



A young woman prays on Sept. 17 near the site where conservative activist and commentator Charlie Kirk, an ally of President Donald Trump, was fatally shot on Sept. 10. The site is now adorned with a large U.S. flag, as students return to classes at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. JIM URQUHART/REUTERS

## Nation grapples with how to talk about Kirk's beliefs

Stephanie Murray Arizona Republic | USA TODAY NETWORK

Four days after Charlie Kirk was killed by a political assassin, the members of a north Phoenix church he frequented already were grappling with how to defend his legacy.

The 31-year-old founder of Turning Point USA had worked with Dream City Church leaders to help elect President Donald Trump in 2024. He spoke there regularly about his Christian faith and conservative politics.

Senior Pastor Luke Barnett reorganized his regular Sunday services to take questions about the slain activist. Dozens of people stood in the aisles and waited for a turn with the microphone.

In question after question, attendees said they were worried about how to protect Kirk's legacy. Some of Kirk's ideological opponents were sharing their indifference about his death online, they noted, and others were saying his rhetoric had contributed to the politically violent climate.

Plus, Kirk's comments on controversial issues such as

See BELIEFS, Page 15A



A protester advocating for gun reform holds a sign on Sept. 11 in front of the White House after conservative activist and commentator Charlie Kirk was shot dead Sept. 10 during an event at Utah Valley University. NATHAN HOWARD/REUTERS

**INSIDE:** Classes resume at Utah Valley University, site of shooting; FBI Director Patel faces more questions. 14A

## Protection for jobs sought as AI grows

Kelly wants to create fund to help workers

Ronald J. Hansen

Arizona Republic  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Sen. Mark Kelly is urging a new tax on artificial intelligence company revenues to create a fund used to protect American jobs and ensure “shared prosperity” as the emerging technology becomes further engrained in daily life.

The Arizona Democrat published a 24-page white paper on Sept. 17 that lays out his preferred policy recommendations on a subject area where there are signs the public is wary of the effects of AI, especially on jobs.

In doing so, Kelly would seem to keep himself in the center of public opinion and as he generates an undercurrent of speculation about a possible presidential run in 2028.

“As a nation, we must seize this moment to build an AI boom for all, not another tech bubble for the few,” Kelly wrote.

“We must build a strong and sustainable AI industry that safeguards American workers and consumers, drives innovation, and powers the infrastructure of tomorrow. At the heart of these proposals is a simple principle: AI companies must be forces for strengthening, not straining, our workforce, energy infrastructure, and public resources.”

His “AI Horizon Fund” would draw funds from the “enormous profits that leading AI companies generate” and be distributed outside the normal budgeting rules for Congress. It doesn't estimate the amount of money it would raise or the rules for paying into the fund.

The funds would be used for things like training workers in jobs presumably more immune from AI pressures,

See JOBS, Page 15A

## Sotomayor defends free speech in wake of Kirk's death



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor's comments on Sept. 16 came during an event at the New York Law School celebrating Constitution and Citizenship Day. JACQUELYN MARTIN/POOL VIA REUTERS FILE

### Justice calls social media 'one of the largest causes of misinformation'

Maureen Groppe and Dan Morrison  
USA TODAY

NEW YORK – Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor on Sept. 16 jumped into the free speech debate swirling around the killing of Charlie Kirk.

“Every time I listen to a lawyer-trained representative saying we should criminalize free speech in some way, I think to myself, ‘That law school failed,’” she said at an event on civic

education.

Sotomayor did not identify any particular lawyer. But her remarks came a day after Attorney General Pam Bondi vowed to go after “those who engage in hate speech.”

“There's free speech and then there's hate speech,” Bondi said Sept. 15 on Katie Miller's podcast, “and there is no place, especially now, especially after what happened to Charlie, in our society.”

Vice President JD Vance, who has a law degree from Yale Law School, has said anyone celebrating Kirk's death should be fired from their jobs.

“Call them out, and hell, call their employer,” Vance said Sept. 15 when he

guest-hosted the podcast Kirk started.

Sotomayor called social media “one of the largest causes of misinformation on the internet” and said Americans need to know the difference between a president and a king.

“I think if people understood these things from the beginning they would be more informed as to what would be important in a democracy in terms of what people can or should not do,” she said.

Her remarks on free speech came in response to a question about the role of law schools in instilling civic awareness.

See FREE SPEECH, Page 12A

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