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ELECTIONS

Trump signs a new executive order on voting. Experts say he lacks the authority

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By Ashley Lopez, Benjamin Swasey

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An election worker sorts mail-in ballots in Reno, Nev., on Nov. 5, 2024.

Godofredo A. Vásquez/AP

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President Trump on Tuesday escalated his efforts to reshape American elections, signing an executive order that seeks to create lists of U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote in each state, and instructing the U.S. Postal Service to send mail ballots only to verified voters.

Trump told reporters in the Oval Office that he believes the order is legally "foolproof." But election experts said the order was unconstitutional, and voting rights advocates and Democratic state officials quickly pledged to sue to block the order from going into effect.

A previous executive order on elections, signed about a year ago, has been blocked by federal judges who said the president lacked the constitutional authority to set voting policy.

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The Constitution says the "Times, Places and Manner" of federal elections are determined by individual states, with Congress able to enact changes. We and our partners process data to provide: sponsorship, analytics, and other vendors or service providers.

"This Executive Order is a disgusting overreach from the federal government and shows how little the Trump Administration understands about election administration," Administration for the Democratic Party secretary of state of Arizona, said in a statement Tuesday. "We will not let this order stand without a fight and will meet the federal government in court," he added.

Arizona is among more than two dozen states Trump's Department of Justice has sued over access to sensitive voter data.



ELECTIONS

The Justice Department plans to share sensitive voter data with Homeland Security

The Trump administration claims it needs the data to enforce states' voter list maintenance. Federal judges in three states have dismissed the Justice Department's lawsuits in those states.

In another case, a DOJ official admitted in court last week that the department plans to share that voter data with the Department of Homeland Security, to run it through the so-called SAVE system to search for noncitizens.

NPR has reported that some U.S. citizens have also been inaccurately flagged by SAVE.

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How the executive order seeks to change voting

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noncitizens and fraud associated with mail ballots.

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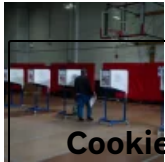
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The new executive order – which was first reported by The Daily Caller – takes aim at both.

It instructs the Department of Homeland Security, working in conjunction with the Social Security Administration, to "compile and transmit to the chief election official of each State a list of individuals confirmed to be United States citizens who will be above the age of 18 at the time of an upcoming Federal election and who maintain a residence in the subject State."

The order then "requires the USPS to transmit ballots only to individuals enrolled on a State-specific Mail-in and Absentee Participation List, ensuring that only eligible absentee or mail-in voters receive absentee or mail-in ballots," according to a White House fact sheet.

The Postal Service is "reviewing the Executive Order," USPS spokesperson Cathy Purcell said in a statement.



ELECTIONS

ICE won't be at polling places this year, a Trump DHS official promises

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Trump's executive order claims that "additional measures are necessary" to secure voting by mail, a form of voting he has used himself — including last week — but also falsely maligned for years. In the 2024 general election, nearly a third of all voters cast mail ballots. The Postal Service should also review the design of mail ballot envelopes to protect the integrity of Federal elections," the order says.

For more details, refer to our Privacy Policy. Collectively, the provisions would be a significant change to how mail ballot programs are currently administered in American elections, which are largely carried out by state and local officials.

Our government's citizenship lists are incomplete and inaccurate. The United States Postal Service is overburdened and inadequate. This combines a car crash with a train wreck," the Brennan Center for Justice, which advocates for expanded voting access and sued to block Trump's 2025 election executive order, said in a statement.

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The National Rural Letter Carriers' Association is also raising concerns about the order, which the union's president, Don Maston, said would "impose new administrative burdens on an agency that is already under significant financial strain."

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The Postal Service is not a law enforcement agency. It is not a substitute for state election administrators, and it is not equipped or authorized to decide who is or is not entitled to vote," Maston said in a statement. "Any effort to push USPS into that role risks politicizing one of the nation's most trusted public institutions and threatening public confidence in both the mail and the electoral process."

Rick Hasen, an election law expert at UCLA, wrote on his blog that the order is likely unconstitutional. And regardless, he added, the timing here makes this virtually impossible to implement in time for November's elections. ... It seems highly unlikely any of this could be implemented for 2026, even if it were not blocked by courts."



ELECTIONS

The SAVE Act faces long odds in the Senate. GOP-led states are picking up the cause

The order comes as Trump pressures Republicans in Congress to pass the SAVE America Act, a sweeping election overhaul that would impose new voter identification and documentation requirements.

That bill is stalled in the Senate due to Democratic opposition and the legislative filibuster.

The Supreme Court is also expected to rule this year on whether Mississippi should be allowed to count mail ballots that are postmarked by Election Day but received by election officials after Election Day.

The legal challenge, which could have sweeping implications for mail voting nationwide, was filed by the Republican National Committee and Trump's 2024 presidential campaign.

With reporting by NPR's Hansi Lo Wang

voting stories

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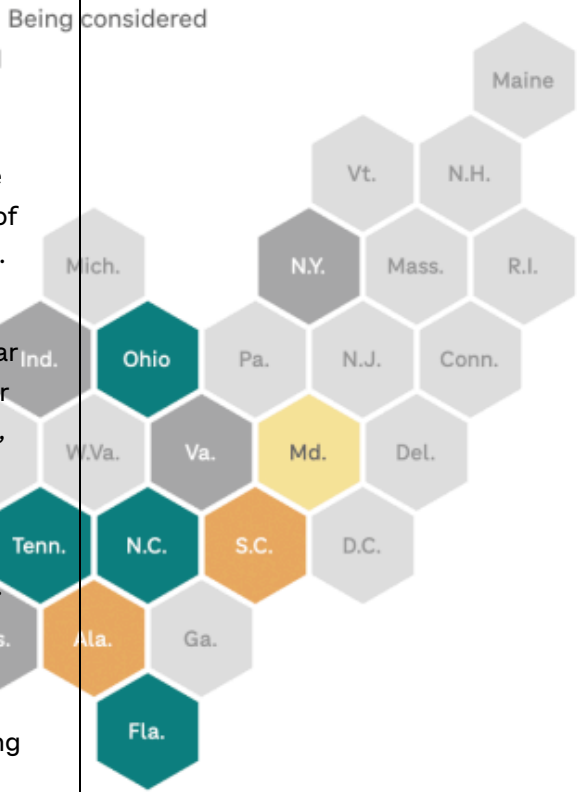
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ELECTIONS

Southern Republicans redistrict after Supreme Court rules, Dems lose big in Virginia



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ELECTIONS

National mood is against Republicans, but redistricting could help prop them up

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POLITICS

Court rejects Virginia redistricting in a blow to Democrats' counter to Trump, GOP



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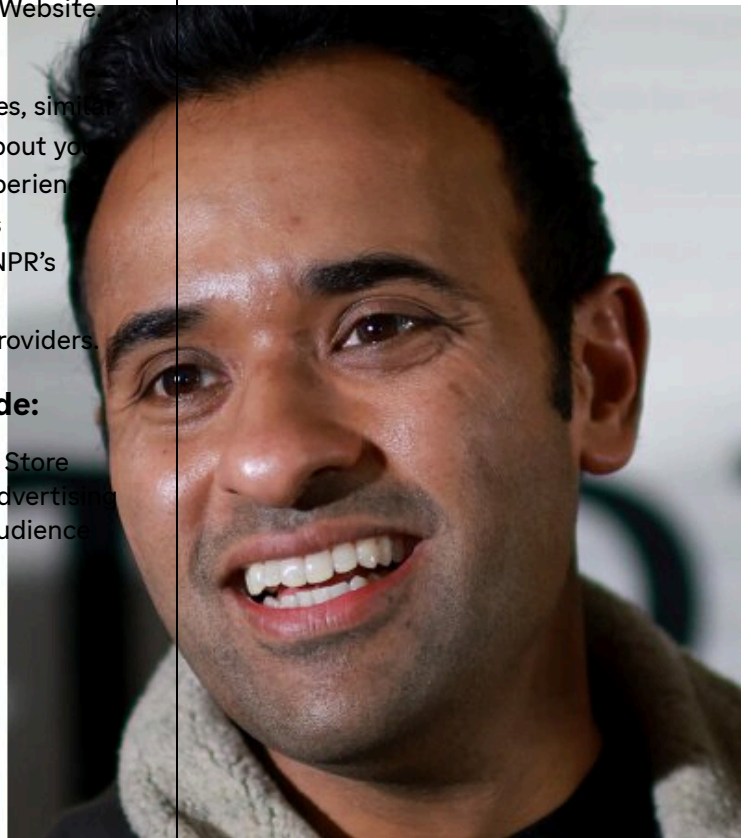
Tennessee Republicans pass a map to break up the state's lone Democratic House seat

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NATIONAL

Trump-backed Ramaswamy wins Ohio governor primary, setting up a competitive Nov. race

2026 Elections

Governors

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ELECTIONS

Here's a look at the 36 races for governor this year

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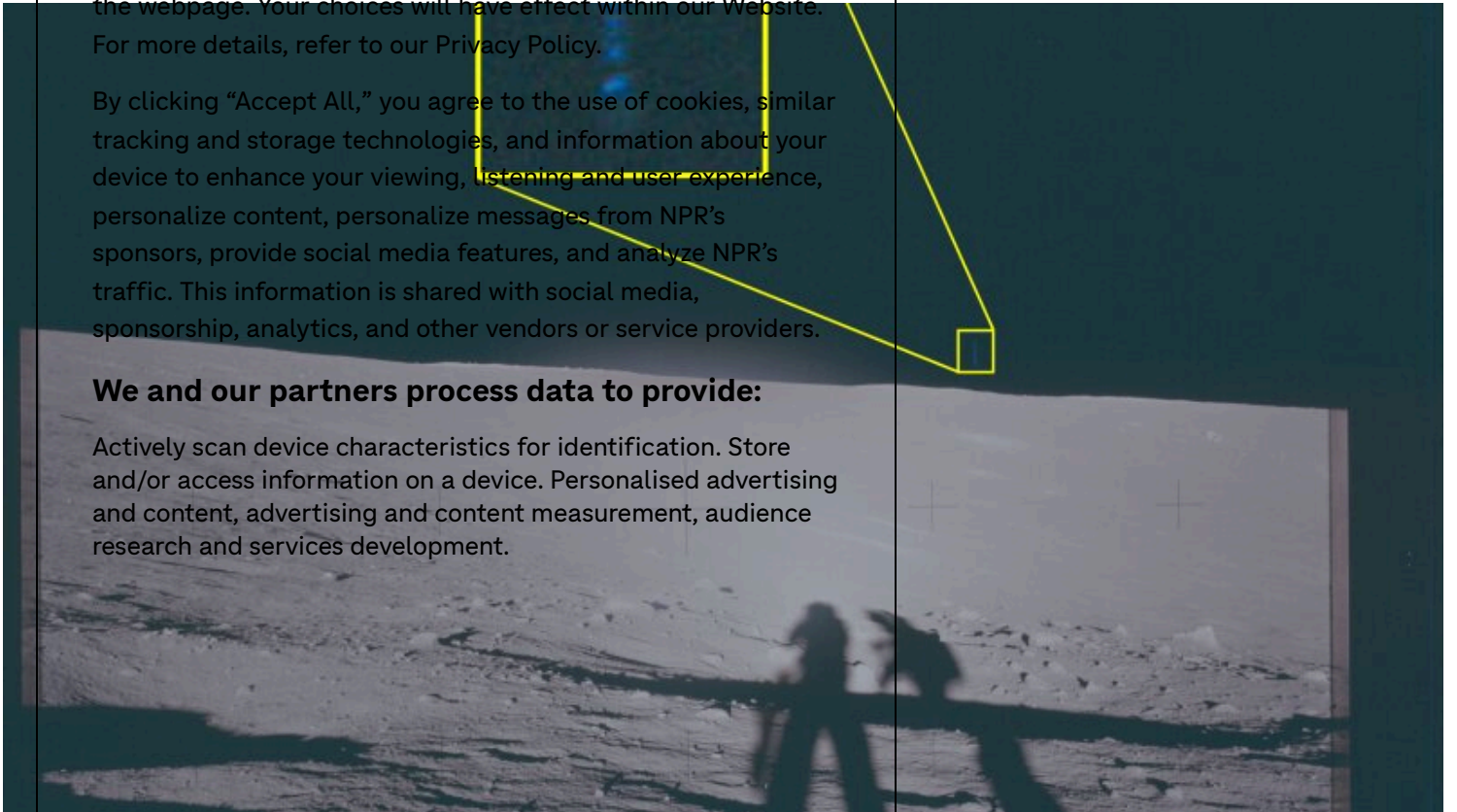
They graduate to six figure salaries, and grueling work

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NATIONAL

UFO files spanning decades are released by Defense Department



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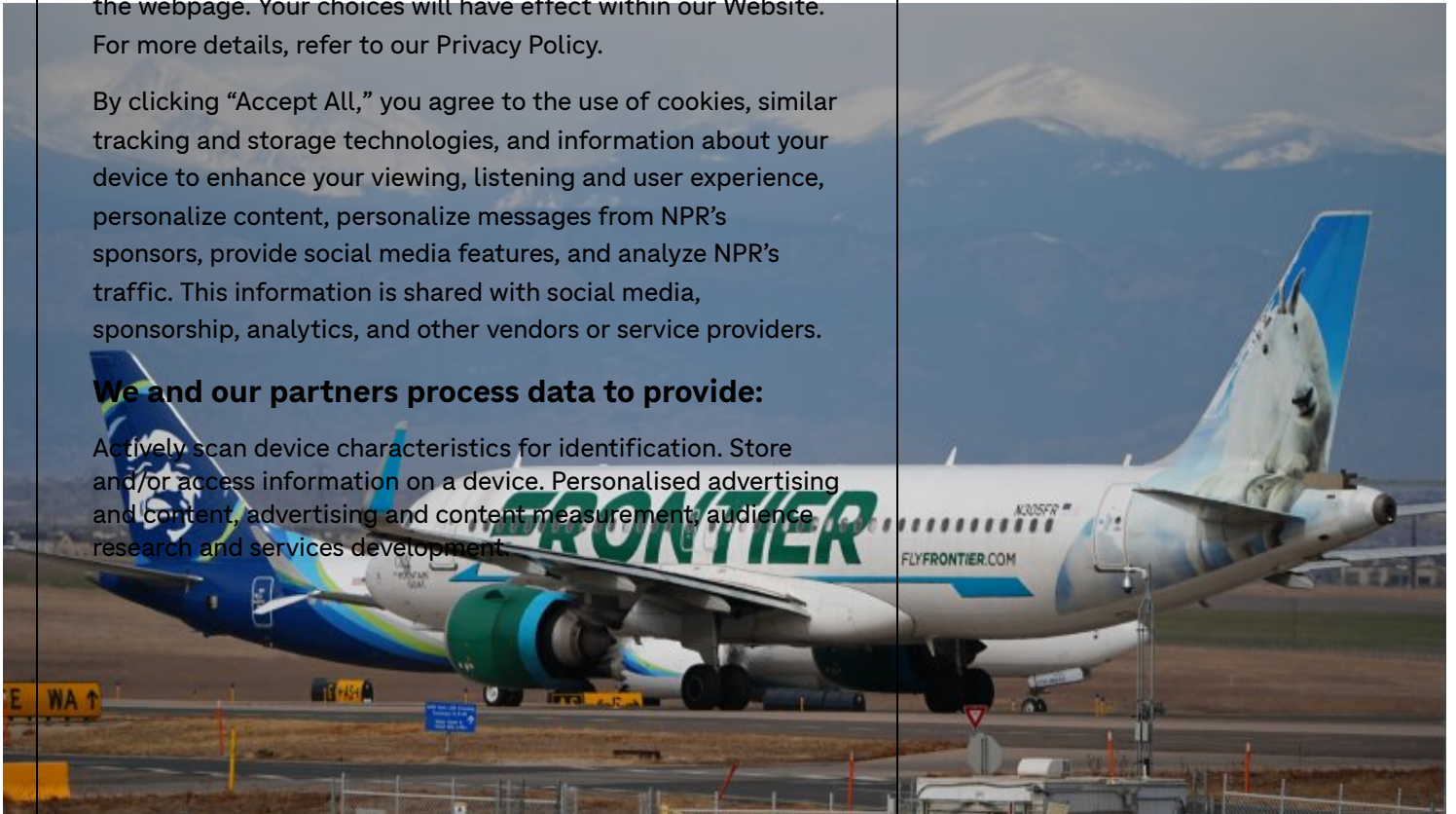
'Wait Wait' for May 9, 2026. With Not My Job guest Bobby Lopez

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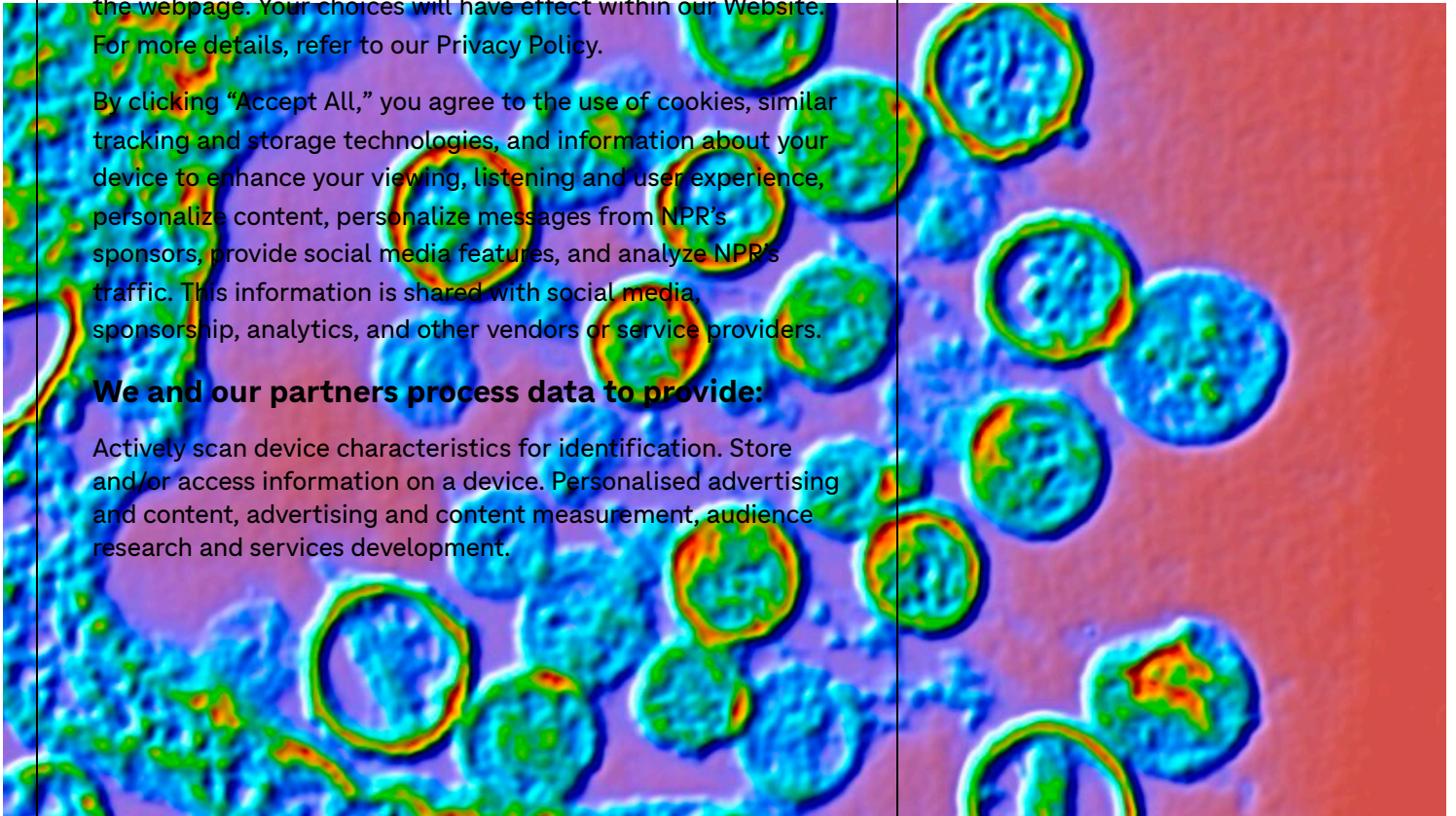
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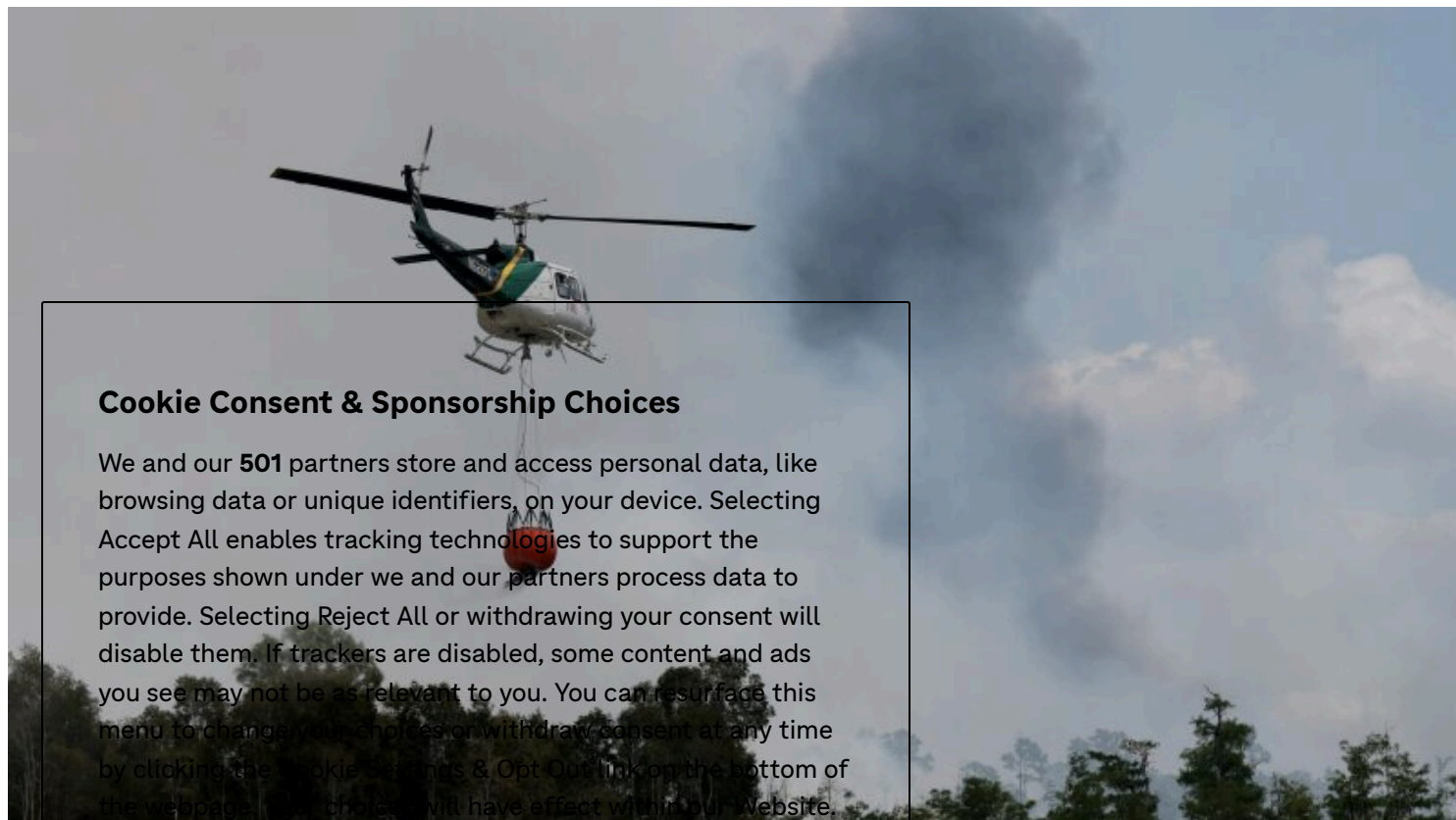
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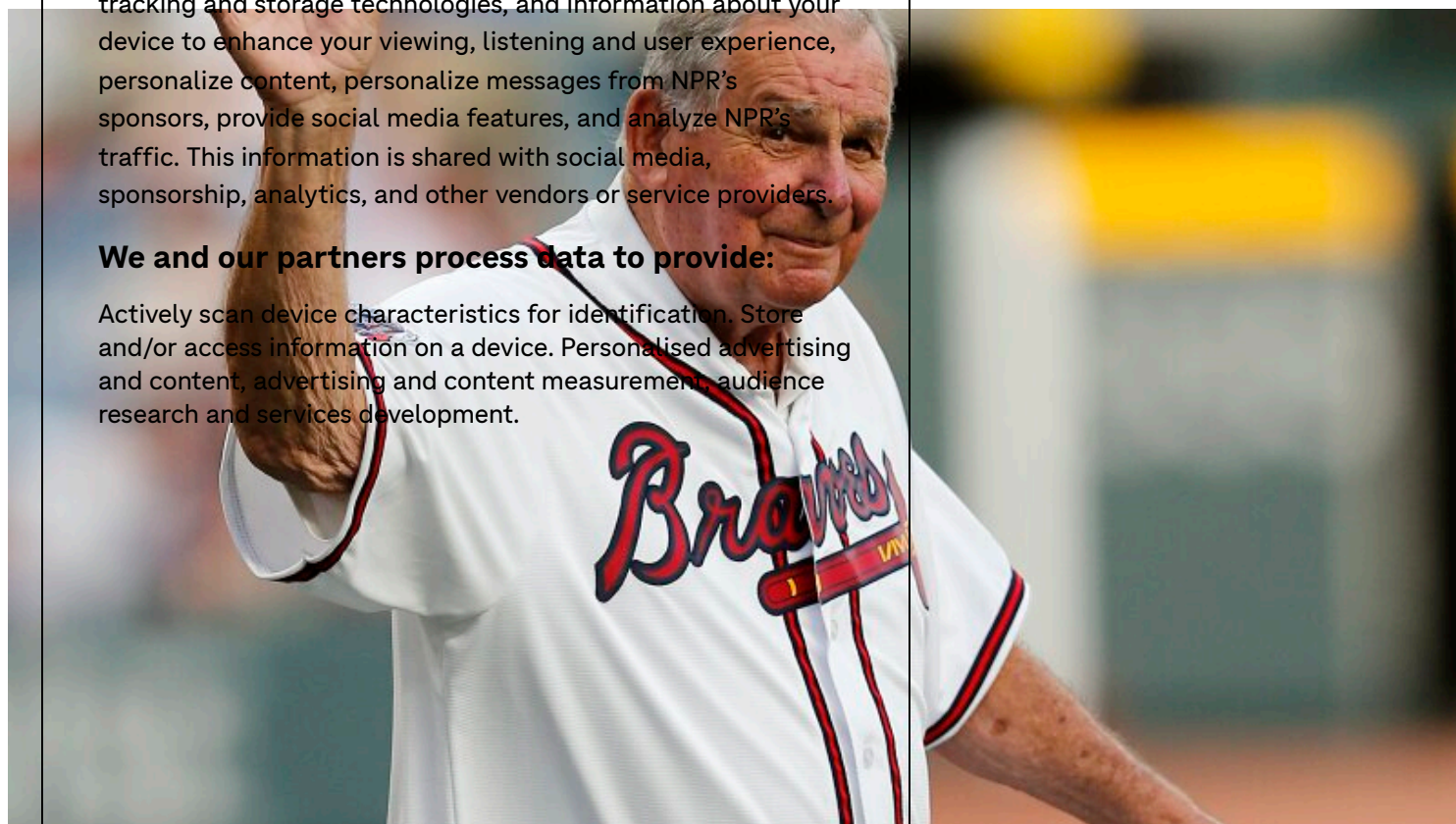
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OBITUARIES

Bobby Cox, Hall of Fame manager of Atlanta Braves, dies at age 84



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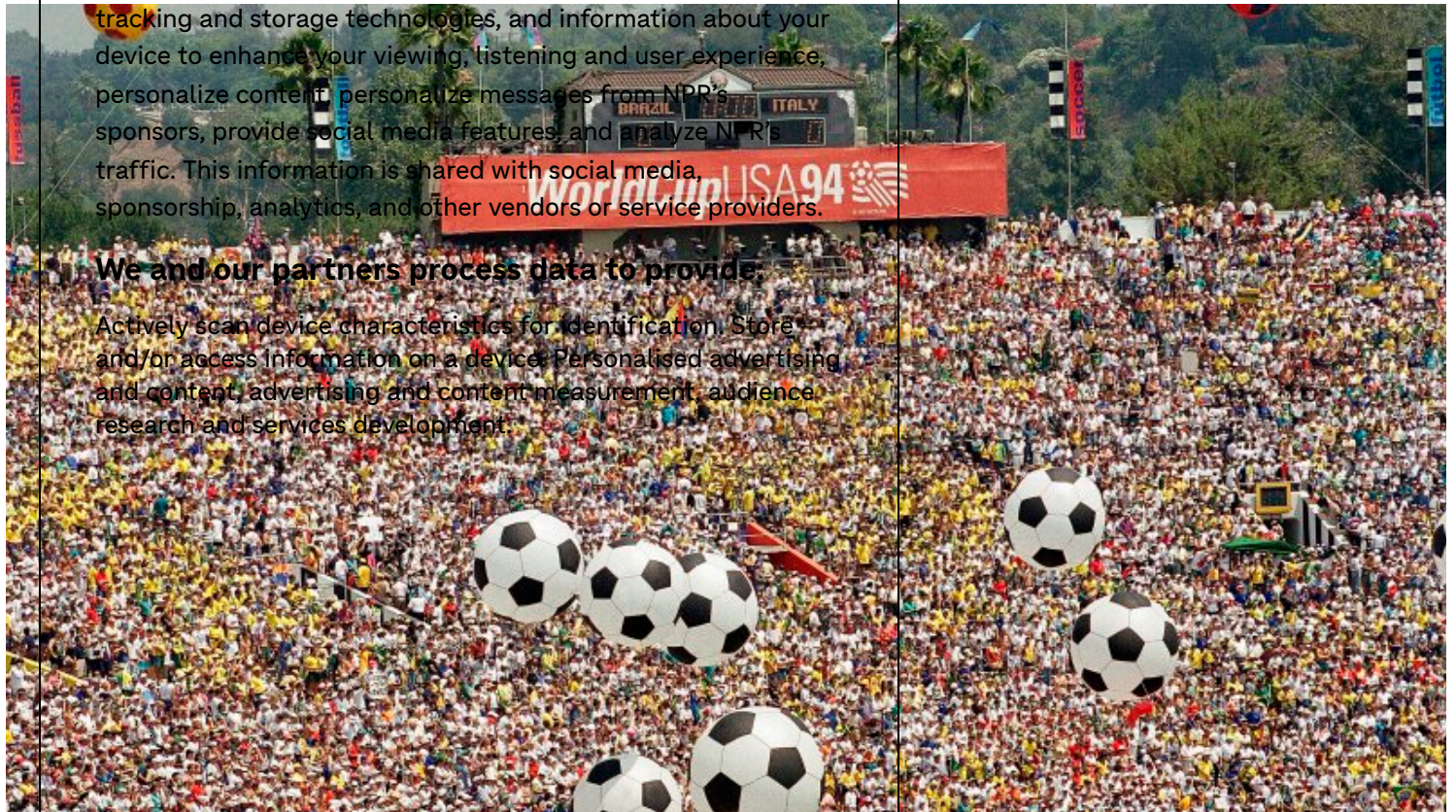
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Soccer was once considered niche in the U.S. Then came the 1994 World Cup



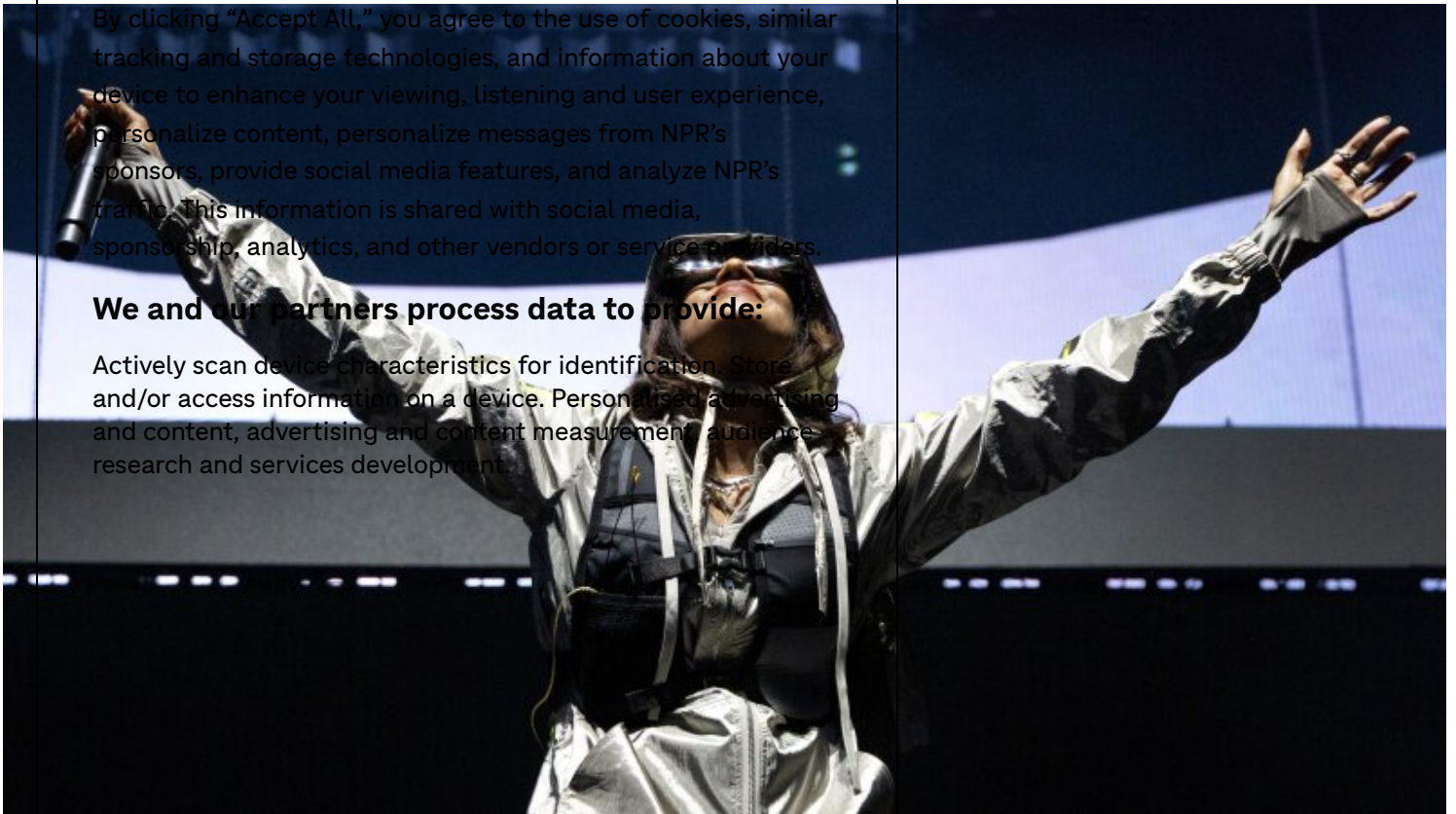
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