

Job hopping can pay off for younger employees

Millennials, Gen Zers who jump ship see faster wage growth than those who stay. **In Money**

Hollywood puts spotlight, production on Texas turf

Lone Star State rules TV stories with "Dutton Ranch" and "Grey's Anatomy" spinoff. **In Life**

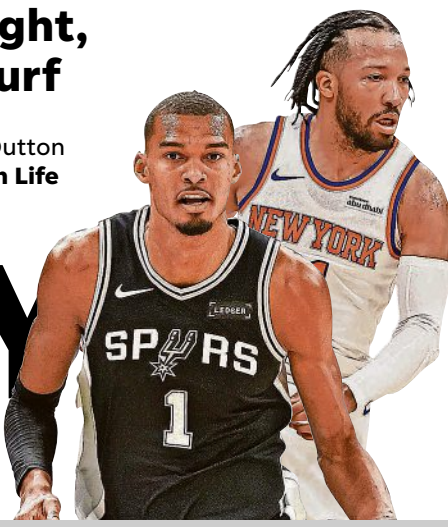
Spurs vs. Knicks: Who has edge in NBA Finals?

Battle for championship title will be a rematch of 1999, when San Antonio beat New York 4-1. See how each team compares today. **In Sports**

USA TODAY

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VICTOR WEMBANYAMA, LEFT, BY CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES AND JALEN BRUNSON BY GREGORY SHAMUS/GETTY IMAGES



Democrat Rob Sand, right, is chasing Republicans Eddie Andrews, left, Randy Feenstra, Zach Lahn, Brad Sherman and Adam Steen for Iowa's governor's seat. USA TODAY NETWORK

Democrats have set a 'bulls-eye' on Iowa

Solid Republican state seen as ripe for gains

Brianne Pfannenstiel

Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

DES MOINES — For a ruby-red state controlled at nearly every level by GOP elected officials, Iowa Republicans are unusually nervous going into the 2026 midterm election season.

The state has open races for governor and U.S. Senate, and it will see two of its four U.S. House races heavily targeted as pickup opportunities for Democrats.

Elections Tuesday

Visit us at usatoday.com for coverage as six states hold primaries.

The governor's race in particular has unsettled Republicans as well-funded, well-liked Democratic state Auditor Rob Sand marshals a formidable campaign infrastructure while Republicans fight out a divisive five-way primary race.

The field will be set in the state's primary elections Tuesday, June 2.

National leaders of both parties see Iowa as a potential key to either holding or reversing national control of Congress, and Democrats hope to reclaim ground with rural voters in a state that has consistently trended red.

"The Democrats have put a bull's-eye on the state of Iowa," Texas U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz warned Iowa Republicans at a rally May 2 in suburban Des Moines.

Cruz said Democrats believe they can swing control of the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate from Republicans just by flipping seats in Iowa.

"And they're probably right about that," he said.

National midterm trends favor Democrats as polling shows voters souring on Republican President Donald Trump, gas prices skyrocket amid the war with Iran and the cost of living remains high.

In Iowa, the state has taken additional hits as trade wars and high costs threaten a renewed farm crisis in the state's agricultural economy.

But it will be a tough road for Democrats in the Hawkeye State, even if the midterm stars align in their favor.

Registered Republican voters outnumber registered Democrats in Iowa by nearly 200,000, and Republicans have dominated recent election cycles in the state.

Trump carried Iowa by about 13 percentage points in 2024. And Republicans hold all six seats in

See **IOWA**, Page 6A

'Buy before you sell' is opening new doors

Innovative mortgage financing could revolutionize the big move



ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY CLEMENS/USA TODAY; GETTY IMAGES

Andrea Riquier USA TODAY

Last year, when Matt Gehr and his wife, Amber, decided to upgrade their condo for a single-family home, they had some advantages. • Among the biggest: just enough savings to be able to swing a 10% down payment on a new place without having to sell their current home. Doing so would have wiped out their savings, but it was a fallback option. • The couple got lucky, however. They made a contingent offer on a new house that was accepted, mostly because they offered a nonrefundable deposit of \$5,000. And their condo sold surprisingly quickly, well within the 20 days specified by the contract on the new house. • Still "it was super-stressful," Gehr told USA TODAY, noting that paying two mortgages at once would have been "brutally difficult."

See **HOMEBUYING**, Page 4A

"Our insight was that we could fundamentally change the way people move."

Tushar Garg, CEO of Flyhomes



For retirees Ed and Marilyn Smolyneec, "buy before you sell" financing helped smooth a life transition. PROVIDED BY MARILYN AND ED SMOLYNEEC

IN MONEY Seniors feeling mortgage squeeze

Record number of homeowners age 65 and older are spending over 30% of their income on housing as costs for taxes and insurance soar.

U.S., Iran talks hit another obstacle

Stall comes after Israel widens Lebanon attack

Christopher Cann
USA TODAY

Iran halted indirect talks with the United States over Israel's intensifying military campaign in Lebanon, according to Iranian media reports, signaling a possible breakdown in diplomatic efforts to end the three-month-old war.

The Iranian semi-official Tasnim news agency said on June 1 that Tehran's negotiating team would stop communicating with Washington through mediators in protest of Israel's widening ground invasion and bombardment of Lebanon, where it is battling Iran-backed Hezbollah.

The reported breakdown comes after President Donald Trump and his top cabinet officials expressed optimism about a possible deal to end the conflict, which has killed thousands across the Middle East and surged global energy prices. In an early morning social media post, Trump said "Iran really wants to make a deal and it will be a good one for the U.S.A."

The White House has not commented on the reported breakdown in talks. Iranian officials have not publicly confirmed a halt in negotiations.

Over the weekend, tensions between the United States and Iran escalated after the two countries traded a fresh round of air strikes. The U.S. military said it carried out "self-defense" strikes on Iranian radar and drone sites after Tehran shot down an American drone. Iran said it targeted an air base used by American forces.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei accused Washington on June 1 of shifting its negotiating positions and condemned what he described as U.S. aggression. The country's top diplomat, Abbas Araghchi, also accused Israel of violating the terms of the truce as it intensifies attacks on southern Lebanon in its war against Iran-backed Hezbollah.

"Violation on one front is a violation of the ceasefire on all fronts," Minister of Foreign Affairs Araghchi wrote on X. "The U.S. and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on June 1 that he had ordered attacks on Hezbollah-controlled suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon's capital. Israel's military has also expanded its ground invasion of southern Lebanon, where it has established a buffer zone, forcing hundreds of thousands from their homes and destroying villages near Israel's northern border.

Israel launched the ground invasion after Hezbollah attacked the country in support of Iran. Despite a ceasefire struck between the Lebanese government and Israel, Hezbollah and the Israeli military have continued to trade strikes and rocket fire, threatening negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

Since the war began Feb. 28, thousands of people in Iran and Lebanon have been killed, according to the countries' respective health ministries. Israel says 23 of its soldiers and four civilians have been killed over the same period. Thirteen U.S. service members have died in the conflict.

Iran has maintained its grip on the Strait of Hormuz, where one-fifth of the world's oil and natural gas flows. The conflict has become increasingly unpopular in the United States as Americans face higher prices at the pump. Average U.S. gas prices were at \$4.32 a gallon as of June 1, according to AAA.

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