



SEN. LINDSEY GRAHAM, TRUMP ALLY, DIES AT 71

STORIES • PAGE 7A

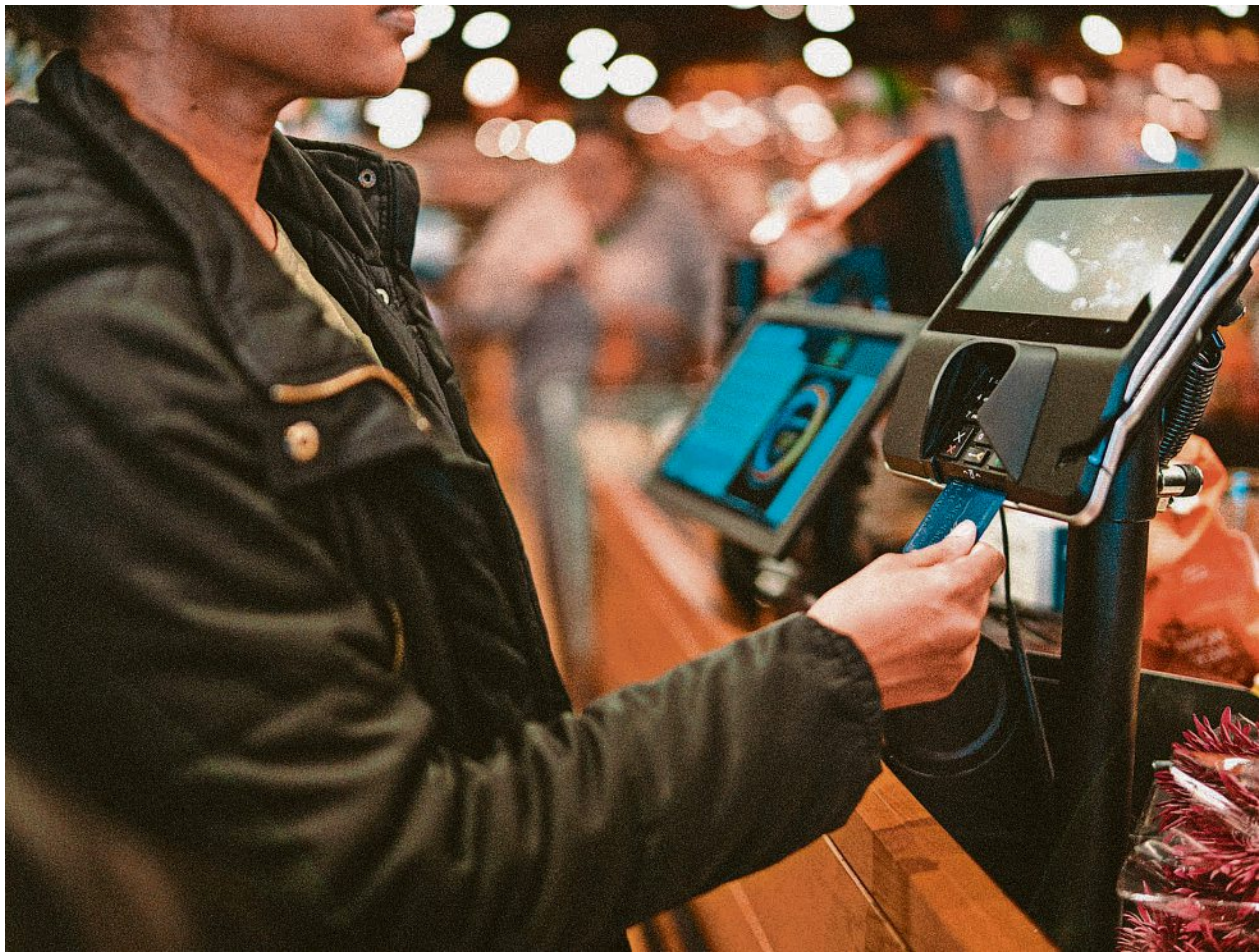
Read the latest at usatoday.com. Also find more coverage in the **Nation & World Extra** section, a subscriber-only feature in your eNewspaper.

Poughkeepsie Journal

MONDAY, JULY 13, 2026 | [POUGHKEEPSIEJOURNAL.COM](https://poughkeepsiejournal.com) PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

NEW YORK STATE COST OF LIVING

Inflation outpaces income for many



New data reveals that inflation outpaces income for many New Yorkers, who consistently face the highest taxes in the country. FLY VIEW PRODUCTIONS/GETTY IMAGES

Despite good pay, New Yorkers face highest taxes in U.S.

Emily Barnes
New York State Team | USA TODAY NETWORK

New York’s cost of living is weighing on residents’ minds as inflation outpaces many of their incomes and they consistently face the highest taxes in the country, new data reveals.

Both the state government and local governments across New York collect more tax revenue per resident than any other state as of 2023, data from the newly released Citizens Budget Commission’s “Competitive NYS” dashboard outlines. Additionally, the state’s per-

capita tax collections are 78% above the national average and personal income tax collections in New York are 112% higher than the rest of the nation.

“If high taxes deliver high quality of life, public services and infrastructure, residents and businesses can decide if the high cost of government is worth it,” the nonprofit watchdog organization says. “Ultimately, the value proposition must hold: The cost of living or doing business needs to be worth the benefit of locating there.”

See **INFLATION**, Page 2A

White House tried to sidestep election agency prior to firings

Erin Banco and Bo Erickson
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – The White House spent months looking for ways to bypass a federal election agency and use emergency powers to force changes to voting machines before President Donald Trump ousted its leaders on July 9, four people familiar with the matter said.

Some officials were frustrated with what they saw as the Election Assistance Commission’s slowness in updating guidelines for states on voting machines, the sources said, while some also wanted it to add a proof-of-citizenship requirement to its national mail voter registration form and address other election-related priorities of the administration.

Democratic lawmakers criticized the firings as an attempt to increase its control over elections, which are the purview of the states, and as undermining election integrity ahead of November’s midterm elections, when control of Congress will be at stake.

Trump fired the bipartisan federal agency’s two

“He is gutting the independent agency that certifies voting systems and helps election officials run secure elections.”

Chuck Schumer, D-New York

Democratic commissioners and allowed its lone Republican commissioner to resign, Reuters reported on July 9. The agency’s fourth commissioner departed in April.

It was not immediately clear why Trump decided to force the commissioners out at this time or if they will be replaced. The agency remains operational, but without a quorum it cannot take up any new business, such as implementing changes to voting procedures or the national mail voter registration form.

See **ELECTION**, Page 2A

Trump picks hold near perfect record in primaries

President’s endorsements reshape Republican Party

Phillip M. Bailey
USA TODAY

With five months left until the 2026 elections, President Donald Trump holds a near perfect record when it comes to endorsing winning Republican primary candidates.

In only a few cases has his preferred candidate lost this year, demonstrating that even as Trump’s nationwide popularity sags, he remains the fractured Make America Great Again movement’s dominant figure.

A review of Trump’s picks by Ballotpedia, a digital encyclopedia of U.S. politics and elections, shows out of 312 primary endorsements, the president carries a 98% success rate in GOP contests across congressional, state legislative and statewide elections.

The president bragged about that record when reacting to New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s preferred candidates’ recent sweep in three Democratic primaries on June 23 for Congress. On that same day more than a dozen Trump-backed contenders across multiple states prevailed in their Republican primaries.

Among them were first-time candidates such as Anthony Constantino, an upstate New York sticker company CEO and former boxer who beat out Assembly member Robert Smullen, the state GOP’s preferred candidate, by about 20 percentage points for a seat previously held by Rep. Elise Stefanik.

“Congratulations Mr. Mayor,” Trump said in a June 24 social media post aimed at Mamdani. “I went 16-0 last night, helping to elect wonderful American patriots, and the media doesn’t say a word.”

But a closer examination paints a more complicated picture. In six of those 16 elections, Trump backed an incumbent without a primary challenger, such as Rep. Mike Lawler of New York, a moderate who ran unopposed. The president also appears to be counting the South Carolina runoff for governor as two wins after endorsing both candidates in that race.

But Trump’s choices have reshaped the Republican Party by crushing veteran conservative lawmakers’ careers.

Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-Louisiana; Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas; and Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Kentucky, have been catapulted out of office this year for having disagreed with Trump at one point or another. He also put his large network’s muscle into defeating five of the seven Indiana state legislators who defied him on redrawing the state’s congressional maps.

Political observers say Trump wields his influence in ways rarely done by previous presidents, who usually avoided intraparty political battles.

See **ENDORSEMENTS**, Page 6A



Political observers say President Donald Trump wields his influence in ways rarely done by previous presidents, who usually avoided intraparty political battles. ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES FILE

