

TO GIVE THE NEWS IMPARTIALLY, WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

Chattanooga Times Free Press

VOL. 156 | NO. 180 | \$2.00

TIMESFREEPRESS.COM

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025



A protester speaks during an immigration demonstration Tuesday in Brookhaven, Ga., near Atlanta.

California mayors call for end to immigration raids

BY SHAILA DEWAN, JESUS JIMÉNEZ, JOHN YOON AND ERIC SCHMITT
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Mayor Karen Bass of Los Angeles and leaders of more than 30 smaller cities in California called Wednesday for an end to the federal immigration sweeps that have disrupted cities across the region.

Bass and the other mayors — of Montebello, Downey and other municipalities — spoke at a news conference after five days of protests sparked by immigration raids and President Donald Trump’s deployment of 4,700 National Guard troops and Marines to the Los Angeles area.

“When you raid Home Depots and workplaces, when you tear parents and children apart, and when you run armored caravans through our streets, you’re not trying to keep anyone safe — you’re trying to cause fear and panic,” Bass said, suggesting the raids were a purposeful provocation by the White House. “I posit that maybe we are part of a national experiment to determine how far the federal government can go in reaching in and taking over power from a governor, power from a local jurisdiction,” she added.

Bass’ comments came just hours after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told a Senate hearing that troops could be sent to other cities “if there are riots in places where law enforcement officers are threatened.”

“When you raid Home Depots and workplaces, when you tear parents and children apart, and when you run armored caravans through our streets, you’re not trying to keep anyone safe — you’re trying to cause fear and panic.”

— KAREN BASS, MAYOR OF LOS ANGELES

In Los Angeles, 700 Marines were receiving training on how to handle civil disturbances and not yet assisting the National Guard troops or federal immigration agents. Under Department of Defense policy, they can detain, but not arrest, people, and then they must hand them over to local officials as soon as possible.

Protests have swept across the Los Angeles area since federal deportation raids there Friday prompted clashes. As standoffs intensified in Los Angeles, similar demonstrations have cropped up in other cities, and more were expected Wednesday, including in Raleigh, North Carolina; Eugene, Oregon; and St. Louis.

At the White House, press secretary Karoline Leavitt opened her briefing by attacking Bass and the state’s governor, Gavin Newsom, and insisting that “left wing riots” would not halt the Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids.

Here’s what else to know:

› **L.A. curfew:** Bass instituted a curfew late Tuesday and said it would go on “as long as needed,” adding, “Anybody that’s involved in violence or looting or vandalism is not supporting the cause of immigrants.” About 200 people were arrested on charges of failure to disperse after the curfew took effect downtown, according to a statement by the Los Angeles Police Department.

› **Newsom’s speech:** The governor made a nationally televised address arguing that the deployment of federal troops was a “brazen abuse of power” by Trump and a “perilous moment” for U.S. democracy.

› **Texas protests:** Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas plans to deploy National Guard troops across the state to maintain order, becoming the first U.S. governor to do so since the unrest began. The mayor of San Antonio, Ron Nirenberg, criticized the move as “geared toward theater and provocation.”

› **Court hearing:** The Trump administration filed its response Wednesday to California’s request for a temporary restraining order that would limit the National Guard and Marines deployed in Los Angeles to guarding federal buildings. The Justice Department argued that the state’s legal objections — including that the guard call-up order did not go through Newsom — are meritless and there is no basis for such an order. A federal judge in California has set a hearing for Thursday.

Mexican flags at protests add fuel to debate

BY SHAWN HUBLER AND ORLANDO MAYORQUÍN
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

LOS ANGELES — As images of protests in Southern California have flooded television and social media in recent days, a key question has emerged: Why are so many protesters carrying Mexican flags at an American political protest?

The sea of red, white and green Mexican flags at anti-deportation protests this week in Los Angeles has been seized upon by conservatives who argue that the demonstrations are inherently un-American, causing some protesters to consider leaving them at home.

Photos of masked provocateurs waving Mexican flags atop burning Waymo taxis spread instantly across conservative social media this weekend. Republicans pointed to them as a prime example of why President Donald Trump called in the National Guard and how immigration had gone too far in California.

“Look at all the foreign flags,” Stephen Miller, the deputy White House chief of staff and the architect of Trump’s domestic agenda, said Sunday on social media. “Los Angeles is occupied territory.”

See **FLAGS** › **A6**

Fired TVA director supported clean energy

BY DANIEL DASSOW
STAFF WRITER

When President Donald Trump fired [Beth Geer](#) from the Tennessee Valley Authority board of directors, the panel lost one of its most outspoken advocates for clean energy and critics of fossil fuels.

Geer, who was fired Tuesday, joined the board in 2023, nearly two years after former President Joe Biden first nominated her and after Senate Republicans opposed her nomination.

She has been chief of staff for former Vice President Al Gore’s office for more than a decade and previously served in the Clinton administration in roles related to climate change policy.

The board, made up of nine members nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate, regulates the nation’s largest public power provider as it generates electricity for 10 million people.

After Trump fired two of the board’s six Biden nominees, including clean energy

See **TVA** › **A6**

Commissioners will vote on builder’s growth suggestions

BY ELLEN GERST
STAFF WRITER

Next week, Hamilton County commissioners will be presented with two versions of the county’s strategic growth plan.

One will include suggested amendments from local home builders, which would allow more dense housing to be built in much of the county’s unincorporated areas. It would also allow more frequent changes to the five-year plan, which has been in the works for around three years.

The other won’t have those amendments, preserving lower density in those areas and limiting changes to the plan, once passed, to twice a year.

Growth is here and coming, said Commissioner Warren Mackey, D-Lake Vista. People want to live in Chattanooga but can’t afford it, he said, which seems like a supply-and-demand issue with housing.

“So you want growth every place but in your backyard?” Mackey asked residents of the

See **GROWTH** › **A6**



People line up Wednesday to speak about Plan Hamilton as the Hamilton County Commission meets.