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THE SUN

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WASHINGTON

Senate nears passage of bill to reopen government

House to vote next

By **Mary Clare Jalonick and Lisa Mascaro**
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » The Senate began its final votes Monday evening on legislation

to reopen the government, bringing the longest shutdown in history closer to an end after a small group of Democrats struck a deal with Republicans.

The shutdown could last a few more days as members of the House, which

has been on recess since mid-September, return to Washington to vote on the legislation. President Donald Trump has signaled support for the bill, saying Monday that "we're going to be opening up our country very quickly."

Senators began debate on the bill just past nightfall. Senate Majority Leader John Thune set up a series of procedural votes and said he hoped final passage would take "hours not



AP PHOTO/J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE

Speaking to reporters, Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., responds to Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer to reopen the government if Republicans extend expiring health care subsidies for one year, at the Capitol in Washington, Friday, Nov. 7, 2025, day 38 of the government shutdown.

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'OUR KIDS ARE COUNTING ON US'

HEAD START CUTS RIP ACROSS REGION



PHOTOS BY MELANIE GILBERT — LOWELL SUN

Children in the preschool classroom at Community Teamwork's James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025, with their teacher Kiara Vazquez. The children range in age from 2.9 to 5 years old.

80% of program funding cut during shutdown

By **Melanie Gilbert**
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LOWELL » Head Start is on the federal shutdown chopping block, and a coalition of leaders addressed the dire situation during a press conference Monday calling for an end to the government shutdown and the release of funding for the 60-year-old federal program.

The pain is already being felt in Lowell. On Saturday, Community Teamwork Inc. announced that it has been forced to furlough, reduce and eliminate staff positions due to the shutdown.

"At Community Teamwork, we have done everything possible to remain open," CEO Carl Howell said during the event held at the James Houlares Early Learning Center on Phoenix Avenue. "We

are relying on temporary non-federal funds, adjusting operations and shifting staffing — because families need us, and closing our doors would devastate this community."

The community action agency, which provides support and services to 70 different communities in the commonwealth, furloughed approximately 50 Head Start staff members and reduced hours for an additional 22 employees, as well as eliminated several positions.

The agency is one of six Head Start programs in Massachusetts that did not receive its scheduled payments from the federal government after the annual funding cycle ended on Oct. 31. Its Head Start program serves hundreds



Community Teamwork CEO Carl Howell speaks during a press conference at the James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025. He called for the end of the federal shutdown and the release of funding to the Head Start program.

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OPERATION FIREWALL

State police arrest 56 in child porn, exploitation operation

By **Grace Zokovitch**
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Massachusetts State Police arrested 56 people in a three-day sting operation targeting child pornography and exploitation across the state, officials announced Monday.

"If you think you may know the type of person who commits these types of crimes, I can assure you there is no profile when it comes to child exploitation," said Lt. Col. Dan Tucker, commander of the State Police Division of Investigative Services.

"Operation Firewall brought us to nearly 40 communities across every part of the Commonwealth. We arrested successful business people, homeowners, spouses and parents of children. Fifty-five of the suspects are men, and one is a woman. The suspects arrested range in age of 18 to 75. These suspects could be your neighbors."

Operation Firewall, conducted by the State Police and law enforcement partners over three days last week, was designed to address the "growing problem of possession, production, and sharing of child sexual abuse material, as well as child enticement and other illegal activity."

During the operation, 56 people were arrested, 229 devices were seized from suspects and 34 residential search warrants were executed, Tucker said.

Of the arrests, 25 were on charges of possession of child pornography and 19 were on charges of enticement of a child "after communicating with an undercover law enforcement officer they thought was an underage child and agreeing to meet for sex," Tucker said.

Seven more were arrested on outstanding warrants for failure to register as a sex offender and five on warrants for rape and assault and battery of a child.

Local arrestees nabbed in the operation included David Homen, 60, of Lowell, charged

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PHOTOS BY MELANIE GILBERT — LOWELL SUN

Children in the preschool classroom at Community Teamwork's James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025. The children range in age from 2.9 to 5 years old.



Rita O'Brien-Dee, at left, with teacher Daniella Jaramillo, speaks with some of the children in preschool classroom at Community Teamwork's James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025. The children range in age from 2.9 to 5 years old.

Programs

FROM PAGE 1

of low-income children and families across Greater Lowell and the Merrimack Valley, providing early education, nutrition and family support services that promote school readiness and long-term success.

The Houlares Center houses the Early Learning Head Start Program and accepts children 6 weeks to 5 years of age from low-income families.

Michelle Haimowitz, executive director of the Massachusetts Head Start Association, said that more than 10,000 children statewide rely on Head Start. Five days a week, children enrolled in the program are guaranteed access to a quality education, nutritious meals, health screenings, disability services, family job training and much more.

"It's time to end the shutdown and restore funding to our essential programs like Head Start to ensure the well-being of our children, families and communities," she said.

While CTI Head Start remains open, four Self Help Inc. Head Start centers in Brockton and Norwood had to close on Nov. 3, leaving



Children in the toddler classroom at Community Teamwork's James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025 with their teacher Tiffany Rodriguez.

more than 550 children without care and over 150 staff members furloughed.

"Their teachers are out of work and their parents and guardians struggle to find affordable and reliable child care so they can go to work and school as well," Haimowitz said. "All of this because of the federal inaction and the government shutdown."

The shutdown is in its 41st day. And despite the U.S. Senate vote on Sunday to reopen the government, the shutdown continues and Head Start officials remain concerned about its long-term impacts on children, families and staff.

"Head Start is not a light switch. We can't just turn our programs on and off," Haimowitz said. "Even if funding is released tomorrow, it will take a while to hire back employees, bring back families, and get our programs up to full strength."

CTI is using non-federal funding to maintain operations as long as possible, including the Head Start State Supplemental Grant and 3 million Commonwealth Cares for Children grants. However, those temporary solutions cannot replace federal funding, which makes up at least 80% of all Head Start budgets.



Parents Xiomara Tiburcio, left, and Jesalina Sabater spoke during a press conference at the James Houlares Head Start Center on Phoenix Avenue in Lowell Nov. 10, 2025, to call for the end of the federal shutdown and the release of funding to the Head Start program.

"No amount of patchwork state funding can replace these Head Start funds," Howell said. "We are deeply grateful for the Healey administration, our state legislators, and the Head Start State Supplemental and C3 grants that are helping us stay afloat, but these dollars were never meant to carry programs during a federal shutdown."

Xiomara Tiburcio knows firsthand the impact CTI has on people's lives. The "proud single mom of three kids" was one of two parents who spoke at the press conference, describing her year-long journey to stabilize her

family through the services and programs offered by the agency. She said Head Start "needs to be protected."

"For 60 years, Head Start has been a lifeline for millions of families," Tiburcio said. "(It's) not just a program, but a promise ... That is at risk. Our kids are counting on us."

She urged members of the audience to contact their state representatives to push for an end to the shutdown and restore Head Start funding.

Jesalina Sabater described a tenuous time following the death of her child's father during COVID, in which

Head Start child care for her daughter allowed her to regain her footing and self-sufficiency.

She said the shutdown made her "feel scared all over again."

Taking care of children has been Rita O'Brien-Dee's life work, first as a single mother raising her children, and later as a Head Start teacher and now as a CTI board member.

Last September, CTI cut the ribbon on the new Rita O'Brien-Dee Center for Behavioral Health and Development at the Houlares Early Learning Center. The new center provides all children and families at CTI with developmental and behavioral health services that nurture healthy social-emotional and educational development.

O'Brien-Dee has been a vocal advocate for supporting teachers and young children in CTI's care throughout her more than 55 years of continuous involvement with the organization.

"I had three children who went to Head Start, and they went on to higher education," O'Brien-Dee said. "As board members, we are very protective, appreciative of our children, staff — we care what happens to them. Hopefully, we can bring back the people that are furloughed, and they can keep doing the good work."

VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Notable monuments to veterans across the United States



Veterans Day honors the millions of men and women who have sacrificed much to serve in the United States military. Veterans Day is commemorated each year on November 11 because it was that day in 1918 when an armistice was reached between combatants in World War I, which estimates suggest claimed the lives of as many as 22 million people. There are many ways for Americans to celebrate

veterans on Veterans Day. Visiting war memorials can instill a greater sense of appreciation for the men and women who have served in the United States military. The following are some notable war memorials honoring veterans across the United States.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is an iconic memorial located in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. Cemetery officials note New York Congressman and World War I veteran Hamilton Fish, Jr., played an integral role in establishing the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by proposing legislation that provided for the interment of one unknown American soldier killed during WWI. Guards are now present at the tomb 24/7, and visitors, including U.S. presidents

and foreign dignitaries, typically lay a wreath at the tomb to honor the sacrifices of all U.S. veterans.

Korean War Veterans Memorial

The Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. honors the roughly 1.5 million American veterans who fought alongside forces from the United Nations in a conflict that lasted from 1950 to 1953. Nineteen sculptures depicting U.S. servicemen on patrol during the conflict are among the many notable components of this moving memorial, which also features a wall and pool of remembrance that display the names of the more than 36,000 Americans killed during the Korean War.

Liberty Memorial

The Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, was built in 1926 to honor the brave American service

members who lost their lives in World War I. The Liberty Memorial, which is now known as the National World War I Museum and Memorial, is an iconic landmark in Kansas City that features the Liberty Memorial Tower, which rises 217 feet about Memorial Courtyard and 268 feet above the North Lawn. The top of the tower emits a flame at night to create a stunning visual. Memory Hall on the east side of the Liberty Memorial Tower

containing a portion of the Panth on de la Guerre, an iconic French painting that depicts the Allied nations of World War I.

USS Arizona Memorial

The USS Arizona Memorial in Honolulu, Hawaii, is dedicated to preserving the memories of the sacrifices of servicemen who fought in the Pacific theater throughout World War II. The memorial marks the resting place of more than 1,100 sailors during the

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, an event that led to U.S. involvement in World War II. The memorial is accessible exclusively by boat and the sunken remains of the battleship USS Arizona straddle the site.

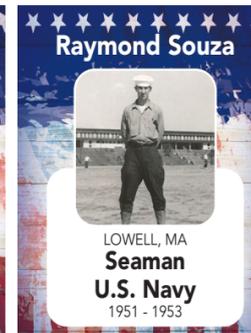
These are just four of the many notable landmarks that commemorate the sacrifice and service of U.S. military members over the course of the nation's history.



LOWELL, MA
Private First Class - Specialist
U.S. Army
1958 - 1965



LOWELL, MA
Airman First Class
U.S. Air Force
1954 - 1957



LOWELL, MA
Seaman
U.S. Navy
1951 - 1953

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The entire team at Quinn's Construction proudly pauses this Veterans Day to salute the brave men and women of the united armed forces. Your courage, sacrifice, and commitment to our nation are the very beams and supports of our society.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all who have served.

May your day be filled with honor and peace