

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



A train operator looks out the window for passengers at the Morse CTA Red Line station on Tuesday. EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

## Transit workers confront ongoing increase in attacks

Violence, including on CTA, carries implications for employees and riders

By Sarah Freishtat  
Chicago Tribune

The Orange Line operator was directed to take the train out of service because of an issue elsewhere in the system, and was emptying the railcars of passengers. But that Friday morning in mid-October, one customer refused to get off.

With fists raised, the customer got in the operator's face, the operator's union President Pennie McCoach recounted. Another passenger came to help, but once

outside the train, the person who had refused to leave pushed the operator, who fell to the platform, McCoach said.

The Orange Line shoving was one of several attacks against train or bus operators in recent months. In early September, a CTA employee was injured in a drive-by shooting outside the Howard station in Rogers Park, Chicago police said. In late October, an instructor training a bus operator was involved in an argument with a woman on a bus, and the woman hit the instructor

several times, then pulled the instructor off the bus while continuing to hit her, according to police and the bus employees' union president.

The recent violence is a snapshot of an issue that has long been a concern for the unions representing train and bus operators in Chicago. It is part of a nationwide, decades-long uptick in attacks on transit workers, one researcher found, with implications for transit employees, riders and the systems themselves.

"Transit workers are not just in the wrong place at the wrong time," said Lindiwe Rennert, a researcher at the Urban Institute who has studied violence against transit employees. "They're not

just another member of the public who's in a potentially dangerous public space. They're representatives of institutions. It is because of their role that they are seeing less safe conditions than other members of the public."

In 2023, there were 90 major assaults on CTA workers: 52 on bus employees and 38 on rail workers, federal data shows. Across both bus and rail, it was the highest number of major attacks on employees since at least 2008, the data shows.

Complete data isn't yet available for 2024, but through June there had been 13 attacks on rail workers and 26 on bus workers.

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### ELECTION 2024

## Trump falls back on old beefs

Says he shouldn't have left power after 2020 election loss

By Jill Colvin, Darlene Superville, Bill Barrow and Jonathan J. Cooper  
Associated Press

LITITZ, Pa. — Former President Donald Trump gave a profane and conspiracy-laden speech two days before the presidential election, talking about reporters being shot and suggesting he "shouldn't have left" the White House after his 2020 loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

In remarks Sunday that bore no resemblance to his standard speech in the campaign's closing stretch, the former president repeatedly cast doubt on the integrity of the vote and resurrected old grievances about being prosecuted after trying to overturn his defeat four years ago. Trump intensified his verbal attacks against a "grossly incompetent" national leadership and the American media, steering his Pennsylvania rally at one point on to the topic of violence against members of the press.

The GOP nominee for the White House noted the ballistic glass placed in front of him at events after a gunman's assassination attempt in July at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, and Trump talked about places where he saw openings in that protection.

"I have this piece of glass here," he said. "But all we have really over here is the fake news. And to get me, somebody would have to shoot through the fake news. And I don't mind that so much."

It was the second time in

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Tony Adams, 62, checks on his new Tesla as it charges in his garage on Oct. 25 in the McKinley Park neighborhood of Chicago. TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

## Are EV sales slowing — or setting new records? Both.

By Nara Schoenberg  
Chicago Tribune

Electric vehicles are all the rage at the four-unit brick building in McKinley Park where three generations of the Breems family live.

After years of encouragement from Joel Breems, the only sibling who does not live at the building, Kara Breems and her husband, Tony Adams, bought a

Tesla Model Y in August. So did the other Breems sibling, Daniel, and his wife, Heather.

Not to be outdone, the siblings' parents, Helen and Brad, took the plunge a few weeks later, bringing home a third EV, a royal blue Kia EV6.

"We're all super-excited," said Kara Breems, 48.

The Breems family is part of a good news-bad news story on EV sales that's making for seemingly

contradictory headlines, including one — "GM scales back EV plans" — that's displayed prominently in an ad that Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has been running in the key battleground state of Michigan.

Electric vehicles continue to grow in the United States but not at the pace of 2021 to 2022, when

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### MICHAEL MADIGAN TRIAL

## Ex-campaign worker's testimony could add source of intrigue

#MeToo moment would be in back of corruption proceedings

By Jason Meisner, Ray Long and Megan Crepeau  
Chicago Tribune

Seven years ago almost to the day, Alaina Hampton sent a private letter to then-House Speaker Michael Madigan about sexual harassment from a co-worker that became a turning point in Madigan's record-setting reign.

"I do not want to hurt any of you — I care very deeply about people involved," she wrote in the letter, which she later made public. "I only needed to tell you because it has been very painful to experience alone."

The letter set off a chain reac-

tion that weakened Madigan's grip on the House Democratic caucus, which began to question how he handled sexual harassment issues.

While Madigan himself was not accused of sexual misconduct, the lingering fallout combined with federal prosecutors naming him "Public Official A" in their burgeoning investigation ultimately cost him caucus support for the speakership and led to his resignation in early 2021.

As soon as Monday, Hampton, a campaign worker once considered a rising star on Madigan's team, could come face to face with the dethroned speaker if she testifies in his landmark trial, where his organization's struggle with #MeToo scandals has become front and center for the jury.

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### INSIDE

## Israel says it conducted ground raid in Syria

In Israel's first announcement of an operation in Syrian territory during the current war, the military said it seized a Syrian citizen. **Nation & World**

## Bears dominated by Cardinals in 29-9 loss

The Bears' defense was worn down by the Cardinals' running game, and Bears quarterback Caleb Williams was sacked six times. **Chicago Sports**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 69 Low 64

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 14

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
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