

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, November 4, 2025, which is both elections day and the 35th day of the federal government shutdown.

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As the shutdown continues, Republican US Representative Michael Baumgartner has apparently challenged Washington's Governor Bob Ferguson to a televised debate to address which political party is responsible for the shutdown and what it would take to end it. As of yesterday, Ferguson has not accepted the challenge. According to the *Washington State Standard*, Washington State Communications Director Brionna Aho responded in an email that, while the congressman has time on his hands, the governor is "focused on helping Washingtonians suffering from the impacts of this shutdown caused by Congressman Baumgartner and his Republican colleagues – who control the Oval Office and both houses of Congress."

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As the shutdown continues and the start of open enrollment looms, the cost of health insurance for the nearly 300,000 Washington residents who buy insurance through the state's online marketplace is predicted to rise significantly. The Washington Healthplanfinder is used by people who do not have access to health insurance through their jobs or from government programs like Medicaid. About three-quarters of those individuals qualified for the federal tax credits currently under debate, which had been helping them decrease annual premiums by an average of \$1,330. For seniors, those savings jumped to more than \$1,900 annually.

But according to Washington Senator Maria Cantwell, without those tax credits, a typical middle-class couple, age 60 and 55 living in King County, will see their monthly ACA (Affordable Care Act) marketplace premium rise from \$425 per month to \$1,386 per month. That same couple living in Spokane County, Clark County, or Benton County would see similar cost increases.

Given that most people do not have an extra thousand dollars a month available for healthcare, Cantwell estimates that "About 5 million Americans, including 80,000 in my state, will probably be forced to say, 'I just can't afford health insurance anymore.'"

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Jefferson County Superior Court Judge Brandon Mack has denied the restraining order intended to prohibit the city of Port Townsend from removing the homeless encampment at Evans Vista. Though Judge Mack admitted he regrets his decision and admonished the city for not doing a better job of notifying the residents, he was unable to find a legal basis to grant the order.

Attorney Joanna Eide, who represented the city, argued that the restraining order would prohibit repairs on a main water valve located under the encampment. The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that as of yesterday only six residents remained at the encampment, and Bayside Housing and Services has been issued a permit to expand capacity at Pat's Place (Bayside's Tiny Shelter Village) to accommodate at least four additional tent spots.

In the meantime, the city has posted notices at the campground and the police were at the site alongside service providers with booths and tables set up, including the LEAD Team, REAL Team, and Bayside Housing, who are prepared to provide campsites, temporary hotel rooms, and other supportive services. Listen tomorrow to the *Beacon* report at noon and 5pm to learn more about the eviction process.

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The Port Townsend School District has received a \$10,000 grant from ArtsWa to support an innovative arts-integrated science program at Salish Coast Elementary. The grant will fund a residency with nationally acclaimed environmental educator, performer Billy Brennan, the Natural Science Song and Dance Man. Widely known as Billy B., Brennan, a Port Townsend resident, will work with Kindergarten through 3rd grade students, engaging them in exploring natural science concepts and connecting them to the environment through the arts.

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And finally, today is your last chance to vote in the current election. Ballots must be postmarked today or returned to a ballot drop box by 8pm this evening. Be mindful of mailbox collection times or use an official ballot drop box. A ballot envelope with a late postmark will not be counted. For a list of drop box locations, visit <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1493/Ballot-Drop-Boxes>.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.