



## Why Ohio State signed off on rare November night game against UCLA

SPORTS, 1C

# The Columbus Dispatch

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2025 | DISPATCH.COM

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## Hemp ban in spending bill

As Ohio debates rules for THC drinks and gummies, Congress included measure in deal to end shutdown

**Haley BeMiller**  
State Bureau  
USA TODAY NETWORK

When Congress voted to end the government shutdown, it also threw a wrench in Ohio's efforts to regulate hemp gummies and THC drinks.

President Donald Trump signed legislation Nov. 12 to fund the federal government and end the record-breaking shutdown that caused chaos at airports and left 1.4 million Ohioans without food assistance.

Tucked into the spending bill is a measure that would ban most hemp-derived cannabis – something critics say will decimate businesses.

"Everything that we carry is hemp related and protected by the Farm Bill over these last 10 years," said Joe Brennan, owner of Columbus Botanical Depot. "That's all we carry. We specialize in that one product. ... It would be everything."

The measure aims to close a loophole in the 2018 Farm Bill, which paved the way for a booming industry that sells everything from synthetic delta-8 THC to THC beverages. The ban, which does not take effect for one year, applies to products with more than 0.3% total THC or 0.4 milligrams per container.

And it's already complicating efforts

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Karen Cordes, of Akron, stocks up on THC drinks at Mustard Seed Market at the West Market Street location in Akron on Oct. 10.

LISA SCALFARO/AKRON BEACON JOURNAL



The Front Street bridge in downtown Columbus remains closed on Nov. 12. NATHAN HART/COLUMBUS DISPATCH

## Front Street bridge set to reopen Nov. 15 after years of construction

**Nathan Hart**  
Columbus Dispatch  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Front Street bridge over Interstates 70 and 71 in downtown Columbus and a new I-70 East ramp to Fulton Street will open Nov. 15, the Ohio Department of Transportation has announced.

Crews will get to work opening the new structures the night of Nov. 14, with a goal of having them open the morning of Nov. 15, ODOT spokesperson Matthew McGuire said.

The new Front Street bridge will al-

low two-way traffic and has improved bike and pedestrian facilities and room for green space. The new I-70 ramp will be accessible to I-70 East and I-71 North drivers, according to ODOT.

With the new Fulton Street ramp opening, the I-70 East exit ramp to Livingston Avenue will close permanently Nov. 15. Drivers may still reach Livingston Avenue by exiting at Fulton Street and taking Third Street to Livingston Avenue.

The openings will mark the end of over three years of construction in the Front Street area as a part of ODOT's Downtown Ramp Up project. It will also

create a new two-way route over the interstates as the High Street bridge now faces two years of lane restrictions.

The new Front Street bridge is the first of downtown's interstate-spanning bridges to get a makeover for the project. The High Street bridge is being rebuilt, and the Third and Fourth Street bridges will be after that.

ODOT also plans to open its new I-71 South flyover ramp by the end of 2025.

Transportation and neighborhoods reporter Nathan Hart can be reached at [NHart@dispatch.com](mailto:NHart@dispatch.com) and at [@NathanRHart](https://twitter.com/NathanRHart) on X.

## 'Not one decent cell in his body'

Epstein trashed former friend Trump in emails

**Josh Meyer**  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – "Dirty." "(Expletive) crazy." "Borderline insane." A Mafia don but with the "great dangerous power" of being America's president and commander-in-chief.

That's how the late Jeffrey Epstein described his former longtime friend and confidant Donald Trump, according to a trove of the convicted sex offender's texts and emails released Nov. 12 by the House Oversight Committee.

But perhaps the most intriguing thing Epstein said about Trump in the 20,000-plus pages of emails provided by his estate was this:

"I am the one able to take him down."

The White House and Trump himself tried to spin the document release – and a later one by Republicans – as being a giant nothingburger.

On Nov. 14, Trump said on social media he was asking the Department of Justice to investigate Democrats he says "spent large portions of their life" with the disgraced financier: "Bill Clinton, Larry Summers, Reid Hoffman, J.P. Morgan, Chase, and many other people and institutions."

At the same time, Trump railed against Republicans working with Democrats to force the full release of

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**Sophia Veneziano**  
Human Kindness Reporter  
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Volume 155 | No. 116  
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