

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



A man holds a large cross while police officers and members of the public line up to enter the visitation for Chicago police Officer Luis Huesca on Sunday at Blake-Lamb Funeral Home in Oak Lawn. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

‘AN ATTACK ON THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY’

Slain Chicago police Officer Luis Huesca mourned at visitation

By Avani Kalra and Adriana Pérez | Chicago Tribune

Rays of sunlight filtered through the clouds Sunday evening as firefighters and police officers filed into the Blake-Lamb Funeral Home in Oak Lawn. Inside, they joined family and friends grieving Chicago police Officer Luis Huesca. As cars drove down the busy street, they slowed when passing a U.S. flag fluttering from a firetruck ladder. Drivers and passengers rolled their windows down to look at a sign bearing a photo of a smiling Huesca, his name, badge number and last watch: April 21, 2024.

Huesca, 30, was shot and fatally wounded driving home from work in Gage Park while in uniform. Late Friday night, the Chicago Police Department announced a suspect in the case, and a judge signed off on a warrant for the arrest of Xavier Tate Jr.

Huesca's family spoke Saturday in a video conversation with Chicago's Fraternal Order of Police.

"April 23 was his birthday, and it was so hard for me," Edith Huesca said in the video. "For me as a mother, I'm asking for justice. It won't give

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An image of Chicago police Officer Luis Huesca from the 2023 video "Behind This Uniform: Honoring Officer Andrés Mauricio Vásquez Lasso." **CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Transit merger getting big push

Leaders eye future as agencies' COVID-19 relief begins to fade

By Sarah Freishtat
Chicago Tribune

The Chicago area's public bus and rail systems would be combined under a measure Illinois lawmakers are expected to introduce, which would eliminate the CTA, Metra and Pace as separate agencies.

The legislation comes as complaints have mounted over the Chicago Transit Authority's struggles to provide frequent, reliable and safe service, and days after Gov. J.B. Pritzker called for "an evolution of the leadership" at the CTA. But it is linked to an earlier report laying out recommendations about what Chicago-area transit could look like in the future, and marks a decision to pursue the more comprehensive of two options outlined in the report to overhaul oversight of public transportation.

The proposal is part of a broader look at transit funding, as the region's public transit agencies face a combined \$730 million budget hole once federal COVID-19 relief funding starts running out, which could be as soon as 2025. Transit agencies have warned failure to plug the financial hole could lead to catastrophic service cuts and fare increases, and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning was tasked by the Illinois General Assembly with developing recommendations to overhaul transit, which were delivered to lawmakers in December.

The decision to introduce legislation is a signal of how some lawmakers and civic organizations want to proceed. Already, the transit agencies have sought more state funding, while the civic organizations and lawmakers say funding must be linked to changes to the way transit is overseen. But debate about consolidating the transit agencies and funding could prove thorny in Springfield.

Turn to Transit, Page 5



People protest Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government Saturday in Tel Aviv. **OHAD ZWIGENBERG/AP**

Pressure building for Israel, Hamas

Biden, Netanyahu talk; some top Israelis fear arrest warrants

By Tia Goldenberg,
Jon Gambrell
and Samy Magdy
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — U.S. President Joe Biden has again spoken with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the White House said Sunday, as pressure builds on Israel and Hamas to

reach a deal that would free some Israeli hostages and bring a cease-fire in the nearly seven-month war in Gaza.

The White House said Biden reiterated his "clear position" as Israel plans to invade Gaza's southernmost city, Rafah, despite global concern for more than 1 million Palestinians sheltering there.

In a development Sunday evening, Israeli officials increasingly believe that the International Criminal Court is preparing to issue arrest warrants for senior

government officials on charges related to the conflict with Hamas, according to five Israeli and foreign officials. The Israeli and foreign officials also believe the court is weighing arrest warrants for leaders from Hamas.

If the court proceeds, the Israeli officials could potentially be accused of preventing the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and pursuing an excessively harsh response to the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attacks

Turn to Pressure, Page 9

6 months after state ended cash bail, jail populations are down

Courts settle into new patterns; long-term outcomes still unclear

By Madeline Buckley
Chicago Tribune

In one of the most serious cases on the detention hearing call at the Leighton Criminal Court Building on a day earlier this month, a judge ordered a teen jailed pending trial after he was accused of shooting a woman in the neck during an attempted carjacking.

"It's difficult for the court to come to the finding that an 18-year-old is so dangerous," said Cook County Judge William Fahy. "I can't overlook the nature of this offense and the level of violence involved. ... This poor victim was shot twice."

More than six months into implementation of the law that eliminated cash bail and reformed the state's pretrial justice systems, counties have

settled into new patterns, with longer detention hearings and money no longer a factor in whether someone will be released from jail.

Illinois was the first state in the nation to legislatively outlaw cash bail, ensuring that outcomes here would be watched closely. With half a year past, experts are taking stock of the Pretrial Fairness Act in practice, while advocates push for funding to support measures that they say will set the law up for success, particularly for the state's underfunded public defense system.

"It's a sea change in how things were done," said Carolyn Klarquist, director of the Pretrial Fairness Unit in the Office of the State Appellate Defender, which is overseeing most appeals related to the act.

Newly released data from the Cook County courts also offers the first glimpse of detention outcomes, though experts

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TODAY'S WEATHER



High 74 Low 60

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 12

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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