

CBS Mornings

09/18/25

7:00:16 a.m. [TEASE]

8 seconds

GAYLE KING: Breaking overnight, late-night host Jimmy Kimmel is suspended indefinitely for comments about the Charlie Kirk assassination. We'll have the fallout.

(....)

7:00:28 a.m. [TEASE]

16 seconds

KING: ABC pulls Jimmy Kimmel off the air after complaints over his response to the killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Suspended Indefinitely]

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/15/25]: The MAGA gang desperately trying characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them.

(....)

7:01:56 a.m.

3 minutes and 51 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Kimmel Late-Night Show Suspended Indefinitely]

KING: But let's get to the news breaking overnight. By now you have heard from Hollywood that ABC has suspended Jimmy Kimmel's long-running late-night show indefinitely after an angry response to comments he made about conservative activist Charlie Kirk. This morning, we are hearing reaction from the entertainment world and the President. Jonathan Vigliotti is in Los Angeles with the latest. Jonathan, good morning to you.

JONATHAN VIGLIOTTI: And Gayle, good morning to you. A rerun of *Family Feud* aired in place of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* last night. The move to indefinitely suspend his show is now raising new questions over the ways the Trump administration is pressuring private companies.

LOU WILSON [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/15/25]: Jimmy Kimmel.

VIGLIOTTI: Days after police arrested the man suspected of assassinating conservative activist Charlie Kirk, this was Jimmy Kimmel's reaction Monday night.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/15/25]: We had some new lows over the weekend

with the MAGA gang desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it.

VIGLIOTTI: In response, FCC chairman Brendan Carr, a Trump appointee, appeared to threaten broadcasters on Wednesday while speaking on a conservative podcast.

FCC CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR [on *The Benny Show*, 09/17/25]: They have a license granted by us at the FCC, and that comes with it an obligation to operate in the public interest. [SCREEN WIPE] I mean, look, we can do this the easy way or the hard way. These companies can find ways to change conduct to take action, frankly, on Kimmel or, you know, there's going to be additional work for the FCC ahead.

VIGLIOTTI: Hours later, Nextstar, the country's largest local broadcasting group, announced it "would pre-empt *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* for the foreseeable future" on its stations, calling his monologue, "offensive and insensitive at a critical time in our national political discourse." And shortly after, ABC said it would pull its late-night host off the air indefinitely. CBS News legal contributor Jessica Levinson

JESSICA LEVINSON: When a private employer takes action against a private employee for speech, that's not a First Amendment issue. That, generally speaking, is an employment-based issue.

VIGLIOTTI: Celebrities like Ben Stiller and Jean Smart were quick to defend Kimmel. Comedian Wanda Sykes, who was scheduled to appear as Kimmel's guest Wednesday, accused the Trump administration of ending free speech.

WANDA SYKES: Hey, for those of you who pray, now is the time to do it. Love you, Jimmy.

VIGLIOTTI: Reacting to the news Wednesday night, President Trump called it "Great News for America." Kimmel has routinely taken aim at the President in his late-night monologues, and he's subsequently been a target of Trump's ire, including after CBS announced it was canceling its *Late Show* franchise with Stephen Colbert, citing financial concerns.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/02/25]: I guess that wasn't enough for el presidemente because he posted: "The word is, and it's a strong word at that, Jimmy Kimmel is NEXT to go in the untalented Late Night Sweepstakes." [SCREEN WIPE] You want us to be canceled because we make jokes about you? I thought you were against cancel culture. I thought that was, like, their whole thing.

FCC COMMISSIONER ANNA GOMEZ [on CNN's *Erin Burnett OutFront*, 09/17/25]: We must be careful not to allow the government to punish critics simply because of content.

VIGLIOTTI: Ana Gomez is one of two FCC commissioners working with Carr. She was appointed by former President Joe Biden and called Kimmel's suspension a dangerous new precedent.

GOMEZ [on CNN's *Erin Burnett OutFront*, 09/17/25]: This administration is increasingly using the weight of government power to suppress lawful expression, not because it glorifies violence or breaks the law, but because it challenges those in power and reflects views they oppose.

VIGLIOTTI: And we asked Jimmy Kimmel and his reps for comment but haven't heard back. We should note that Nexstar decided to preempt Kimmel's show as it seeks FCC approval for a \$6.2 billion margin with another company, Tegna. Nate.

NATE BURLESON: Jonathan, thank you.