

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## A referendum on corruption

Sentencing hearing for former Ald. Burke set for Monday in federal court could be legal spectacle

By Jason Meisner and Megan Crepeau  
Chicago Tribune

After a lifetime of backroom wheeling and dealing, former Chicago Ald. Edward Burke faces the most consequential negotiation of his life on Monday — and in the most public of places.

In a federal courtroom on the 25th floor of the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse, Burke, the longtime Democratic machine stalwart who dominated the City Council for most of his 54 years as an alderman, will be sentenced in a corruption case that rocked city politics and tanked Burke's extraordinary career as a lawyer and politician.

The sentencing hearing is among the most anticipated proceedings in years in Chicago's federal court, a building that seen countless politicians, both Republicans and Democrats, handed prison terms, a veritable parade of alderpersons, county commissioners, state representatives, senators, governors and even a former speaker of the U.S. House.

But perhaps none wielded so much power for so long as Burke, the head of the vaunted Finance

Committee who not only worked the city's purse strings but also was a shrewd ward boss, political tactician and judicial slate-maker.

Those factors make Burke's sentencing a significant referendum on Chicago's nationally recognized brand of old-school corruption.

After a last-ditch effort by Burke's legal team to postpone the sentencing was denied Friday, the stage is set for a legal spectacle that hasn't occurred since ex-Gov. Rod

Blagojevich was sentenced to 14 years in prison in December 2011.

To accommodate what's expected to be a horde of media, friends and relatives of Burke, and curious onlookers, two overflow courtrooms will be set up at the courthouse at 219 S. Dearborn St. with a live video feed for those who can't get into U.S. District Judge Virginia Kendall's main courtroom.

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## Billing still a debacle for solar customers

ComEd's system woes have hindered state program for 4 months

By Robert Channick  
Chicago Tribune

When ComEd bungled the launch of a new computer billing system in February, it left millions of customers unable to see their balances or pay online for more than a week before it was ostensibly resolved.

But for thousands of ComEd customers participating in the state's community solar program, the billing debacle continues.

For nearly four months, subscribers to community solar farms dotting the landscape across northern Illinois have been unable to get credit for the power generated to offset their regular ComEd bills. Meanwhile, the companies that operate the solar installations are not getting paid, essentially shutting down one of the state's signature clean energy programs.

"Our program serves as a model for how community solar could work in other states," said Sarah Moskowitz, executive director of Citizens Utility Board. "It's very disappointing to see one of our utilities single-handedly halt the program for several months."

Created nearly a decade ago and boosted by the state's 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, the Illinois community solar program allows customers who

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ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/TRIBUNE

## Sandberg statue unveiled at Wrigley

Forty years after his MVP season in 1984, the Hall of Fame second baseman was on hand Sunday for a ceremony to unveil a statue in his honor. **Chicago Sports**

## Joel, Nicks deliver sets full of classics

Music icons roll out bevy of familiar favorites as they concluded the 2024 stretch of their ongoing Two Icons One Night tour at Soldier Field. **Arts & Living**

### SKY VS. FEVER



EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

## Embrace the challenge

Sky forward Angel Reese hugs guard Chennedy Carter (7) with 0.5 seconds left in the game against the Fever on Sunday at Wintrust Arena. The Sky won 88-87 in a game that featured a highly anticipated matchup between Reese and the Fever's Caitlin Clark. **Story, Chicago Sports**

## CPD seeing gains in homicide 'clearance' rate

Officials say staff restructuring has helped close cases

By Sam Charles  
Chicago Tribune

Baseball was a big part of life for brothers Ronald and Gregory Tolliver. Growing up on the city's West Side in the 1950s and 1960s, the two would often ride their bikes to play in places like Garfield Park.

"We played baseball pretty much from the time that the sun rose till the streetlights came on," Gregory Tolliver said in a recent interview with the Tribune.

They cheered for both the White Sox and Cubs, going to night games at Comiskey Park after their father finished with work and watching Cubs day games on WGN-TV. Ronald, the fifth of eight kids, went on to play at Marshall High School. Gregory, two years younger, tried out

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Chicago police Superintendent Larry Snelling approaches a news conference with Antoinette Ursitti, chief of detectives, on May 3 at police headquarters. **E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Israel shifting focus to Lebanon

Netanyahu eyes new phase in Gaza, preps for Hezbollah fight

By Bassem Mroue and Qassim Abdul-Zahra  
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that the current phase of fighting against Hamas in Gaza is winding down but the war isn't, setting the stage for Israel to send more troops to its northern border to confront the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

The comments threatened to further heighten the tensions between Israel and Hezbollah at a time when they appear to be moving closer to war.

Thousands of fighters from Iran-backed groups in the Middle East are ready to come to Lebanon to join with the militant Hezbollah group in its battle with Israel if the simmering conflict escalates into a full-blown war, officials with Iran-backed factions and analysts say.

Over the past decade, Iran-backed fighters from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan fought together in Syria's 13-year conflict, helping tip the balance in favor of Syrian President Bashar Assad. Officials from Iran-backed groups say they could also gather again against Israel.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said in a speech Wednesday that militant leaders from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and other countries previously offered to send tens of thou-

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