

Spending Plan
Would Hobble
Safety Net Aid

Targeting Billions From
‘Radical’ Programs

By ALAN RAPPEPORT
and TONY ROMM

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration, which has made clear that it aims to slash government spending, is preparing to unveil a budget proposal as soon as next week that includes draconian cuts that would entirely eliminate some federal programs and fray the nation’s social safety net.

The proposed budget for the 2026 fiscal year would cut billions of dollars from programs that support child care, health research, education, housing assistance, community development and older adults, according to preliminary documents reviewed by The New York Times. The proposal, which is being finalized by the White House’s Office of Management and Budget, also targets longstanding initiatives that have been prized by Democrats and that Republicans view as “woke” or wasteful spending.

Technically, the president’s blueprint is merely a formal recommendation to Congress, which must ultimately adopt any changes to spending. The full extent of President Trump’s proposed cuts for 2026 is not yet clear. Rachel Cauley, a spokeswoman for the Office of Management and Budget, said in a statement that “no final funding decisions have been made.”

But early indications suggest the budget will aim to formalize Mr. Trump’s disruptive reorganization of the federal government. That process — largely overseen by the tech billionaire Elon Musk — has frozen billions of dollars in aid, shuttered some programs and dismissed thousands of workers from their jobs, prompting numerous court challenges.

The early blueprint reflects Mr. Trump’s long-held belief that some federal antipoverty programs are wasteful.

More on the White House

EDUCATION The U.S. restored the legal status for many international students, for now. PAGE A16

TRADE President Trump said “we’re meeting with China,” which Beijing denied. PAGE A6

MINING An executive order pits the U.S. against the world over minerals under the sea. PAGE A15

Santos Is Given
7-Year Sentence
To Cap His Fall

By MICHAEL GOLD
and GRACE ASHFORD

CENTRAL ISLIP, N.Y. — George Santos, the former Republican congressman from New York whose outlandish fabrications and criminal schemes fueled an unforeseen rise and spectacular fall, was sentenced to more than seven years in federal prison on Friday.

His 87-month sentence was a severe corrective to a turbulent period in which Mr. Santos was catapulted from anonymity to political and pop cultural infamy, a national spotlight that, even when negative, he often relished more than rejected.

Mr. Santos pleaded guilty last year to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. He acknowledged his involvement in a variety of other deceptions, including lying to Congress, fraudulently collecting unemployment benefits and

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HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A security expert said Pete Hegseth was one of the “most targeted people in the world for espionage.”

Hegseth’s Use of Personal Phone Exposes the U.S.

This article is by Helene Cooper, Julian E. Barnes, Eric Schmitt and Christiaan Triebert.

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth’s personal phone number, the one used in a recent Signal chat, was easily accessible on the internet and public apps as recently as March, potentially exposing national security secrets to foreign adversaries.

The phone number could be found in a variety of places, including WhatsApp, Facebook and a fantasy sports site. It was the same number through which the defense secretary, using the Signal commercial messaging app, disclosed flight data for American strikes on the Houthi militia in Yemen.

Cybersecurity analysts said an

Number in Signal Chat
Is Found All Over
the Internet

American defense secretary’s communications device would usually be among the most protected national security assets.

“There’s zero percent chance that someone hasn’t tried to install Pegasus or some other spyware on his phone,” Mike Casey, the former director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, said in an interview. “He is one of the top five, probably, most targeted people in the world for espionage.”

Emily Harding, a defense and

security expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, added: “You just don’t want the secretary of defense’s phone number to be out there and available to anyone.”

The chief Pentagon spokesman, Sean Parnell, did not respond to a request for comment.

Mr. Hegseth’s use of Signal to convey details of military strikes in Yemen first surfaced last month when the editor of The Atlantic wrote an article that said he had been added, apparently accidentally, to an encrypted chat among senior U.S. government officials. The New York Times reported this week that Mr. Hegseth included sensitive information about the strikes in a Signal group chat he set up with his wife and brother,

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Trump Is Going Too Far
In Amassing His Power,
Most Voters in Poll Say

Faith in President Dips Even on Economy
and Immigration, His Top Issues

This article is by Shane Goldmacher, Ruth Igielnik and Camille Baker.

Voters believe that President Trump is overreaching with his aggressive efforts to expand executive power, and they have deep doubts about some of the signature pieces of his agenda, a New York Times/Siena College poll found.

The turbulent early months of Mr. Trump’s administration are seen as “chaotic” and “scary” by majorities of voters — even many who approve of the job he is doing. Voters do not view him as understanding the problems in their daily lives and have soured on his leadership as he approaches his 100th day in office.

Mr. Trump’s approval rating sits at 42 percent. His standing is historically low for a president this early in a term, but it is in line with his stubborn unpopularity, which did not prevent him from sweeping the battleground states in last year’s election.

Now, however, voters express dimming confidence about Mr. Trump’s handling of some of the top issues that propelled him back to the White House, including the economy and immigration, even as most Americans support de-

portations. Only 43 percent said they approved of the way he has managed the economy this term, a serious erosion on an issue long seen as a strength.

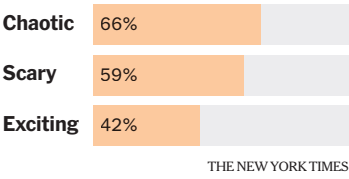
The president’s pursuit of widespread tariffs — which has caused stock-market drops and gyrations — was opposed by 55 percent of voters, including 63 percent of independents.

Taken together, the survey’s findings show that any second-term honeymoon for Mr. Trump is over. His approval rating among crucial independent voters is now at a woeful 29 percent.

Voters said he had “gone too far” on issue after issue: his tariffs, his immigration enforcement, his cuts to the federal work force. Broad numbers of independent voters sided with Democrats in

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Percent of voters who said the following words described Donald Trump’s second term in office well:



F.B.I. Arrests Judge, Saying She
Tried to Help Immigrant Escape

By DEVLIN BARRETT

WASHINGTON — F.B.I. agents arrested a Milwaukee judge on Friday on charges of obstructing immigration agents, saying she steered an undocumented immigrant through a side door in her courtroom while the agents waited to arrest him in a public hallway.

The decision to charge a sitting state court judge is a major escalation in the Trump administration’s battle with local authorities over deportations. The administration has demanded, under threat of investigation or prosecution, that local officials not impede federal efforts to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, and the ar-

rest sent a message that the administration intends to take a harder line with those that do.

The arrest of the judge, Hannah Dugan, comes after months of rising tensions between the Trump administration and the judiciary. President Trump and his top advisers have repeatedly assailed “local judges” for halting or questioning actions taken by the administration, particularly when it comes to immigration cases.

Mr. Trump’s drive to round up and deport large numbers of migrants has also led to other disputes with federal judges, espe-

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How \$10 Million Quietly Crept
From DeSantis’s Wife’s Charity

By PATRICIA MAZZEI

MIAMI — A charity meant to help people stay off public assistance was the signature project of Florida’s popular first lady, Casey DeSantis. But over three years, it had managed to raise only about \$2 million to help struggling families in Florida.

Then last fall, a \$10 million windfall suddenly arrived from an unlikely source: a Medicaid contractor embroiled in a case of overbilling.

Within weeks, the money was gone — not to churches or other groups helping the needy. Instead, the Hope Florida Foundation quietly funneled it to two nonprofit political committees that helped Gov. Ron DeSantis and his allies defeat a November ballot measure that would have legalized marijuana.

The mystery of the \$10 million — and how it ended up being used to help the governor’s political aims — has engulfed Mr. DeSantis and his wife in a growing scandal in Florida. Republican state law-

Path of Windfall Leads
to a Ballot Measure

makers and news reporters are investigating the money trail just as Mr. and Ms. DeSantis are mulling whether she should run for governor next year to succeed her husband.

Ms. DeSantis has made the Hope Florida initiative central to her public persona since she started the program in 2021. Hope Florida connects low-income families with churches and local groups that might help them with housing, food or other needs so that they do not seek government assistance; the Hope Florida Foundation is its nonprofit fundraising arm.

“Hope Florida is a philosophy,” Ms. DeSantis said in St. Augustine, Fla., on Thursday at an event with the governor trumpeting its achievements. “It shows we can help people in need.”

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Out for a Musical Test Drive

The pianist Jeremy Denk tries three Steinways that the Frick Collection is considering for its auditorium. PAGE C5

Journaling as a Way to Cope

Facing down cancer for the third time inspired Suleika Jaouad’s new work, “The Book of Alchemy.” PAGE C1

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Toxic Sludge on Farmland

For years, a textile mill in South Carolina gave farmers its sewage as free fertilizer. Today, the land is full of “forever chemicals.” PAGE A10

Mangione Pleads Not Guilty

The judge warned Attorney General Pam Bondi to temper her statements to ensure a fair trial on charges of a health insurance executive’s killing. PAGE A20

Expanding Party’s Horizons

A 50-state program announced by the Democratic Party seeks to help recruit candidates to take on Republicans in less-friendly terrain. PAGE A11

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Sleep Deprivation in Ukraine

Experts and psychologists cite near-nightly drone attacks as one of the major impediments to civilians getting proper rest. PAGE A4

A Shrine to Old Hong Kong

At a formerly grand hotel where Bruce Lee once stayed, a group of collectors seeks to preserve a city’s past. PAGE A9

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A Captain’s Comeback

Gabriel Landeskog of Colorado hadn’t played in the N.H.L. since 2022. Against long odds, he made his return. PAGE B6

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Britain’s Clean Energy Push

National Grid, which owns the high-voltage electricity grid in England and Wales, is rebuilding it in a government-backed drive to attract investment and tackle climate change. PAGE B1

Rights for A.I. Systems?

As artificial intelligence becomes smarter, researchers for at least one company are studying how the systems should be ethically treated should they become conscious. PAGE B1

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Michelle Goldberg

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THIS WEEKEND

