February 19 - Day 31

12:00 AM - Romania has come under US pressure to allow far-right candidate Calin Georgescu to run unimpeded in the May 2025 elections. Georgescu is a eurosceptic with pro-Russian tendencies.

12:40 AM - Pete Marocco, State Department Director of Foreign Assistance and Acting Deputy USAID Administrator, says in a court briefing that the Trump administration will continue to freeze foreign aid in defiance of court orders by Federal Judge Amir Ali.

6:00 AM - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky responded to Trump’s comments about his country and his performance overnight. He says Trump lives in a disinformation bubble created by Russia, and that his country was not for sale re: the mineral deal.

7:03 AM - Donald Trump’s media company sues Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes for violating EO 14203 (Sanctions on the ICC) for being involved in the prosecution of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, now residing in the US and an avid Trump ally.

9:17 PM - State Department orders all employees to cancel subscriptions for The Economist, New York Times, Politico, Bloomberg, AP, and Reuters. All have reported negatively on the Trump administration.

9:27 AM - Donald Trump posts on his Truth Social to support the House’s version of the reconciliation bill. “the House Resolution implements my FULL America First Agenda, EVERYTHING, not just parts of it! We need both Chambers to pass the House Budget to ‘kickstart’ the Reconciliation process, and move all of our priorities to the concept of, ‘ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL.’ It will, without question, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!” The House's proposal includes steep cuts to Medicaid, which Trump promised would not be touched. It also includes billions in additional border security funding.

9:28 AM - The Trump administration issues a pause on all immigration applications filed by migrants from Latin America and Ukraine, citing fraud and national security concerns.

10:24 AM - Trump is looking at a trade deal with China to make the country buy more US goods and make more investments in the United States. Trump previously negotiated a trade deal with China in 2020, but China failed to uphold a promise to purchase an additional $200b of American goods. He wants the agreement to tackle issues such as nuclear weapons security as well.

10:28 AM - Per WaPo, GOP Senators have been begging the Trump administration to resume the distribution of funds that would have gone to their states. The cutting and freezing of aid has blocked billions in agricultural and infrastructure investments to red states.

10:36 AM - An unpublished federal register public notice from the State Department confirms that the following criminal organizations will be designated as foreign terrorist organizations tomorrow: Tren de Aragua, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), Cartel de Sinaloa (Sinaloa Cartel), Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG), Carteles Unidos (United Cartels); Cartel del Noreste (Los Zetas); Cartel del Golfo (Gulf Cartel), and La Nueva Familia Michoacana.

10:47 AM - Donald Trump attacks Ukraine and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Truth Social. “Volodymyr Zelenskyy... talked the United States of America into spending $350 Billion Dollars, to go into a War that couldn't be won, that never had to start, but a War that he, without the U.S. and ‘TRUMP, will never be able to settle.” He calls Zelensky a “Dictator without Elections”, and accuses him of prolonging the war and destroying his country.

11:20 AM - Donald Trump expresses frustration over Boeing's delay relating to the delivery of new Air Force Ones, empowering Elon Musk to take measures to make the company move faster, which could include relaxing security standards on new planes or retrofitting a new jet. He also expressed his view that Boeing is a “lost cause”.

11:35 AM - JD Vance warns that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will regret disparaging Trump, calling his response to peace negotiations “atrocious”.

11:51. AM - Donald Trump is expected to issue a public health order to limit immigration at the southern border based on the idea that immigrants at the southern border are risky disease vectors for things such as Measles and Tuberculosis. It’s similar to Title 42 under the first Trump administration, implemented during the COVID Pandemic.

12:05 PM - Nonprofit organizations sue the Trump administration over anti-trans and anti-DEI executive orders. They claim the orders violate the first amendment and equal protection guarantees, are too vague, exceed presidential authority, and violate the Administrative Procedure Act.

12:20 PM - Gallup poll conducted from February 3 to February 16 shows that Donald Trump’s approval rating has fallen to 45% in favor to 51% against. A Quinnipiac poll from February 13 to February 17 showed that congressional democrats are at an approval rating of 21% in favor and 68% against.

12:38 PM - Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent will skip the G20 conference in South Africa.

12:45 PM - Rumors that preparations are ongoing in Italy for the US to withdraw troops from Kosovo.

12:56 PM - Department of Transportation rescinds approval for NYC congestion pricing. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy [R-WI] says that the federal government has authority over highways going into Manhattan and that the tolls created an unfair burden for drivers living outside of the zone.

1:00 PM - The Metropolitan Transportation Agency sues the federal government to keep congestion pricing in Lower Manhattan. “It’s mystifying that after four years and 4,000 pages of federally-supervised environmental review — and barely three months after giving final approval to the Congestion Relief Program — USDOT would seek to totally reverse course.”

1:58 PM - Donald Trump issues a statement on Truth Social on the revoking of congestion pricing. “CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD. Manhattan, and all of New York, is SAVED. LONG LIVE THE KING!”

2:23 PM - Gov. Kathy Hochul [D-NY] issues a statement on the DOT rescinding their approval for congestion pricing. She highlights benefits of the program, such as reduced traffic, improved transit ridership, more economic activity, and school buses arriving on time. “We are a nation of laws. Not ruled by a king... We'll see you in court.”

2:24 PM - Four top NASA officials are expected to leave the agency, per Reuters. The officials were all closely tied to NASA’s manned lunar program Artemis, which was planned to land humans on the moon again by 2027. That includes Associate Administrator Jim Free, who was a defender of the program.

2:36 PM - YouGoy poll of 1,603 people show that 25% of respondents want DOGE to be abolished, the most out of any agency mentioned.

2:49 PM - SecDef Pete Hegseth orders senior Pentagon officials to draft a plan to cut 8% from the defense budget every year for the next 5 years, with programs relating to border security, nuclear weaponry, missile defense, and munitions procurement. Hegseth wants to receive the proposal by February 24. Pentagon officials confirmed that the cuts are conceived to fund other projects such as Trump’s American Iron Dome.

3:20 PM - National Security Advisor Mike Waltz says that Trump’s relationship soured with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky due to his refusal to sign the mineral deal. Note: Ukraine might not even have the mineral reserves necessary to uphold the deal.

3:21 PM - Rep. Eli Crane [R-AZ-2] reveals the articles of impeachment for Federal Judge Paul Engelmayer he will file on Friday, accusing Engelmayer of using his position for personal and political gain.

3:28 PM - Trump administration freezes funding to the Palestinian Authority Security Services, in line with the broader freeze to foreign aid programs.

3:32 PM - Leaked memo from SecDef Pete Hegseth reveals 17 exemptions from the planned DOD budget cuts, the F-35 program, frequently criticized by Elon Musk, is not protected by the exemptions.

3:35 PM - European Parliament member Mika Aaltola from Finland: “The United States has given us three weeks to agree on terms for Ukraine's surrender. If we don't, the United States will withdraw from Europe.”

3:50 PM - WIRED reporting that SpaceX employees have already begun work at the FAA. Previous statements from the DOT and Elon Musk indicated that they were just visiting, while some were being onboarded into positions via Schedule A.

4:06 PM - The SP500 closes at a new record high of $6,144.15.

4:12 PM - Acting Deputy AG Emil Bove visited the NYC offices of the DOJ to assert his commitment to “ending weaponized government, stopping the invasion of criminal illegal aliens, and eliminating drug cartels and transnational gangs from our homeland.” He said that there are resignation templates available for people who do not support the administration's mission.

4:17 PM - USAID contractors and aid recipients in a new court filing say that Secretary of State Marco Rubio [R-FL] and Acting Deputy USAID Administrator Peter Marocco should be held in civil contempt for violating court orders on lifting the aid freeze.

4:28 PM - The State Department formally declares the aforementioned criminal organizations as foreign terrorist organizations.

4:33 PM - Federal judge delays a decision on whether or not to dismiss the charges against NYC Mayor Eric Adams [D-NY].

4:54 PM - IRS probationary employees started receiving an email telling them to return to offices tomorrow with all government-issued equipment. A separate termination email from the OPM will come later.

4:55 PM - MSNBC reporting that SecDef Pete Hegseth is considering firing a slate of military generals and flag officers as early as this week.

4:57 PM - The NYT (via Newswire) reports that the Trump administration will start to fire 6,000 IRS employees starting tomorrow.

5:02 PM - ICE Assistant Chief Counsel in Dallas, James Rodden, is identified as the owner of the racist Twitter account “GlomarResponder”. Rodden posted comments such as “Migrants are all criminals” and “America is a White nation, founded by Whites. ... Our country should favor us.”

5:20 PM - Per FOX correspondent Bill Melugin, Trump will sign an executive order to “direct every federal agency & department to identify all federally funded programs currently providing any financial benefits to illegal aliens, and ‘take corrective action’, ensuring that any federal funds to states and localities ‘will not be used to support sanctuary policies or assist illegal immigration.’ Additionally, the executive order will mandate improvements in eligibility verification to prevent federal benefits from going to anyone in the US illegally.”

5:37 PM - Trump administration officials cite other legal authorities instead of directly citing Trump’s executive orders to avoid court orders to stop blocking funding, per the NYT. “...administration officials are paying lip service to complying with the letter of the court orders while violating their spirit. The tactic shows how aggressively and nimbly the Trump administration is working to keep funds jammed up, and the complexity judges face if they want to compel the administration to unblock the money.”

6:00 PM - Donald Trump speaks at an investor conference in Miami, claiming massive fraud in Social Security that will be “one of the great potential scandals in history.” He also praised his administration's efforts to shut down USAID and CFPB. He also reaffirmed that he would announce tariffs on cars, semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, AND lumber in the next month at the latest.

On peace talks about Ukraine, Trump praised Saudi Arabia as a country with “smart people”. He also said that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky could have shown up if he wanted to, but didn’t. He continued his standard attacks about Zelensky’s election suspension and for continuing the war.

6:15 PM - Sources within CISA confirm that DOGE operative Edward Coristine now has digital access to the agency.

6:23 PM - Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez [D-NY-14] rallied with thousands of federal employees in NYC at the “Save Our Services” event protesting the mass layoffs and funding freezes, reportedly electrifying the crowd.

6:31 PM - Reuters reports that DOGE has only managed $8.5b in cuts via contract cancellation.

6:44 PM - Trump will sign a new executive order tonight to shrink or cut the following agencies: Presidio Trust, Inter-American Foundation, U.S. African Development Foundation, Federal Executive Boards, Presidential Management Fellows Program, and United States Institute for Peace.

6:52 PM - WIRED reporting that the Director of Data Science and Engineering for the USDS (rebranded DOGE) resigns. “I do not believe that DOGE can continue to deliver the work of USDS, based on their actions so far.”

7:12 PM - Vanity Fair reports that Republicans are privately expressing their fear of speaking out against Donald Trump’s policies. Their concern is having Trump-backed primary opponents run against them and fears of political violence directed by Trump.

8:28 PM - Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick says that Donald Trump’s ultimate goal is to abolish the IRS in a FOX News interview.

8:30 PM - Donald Trump officially signs the executive order directing agencies to eliminate illegal immigrants’ access to welfare.

9:02 PM - Another round of mass layoffs hits CISA, possibly affecting an additional 130 employees atop the 130 employees affected last week during the federal mass layoffs.

9:09 PM - oth Circuit Court denies the Trump administration’s bid for emergency relief from the TRO blocking the birthright citizenship executive order.

10:08 PM - Trump says the federal government should take over direct governance of Washington DC. “I think we should take over Washington, D.C. — make it safe... I think that we should govern the District of Columbia.” DC has limited home rule, with Congress able to vet and overturn any DC laws, and any change would put it back under direct rule from Congress.