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## Hispanic shoppers turn to online buying



The Tien Rong Gift Shop in Newark, New Jersey, which sells everything from stuffed animals to imitation jewelry, has reported weeks of sluggish sales. NICHOLAS P. BROWN/REUTERS

## Economists cite fear of Trump immigration raids

Siddharth Cavale  
and Nicholas P. Brown  
REUTERS

NEW YORK – In Newark’s heavily Latino Ironbound district, Rosa Ludena works the register of the electronics shop she’s owned since 2003. A wall of phone cases appears on display behind her, but few shoppers are around to buy them. Traffic has slowed, and some of her customers have told her they fear leaving the house due to a spate of high-profile anti-immigration raids champi-

oned by President Donald Trump. Those actions – including a headline-grabbing raid of a fish market in January a few blocks from her store – have scared people into doing more shopping online, Ludena said. “In this area, it’s a lot of Hispanics, and they are afraid to go out because of immigration raids,” says Ludena, 51, a U.S. citizen who emigrated from Ecuador in 1999. “If sales decrease, how will I pay rent?” The Trump administration has conducted high-profile raids nationwide at Home Depot stores where day laborers often congregate, Walmart parking lots, strawberry and peach farms, and a Hyundai Motor battery plant. The expanded approach to immigration enforcement has changed the routine for some Hispanic consumers, and businesses are seeing it, according to in-

terviews and statements from two dozen people, including business owners, community leaders, analysts and CEOs of publicly traded companies. “A shift to online purchasing in certain communities is unsurprising given concerns over changing immigration policies and their enforcement,” said Mark Mathews, chief economist at the National Retail Federation. The White House, in response to Reuters’ reporting, reiterated that its immigration enforcement operations are focused on anti-crime efforts and that “making American communities safer will create an environment in which all businesses can thrive in the long term and their customers can feel safe.”

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## Longest U.S. gov shutdown ends

Here’s what New York leaders are saying

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The longest government shutdown in U.S. history has ended after more than a month. President Donald Trump signed legislation late Wednesday to reopen the federal government, hours after the House of Representatives voted 222–209 to approve a funding package. The move ends weeks of disruption that left hundreds of thousands of federal workers without pay and shuttered key services, from food assistance programs to national parks. Under the agreement, federal employees will receive back pay for the missed weeks. Federal agencies, pre-schools, and food benefit programs will resume operations, and delayed economic data releases will restart.

Trump signs bill, blames Democrats

Trump signed the bill around 10:25 p.m. Wednesday, shortly after the House vote. In televised remarks from the Oval Office, he blamed Democrats for the shutdown. “The extremists in the other party insisted on creating the longest government shutdown in American history, and they did it purely for political reasons,” Trump said, surrounded by House Republicans. All but two House Republicans voted in favor of the measure, while only six Democrats supported it. The Senate had approved the deal earlier in the week after several Democrats dropped policy demands over health care to end the stalemate. Gov. Kathy Hochul criticized Republican leadership following the deal, saying the shutdown caused unnecessary hardship for New Yorkers.

Hochul: Shutdown created ‘chaos’ for New Yorkers

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## Posts critical of Kirk face free speech test

### FL wildlife worker fired over social media post

Stephany Matat  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE, FL – A federal judge seemed to agree that a Florida wildlife biologist’s Instagram joke about whales reacting to the shooting of conservative activist Charlie Kirk was political speech protected by the First Amendment. U.S. District Judge Mark Walker heard arguments Nov. 10 in what may be the first lawsuit in Florida by an employee who was fired for a social media post

about Kirk’s Sept. 10 assassination. Walker did not rule immediately, but his decision may sway other federal judges in how they view the speech rights of public employees who comment on political issues in their off hours. Brittney Brown, who worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as a biologist, reposted another account’s post on her private Instagram story. It said, “the whales are deeply saddened to learn of the shooting of charlie kirk, haha just kidding, they care exactly as much as charlie kirk cared about children being shot in their classrooms, which is to say, not at all.” Hard-right social media account Lib-

softTikTok posted her LinkedIn page and a screenshot from her Instagram story on Sept. 14. The account posted: “Your tax dollars pay her salary. She should be fired ASAP.” Brown, who had worked at the agency for about seven years, was fired Sept. 15 as others in the public and private sectors across Florida and the nation also were undergoing termination or disciplinary action for critical social media posts related to Kirk’s death. When the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission fired Brown, it posted on X: “The comments and actions of this individual are not in line with the

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Conservative activist Charlie Kirk’s murder, which circulated on social media after he was shot at a public event, evoked passionate reactions from supporters and detractors, with some people being fired over their comments about Kirk. LOGAN NEWELL/THE COLORADOAN FILE

