



Log In

Join HuffPost

NEWS

POLITICS

ENTERTAINMENT

LIFE

PERSONAL

VOICES

SHOPPING

VIDEO

U.S. Edition

[POLITICS](#) [LGBTQ](#) [TARGET](#) [PRIDE MONTH](#)

Target Slammed For Removing Pride Merch Following Conservative Outrage

The retail giant is caving to "bullies" instead of standing by the LGBTQ community, critics say.



By Lydia O'Connor

May 24, 2023, 07:37 PM EDT

Target is under fire for its decision to [pull some of its Pride Month merchandise](#) from shelves — a move the company says was done to protect employees but that critics say merely [bows to pressure](#) from anti-LGBTQ conservatives.

The new wave of backlash at the retail giant follows its [announcement](#) that because some people have been threatening store employees over the merchandise, Target is “removing items that have been at the center of the most significant confrontational behavior.”

Target didn't disclose what those Pride Month items were, but adult swimsuits marketed to transgender women as “tuck-friendly” and offering “extra crotch coverage” have caused a [conservative firestorm](#) on social media. Much of the outrage has revolved around the [false claim](#) that Target is selling these swimsuits in children's sizes.

The company also confirmed to The Associated Press that some Southern stores had moved their entire Pride merchandise displays to [the back of the stores](#) in light of confrontations with customers.

In a tweet, California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) called out Target CEO Brian Cornell directly and said corporate decisions like this are a slippery slope.

CEO of Target Brian Cornell selling out the LGBTQ+ community to extremists is a real profile in courage.

This isn't just a couple stores in the South. There is a systematic attack on the gay community happening across the country.

Wake up America.

This doesn't stop here.... <https://t.co/1vRgukaT0g>
— Gavin Newsom (@GavinNewsom) [May 24, 2023](#)

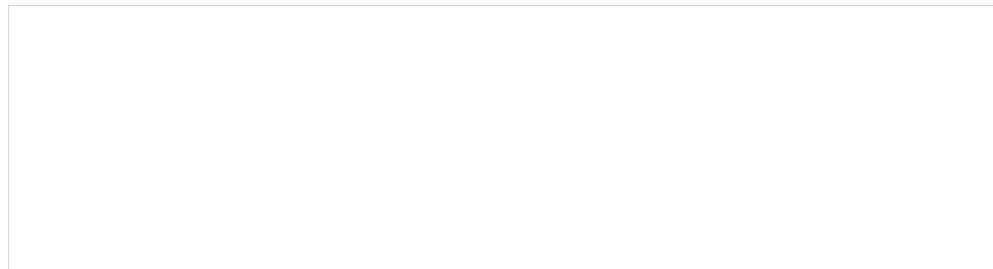
“There is a systematic attack on the gay community happening across the country,” Newsom said. “Wake up America. This doesn't stop here. You're black? You're Asian? You're Jewish? You're a woman? You're next.”

Rep. Becca Balint, a Democrat who's the first openly LGBTQ person to represent Vermont in Congress, [echoed](#) Newsom's disappointment, tweeting: “If companies like @Target give in to the whims of a hateful few, they may need a lesson or two on the history of pride and what it means to the LGBTQ+ community.”

The company was also heavily criticized by human rights organizations.

“Target should put the products back on the shelves and ensure their Pride displays are visible on the floors, not pushed into the proverbial closet. That's what the bullies want. Target must be better,” Human Rights Campaign President Kelley Robinson said in a statement Wednesday.

“Extremist groups and individuals work to divide us and ultimately don't just want rainbow products to disappear, they want us to disappear,” she continued. “For the past decade, the LGBTQ+ community has celebrated Pride with Target—it's time that Target stands with us and doubles-down on their commitment to us.”



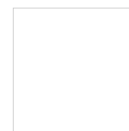
/ TRENDING /



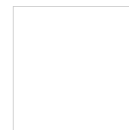
Most People Don't Need Pacemakers Until Retirement Age. I Had To Get One At 26.



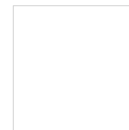
Alert! The Internet-Famous Revlon Brush Is Only \$28 On Amazon Right Now



Gavin Newsom Uses Marjorie Taylor Greene's Theories Against Her In Wicked Burn



Oprah Winfrey Recalls Tina Turner Being 'Excited And Curious' About Death



Ken Jennings Cracks Wise About Rep. George Santos On 'Jeopardy'

Politics

HuffPost's top politics stories, straight to your inbox.

SIGN UP

By entering your email and clicking Sign Up, you're agreeing to let us send you customized marketing messages about us and our advertising partners. You are also agreeing to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).



Pride month merchandise is displayed at the front of a Target store in Hackensack, New Jersey, on Wednesday, May 24. VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

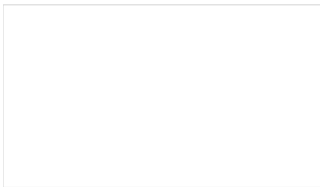
GLAAD pointed out that, according to its research, 3 in 4 non-LGBTQ people are comfortable seeing LGBTQ people in ads, and that when a brand publicly supports LGBTQ rights, Americans are overall twice as likely to support that brand.

“Anti-LGBTQ violence and hate should not be winning in America, but it will continue to until corporate leaders step up as heroes for their LGBTQ employees and consumers and do not cave to fringe activists calling for censorship,” Sarah Kate Ellis, the president and CEO of GLAAD, said in a statement Wednesday.

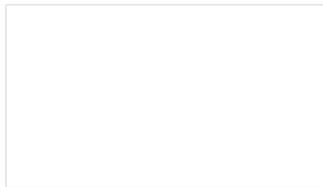
Target did not immediately respond when HuffPost asked what it thought of the new criticism, nor did it respond [when asked](#) why it couldn’t simply beef up security or take other measures to protect staff.

RELATED

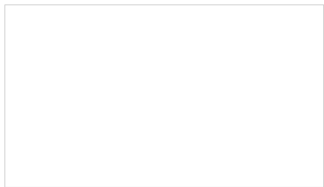
- LGBTQ
- TARGET
- PRIDE MONTH



Target Put Out Some Cool Pride Gear — Then Pulled It Once the Bigots Came For Them




Target Removes Some LGBTQ Merchandise From Stores Ahead Of June Pride Month After Threats To Workers



Nation's LGBTQ Rights Group Issues Travel Advisory For Florida

[< GO TO HOMEPAGE](#)



Lydia O'Connor  Senior Reporter, HuffPost

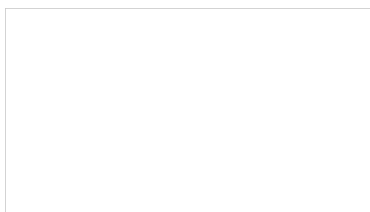
Do you have information you want to share with HuffPost? [Here's how.](#)

[Suggest a correction](#)

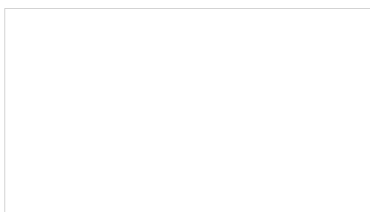
POPULAR IN THE COMMUNITY

YOU MAY LIKE

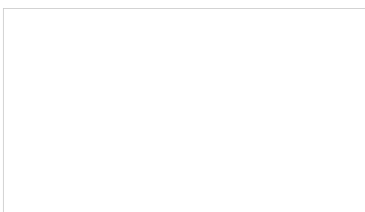
WHAT'S HOT



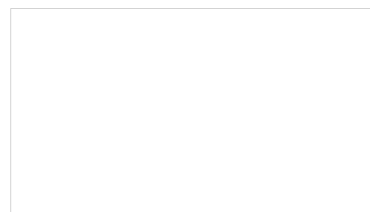
Russia Signs Deal To Deploy Tactical Nuclear Weapons In Belarus



Fox News Host Tweets Ron DeSantis' Campaign Donation Page, Stoking MAGA Rage

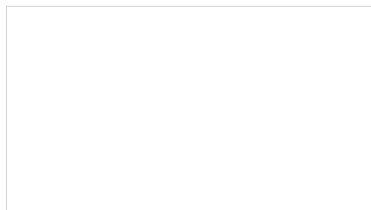


A New Dictionary May Finally Address The Inherent Blackness Of Internet Slang

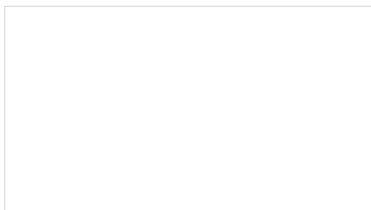


Supreme Court Limits Federal Power Over Wetlands, Boosts Property Rights Over Clean Water

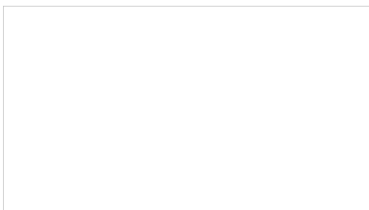
MORE IN POLITICS



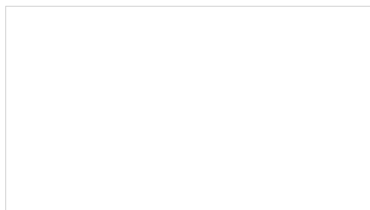
Conservatives Furious As Lawmakers Close In On Debt Limit Deal



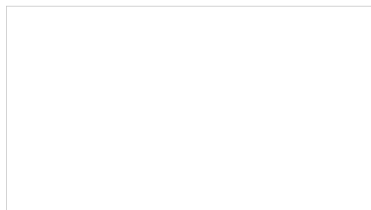
South Carolina Governor Signs New Abortion Ban Into Law



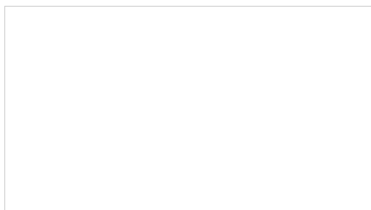
Newt Gingrich's Unintentional Burn Of Donald Trump Is Priceless



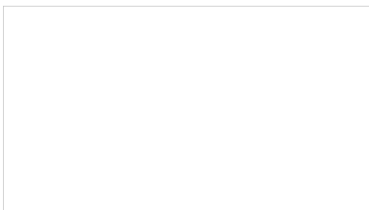
Whoopi Goldberg Delivers Scathing Reality Check For Right-Wing 'Snowflakes'



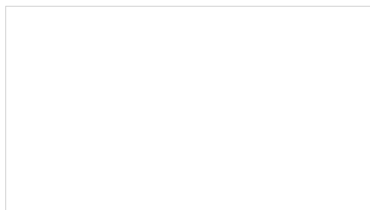
Ex-DOJ Official Predicts When Trump's 'Worst Nightmare' Will Happen



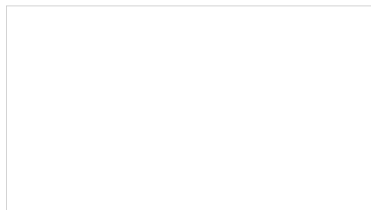
Trump Goes Scorched Earth On DeSantis With Freaky Hitler/Satan Post



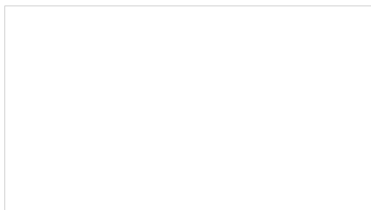
DeSantis' Campaign To Be President Of Twitter Had A Rough Start



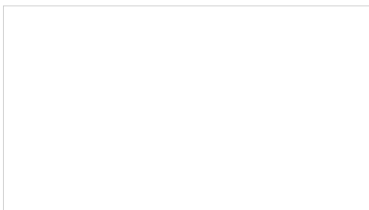
House Democrats Dunk On Marjorie Taylor Greene After Her Hilariously Ironic Request



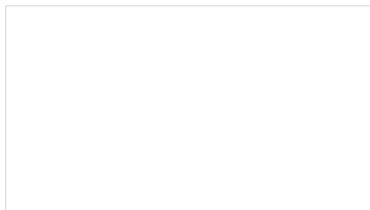
Biden Mocks DeSantis' Glitchy Presidential Announcement In Just 3 Words



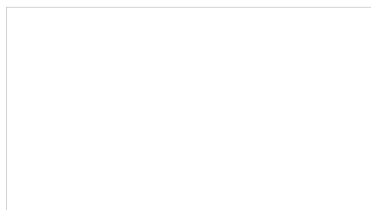
Jan. 6 Rioter Who Put Foot On Desk In Pelosi's Office Sentenced To 54 Months In Prison



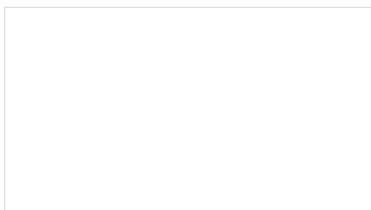
'Melting The Servers!' DeSantis Tried To Launch His Campaign On Twitter. It Did Not Go Well.



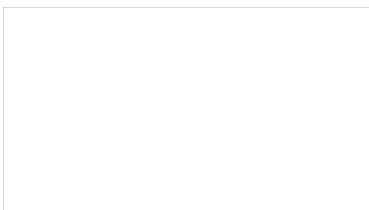
Biden Marks Anniversary Of Uvalde Massacre By Renewing Call For Stricter Gun Control



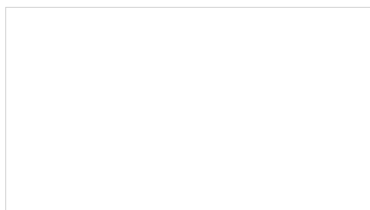
Watchdog: Park Police Used Excessive Force Against Media During 2020 Protest Crackdown



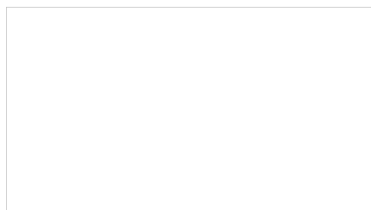
Montana Becomes First State To Ban Drag Storytime



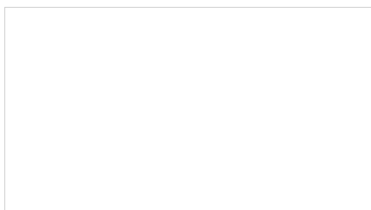
Kevin McCarthy Trolls Democrats For Not Lifting Debt Ceiling Before He Became Speaker



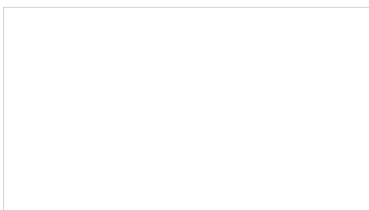
Ron DeSantis Finally Makes His 2024 Presidential Campaign Official



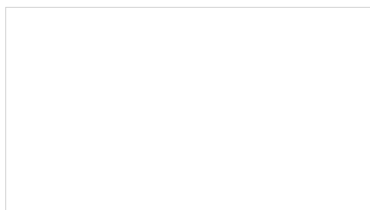
Sen. Rick Scott's Snarky Response To NAACP's Florida Travel Advisory Gets Roasted



Top Democratic Redistricting Group Gears Up For Era Of 'Perpetual' Combat



Student Who Tracked Elon Musk's Jet Has A New One — That Of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis



Kari Lake's 'Planet Crazy' Comment Quickly Gets Turned Against Her





Conservative Radio Host Issues Chilling Call For What America 'Needs'



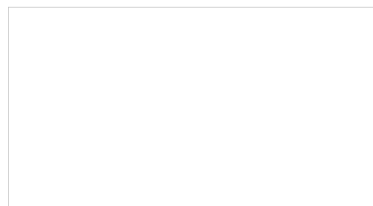
GOP Donor Says Trump Should 'Drop Out' For 2 Reasons



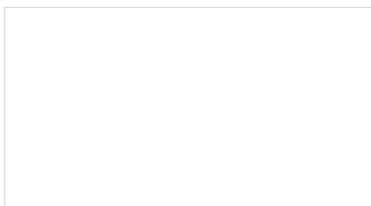
Ex-Trump Attorney Reveals 'The Sad Thing' About Possibility Of Prison Sentence



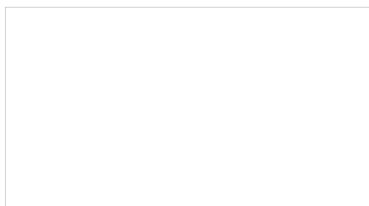
Roberts Says Supreme Court Can Do More On Ethics, But Offers No Specifics



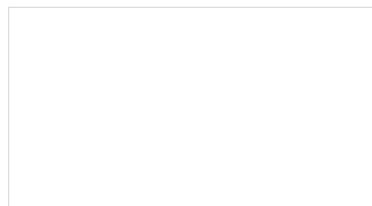
Trump's Attorneys Ask For Meeting With DOJ As Classified Documents Probe Nears End



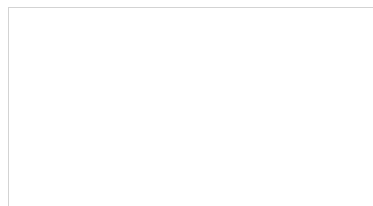
South Carolina Legislature Passes 6-Week Abortion Ban



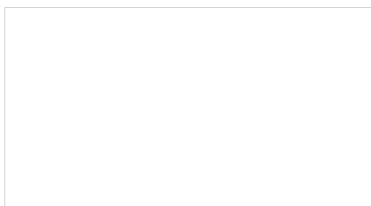
House Republicans Pretty Much Admit They Are Taking Debt Limit 'Hostage'



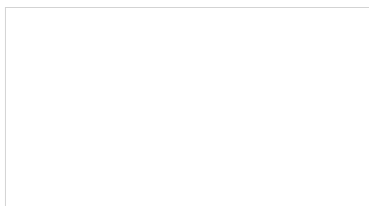
Target Removes Some LGBTQ Merchandise From Stores Ahead Of June Pride Month After Threats To Workers



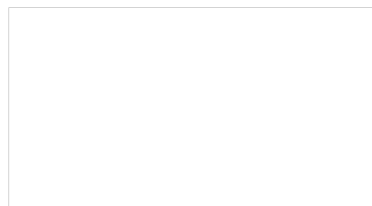
Twitter Users Mock Lauren Boebert's Bizarre Birth Control Claim



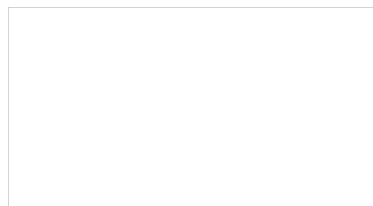
Kevin McCarthy Says Lifting Debt Ceiling Must Also Lift Lazy Guy Off Couch



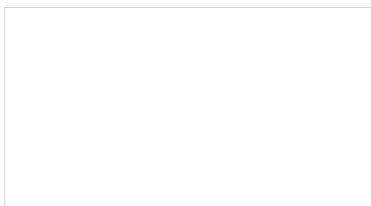
South Carolina Governor Under Fire For Comment About Hunting Democrats With Dogs



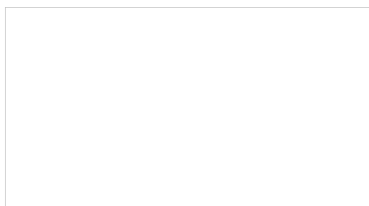
4-Year-Old Child Survives Being Dropped From High Border Wall In San Diego



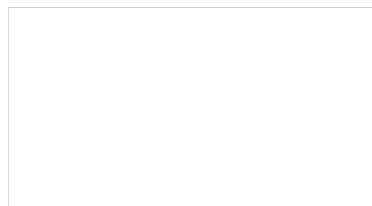
Trial For Trump's Hush Money Case Will Start In The Middle Of Presidential Primaries



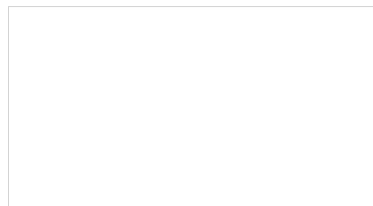
Utah Mayor Plans To Challenge Mitt Romney In GOP Primary For Utah Senate Seat



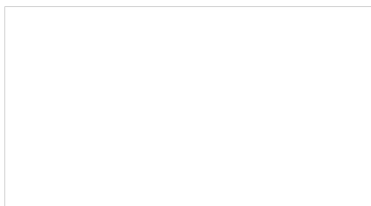
Russia Extends Detention Of WSJ Reporter Evan Gershkovich



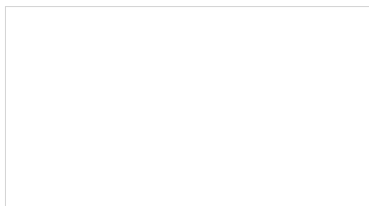
Marjorie Taylor Greene Bids \$100K On Kevin McCarthy's Used Chapstick



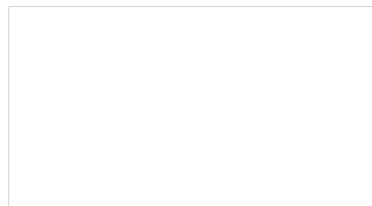
Harlan Crow Rebuffs Senate Democrats' Questions About Gifts To Clarence Thomas



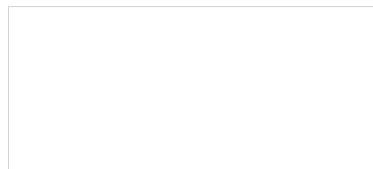
Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen Under Fire For Debt Limit Projection She Didn't Make



Ron DeSantis To Announce Presidential Bid On Twitter With Elon Musk



Republicans Rule Out Taxes While Complaining About Tax, Spending Imbalance





Hamburger Mary's In Orlando Sues Florida Over Anti-Drag Law



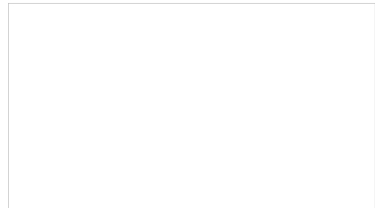
GOP Alarms About Government Spending Don't Include Huge Military Budgets



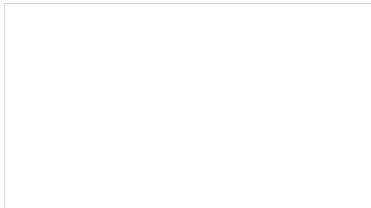
DeSantis May Have Missed His Chance To Make The GOP Primary About Him And Trump



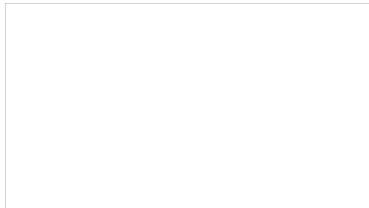
Former Ron DeSantis Appointee Offers Insight Into How The Governor Will Combat Trump



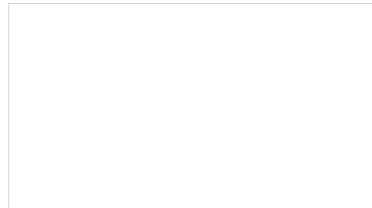
2024 Presidential Hopeful Tim Scott Says He Wouldn't Seek To Undo Election Loss



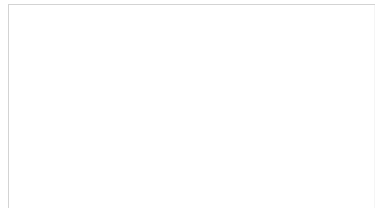
Ron DeSantis Outlines Vision To Remold Supreme Court, Takes Subtle Jab At Trump



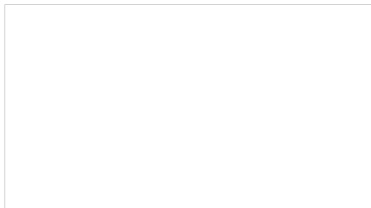
Fox News Pundit Receives Easiest Fact-Check Live On Air



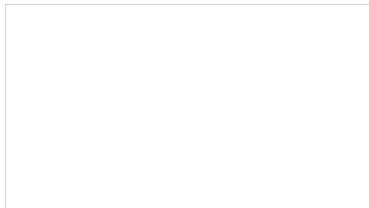
Columnist Gives 'Brittle Ego' Ron DeSantis A Brutal 2024 Reality Check



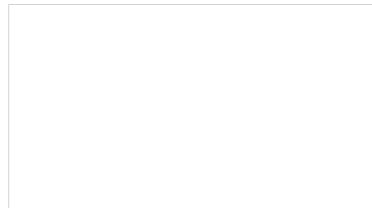
Watergate Lawyer John Dean Says Trump's 'Loose Lips' Will Cost Him Big Bucks



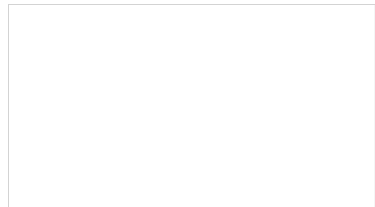
George Conway Predicts Trump Will Go To Jail: 'He Should And He Will'



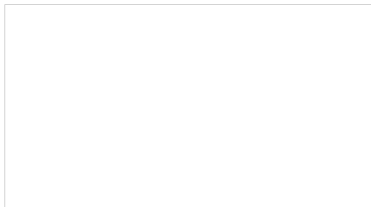
Judge To Personally Remind Trump Against Attacking Witnesses



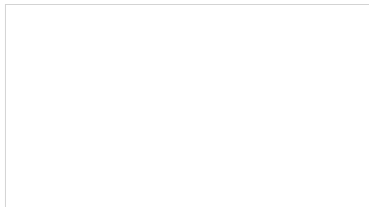
Tucker Carlson's Attorney Has A Blunt Response To 2024 Presidential Speculation



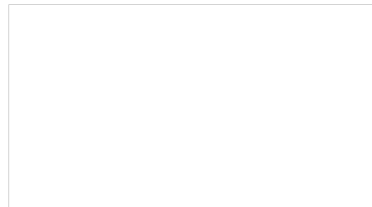
Judge Dismisses Kari Lake's Last Claim After Losing Arizona Race



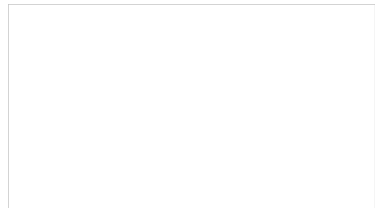
L.A. Dodgers Apologize For Disinviting Drag Charity To Its Pride Night



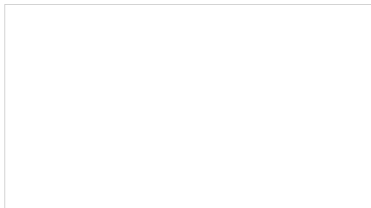
Montana Governor Signs Controversial Anti-Trans Law



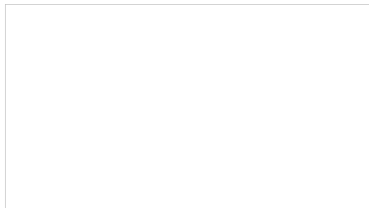
McCarthy: 'Don't Give Up' On Debt Limit Talks, But Signs Of Progress Prove Elusive



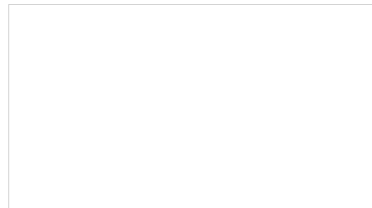
Nebraska Governor Signs Combined Anti-Trans, Anti-Abortion Bill Into Law



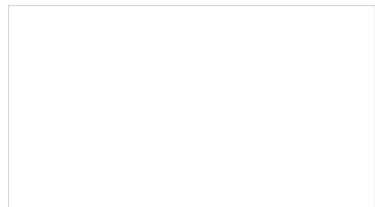
E. Jean Carroll Asks Court To Increase \$5 Million Trump Judgment After CNN Town Hall



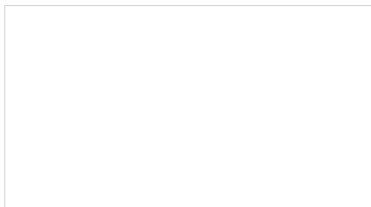
Sen. Tim Scott's Presidential Announcement Is A Real Scream



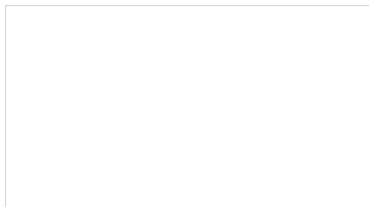
Rep. Bowman Says He's Staying 'Far Away' From Marjorie Taylor Greene



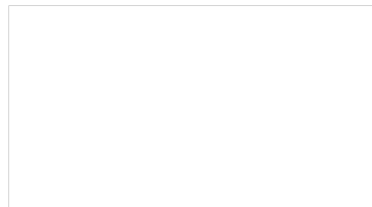
Jon Hamm Calls Josh Hawley A



GOP Rep. James Comer Implies Biden Family Probe Is Really About Helping

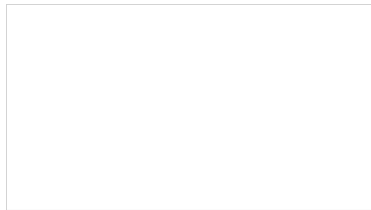


The Important Difference Between



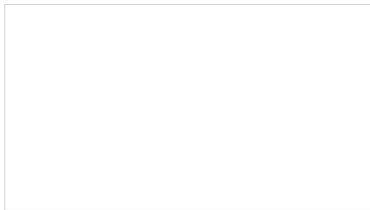
Democratic Sen. Tom Carper To

Coward In Ad For His Opponent



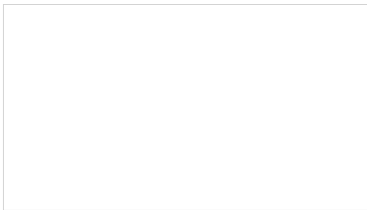
Janet Yellen Says June 1 Remains 'Hard Deadline' For Congress To Raise Debt Limit

Trump In 2024



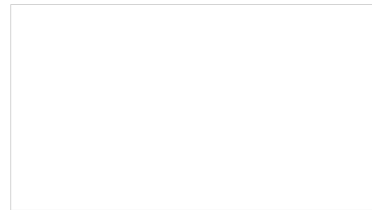
Dem Points Out The 'Farce' Of Republicans' Demands Amid Debt Ceiling Talks

SNAP And Food Stamps

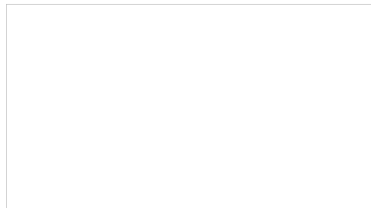


GOP Strategist Flips Chris Christie's Trump Vow Back At Him

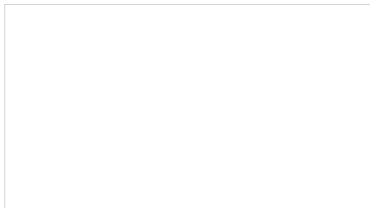
Retire In 2024



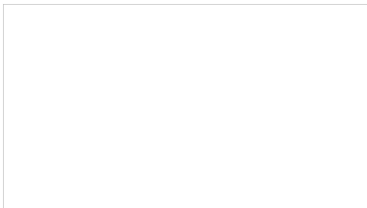
Tuberville Draws Fire For Holding Hundreds Of Military Promotions 'Hostage' Over Abortion



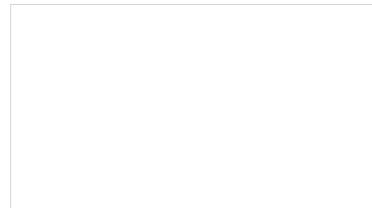
Ex-RNC Chair Ridicules Jim Jordan With Cold 'Reality' Of Weaponization Claims



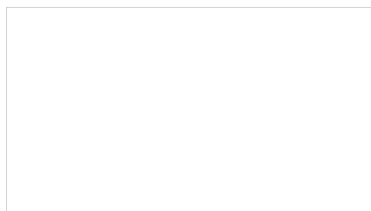
Former Florida GOP Rep. Considers Drastic Move Because Of Ron DeSantis



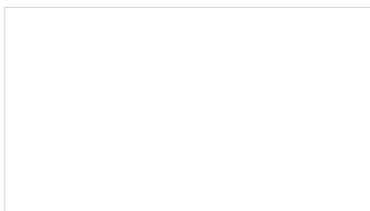
Ex-White House Lawyer Says Evidence Is Stacked Against Trump In Documents Case



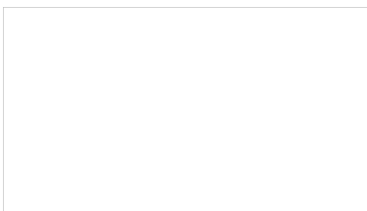
GOP Senator Thinks Trump Can't Win A General Election For President



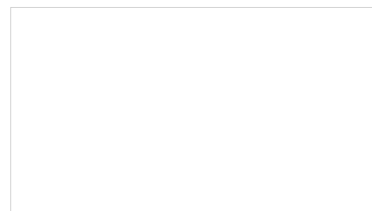
NAACP Warns Against Travel To Florida Over DeSantis' 'Openly Hostile' Politics



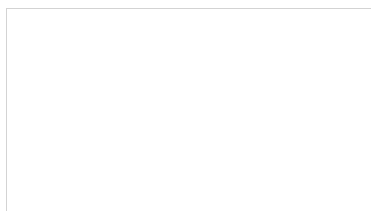
Biden, McCarthy To Meet Monday For Debt Limit Talks



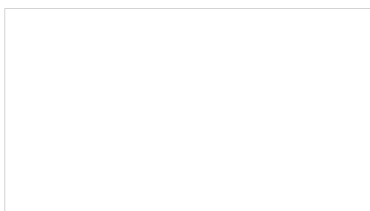
If Trump 'Finished' His Wall Like He Claims, How Are So Many Migrants Still Crossing?



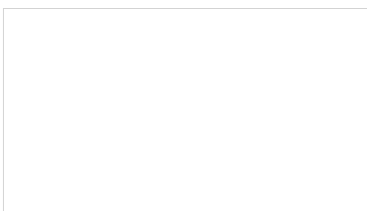
Ron DeSantis Is About To Run For President. Andrew Warren Has A Warning.



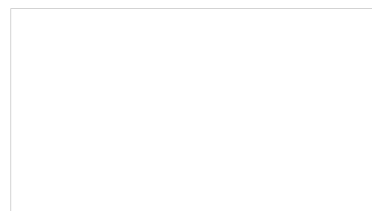
North Carolina's Dem Governor Lambastes Republicans Over 12-Week Abortion Ban



Lawyer Who Quit Trump Legal Team Cites Disagreements With Trump Adviser As Basis For Departure



Another Florida Pride Event Canceled As Other Organizers Dig Their Heels In



George Santos Names Himself Treasurer Of His Campaign



[NEWS](#)

[POLITICS](#)

[ENTERTAINMENT](#)

[LIFE](#)

[VOICES](#)

[HUFFPOST PERSONAL](#)

[SHOPPING](#)

[NEWSLETTERS](#)

[ABOUT US](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[RSS](#)

[FAQ](#)

[CAREERS](#)

[ARCHIVE](#)

[USER AGREEMENT](#)

[COMMENT POLICY](#)

[DMCA POLICY](#)

[HUFFPOST PRESS ROOM](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[CONSENT PREFERENCES](#)

[DO NOT SELL OR SHARE MY PERSONAL INFORMATION](#)

Part of HuffPost Politics. ©2023 BuzzFeed, Inc. All rights reserved.

