



Costs of Iran war remain in flux

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Tankers sail in the Persian Gulf March 11 near the Strait of Hormuz, as seen from the United Arab Emirates. Shipping around the strait has come to a halt since the United States and Israel launched coordinated strikes on Iran on Feb. 28. REUTERS

Prominent Springfield hotel on market for \$5.3M

Claire Grant
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD – You can be the proud owner of a hotel right down the road from the Illinois State Capitol Complex.

The State House Inn, a trademark collection by Wyndham at 101 E. Adams St., has been on the market since November 2025.

The listing on Century 21 Commercial sets the starting price for the 125-room hotel at \$5.3 million, or roughly \$42,400 per room.

The hotel has 6,000 square feet of meeting space across the two-acre lot and is walking distance from downtown, the capital and the Lincoln Home site.

While still listed for sale, according to Sangamon County tax parcel records, the hotel was technically sold on Dec. 18, 2025, to Syham SF Inc. for a special sale of \$0. Special sales occur in circumstances of excess property tax or sold under different terms and conditions.

“The transfer recorded in December 2025 was a separate transaction that was not affiliated with Mark Ahmad or his client,” Marketing & Brand Communications for Century 21 Courtney Cager confirmed with The State Journal-Register.

Shyam SF Inc. president is listed as Aarti Patel, according to the Illinois Business Entity Database, and lists the principal address of the corporation as the same address as the hotel.

More about the State House Inn

Originally built in 1961 as The Boutique Hotel, in 2018 the city center lodging changed hands to be a Red Roof Inn’s premium Red Collection, before transitioning into a Wyndham-brand hotel during the coronavirus pandemic in June 2020.

The hotel also had a full facelift during the pandemic in a building-wide renovation to bring the style into a

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New Iranian leader vows to avenge dead

Says Strait of Hormuz will remain blocked

Thao Nguyen, James Powel, Jeanine Santucci, Andrea Riquier, Ignacio Calderon and Suhail Bhat
USA TODAY

In his first message to the world as Iran’s new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei promised revenge for his country’s dead and said the critical Strait of Hormuz would remain closed amid the escalating U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

“We will not overlook the vengeance for the blood of your martyrs,” his address to the Iranian people said.

Khamenei’s message, read aloud by an announcer on state TV, came as oil prices again topped \$100 a barrel and two tankers burned in Iraqi waters after an overnight attack. Three ships were attacked on March 11.

The new supreme leader did not appear personally to deliver the message,

nor was a recording of his voice played over the broadcast. Khamenei was reportedly wounded in the Feb. 28 air-strikes that killed his father, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, and several family members in Tehran. Mojtaba Khamenei has not been seen or photographed since he was named to succeed his father.

Iran stepped up its attacks on oil and transport facilities across the Middle East, setting two fuel tankers on fire in Iraqi waters, Reuters reported. Iraqi authorities said they were hit by explosive-laden Iranian boats, killing at least one crew member.

At least 16 ships have been struck in the region since the war began. Shipping around the Strait of Hormuz, which carries around a fifth of the world’s oil, has come to a halt since the United States and Israel launched coordinated strikes on Iran on Feb. 28.

Wright: Strait ‘will be opened’

Energy Secretary Chris Wright told

CNN on March 12 that the Strait of Hormuz “will be opened” but “you’ve got to go through short-term pain to solve a long-term problem” by “defanging Iran.”

Wright said the United States would start escorting oil tankers through Hormuz once U.S. Navy ships are freed up from military operations, but he provided no timeline. “When we can afford some additional assets to move tankers through the Straits of Hormuz, we will do that,” he said.

Meanwhile, oil prices climbed above \$100 per barrel in early trading and were just under that early on March 12. Iran said the world should prepare for oil to cost \$200 per barrel amid the destabilization in the region. Wright told CNN that oil is “unlikely” to get that high.

“I’m not going to guess on short-term trading that’s based on psychology more than flows of oil,” Wright said.

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Woman charged in child abuse case appears in court

Steven Spearie
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD — A Springfield woman arraigned in Sangamon County court on nine counts, including five aggravated criminal battery charges, was ordered detained in jail at a March 10 hearing.

Ashley C. Wardlow, 40, of the 1900 block of North 20th Street pleaded not guilty to the charges, which also included unlawful restraint, domestic battery and two counts of endangering health/life of a child.

Wardlow’s husband, co-defendant

Willie E. Wardlow, had his court appearance moved to March 11.

Ashley Wardlow, wearing a jail-issued jumpsuit and glasses, was seated at the defense table for the hearing. She mostly stared straight ahead.

A woman who was inside the couple’s home on March 8 witnessed a child tied up and blindfolded. She began filming and took the evidence to the Springfield Police.

At the home, SPD officers found a 5-year-old, identified as “A.W.” in court Tuesday, who was malnourished, had marks and scars on her body, including lacerations to a bottom lip, multiple bro-

ken bones and a sock covering a burn on her hand, said Sangamon County Assistant State’s Attorney Kendra Hansel.

After being transported to a local hospital, “A.W.” became lethargic and suffered two brain bleeds leading to surgery, Hansel told the court.

Hansel said if “A.W.” would have still been in the house, “no one would have noticed.”

Hansel said that Willie Wardlow told police that “A.W.” left her hand in the oven and the sock “fused with the burn.”

“A.W.,” according to Willie Wardlow’s comments to officers, “defecates everywhere,” Hansel told the court. Ashley

Wardlow acknowledged that her husband “strikes” “A.W.”

Hansel pointed out that Ashley Wardlow pleaded guilty to battery/bodily harm to a child in Sangamon County in 2020. She was placed on probation.

Wardlow’s attorney, Stephanie Hammer, said while the allegations were “emotional and gut-wrenching to hear,” Wardlow denied many of the statements attributed to her.

In appealing for her release, Hammer said when services were offered to Wardlow and “people are at the ready, she is

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