

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Mayoral adviser voted in Texas

Lee maintains he didn't violate rules on city residency

By Alice Yin and Gregory Royal Pratt
Chicago Tribune

Jason Lee, a top adviser to Mayor Brandon Johnson, voted in Texas last month despite a rule requiring city employees to live in Chicago.

Records obtained by the Tribune show Lee cast his ballot for the November 2024 presidential election in person on Election Day in Houston, where his voter registration address was listed and where one document indicates he told Texas election officials he lived. But he has also served as Johnson's senior adviser since the mayoral transition in May 2023 and signed an affidavit that month attesting that Chicago is his permanent home.

Lee hasn't been charged with wrongdoing, but the optics of a government leader who is required by law to live in one city voting in another are questionable.

In a phone interview, Lee said he wanted to vote for his sister, Erica Lee Carter, in a special election to complete the unfinished congressional term of their late mother, U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, who died of pancreatic cancer in July. He said he is allowed to vote in Texas even though he lives in Chicago.

"I voted in Texas last

Turn to Adviser, Page 4

CHICAGO BUDGET Speed cameras could fill \$11M gap

Mayor's plan aims to pay for restored police oversight

By Alice Yin and A.D. Quig
Chicago Tribune

Mayor Brandon Johnson wants to install new speed cameras to ticket Chicago drivers in order to raise \$11 million next year to pay for Chicago Police Department positions related to the federal consent decree, aldermen familiar with his latest 2025 budget proposal said Friday.

It's part of the mayor's latest bid to reach a compromise with aldermen to pass a budget before an end-of-year deadline. Johnson's administration also proposed a raft of other fixes Friday, including amending a downtown ride-share congestion tax to include weekend trips, boosting the charge on garage and valet parking across the board, and doing away with a promise to continue the city's guaranteed basic income program.

Expanding Chicago's speed camera network could be controversial among City Council members, who are divided over its

Turn to Cameras, Page 2

TikTok ban one step closer

WHAT'S NEXT: TikTok is expected to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, although it is unclear whether the court will take up the case. It's also possible that the company might be thrown a lifeline by President-elect Donald Trump, who said during his campaign that he's opposed to banning the popular social media platform.

Appeals court upholds law requiring app to break ties with its China-based parent

By Haleluya Hadero
Associated Press

A federal appeals court panel unanimously upheld a law Friday that could lead to a ban on TikTok in a few short months, handing a resounding defeat to the popular social media platform as it fights for its survival in the United States. The U.S. Court of Appeals

for the District of Columbia Circuit denied TikTok's petition to overturn the law — which requires TikTok to break ties with its China-based parent ByteDance or be banned by mid-January — and rebuffed the company's challenge of the statute, which it argued had run afoul of the First Amendment. "The First Amendment

exists to protect free speech in the United States," said the court's opinion, which was written by Judge Douglas Ginsburg. "Here the Government acted solely to protect that freedom from a foreign adversary nation and to limit that adversary's ability to gather data on people in the United States."

TikTok and ByteDance — another plaintiff in the lawsuit — are expected to appeal to the Supreme Court, although it is unclear whether the court will take

up the case.

"The Supreme Court has an established historical record of protecting Americans' right to free speech, and we expect they will do just that on this important constitutional issue," TikTok spokesperson Michael Hughes said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, the TikTok ban was conceived and pushed through based upon inaccurate, flawed and hypothetical informa-

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TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Despite pleas, camp cleared

Marcos Hernandez gathers up belongings from his tent before city workers clear the Humboldt Park homeless encampment on Friday. Dozens of city workers arrived with trucks and heavy machinery to clear the camp — and, in some instances, to throw away residents' belongings — amid frigid weather. Everyone living in the encampment was offered an apartment or a shelter bed, according to the ward's alderman, but as of Thursday, only about two-thirds had been able to move into their new homes. **Chicagoland, Page 3**



Former President Barack Obama speaks at the Obama Foundation Democracy Forum at the Marriott Marquis in Chicago on Thursday. **TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

"This idea that each of us has to show a level of forbearance toward those who don't look or think or pray like us, that's at the heart of democracy."

— Former President Barack Obama, during a speech in Chicago on Thursday

In Chicago, Obama urges end to Trump-era divide

By Rick Pearson
Chicago Tribune

In his first public remarks since last month's election, former President Barack Obama on Thursday largely avoided direct mention of Donald Trump's presidential victory and instead focused on the need for bridge-building and accommodation among a public whose sharp divisions have been sown in the Trump era.

"You see, it's easy to give democracy lip service when it delivers the outcomes we want. It's when we don't get what we want that our commitment to democracy is tested," Obama said as he keynoted the third annual Obama Foundation Democracy Forum at a South Loop hotel.

"And at this moment in history, when core democratic principles seem to be continuously under attack, when too many people around the world have become cynical and disengaged, now is precisely the time to ask ourselves tough questions about how we can build our democracies and make them work in meaningful and practical ways for ordinary people," he said.

During his speech, Obama did not mention Trump by name, his Republican successor in the 2016 election who retook the White House by defeating Vice President Kamala Harris on Nov. 5. And Obama's talk was a far cry from the partisan attacks he leveled

Turn to Obama, Page 2

US job market rebounds

America's job market bounced back in November, adding 227,000 workers in a solid recovery from the previous month, when the effects of strikes and hurricanes had sharply diminished employers' payrolls. Hourly wages also rose 0.4% from October, up 4% from one year ago. **Business**

Trump defends Hegseth

President-elect Donald Trump on Friday offered a show of support for Pete Hegseth, his embattled choice to lead the Defense Department, whose confirmation by the Senate is in doubt as he faces questions over allegations of drinking, sexual assault and his views on women. **Nation & World**

'New voice' for Hawks

One day after firing Luke Richardson, the Blackhawks general manager said he made the decision because "some of the realistic expectations that we had coming into the year just were not met." In turn, he's confident interim coach Anders Sorensen will provide a "new voice." **Chicago Sports**

