



AI leaders struggle to answer for risks

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Next steps in Pike case are uncertain



Photographs are set up in memory of Colleen Slemmer, the woman Christa Pike was convicted of murdering in 1995, on Sept. 30, the day of Pike's was scheduled to be executed at a Tennessee prison. DENNY SIMMONS/NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

Inmate may face the possibility of second execution attempt

Amanda Lee Myers
USA TODAY

With the astonishing news that Christa Pike is conscious, talking and making a “medically unprecedented” recovery following her botched execution, Tennessee is now facing a critical question: Will the state try to kill her again?

“Against all odds, Christa Pike is conscious, speaking, and continues to receive critical medical care,” her attorneys said in a statement on Oct. 6. “Her prognosis remains unclear but, at a minimum, we expect a long recovery.”

They said that despite “severe damage” to Pike’s arms, “she is still handcuffed and shackled to the bed.”

“She survived two complete rounds



Pike

of lethal injection per Tennessee’s protocol, despite her attorneys’ warning to the state of specific challenges with her veins,” her attorneys said. “She is the only person known to have survived a complete execution attempt in the U.S. Christa is a survivor and will take recovery one day at a time.”

So far, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has not responded to repeated calls from Pike’s attorneys and death penalty observers to commute her sentence to life in prison. That leaves open the possibility that Pike will face a second execution, even after her attorneys said the first attempt on Sept. 30 amounted to unconstitutionally cruel and unusual

punishment.

“We’re in uncharted territory,” said Robin Maher, executive director of the nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center, which does not take a stance on the death penalty.

“The U.S. Supreme Court has not decided whether a second execution attempt would violate the constitution since 1947,” Maher told USA TODAY. “These are questions that have never needed to be asked before and no one knows the answers.”

Tennessee was supposed to execute Pike, 50, by lethal injection on Sept. 30 for the brutal and prolonged 1995 murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer. The execution failed after Pike survived

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CA leaders condemn Trump’s remarks

President calls potential attacks on San Diego, LA ‘very small price to pay’

James Ward
USA TODAY NETWORK

A comment by President Donald Trump during an Oct. 5 campaign rally in Nebraska sparked immediate backlash from California leaders after he appeared to suggest that the potential destruction of Los Angeles or San Diego would be “a small price to pay” amid tensions tied to the war with Iran.

Speaking at a midterm election rally in Grand Island, Nebraska, Trump discussed higher gasoline prices resulting from the conflict and argued that Americans should accept the economic impact.

“They can take out a city. Let ’em take out Los Angeles, let ’em take out San Diego. This is a very small price to pay,” Trump said, adding that the war was nearly over and describing the costs as “a small price to pay for keeping the world safe.”

The remarks quickly circulated online, drawing sharp condemnation from California officials who accused the president of treating millions of Californians as expendable.

Trump has shrugged off cost-of-living concerns stemming from the Iran conflict before, and he previously downplayed his concerns about the potential for Iran or its allies to launch an attack on U.S. soil.

The comment in rural Nebraska, a state Trump won with more than 55% of the vote in the 2024 presidential election, targeted Democratic-run cities in California, a solidly Democratic state the president often criticizes.

Gov. Gavin Newsom responded on social media by linking Trump’s remarks to the administration’s recent deployments of federal forces into California.

One year on, Trump’s Gaza plan stalled

Deal hasn’t halted Israeli fire or disarmed Hamas

REUTERS

JERUSALEM – President Donald Trump’s year-old plan to end the Gaza war has stalled, with Israel mounting near-daily attacks and occupying around two-thirds of the shattered enclave where Palestinians face dire conditions.

The initial phase resulted in a cease-

fire on Oct. 10, 2025, and secured the release of the last remaining hostages seized in Hamas’ 2023 attacks on Israel, along with freedom for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held by Israel.

But other goals, including disarming Hamas, securing Israeli withdrawal and rebuilding Gaza, appear far from reach.

What was in the plan?

The first phase of Trump’s 20-point

plan included a suspension of all military operations, Israeli withdrawal from part of the enclave, hostage and prisoner releases and a surge in aid.

Later phases foresaw Hamas disarming and new governance by a Palestinian body overseen by the Trump-led Board of Peace. Israel would gradually withdraw, handing territory to a temporary International Stabilization Force, or ISF.

“Gaza will be redeveloped for the

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“After sending the National Guard and Marines to occupy California, Donald Trump is now saying our foreign enemies should ‘take out’ Los Angeles and San Diego,” Newsom wrote. “He is deranged and dangerous.”

White House Communications Director Steven Cheung said on Oct. 6 that Trump was talking about protecting U.S. cities by preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

“He was clearly stating U.S. cities would have been threatened if a nuclear Iran hadn’t been stopped,” Cheung said on social media. “America is safer because of the President. Iran has no

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