



HIGH 57, LOW 35

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026

PRICES MAY VARY OUTSIDE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AREA



washingtontimes.com \$1.50

## ELECTION 2026

# Democratic candidates turn against Schumer

Demand different leader in Senate

By LINDSEY MCPHERSON

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Senate Democratic primaries this year are turning into proxy wars over Charles E. Schumer's leadership amid a growing desire for wholesale change within the party.

Whether in competitive open races or long-shot bids to unseat incumbents, liberal Senate candidates in at least 13 states are opposed to Mr. Schumer's continued role as the chamber's Democratic leader.

"I absolutely oppose Schumer's continued leadership due to his failure to confront [President] Trump's trashing of the Constitution, his ongoing support for the genocide in Gaza, and because polling shows Americans have lost faith in the Democratic

Party," Karen Breslin, a lawyer and political science professor running for the Senate in Colorado, told The Washington Times. "The party will not redeem itself without cleaning house."

Ms. Breslin is one of four Democrats running against incumbent Sen. John Hickenlooper, and those four say Mr. Schumer should be replaced. One of those candidates, A.J. Zimpfer, said he would support liberal Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez if she runs against Mr. Schumer in New York in 2028.

The anti-Schumer sentiment reflects a broader rebuke of the Democratic Party as out of touch with its base and incapable of effectively countering Mr. Trump.

"The public mood is shifting, and it is

» see SENATE | A4

## TRANSPORTATION

# Airlines spared from steep consumer protection penalties with Trump rules

By SUSAN FERRECHIO

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Trump administration is poised to relax fines on airlines that violate consumer protections, a move aimed at further reducing the regulatory burden imposed during the Biden era.

The Transportation Department's Office of Aviation Consumer Protection filed notice Monday that it planned to "de-prioritize" certain actions to enforce regulations.

For airline passengers, the revisions mean fewer fines for airlines that fail to adhere to consumer protections, such



as those related to airline seating, delayed or canceled flights, and lost luggage.

Instead, the department plans to issue warnings and work to correct the violations, which likely will spare the airlines from having to pay millions of dollars in civil penalties.

A Transportation Department spokesperson told The Washington Times that the updated regulation "will

shift toward preventing violations before they occur to create a better experience for travelers."

When violations occur, the spokesperson said, "the goal is to make sure consumers get the money or help they are owed as quickly as possible."

Consumer advocates warned that lifting government fines could undermine the effectiveness of the Biden administration's stepped-up regulations on the commercial airline industry, which proponents say have compelled airlines to improve their services.

» see AIRLINES | A7

## IMMIGRATION

# Migrants turn to habeas corpus blitz to stall deportations

By STEPHEN DINAN

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

As the Trump administration moves to arrest and detain more illegal immigrants, their attorneys have figured out a way to fight back in regular federal courts by filing habeas corpus cases demanding that judges order their release.

The cases are flooding into the courts in record numbers. More than 3,000 alien

habeas petitions were filed in December alone, up from just a couple of dozen cases a month in 2024.

The filing of the case is usually enough to slow down a deportation. In nearly every case, migrants are doing better than that by winning an order that they be granted a bond hearing in immigration courts and, in some cases, even being granted an outright release.

Immigrant rights lawyers say they

have been left with no choice after the Homeland Security Department and the Justice Department issued new interpretations of the law last year, finding that a wide swath of migrants who sneaked across the border are no longer eligible to ask for a bond hearing before an immigration judge.

Without recourse to the specialized immigration courts, the migrants have rushed to the regular federal district

courts with their habeas corpus petitions.

"The surge in habeas filings isn't about detainees bypassing immigration court; it's about immigration courts no longer having the authority to conduct bond hearings. When bond is taken off the table, federal court becomes the only place left to argue for release," said Adriana Coppola, supervising attorney

» see MIGRANTS | A4

## POLITICS

# Immigration agents on way to Minnesota after fraud allegations. A5

## NATION

# Deaths of on-duty law enforcement down by 25% in 2025. A6

## WORLD

# Pope closes Vatican's Holy Year by blasting hate, consumerism. A8

## REGION

# U.S. attorney credits federal crackdown for D.C. crime decline. A10

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 5



7 02803 87040 7

INDEX

Commentary B1 | Comics B9 | Dear Abby B10 | Editorials B2 | Horoscope B10 | Letters B2 | Life B10 | Nation A6 | Politics A3 | Puzzles B9 | Region A10 | Sports B12 | World A8

America's Newspaper



washingtontimes.com

## CHINA

# Maduro's fall strips Beijing of key oil ally

U.S. raid reveals air defense flaws

By BILL GERTZ

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

China is losing a key regional ally and major source of oil from the U.S. capture of Venezuelan strongman Nicolas Maduro, whose leftist regime was a hoped-for part of Beijing's global expansion initiatives, security experts say.

The U.S. military operation took place early Saturday, shortly after a delegation of Chinese officials met with Mr. Maduro in Caracas. Analysts say his ouster highlights the limits of China's power.

President Trump sidestepped a question about the impact on China's oil imports from Venezuela after the daring commando capture of Mr. Maduro, dubbed Operation Absolute Resolve.

Asked about the impact of the military strike on U.S. relations with China, Russia and Iran, nations that had close ties to the Maduro regime, Mr. Trump said the U.S. would not block them from future Venezuelan oil sales after "we get things straightened out."

"But in terms of other countries that want oil, we're in the oil business, we're going to sell it to them," he said.

Beijing denounced the military operation as a violation of Venezuela's sovereignty and international law and called for the U.S. to release the autocratic ruler and his wife, Cilia Flores, who are in U.S. custody in New York City.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian declined to say whether the operation will result in consequences for U.S.-China relations if appeals for the couple's release are ignored.

» see CHINA | A9

► Military force among options in acquisition of Greenland. A8



**CLEARED:** Southwest Airlines was granted a waiver in December from a final \$11 million payment owed for significant flight delays in 2022.

## SECURITY

# Ukraine's war drone success rewrites U.S. battle plans

By JOHN T. SEWARD

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

U.S. military spending on small drones has quadrupled since the war in Ukraine demonstrated the devastating capabilities of these remote systems, and data shows that the money is being spent among dozens of American companies amid Pentagon plans to enable troops to build and 3D-print their own drones.

The spending is slated to increase this year. The defense authorization recently passed by Congress earmarked some \$1.7 billion for small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS), a significant jump from the \$398 million spent in 2022, when the Russia-Ukraine war began.

Obviant, a Virginia-based firm that uses artificial intelligence to track military spending across various areas, shared data analytics with Threat Status at The Washington Times. The data shows that the vast majority of the sUAS funding is being spent on contracts under Army programs.

The Times and Obviant collaborated to examine how U.S. companies have scrambled to compete for a total of \$4.7 billion that the Pentagon has spent on

» see DRONE | A9