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App

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through the App Store.

ICEBlock’s developer challenged the decision on social media: “We just received a message from Apple’s App Review that #ICEBlock has been removed from the App Store due to ‘objectionable content.’ The only thing we can imagine is this is due to pressure from the Trump Admin.”

The decision comes amid heightened scrutiny of ICE-tracking apps. Federal officials recently alleged that the gunman in last week’s deadly shooting of detainees in Dallas had relied on a similar tool to locate ICE agents.

Red Dot and ICEBlock notified users when ICE agents were operating nearby. Critics argue that such apps could endanger law enforcement, while supporters contend they are vital for immigrant

communities seeking to avoid raids.

Waytowich said he’s exploring legal options and declined to comment at this time.

Red Dot billed itself in the App Store as “a community-driven safety tool that helps protect immigrant communities through real-time ICE activity reporting and alerts.” The app was published under Binary Brains LLC, a company Laura Loomer said she traced to an Army Research

Lab scientist. Florida business filings list Binary Brains LLC’s registration to Nicholas Waytowich, who resides in Baltimore and is named as the company’s CEO.

The U.S. Department of Justice released a statement Monday, saying the agency will “arrest and prosecute to the fullest extent of the law every person who aids, abets, or conspires to commit” crimes against ICE, including through “funding, coor-

dination, or planning.”

On Thursday, U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi told Fox News Digital that her office reached out to Apple demanding they remove the ICEBlock app from their App Store.

The same day, Loomer touted her role in having the apps removed.

“Less than 48 hours after I published my expose about the @USArmy’s leading lab researcher who founded an ICE tracking app and I did a show expos-

ing @Apple and @Google for undermining President Trump’s immigration policies and sent evidence to the White House and DOJ of Big Tech hosting ICE @ICEgov tracking apps in the Apple and Google stores, APPLE has just removed the ICE tracking apps from the Apple App Store!” Loomer wrote on X.

Have a news tip? Contact Todd Karpovich at tkarpovich@baltsun.com or on X as @ToddKarpovich.

Shutdown

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unwillingness to extend the Affordable Care Act tax credits.”

Democrats are running the high-risk strategy of effectively voting for a government shutdown to make their stand. Trump has vowed to make it as painful as possible for them.

The Republican president has called the government funding lapse an “unprecedented opportunity” to make vast cuts to federal agencies and potentially lay off federal workers, rather than the typical practice of furloughing them. White

House budget director Russ Vought has already announced that he is withholding billions of dollars for infrastructure projects in states with Democratic senators.

On Friday morning, Vought said he would withhold another \$2.1 billion for Chicago infrastructure projects to extend its train system.

Jeffries has displayed no signs of budging under those threats.

“The cruelty that they might unleash on everyday Americans using the pretense of a shutdown is only going to backfire against them,” he said during an interview with The Associ-

ated Press and other outlets at the Capitol.

Still, the shutdown, no matter how long it lasts, could have far-reaching effects on the economy. Roughly 750,000 federal employees could be furloughed, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, and they could lose out on \$400 million in daily wages. That loss in wages until after the government reopens could drive down wider demand for goods and services.

“All around the country right now, real pain is being endured by real people because the Democrats have decided to play politics,” House Speaker Mike John-

son, R-La., said on Friday.

The White House also began its press briefing on Friday by rattling off the various consequences of the shutdown that were already hitting Americans. Press secretary Karoline Leavitt discussed a report that said military families are already seeking food aid as troops go without a paycheck.

“This madness must end,” she said.

Jeffries on Thursday called for a permanent extension to the ACA tax credits. Meanwhile, Johnson and Thune told reporters they would not negotiate on the tax credits



Jeffries

until the government is reopened.

A bipartisan group of senators, including moderate Democrats who have said they want to find a quick resolution, has been discussing possible health care compromises through one-on-one talks over the last two days.

Still, it was unclear if they would be able to find a solution that could appease the White House and Republican leaders, who want to see cuts to the subsidies.

Johnson, R-La., said Friday that “more reforms are coming” to the ACA subsidies, which he said “are not working”

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, in a floor speech, called for Republicans to work with Democrats to find “common ground” on the ACA subsidies, saying their expiration would affect plenty of people in states with GOP senators — especially in rural areas where farmers, ranchers and small business owners purchase their own health insurance.

She said that it was difficult to trust that Republicans could deliver on anything if Trump is not on board. “We know that even when they float ideas — which we surely do appreciate — in the end the president appears to make the call,” she said.

Airline

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flight was canceled until we saw a news article,” Kennedy said. “We couldn’t log in to the PLAY Airlines website to check in. The last email we received from them was a reminder to check in for our flight to Dublin.”

PLAY had previously announced plans to end all North American routes in October, including service to New York, Boston, and Baltimore. But the airline’s collapse came earlier than expected.

The shutdown followed news that a group of investors, led by CEO Einar Örn Ólafsson, planned to

buy out shareholders and delist the company from the stock exchange. As part of that restructuring, PLAY said it would drop its North American flights and cut back service in Northern Europe, pivoting instead to “sun destination” routes.

“This is primarily a plan for practical changes to the operations of the Icelan-

dic airline PLAY,” Ólafsson said in a statement. “We’re focusing on profitable aspects of the business — sun destination flights — and discontinuing those that have not yielded results.”

For travelers like Kennedy, the timing has been devastating.

“We haven’t been able

to figure out a flight home yet,” he said. “PLAY Airlines is out of the question. We’re reaching out to other airlines. The only carrier offering rescue fares is Condor, but we would have to fly to another country first just to get home.”

Kennedy said PLAY has not reimbursed them. Instead, the couple was

advised to file a chargeback with their credit card company, which they have already initiated.

In the meantime, Kennedy sighed: “We’re stuck in Dublin.”

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Mayor

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I’ve worked with three presidents, and Trump one and Trump two. We have similar outreach to Congress. We work with Republican and Democratic speakers, and the same on the Senate side, because the Constitution gives Congress plenary authority over the District of Columbia. We’ve been very proactive in our relationships, including when President Trump was first elected, Trump won, and conducted his transition efforts out of New York City and Trump Tower. I was the second Democrat to meet with him after Bill de Blasio. Similarly, this time he conducted most of his transition operations out of Mar-a-Lago, and I met with him there to talk about priorities for the District of Columbia.

**Talk about public safety and the National Guard, and what lessons you can pass on to other major cities.**

It’s hard to extrapolate our D.C. experience to other places, especially with the federal surge, because we’re different. Our law allows the president to declare an emergency for any reason related to public safety. We had a tough year in 2023. 2025 is not 2023. We’ve spent two years driving down crime in every category. Violent crime was down 35%, and down 25–26% this year; it’s down even more now, post-surge.

No mayor anywhere is going to say any level of violent crime is acceptable. If we can drive down carjackings, homicides, and weapons offenses, we’re going to use every resource available. The bigger question underlying what you’re asking is: How do we get more officers? We’d like to hire 500 officers over the next several years.

During the surge, about 500 officers became available to work with our police department, and we know that has an impact on crime.

**Some time ago you wrestled with whether 14-year-olds who commit the worst crimes should be tried as adults. Fast-forward to today: how do you address this, particularly with repeat offenders?**

First of all, I don’t agonize about it. I don’t think it’s right to charge 14-year-olds as adults for a lot of reasons. While we do have some 14-year-old offenders, I think it’s few and far between that the worst crimes would even make us think they should be charged as adults. I would, however, support expanding the categories of crimes already available for 16-year-olds that the U.S. Attorney can prosecute as adults. Right now, carjacking, which concerns me the most and makes neighbors most afraid, should be part of the crimes where a kid could be prosecuted as an adult. I favor expanding the number of crimes that qualify as adult crimes for 16-year-olds and up.

**What about the issue of bail?**

There’s a lot of misinformation about bail. We have a bail system; it’s rarely used in D.C., but it’s available to judges. What’s more important to us, and I think the last two years suggest it works, is expanding what we call pretrial detention and the number of crimes for which a judge can hold people pretrial. This is America: A person is innocent until proven guilty. But if you’re a violent offender charged with a violent crime, the judge should look carefully at keeping you detained until trial. Since we expanded our law around pretrial detention, more judges are holding more people who commit

a crime and are charged with another violent crime. As a result, and among all the changes we’ve made, I believe expanding pretrial detention has focused on the right people. We’re seeing gun crimes, homicides, and carjackings go down by double digits. That’s the kind of smart-on-crime change we needed.

**What about prosecutors who are overwhelmed, especially when there are many arrests and they lack resources?**

Our prosecutors are federal prosecutors, and they lost a lot at the beginning of this year. They need to hire more. I understand they detailed some other lawyers to the office, but we need both prosecutors and judges, and we need to turn around the pace of prosecutions. This prosecutor is very aggressive about moving cases. They’ll make mistakes here and there, and judges will tell them if they do, but we strongly encourage them to move good cases to trial, especially those involving guns.

**You’ve always been an advocate of school choice. Why do you think Americans are falling behind and the educational gap is expanding?**

I can’t speak for the nation, but we should be very concerned, about literacy, math, and how our kids compete globally, especially as we prepare for the next revolution, AI. We’re getting a taste of it with the federal shift’s impact on jobs, but the next impact is coming when many current jobs won’t exist. When my daughter enters the workforce, higher education will be totally different. If we think there’s a gap now, and people aren’t ready for the next revolution, we could see real gaps. I’m launching what I’m calling the tech, or talent, capital for D.C., a cooperative arrange-

ment with surrounding jurisdictions to attract talent, make sure industry tells us what it needs, and get our kids ready for good-paying jobs of the future.

**No one ever thought the Commanders would return to the nation’s capital.**

I believed it. I have always believed it. It’s only right because it’s our team, it’s the Washington Commanders. RFK Stadium is a storied location for football. So many people have childhood memories, football, baseball, concerts, right there at RFK. It’s a beautiful location on the banks of the Anacostia River; to the west, you’re looking at the capital of the free world. There’s no better place for the stadium than right where it was, and is. It’s right that our team comes home. Many of us believe they never should have left, that was a big mistake. I’m grateful I’ve had the opportunity to right that mistake.

**Work has already started. What will this look like when it’s completed? How will it revolutionize the economy?**

It’s hard to imagine because there’s been a stadium there for decades. It will look nothing like that. Right now, it’s a stadium surrounded by parking lots. Some people have been to The Wharf in D.C. on the Potomac River, four Wharfs can fit at RFK. At The Wharf, we have four hotels, so imagine that. Four Wharfs can fit at RFK, with activity and connection to the river. We have great rivers here, two of them, but we’re not known for them because we haven’t developed alongside them. The Wharf opened up the land and water. We can do the same on the Anacostia. People will live there, up to 6,000 units of housing.

**What else is happening in Washington, D.C.?**

We’ve delivered a lot. I was just at a development in Ward A called Sycamore and Oak, where we’ve invested over \$1 billion east of the river, from a practice facility to a hospital to the Whitman Walk clinic to hundreds of units of new housing. I’m proud we’ve kept our promises in every part of the city, not just downtown, but across town. We’re proud of transforming our homeless services center. We’re proud of our kids’ achievements in public schools and having one of the most robust pre-K programs anywhere. With all that, we still have to address losses we’ll experience, not because we did anything wrong, but because the federal government is changing the number of jobs and people they employ. While we’ve achieved a lot, we still have to work on the future.

**Many are happy that homelessness in the city isn’t as prevalent as it once was. But people ask privately: where did they go? Where are they now?**

This is the most vexing problem in a city: people who are really sick and won’t come inside. It’s especially vexing for us because we have shelter, some places don’t. We largely know where our unsheltered population is. A few weeks ago, we did a point-in-time count to find them and connect them to services. Every day, front-line workers in our government do this hard work to get people to come inside. We’re having more success. We don’t criminalize homelessness, it’s not a crime to be sick and on the street, but our law doesn’t allow camping on the street. It’s a tough job when you have to involve law enforcement, but sometimes it’s better for people to come inside to stabilize and get help.

**Union Station is a big symbol**

**for our nation’s capital. What’s the future of the refurbishing?**

It belongs to the federal government. Some people said they took it over, it was already theirs. It belongs to the U.S. Department of Transportation; it always has. I hope they’re not walking away from more than cosmetic renovation, Union Station needs to expand, and there’s a plan to do that. I hope DOT stays at the table and goes to Congress to get the \$8 billion it needs.

**What about the Park Service? I’m up early, running from Capitol Hill to the Lincoln Memorial, you can see the beauty. What about personnel for the Park Service?**

They need more money. I’m not just talking about D.C., but our national parks across the country. They don’t have the resources they need, especially not here, not at the level we’d like or apparently that President Trump would like. If we want manicured grass on the National Mall and similarly maintained neighborhood parks, you need more personnel and resources. We want to partner with them. One thing the National Guard’s mulching and cleaning shows is that they could use help, and we can help. As a resident, you know we have a seasonal leaf crew. I could put together a crew of D.C. residents to work on contract with the National Park Service to do everything the National Guard is doing now. That could be a win-win for the president and for us.

Armstrong Williams (www.armstrongwilliams.com; @arightside) is a political analyst, syndicated columnist and owner of the broadcasting company, Howard Stirk Holdings. He is also part owner of The Baltimore Sun.

**CORRECTION** | A story in Thursday’s print editions about University of Maryland graduate students seeking union representation incorrectly stated Anna Emenheiser’s academic credentials. She is a Ph.D. candidate. The Sun regrets the error.

**CORRECTIONS** | The Baltimore Sun is committed to providing fair and accurate coverage. Readers who have concerns or comments are encouraged to call us at 800-829-8000.

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