

FEDERAL AGENCIES
MAY FACE LAYOFFS
IN A SHUTDOWN

ANXIETY FOR WORKERS

Few Contingency Plans
About How Services
Would Operate

By EILEEN SULLIVAN

WASHINGTON — Even before most federal agencies had shared their plans for a possible government shutdown this week, the White House delivered a message that resonated across the bureaucracy: a funding lapse could be used as an opportunity for even more layoffs.

With days left before the government runs out of money at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, federal workers were grappling with a deepening sense of uncertainty about the ramifications if congressional leaders cannot come to an agreement over the budget.

Agencies have been slow to to post their contingency plans for how they would operate. And the threat issued by the White House that the administration would use a shutdown to fire more workers has fueled even more anxiety across the federal work force, already stretched thin by the administration's mass terminations and cuts.

Around 300,000 employees are set to be off the payroll by the end of the year. The federal workers who remain are now facing the prospect of going without pay for an indefinite period — or possibly even losing their jobs.

Shutdowns are always bad for the country, causing disruption in government services and testing economic stability, said Michael Linden, a senior policy fellow at the Washington Center for Equitable Health, a liberal think tank focused on inequality. But this one could be even worse than in the past, he warned, including the longest government shutdown to date, which occurred during the first Trump administration.

"This administration is throwing more uncertainty and more threats of pain, of deliberate pain,

Continued on Page A14



Katie and Jeff Lesslie at the area developed in Rock Hill, S.C., by Jeff's father, Dr. Robert Lesslie, who envisioned a family compound with ponds and a barn. Referred to by the Lesslies as The Land, it was their oasis, until an armed former N.F.L. player showed up.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

ADAMS ABANDONS
RE-ELECTION BID,
SHAKING UP RACE

MAYOR SPREADS BLAME

Seeing 'Insidious Forces'
in City, He Declines
to Endorse a Rival

This article is by Nicholas Fandos, Dana Rubinstein, William K. Rashbaum and Maggie Haberman.

Mayor Eric Adams of New York announced on Sunday that he would abandon his foundering campaign for a second term, upending the race to lead the nation's largest city just five weeks before Election Day.

In a nearly nine-minute video message that began with Frank Sinatra's "My Way," the mayor conceded that despite his best efforts, he could no longer see a path to re-election and would conclude his tumultuous mayoralty at year's end.

He blamed "continued media speculation about my departure" and a decision by the city's Campaign Finance Board to deny him public matching funds for his campaign, which has flagged amid anemic poll numbers and a cloud of scandal around City Hall.

"Despite all we've achieved," he said, "I cannot continue my re-election campaign."

The mayor did not endorse one of his rivals. But he offered voters what appeared to be a veiled warning about Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani, the Democratic nominee and front-runner, and what he characterized as growing extremism in politics.

Without naming Mr. Mamdani, a democratic socialist, the politically moderate mayor warned that "insidious forces" were pushing "divisive agendas" in city politics. He claimed that "our children are being radicalized to hate our city and our country."

"Major change is welcome and necessary," Mr. Adams said. "But beware of those who claim the answer is to destroy the very system we built together over generations."

In a copy of his prepared re-

Continued on Page A18

A Family Finds a Path to Forgive a Stranger's Unfathomable Act

By JULIET MACUR

For months after it happened, through sweaty South Carolina days and cooler starlit nights, even when the air eventually grew so chilly that she could see her breath, Katie Lesslie sat curled up in the cushioned porch swing of her white house in the woods, staring past her backyard and into the distance.

Images flashed through her head: her two children, Adah, 9, and Noah, 5, playing over there to her left, climbing on rocks and running wild on ground made soft by fallen pine needles.

Her father-in-law, clad in his doctor's scrubs, playing "High-

land Cathedral" on his bagpipes outside his house. Her mother-in-law, whose motto was "if it's worth doing, it's worth overdoing," in her kitchen cooking family favorites like B's favorite mud pie.

As Katie sat and thought, her husband, Jeff, brought her food. And fuzzy blankets. And boxes of tissues, to wipe away their never-ending tears as they searched for an answer to a question that had none.

Their life in Rock Hill, S.C., had been idyllic, rooted in Christian faith and service, and revolved around a 50-acre family compound, a place the Lesslie clan called The Land.

Jeff's parents, Dr. Robert and Barbara Lesslie, bought the prop-

'C.T.E. Is the Villain,'
a Mother Says of a
2021 Massacre

erty in 2002, hoping that their four children would build houses of their own there.

The plot had been just brambles and loblolly pine trees planted in rows for future harvest. With long, slender trunks, the pines looked like an army of matchstick soldiers so tall that they touched the sky.

Dr. Lesslie had a wondrous vision for his real estate. Three ponds stocked with bass and

breem. A stage and a field for music festivals. A little barn for mini-donkeys, mini-horses and goats. An 18-hole Frisbee golf course.

The anchor of it all would be a big brown house for him and his wife, and it would become known as the big house.

And then someone they had never met, someone they had never even heard of, showed up and shattered that bliss, leaving behind a level of pain that could break any family's bond.

Katie, a preschool teacher, was home for spring break on April 7, 2021, her 36th birthday. Recovering from a Covid shot, she was napping while her children were at the big house with their grand-

Continued on Page A16

Careers That Ended, or Never Really Began

About 300,000 federal workers will have been forced out by year's end. Some were nearing retirement; others were just beginning their jobs. More than two dozen shared what they left behind and what comes next. Page A12.



Edgar Munoz
Dept. of Homeland Security



Rebecca Ferguson-Ondrey
Dept. of Health and Human Services



Von Robertson
General Services Administration



Stetson Kastengren
Bureau of Indian Affairs

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JARED SOARES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Greene, Straying From Trump,
Reflects Emerging MAGA Split

By ANNIE KARNI

WASHINGTON — Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, the right-wing Republican from Georgia, did not appreciate being threatened by the White House over her backing for a bill ordering the release of the Epstein files.

So after a Trump official put out word that doing so would be viewed as a "very hostile act," she called a top West Wing aide to push back.

"I told them, 'You didn't get me elected. I do not work for you; I work for my district,'" she recounted recently during a wide-ranging interview in her office on Capitol Hill. "We aren't supposed to just be whipped on our votes because they're telling us what to do with this scary threat, or saying 'We'll primary you,' or that we won't get invited to the White House events."

"Me personally? I don't care," Ms. Greene went on. These days, when she encounters tactics like that from Mr. Trump's team, she added, "I'm like, '[Expletive] you!'"

After arriving in Congress in 2021 as something of a joke and a pariah in her own party, known for making bigoted remarks and amplifying QAnon conspiracy theories, Ms. Greene evolved into a team player. She still sometimes spouted groundless claims and



Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia now operates as a powerful free agent.

racist remarks, but also wielded some measure of influence by aligning herself closely with former Representative Kevin McCarthy, then speaker of the House, who in turn reined in her more extreme impulses.

But those days are all now behind her. Ms. Greene is no longer a team player for Republicans in Congress. And she is no longer seen as a joke.

She is now operating as a pow-

Continued on Page A10

Submit or Stand Up to Trump? Colleges Are Torn on a Response.

By ALAN BLINDER and STEPHANIE SAUL

SAN FRANCISCO — The Trump administration has attacked the University of California system's research funding, launched a swarm of investigations and demanded that it pay more than \$1 billion.

But people across the 10-campus system are at odds over how to fight back, stirring a war within

about countering President Trump's tactics. In many ways, the conflicts reflect academia at large, which has not mustered a consensus about how to fend off the White House's campaign to remake American campuses.

California administrators have tried to negotiate with the same government that professors have sued. The university system's regents have huddled behind closed doors while one, Gov. Gavin New-

Tensions Stem From the
Need to Prioritize

som, has publicly called for defiance. And system leaders have clashed with campus-level officials over giving the Trump administration the names of scores of students and employees connected to complaints about anti-

semitism.

"This has nothing to do with antisemitism, and everything to do with capitulating," Peyrin Kao, a Berkeley lecturer who was included in the files that went to the federal government, told regents this month.

The White House's barrage against top schools has sometimes proven a rallying cry for higher education, especially after

Continued on Page A11



INTERNATIONAL A4-8

Russia Bombards Kyiv

The Ukrainian capital and other cities were attacked for hours with nearly 600 drones and dozens of missiles. PAGE A4

A Tense Time in Venezuela

In a nation bracing for potential U.S. military action, there is defiance, fear of possible bloodshed, and hope. PAGE A6

NATIONAL A9-20

Hard Choice: Rebuild or Leave

A federal rule requiring many storm-damaged homes to be demolished or rebuilt to flood-resistant standards has shaken many in Florida. PAGE A9

Shooting at Mormon Church

A gunman attacked a Sunday service in Grand Blanc Township, Mich., killing at least two people. PAGE A19

OBITUARIES A21, 24

Pun-Loving Puzzle Maker

Mel Taub was the wordplay whiz behind anagrams, a crossword variation for The Times. He was 97. PAGE A24



SPORTS D1-8

A Star's Sterling Summer

Luka Doncic, now in peak condition, dominated a tournament as he readied to be the face of the Lakers. PAGE D1

Polish Climber Skis Everest

Andrzej Bargiel is the first to ascend and ski down the mountain without supplemental oxygen. PAGE D8

BUSINESS B1-6

Wind's Unlikely Supporters

Oil company executives are among those who are troubled by the Trump administration's effort to interrupt work on offshore wind farms that had already secured federal approval. PAGE B1

\$100,000 Visa Upends Lives

Skyrocketing costs threaten to deter students in India who pinned hopes and family savings on careers that once soared on H-1B visas allowing work in the United States. PAGE B1

OPINION A22-23

Kristen Soltis Anderson PAGE A23



ARTS C1-6

Giving 'Godot' an Air Guitar

Jamie Lloyd's chic revival of the tragic-comedy casts the "Bill & Ted" stars Alex Winter, left, and Keanu Reeves as Samuel Beckett's clowns. PAGE C1

