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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

STATE OF THE UNION



President Joe Biden delivers a fiery State of the Union address Thursday night at the U.S. Capitol. SAUL LOEB/GETTY-AFP

Biden makes case for a 2nd term

President calls out GOP on Ukraine, Jan. 6, border bill

By Zeke Miller and Seung Min Kim
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden turned his State of the Union speech Thursday night into an animated argument for a second term as he laced into GOP front-runner Donald Trump for espousing “resentment, revenge and retribution,” and jeopardizing freedom at home and abroad.

Over and over, Biden delivered broadsides at “my predecessor” without ever mentioning Trump by name — 13 times in all — raising his voice repeatedly as he tried to quell voter concerns about his age and job performance while sharpening the contrast with his all-but-certain November rival.

It was a far feistier tone from Biden than his prior State of the Union addresses and it was designed to banish doubts about whether the 81-year-old is still up to the job. For 68 minutes in the House chamber, Biden goaded Republicans over their policies, invited call-and-response banter

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INSIDE

US to aid Gaza via temporary port

Will open a sea route for food and other aid for desperate Palestinian civilians trapped in the Israel-Hamas war. **Nation & World**

Cornerback lands \$76M extension

Jaylon Johnson gets a four-year extension with the Bears, keeping the Pro Bowl cornerback as a core player. **Chicago Sports**

TODAY'S WEATHER

High 48
Low 36



Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 22

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
176th year No. 68
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Hybrid elected city school board bill goes to Pritzker

10 members would be picked by voters, with remaining 10 appointed by mayor

By Jeremy Gornier
Chicago Tribune

SPRINGFIELD — Legislation that spells out the inaugural electoral process for Chicago's school board is in Gov. J.B. Pritzker's hands after the Illinois House on Thursday approved a measure that would see half of the 20-member board elected

in November and the other half appointed by the mayor, with the entire panel not decided on by voters for another two years.

In a 75-31 vote, the House passed the same hybrid model of the elected board that it pushed through the chamber during the fall veto session. That proposal stalled because the Senate moved ahead on its own plan to elect the

entire board in the first round of balloting.

Senate President Don Harmon of Oak Park acquiesced to the House plan after receiving a letter in January from Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson urging him to push through the hybrid model instead. The model, also supported by the Chicago Teachers Union, was passed by the Senate on Tuesday.

A few hours before Thursday's house vote, Pritzker, who signed the measure in 2021 to create Chicago's elected school board,

indicated his support for moving forward whether through an initial hybrid model or otherwise.

“Either way, I think that the city of Chicago is doing the right thing,” Pritzker said at an unrelated event in Decatur. “The Chicago Public Schools will be better led by people who are representative of the people and not just appointed by the mayor of the city of Chicago.”

During House debate Thursday afternoon, state Rep. Ann

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Vicenta Buitrago leaves Nourishing Hope-Sheridan Market with her food items on Feb. 26. Food pantries in Chicago are struggling to meet demand with the influx of migrants in the city. **E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

‘We’re running out of food’

Amid migrant crisis, Chicago food pantries experience unprecedented demand

By Kate Armanini
Chicago Tribune

Vicenta Buitrago stood in line for three hours at the Sheridan Market food pantry on a recent afternoon. The small waiting room was packed, and guests spilled out the front door onto the sidewalk.

Despite the wait, the Colombian migrant left beaming, pushing a grocery cart piled high with an assortment of produce and other goods. A pot of red tulips

from Trader Joe's was perched above her bags.

“Mira, que bonito. Look, how beautiful,” Buitrago, 59, said. “It's been so long since I've had flowers.”

For many nonprofit food distributors, hourslong lines have become the norm. Food pantries across Chicago are grappling with a wave of unprecedented demand, driven at least in part by the influx of migrants in the city, forcing some to cut back services.

Many pantries have reduced

the number of allotted visits per month to stretch supply. Others are rationing food products offered to guests.

“We're running out of food,” said Pastor Sandra Gillespie, who runs Chosen Bethel Family Ministries Food Pantry in Englewood. “If this rate of increase continues, we're going to have to change something.”

The network of the Greater Chicago Food Depository, which includes over 800 food distributors across the city, served

186,000 households in December, a 29% increase from the previous year.

While pantries don't ask guests their status, anecdotally, a significant portion of the new visitors are Latino migrants, several organizations said. Nonprofit food distributors in Denver, another city that has received thousands of migrants, are facing similar challenges.

More than 36,400 migrants

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A new Church of Scientology building stands Wednesday at 650 S. Clark St. in the South Loop. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Church of Scientology opening up for business

But not all neighbors in South Loop rolling out the welcome mat

By Rebecca Johnson and Jake Sheridan
Chicago Tribune

A new Scientology church opened over the weekend in Chicago, with its gold and white logo displayed prominently in the middle of a seven-story building in the South Loop. But not every-

one in the new neighborhood is laying out the welcome mat.

Bari Berger, a spokesperson for the church, said the new location is called an “Ideal Church of Scientology,” meaning it provides the “ideal facilities to service Scientologists on their ascent to greater states of spiritual awareness and freedom.” She said it also serves as a headquarters for humanitarian initiatives, such as drug and crime prevention and

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