


WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2025



**SUNNY**  
High, 90. Low, 61. > **A15**  
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## Spiking lawsuit payouts put state’s self-insurance fund \$1B in the red

**NO FIXES IN HAND** | ‘Deficiency’ is authorized through June 2027.

By **JIM BRUNNER**  
*Seattle Times political reporter*  
Lawsuit payouts by the state of Washington spiked to a new high of more than \$506 million in the latest

fiscal year, driven largely by claims of alleged abuse suffered by children in the foster care system over many decades.  
The ballooning legal costs have

drained the state’s self-insurance fund, leaving it with a projected deficit of more than \$1 billion, according to a new disclosure by the state’s top budget official.

The fund’s insolvency was outlined in a memo issued Monday by K.D. Chapman-See, director of the state Office of Financial Management, which authorized the self-insurance account to operate in a “temporary cash deficiency” of up  
See > **LAWSUITS, A6**

## Seattle-area inflation up in June as tariffs start to take toll

By **JESSICA FU**  
*Seattle Times business reporter*  
Inflation increased slightly in the Seattle area in June, reflecting the impact of tariffs on imported goods and higher costs of necessities like food and energy.  
Overall costs in the region consisting of Seattle, Tacoma and Bellevue were up 2.7% in June compared to the year prior. That represents a 1 percentage point increase from the rate recorded in April.  
“The trend line has changed,” said James McCafferty, director of the Center for Economic and Business Research at Western Washington University. “We’re just starting to see the impacts of the tariffs and threats of tariffs in the inflation data.”  
In April, President Donald Trump announced a broad slate  
See > **INFLATION, A16**

## WSDOT’s plan of pain: Years of I-5 lane closures in Seattle to begin this weekend



KEN LAMBERT / THE SEATTLE TIMES

The northbound lanes of the Interstate 5 Ship Canal Bridge are seen from the air at left on Tuesday, with downtown Seattle in the background. Construction on the bridge begins this weekend with the closure of all northbound lanes.

By **MIKE LINDBLOM**  
*Seattle Times staff reporter*  
After months of procrastination and dread, Seattle’s main traffic event of 2025 is finally upon us — a full 30 days of northbound lane closures at the Interstate 5 Ship Canal Bridge for a necessary concrete repave.  
Workers will restore a 900-foot-long section this summer as the first stage of a project that will close lanes on-again, off-again until 2027.

**TRAFFIC LAB**

First, 4 miles of the entire northbound freeway will close this weekend, from the Interstate 90 junction to Northeast 45th Street, from 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 18, until 5 a.m. Monday, July 21. Workers will install concrete safety barriers and stage heavy equipment. The I-5 express lanes will point northbound for drivers to bypass downtown.  
Then beginning early Monday, the two left lanes of northbound I-5 will stay closed from approximately the Highway 520 junction

to Northeast 45th Street, until the night of Aug. 15. Only two lanes will cross the canal. The express lanes will flow north throughout construction, which means southbound drivers can expect morning traffic jams.  
Another full northbound closure is needed the weekend of Aug. 16-17, when contractors will remove the barriers and machines. The Ship Canal Bridge, where the Washington State Department of Transportation performed more than 200 urgent pothole  
See > **CLOSURES, A5**

## Senate votes to advance bill to cut \$9B from budget

By **KEVIN FREKING**  
*The Associated Press*  
WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans on Tuesday advanced President Donald Trump’s request to cancel some \$9 billion in previously approved spending, overcoming concerns from some lawmakers about what the rescissions could mean for impoverished people around the globe and for public radio and television stations in their home states.  
The Senate vote was 50-50, with Vice President JD Vance breaking the tie.  
A final vote in the Senate could occur as early as Wednesday. The bill then would return to the House for another vote before it would go to Trump’s desk for his signature before a Friday deadline.  
Republicans winnowed down the president’s request by taking  
See > **CUTS, A5**

## PCC makes downtown comeback with downsized ambitions

By **PAUL ROBERTS**  
*Seattle Times business reporter*  
If PCC Community Markets had any doubts about returning to the downtown Seattle location it shuttered just last year, the crowd that showed up for the grand reopening

Tuesday offered some reassurance. A line of PCC devotees was waiting when the doors opened Tuesday morning, and by 11:30 a.m., the store on the ground floor of Rainier Tower at Fourth Avenue and Union Street was packed.

“It’s chaos right now,” said Krish Srinivasan, CEO of the member-owned Seattle-based grocery co-op, who was so delighted by the turnout he let slip a “Jaws” joke: “We’re going to need a bigger boat.”

In fact, this time around, PCC has opted for a much smaller “boat.” The PCC Corner Market, as it’s called, is roughly a third the size of its 20,000-square-foot predecessor, with a much narrower selection  
See > **PCC, A15**

### HEAT WAVE HITS

**Inside:** How to keep cool with highs in the 90s > **A7**

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