

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

ELECTION 2024

A primer on Bring Chicago Home

Changes in real estate transfer tax key part of mayor's agenda

By Alice Yin and A.D. Quig
Chicago Tribune

On Tuesday evening, polls will close in the March primary election in which Chicago voters will decide the fate of a yearslong grass-roots campaign to raise taxes for a fund to address homelessness, also known as Bring Chicago Home. Scores of Chicagoans have already cast their ballots early.

The measure, centered on raising the city's real estate transfer tax for property sales above \$1 million, has taken a bumpy and winding road to get there, including an eleventh-hour court fight from the real estate lobby. Should it prevail, the referendum would be the first win from Brandon Johnson's "tax the rich" agenda that he campaigned on during the 2023 mayoral race.

What is the Bring Chicago Home campaign, and who is against it?

Since 2018, a coalition of homeless advocacy organizations, labor unions and progressive politicians has been pushing the city to designate a special revenue stream for Chicago's homeless population. Christening themselves as the Bring Chicago Home campaign, they argue the city must address its dearth of affordable housing by raising the one-time tax on property sales.

Johnson's predecessor, Mayor Lori Lightfoot, championed the idea but grew reluctant after taking office in 2019 and presiding over a pandemic. That conflict came to a head in 2022, when a special City Council hearing failed to establish a quorum by just one alderman — despite several members being present just outside chambers.

Meanwhile, Johnson's campaign to unseat her the

Turn to Home, Page 3



Bagpipe players from the Chicago Stock Yard Kilty Band march at the front Sunday during the 46th South Side Irish Parade celebrating St. Patrick's Day on South Western Avenue in Chicago. VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

ELECTION 2024

Candidates push for voter turnout as primary nears

With presidential race set, local hopefuls make their case in parades and pulpits

By Olivia Olander, Olivia Stevens and A.D. Quig
Chicago Tribune

Politicians fanned out across Chicago during a furious final weekend of campaigning, making appearances in St. Patrick's Day parades, church pulpits and restaurant gatherings as they sought to energize voters ahead of Tuesday's Illinois primary elections.

A day after tens of thousands

of green-clad revelers watched the front-of-the-line jousting among politicians at Chicago's downtown parade along Columbus Drive, the focus on Sunday was the traditional South Side Irish Parade, where candidates trekked down Western Avenue amid Irish Wolfhounds and high school marching bands.

"It's a great moment to celebrate another culture," said Appellate Judge Jesse Reyes, a Democratic candidate for a

Cook County seat on the Illinois Supreme Court who is challenging appointed Justice Joy Cunningham. "Today, and tomorrow, everybody's Irish, right?"

Noting contested countywide races for state's attorney, circuit court clerk and the seat on the state's highest court, he urged voters to come out on Election Day. "If you're really interested in your community, Cook County, I think the people will come out to vote," he said.

Without contested presidential primary contests to help drive voter turnout at the top of the ticket, expectations are for a low voter turnout, so "institutional support is very important," said Mariyana Spyropoulos, who is challenging incumbent Democratic Cook County Circuit Court Clerk Iris Martinez.

Spyropoulos got the backing of the Cook County Democratic

Turn to Primary, Page 2



A Canada goose wanders past oversized eclipse viewing glasses Wednesday outside the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Glasses are key to watch eclipse, but clothes can make difference

Bright colors could bring boost to viewing experience on April 8

By Adriana Pérez
Chicago Tribune

Nicole Bajic was completing her medical residency at the University of Chicago when she briefly ducked out between surgery training classes to watch the 2017 solar eclipse darken the skies. At the time, she didn't fully appreciate how much excitement

surrounded the event.

Now an ophthalmologist at the Cleveland Clinic Cole Eye Institute in Ohio, Bajic is among the eye doctors, specialists and eclipse experts advising enthusiastic viewers across the country on how they can make April's total solar eclipse as safe — and as fun — as possible.

"I'm so surprised with how big of a phenomenon this is. I feel like this is a frenzy," she told the Tribune, in what she said was perhaps her 20th interview about eye safety.

During a total solar eclipse, the moon appears to completely cover the sun, casting its shadow along its trajectory above the Earth. This year's eclipse will be the second of its kind in the 21st century to touch the contiguous United States. There won't be another one until 2044. The first one was the 2017 eclipse, which Bajic saw partially from Chicago.

This time, Bajic has carefully thought out her upcoming eclipse experience rather than leaving it

Turn to Eclipse, Page 4

Israeli PM Netanyahu snaps back at criticism

'People of Israel will choose when they will have elections'

By Tia Goldenberg and Ravi Nessman
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu railed Sunday against growing criticism from top ally the United States against his leadership amid the devastating war with Hamas, describing calls for a new election as "wholly inappropriate."

In recent days, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the highest-ranking Jewish offi-

cial in the country and a strong Israel supporter, called on Israel to hold a new election, saying Netanyahu had "lost his way."

President Joe Biden expressed support for Schumer's "good speech" and earlier accused Netanyahu of hurting Israel because of the huge civilian death toll in Gaza.

Netanyahu told Fox News that Israel never would have called for a new U.S. election after the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001 and denounced Schumer's comments as inappropriate.

"We're not a banana republic," he said. "The people of Israel will choose when they will have elec-

Turn to Israel, Page 10



DAVID BERDING/GETTY

Illini cut down the nets at Big Ten tourney

Illinois topped Wisconsin 93-87 in the Big Ten Tournament title game and earned a No. 3 seed in the NCAA Tournament. **Chicago Sports**

