

The Forward Eagle

Compiled Weekly
for
The Riverdale Senior Services Center
Bronx, NY

“Let us endeavor mutually to enlighten one another.”

Current events

1.

On January 13, 2026 five Republican Senators joined Democrats to advance legislation in the U.S. Senate to oppose further US military action in Venezuela. Less than 48 hours later, the effort collapsed after a barrage of calls from the Executive Branch to the five GOP defectors. It's the latest example of a gap that exists between legislative and executive powers of the Federal government.

Jeanne Shaheen, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator from New Hampshire, knows well the political liability Democrats have tolerated this past year. “What can we do to address the policy decisions this administration is making?” she asked.

2.

A federal judge Thursday decried what he said were “breathtaking” constitutional violations by senior Trump administration officials and called the president an “authoritarian” who expects everyone in the executive branch to “toe the line absolutely.”

In remarks laced with outrage and disbelief, U.S. District Judge William Young said Donald Trump and top officials have a “fearful approach” to freedom of speech that would seek to “exclude from participation everyone who doesn’t agree with them.”

Young, who was appointed to United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts by President Ronald Reagan in 1985, leveled the searing critique during a hearing in Boston to determine the appropriate remedies for the administration’s detentions of pro-Palestinian students last year. The judge had ruled in September that senior administration officials engaged in an illegal effort to arrest and deport noncitizen students based on their activism.

This past week, he again denounced the administration’s conduct in unusually stark terms. “Talking straight here,” he said. “The big problem in this case is that the Cabinet secretaries and ostensibly, the president of the United States, are not honoring the First Amendment.”

3.

Miami television station WPLG decided in August 2025 to cut ties with the ABC national network. WPLG had been affiliated with ABC for sixty-nine years.

Since the 1990s, local TV stations such as WPLG have paid network fees for the rights to air national network programming such as *Shark Tank* and *Good Morning America*. However, after negotiating a new contract for months, WPLG concluded that ABC was costing the local station too much money. “If we had taken the package that was given to us, we would have to do what many stations across the country have done, and initiate layoffs and cutbacks” the station’s president said.

Instead, WPLG, which is owned by Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway, made a rare choice to operate as an unaffiliated station, freeing up a significant portion of its budget for local programming.

4.

Isaac Stein, an IRS attorney furloughed last year had dreams of running a hot dog cart since he was a boy. His boyhood dream has come true.

Customers now flock to the corner of M and First Street NE in Washington D.C. for a suit-clad Stein to sling what he calls “the only honest ripoff in D.C.,” a soft drink and a hot dog prepared the “correct” way (with spicy brown mustard and sauerkraut) for \$10, or the “wrong” way (with any other toppings) for \$11.

The hot dog cart has been a hit. And Stein’s isn’t the first such startup. For centuries across American cities, food carts have served as a common

vehicle for entrepreneurial ambition. Typically low-income immigrants with a strong work ethic and culinary skills have entered the trade.

5.

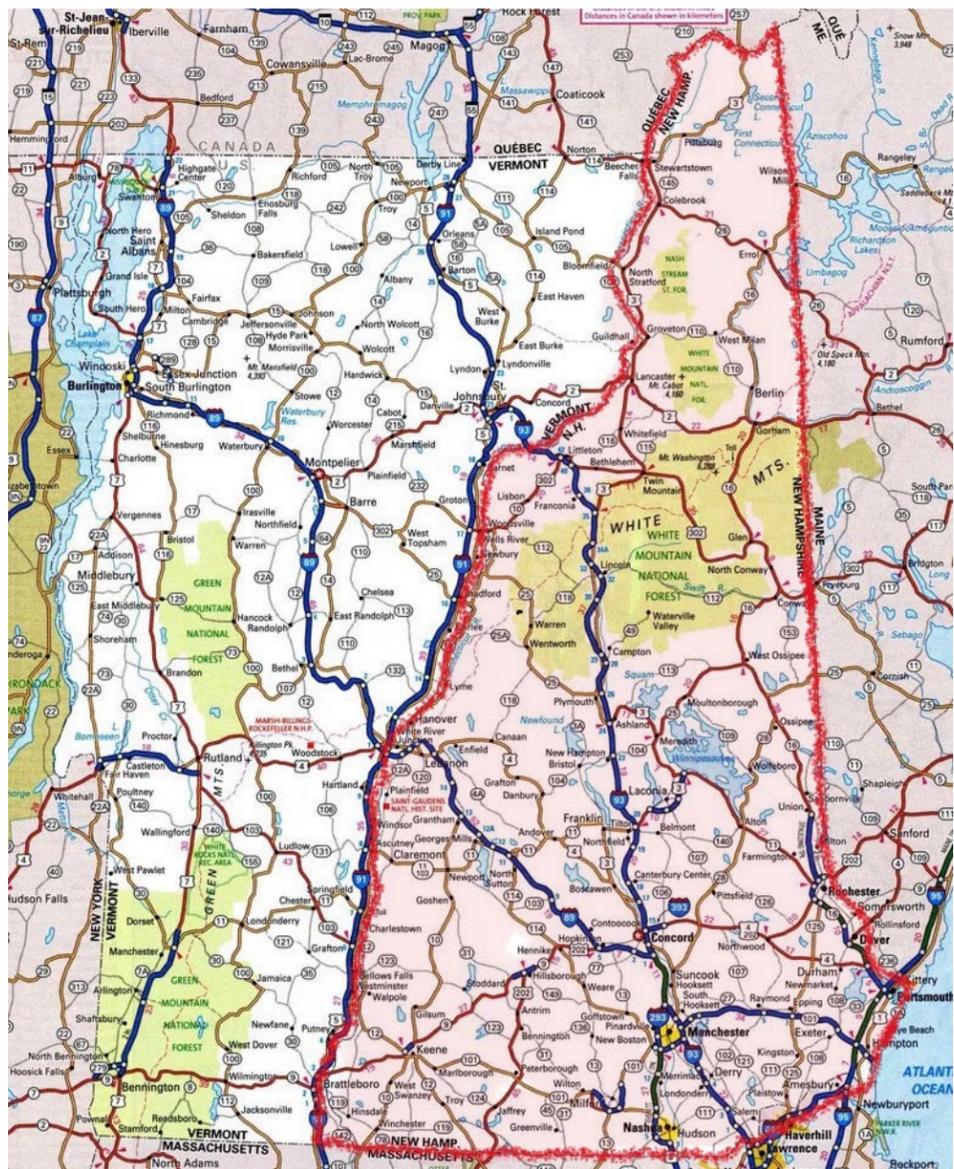
The city of Chicago does not have a single food cart licensed to sell hot dogs on its city sidewalks, according to a Chicago Policy Center analysis. This de facto ban speaks to a municipal political structure unique to the Windy City.

For decades, the city has not allowed food carts of any kind. Restaurant interests have lobbied city bureaucrats to keep street vendors from legally operating.

Meanwhile, vendors are still out selling sliced fruit, tamales and other street food illicitly across the city. An Illinois Policy Institute study uncovered the significance of this shadow economy. An estimated 1,500 unlicensed street vendors serve 50,000 meals a day. They generate \$35.2 million in annual sales with a total yearly income of over \$16 million. The food cart vendors have created 2,100 jobs and support 5,000 dependents.

In 2015, after community pressure, the city created a new license for food carts. Chicago South Siders Abraham and Maria Celio, owners of Yolis Tamales, were elated. They worked for more than a year to custom-fabricate and launch Chicago’s first licensed tamale carts in 2016.

Nearly a decade later, there are just 14 licensed food carts of any kind in Chicago. Compare that with New York City, home to 7,000 licensed food cart and truck vendors.



New Hampshire Map

New Hampshire has a notable, albeit small, separatist movement, primarily driven by the Free State Project (FSP), a libertarian initiative encouraging members to move to NH to influence the state government towards greater individual liberty, sometimes advocating for secession. FSP's tactics involve electing libertarians and reducing federal influence.

Word of the week

defeasible

/dəˈfiːzəbəl/

adjective

Law and Philosophy

1. open in principle to revision, valid objection, forfeiture, or annulment.

“Isaac Newton (1643-1727) thus helped establish an important principle, namely that scientific knowledge is defeasible, subject to revision and challenge when new and better evidence becomes available.”

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Tim Forward Editor

This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at The Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events & Discussion.