

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

AG joins diversity defense efforts

Raoul among Dems from 19 states to pledge their support

By Olivia Olander
Chicago Tribune

A national effort to undermine diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in housing, universities and corporate boardrooms is being countered in Illinois and other states by Democratic officials who say they will defend anti-discrimination laws from being “hijacked and turned on their heads.”

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul took the lead on a letter signed by 19 Democratic attorneys general late last month reaffirming their position that programs supporting diversity are valid and mitigate racial discrimination, part of an effort to take back the narrative from conservatives. The letter was delivered to the American Bar Association, Fortune 100 company CEOs and other organizations that may be targeted for DEI initiatives.

In an interview, Raoul said he wants to ensure “this very well-coordinated effort to undermine efforts to be inclusive, both in higher education and the corporate sector, does not succeed.”

The nationwide reckoning on race after the murder of George Floyd, a Black man, by a white police officer in Minneapolis in 2020 prompted promises from institutions across the country to hire and include more people from marginalized communities.

But the movement has become a key political target for more conservative groups, who argue such initiatives are no longer necessary and undermine merit. The opposition was bolstered by last year’s Supreme Court

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NASCAR CHICAGO STREET RACE



People watch from windows along Michigan Avenue during the NASCAR Chicago Street Race on Sunday. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

For 2nd year in a row, rain interrupts Grant Park 165

By Jake Sheridan and Molly Morrow
Chicago Tribune

Fans — and once again, rain — flooded downtown Chicago Sunday for the NASCAR Chicago Street Race weekend’s main event, the Grant Park 165.

Thousands watched as race cars roared by on the city streets between lengthy delays caused by intermittent downpours. Rain fell hard as the race’s start was delayed half an hour and picked up again early into the competition, bringing out the caution flags, slip-ups and ponchos.

Many fans left Grant Park as the race came to an early, temporary halt.

Berwyn resident José Fernando, a towel covering his head, was among the soaked crowd members heading for the exit. The dry Saturday undercard race was “awesome,” the 25-year-old new racing fan said. But he didn’t want to stick around in the gloomy, wet conditions.

“I’m not trying to experience that from last year,” Fernando said at his second, rainy NASCAR race. “Hopefully, it turns out better next year. I really had high hopes for this.”

But lots of fans stuck around until the race started up again around 7:20 p.m. The race was not completed before the Tribune went to press.

Michael Wilson and his family, all of whom were clad in rain ponchos as they stood under an awning, had come prepared.

“Anytime it says sunny, bring your poncho,” Wilson laughed. He and his family came out to NASCAR as casual fans and planned to wait out the rain as long as they could.

Esha Patel, 35, and her husband, Rick Patel, 36, who live in the West Loop, also hid out under the

same awning. The couple withstood the heat of the early afternoon and then hunkered down for the downpours.

They made the decision to get tickets for the race this morning, having checked the forecast for rain.

“Rain or shine, he loves it,” Esha Patel said about her husband. “As long as he’s here, I’m here,” she said.

The stands emptied just minutes after former Chicago Bear Matt Forte and race grand marshal shouted for drivers to

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ELECTION 2024



President Joe Biden calls for support Sunday at a church in Philadelphia. SAUL LOEB/GETTY-AFP

Biden preaches unity in Pa.

Campaign expects calls to grow louder for a new candidate

By Colleen Long and Will Weissert
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — President Joe Biden urged his supporters to stay unified at a rousing Black church service Sunday in critical Pennsylvania, even as his campaign team quietly braced for growing pressure on him to aban-

don his reelection bid amid intensifying questions about whether he’s fit for another term.

Speaking from a stage flanked by sunshine from stained-glass windows at northwest Philadelphia’s Mount Airy Church of God in Christ, the 81-year-old Biden laughed off concerns about his age, joking “I know I look 40” but “I’ve been doing this a long time.”

“I, honest to God, have never been more optimistic about America’s future if we stick together,” he said, speaking from a prepared text but forgoing a teleprompter.

As Congress prepares to resume this week, House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries convened top committee lawmakers Sunday afternoon to assess their views. Several Democratic committee leaders spoke up to say Biden should step aside, according to two people familiar with the meeting and granted anonymity to discuss it.

But several other top Democrats, including members of the Congressional Black Caucus, argued just as

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High-profile murder case unusual in its speed, and defense

Accused of stabbing 11-year-old, he’s acting as his own attorney — ‘a nightmare for judges’

By Madeline Buckley
Chicago Tribune

In a courtroom last week, Cook County prosecutors handed over a stack of cell-phone records to a defendant accused of fatally stabbing 11-year-old Jayden Perkins in March, as the defendant lobbed back accusations that they hid evidence from him.

The case against Crosetti Brand is striking on its own: A man with a documented history of abusing multiple women is accused of barging into an Edgewater apartment just a day after being released from prison, attacking his ex-girlfriend and killing Jayden when the boy tried to help his mother. But procedurally, the matter

stands out even more as it unfolds at the busy Leighton Criminal Court Building. Brand is serving as his own attorney, arguing the case without the expertise of a licensed lawyer, and he has demanded a speedy trial — meaning the case is proceeding toward trial at a pace nearly unheard of in a building where murder cases can linger for years or even a decade.

“I have seen the mounds of discovery tendered to you, tendered in a very rapid fashion, way more quickly than I’ve seen in any other case,” Judge Angela Petrone told Brand at the latest hearing, where he took possession of reams

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Teddy bear’s story has young audience cheering

The Chicago Shakespeare Theater’s annual family production of “Corduroy” has inventive stagecraft, circus-inspired physicality and opportunities for audience interaction. **Arts & Living**

Leftist bloc on track for upset in French elections

A coalition of the French left that quickly banded together to beat a surging far right in legislative elections won the most seats in parliament but not a majority, according to projections. **Nation & World**

