



SEC, Big Ten teams to face the toughest schedules in 2025

SPORTS, 1B

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ANALYSIS



Democratic state Rep. Gene Wu displays a permission slip allowing him to leave the House in the custody of the Texas Department of Public Safety on Aug. 18 after a legislative session in Austin. SERGIO FLORES/REUTERS

Trump, GOP on verge of big win in Texas

All-out redistricting war could help Republicans

Erin Mansfield
USA TODAY

A partisan battle in Texas over who holds power in Washington during the final two years of President Donald Trump's second term has unfurled into a nationwide debate drawing in top political figures as voters brace for another divisive election in 2026.

The Lone Star State's GOP lawmakers were working to send new congressional maps to Republican Gov. Greg Abbott on Aug. 22 that Trump and his allies hope will give them a strategic advantage in holding onto their majority in the U.S. House.

But the fight in Austin has spread beyond the state's borders and created significant uncertainty about who will be in position to govern during the second half of the Trump administration and after 2028 election.

"Game on," New York Gov. Kathy Hochul wrote Aug. 20 in a social media post. She is one of several state leaders considering their own steps like the Texas Republicans to redraw congressional district borders inside their states.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom is another, and in his state, Democratic lawmakers want voters to decide in a Nov. 4 special election whether to redraw their maps. The California Legislature on Aug. 21 approved Newsom's proposal on a ballot measure to suspend the state's current congressional districts, drawn

by an independent commission, and replace them.

GOP has upper hand if redistricting war expands

States typically redo their congressional boundaries for voters every decade, specifically in the two years that follow a new census. But Trump has encouraged redistricting to happen ahead of the 2026 House elections.

His motivation? The tendency of the party in the White House to lose seats in the House during the midterm elections. Trump and the GOP are hoping to break that trend or increase their 219-212 House majority through states

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FBI searches home of ex-Trump official Bolton

Bart Jansen, Josh Meyer
and Aysha Bagchi
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The FBI said a search at the home of former national security adviser John Bolton on Aug. 22 was "court authorized," while critics of the administration called it "vindictive" and "inappropriate."

President Donald Trump disparaged his former aide as the news broke. He said that he knew little about the search beyond what he had seen on television but that the Justice Department would probably brief him.

"I'm not a fan of John Bolton," Trump told reporters at The People's House museum near the White House. "He's a real sort of a lowlife."

Bolton served in Trump's first term, then became a vocal critic of the administration's foreign policy and called the president unfit to serve. He was previously investigated over allegations of including classified information in his 2020 book about the administration. The Justice Department under President Joe Biden dropped that inquiry without charges.

Most recently, Bolton has criticized

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John Bolton has had a fraught relationship with President Donald Trump since serving as national security adviser during Trump's first term. JONATHAN DRAKE/REUTERS FILE

Judge: Trump prosecutor pick acting unlawfully

Aysha Bagchi
USA TODAY

President Donald Trump's pick to lead the federal prosecutor's office in New Jersey, Alina Habba, has been serving unlawfully for nearly two months, a judge ruled Aug. 21.

The decision escalates the administration's battle with the judiciary.

Trump selected Habba, his former personal lawyer, as the interim U.S. attorney for New Jersey in March. But keeping Habba in the top role has proven a challenging task.

On July 22, a panel of judges declined to appoint Habba to the job. Attorney General Pam Bondi responded by removing the official who was set to replace Habba.

"This Department of Justice does not tolerate rogue judges – especially when they threaten the President's core Article II powers," Bondi wrote in a July 22 post on X. Article II of the Constitution spells out the powers of the presidency.

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President Donald Trump selected Alina Habba, his former personal lawyer, as the interim U.S. attorney for New Jersey in March. A federal Judge Matthew W. Brann ruled Aug. 21 that Habba's interim appointment ended on July 1.

ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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