

# TODAY'S TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

FEBRUARY 5, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

## TODAY'S TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL - FEBRUARY 5, 2026

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PIVOTS TO "ENERGY DOMINANCE" AND "AI SUPREMACY" AS DHS FUNDING BATTLE ENTERS A CRITICAL PHASE.

**DAY-AT-A-GLANCE**

**ADMINISTRATION'S AGGRESSIVE ENFORCEMENT:** Border Czar Homan, 700 agents withdrawn from Minneapolis, "unprecedented local cooperation," "zero illegal releases."

**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**CONGRESS**

**DEMOCRATIC DEMANDS FOR SAFEGUARDS:** Jeffries & Schumer, 23 demands, mandatory body cameras, removal of masks, judicial warrants before home entry.

**FEBRUARY 13 DHS FUNDING DEADLINE LOOMS**

**MULTI-DEPARTMENTAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY** Critical minerals, power plants, AI chips, AI electric vehicles, and electric vehicles.

**PREFERENTIAL TRADE ZONE:** VP Vance & Sec. Rubio, 50-nation ministerial, price floors, tariffs against China.

**AI "MANHATTAN PROJECT":** Treasury & DOE, 50 gigawatts new power, federal preemption of state AI regulations.

**MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS**

**DHS FUNDING STANDOFF & ICE REFORM** 23 Demands from Schumer & Jeffries; Renee Good & Alex Pretti deaths cited; Homan announces 700-officer drawdown, 2,000 agents remain; Sec. Noem claims "most secure border," 95% drop in encounters; Trump open to "softer touch" with local cooperation.

**CRITICAL MINERALS & GLOBAL TRADE STRATEGY** VP Vance & Sec. Rubio propose "Preferential Trade Zone" to break China's 80% control; "Project Vault" strategic mineral stockpile announced; House passes H.R. 4090 (Critical Mineral Dominance Act) for expedited mining.

**ECONOMIC POLICY & FINANCIAL STABILITY** Sec. Bessent demands 4.4% GDP inflation towards 2%; Criticized over 71,000 lost manufacturing jobs; Supports 10% credit card interest rate cap, "Trump Accounts" for newborns hit 1 million sign-ups.

**TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: AI & AVs** OSTP's "Genesys Mission" to double scientific R&D with AI; Senate Commerce clashes with Tesla/Waymo on liability; Threats to withhold broadband funding for state AI regulations.

**DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES**

**"WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT" INDUSTRIAL SHIFT** Shift from border security to "builder" narrative and long-term competition with China. Energy, trade, and technology treated as a singular national security front. "Builders vs. Resisters" framing.

**FEDERALISM & "UNITARY EXECUTIVE" AUTHORITY** Escalating friction, executive orders on voting/AI, "geographic targeting" of benefits, DOJ investigations of obstacles. Testing limits of federal power over states.

**"SPIRITUALIZATION" OF PUBLIC SERVICE** Aligning policy goals with religious tradition; Sec. Hegseth's prayer services; National Mall rededication; Framing law enforcement as "peacemakers" and a moral shield.

**LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP & FUTURE OUTLOOK**

**BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED** H.R. 4090 (Critical Minerals), SAVE America Act (Voter ID), Main Street Capital Access Act, Clear Labels Act (Drug labels), RAIL Act (Broadband), Stay In Your Lane Act (AVs), TRACK Act (FEMA), SMART Act (Financial institutions).

**HYPOTHESES & FUTURE OUTLOOK** DHS Funding & Potential Shutdown (Likely Feb 13 without intervention); AI and Preemption (Bipartisan framework appetite, "moratorium" challenges); Energy Dominance Infrastructure (SPEED Act, RAIL Act, "Giga-Bill" momentum).

**HYPOTHESES & FUTURE OUTLOOK** DHS Funding & Potential Shutdown (Likely Feb 13 without intervention); AI and Preemption (Bipartisan framework appetite, "moratorium" challenges); Energy Dominance Infrastructure (SPEED Act, RAIL Act, "Giga-Bill" momentum).

# TODAY'S TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

FEBRUARY 5, 2026

---

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PIVOTS TO "ENERGY DOMINANCE" AND "AI SUPREMACY" AS DHS FUNDING BATTLE ENTERS A CRITICAL PHASE.

## DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

---

February 5, 2026, was defined by a widening ideological chasm between the executive branch's aggressive enforcement policies and Congressional Democrats' demands for civil liberty safeguards. The day's legislative focus centered on the looming February 13 deadline for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding. Congressional leaders Hakeem Jeffries and Chuck Schumer explicitly conditioned their support for a full-year bill on the implementation of "guardrails" for ICE, including mandatory body cameras, the removal of face masks for federal agents, and a requirement for judicial warrants before entering homes ([Source](#), [Source](#)). Border Czar Tom Homan attempted to de-escalate tensions in the Midwest by announcing the withdrawal of 700 federal agents from Minneapolis, citing increased "unprecedented cooperation" from local jails ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

Beyond immigration, the administration launched an ambitious multi-departmental industrial strategy designed to secure American

dominance in the 21st-century economy. At the State Department, Vice President Vance and Secretary Rubio hosted a 50-nation ministerial to establish a "Preferential Trade Zone" for critical minerals, utilizing a "price floor" mechanism and tariffs to insulate domestic mining from Chinese market manipulation ([Source](#), [Source](#)). Simultaneously, the Treasury Department and Department of Energy (DOE) outlined a "Manhattan Project" for the AI era, including the deployment of 50 gigawatts of new power generation on federal lands and a major push for federal preemption of state-level AI regulations ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).

## MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

---

### The DHS Funding Standoff and ICE Reform

- Democratic leaders Schumer and Jeffries issued a list of 23 demands for the DHS funding bill, citing the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti as evidence of a "paramilitary force" out of control ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- Border Czar Tom Homan announced a 700-officer drawdown in Minneapolis but vowed that mass deportations would continue, stating that 2,000 agents remain on the ground to target "criminal aliens" ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).
- DHS Secretary Kristi Noem reported that the border is the "most secure in history," claiming zero illegal alien releases into the interior in the last nine months and a 95% drop in encounters ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- President Trump suggested in a national interview that he is open to a "softer touch" for ICE if local authorities cooperate fully ([Source](#)).

## Critical Minerals and Global Trade Strategy

- VP Vance and Secretary Rubio proposed a "Preferential Trade Zone" for minerals to break China's 80% control over processing, offering members price floors maintained via adjustable tariffs ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).
- The administration announced "Project Vault," the nation's first strategic mineral stockpile, modeled after the Strategic Petroleum Reserve ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- The House passed the "Critical Mineral Dominance Act" (H.R. 4090) to expedite mining permits on federal lands despite Democratic concerns regarding foreign ownership loopholes ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

## Economic Policy and Financial Stability

- Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent defended the administration's 4.4% GDP growth and reported inflation falling toward a 2% target, despite sharp criticism over 71,000 lost manufacturing jobs since April 2025 ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).
- Bessent signaled support for a one-year 10% cap on credit card interest rates to combat the "Biden inflation" legacy ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- Implementation of "Trump Accounts" (investments for newborns) reached a milestone of one million sign-ups, with a major promotional rollout planned for the Super Bowl ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

## Technological Infrastructure: AI and Autonomous Vehicles

- White House OSTP Director Michael Kratsios outlined the "Genesis Mission" to use AI to double scientific R&D output in a decade ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

- Senate Commerce Committee members clashed with Tesla and Waymo executives over liability, with Ranking Member Cantwell vowing to prevent the application of binding arbitration to vehicle safety disputes ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- The administration threatened to withhold broadband funding from states that adopt "onerous" AI regulations, seeking a unified federal framework ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

## DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

---

The day's events revealed a fundamental shift in the administration's posture, moving from a campaign-style focus on border security to a "builder" narrative aimed at long-term industrial competition with China. This shift is characterized by a "Whole of Government" approach where energy policy (drilling and nuclear), trade (tariffs and mineral trade zones), and technology (AI and autonomous vehicles) are treated as a singular national security front ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)). Secretary Bessent and Rep. Westerman both framed the current political climate as a choice between "builders" and "resisters," suggesting that regulatory hurdles are now viewed as a form of economic sabotage ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

A second major theme is the escalating friction over federalism and "Unitary Executive" authority. This was evident in the administration's use of executive orders to influence state-level voting and AI laws, and in Secretary Bessent's refusal to comment on the potential criminal investigation of Fed Chair Jerome Powell ([Source](#), [Source](#)). The administration appears to be testing the limits of its power to compel state and local cooperation, particularly through "geographic targeting" of federal benefits and the use of the Department of Justice to investigate perceived politi-

cal or administrative obstacles ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).

Finally, there is a distinct effort to "spiritualize" public service and military readiness. From Secretary Hegseth's monthly prayer services at the Pentagon to President Trump's rededication of the National Mall as "one nation under God," the administration is intentionally aligning its policy goals with religious tradition. This is being used both as a recruitment tool and as a moral shield against criticism of ICE and mass deportations, framing law enforcement as "peacemakers" ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).

## HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK

---

### **DHS Funding and Potential Shutdown:**

Given that Speaker Johnson and Leader Thune have already rejected Democratic demands for judicial warrants and mask removals, a partial government shutdown of the DHS (affecting TSA, FEMA, and the Coast Guard) appears increasingly likely on February 13 unless the President intervenes to force a compromise ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

**AI and Preemption:** There is a strong bipartisan appetite for an AI framework, but the administration's "moratorium" approach on state laws will likely face legal challenges. Congress will likely seek to codify the Center for AI Standards and Innovation (CASI) to provide a "hub" for sectoral regulators, though disagreement over "truthful output" mandates will remain a hurdle ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

**Energy Dominance Infrastructure:** The SPEED Act has significant momentum as a centerpiece of the surface transportation reauthorization. Expect efforts to fold broadband permitting (the RAIL Act) into this pack-

age to create a "Giga-Bill" focused on AI physical infrastructure ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#)).

## LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

---

Legislative activity focused on accelerating domestic resource extraction, protecting consumer credit, and defining the federal role in election integrity and technology regulation.

## BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED

- **H.R. 4090 - Critical Mineral Dominance Act:** Requires the DOI to submit a list of priority mining projects for expedited approval and assess the economic costs of foreign mineral dependence. Passed the House ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **SAVE America Act:** Proposed federal legislation to require voter ID and proof of citizenship for registration, and to direct states to remove non-citizens from voter rolls ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **Main Street Capital Access Act:** A community banking package designed to revitalize local bank formation and index regulatory thresholds to inflation. Introduced by Rep. Hill and Rep. Barr ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **Clear Labels Act:** Proposed by Senator Scott to require drug products sold in the U.S. to identify the name and location of each manufacturer (API and finished form) on the label or via a searchable portal ([Source](#)).
- **The RAIL Act:** A bill to eliminate the regulatory gap for broadband fiber crossings on railroad rights-of-way, aimed at lowering costs and speeding deployment ([Source](#)).

- **Stay In Your Lane Act:** Introduced by Senator Markey to require automakers to restrict partially autonomous driving systems to specific, pre-mapped operational domains ([Source](#)).
- **TRACK Act:** Introduced by Senator Rubio to implement a status tracker on the FEMA website for disaster recovery claims ([Source](#)).
- **SMART Act:** Bipartisan legislation to allow well-managed small financial institutions to combine consumer compliance and I.T. exams ([Source](#)).

## HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS

- **ICE Minneapolis Press Conference:** Border Czar Tom Homan announced a 700-officer drawdown while emphasizing new body camera deployments and local jail cooperation ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **Arizona Border Press Conference:** Secretary Noem and Border Patrol Chief Mike Banks tout the "most secure border" and low encounter numbers ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **House Financial Services Committee Hearing:** Secretary Bessent testified on the FSOC 2025 Annual Report, defending tariffs and discussing credit card rate caps ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **Senate Commerce Committee Hearing on Autonomous Vehicles:** Executives from Tesla and Waymo discussed the need for a federal safety framework versus state-level patchworks ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **House Subcommittee on Research and Technology Hearing:** OSTP Director Michael Kratsios discussed the AI Action Plan and the Genesis Mission for scientific discovery ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

- **Critical Minerals Ministerial:** VP Vance and Secretary Rubio convened 50 countries to propose a "Preferential Trade Zone" and global mineral supply diversity ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **National Prayer Breakfast:** President Trump addressed global leaders on faith, military recruitment, and a plan for a national day of prayer in May 2026 ([Source](#), [Source](#)).

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

---

**Today's Trends On Capitol Hill** is a public interest experiment in applying deep trend analysis to the daily business of the United States Congress to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists, scholars and Congressional staff better understand the overarching legislative trends, themes and patterns of Congress.

**No data is used to train or tune any AI model.**

Each morning, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's Congressional activity to tease out its overarching themes and trends into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original source material, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the legislative themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

This inaugural report is based on deep analysis of CSPAN, CSPAN2 and CSPAN3 coverage in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive. It is currently limited to the Congressional business covered on those three CSPAN channels and thus may not include all major Congressional business, may include activity from previous days that aired on a later date, and/or may include other ma-

jor federal, state and local governmental business. We will continue to refine this report to incorporate a growing array of Congressional information sources. This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact [kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com](mailto:kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com). You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.