

MNI POLITICAL RISK ANALYSIS - US Daily Brief 25-11-25

by Adam Burrowes

The White House *(times subject to change)*

12:00 ET 17:00 GMT	President Trump participates in the Thanksgiving Turkey Pardoning
18:00 ET 23:00 GMT	President Trump departs the White House for Palm Beach, Florida
20:50 ET 01:50 GMT	President Trump arrives in Palm Beach, Florida

Key Dates:

- ❖ Dec. 2: Tennessee Special Election
- ❖ Jan. 30: Government funding expires
- ❖ Jan 31: Texas Special Election
- ❖ April 16: New Jersey Special Election

Washington

President Donald Trump participates in the Thanksgiving Turkey Pardoning at 12:00 ET 17:00 GMT. He will depart the White House at 18:00 ET 23:00 GMT for his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, where he will spend the week.

- Trump has no major events scheduled for the week. He will return to the White House at 17:50 ET 22:50 GMT on Sunday. There is a possibility Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy could travel to Florida for a meeting with Trump, depending on the outcome of peace talks in the UAE (more on that below).

Artificial Intelligence

President Trump yesterday signed an Executive Order launching the [Genesis Mission](#), an initiative that aims to “accelerate scientific breakthroughs using AI.” The White House billed the initiative as the “largest marshalling of federal scientific resources since the Apollo program.”

- Michael Kratsios, the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, said: “The Genesis Mission connects world-class scientific data with the most advanced American AI to unlock breakthroughs in medicine, energy, materials science, and beyond.”
- Energy Secretary Chris Wright told reporters that AI can help reduce Americans' electricity costs, “The ultimate goal of this is to make the lives better for American citizens.”

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Brian Mast (R-FL) has proposed changes to the *GAIN AI Act* in a bid to have the AI oversight legislation included in the must-pass National Defense Authorization Act.

- The initial bill, which was blocked by House GOP leadership amid concerns it would stifle investment, “would give US buyers a 15-day right of first refusal on advanced AI

chips that companies like Nvidia and AMD propose to sell abroad,” per the [Wall Street Journal](#).

- CSIS [wrote in October](#), “If enacted, this legislation would impair the global competitiveness of U.S. chipmakers without advancing national security interests” and “likely do more harm than good in the ongoing geopolitical technology competition.”
- Punchbowl News notes, “Under Mast’s version, Congress would have 30 days to block an export license for artificial intelligence chips going to China, Russia, North Korea or Iran. The clock would start with a Commerce Department notification of its plan to issue a license and certification that the exports won’t hurt the domestic chips supply.”

Bloomberg [reports](#) that Amazon, “says it will spend as much as \$50 billion expanding its capacity to provide artificial intelligence and high-performance computing services to US government entities.”

- The company said in a [blog post](#) yesterday, “Amazon Web Services plans to break ground next year on what will ultimately be 1.3 gigawatts of additional capacity across data centers designed for federal agencies.”

China

President Trump held a phone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday, which, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#), was uncharacteristically requested by the Chinese side “to discuss Taiwan, a flashpoint that has surged to the forefront in recent days as Japan takes a more assertive stance on the island’s autonomy.”

- The Journal notes, “While Taiwan was Xi’s focus, Trump steered the conversation to Ukraine, said people familiar with the matter, as Washington-Kyiv peace talks appear to make progress and Trump tries to decisively end Russia’s war in Ukraine.”
- “The two issues—Taiwan and Ukraine—are sensitive for U.S.-China relations, but they are rarely linked in discussions between the two leaders. Xi made the outreach, people close to Beijing said, turning the high-level communication into a rare diplomatic overture from China,” continues the WSJ.
- Yun Sun, director of the China program at the Stimson Center, a Washington think tank, said, “China is watching the Ukraine peace deal and feels the need to be more involved.”

Trump wrote on [Truth Social](#) that he agreed to visit Beijing in April and Xi will be accorded a State Visit later in the year: *“I just had a very good telephone call with President Xi, of China. We discussed many topics including Ukraine/Russia, Fentanyl, Soybeans and other Farm Products, etc. We have done a good, and very important, deal for our Great Farmers — and it will only get better. Our relationship with China is extremely strong! This call was a follow up to our highly successful meeting in South Korea, three weeks ago.”*

- Trump continued, *“Since then, there has been significant progress on both sides in keeping our agreements current and accurate. Now we can set our sights on the big picture. To that end, President Xi invited me to visit Beijing in April, which I accepted, and I reciprocated where he will be my guest for a State Visit in the U.S. later in the*

year. We agreed that it is important that we communicate often, which I look forward to doing.”

Politico [reports](#), “The pair’s emerging talks come amid mounting tensions between China and Japan over the future of self-governed Taiwan, a former Japanese territory that China sees as its own. Japanese officials earlier this month indicated that any potential military action against Taiwan would be met with force from Japan, a move that China said crosses ‘a red line.’”

- A few hours after the Xi call, Trump held a separate call with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takachi, who told reporters that Trump had “explained the current state of US-China relations,” including details of his talks with Xi, the Japanese leader said without offering further details, per the [Japan Times](#).
- JT notes, “Trump’s call with Xi appeared to be the latest part of a concerted effort by China to gather global support for its pushback against Takaichi’s Nov. 7 remarks in parliament,” referring to comments that appeared to align Japanese and Taiwanese security.
- Xi told Trump, according to a [readout of the talks](#) posted to the Chinese Foreign Ministry’s website, “China and the US fought shoulder to shoulder against fascism and militarism. Given what is going on, it is even more important for us to jointly safeguard the victory of WWII.”

Republican News

Jake Sherman at Punchbowl News [reported on X](#) yesterday that he has received ‘countless’ messages from Republican House Representatives this morning agreeing with the sentiment of a [report](#) the outlet ran yesterday questioning the wisdom of staying in Congress in light of an extended period of legislative gridlock in the lower chamber and Marjorie Taylor Greene’s (R-GA) decision to retire from the House in January.

- Sherman wrote, “since this ran this morning -- 4 hours ago? -- ive gotten countless text messages from House Republicans agreeing with this sentiment. and saying why the hell should we stay in congress if all we’re going to do is vote on censures and be a potted plant.”
- Sherman wrote earlier in the day, “The crux of MTG’s message is that Trump and House Republicans are abandoning all of the president’s priorities, falling into complacency and are on the brink of squandering their razor-thin majority... A few other GOP members messaged us over the weekend saying that they, too, are considering retiring in the middle of the term.”
- The reporting chimes with yesterday’s edition of this newsletter, looking at the mathematics of the House majority. If another two Republican House reps follow MTG to the exit, Speaker Mike Johnson is likely to lose control of the gavel. Such an outcome, while unlikely, would hand oversight powers to Democrats, opening up the possibility of Congressional investigations and likely impeachment of members of the Trump administration.

Former Speaker Kevin McCarthy told Fox News’ that MTG isn’t the only one on retirement watch. “She’s almost like the canary in the coal mine. And this is something inside Congress, they’d better wake up, because they are going to get a lot of people retiring, and they’ve got to focus.”

- McCarthy added, referring to Speaker Johnson's decision to keep the House in recess in the weeks leading up to - and during - the government shutdown, "I think keeping members out of Congress — you only get two years to be in the majority, and if the Democrats get you not to work everyday for two months, that's losing two months of the majority."
- Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE), who is retiring in 2027, told Axios he was "so angry" at the Trump administration's proposed 28-point Russia-Ukraine peace plan last week that he "thought about" resigning early. But "in the end I have a commitment to our constituents to fulfill my term," Bacon said.

Healthcare

The White House has paused plans to roll out a healthcare plan to address the imminent Obamacare subsidy cliff. Reports over the weekend suggested that the White House was set to unveil a two-year extension of Obamacare subsidies with income caps to get conservatives onside. The plan was aimed at preventing a midterm rout for the GOP, when core parts of the Republican base are hit with premium hikes in the new year.

- Punchbowl notes, "The fact that the White House was even seriously working on a plan caught Hill Republicans by surprise when news of it leaked on Sunday. By Monday morning, the White House was preparing to unveil the proposal — before eventually backtracking amid resistance from conservatives and a general sense among Republicans that the White House was mismanaging the issue."

The Wall Street Journal [reports](#) that House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) "cautioned the White House that most House Republicans don't have an appetite for extending enhanced Affordable Care Act subsidies, according to people familiar with the matter, showing how hard it will be politically to stave off sharp increases in healthcare costs next year for many Americans."

- The Journal notes, "Many Republicans objected to the taxpayer-funded subsidies continuing to go toward funding healthcare plans that cover abortions, a red line for many GOP lawmakers, said people familiar with the objections."

Semafor reports, "Beyond the ACA subsidies debate, Trump has spent much of the year rolling out proposals to lower drug prices: He announced an agreement with AstraZeneca recently to cut its prices for Medicaid patients down to "most-favored-nation" levels, with an added partnership on a new "TrumpRx" website that's aimed at directing consumers to lower-cost drug prices.

- "Soon afterward, Trump touted a deal with EMD Serono aimed at lowering the cost of certain fertility medications — not fulfilling his campaign promise to have the government pay for fertility services, but still making the expensive process more accessible for women around the country. And he's also inked a deal with two companies to lower the cost of popular weight loss medications. Trump's push for making deals with drug companies has become a staple of his second term."

Congressional Business

The House is OUT

The Senate is OUT

Committee Schedule –

FY26 Appropriations

Politico's EE reports that "The Senate on Monday unveiled its bill to fund the Department of Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies, proposing some cuts to clean energy."

- According to EE, "The Senate's legislation reflects the priorities of Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA), chair of the Senate's Energy-Water Appropriations Subcommittee, who said he wanted to cut funding for renewable energy in order to shore up nuclear weapons programs and the Army Corps of Engineers. It was released without the blessing of ranking member Patty Murray (D-WA)."
- Murray said: "While I am disappointed that Senate Republicans released a partisan bill instead of working with Senate Democrats — and I am especially disappointed by the cuts to critical clean energy programs — there are some important priorities I strongly advocated for that are addressed by the bill released today."

Ukraine War

Senior US, Ukrainian, and Russian negotiators met in Abu Dhabi this morning to discuss the peace deal proposed by the Trump administration and amended in Sunday talks with Ukrainian officials in Geneva. The US side in the UAE is led by Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll, who has recently emerged as a key figure in the peace process.

- ABC News [reported this morning](#) that a US official said, "The Ukrainians have agreed to the peace deal. There are some minor details to be sorted out but they have agreed to a peace deal."
- Lt. Col. Jeffrey Tolbert, a US Army spokesman, said, "Late Monday and throughout Tuesday, Secretary Driscoll and team have been in discussions with the Russian delegation to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine. The talks are going well and we remain optimistic. Secretary Driscoll is closely synchronized with the White House and the U.S. interagency as these talks progress."

US and Ukrainian negotiators made major changes to the 28-point peace plan - shrinking it down to a 19-point plan - for Ukraine that was panned in Kyiv and Brussels for favouring Russian objectives. It is unclear what specific changes have been made, but even minor alterations will likely make it a non-starter for Moscow.

- Some potential changes include using frozen Russian sovereign assets to fund Ukraine's reconstruction; freezing the war along current frontlines, rather than ceding annexed territory to Russia; providing Kyiv with long-range weaponry to enhance post-war deterrence; and raising the proposed cap on Ukraine's army.

- ABC reports the plan, “no longer includes a point on the issue of amnesty regarding acts committed during the war, as well as limits on the future size of Ukraine's military.”
- The FT [reports](#) that the most contentious aspects — including the future of contested Ukrainian territory, and Ukraine's path to NATO membership — have been punted for future talks between Zelenskyy and Trump.

The Institute for the Study of War [noted](#) prior to the reported changes, “Russian officials and ultranationalist voices continued to reject any peace plan, including the initial US-proposed 28-point plan, that does not achieve Russia's longstanding demands for the destruction of Ukrainian statehood and the weakening of the NATO alliance.”

- The ISW notes that Russian President Vladimir Putin's war goals remain unchanged and comments from senior officials “continue to indicate that Russia is unlikely to accept any proposed peace plan that falls short of Ukrainian capitulation.”
- The New York Times reports that Putin, “some Trump administration officials predict, is likely to dismiss the new draft out of hand, which would lead to a long and drawn-out negotiation — just what Mr. Trump was trying to short-circuit.”

The diplomatic process comes amid a major exchange of fire between Ukraine and Russia. Authorities in Ukraine claim six were killed in Kyiv in a wave of airstrikes on residential buildings and energy infrastructure. Authorities in the Russian city of Taganrog claimed one was killed and three were wounded in Ukrainian strikes overnight, with drones also hitting an oil refinery in Krasnodar Krai and an oil terminal in Novorossiysk, according to Ukraine's military.

- CNN reports, “Russia and Ukraine traded deadly strikes overnight, killing at least six people in Kyiv. NATO fighter jets were scrambled in Romania after at least one Russian drone entered its airspace.”

Ukrainian National Security Chief, Rustem Umerov, has said that he expects Zelenskyy to visit the US at the “earliest possible date” in November, with the aim of “completing [the] final stages” of the peace agreement with President Trump.

- When asked about a potential Zelenskyy visit, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said yesterday, “So there are no plans at this moment in time. As you know, things can change very quickly around here.”
- She added, “as for where we are, I spoke with Secretary Rubio at length. I spoke with the president as well. Everybody inside feels optimistic about what happened and transpired yesterday in Geneva.”

Venezuela

Axios [reports](#), “President Trump has told his advisers he's planning to speak directly with Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, even as the US designated the foreign leader as the head of a terrorist organization yesterday.”

- Axios notes, “Trump's decision is an important milestone in his gunboat diplomacy aimed at Venezuela — and could be a sign that U.S. missile strikes or direct military action on land are not imminent, those sources say.”

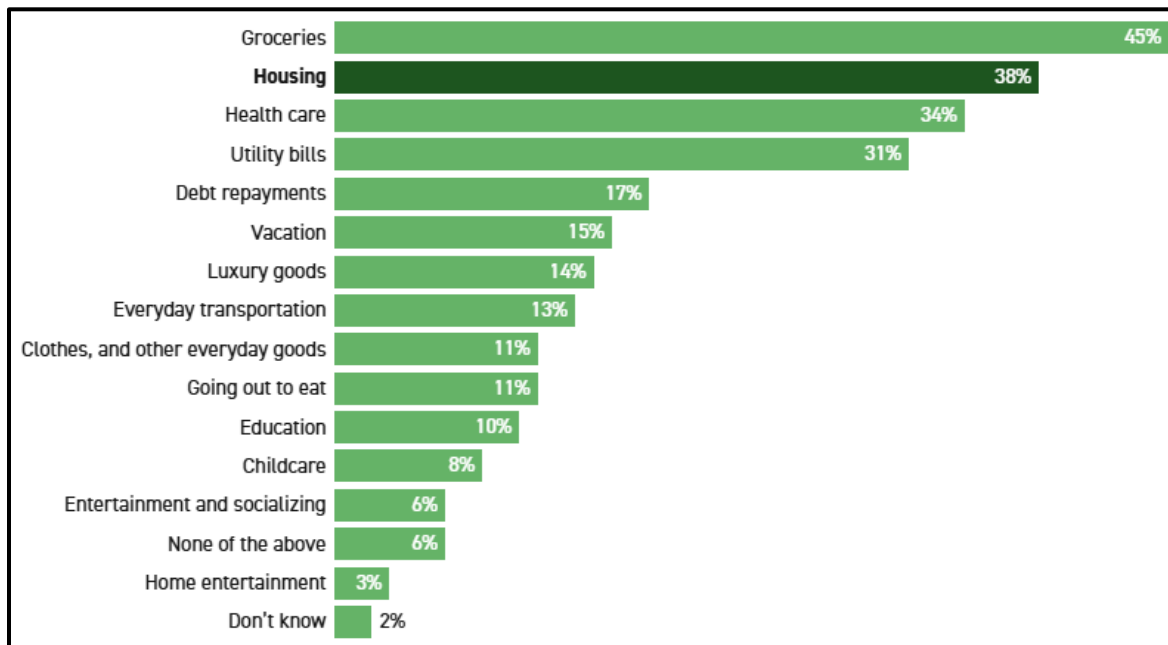
- A US official said, “Nobody is planning to go in and shoot him or snatch him [Maduro] — at this point. I wouldn’t say never, but that’s not the plan right now... In the meantime, we’re going to blow up boats shipping drugs. We’re going to stop the drug trafficking.”
- White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters yesterday, “I’m not going to broadcast any actions that may or may not be happening with respect to Venezuela... We view the Maduro regime as being illegitimate and the president has been very satisfied with the successful strikes against narco terrorists and foreign terrorists that are illegally trafficking drugs towards the United States of America.”

Chart of the Day

Politico [reports](#), “After Democrats dominated the 2025 off-year election cycle with campaigns centered on the cost of living, GOP operatives are scrambling to focus their midterm strategies on voters’ wallets. Some Republicans expect housing will be a key issue in 2026.”

- A new Politico poll found “homebuying and rental costs were among the top affordability concerns for U.S. adults overall — especially among young and Hispanic adults, whose unexpected shift toward President Donald Trump last year helped Republicans return to power.”
- “You can’t just talk about gas and groceries,” said prominent GOP pollster Patrick Ruffini. “You have to talk about health care and housing too.”

Figure 1: “Which costs of living are ‘the most challenging’ to afford” (US adults)



Source: Politico

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