initiative to launch a seven-figure investment" The investment includes "direct mail, digital outreach, and grassroots efforts to support" state Attorney General Jason Miyares (R) "and Republicans running in House of Delegates races." (*The Hill*)
- **ANOTHER DEM AD UP.** Former Delegate Jay Jones (D) released his first television ad for the general election in his bid for state attorney general today. The spot, titled "Stand Strong," is "a part of a six-figure ad buy going up across Virginia." The ad features two sheriffs and a county prosecutor "vouching for Jones's record on public safety and law and order from his time as assistant attorney general and a former Virginia state delegate." (*The Hill*)
- **NOW I'M READY.** Jones accepted a debate with Miyares for October after previously declining other debate invitations. (X)

## **OVERLOOKED**

### **Elected Musical Chairs**

By Amelia Monroe

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) is officially running for governor. Blackburn isn't up for reelection until 2030. If she were to win, she would have the authority to appoint her successor. It's not an uncommon sight to see a term-limited governor eye a bid for the Senate. But, recently there's been a shift—senators are eyeing a chance to hold their state's highest office. Since 1986, 14 senators have run for governor, with about 73% of them securing the seat. A sitting governor appointing their own replacement in the Senate is uncommon but not unheard of. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) was appointed to replace her father, outgoing Sen. and then-Gov. Frank Murkowski (R), in 2002. Occasionally, sitting governors appoint themselves to the Senate—which doesn't usually end well.

