

ABC's *Good Morning America*

10/29/26

7:00:59 a.m. [TEASE]

21 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Home Stretch; 5 Days to Go]

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Home stretch. Five days until the final votes in the midterms. The cost of living taking center stage.

DERRICK ROBINSON: My utility bills going from an average of about \$250 a month to around \$850 a month, and we're hearing those same things across the country.

STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump, former President Obama, both on the trail, plus the claims of dirty tricks in one Senate race.

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7:03:15 a.m. [TEASE]

7 seconds

STEPHANOPOULOS: We're also tracking the homestretch of the midterms, as the cost of living take center stage. President Trump and Obama are leading the charge for each side.

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7:06:21 a.m.

3 minutes and 15 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Race to the Finish]

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: We're going to turn now to the midterm elections. Final votes just five days away. President Trump on the campaign trail in Ohio, which could decide control of the Senate, trading jabs with former President Obama, who's also on the trail in the home stretch. Chief White House correspondent Mary Bruce has the story.

MARY BRUCE: Overnight, President Trump on the ground in Ohio for the third time this month. The races in this red state now neck and neck. Trump heaping praise on Republican Senator Jon Husted, a former college football player, continuing his fixation on Husted's physique.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I looked him all over the place, and I should have never said what I said, but I said I started by looking at his, and it was strong as hell.

BRUCE: And Trump defending his White House construction, which former President Obama

has harshly criticized.

FORMER PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: I heard the President was not happy. When I joked over the weekend that he's got the White House looking like Saddam Hussein opened a Cheesecake Factory.

BRUCE: That line getting under the President's skin.

TRUMP: He said, 'why is he spending so much time fixing up the White House? Why is he doing that?' You know why? Because the White House, I think, is the number one symbol of our country.

BRUCE: On the trail in Georgia, stumping for Democratic Senator John Ossoff, Obama said Trump is focused on the wrong things.

OBAMA: They don't have solutions to actual problems, so they'd rather have the media and you talking about the Cheesecake Factory. That's the game they've been playing for the last two years. Just keep throwing distractions out there: Attacks, fabrications, phony outrage, and hope that you won't notice that your bills are higher, and your life is tougher.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Alaska Senate Race Controversy]

BRUCE: And this morning, another tight race is being rocked by a report that Democrats used underhanded tactics. The Alaska Senate race pits Republican Senator Dan Sullivan against former Congresswoman Mary Peltola, a Democrat. But there is another Dan Sullivan on the ballot, Daniel J. Sullivan, a retired teacher. *The New York Times* reports the Peltola campaign worked to help recruit this second Dan Sullivan in an effort to confuse voters. The Democratic operatives scoured Alaska, searching for a candidate with the same name as the Republican senator, and they found one. Peltola has sidestepped questions about whether her campaign engaged in dirty tricks.

FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN MARY PELTOLA (D-AK) [on MS NOW's *Morning Joe*, 10/23/26]: You know, there's always political theater and shenanigans. Theater seems like [they] are going on every election cycle.

BRUCE: Her campaign now says it "has no involvement with either Sullivan campaign." Boosting spoiler candidates is not unheard of in both parties, and legal experts tell us that recruiting spoiler candidates is not in itself illegal. But the Justice Department has already filed suit to block certification of Alaska's election results if Senator Sullivan loses. And this morning, the Alaska governor is now opening an investigation into whether Democrats allegedly recruited this other Dan Sullivan to be on the ballot. But, Robin, the Alaska court has already looked into the dispute over his candidacy and found there is nothing illegal about his bid, Robin.

ROBIN ROBERTS: They have already decided. All right, Mary, our thanks to you.

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7:35:17 a.m.

2 minutes and 32 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Backlash Over Soaring Electricity Bills]

ROBIN ROBERTS: Now, a top issue taking center stage in the countdown to the final votes: your electricity bill, especially with temperatures starting to drop. Elizabeth Schulze is in Washington with more on all this. Good morning to you, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH SCHULZE: Good morning to you, Robin. Households across the country are bracing for higher home heating costs this winter. Almost half of homes in the U.S. run on electric heat, and already electricity bills have been surging, with some voters in this midterm election cycle pinning the blame on data centers.

WOMAN #1 AT MEMPHIS CITY COUNCIL MEETING [on 10/20/26]: You need to make decisions to do what's right by the people that elected you in office.

SCHULZE: This morning, soaring electricity bills are sparking fierce backlash ahead of the midterms.

WOMAN #1 AT MEMPHIS CITY COUNCIL MEETING [on 10/20/26]: All of us know that our utilities have doubled in recent times.

SCHULZE: Nationwide in the past year, residential electricity costs have spiked five percent. An ABC News analysis found, in the top 10 states where bills have increased the most, five are home to competitive Senate races. In Ohio and Michigan, electricity costs up 12 percent in one year. In Maine, they've surged 16 percent. The issue showing up in ads across the political spectrum.

POLITICAL AD ANNOUNCER [IN ANTI-TROY JACKSON AD]: Maine's electricity rates skyrocketed.

POLITICAL AD ANNOUNCER 2: 61 percent — the amount electric bills went up in Ohio.

SCHULZE: In our ABC News/*Washington Post*/Ipsos poll, 57 percent of Americans now say their utilities are unaffordable, up from 45 percent in February. The higher prices for power fueled in part by costly upgrades to an aging energy grid, and surging demand from consumers and businesses, including data centers.

ROBINSON: We're worried about noise, air quality, water, substations and transmission lines, and the astronomical cost of keeping our lights on.

SCHULZE: At this county meeting in Virginia, where there are more data centers than any other

region in the country, some residents, like Derrick Robinson, say they're fed up.

ROBINSON: The fact that someone like me, for example, my utility bills going from an average of about \$250 a month to around \$850 a month — and we're hearing those same things across the country.

SCHULZE: So, how can you save on your bill right now? The Energy Department says that plugging your devices into power strips actually can help, especially if you turn the power strip off when it's not in use so your TV, for example, isn't in standby mode. Sealing gaps in your doors or windows to improve insulation can significantly reduce costs. Turn down your water heater to 120 degrees, and wash your clothes in warm instead of hot—that can cut the energy load in half. So, small steps can make a pretty big difference, guys.

STEPHANOPOULOS: A lot of good advice there. Elizabeth, thanks very much.