

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Mayor bags deal with ShotSpotter

Johnson fulfills vow to dump gunshot detection system — but only after DNC comes to Chicago

By Jake Sheridan and Alice Yin
Chicago Tribune

The ShotSpotter gunshot detection system has worn a bull's-eye among progressives in Chicago for years.

Now Mayor Brandon Johnson says he will make good on a campaign promise to get rid of the technology. But he won't do so immediately.

Johnson announced Tuesday that the city contract with ShotSpotter would be renewed once more, keeping it in place until late September, a month after the

Democratic National Convention comes to Chicago. Then it will get canceled.

Before the city decommissions ShotSpotter "law enforcement and other community safety stakeholders will assess tools and programs that effectively increase both safety and trust, and issue recommendations to that effect," the Johnson administration said in a statement.

Johnson's decision was greeted with acclaim from his grassroots base that had kept up a steady drumbeat of pressure for him to cancel the contract, but the City Council's more moderate wing

expressed apprehension on how its absence will impact gun violence response times.

"Moving forward, the city of Chicago will deploy its resources on the most effective strategies and tactics proven to accelerate the current downward trend in violent crime," the statement reads in part. "Doing this work, in consultation with community, violence prevention organizations and law enforcement, provides a pathway to a better, stronger, safer Chicago for all."

It was not immediately clear what will supplant the acoustic sensors that are mounted on light poles throughout much of the

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ShotSpotter gunshot detection technology is in use on a light pole in the Austin neighborhood on Tuesday. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



Halyna Fedus prays at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Chicago on Tuesday. JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Biden tells Republicans not to play 'into Putin's hands'

Local Ukrainians, supporters plead for funding to help 'save democracy'

By Angie Leventis Lourgos
Chicago Tribune

Halyna Fedus prays the rosary for her native Ukraine each day, asking God to stave off a Russian takeover and protect the family and friends she left behind when she immigrated to Chicago nearly three decades ago.

She believes Ukraine will persevere, but her homeland needs the help of the United States to preserve its fragile independence — as well as global security and order, which have been at risk since Russia's Feb. 24, 2022, invasion.

"I pray for the U.S. too. It is the biggest support for Ukraine," she said at Shokolad Pastry and Café, the Ukrainian Village neighborhood restaurant she opened

Progressives object to Israel funding: The

Senate-approved bill would give \$14 billion for Israel's military operation in Gaza. Sen. Bernie Sanders, an independent of Vermont, as well as two Democrats, Sens. Jeff Merkley of Oregon and Peter Welch of Vermont, voted against the bill, objecting to sending offensive weaponry to aid the campaign.

House GOP urged to act after Senate OKs aid package for Ukraine, others

By Mary Clare Jalonick, Stephen Groves and Aamer Madhani

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Tuesday called for House Republicans to urgently bring a \$95.3 billion aid package for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan to a vote, warning that refusal to take up the bill, passed by the Senate in the morning, would be "playing into Putin's hands."

"Supporting this bill is standing up to Putin," Biden said, raising his voice in strong comments from the White House as he referred to the Russian leader. "We can't walk away now. That's what Putin is betting on."

But the package faces a deeply uncertain future in

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Officials say CPD short on support

Failures of mental health program laid out in federal court

By Sam Charles
Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Police Department's officer wellness program remains understaffed and unable to respond urgently to officers in need of mental health support, state officials on Tuesday told the chief judge of the U.S. District Court in Chicago.

Meanwhile, CPD's data collection and analysis policies continue to hold back the department's efforts to improve the employee assistance program and reach compliance with a sweeping federal consent decree that is now in its sixth year.

More than a dozen officers have died by suicide since 2018.

"Clearly, there is no way to track or monitor how long it takes for an individual who reaches out to get help," Abigail Durkin, an assistant Illinois attorney general, told Chief Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer during a status hearing in the Chicago consent decree case.

"There is no staffing analysis as to the appropriate number of clients per clinician or drug and alcohol counselor, which impacts the wellness agenda as a whole," Durkin added. "Based on the limited information we do have, the data suggests that the caseloads are far too high and additional staffing is necessary to ensure that members are getting appropriate care."

Durkin credited CPD for its efforts to combat the stigma associated with mental health services, but added that the limited evidence available — mostly anecdotal — suggests

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House impeaches Mayorkas

The U.S. House voted Tuesday to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, with the GOP majority set to punish the Biden administration over its handling of the U.S.-Mexico border. **Nation & World**

For Sox, Cubs, it's already spring

As the White Sox and Cubs start training camp today in the Arizona desert, the new year means putting the last one in the rearview mirror and never mentioning it again in polite company, writes Paul Sullivan. **Chicago Sports**

Picks for Black Restaurant Week

From Haitian cuisine to a nonalcoholic wine shop, six specials we can't wait to try for Black Restaurant Week, which includes participants spanning both the city and suburbs and runs through Feb. 25. **Food & Health**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 45 Low 36

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 16

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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