

Trump cuts fuel standards in bid to lower car prices

But experts say federal emission rules do not lead to sticker-price relief for buyers. **In Money**

Olympic bobsled queens an inspiration on, off track

Column: Elana Meyers Taylor's, Kaillie Armbruster Humphries' wins are for all the moms. **In Sports**

Morgan, Radcliffe team up for comedy

USA TODAY

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TRACY MORGAN (LEFT) BY MICHELLE FARSI/GETTY IMAGES; DANIEL RADCLIFFE BY VALERIE TERRANOVA/GETTY IMAGES



Stars of "The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins" talk about their chaotic chemistry on NBC sitcom and their craziest impulse purchases. **In Life**



"He was an unstoppable and formidable force, proving that no opponent or battle was too big."

Ben Crump
Civil rights attorney

JESSE JACKSON
1941-2026

Civil rights icon lived for justice

The Rev. Jesse Jackson often led crowds in a call-and-answer chant that usually included variations on "I may be poor ... but I am ... Somebody. I may be young ... but I am ... Somebody." GIANLUIGI GUERCIA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Questions arise over payouts by FEMA

Officials get theirs as other fire victims wait

Michael Collins
USA TODAY

Sara Jo Mathews and her family did their part to fight the wildfire that ravaged New Mexico. By the time it was over, her businesses had suffered substantial losses. She's still waiting for a payment from the federal government to help her recover.

The wait has been frustrating. But making matters worse: While she's in limbo, the government employee responsible for distributing payments to people whose homes and businesses were destroyed or damaged has already received a six-figure payment.

"They cannot figure out for the life of them how to pay us," said Mathews of Las Vegas, New Mexico, "but they sure as hell figured out how to pay themselves."



Sara Jo Mathews, with husband Ryan Snyder, says FEMA has been slow to pay out funds set aside for wildfire victims. PROVIDED BY SARA JO MATHEWS

Four years after the fire, the worst in New Mexico's history, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is facing questions about how it has administered a compensation fund set up by Congress to help the wildfire victims. Critics are demanding to know how the money has been distributed, who has received it and whether it's going to the people who need it most.

People who have filed claims complain that the review process has been complicated, frustrating and painstakingly slow and that cases are closed with no notice and no money awarded for their losses.

"Getting money from FEMA, that's like getting blood from a rock," Mathews said. "They're not giving us anything."

On Feb. 12, FEMA placed the director in charge of distributing the money and his deputy on administrative leave after revelations that each received a six-figure payout through the program while other victims are waiting for their claims to be processed.

Jay Mitchell, who works out of the FEMA claims office in Santa Fe, and his wife, Lisa, a real-estate broker, were awarded \$524,000 through the compensation fund last year, according to documents obtained by USA TODAY. The money was to be used to repair smoke and ash damage to the couple's home in Angel Fire, New Mexico, and to cover Lisa Mitchell's reported business losses, the documents say.

An independent news outlet called Source New Mexico was the first to report the payments.

Lisa Mitchell said in a brief phone interview with USA TODAY that she and her husband have been unfairly targeted. "We're being harassed for absolutely no wrongdoing," she said, declining to respond to a reporters' questions.

Jay Mitchell's deputy, Jennifer Carbajal, and a woman named Jennifer Sanchez, identified in local news reports as Carbajal's ex-wife, also received \$267,000 for smoke and ash cleaning and for flooding at a consulting business in Pendaries, New Mexico, the records show.

FEMA and Carbajal did not respond to requests for comment. But Paul

Rainbow PUSH Coalition founder battled even in illness

Trevor Hughes
USA TODAY

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, a towering civil rights icon who battled alongside Martin Luther King Jr., negotiated global hostage releases, and shamed corporations for their lack of corporate diversity and failure to support voting rights, has died.

Jackson was a Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, a Democratic presidential candidate and one of the world's best-known Black activists.

He was 84 and had suffered from progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare disease that causes a decline similar to Parkinson's disease but accelerated.

"It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Civil Rights leader and founder of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the Honorable Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr.," said a statement from the organization. "He died peacefully on Tuesday morning, surrounded by his family."

Despite the illness that softened his voice and weakened his steps, Jackson had continued to advocate for civil rights and was arrested twice in 2021 over his objection to the Senate filibuster rule. That same year, he and his wife, Jacqueline, were hospitalized with COVID-19 complications



Jackson speaks to marchers during the trial of former Officer Derek Chauvin on April 19, 2021, in Minneapolis. Chauvin was later convicted of killing George Floyd. JASPER COLT/USA TODAY

5 key moments in Jackson's career

As a tireless activist, he transformed politics. **3A**

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Top Democrats lay groundwork for 2028



Beshear



Newsom

Governors say they have 'the receipts' of success

Phillip M. Bailey and Francesca Chambers
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The way Andy Beshear sees it, the next Democratic nominee for president ought to be a governor. He runs a state himself, and he says his colleagues have a proven track record against President Donald Trump and for struggling Americans.

"When the American people are hungry for someone that makes their life a little bit better or a little bit easier, that's what governors do on a daily basis," the 48-year-old Kentucky leader

told USA TODAY.

"People see Democratic governors have the receipts, and Donald Trump does not. He probably doesn't like that very much."

The question for rank-and-file Democratic primary voters beginning to kick the tires on early contenders, however, is more likely going to be what type of governor.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, 58, seized the spotlight early last year by resisting the Trump administration's deployment of the National Guard in his state, counteracting the White House's effort to take more House seats through redistricting when other Democratic governors hesitated, and

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