

What is quadratic voting, and why did a Denver judge ban lawmakers from using it?



COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Closing Arguments

The week in Courthouse News

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After more than three months, the New York AG's [\\$370 million fraud trial](#) against Donald Trump escalated this week to an [appropriately dramatic](#) finish.

Following his defense team's closing argument, the former president [defied Judge Arthur Engoron's words of caution and went on a courtroom rant](#) against AG Letitia James and Engoron himself, crying "witch hunt" and saying he deserves damages "for what this company has gone through." [\[Erik Uebelacker\]](#)

Judge Engoron hopes to rule by the end of January. But just as one New York City Trump trial winds down, another is set to begin. On Tuesday, writer E. Jean Carroll will face off against him in a second defamation trial over Trump's denial that he sexually assaulted Carroll decades ago.

At the first trial, last spring, jurors awarded Carroll \$5 million. The federal judge overseeing both cases has already [granted Carroll summary judgment](#) on the second set of claims, which were filed in 2019 but got hung up for years on procedural disputes, so next week's trial will focus on damages. Carroll seeks another [\\$10 million](#).

Trump, who denies the allegation and even knowing Carroll, was notably absent from last year's civil proceedings where [three women testified he'd sexually assaulted them](#). He has said he plans to attend the upcoming trial. It's unclear if he will testify.

More Courthouse News from around the globe is up next.

— [Nina Pullano](#)

Here's what else happened in court this week:



At the UN's high court in The Hague, Netherlands, lawyers for South Africa asked judges for emergency protections for the Palestinian people and [accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza](#), citing the scale of its bombardment and restrictions on humanitarian aid. Israel [denied the genocide charge during its rebuttal](#) at the International Court of Justice. [[Molly Quell](#)]

» Engine manufacturer Cummins [will pay nearly \\$2 billion, the largest-ever fine for a Clean Air Act violation](#), to resolve DOJ's accusations that it installed "defeat devices" in cars to evade emissions tests in the lab. [[Hillel Aron](#)]

» The Supreme Court [agreed to take up the question](#) of whether cities can punish homeless people for sleeping on public lands. [[Kelsey Reichmann](#)]

» Fraud or honest mistake? The Seventh Circuit [heard a class of Walmart shoppers' bid to revive fraud claims](#) that the retail chain lists lower prices for snacks on its shelves than what it actually charges customers in the checkout lane. [\[Dave Byrnes\]](#)



Sotheby's is [on trial in New York over civil fraud claims](#) brought by Russian billionaire Dmitry Rybolovlev, who [testified on Friday](#). Rybolovlev says the fine art auction house [was complicit in an swindler's scheme](#) that cost him tens of millions — including in connection Leonardo da Vinci's "Salvator Mundi," a 500-year-old Renaissance painting of Jesus Christ [\[Josh Russell\]](#)

Top 8: This week's most-read stories

From across the Courthouse News website, including news from Capitol Hill, state legislative decisions and major research developments.

1. [Supreme Court signals narrow win for California property owner fighting permitting fee](#)
2. [Judge won't pause arbitration in 'Love is Blind' cast NDA dispute](#)
3. [Illinois has banned assault weapon ownership. But local sheriffs say they won't enforce it. Now what?](#)

4. [Class action targets makers of Goldfish for use of citric acid](#)
5. [Seventh Circuit upholds conviction for nephew of Chicago's longest-serving mayor](#)
6. [Exiled Chinese billionaire Guo Wenqui hit with new RICO conspiracy charge](#)
7. [\[October 2023\] Special counsel denounces Trump's bid to dismiss DC case; Trump 'is not above the law'](#)
8. [Federal judge rules inmate can be executed by oxygen deprivation](#)



In other international art news, [the Ninth Circuit, on remand from SCOTUS, once again concluded that a Spanish museum was the rightful owner](#) of a Camille Pissarro painting stolen by the Nazis in 1939 from its Jewish owner, Lilly Neubauer, as she was trying to flee Germany. [[Edvard Pettersson](#)]

[ICYMI: New cases and rulings on our radar](#)

» **Highland Park weapon ban OK:** CHICAGO — A federal court in Illinois [declined to enjoin Highland Park from banning assault weapons](#), as requested by a gun owner living in the Chicago suburb. Highland Park implemented the ban in 2013, and after seven

people were killed there in a mass shooting in July 2022, the state enacted a similar ban. The ban is legal under the Second Amendment, as it is based on a “long-established” history of government bodies restricting private access to weapons designed for military use.

» **Overworked and injured:** NEW ORLEANS — A federal court in Louisiana [denied summary judgment as requested by Union Pacific Railroad](#), which argues it is not responsible for injuries suffered by a rail car inspector who fell asleep at the wheel and drove off a road after finishing a 16-hour shift. The accident happened two minutes after he left the railyard, but his extreme fatigue occurred while he was on duty, exposing him to danger not faced by the average commuter.

» **RPI settlement approved:** ALBANY, N.Y. — A federal court in New York [granted final approval to the settlement of a class action against Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute](#), which allegedly failed to reimburse students for on-campus services after converting to online-only teaching in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The full settlement amount was not disclosed, but the class representatives will each receive \$10,000 and class counsel will receive \$2.16 million in attorney fees.

» **Quadratic voting in peril:** DENVER — A Colorado judge [banned state lawmakers from using anonymous quadratic voting](#) to determine legislative priorities. Quadratic voting allows legislators to allocate a certain amount of votes and rank them, to indicate their preferences among multiple options. The anonymous method conceals individual representatives’ voting records from the public, which is illegal under public information laws.

— [Daniel Conrad](#)

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