



## Officials attempt to rein in federal government for violating people's rights

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COMMENTARY

## Battle for Pres. Trump's brain at SOTU address



President Donald Trump will deliver the State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress in the House chamber on Feb. 24. JOSHUA ROBERTS/REUTERS FILE

### Midterms or legacy could dominate speech

Susan Page  
USA TODAY

The state of President Donald Trump's union is troubled. When Trump delivers the State of the Union on Feb. 24, the audience in the House chamber will likely include mem-

bers of a Supreme Court that just outlawed the stiff tariffs that have been his primary economic and national-security cudgel. A key part of his administration has been partially shut down in a ferocious showdown over his aggressive immigration enforcement. And congressional Republicans, bracing for what now looks like difficult midterm elections, will be watching for which Donald Trump climbs the dais. Call it a battle for Trump's brain.

Some see the effort to refocus his message on kitchen-table problems – and even to acknowledge that those problems are real – as an existential challenge to their own political futures and the GOP's continued control of Congress in November. That has not been the president's priority so far. Since he signed the One Big

See SOTU, Page 2A



Lawmakers in Indiana announced they have struck a deal to potentially locate the Chicago Bears' new stadium Hammond, Indiana. MARC LEBRYK/IMAGN IMAGES

## Bears are 'committed' to stadium in Indiana

Statement from team supports possible move

Tom Ackerman  
Springfield State Journal-Register  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Despite recent work in Springfield, the Chicago Bears appear to be poised to leave the state.

Indiana lawmakers announced Feb. 19 that they have struck a deal to potentially locate the football team's new stadium Hammond, Indiana, pending the passage of the bill, according to a report from the IndyStar.

The Chicago Bears released a statement on Feb. 19 further supporting their possible move to northwest Indiana.

"The passage of SB 27 would mark the most meaningful step forward in our stadium planning efforts to date," the Bears wrote in a statement, speaking about Indiana legislation. "We are committed to finishing the remaining site-specific necessary due diligence

See BEARS, Page 4A

## DOT threatens to cut \$128M in Illinois highway funding

Hannah Hudnall  
Peoria Journal Star  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The U.S. Department of Transportation is threatening to pull \$128 million in federal highway funding in Illinois due to the state issuing what the DOT called "illegal foreign licenses."

The department made the announcement Tuesday following a re-

view of the state's non-domiciled commercial driver's license (CDL) program by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

### Why is the DOT threatening to revoke Illinois funding?

The DOT said in its statement Tuesday that FMCSA found one-in-five non-domiciled CDLs in Illinois were "issued

illegally." In a letter to Gov. JB Pritzker and Illinois Director of Driver Services Kevin Duesterhaus, FMCSA wrote that non-domiciled CDLs were issued without the state verifying drivers' lawful presence in the U.S., and were made valid beyond the expiration of the drivers' lawful presence in the U.S.

As a result of the review, which was initiated in August 2025, the DOT is de-

manding Illinois:  
• Immediately pause issuance of non-domiciled CDLs.  
• Identify all unexpired non-domiciled CDLs that fail to comply with FMCSA regulations.  
• Revoke and reissue all noncompliant non-domiciled CDLs if they comply with the federal requirements.

See FUNDING, Page 2A

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