

U.S., Iranian Officials Will Meet, Trump Says

Downplays need
for nuclear accord

A6



A man sweeps up rubble Wednesday
from previous strike in Tehran.

GETTY IMAGES / MAJID SAEEDI

Fast Food Slowdown? LI Experts Have Doubts

A4-5



NEWSDAY / JOHN PARASKEVAS

MAYORAL UPSET IN NYC REVERBERATES

■ Mamdani's primary
win upends election

■ On LI, GOP and Dem
elected leaders are wary

PLUS: 5 things to know
about Zohran Mamdani

A2-4 | VIDEO AT [NEWSDAY.TV](https://www.newsday.com/newsday-tv)

Zohran Mamdani
speaks on
Tuesday night.



BLOOMBERG / CHRISTIAN MONTERROSA

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★ Blowback for Mamdani

This story was reported by **Joe Werkmeister**, **Bahar Ostadan** and **Laura Figueroa Hernandez**. It was written by Werkmeister.

The political shock waves of Assemb. Zohran Mamdani's dramatic New York City Democratic mayoral primary victory reverberated across Long Island Wednesday as some local officials expressed wariness of Mamdani, with some labeling him as anti-American and antisemitic.

Mamdani, a 33-year-old democratic socialist from Astoria, Queens, emerged victorious Tuesday in a primary that included former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo. Mamdani's progressive agenda gravitated voters who rejected the more mainstream and well-known Democrat in Cuomo.

But in Nassau and Suffolk counties, where the Republican base has only grown in the Trump era, Mamdani's message has hit much differently among elected officials.

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, a Republican and strong ally of President Donald Trump, described Mamdani in an interview as "an antisemite" and "anti-American." And Rep. Laura Gillen, a fellow Democrat, criticized Mamdani for "a deeply disturbing pattern of unacceptable antisemitic comments which stoke hate at a time when antisemitism is skyrocketing."

Rep. Tom Suozzi (D-Glen Cove) was more measured in his comments about Mamdani compared with Gillen. Suozzi endorsed Cuomo in the primary and said in a post on X he remained concerned about Mamdani's mayoral candidacy.

Gillen, however, said in a statement that Mamdani was "too extreme to lead New York City" and his campaign was built on "unachievable promises and higher taxes."

"He is the absolute wrong choice for New York," said Gillen, of Rockville Centre.

Mamdani did not respond to a request for comment on the elected officials' remarks.

Mamdani, a practicing Muslim, has said that criticism of Israel and advocacy for Palestinian rights — and how the country's conducted the war in Gaza — are not akin to antisemitism. He's said he believes



Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer



Rep. Andrew Garbarino (R-Bayport)

WHAT NEWSDAY FOUND

- **Zohran Mamdani's victory** in the New York City Democratic mayoral primary has sparked controversy, with some officials labeling him as anti-American and antisemitic.
- **Despite criticism, Mamdani's** focus on affordability and progressive policies resonated with many voters, though Hank Sheinkopf, a political consultant, said his socialist branding may alienate some suburban and conservative demographics. Mamdani is a democratic socialist.
- **Sheinkopf added that** the ripple effects of Mamdani on Long Island may be to strengthen the Republican strongholds and drive moderate and conservative city residents to the suburbs if he becomes mayor.

in equality for all in Israel.

New York's top two congressional Democrats — Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries — did not endorse any candidates during the primary, but both said on Wednesday they had spoken with Mamdani and planned to meet with him in person soon.

On the other side of the aisle, Rep. Andrew Garbarino (R-Bayport) in a statement to Newsday called Mamdani's agenda "out of touch" and "dangerous."

"Government-owned grocery stores didn't work in Russia, and they sure as hell won't work in New York City," Garbarino said, referring to Mamdani's proposal to establish city-operated grocery stores — one per borough — to address food deserts in low-income neighborhoods and keep prices low.

Rep. Nick LaLota (R-Amityville) did not respond to a request for comment.

Mamdani, while earning the Democratic nod for Novem-

ber's general election, must still contend with incumbent Mayor Eric Adams, who is running as an independent, in the general election. Cuomo also did not rule out an independent run.

While Mamdani is now the favorite to win, given the overwhelming number of registered Democrats, recent political history has shown a November victory is not guaranteed. In Buffalo, democratic socialist India Walton won her 2021 primary against mainline Democrat and incumbent Byron Brown only to lose to Brown, who waged a successful write-in campaign, in the November general.

Schumer, in a social media post, said Mamdani "ran an impressive campaign that connected with New Yorkers about affordability, fairness, & opportunity." And he said he's known Mamdani "since we worked together to provide debt relief for thousands of beleaguered taxi drivers [and] fought to stop a cracked gas plant in Astoria."

Jeffries (D-Brooklyn) said on

MSNBC's "Morning Joe" Wednesday that Mamdani's "relentless focus on affordability had great appeal all across the city of New York."

Hank Sheinkopf, a political consultant, said the ripple effects of Mamdani on Long Island may be to strengthen the Republican strongholds and drive moderate and conservative city residents to the suburbs if he becomes mayor.

"People in Suffolk County hear the word socialist, they will lose their minds," he said, adding that an "emerging population" of Central American voters on Long Island also shun socialist branding.

Sheinkopf said he doesn't believe the way Mamdani connected with younger voters carries over to a similar demographic growing up on Long Island. He said the younger people involved in labor, members of fire departments and who are starting small businesses will look at Mamdani and say, "He's not our plate of soup."

Blakeman recounted Mamdani's comment in a 2024 interview about ordering Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's arrest for alleged war crimes under a warrant from the International Criminal Court if he were to visit New York City (it's unclear if the city can enforce the warrant). It's antisemitic to single out Israel from "other countries that really have human rights issues" like Venezuela, China, Russia or North Korea, Blakeman said.

Newsday's Matthew Chayes contributed to this story.

FAST

New CDC study finds consumption fell by a few points

BY DYLAN MURPHY
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Americans have sharply reduced their fast food consumption in recent years according to a new study that is reigniting a simmering debate about causes and impact of consumers' shifting dietary habits.

Calories consumed from fast food — known for its quick preparation, usually cheap prices and questionable healthiness — decreased from 14.1% during 2013-2014 to 11.7% between August 2021 and August 2023, according to a study set to be released Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About a third of those 20 and older consumed fast food on a given day.

Some Long Island health professionals said they are skeptical of the results as obesity remains an epidemic.

"I'm not seeing it," said Dr. Lori Berman, a pediatrician at Allied Pediatrics in Valley Stream. "What I'm finding as a trend in my patients is that children mimic [their] parents' eat-

Ex-CEO

ONLY IN NEWSDAY

BY CANDICE FERRETTE

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The former chief executive of Nassau University Medical Center is pushing back against allegations she doled out excessive payments last month totaling \$3.5 million to herself and a dozen other employees before resigning.

Megan Ryan, who led the county's cash-strapped public hospital in East Meadow, was owed more than 1,000 hours of accrued work time plus salary payments for June 1 through June 14, according to a letter obtained by Newsday Wednesday.

FOOD CALORIE INTAKE DROPS



Fast food giants like McDonald's have slumped. Same-store sales fell 3.6% in its latest earnings report.

NEWSDAY / JAMES CARBONE

WHAT NEWSDAY FOUND

- **Caloric intake from fast food** among American adults has decreased from 14.1% to 11.7% between 2013-2014 and 2021-2023, with variations by age group.
- **While some Long Island food nutrition experts** said they're not seeing less fast food consumption, others credited social media with making healthy eating more popular.
- **Some families have moved from fast food** to ultra-processed or convenience foods, but these alternatives offer little to no advantage.

ing habits."

Parents, she said, are "basically pleasing their children" with fast food. She also said that limited budgets and busy lifestyles make fast food even more alluring.

The new report, from the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, didn't draw any conclusions about the decrease. But researchers noted fast food consumption "has been associated with an increased intake of calories, fat, sodium, and sugar, and with a lower intake of fiber, calcium, iron, fruits, dairy, whole grains, nuts, and seeds."

The study did not address

the impacts of a wave of injectable diet drugs like Ozempic sweeping the country, causing a growing number of adults to dramatically reduce calorie consumption.

While some Long Island food nutrition experts said they're not seeing less fast food consumption, others credited social media with making healthy eating more popular.

Alyssa Morando, a registered dietitian at St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson Station, said she believes that young adults view healthy eating as "trendy."

"Kids, young adults, teens, they love trends. They go on so-

cial media, they see they have these healthier sodas," she said.

Morando encourages discussing the benefits of eating a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables and lean proteins, and watching portion sizes of fast food, as opposed to eliminating it altogether.

The results of the study mirror a decline in sales reported by fast food giants like McDonald's. The company's sales dropped in the beginning of the year, marking the second straight quarter of declines, according to its latest earnings report. Same-store sales fell 3.6%, the biggest drop since the pandemic lockdown.

For their part, McDonald's leaders are blaming the decline on economic conditions, not consumers seeking alternatives.

"Consumers today are grappling with uncertainty," McDonald's chairman and CEO Chris Kempczinski said in a statement, adding that he has "confidence in our ability to navigate even the toughest of market conditions."

Domino's Pizza and Burger King have reported similar earnings slumps.

Cleopatra Tsanis-Tsirnikas, a dietitian at Long Island Jewish

Valley Stream hospital, said she found that while individuals may be moving away from fast food, they may not be consuming significantly healthier alternatives.

"There's some people that will shift to more homemade things, which tend to be a good thing because they're less processed," she said. "But people who are struggling economically will turn to more convenience foods that are more ultra-processed."

Tsanis-Tsirnikas said, however, that options for food-insecure individuals are becoming more widely available.

The CDC survey also found older age groups took in a lower percentage of calories from fast food. Adults 20-39 consumed 15.2% of calories from fast food on a given day, while the figures were 11.9% for those 40-59 and 7.6% for people 60 and older.

A separate CDC study found that the average percentage of calories consumed from fast food decreased significantly among 2- to 11-year-olds between 2013-2014 and August 2021-August 2023.

Outside a Commack Whole Foods store on Wednesday, shoppers expressed discontent with fast food.

"I try not to [eat fast food], as much as possible," said Joann Lawrence, 52, from Valley Stream. "I think it's less healthy now. Cheap prices equals cheap food."

of NUMC disputes doling out excessive payments

The letter last Friday from Ryan's attorney Alex Hartzband to interim NUMC CEO Dr. Richard Becker calls the allegations "patently false" and says Ryan is entitled to "full payment for accrued but unused vacation, personal and sick time."

"NHCC merely paid Ms. Ryan the monies she is owed under her contract," Hartzband wrote, referring to Nassau Health Care Corp., the public benefit corporation that runs the hospital. He continued to say Ryan would pursue all payments including "contractual severance through April 15, 2027."

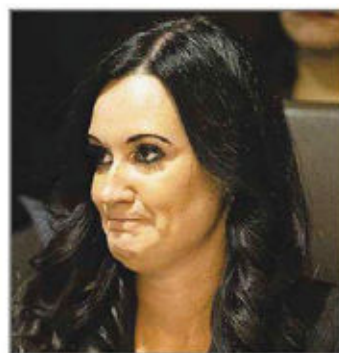
Ryan last week was accused of authorizing the payments around May 30 — one day before Gov. Kathy Hochul, a

Democrat, announced Stuart Rabinowitz as the new chairman to lead a revamped board, shifting the majority of its appointed members from county to state lawmakers.

The payments were authorized before Ryan and others announced they would resign from the hospital.

The new board voted June 10 to put Ryan on leave, appointing Becker as interim CEO. On June 18, he sent Ryan a letter about the payments saying she was being "terminated for cause." There was "at least \$1 million" in excessive payments, Becker wrote.

Becker had said that if Ryan can prove the payments served "a valid business purpose," the hospital's leadership "would be



Megan Ryan, former CEO of NUMC, was fired last week.

NEWSDAY / KENDALL RODRIGUEZ

willing to reconsider" her termination. Ryan had until the close of business last Friday to communicate her defense.

Ryan, through a spokesman,

declined comment.

Hartzband previously told Newsday the termination was a "politically motivated hit." In the letter, he said the hospital was trying to "wriggle out of its obligations" under Ryan's employment agreement by "ginning up 'cause' where none exists."

NUMC's leadership on Wednesday, however, appeared to have doubled down on their allegations against Ryan.

"After carefully reviewing the assertions made by Ms. Ryan's counsel, we stand strongly behind the actions we took and the conclusions we made in our previous letter to her. Any further action we take regarding Ms. Ryan's conduct will be addressed by our legal

counsel," Rabinowitz said in an emailed statement.

Officials with the Nassau Interim Finance Authority, the state-appointed panel that oversees Nassau County's finances including those at the county hospital, are continuing to review the payments and her employment contract, Chairman Richard Kessel said.

"Obviously this is a complex legal issue. I don't agree with her attorney's conclusion," Kessel said. "NIFA never approved an employment contract for her and therefore the contract was invalid. Even if the contracts were valid, the payments were far in excess what the employees were entitled to under hospital policy."