

Stronger connections
for farmers, food systems

John Deere Foundation commits \$18.5 million across U.S. to fight food insecurity. **In Money**

Lambert: ‘We’re kindred
spirits, like soul sisters’

Country music superstar reflects on writing, working relationship with Ella Langley. **In Life**

WHO IS THE BEST?

We take a look around the NBA to identify the 20 top players in the league heading into the 2026-27 season. **In Sports**



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NIKOLA JOKIC' (NO. 2) BY JUSTIN EDMONDS/GETTY IMAGES; KEVIN DURANT (NO. 12) BY ALEX SLITZ/GETTY IMAGES; GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO (NO. 5) BY SAM NAVARRO/IMAGN IMAGES VIA REUTERS

Potential
2028 field
evolving
on left

Prominent Dems already
weigh presidential bids



Susan Page
Washington Bureau Chief
USA TODAY

They’re off, already.

While the midterms are officially about electing 36 governors and 470 members of Congress, a burgeoning group of prominent and wannabe prominent Democrats are using this political season to pursue a higher aspiration: The 2028 presidential nomination.

The days when political protocol required early White House hopefuls to be coy?

No more.

“I’m thinking about it,” said former Vice President Kamala Harris, the party’s late-breaking nominee in 2024. Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg acknowledged that he’s “more inclined than not” to run. Asked by USA TODAY to name a reason he might *not* run, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear cited only objections from his family – then noted that his wife and two children had always supported his campaigns.



Former Vice President Kamala Harris says she’s “thinking about” running for the 2028 Democratic presidential nomination. MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

The GOP has a presumptive 2028 nominee in Vice President JD Vance, although he is likely to face challengers. (Vance’s prediction to NBC: “It is really obvious to me that, at this very moment, [Texas Sen.] Ted Cruz is running for president.”)

But Democrats are heading toward a big roster and a fierce battle over the 2028 nomination.

Consider the lanes: The governors, with seven or so regularly mentioned; the senators, with at least nine early prospects; the progressives, including U.S. Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Ro Khanna of California; a handful of formers who are out of government and want back in, among them Rahm Emanuel, who is not only a former Chicago mayor and House member but also a former ambassador and White House chief of staff.

Here are a few ways they and others are pursuing the White House now:

Show up

Like the guy in the Johnny Cash song, Buttigieg has been everywhere.

In the two years since he lost his job as transportation secretary with

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Wealthiest county in the U.S. grapples with overrun
of data centers and the billions of dollars they bring in



Greg Pirio, a Loudoun County, Virginia, resident, stands in front a data center near his home that he said has caused health issues for him and his neighbors. PHOTOS BY JOSH MORGAN/USA TODAY

VA residents
rise: ‘We’ve
been screwed’



Residents of Loudoun County, Virginia, play pickleball at Hal & Berni Hanson Regional Park on Sept. 28. The construction of the 257-acre park was made possible by tax revenue from data centers in the region.

“I don’t think we need any more data centers. There are other ways to pay for these nice things.”

Sam Lechman
A 35-year-old father who brings his three young children to the large recreation center in Aldie.

Christopher Cann
USA TODAY

ALDIE, VA – On an overcast morning in late September, two dozen women gathered for their weekly pickleball game at a \$91 million recreation complex in this leafy suburb outside the nation’s capital.

Wearing fitness watches and moisture-wicking skirts, they laughed and cheered over the sound of paddles and Wiffle balls. Nearby, children scrambled up a shiny rock wall and ran through a colorful splashpad while parents watched from shaded benches.

Officials say the sprawling park, with its athletic fields, pavilions and tennis courts, is among the many projects built with the help of tax revenue from an industry that has transformed Loudoun County over the past decade: data centers.

Just beyond the park’s borders, evidence of that transformation is everywhere. A forest of transmission lines towers over nearby homes, and several hyperscale data centers are under construction.

No place has embraced the digital economy more than Loudoun County, long-known as the wealthiest county in the United States thanks to its proximity to Washington, DC, and major government contractors.

The region is home to more than 230 data center buildings, what the county describes as the largest concentration of computing hubs on the

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Changing the hands of time
pits science against politics

Disagreement persists
on which clock to adopt

Doyle Rice and Jeanine Santucci
USA TODAY

Daylight is already fading, and soon Americans will set back the clocks, too. But this year, political support is building for doing away with seasonal time changes by switching to permanent daylight saving time.

That would be a mistake, scientists say.

A new report echoes a chorus of scientific research saying that permanent

standard time is the best solution for eliminating the dreaded twice-yearly clock change.

People might enjoy daylight saving time for its later sunsets throughout the year. But standard time’s earlier sunrises are more in line with our body clocks, leading to better sleep and mood, authors of the report said.

For now, most of the nation is scheduled to set the clocks back Nov. 1, ending daylight saving time and returning to standard time. [All states except Arizona and Hawaii currently follow daylight saving time.]

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Most of the nation is scheduled to set clocks back Nov. 1, ending daylight saving time. CAROLINE BREHMAN/REUTERS