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Friday, May 2

Senior Menu: Ham salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, peaches, cookie.

School Breakfast: Breakfast cookies.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, cooked carrots.

Track at Howard Wood Invitational, 10 a.m.

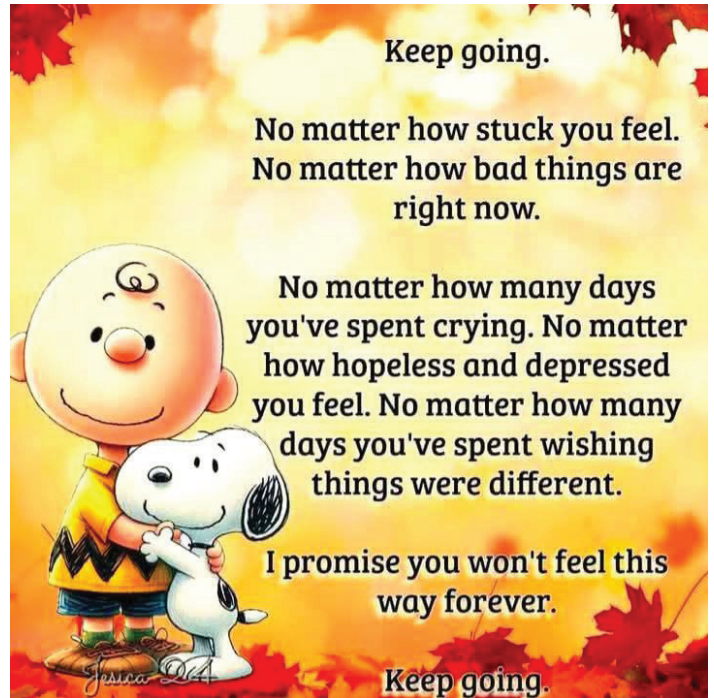
Track at Sisseton, 1 p.m.

Saturday, May 3

Track at Howard Wood, 10 a.m.

Spring Citywide Rummage Sale

Groton Daily Independent
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460



Sunday, May 4

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion, 11 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m. (Senior Milestones and Faith Forever Scholarship)

High School Baseball in Groton - hosting Elton at 2 p.m. and Clark/Willow Lake/Hamlin/Castlewood at 6 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship with communion at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.

Monday, May 5

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, mixed vegetables, 4w5aa, garlic bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, tiny whole potatoes.

Junior High Track at Sisseton, 2 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

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1440

Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.

Waltz Shuffles Out

National Security Adviser Mike Waltz was relieved of his current role and will become ambassador to the United Nations, according to a social media post by President Donald Trump yesterday. The decision comes after fallout from a leak of military plans in a Signal group chat. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will fill the role on an interim basis.

Waltz is the first senior leader in Trump's second administration to exit his role. As national security adviser, Waltz was tasked with providing the president with direct, cross-departmental reports on national security and producing the president's daily brief. The White House had reportedly considered firing Waltz for weeks due to his role in the leak, in which the three-term former Florida congressman unintentionally invited Atlantic editor Jeffrey Goldberg into a group chat discussing imminent military plans in March.

Several other national security officials were fired in recent weeks. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth faces ongoing scrutiny for his participation in the chat.

Chef Boyardee Sells

Conagra, owner of Chef Boyardee, has reportedly agreed to sell the historic brand to private equity firm Brynwood Partners. The deal, which is not yet finalized, is valued at \$600M.

Italian immigrant Ettore "Hector" Boiardi launched the pasta sauce with his brothers in 1928 after running a popular restaurant in Cleveland. The brand played a key role in introducing Italian food to the US, challenging the preeminence of French cuisine. Chef Boyardee was once the US' No. 1 importer of Parmesan cheese. At the company's height, its Pennsylvania factory produced 250,000 sauce cans per day.

Chicago-based Conagra, which bought Chef Boyardee in 2000, is shedding the brand to focus on its frozen food and snack portfolio, including protein-heavy Slim Jim meat sticks. Amid slowing sales, the company recently launched "GLP-1 friendly" labels to market products to customers using weight-loss drugs.

'Greatest Two Minutes in Sports'

The 151st Kentucky Derby takes place tomorrow at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky. This year's race features 20 three-year-old thoroughbreds competing in the 1.25-mile "Run for the Roses," racing for a \$5M purse, with the winner set to take home over \$3M. Coverage begins at 2:30 pm ET on NBC, with the race's post time set for 6:57 pm ET.

This year's field includes offspring of two past Triple Crown winners and is led by favorite Journalism (3-1), who enters on a four-race win streak. He'll face competition from Sovereignty (5-1) and Sandman (6-1), the latter drawing the historically unlucky 17th post—no horse has ever won from that gate since its introduction in 1930. Trainer Bob Baffert is also back with Rodriguez (12-1), aiming for a record seventh Derby win after a three-year suspension.

The Derby, first run in 1875, is the US' oldest continuously held sporting event and the first leg of horse racing's Triple Crown.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 78th Annual Tony Award nominations announced with "Death Becomes Her," "Maybe Happy Ending," and "Buena Vista Social Club" leading with 10 nominations apiece.

Sean "Diddy" Combs turns down plea deal on sex trafficking and racketeering charges; jury selection is set to begin Monday.

Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Michael Bolton reveals brain cancer diagnosis.

"Rust" released in theaters today, three and a half years after the on-set shooting death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins.

Science & Technology

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman debuts his biometric eyeball-scanning cryptocurrency World in six US cities; users reportedly visit Apple-like physical stores to enroll.

Facial microbiome study reveals how different strains of *C. acnes* develop and populate on the skin during teenage years; findings may help lead to more effective probiotic defenses against acne.

An individual California sea lion becomes the only known nonhuman mammal capable of high-precision rhythmic beats; analysis opens questions on other animals' ability to measure time.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.6%, Dow +0.2%, Nasdaq +1.5%).

Reddit shares rise 6% in after-hours trading after posting strong Q1 results and upbeat sales forecast fueled by digital ad spending.

Amazon beats Q1 expectations, reports 19% year-over-year revenue growth in online ad business; shares fall on light Q2 guidance.

Apple tops Q2 earnings and revenue estimates, thanks to iPhone demand.

McDonald's reports largest US same-store sales drop since 2020 due to lower foot traffic.

Kohl's fires CEO Ashley Buchanan after external probe found he violated ethics policies by arranging lucrative business deals to benefit a romantic partner.

Trump family's stablecoin chosen for \$2B Abu Dhabi investment in Binance.

Politics & World Affairs

Federal judge blocks Trump administration from using the 18th-century Alien Enemies Act to deport Venezuelans without a court hearing; ruling does not block deportation of migrants under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. requires placebo-controlled trials to test all future vaccines.

Agency invests \$500M into a project aiming to develop a universal flu vaccine.

Iran-US nuclear negotiations postponed as the US unveils new sanctions on Iranian-linked companies.

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Wed., May 7 from 4-9 pm

**DI DAY
AT DQ**

**Here's your chance to support
the two Groton Area teams attending
Global Finals in Kansas City, MO. A
portion of the evening sales go to DI.**

Imagination will get you everywhere!

Thanks for your support!

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The Groton Area High School Music Department presented its spring concert Thursday evening.

Band - directed by Desiree Yeigh

Choose Joy.....Randall D. Standridge

Solo: Gretchen Dinger, Flute

Action Front.....Ronald C. Knoener

Kaboom!.....Rob Remeyn

Soloists: Gretchen Dinger, Flute Teagan Hanten, Mallets Jackson Hopfinger, Trombone

Overture to Gremlins.....arr. by Larry Norre

How To Train Your Dragon.....arr. By Sean O' Loughlin

Soloists: Carlee Johnson, Horn Gretchen Dinger, Flute Emerlee Jones, Alto Sax

Jayden Schwan, Trumpet

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HS Choir - Directed by Landon Brown

Accompanied by: Amy Warrington

Like A River In My Soul.....Tim Osiek

Flower of Beauty.....John Clements

How Can I Keep from Singing?Greg Gilpin

Soloists: Addison Hoeft and Natalia Warrington



Treble Choir - Directed by Landon Brown

I Wanna Go Back.....Ingrid Michaelson



BDM HIRES NEW MANAGER – The BDM Rural Water Board of Directors has hired Tom Jones (right) as the new BDM Rural Water General Manager. Jones is pictured with Board Chairman Kevin Deutsch (center) and Retiring General Manager Rodney Kappes (left). ~ Courier Photo

BDM announces New General Manager

The Board of BDM Rural Water System, Inc. wishes to announce that Thomas Jones of rural Britton has been selected to assume the duties as the next General Manager, as of Jan. 1, 2026, succeeding current General Manager Rodney Kappes.

Jones, a lifelong member of BDM and advocate of the cooperative business model, comes to the role having spent the past nine years with the USDA Rural Utilities Service working with Electric Cooperatives across the state of South Dakota and the Northern Great Plains. Prior to that time he was on the board at Lake Region Electric Cooperative and worked for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in various locations in North and South Dakota.

Jones is extremely excited to bring his experiences and ag background to BDM at an exciting time as the company finishes the new water treatment plant and adds significant resources to the overall system. Tom and his wife Marcy, a teacher at Britton-Hecla school, are the parents of three, all living in the Britton area. In his free time Jones enjoys carpentry and dog training along with all activities outdoors.

Tom's employment with BDM will begin Oct. 1, 2025, allowing for a smooth transition where Tom will mentor with Rodney until Rodney's retirement date of Dec. 31, 2025.

WEB Water Development Association received an additional \$1,164,796 in ARPA grant funds to increase water capacity for WEB, and to provide a bulk water connection for Aberdeen and BDM Rural Water. The project is known as the Water Investment in Northern South Dakota or WINS project. Previous funding for this project was approved in June 2023, June 2024, and November of 2024. The additional grant award brings the ARPA grant total for this project to \$26,344,628.

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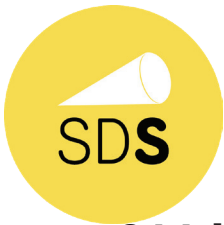
Pictured left to right area Claire Schuelke, Halee Harder, Carly Gilbert, Rylie Rose and Carlee Johnson. (Courtesy Photo)

Johnson takes second as Groton girls golf team wins Redfield Invite

Carlee Johnson took second place at the Redfield Invitational Golf Meet held Thursday. Her score was a 96. Kensley Heath of Sisseton took first with a n 87.

Others golfing for Groton Area were Claire Schuelke in fifth with a 111, Halee Harder was sixth with a 111 Carly Gilbert was seventh with a 113 and Rylie Rose was 10th with a 121.

There wre only two complete teams with Groton Area winning the meet over Milbank, 431-516.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

911 board plans grant program to support efficiency and consolidation of call centers

Increase to customer surcharge supplies extra funding, board members say

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - MAY 1, 2025 2:30 PM

A South Dakota board overseeing the 911 emergency system approved a plan Thursday to create a grant program helping call centers pay for technology upgrades. The program is possible because of an increase to the state's 911 surcharge lawmakers approved in recent years, board members said.

The monthly, per-line charge applies to landline and cellphone service, and is used to help local governments fund their 911 call centers. Legislators and then-Gov. Kristi Noem adopted a 75-cent increase in the surcharge last year, from \$1.25 to \$2. Lawmakers and Gov. Larry Rhoden made the increase permanent this year.

Before last year, lawmakers had not increased the surcharge since 2012, and it was supporting only 30% of local call centers' operational costs while local governments funded the rest, said Jason Husby, the state's 911 coordinator. He told board members the increased surcharge is covering about 45% of those costs.

Seventy percent of revenue from the surcharge is remitted to the local agency where the surcharge was collected, and 30% is deposited into the 911 coordination fund overseen by the state Department of Public Safety.

The increase raised the state's surcharge revenue from \$2.8 million in fiscal year 2024 to \$3.1 million in fiscal year 2025. Husby told board members that some of those extra funds can go toward creating a continuous grant program for 911 call centers to make necessary improvements. Considering other costs paid by the coordination fund, he said it'll leave about \$80,000 a month to use for call center grants.

South Dakota is ahead of other states regarding its 911 infrastructure, Husby said. The state set up redundancies in case a call center is offline or overwhelmed, rerouting incoming calls to the nearest dispatcher. That redundancy was used during statewide 911 outages in April and July last year.

The next step is to extend that redundancy and coordination to emergency responders through improved radio networks. The improvement was recommended in the state's 911 efficiency study, published in January.

Board member and Watertown Police Chief Tim Toomey said the surcharge increase was a "lifesaver" for his local 911 call center. The agency was "hundreds of thousands of dollars in a deficit," and the surcharge increase for the locality is filling in the gap.

But technology replacement costs, such as radio equipment, are "staggering" to the point "that our city cannot even fathom a budget for that," Toomey said, requiring additional support.

The grants can also be used to facilitate consolidation among several call centers currently discussing the matter, Husby said.

"There are upfront costs if County A and County B want to combine, and I would hate for those upfront costs to dissuade what would be an eventual efficiency," Husby said. "To me, that's where I see the board come in to fund and review the cost to move radios, technology and all the things together. We can help those governments and, in the end, they're becoming more efficient."

The board unanimously approved of the grant program. Husby hopes to move the program forward quickly to assist call centers "in desperate need" of radio updates. He said he'll provide a more detailed plan at the board's next meeting in June.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with

health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

SD leads the way as new apartments hit a 50-year high, but states expect a slowdown

Tariffs, deportations and high interest rates are housing headwinds

BY: TIM HENDERSON, STATELINE - MAY 1, 2025 8:09 AM

More new apartments were built in 2024 than in any other year since 1974 — while South Dakota led the way in approval of new housing units — but the Trump administration's tariffs and deportations of potential construction workers, plus higher interest rates, could be a wet blanket on the boom.

A U.S. Census Bureau survey found almost 592,000 new apartments were finished last year, the most since the 1970s, when baby boomers sparked a construction surge as they moved out of their childhood homes. There were 693,000 new apartments built in 1974, when the country had about half as many households.

But there has been a steep slowdown in construction starts, as the newly completed apartments come online. The increased supply has lowered rents and increased vacancy rates, making new development less profitable. Some experts also say tariffs on construction materials and labor shortages caused by dips in immigration will create headwinds for new construction.

Apartment starts were down 27% in 2024 compared with 2023, and down 37% from a recent peak of 531,000 in 2022, despite the historic rate of completions. Apartment starts were at their lowest ebb since 2013.

Housing experts have long lamented that there aren't enough apartments and single-family houses in the U.S. — at least not in places where people want to live and at prices they can afford. Estimates of the national housing shortage last year varied widely, from 1.5 million houses and apartments to 20.1 million; since then, another 1.6 million houses and apartments have been built. Most experts estimate a shortage of 1.5 million to 5.5 million, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University.

Some states are building apartments faster than others, according to a Stateline analysis. Though completions aren't tracked by state, permits that lead to new apartments have been granted at high rates in recent years in South Dakota, Utah, Arizona and Colorado. Rates are lowest in Mississippi, Wyoming, West Virginia, Rhode Island, Oklahoma and Alaska.

The massive jump in apartment construction has its roots in 2021 and 2022, when interest rates were low and rent growth was high, said Rob Warnock, senior research associate for Apartment List, a company that posts rental listings online.

"Those new apartments came online in 2023 and 2024, and while those deliveries are slowing down today, there are still many apartments in the pipeline," said Warnock, who added that "supply and demand are coming back into balance."

In response to greater supply, rents have fallen by about \$50 per month (3.5%) from their 2022 peak, according to a report released this week by Apartment List. Apartment vacancy is at a 15-year high of 6.3%, keeping a lid on rents, but that could turn around as construction slows, according to an April report by Moody's, a financial services company.

Apartment building has been a bipartisan priority as single-family home prices soar further out of the affordability range for young families. In South Dakota, the Republican-controlled legislature worked to prolong the building boom with grants and loans under the state's Housing Infrastructure Financing Program. The program put \$200 million of state and federal funding toward defraying the costs of development in new neighborhoods, such as roads, sewer lines and streetlights.

Republican state Sen. Casey Crabtree, sponsor of the proposal signed into law in 2023, told Stateline it

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was needed to address a housing shortage, especially in rural parts of the state.

"We have a drastic shortage of workers," Crabtree said before a vote in 2023. "South Dakota businesses need more workers in our state. To get more workers, we need more housing."

Armand Domalewski, co-founder of YIMBY Democrats for America, said overregulation is a barrier to housing construction in many areas that his party controls.

"A lot of blue-government areas and cities have extremely restrictive zoning, impact fees and other rules that make it very difficult to build housing," said Domalewski. Another barrier is local opposition, he said.

"If it was just a free market, developers would want to build in the places like California, where prices are the highest and rents are the highest, because they'd make more money," he added.

In California, the 2021 HOME Act was meant to spur more affordable housing and ease labor shortages, but it's faced local opposition in some areas. At the end of last year, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed several measures that aim to streamline regulations and crack down on local resistance to the 2021 law.

South Dakota approved nearly 6,000 permits for apartment units in 2023 and 2024, which when completed would add about 1.4% to its 2023 total of 417,000 housing units. That's the highest rate in the nation. By contrast, Mississippi during that same period approved about 660 apartment units — a fraction of 1 percentage point to its 2023 base of about 1.4 million housing units.

Chas Olson, executive director of the South Dakota Housing Development Authority, said the full impact of the state infrastructure funding isn't apparent yet, as many developments that received the help are still under construction.

Completions are still strong this year with about 39,000 apartments finished in March, not much different from the 41,500 in March 2024, which was the biggest March number since 1985.

Another impediment to apartment construction has been high interest rates, which make it harder to borrow money to build, said Danushka Nanayakkara-Skillington, an assistant vice president for forecasting and analysis at the National Association of Home Builders.

She expects apartment building starts to slow until later this year.

"We are going to be short of workers for a long time. That's the way it is. And of course tariffs are going to have an impact," Nanayakkara-Skillington said.

Tim Henderson covers demographics for Stateline. He has been a reporter at the Miami Herald, the Cincinnati Enquirer and The Journal News in suburban New York. Henderson became fascinated with census data in the early 1990s, when AOL offered the first computerized reports. Since then he has broken stories about population trends in South Florida, including a housing affordability analysis included in the 2007 Pulitzer-winning series "House of Lies" for the Miami Herald, and a prize-winning analysis of public pension irregularities for The Journal News. He has been a member and trainer for the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting since its inception 20 years ago, specializing in online data access and visualization along with demographics.

Trump administration asks Supreme Court to strip legal protections for Venezuelans

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - MAY 1, 2025 5:57 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Justice Department made an emergency request to the U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday, asking the justices to lift a lower court's freeze on the Trump administration's plans to terminate work authorization and deportation protection for more than 350,000 Venezuelans residing in the United States.

The request to the high court filed by Solicitor General D. John Sauer said an order from a federal judge in California stripped a national security-based power from Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

"So long as the order is in effect, the Secretary must permit hundreds of thousands of Venezuelan nationals to remain in the country, notwithstanding her reasoned determination that doing so is 'contrary to the national interest,'" Sauer wrote.

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The emergency appeal, which asks the court to rule as soon as possible, was not available on the Supreme Court website late Thursday afternoon but a copy was uploaded by Politico.

The appeal came after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the administration's request to pause an order from a trial court that blocked Noem's decision to end Temporary Protected Status for one group of Venezuelans whose protections President Joe Biden extended.

U.S. District Judge Edward Chen of the Northern District of California issued a nationwide pause in early April, noting the immigrant rights groups and TPS holders who brought the suit had a strong claim under the equal protection clause of the Constitution's 14th Amendment because Noem has "made sweeping negative generalizations about Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries."

The equal protection clause was meant to bar the government from discriminating against classes of people.

Chen was appointed by former President Barack Obama in 2011.

President Joe Biden granted protections until October 2026 for two groups of Venezuelans. His administration granted about 250,000 Venezuelans TPS in 2021 and 350,000 more in 2023.

Noem cited gang activity as her reason for not extending TPS for the 2023 group of Venezuelans, which, without a court intervention, were set to end in early April after she vacated the protections set under the Biden administration.

TPS allows nationals from certain countries deemed too dangerous to return to remain in the U.S. temporarily. Those with the status have deportation protections and are allowed to work and live in the U.S. for 18 months, unless extended by the Homeland Security secretary.

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.

Trump shifts Waltz out of national security adviser post after Signalgate flap

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - MAY 1, 2025 5:16 PM

WASHINGTON — Mike Waltz, a former Florida congressman who became known for sharing U.S. plans to strike Yemen on a Signal group chat, was out as White House national security adviser on Thursday.

President Donald Trump announced he will instead nominate Waltz to be the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, a position that requires U.S. Senate confirmation.

"From his time in uniform on the battlefield, in Congress and, as my National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz has worked hard to put our Nation's Interests first. I know he will do the same in his new role," Trump wrote on his social media site, Truth Social.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, a former U.S. senator from Florida, will step into the role of national security adviser, according to Trump.

"Together, we will continue to fight tirelessly to Make America, and the World, SAFE AGAIN. Thank you for your attention to this matter!" the president wrote.

Strikes on Houthi rebels

Waltz's apparent ouster from the National Security Council occurred five weeks after what became known as Signalgate.

The Atlantic magazine's editor-in-chief, Jeffrey Goldberg, revealed Waltz had invited him, presumably by mistake, to a group chat of high-level officials that included Vice President J.D. Vance, discussing specific plans for strikes on Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and other Cabinet members denied that any classified information was shared in the chat on the commercially available app Signal, prompting Goldberg to release the chat transcript that detailed specific times and locations of the military strikes ahead of their scheduled launch.

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In the group chat on March 15, Waltz wrote "amazing job," minutes after missiles landed, followed by emojis for a fist, an American flag and fire, according to Goldberg, who watched the Signal group messages in real time minutes before news of U.S. bombs in Yemen became public.

The New York Times has since revealed that Hegseth shared details about the same Yemen strikes in a separate Signal group chat that included his wife, brother and personal lawyer. Hegseth has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

When contacted for details surrounding Waltz's departure from the NSC, the White House directed States Newsroom to the president's Truth Social account.

Senate confirmation votes ahead

Waltz will now face hearings and votes before senators for a post that Trump originally designated for New York U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik. Stefanik withdrew from the running to remain among the House Republican ranks as insurance against the party's razor-thin margin.

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, the top Democrat on the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, characterized Waltz's exit as an "abrupt dismissal" that is "further proof of the chaos and incompetence that has reigned over President Trump's White House and national security team during his first 100 days in office."

"The stunning amount of turnover of senior staff at both the National Security Council and at the Pentagon is alarming. Purges of senior military officers, mass firings of top career officials for perceived political disloyalty and the illegal dismantling of America's foreign policy institutions only hurts our security and signals weakness to our foes," Shaheen, of New Hampshire, said in a statement Thursday, while calling for accountability for those sharing information on unsecured channels.

Shaheen further added, "We should remember that it was Secretary Hegseth who initially shared this material and did so a second time with his family. He too must be held accountable."

Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

Tim Walz announced as speaker for annual South Dakota Democratic Party event

BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - MAY 1, 2025 9:40 AM

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, who was the Democratic Party's nominee for vice president last year, will be the keynote speaker for the South Dakota Democratic Party's annual McGovern Day Dinner on July 12 in Sioux Falls.

The state party made the announcement Thursday. Tickets for the dinner, which is named for the late U.S. Sen. George McGovern, will go on sale next month.

Walz was first elected governor in 2018 and won reelection in 2022. He grew up in Nebraska, served in the Army National Guard and worked as a high school teacher and coach before entering politics.

"We are thrilled to host Governor Tim Walz as our guest at McGovern Day," said State Party Vice Chair Jessica Meyers in a news release. "Walz and his administration continue to show their neighboring states what good governance looks like in the Midwest. It is an honor to have him visit us this summer."

Three-quarters of Americans oppose Medicaid cuts, poll shows

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - MAY 1, 2025 7:55 AM

WASHINGTON — A majority of Americans, including most Republicans, oppose major cuts in federal funding for Medicaid, according to a poll released Thursday by the nonpartisan health research organization KFF.

The survey shows that 76% of those questioned wouldn't support Congress slashing the amount of

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spending dedicated to the state-federal health program for lower-income Americans and some people with disabilities.

Democrats held the highest rate of opposition at 95%. A small majority of Republicans surveyed, 55%, said they don't support substantial federal spending cuts for the program.

The breakdown was nearly even among respondents who identified as Make America Great Again supporters — President Donald Trump's base — with 51% of that group saying they support less federal funding for Medicaid and 49% saying they oppose major cuts to the federal allocation.

The survey comes just days before House Republicans are expected to release a bill that will likely propose cutting hundreds of billions in federal funding for Medicaid.

That legislation, as well as bills from several other committees, is supposed to help Republicans offset some of the \$4.5 trillion deficit impact that comes with extending the 2017 tax law.

The KFF poll also showed strong opposition to slashing federal funding to other health care programs — 74% were against cuts to states for mental health and addiction prevention services, 71% didn't support reducing federal spending to track infectious disease outbreaks, 69% opposed limiting federal dollars for research at universities and medical centers, 65% were against cuts to HIV prevention program allocations and 65% didn't support reducing federal funding to help people buy health insurance through the Affordable Care Act.

Polling of 1,380 U.S. adults took place from April 8 to April 15 via telephone and online. The margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Senate GOP watching House action

Senate Republicans are closely watching how their House colleagues restructure federal funding for Medicaid, and will likely propose changes when the entire 11-bill package comes over from the House later this year.

Several GOP senators told reporters at the Capitol on Wednesday they will judge the package based on how changes to Medicaid will impact their constituents.

Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley said he's unlikely to support any changes to Medicaid that "will result in cutting benefits or denying eligibility for people who are otherwise working."

"I'm all for work requirements," he said. "I don't think you get any Republican objection to that."

But Hawley said going beyond that might be pressing the issue too far to get his vote.

"I just met with the governor of my state this morning. He's in town. We just sat down and we talked about this issue," Hawley said, adding that Gov. Mike Kehoe, a Republican, was "very worried about" potential changes to federal Medicaid funding.

Maine Sen. Susan Collins said she's planning to evaluate the House bill once it makes it through that chamber based on "the impact on low-income seniors who are dual eligible, families with children with disabilities, low-income families, our rural hospitals, healthcare providers."

Dual eligibility refers to people who are on Medicare and Medicaid.

"I am open to carefully crafted work requirements for able-bodied adults who do not have preschool children," Collins said. "But I have no idea what the package is going to contain at this point."

Kansas Sen. Jerry Moran said he's told his chamber's Republican leadership that "Medicaid is an important issue" for him in determining whether he votes for the entire package once it's on the floor.

"I'm going to look at overall how it impacts citizens, particularly people with disabilities, and how it impacts my state and the hospitals that provide services to people in Kansas," Moran said.

North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven said "the challenge is going to be to find savings in line with what the president has described."

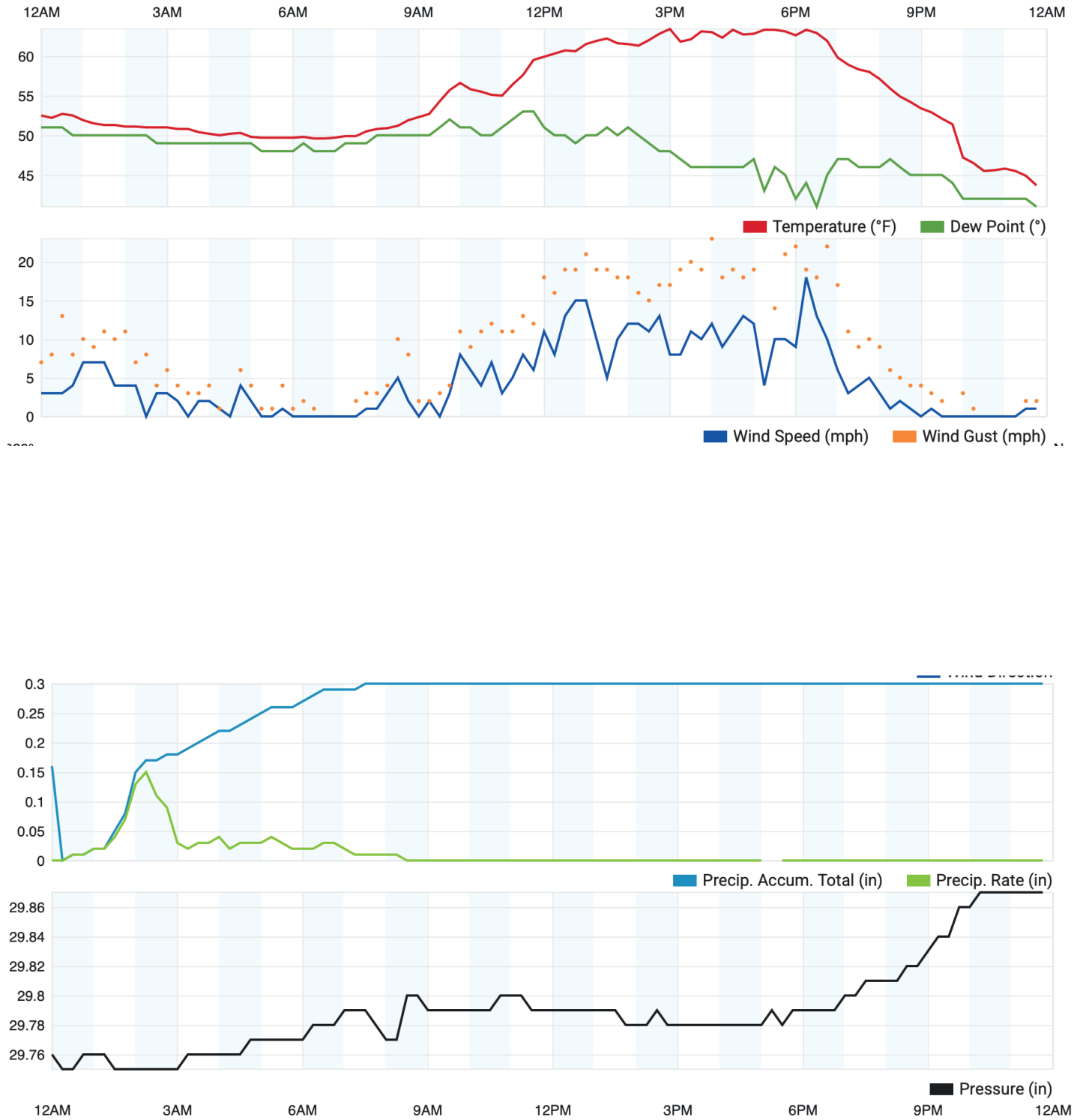
"He said he doesn't want any cuts to Medicaid," Hoeven said. "But how do you make sure that you eliminate waste, fraud and abuse? And that the folks that should be getting it are getting it, rather than an able-bodied person who should be out there working and is able to do that and take care of themselves."

Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Saturday

Saturday Night

Sunday



High: 61 °F

Partly Sunny



Low: 36 °F

Partly Cloudy



High: 71 °F

Sunny



Low: 42 °F

Clear



High: 75 °F

Sunny then
Sunny and
Breezy

Today

May 2nd, 2025



Highs 57 to 62°

Some light showers possible (15-20%)
this afternoon, mainly between the
James and Missouri rivers.

Saturday

Sunday



67 to 73°



72 to 77°

Increasing temps through the weekend.
Gusts of 25-35 mph possible Sunday



May 2, 2025

3:37 AM



Some light showers will be possible this afternoon (15-20%), mainly between the James and Missouri rivers, otherwise the weekend is expected to be dry with increasing temperatures.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 64 °F at 2:52 PM

Low Temp: 45 °F at 11:26 PM

Wind: 23 mph at 3:57 PM

Precip: : Total: 0.72

Day length: 14 hours, 25 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1955

Record Low: 20 in 1909

Average High: 65

Average Low: 38

Average Precip in May.: .22

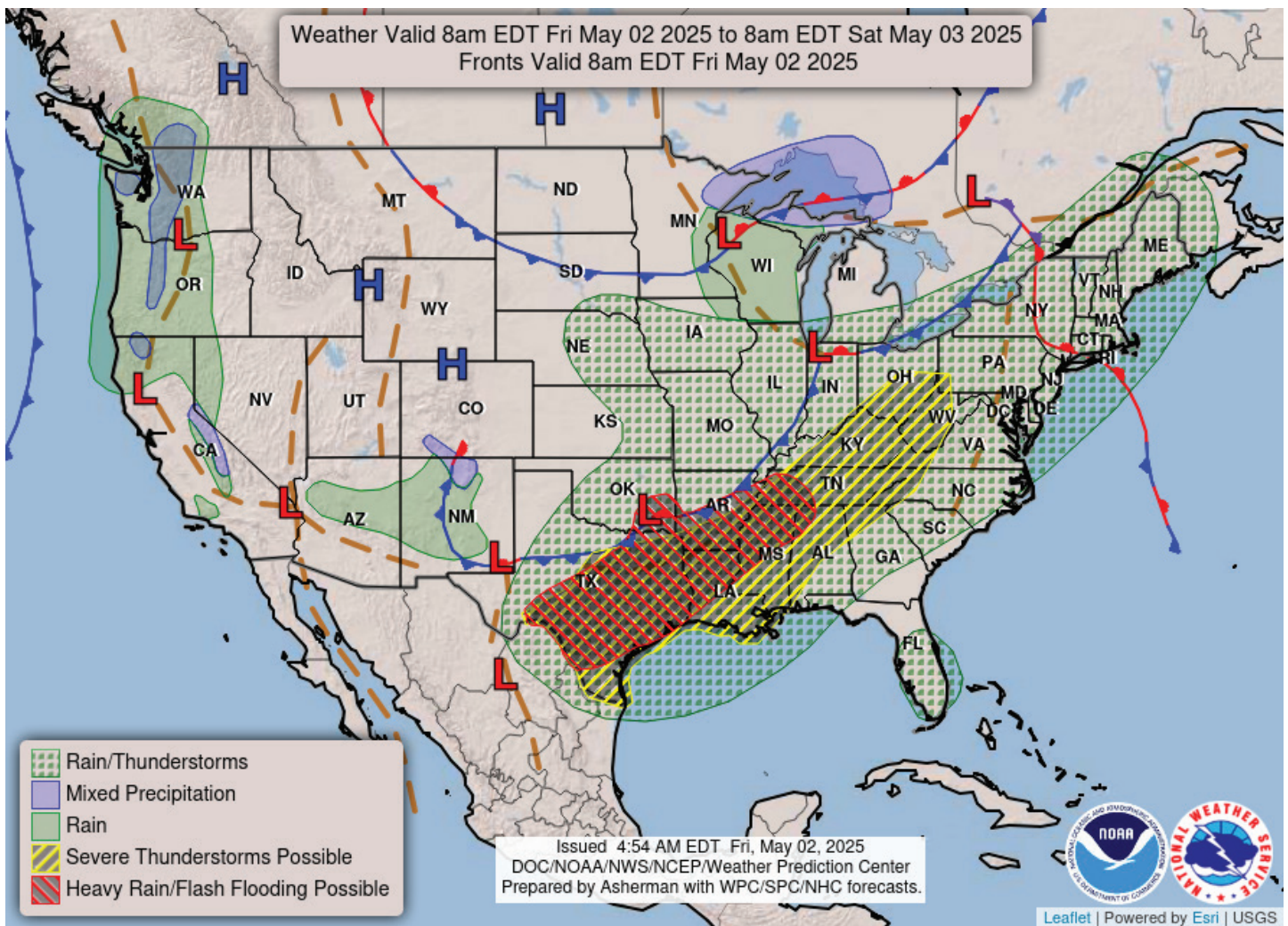
Precip to date in May.: 0.30

Average Precip to date: 4.19

Precip Year to Date: 2.93

Sunset Tonight: 8:42:07 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:15:03 am



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Today in Weather History

May 2nd, 1984: High winds picked up a trailer home northwest of the Pierre Airport and hurled it through the air, smashing it to the ground 50 yards away. The upper sections of a home were damaged by the airborne trailer. Several branches and shed roofs were also damaged nearby.

May 2nd, 2008: A two-day blizzard dropped two to four feet of snow across the northern Black Hills, Harding, and Butte counties. Six to 14 inches of snow fell along the eastern foothills and western Perkins and Meade counties.

1899 - A storm buried Havre, MT, under 24.8 inches of snow, an all-time record for that location. The water equivalent of 2.48 inches was a record 24 hour total for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1920 - A swarm of tornadoes in Rogers, Mayes and Cherokee Counties in Oklahoma killed 64 persons. (David Ludlum)

1929 - Virginia's worst tornado disaster occurred. Six tornadoes, two of which were west of the Blue Mountains, killed 22 people. Twelve children and a teacher were killed at Rye Cove, in Scott County. Four schools were destroyed by the storms. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - Severe thunderstorms spawned twenty tornadoes across Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York State. The tornadoes caused five deaths. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms in the Lower Mississippi Valley produced golf ball size hail in northern Louisiana, and wind gusts to 77 mph at Lake Providence LA. Thunderstorms in Arkansas produced 4.20 inches of rain at Arkadelphia and 4.00 inches at Bismarck. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A powerful storm produced snow and high winds in the Central Rockies and the Central High Plains Region. Snowfall totals in Colorado ranged up to 12 inches at Strasburg, and winds in southeastern Colorado gusted to 87 mph at Lamar. Snow and high winds created blizzard conditions in eastern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing to the north of a warm front produced severe weather in Oklahoma and Texas. There were 93 reports of severe weather. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 80 mph at Beattie, and baseball size hail was reported at Ranger and Breckenridge. Juneau AK reported a record high temperature of 72 degrees while Honolulu equalled their record low for the month of May with a reading of 60 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Fourteen cities in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 90s. Tampa FL reported a record high of 97 degrees, and Fort Stewart GA was the hot spot in the nation with a reading of 100 degrees.

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from northeastern Texas to western Arkansas during the evening and early nighttime hours. Thunderstorms spawned a tornado which injured thirteen persons at Paris TX, and produced baseball size hail at Rio Vista TX. Thunderstorm rains of four to seven inches caused flash flooding in west central Arkansas, southern and eastern Oklahoma, and northern Texas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Peace in Troubled Times

In difficult times, remember God's past faithfulness and choose to trust Him.

2 Chronicles 20:1-25

Jehoshaphat Defeats Moab and Ammon

20 After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites[a] came to wage war against Jehoshaphat.

2 Some people came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom,[b] from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi). 3 Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. 4 The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

5 Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the Lord in the front of the new courtyard 6 and said:

"Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. 7 Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? 8 They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying, 9 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.'

10 "But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. 11 See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. 12 Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

13 All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the Lord.

14 Then the Spirit of the Lord came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly.

15 He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. 16 Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. 17 You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.'"

18 Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the Lord. 19 Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and

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praised the Lord, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

20 Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." 21 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his[c] holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:

"Give thanks to the Lord,
for his love endures forever."

22 As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. 23 The Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

24 When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. 25 So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing[d] and also articles of value—more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it.

Faced with the certain defeat of his nation, King Jehoshaphat responded with worship. In fact, read today's passage and you may find it difficult to separate the petition from the praise.

The king led the people in glorifying God for their past redemption. As they focused on the Lord, the Israelites recalled anew how their heavenly Father had intervened in the past. This was exactly what God had told them to do—to instruct their children regularly about His ways (Deuteronomy 6:7) so their lives would honor Him. That, in turn, builds courage and strengthens faith.

The people's praise paved the way for their total dependence upon God. The odds of the small Israelite army beating the united force of three enemies were slim. However, in their worshipful state of mind, the people could admit their weakness and await divine intervention. God gave them an outrageous solution to the problem: Do nothing. Israel was spiritually prepared to go against human reason and obeyed His command.

God is also willing to lead you to victory in troubled times. The Israelites' story is recorded in His Word so that all believers may apply its principles to their lives. Bend your heart and mind toward the Lord, and He will enlarge your vision of who He is and what He can do on your behalf.

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.29.25

16 33 40 51 57 10

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$80,000,000

NEXT
DRAW: 16 Hrs 31 Mins 11
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.30.25

5 22 23 24 36 7

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$32,100,000

NEXT
DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 46
Mins 11 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.01.25

17 32 36 41 46 4

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT
DRAW: 16 Hrs 1 Mins 12
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.30.25

1 20 21 29 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$136,000

NEXT
DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 1 Mins
11 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.30.25

1 34 38 60 65 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT
DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 30
Mins 11 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.30.25

1 2 3 57 59 9

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$44,000,000

NEXT
DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 30
Mins 11 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

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Upcoming Groton Events

03/22/2025 Spring Vendor Fair at the GHS Gym 10am-2pm
03/29/2025 Men's Singles Bowling Tournament at the Jungle 10am, 1pm & 4pm
04/05/2025 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39, 6-11:30pm
04/06/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
04/12/2025 Groton Firemens Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
05/12/2025 High School Girls Golf Meet at Olive Grove
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
06/07/2025 Day of Play
06/13/2025 SDSU 4 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
06/21/2025 Groton Triathlon
06/23/2025 Ladies 2 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
07/11-13/25 2025 VFW 12U Class B State Baseball Tournament
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
07/16/2025 Men's Pro Am Golf at Olive Grove
07/25/2025 Ferney Open Scramble Golf at Olive Grove
08/01/2025 Wine on Nine Fundraiser at Olive Grove
08/09/2025 2nd Annual Celebration in the Park/Rib Cook-Off 1-9:30pm
08/14/2025 Family Fun Fest, Downtown Main Street 5:30-7:30pm (2nd Thursday)
08/23/2025 Glacial Tournament at Olive Grove
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/07/2025 Sunflower Classic Couples Scramble at Olive Grove
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest 10am-3pm City Park
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1:30pm
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Midwest carbon dioxide pipeline could face new hurdle as some Iowa lawmakers question eminent domain

By HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A proposed carbon-capture pipeline that would traverse through several Midwestern states could face more hurdles in Iowa as a dozen Republican state senators try to force the issue to a vote.

Summit Carbon Solutions already will likely have to readjust plans for their estimated \$8.9 billion, 2,500-mile (4,023-kilometer) project after South Dakota's governor signed a ban on the use of eminent domain — the government seizure of private property with compensation — to acquire land for carbon dioxide pipelines.

Now, after several proposals advanced through the Republican-controlled Iowa House, 12 GOP state senators have told their Republican leaders that they will not vote on any budget, which the Legislature is constitutionally required to approve, until they bring a pipeline bill to the floor.

"The people of South Dakota emphatically stated that eminent domain will never be granted for this pipeline to cross South Dakota, and it is past time for Iowa to do the same," the senators wrote in a joint letter, saying they believe "addressing eminent domain is more important than the budget or any other priority for the 2025 session."

It's unclear if the demands will be met or what a measure that passes the full chamber would look like, given the wide range of views on the issue among the 34 Senate Republicans, who hold a supermajority in the chamber.

The proposed 2,500-mile pipeline would carry carbon emissions from ethanol plants in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota to be stored underground permanently in North Dakota.

By lowering carbon emissions from the plants, the pipeline would lower their carbon intensity scores and make them more competitive in the renewable fuels market. The project would also allow ethanol producers and Summit to tap into federal tax credits.

The project received permit approvals in Iowa, Minnesota and North Dakota, but it does face various court challenges, and its application was rejected in South Dakota last month.

"Summit Carbon Solutions has invested four years and nearly \$175 million on voluntary agreements in Iowa, signing agreements with more than 1,300 landowners and securing 75% of the Phase One route," Summit spokesperson Sabrina Zenor said in a statement. "We are committed to building this project, committed to Iowa, and remain focused on working with legislators — including those with concerns."

Some Midwest farmers, despite loyalty to the ethanol industry, have voiced strong opposition to the pipeline since its inception, objecting to its presence on or near their land and questioning the safety of having the pipeline in their backyards.

Then, a slew of eminent domain legal actions in South Dakota to obtain land provoked a groundswell of opposition in the state, sending the issue to the governor's desk. Lee Enterprises and The Associated Press reviewed hundreds of cases, revealing the great legal lengths the company went to get the project built.

Iowa state Sen. Kevin Alons said the senators who are forcing the issue want an amendment to the bill that mimics South Dakota's new law, but it remains to be seen what provisions, if any, would be included in a final version or whether Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds would give it her signature.

"A number of Republican Senators are working on policy surrounding eminent domain and pipeline issues and I am optimistic we will find a legislative solution," Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver said in a statement.

The Iowa House has sent several proposals to the Senate. During debate on the House floor, state Rep. Steven Holt expressed plenty of disappointment that the Senate had not taken up the issue in the past.

"Regardless of whether the Senate's gonna pass it or not, we're going to fight for it here because it's

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the right thing to do," Holt said.

"You chose to try to trample on the rights of citizens of Iowa and South Dakota," he added of Summit, "and now the chickens are coming home to roost."

Drones strike ship carrying aid to Gaza, humanitarian group says

By SAM MEDNICK and RENATA BRITO Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Drones attacked a vessel carrying aid to Gaza while it was off the coast of Malta on Friday, the humanitarian group organizing the shipment said. A fire broke out but was brought under control, authorities said.

A nearby tugboat responded to a distress call from the ship, which was carrying 12 crew members and four civilians, Malta's government said. The Freedom Flotilla Coalition said in an email there were no injuries among those on board its vessel.

Charlie Andreasson, who has been involved with the Freedom Flotilla for more than a decade, told The Associated Press that he had spoken to people on board who said there were two explosions and a fire broke out.

The group did not provide evidence that the fire was caused by drones, but in a video it shared an explosion can be heard. Another video showed a fire blazing. People on board the ship were not immediately reachable for comment.

Cypriot authorities shared photos showing the Conscience with damage to its hull.

Earlier the group said the strike appeared to have targeted the ship's generator, causing a "substantial breach in the hull" and leaving it without power. It said that put the vessel at risk of sinking.

Israel has cut off Gaza from all imports, including food and medicine, since the beginning of March in what is believed to be the worst humanitarian crisis in nearly 19 months of war. Israel says it is an attempt to pressure Hamas to release hostages it took during the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that triggered the conflict.

When an aid flotilla attempted to break a blockade of Gaza in 2010, Israeli forces stormed a Turkish ship, Mavi Marmara, killing nine people on board. That led to a breakdown in Turkish-Israeli relations.

Israel's army didn't respond to a request for comment.

The Freedom Flotilla said the vessel, called the Conscience, was attacked about 16 miles (26 kilometers) from Malta. It flies the flag of Palau, a tiny island nation in Micronesia, Andreasson said.

From the longest conclave to antipopes: 10 fun facts about the secret voting to elect a pope

By GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — "Conclave," the movie, may have introduced movie-goers to the spectacular ritual and drama of a modern conclave, but the periodic voting to elect a new pope has been going on for centuries and created a whole genre of historical trivia.

Here are some fun facts about conclaves past, derived from historical studies including Miles Pattenden's "Electing the Pope in Early Modern Italy, 1450–1700" and interviews with experts including Elena Cangiano, an archeologist at Viterbo's Palazzo dei Papi (Palace of the Popes).

The longest conclave in history

In the 13th century, it took almost three years — 1,006 days to be exact — to choose Pope Clement IV's successor, making it the longest conclave in the Catholic Church's history. It's also where the term conclave comes from — "under lock and key," because the cardinals who were meeting in Viterbo, north of Rome, took so long the town's frustrated citizens locked them in the room.

The secret vote that elected Pope Gregory X lasted from November 1268 to September 1271. It was the first example of a papal election by "compromise," after a long struggle between supporters of two main geopolitical medieval factions — those faithful to the papacy and those supporting the Holy Roman Empire.

'One meal a day' rule

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Gregory X was elected only after Viterbo residents tore the roof off the building where the prelates were staying and restricted their meals to bread and water to pressure them to come to a conclusion. Hoping to avoid a repeat, Gregory X decreed in 1274 that cardinals would only get "one meal a day" if the conclave stretched beyond three days, and only "bread, water and wine" if it went beyond eight. That restriction has been dropped.

The shortest conclave ever

Before 1274, there were times when a pope was elected the same day as the death of his predecessor. After that, however, the church decided to wait at least 10 days before the first vote. Later that was extended to 15 days to give all cardinals time to get to Rome. The quickest conclave observing the 10-day wait rule appears to have been the 1503 election of Pope Julius II, who was elected in just a few hours, according to Vatican historian Ambrogio Piazzoni. In more recent times, Pope Francis was elected in 2013 on the fifth ballot, Benedict XVI won in 2005 on the fourth and Pope Pius XII won on the third in 1939.

The first conclave in the Sistine Chapel

The first conclave held under Michelangelo's frescoed ceiling in the Sistine Chapel was in 1492. Since 1878, the world-renowned chapel has become the venue of all conclaves. "Everything is conducive to an awareness of the presence of God, in whose sight each person will one day be judged," St. John Paul II wrote in his 1996 document regulating the conclave, "Universi Dominici Gregis." The cardinals sleep a short distance away in the nearby Domus Santa Marta hotel or a nearby residence.

The alternative locations

Most conclaves were held in Rome, with some taking place outside the Vatican walls. Four were held in the Pauline Chapel of the papal residence at the Quirinale Palace, while some 30 others were held in St. John Lateran Basilica, Santa Maria Sopra Minerva or other places in Rome. On 15 occasions they took place outside Rome and the Vatican altogether, including in Viterbo, Perugia, Arezzo and Venice in Italy, and Konstanz, Germany, and Lyon, France.

The alternative popes, or antipopes

Between 1378-1417, referred to by historians as the Western Schism, there were rival claimants to the title of pope. The schism produced multiple papal contenders, the so-called antipopes, splitting the Catholic Church for nearly 40 years. The most prominent antipopes during the Western Schism were Clement VII, Benedict XIII, Alexander V, and John XXIII. The schism was ultimately resolved by the Council of Constance in 1417, which led to the election of Martin V, a universally accepted pontiff.

A challenge to personal hygiene

The cloistered nature of the conclave posed another challenge for cardinals: staying healthy. Before the Domus Santa Marta guest house was built in 1996, cardinal electors slept on cots in rooms connected to the Sistine Chapel. Conclaves in the 16th and 17th centuries were described as "disgusting" and "badly smelling," with concern about disease outbreaks, particularly in summer, according to historian Miles Pattenden. "The cardinals simply had to have a more regular and comfortable way of living because they were old men, many of them with quite advanced disease," Pattenden wrote. The enclosed space and lack of ventilation further aggravated these issues. Some of the electors left the conclave sick, often seriously.

Vow of secrecy

Initially, papal elections weren't as secretive, but concerns about political interference soared during the longest conclave in Viterbo. Gregory X decreed that cardinal electors should be locked in seclusion, "cum clave" (with a key), until a new pope was chosen. The purpose was to create a totally secluded environment where the cardinals could focus on their task, guided by God's will, without any political interference or distractions. Over the centuries, various popes have modified and reinforced the rules surrounding the conclave, emphasizing the importance of secrecy.

Youngest pope, oldest pope

Pope John XII was just 18 when he was elected in 955. The oldest popes were Pope Celestine III (elected in 1191) and Celestine V (elected in 1294) who were both nearly 85. Benedict XVI was 78 when he was elected in 2005.

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A non-cardinal pope and non-Italian pope

There is no requirement that a pope be a cardinal, but that has been the case for centuries. The last time a pope was elected who wasn't a cardinal was Urban VI in 1378. He was a monk and archbishop of Bari. While the Italians have had a stranglehold on the papacy over centuries, there have been many exceptions aside from John Paul II (Polish in 1978) and Benedict XVI (German in 2005) and Francis (Argentine in 2013). Alexander VI, elected in 1492, was Spanish; Gregory III, elected in 731, was Syrian; Adrian VI, elected in 1522, was from the Netherlands.

Israeli military strikes near Syria's presidential palace after warning over sectarian attacks

By GHAITH ALSAYED and SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Israel's air force struck near Syria's presidential palace early Friday after warning Syrian authorities not to march toward villages inhabited by members of a minority sect in southern Syria.

The strike came after days of clashes between pro-Syrian government gunmen and fighters who belong to the Druze minority sect near the capital, Damascus. The clashes left dozens of people dead or wounded.

Friday's strike was Israel's second on Syria this week, and attacking an area close to the presidential palace appears to send a strong warning to Syria's new leadership that is mostly made up of Islamist groups led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham.

On Thursday, Syria's Druze spiritual leader Sheikh Hikmat Al-Hijri harshly criticized Syria's government for what he called an "unjustified genocidal attack" on the minority community.

Early Friday, the Druze religious leadership said the community is part of Syria and refuses to break away from the country, adding that the role of the state should be activated in the southern province of Sweida and authorities should be in control of the Sweida-Damascus highway.

"We confirm our commitment to a country that includes all Syrians, a nation that is free of strife," the statement said.

In the Damascus suburb of Jaramana, where fighting occurred earlier this week, security forces deployed inside the area along with local Druze gunmen, and at a later stage heavy weapons will be handed over to authorities. As part of the deal, forces from the defense ministry will deploy around Jaramana without going inside.

Israeli fighter jets strike near the palace

The Israeli army said that fighter jets struck adjacent to the area of the Palace of President Ahmad al-Sharaa in Damascus. Its statement gave no further details.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz said the strike was a message to Syrian leaders. "This is a clear message to the Syrian regime. We will not allow the deployment of forces south of Damascus or any threat to the Druze community," said the joint statement.

Pro-government Syrian media outlets said the strike hit close to the People's Palace on a hill overlooking the city.

Over the past two days the Israeli military said it had evacuated Syrian Druze who were wounded in the fighting.

The Israeli army said in a statement Friday that a soldier was killed and three were lightly injured in an accident in the Golan Heights. An army statement added that the soldiers were evacuated to receive medical treatment at the hospital and that the circumstances of the incident are being investigated.

Clashes set off by disputed audio clip

The clashes broke out around midnight Monday after an audio clip circulated on social media of a man criticizing Islam's Prophet Muhammad. The audio was attributed to a Druze cleric. But cleric Marwan Kiwan said in a video posted on social media that he was not responsible for the audio, which angered many Sunni Muslims.

Syria's Information Ministry said 11 members of the country's security forces were killed in two separate attacks, while Britain-based war monitor The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 56 people in

Sahnaya and the Druze-majority Damascus suburb of Jaramana were killed in clashes, among them local gunmen and security forces.

The Druze religious sect is a minority group that began as a 10th-century offshoot of Ismailism, a branch of Shiite Islam. More than half of the roughly 1 million Druze worldwide live in Syria, largely in the southern Sweida province and some suburbs of Damascus.

Most of the other Druze live in Lebanon and Israel, including in the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 Mideast War and annexed in 1981.

Rubio takes on dual national security roles after embracing Trump's 'America First' vision

By MATTHEW LEE and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been thrown into two top national security jobs at once as President Donald Trump presses forward with his top-to-bottom revamp of U.S. foreign policy, upending not only longstanding policies that the former Florida senator once supported but also the configuration of the executive branch.

Trump's appointment of Rubio to temporarily replace Mike Waltz as national security adviser is the first major leadership shake-up of the nascent administration, but Waltz's removal had been rumored for weeks — ever since he created a Signal group chat and accidentally added a journalist to the conversation where top national security officials shared sensitive military plans.

So, just over 100 days into his tenure as America's top diplomat, Rubio now becomes just the second person to hold both positions. He follows only the late Henry Kissinger, who served as both secretary of state and national security adviser for two years under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford in the 1970s.

Rubio — a one-time Trump rival and hawkish conservative who was derided by the president as "Little Marco" during the 2016 presidential campaign — has proven adept at aligning himself with Trump's "America First" foreign policy positions. Rubio has largely eschewed his staunch advocacy of providing foreign aid and promoting democracy overseas since taking over the State Department, repeating a refrain that every policy or program should make America safer, stronger or more prosperous.

Rubio leads during Trump's massive changes

Since being confirmed in a 99-0 Senate floor vote, Rubio has presided over a radical reorganization of the State Department. That includes the dismantling of the U.S. Agency for International Development and plans to cut U.S. jobs by 15% while closing or consolidating more than 100 bureaus worldwide. He has also begun a major cull of the visa system, revoking hundreds, if not thousands, of visas issued to foreign students.

He has overseen the negotiation of agreements to send immigrants accused of crimes to third countries, most notably to El Salvador, in cases that are now being challenged in federal courts.

"Marco Rubio, unbelievable," Trump said Thursday before announcing on social media that Waltz would be nominated as ambassador to the United Nations and Rubio would take over as national security adviser in the interim. "When I have a problem, I call up Marco, he gets it solved."

That's a far cry from 2016, when Rubio and Trump were competing for the GOP presidential nomination and Rubio warned that Trump was a threat. After Trump won, the relationship remained contentious, but eight years later, Rubio was an enthusiastic Trump supporter who worked his Florida bona fides to get into the president's inner circle.

Yet, even after Rubio was nominated to the top diplomatic job, doubts remained. Many pundits suggested he would last only a short time in office before Trump dismissed him in the same way he did his first-term secretary of state, Rex Tillerson, who was fired by tweet in 2018 just 18 months into the job.

Yet Rubio has been resilient. And as of Thursday, he oversees both the State Department and the National Security Council, which is responsible for coordinating all executive branch foreign policy functions,

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ranging from diplomatic to military and intelligence operations.

Thomas Wright, an NSC official during the Biden administration who is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said the national security adviser post alone is "more than a full-time job."

"It is just very hard to comprehend the idea that you can do this job sort of part time," Wright said.

He said he watched national security adviser Jake Sullivan and his deputy work 14-15 hour days, six to seven days a week: "I think they felt that they had to do that to do the job properly."

Rubio says little so far on his additional role

Appearing Thursday night on Fox News Channel's "Hannity," Rubio was not asked to weigh in on the president's decision to tap him as national security adviser but did joke that he was barred from adding pope to his list of many jobs because he is married.

But as he marked the first 100 days of Trump's latest term, Rubio applauded the president for his vision.

"I am honored by the trust President Trump placed in me and I am proud of the work the Department of State has done over the past hundred days to implement his agenda and put the American people first," he wrote Wednesday in a State Department Substack post.

One of Rubio's former Florida statehouse colleagues, Dan Gelber, a Democrat, said of Rubio's increasing responsibilities that "Marco is probably, to a certain extent, one of the more reliable Cabinet officers, if not the most reliable."

"And I can only believe those qualities are even more vital to his current confluence of positions and growing portfolio," Gelber said. "He's not a chaos guy, and I've always sort of wondered how he's going to do in an administration where there seems to be so much chaos. And maybe that's why he's getting all these positions."

Rubio's dual-hatted role comes on top of him serving as acting administrator of the largely shut down USAID and as acting head of the National Archives. It puts him in a similar position to that of Trump's longtime personal friend and golfing buddy Steve Witkoff.

As a special envoy, Witkoff is the lead U.S. negotiator in the Iran nuclear talks and in administration peace efforts for the Israel-Hamas war and the Ukraine-Russia war.

In many ways, Rubio and Witkoff are following in the footsteps of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, who had multiple roles in the first administration, ranging from the Middle East to Latin America and immigration.

How Rubio's expanded duties are seen at the State Department

State Department officials appeared taken aback by Trump's appointment of Rubio as acting national security adviser. Spokeswoman Tammy Bruce said at a briefing Thursday that she learned the news from a journalist who asked her a question about Trump's post minutes after it appeared on social media.

Officials, however, have noted that Rubio in recent weeks has spent an increasingly large amount of time at the White House away from his posh seventh-floor State Department office in what is known as "Mahogany Row," a corridor known for its wood paneling.

At the same time, these officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the personnel shift, said they did not expect Rubio's duties as secretary of state to change significantly. He still plans to travel on diplomatic missions abroad and likely will delegate at least some of the NSC management to others, they said.

Trump administration asks Supreme Court to strip legal protections from 350,000 Venezuelan migrants

By MARK SHERMAN and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Thursday asked the Supreme Court to strip temporary legal protections from 350,000 Venezuelans, potentially exposing them to being deported.

The Justice Department asked the high court to put on hold a ruling from a federal judge in San Francisco that kept in place Temporary Protected Status for the Venezuelans that would have otherwise expired last month.

The status allows people already in the United States to live and work legally because their native coun-

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tries are deemed unsafe for return due to natural disaster or civil strife.

A federal appeals court had earlier rejected the administration's request.

President Donald Trump's administration has moved aggressively to withdraw various protections that have allowed immigrants to remain in the country, including ending TPS for a total of 600,000 Venezuelans and 500,000 Haitians. TPS is granted in 18-month increments.

The emergency appeal to the high court came the same day a federal judge in Texas ruled illegal the administration's efforts to deport Venezuelans under an 18th-century wartime law. The cases are not related.

The protections had been set to expire April 7, but U.S. District Judge Edward Chen ordered a pause on those plans. He found that the expiration threatened to severely disrupt the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and could cost billions in lost economic activity.

Chen, who was appointed to the bench by Democratic President Barack Obama, found the government hadn't shown any harm caused by keeping the program alive.

But Solicitor General D. John Sauer wrote on behalf of the administration that Chen's order impermissibly interferes with the administration's power over immigration and foreign affairs.

In addition, Sauer told the justices, people affected by ending the protected status might have other legal options to try to remain in the country because the "decision to terminate TPS is not equivalent to a final removal order."

Congress created TPS in 1990 to prevent deportations to countries suffering from natural disasters or civil strife.

A US-led effort to end the war in Ukraine looks favorable to Russia, but mixed signals emerge

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — The discussions have taken place in an ornate Kremlin hall, on the polished marble of St. Peter's Basilica and in a famously contentious session in the Oval Office of the White House.

What's emerged so far from the Washington-led effort to end the war in Ukraine suggests a deal that seems likely to be favorable to Russia: President Donald Trump has sharply rebuked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, echoed Kremlin talking points, and indicated Kyiv would have to surrender territory and forego NATO membership. What's more, he has engaged in a rapprochement with Moscow that was unthinkable months ago.

More recently, Trump has offered mixed signals — social media posts that perhaps Russian President Vladimir Putin is stringing him along — and a deal has yet to materialize.

While the optics so far have been in the Kremlin's favor, no proposals that were put forth have been cemented.

And on Wednesday, Washington and Kyiv signed an agreement granting American access to Ukraine's vast mineral resources that could enable continued military aid to the country under ongoing attacks from Russia.

Dialogue and aligned vision

One gain for the Kremlin is that Washington is talking again to Moscow after years of extremely strained ties following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine — and not just about the war, said Nikolay Petrov, senior research fellow with the New Eurasian Strategies Centre think tank.

Russian officials and state media from the very start of discussions with Trump's officials sought to underscore that Ukraine was only one item on the vast agenda of the "two superpowers." Trump and Putin talked in March about Ukraine but also the Middle East, stopping the proliferation of strategic weapons and even organizing hockey games between the countries.

Russia's main state TV channel reported that the meeting between Putin and Trump envoy Steve Witkoff showed that Moscow and Washington were building "a new structure of the world" together.

In this sense, "Putin already got a part of what he sought" — the optics of Russia as a country that is on par with the U.S., Petrov said.

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Trump has said Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula Moscow illegally annexed in 2014, "will stay with Russia," and outlines of a peace proposal his team reportedly presented to Kyiv last month apparently included allowing Russia to keep control of other occupied Ukrainian territories. Trump, who had a contentious meeting with Zelenskyy in the Oval Office on Feb. 28, lashed out at him for publicly rejecting the idea of ceding land, and also said that Kyiv was unlikely to ever join NATO.

All of these have long been Moscow's talking points, and Trump's use of them suggested his administration's vision was aligned with the Kremlin's.

Trump also seemingly puts more pressure on Kyiv than Moscow in trying to reach a peace deal and appears eager to return to a more normal relationship with Russia and its "big business opportunities," said Sam Greene of King's College London.

"Is there any part of this that doesn't look like a win for Russia? No," Greene adds.

So far, it's only talk

But so far, all of this has remained nothing but rhetoric, with terms of a possible settlement still very much "in the air," says Sergey Radchenko, a historian and a professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Moreover, there are still demands by both Russia and Ukraine that would be hard to reconcile in any kind of peace settlement.

Ukraine refuses to cede any land and wants robust security guarantees against future aggression, possibly involving a contingent of peacekeepers — something a handful of European nations have been discussing and Russia publicly rejects as a nonstarter.

Russia, in turn, demands that it holds onto the territory it has seized as well as no NATO membership for Ukraine. It also wants Kyiv to "demilitarize," or significantly reduce its armed force.

Radchenko sees the latter as a major sticking point in peace talks, because a strong, viable army is important for Ukraine to defend itself.

"If there are restrictions on the kinds of weapons Ukraine can receive (from the West) or the size of the army, then it will be very difficult to get them to accept this sort of agreement," he said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov seemingly raised the stakes further this week by saying that international recognition of regions annexed from Ukraine by Russia was "imperative" for a peace deal.

Achieving that remains unclear, given that dozens of countries have decried the annexations as violating international law.

What if the US walks away?

Some analysts believe it is in Putin's interest to prolong the war and keep making gains on the battlefield.

Trump, Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio have threatened to wash their hands of the peace effort if there is no progress soon.

Putin, in an apparent gesture of willingness to keep talking, announced this week a 72-hour ceasefire starting May 8 for Russia's Victory Day holiday that marks the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Zelenskyy dismissed the gesture as a further attempt by Putin at "manipulation" to string along the U.S., saying a ceasefire should begin immediately and last longer.

Greene noted that the Russian ruble and markets have been doing better recently over expectations of a peace deal and U.S. businesses and investors coming back, "and there may be a price to be paid" for pulling out the rug from under that.

The larger question is what happens on the battlefield if the Trump administration withdraws from the peace effort.

"When the Trump administration says they'll walk away, we don't know what that means. Does that mean they walk away from negotiations and keep supporting Ukraine?" Greene said.

Greene says that Ukraine probably doesn't feel confident that the U.S. stepping back from the process means that Washington will keep supporting Kyiv, adding that Russia may not be sure of the Trump administration ending aid, either.

"I think it's very difficult for the Kremlin to calculate the risks of dragging this out," he said.

And U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the mineral deal "signals clearly to Russia that the Trump

administration is committed to a peace process centered on a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term.”

A lot depends on whether Europe can step up and fill any gaps in U.S. aid.

If Trump walks away from the peace effort and still pursues normalizing relations with Russia, lifting sanctions, “this will amount to a major breakthrough” for Putin, but it’s not a given, Radchenko says.

That would be an uphill battle for Trump as “there’s a lot of congressional sanctions that are predicated on the war in Ukraine,” Greene notes.

Netanyahu’s campaign against Iran’s nuclear program is muted with Trump in power

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — When the U.S. and Iran met for nuclear talks a decade ago, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu railed against an emerging deal from the world’s most public stages, including in a fiery speech to Congress seen as a direct challenge to the Obama administration as it was wrapping up the talks.

Now, as the sides sit down to discuss a new deal, Netanyahu has fallen silent.

Netanyahu sees an Iran with nuclear weapons as an existential threat to Israel, and he is just as wary of any new U.S. agreement with its archenemy that may not meet his standards. Yet he finds himself shackled with Donald Trump in the White House.

Netanyahu is unwilling to publicly criticize a president who has shown broad support for Israel, whom he deems to be Israel’s greatest friend, and who doesn’t take well to criticism.

He “can’t do anything that goes against Trump. He’s paralyzed,” said Yoel Guzansky, an Iran expert at the Institute for National Security Studies, a Tel Aviv-based think tank.

Israel is in a position of power against Iran after a series of strategic achievements over the past 18 months in the wars that have shaken the Middle East. It thrashed Iran’s allies in Lebanon, Gaza and Syria, and directly attacked Iran last year, neutralizing some of its key air defenses. Experts say Israel now has a window of opportunity for what could be an effective strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities, with possibly less regional blowback.

Yet Israel’s leader was recently unable to galvanize Trump to prioritize a strike against Iran’s nuclear facilities — which would likely hinge on U.S. military assistance to be successful. With the U.S. negotiating with Iran, Israel has little legitimacy to pursue a military option on its own.

“Netanyahu is trapped,” said Eytan Gilboa, an expert on U.S.-Israel relations at Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv. “He was banking on Israel’s position relative to Iran to improve under Trump. In practice, it’s the opposite.”

Netanyahu hoped for alignment with Trump on Iran

Netanyahu and his nationalist supporters hoped Trump’s return to the White House would be advantageous because of his history of support for Israel. They thought that, under Trump, the U.S. might back a strike on Iranian nuclear facilities.

But Trump’s approach to Iran — as well as on other issues, such as tariffs — has shown the relationship is more complicated, and that Trump’s interests don’t entirely align with Netanyahu’s.

Netanyahu has long accused Iran of developing a nuclear weapon and went on a global campaign against the Obama deal. He painted the nuclear program as an existential threat to Israel and the world, and said the agreement was too weak to contain it. Israel remains the Mideast’s only nuclear-armed state, an advantage it would like to keep.

With Netanyahu’s strong encouragement, Trump backed out of the deal struck by Obama. And since returning to the White House, Trump has given Israel free rein in its war against Hamas in Gaza, been soft on the worsening humanitarian crisis in the territory and launched strikes against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, who have attacked Israel since the start of the war.

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But now that the U.S. has returned to the negotiating table with Iran, Netanyahu would risk jeopardizing his good ties with the president if he were to publicly oppose one of his administration's key foreign policy initiatives.

The last time Netanyahu crossed the temperamental Trump was when he congratulated Joe Biden for his election win in 2020. Trump was apparently offended by the perceived disloyalty, and their ties went into deep freeze.

Israel is communicating to Washington its priorities for any deal. As part of that, it understood that should Israel choose to carry out a strike on Iran, it would likely be doing so alone — so long as negotiations were underway, according to an Israeli official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive diplomacy.

Netanyahu is hoping for a strict deal on Iran's nuclear program

In a speech in Jerusalem this week, Netanyahu said he had discussed his terms for a deal with Trump. He explained that it would need to dismantle all the infrastructure of Iran's nuclear program and that it should work to prevent Iran from developing ballistic missiles capable of delivering a bomb.

"I said to President Trump that I hope that this is what the negotiators will do. We're in close contact with the United States. But I said one way or the other — Iran will not have nuclear weapons," he said.

Netanyahu has said he would favor a strict diplomatic agreement similar to Libya's deal in 2003 to destroy its nuclear facilities and allow inspectors unfettered access. However, it is not clear if Trump will set such strict conditions — and Iran has rejected giving up its right to enrich.

The Trump-led talks with Iran began earlier this month and have advanced to expert discussions over how to rein in Iran's nuclear program and prevent it from being able to obtain atomic weapons, should it choose to pursue them. Iran says its program is for peaceful purposes, though some officials increasingly threaten to pursue the bomb.

While Trump has said a military option remains on the table, and has moved military assets to the region, he says he prefers a diplomatic solution. Planned talks between Iran and the United States this weekend were postponed on Thursday.

Netanyahu will also struggle to criticize a deal once one is clinched

Since Trump scrapped the Obama-era agreement in 2018, Iran has ramped up its nuclear enrichment and increased its uranium stockpile.

Netanyahu's 2015 speech to Congress against Obama's deal — at the invitation of Republicans — was made without consulting the White House. Obama did not attend.

That was just one of many instances in which Netanyahu was seen as cozying up to Republicans, driving a wedge in what has traditionally been bipartisan support for Israel. That, coupled with Netanyahu's strained relationship with the Biden administration over Israel's conduct in Gaza, has meant that Netanyahu can't rely on Democratic allies to take up his cause.

Still, Netanyahu would struggle to find any Republicans willing to publicly confront the president on this issue. And he himself will struggle to criticize a deal if one is clinched; instead, he might send surrogates like his far-right allies to do so, said Gilboa of Bar-Ilan University.

But until then, Gilboa said, Netanyahu's best hope is that the talks fail.

"That, for him, will be the best case scenario."

China says it's evaluating US overtures for trade talks, but tariffs remain an obstacle

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

China's Commerce Ministry said Friday that Beijing is evaluating multiple approaches by the Trump administration for trade talks, but steep tariffs imposed by Washington must go.

A ministry statement reiterated China's stance that is open to talks, but also that Beijing is determined to fight if it must. It said one-sided tariffs of up to 145% remain an obstacle, undermining trust.

"The tariff and trade wars were unilaterally initiated by the U.S., if the U.S. side wants to talk, it should

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show its sincerity, and be ready to take action on issues such as correcting wrong practices and canceling the unilateral imposition of tariffs," it said.

An unnamed ministry spokesperson was cited as saying that Beijing had taken note of various statements by senior U.S. officials indicating a willingness to negotiate over tariffs.

"At the same time, the U.S. has recently taken the initiative to convey information to the Chinese side on a number of occasions through relevant parties, hoping to talk with the Chinese side. In this regard, the Chinese side is making an assessment," it said.

But it emphasized that China would regard overtures without a change in President Donald Trump's sharp tariff hikes as insincere.

"Saying one thing but doing another, or even attempting to engage in coercion and blackmail under the guise of talks, will not work on the Chinese side," it said.

China is in the midst of a public holiday, with government offices and markets closed. But share prices in Hong Kong jumped 1.7% early Friday, while Taiwan's benchmark index was up 2.2%. U.S. futures also advanced.

As of Friday, the Trump administration is ending a duty-free exemption on low-value imports from China. That will mean higher prices and delivery delays when the government starts collecting tariffs on every single shipment.

Beijing has responded to Trump's tariff hikes by raising its own duties on imports of U.S. products to as high as 125%. It has also tightened restrictions on exports to the U.S. of certain strategically important minerals and stopped importing a wide range of U.S. farm products.

At the same time, China has sought to join with other countries to build a united front against Trump, while ramping up its own countermeasures to the impact of Trump's tariffs.

Trump has slapped a global 10% import tax, or tariff, to try to compel manufacturers to shift factories back to the U.S. He ordered double-digit "reciprocal" tariffs for many countries but then postponed their implementation for 90 days to allow time for negotiations. He has also hit foreign steel, aluminum and autos.

The toughest measures were reserved for China, the world's biggest exporter and second largest economy.

His announcements of higher tariffs, suspensions, and then more tariffs have left companies, investors and consumers stymied over what comes next, hitting consumer confidence.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who is leading the administration's approach to China, has said he expects Beijing to call because the tariffs are not sustainable.

In an interview Thursday with Fox Business, Bessent said the main issue with Beijing was not high tariffs but other barriers.

"There's a whole range of bad behavior by the Chinese," Bessent said, mentioning theft of intellectual property like trademarks and cyberhacking."

"So, everything is on the table for the economic relationship," he said, adding "I am confident that the Chinese will want to reach a deal."

Beijing has shown scant willingness to compromise, however, with its foreign ministry posting a strident video on social media this week saying the U.S. has "stirred up a global tariff storm."

It vowed China would not "kneel down" in the trade war.

"Kneeling only invites more bullying," it said.

Trump's pick for top prosecutor in DC is testing Republican loyalty

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN, ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Most of President Donald Trump's top nominees have sailed through the Senate with little resistance. His pick to be the top federal prosecutor for the nation's capital could be an exception. Ed Martin Jr., a conservative activist with modest legal experience who has defended rioters who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, is testing Republican party loyalties as a deadline approaches for the Senate to decide whether to extend or end his brief but tumultuous tenure as leader of the country's largest U.S. Attorney's office.

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Martin's nomination faces vocal opposition from hundreds of veterans of the office that he is leading on an interim basis. Democrats are trying to tie up his confirmation vote. And Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee have said they need more time to review his record.

There were signs of trouble at a Judiciary meeting on Thursday as Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the top Democrat on the panel, said it was his understanding that committee chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, was going to announce "that we are not going to move forward on the Martin nomination."

Grassley demurred, saying he would wait to talk about Martin until the committee scheduled a vote. But he said he was still going through hundreds of questions that the committee had posed to Martin, adding that some of his staff "had more questions" and wanted to meet with him in person.

It was hardly a ringing endorsement of Martin, who hasn't spent much time in courtrooms but has been a devoted loyalist to Trump.

Within days of taking office in January, Martin fired or demoted veteran attorneys who prosecuted Trump supporters for storming the U.S. Capitol. Before his appointment, he represented and helped raise money for Capitol riot defendants. He frequently appeared on Russian state media to parrot Trump talking points. He even published coloring books glorifying Trump's tweets.

Martin hasn't responded to several Associated Press interview requests since he took office in January, including this week.

Martin recently told NBC Washington that he is confident that Trump made the "right decision" in nominating him. He has touted his office's work tackling violent crime. And he has told lawmakers that his opinions won't influence his office decisions.

"We have to keep the streets safe AND fight for America on the world stage. Amazing work and I am blessed to serve Donald Trump in this way," Martin wrote in a Substack post.

Democrats want a rare hearing on Martin's nomination

Any vote on Martin's nomination is bound to be split along party lines. But first, Democrats are calling for a rare hearing where they can grill him.

The Judiciary panel traditionally does not hold confirmation hearings for U.S. attorneys, relying on questionnaires instead.

Even if the committee were to approve Martin's nomination, it would face obstacles on the Senate floor. California Democratic Sen. Adam Schiff placed a hold on the nomination, meaning Republicans would have to spend several days of floor time to confirm him. U.S. attorneys are generally approved in groups by a quick voice vote.

Schiff last month said Martin "has consistently undermined the independence and abused the power of the U.S. Attorney's office in D.C." since taking office.

Martin has touted endorsements from leading conservative figures, including Elon Musk, Charlie Kirk and Donald Trump Jr. Republican lawmakers, including Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky and Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, also have expressed support.

Paul in a post on X said he's confident Martin will "work to clean up DC and fight against the left's lawless judicial tyranny. Proud to support him as U.S. Attorney!"

His supporters have said his record fighting conservative causes makes him the right person to lead the office that critics have claimed unfairly treated Jan. 6 defendants and should have been more focused on bringing down street crime. Weeks into the job, he announced a "Make D.C. Safe Again" initiative to bring more gun cases in federal court, where penalties are stiffer.

But at least one Republican member of the committee appears to have reservations. North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, who has expressed some concerns about Martin's Jan. 6 comments, said Thursday that he will meet with Martin next week.

An advocate for Capitol rioters now leads the office that prosecuted them

Trump appointed Martin the same week in January that he issued mass pardons to supporters who attacked the U.S. Capitol four years ago. It was a morale-destroying choice for prosecutors who spent four years building cases against over 1,500 riot defendants, the largest investigation in Justice Department history.

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Martin was a leading figure in Trump's "Stop the Steal" movement. He spoke at a rally in Washington on the eve of the riot. He also represented three Jan. 6 defendants, which he ranked among the top 10 cases of his legal career on his committee questionnaire.

Former federal prosecutor Michael Romano, who was detailed to help supervise Jan. 6 prosecutions, returned to his home office in the Justice Department before Martin arrived. And yet Martin tried to demote Romano to an entry-level position along with other senior prosecutors who worked on Capitol riot cases.

"He appeared not to realize that I didn't work for him," said Romano, who recently joined a private law firm. "It was a moment that made my eyes roll."

Martin served on the board of the nonprofit Patriot Freedom Project, which reports raising over \$2.5 million to support Jan. 6 defendants. Last year, he presented an award to a Capitol riot defendant, Timothy Hale-Cusanelli, who openly espoused white supremacist and antisemitic ideology and photographed himself sporting a Hitler mustache. He referred to Hale-Cusanelli as a friend who is "an extraordinary guy."

Martin told committee members that he condemns Hale-Cusanelli's hateful comments as "abhorrent and deplorable." He claimed he didn't learn about them until after he presented him with the award during an event at Trump's golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey.

But Martin alluded to the controversy when he interviewed Hale-Cusanelli before the awards ceremony. Martin accused prosecutors of leaking photos of Hale-Cusanelli sporting the Hitler mustache to taint the jury pool.

"Not your best moment, but not illegal," Martin said.

Martin is no stranger to political controversies

Critics have accused Martin of abusing his office — and his account on Musk's X platform — to intimidate potential targets of investigations.

At least three medical journals received letters from Martin asking about "competing viewpoints." Another letter that he sent on office stationery accused Wikipedia of "allowing foreign actors to manipulate information and spread propaganda to the American public."

Martin had a habit of getting ensnared in political controversies — and litigation — during his earlier forays into public service. Nearly two decades ago, he was chief of staff for then-Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt when he was sued by a former staff attorney who claimed he was fired in retaliation for complaining that the administration was destroying e-mails illegally.

Martin was chairman of the Missouri Republican Party before becoming president of conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum in April 2013. He co-authored a book about Trump with Schlafly, who died in 2016.

Martin has referred to himself as one of the president's lawyers. His critics have called him unqualified and unfit for the job.

"Ed Martin has less experience than a misdemeanor assistant does after a week in basic training. That's not an exaggeration," said Kevin Flynn, who worked as a prosecutor under roughly a dozen U.S. attorneys in Washington before leaving the office in 2023. "And he's not exactly learning on the job, either."

Who are the contenders to be pope?

They include a street priest, a missionary and a Lutheran convert

By The Associated Press undefined

Wanted: A holy man.

Job description: Leading the 1.4 billion-strong Catholic Church.

Location: Vatican City.

There are no official candidates for the papacy, but some cardinals are considered "papabile," or possessing the characteristics necessary to become pope. After St. John Paul II broke the centurieslong Italian hold on the papacy in 1978, the field of contenders has broadened considerably.

When the cardinals enter the Sistine Chapel on May 7 to choose a successor to Pope Francis, the first

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pontiff from Latin America, they will be looking above all for a holy man who can guide the Catholic Church. Beyond that, they will weigh his administrative and pastoral experience and consider what the church needs today.

Here is a selection of possible contenders, in no particular order. The list will be updated as cardinals continue their closed-door, preconclave discussions.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin

Date of Birth: Jan. 17, 1955

Nationality: Italian

Position: Vatican secretary of state under Francis

Experience: Veteran Vatican diplomat

Made a cardinal by: Francis

The 70-year-old veteran diplomat was Francis' secretary of state, essentially the Holy See's prime minister.

Though associated closely with Francis' pontificate, Parolin is much more demure in personality and diplomatic in his approach to leading than the Argentine Jesuit he served and he knows where the Catholic Church might need a course correction.

Parolin oversaw the Holy See's controversial deal with China over bishop nominations and was involved -- but not charged -- in the Vatican's botched investment in a London real estate venture that led to a 2021 trial of another cardinal and nine others. A former ambassador to Venezuela, Parolin knows the Latin American church well and played a key role in the 2014 U.S.-Cuba detente, which the Vatican helped facilitate.

If he were elected, he would return an Italian to the papacy after three successive outsiders: St. John Paul II (Poland), Pope Benedict XVI (Germany) and Francis (Argentina).

But Parolin has very little pastoral experience: He entered the seminary at age 14, four years after his father was killed in a car accident. After his 1980 ordination, he spent two years as a parish priest near his hometown in northern Italy, but then went to Rome to study and entered the Vatican diplomatic service, where he has remained ever since. He has served at Vatican embassies in Nigeria, Mexico and Venezuela.

He is widely respected for his diplomatic finesse on some of the thorniest dossiers facing the Catholic Church. He has long been involved in the China file, and he played a hands-on role in the Holy See's diplomatic rapprochement with Vietnam that resulted in an agreement to establish a resident Vatican representative in the country.

Parolin was also the Vatican's point-person in its frustrated efforts to end the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. He has tried to make the church's voice heard as the Trump administration began working to end Russia's war in Ukraine.

"Let's hope we can arrive at a peace that, in order to be solid, lasting, must be a just peace, must involve all the actors who are at stake and take into account the principles of international law and the UN declarations," he said.

Parolin might find the geopolitical reality ushered in by the Trump administration somewhat unreceptive to the Holy See's soft power.

— By Nicole Winfield in Vatican City

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle

Date of Birth: June 21, 1957

Nationality: Filipino

Position: Pro-Prefect, Dicastery for Evangelization under Francis

Experience: Former archbishop of Manila, Philippines

Made a cardinal by: Benedict

Tagle, 67, is on many bookmakers' lists to be the first Asian pope, a choice that would acknowledge a part of the world where the church is growing.

Francis brought the popular archbishop of Manila to Rome to head the Vatican's missionary evangelization office, which serves the needs of the Catholic Church in much of Asia and Africa. His role took on

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greater weight when Francis reformed the Vatican bureaucracy. Tagle often cites his Chinese heritage — his maternal grandmother was part of a Chinese family that moved to the Philippines.

Though he has pastoral, Vatican and management experience — he headed the Vatican's Caritas Internationalis federation of charity groups before coming to Rome permanently — Tagle would be on the young side to be elected pope, with cardinals perhaps preferring an older candidate whose papacy would be more limited.

Tagle is known as a good communicator and teacher — key attributes for a pope.

"The pope will have to do a lot of teaching, we'll have to face the cameras all the time so if there will be a communicator pope, that's very desirable," said Leo Ocampo, a theology professor at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

That said, Tagle's tenure at Caritas was not without controversy and some have questioned his management skills.

In 2022, Francis ousted the Caritas management, including demoting Tagle. The Holy See said an outside investigation had found "real deficiencies" in management that had affected staff morale at the Caritas secretariat in Rome.

— By Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, and Nicole Winfield in Vatican City

Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu

Date of Birth: Jan. 24, 1960

Nationality: Congolese

Position: Archbishop of Kinshasa, Congo

Experience: President of the bishops conferences of Africa and Madagascar

Made a cardinal by: Francis

The 65-year-old Ambongo is one of Africa's most outspoken Catholic leaders, heading the archdiocese that has the largest number of Catholics on the continent that seen as the future of the church.

He has been archbishop of Congo's capital since 2018 and a cardinal since in 2019. Francis also appointed him to a group of advisers that was helping reorganize the Vatican bureaucracy.

In Congo and across Africa, Ambongo has been deeply committed to the Catholic orthodoxy and is seen as conservative.

In 2024, he signed a statement on behalf of the bishops conferences of Africa and Madagascar refusing to follow Francis' declaration allowing priests to offer blessings to same-sex couples in what amounted to continent-wide dissent from a papal teaching. The rebuke crystalized both the African church's line on LGBTQ+ outreach and Ambongo's stature within the African hierarchy.

He has received praise from some in Congo for promoting interfaith tolerance, especially on a continent where religious divisions between Christians and Muslims are common.

"He is for the openness of the church to different cultures," said Monsignor Donatien Nshole, secretary-general of the National Episcopal Conference of Congo, who has long worked with Ambongo.

An outspoken government critic, the cardinal is also known for his unwavering advocacy for social justice.

In a country with high poverty and hunger levels despite being rich in minerals, and where fighting by rebel groups has killed thousands and displaced millions in one of the world's biggest humanitarian crises, he frequently criticizes both government corruption and inaction, as well as the exploitation of the country's natural resources by foreign powers.

"Congo is the plate from which everyone eats, except for our people," he said last year during a speech at the Pontifical Antonianum University.

Ambongo's criticism of authorities has drawn both public admiration and legal scrutiny. Last year, prosecutors ordered a judicial investigation of him after accusing him of "seditious behavior" over his criticism of the government's handling of the conflict in eastern Congo.

— By Mark Banchereau in Dakar, Senegal

Cardinal Matteo Zuppi

Date of Birth: Oct. 11, 1955

Nationality: Italian

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Current position: Archbishop of Bologna, Italy, president of the Italian bishops conference

Previous position: Auxiliary bishop of Rome

Made a cardinal by: Francis

Zuppi, 69, came up as a street priest in the image of Francis, who promoted him quickly: first to archbishop of the wealthy archdiocese of Bologna in northern Italy in 2015, before bestowing the title of cardinal in 2019.

He is closely closely affiliated with the Sant'Egidio Community, a Rome-based Catholic charity that was influential under Francis, particularly in interfaith dialogue. Zuppi was part of Sant'Egidio's team that helped negotiate the end of Mozambique's civil war in the 1990s and was named Francis' peace envoy for Russia's war in Ukraine.

He traveled to Kyiv and Moscow after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed to the Holy See for help in winning the release of 19,000 Ukrainian children taken from their families and brought to Russia during the war. The mission also took him to China and the United States.

After making him a cardinal, Francis made clear he wanted him in charge of Italy's bishops, a sign of his admiration for the prelate who, like Francis, is known as a "street priest" — someone who prioritizes ministering to poor and homeless people and refugees.

Zuppi would be a candidate in Francis' tradition of ministering to those on the margins, although his relative youth would count against him for cardinals seeking a short papacy.

In a sign of his progressive leanings, Zuppi wrote the introduction to the Italian edition of "Building a Bridge," by the Rev. James Martin, an American Jesuit, about the church's need to improve its outreach to the LGBTQ+ community.

Zuppi wrote that building bridges with the community was a "difficult process, still unfolding." He recognized that "doing nothing, on the other hand, risks causing a great deal of suffering, makes people feel lonely, and often leads to the adoption of positions that are both contrasting and extreme."

Zuppi's family also has strong institutional ties: His father worked for the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, and his mother was the niece of Cardinal Carlo Confalonieri, dean of the College of Cardinals in the 1960s and 1970s.

— By Colleen Barry in Vatican City

Cardinal Péter Erdő

Date of Birth: June 25, 1952

Nationality: Hungarian

Position: Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest, Hungary

Past experience: Twice elected head of the umbrella group of European bishops conferences

Made a cardinal by: John Paul

Known by his peers as a serious theologian, scholar and educator, Erdő, 72, is a leading contender among conservatives. He has served as the archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest since 2002 and was made a cardinal by John Paul the following year. He has participated in two conclaves, in 2005 and 2013, for the selection of Benedict and Francis.

Holding doctorates in theology and canon law, Erdő, speaks six languages, is a proponent of doctrinal orthodoxy, and champions the church's positions on issues like abortion and same-sex marriage.

Erdő opposes same-sex unions, and has also resisted suggestions that Catholics who remarry after divorce be able to receive communion. He stated in 2015 that divorced Catholics should only be permitted communion if they remain sexually abstinent in their new marriage.

An advocate for traditional family structures, he helped organize Francis' 2014 and 2015 Vatican meetings on the family.

From 2006 to 2016, Erdő served as president of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, helping to foster collaboration among Catholic bishops across Europe and to address contemporary issues facing the church on the continent.

While careful to avoid taking part in Hungary's often tumultuous political life, Erdő has maintained a close relationship with the country's rightist populist government, which provides generous subsidies to

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Christian churches.

He has been reluctant to take positions on several of the government's policies that divided society in Hungary such as public campaigns that villainized migrants and refugees and laws that eroded the rights of LGBTQ+ communities.

When hundreds of thousands of asylum-seekers entered Europe in 2015 fleeing war and deprivation in the Middle East and Africa, Erdő emphasized that the church had a Christian duty to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, but stopped short of the full-throated advocacy for migrants that was one of Francis' top priorities.

— By Justin Spike in Budapest, Hungary

Cardinal Robert Prevost

Date of Birth: Sept. 14, 1955

Nationality: American and Peruvian

Position: Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops; president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America under Francis

Experience: Archbishop of Chiclayo, Peru; head of the Augustinian religious order

Made a cardinal by: Francis

Francis brought Prevost, 69, to the Vatican in 2023 to serve as the powerful head of the office that vets bishop nominations from around the world, one of the most important jobs in the Catholic Church. As a result, Prevost has a prominence going into the conclave that few other cardinals have.

One strike against him, however, is that he's American, and there has long been a taboo against a U.S. pope, given the geopolitical power already wielded by the United States in the secular sphere. But Prevost, a Chicago native, could be a first because he's also a Peruvian citizen and lived for years in Peru, first as a missionary and then as an archbishop.

Prevost was also twice elected prior general, or top leader, of the Augustinian religious order, the 13th century order founded by St. Augustine. Francis clearly had an eye on him for years, moving him from the Augustinian leadership back to Peru in 2014 to serve as the administrator and later archbishop of Chiclayo.

He remained in that position, acquiring Peruvian citizenship in 2015, until Francis brought him to Rome in 2023 to assume the presidency of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. In that job he would have kept in regular contact with the Catholic hierarchy in the part of the world that counts still counts the most Catholics.

Ever since he arrived in Rome, Prevost has kept a low public profile, but he is well known to the men who count.

Significantly, he presided over one of the most revolutionary reforms Francis made, when he added three women to the voting bloc that decides which bishop nominations to forward to the pope. In early 2025, Francis again showed his esteem by appointing Prevost to the most senior rank of cardinals, suggesting he would at least be Francis' choice in an any future conclave.

Prevost's comparative youth could count against him if his brother cardinals don't want to commit to a pope who might reign for another two decades.

The Rev. Fidel Purisaca Vigil, the communications director for Prevost's old diocese in Chiclayo, remembers the cardinal rising each day and having breakfast with his fellow priests after saying his prayers.

"No matter how many problems he has, he maintains good humor and joy," Purisaca said in an email.

— By Franklin Briceño in Lima, Peru, and Nicole Winfield in Vatican City

Cardinal Anders Arborelius

Date of Birth: Sept. 24, 1949

Nationality: Swedish

Position: Bishop of Stockholm

Experience: Member of Order of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers; longtime president and then vice president of the Scandinavian bishops conference

Made a cardinal by: Francis

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Even though he heads a tiny Catholic diocese, Arborelius, 75, is on a few insider lists as a possible papal contender for the conservative camp.

He has been the bishop of Stockholm — a diocese that covers the whole of predominantly Lutheran though largely secular Sweden — since 1998 and was made a cardinal by Francis in 2017. It was the first time Sweden had ever had a cardinal.

Arborelius was born in Switzerland, grew up in Sweden as a Lutheran and converted to Catholicism when he was 20. He was ordained a priest a decade later. As bishop of Stockholm, he became the first ethnically Swedish bishop of the country since the Reformation centuries earlier.

He is multilingual, with a master's degree in modern languages — English, Spanish and German. He also studied theology and philosophy in Bruges, Belgium, and in Rome.

Arborelius has opposed the ordination of women as priests but did suggest in 2017 that a college of women who would give advice to the pontiff could be created. He has shared Francis' welcoming approach to migrants and has spoken in favor of legislation against "ecocide," or serious environmental damage.

In 2021, Arborelius was one of two envoys sent by Francis to the German archdiocese of Cologne to investigate possible mistakes by senior church officials in handling past sexual abuse cases.

Francis was clearly fond of him. In a 2022 meeting with the editors of European Jesuit journals, Francis praised Arborelius as a fearless proponent of dialogue and a model for others to follow.

"He isn't afraid of anything. He talks to everybody and isn't against anybody," Francis said, according to La Civiltà Cattolica, the Italian Jesuit journal, which reported the conversation. "I believe that a person like him can indicate the right path to follow."

But Arborelius told Swedish broadcaster SVT that he had asked the late pontiff to be relieved of the duties of cardinal and wanted to return to his monastery in southern Sweden. He said it was "highly unlikely" that a Swede like him would be elected pope.

— By Geir Moulson in Berlin

Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa

Date of Birth: April 21, 1965

Nationality: Italian

Position: Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Experience: Member of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor

Made a cardinal by: Francis

At 60, Pizzaballa is on the young side to be pope, but he is a favorite of many Italian Vatican watchers eager to see an Italian take back the papacy after three non-Italians.

He has served in Jerusalem for more than three decades, moving to the city from his native Italy just a month after his ordination. Pizzaballa served as custodian of the Holy Land for 12 years, responsible for all of the Catholic properties in the region.

In 2016, Francis appointed Pizzaballa to fill the vacant seat of the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem — the representative of Catholics in Israel, Cyprus, Jordan and the Palestinian territories — and made it official in 2020. Pizzaballa was elevated to cardinal in 2023.

A fluent Hebrew speaker, Pizzaballa has translated various liturgical texts into the language for the Catholic communities in Israel. He gained favor in Israel after offering to take the place of children being held hostage in Gaza a week after the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack. Some 251 people, including dozens of children, were abducted.

Earlier that year, ahead of Easter, Pizzaballa warned in an interview with The Associated Press that the region's 2,000-year-old Christian community has come under increasing attack, with Israel's government emboldening extremists who have harassed clergy and vandalized religious property at a quickening pace.

Pizzaballa has traveled extensively around the region, including to help celebrate a special pre-Christmas Mass in Gaza last year. "I want to say, to tell you, that all the world, not only the Christian world, all the world is with you, so the war will finish and we will rebuild," the cardinal said, urging Gazans to never be afraid.

— By Melanie Lidman in Jerusalem

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Cardinal Juan José Omella

Date of Birth: April 21, 1946

Nationality: Spanish

Position: Archbishop of Barcelona, Spain

Experience: Missionary in Zaire, now called Congo; president of the Spanish bishops conference

Made a cardinal by: Francis

The 79-year-old archbishop of Barcelona, Spain, has crusaded against hunger worldwide and would likely continue Francis' commitment to putting the church in the service of the neediest.

The Spanish church's tumultuous attempts to come to terms with sexual abuse in its ranks could work against Omella, who would also be on the older side for a pope, meaning his pontificate would likely be short and transitional.

Born in a village in Spain's Aragon region, Omella was ordained in 1970 and became archbishop of Barcelona in 2015. Francis made Omella a cardinal two years later and named him to his small group of advisers in 2023.

Known for his own affable personality, Omella has praised Francis for emphasizing the joyful message of the Gospels.

Omella shares Francis' social vision of the church. He did missionary work in Zaire, now called Congo, and has been active in the Spanish Catholic NGO Manos Unidas. In a 2022 letter entitled "Combating Indifference," Omella wrote that hunger in the poorest countries was the result of unchecked capitalism. "Our goal is to transform the established (economic) structures to correct the deep and growing gap between the rich and poor," he wrote.

But also like Francis and other church leaders, Omella has had trouble handling the enormously painful history of sexual abuse by clergy in the Catholic Church.

Omella's term as president of the Spanish Episcopal Conference from 2000 to 2024 coincided with a confrontation with Spain's government over the issue. Under Omella, the Spanish church conducted its own audit of sexual abuse, apologized to the victims and has since offered economic compensation to them. But Omella dismissed the results of government polling data that pointed to a much higher total of victims.

When asked by Spain's National Radio how he felt about being considered a candidate to succeed Francis, Omella stayed true to his reputation of modesty and laughed off the possibility.

"There are excellent cardinals who will know how to take the helm of the church, and I am not one of them," he said. "Others will know how to take up the legacy of the pope and carry it forward."

— By Joseph Wilson in Barcelona, Spain

Cardinal Reinhard Marx

Date of Birth: Sept. 21, 1953

Nationality: German

Position: Archbishop of Munich-Freising

Experience: Coordinator of the Vatican's Council of the Economy; president of German bishops conference; president of the commission of European bishops conferences

Made a cardinal by: Benedict

If the cardinals want to elect someone who would continue Francis' unfinished business making the Catholic Church more attuned to the needs of ordinary lay Catholics, the 71-year-old Marx could fit the bill.

Marx has been the archbishop of Munich and Freising — one of Germany's most prominent dioceses — since 2008 and was made a cardinal by Benedict in 2010. He was chosen by Francis as a key adviser in 2013 and was named to head the council overseeing Vatican finances during reforms and belt-tightening.

A former head of the German Bishops' Conference, he is a strong proponent of the controversial "synodal path" process of dialogue in the German church that began in 2020 as a response to the clergy sexual abuse scandal, which has contributed to large numbers of people leaving the church. The reform process has drawn opposition from conservatives and suspicion from the Vatican.

In an extraordinary gesture in 2021, Marx offered to resign over the church's "catastrophic" mishandling of clergy abuse cases, declaring that the scandals had brought the church to "a dead end." But Francis

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swiftly rejected the offer.

In 2022, a report that Marx's archdiocese commissioned into abuse over recent decades faulted the cardinal over his own handling of two cases. Marx said he would look over those cases "to learn from them" but didn't renew his resignation offer.

Marx said the church still needed to do more to reach out to abuse victims, and acknowledged that he himself had "overlooked the people affected." He added that "is inexcusable." He stressed the importance of pushing forward reforms, saying that the church wouldn't be able to work through the abuse crisis successfully "without really deep renewal."

In a 2022 newspaper interview, Marx advocated loosening celibacy rules. He insisted that celibacy wouldn't be scrapped altogether but said he sees a "question mark" over "whether it should be taken as a basic precondition for every priest." Also that year, Marx apologized for discrimination against gay people by the church.

— By Geir Moulson in Berlin

Cardinal Robert Sarah

Date of Birth: June 15, 1945

Nationality: Guinean

Position: Retired

Experience: Prefect of Vatican's liturgy office; head of the Vatican's charity office Cor Unum; secretary of Vatican's missionary office; archbishop of Conakry, Guinea

Made a cardinal by: Benedict XVI.

Sarah, 79, has become something of a figurehead for the conservative wing among cardinals, even if his chances of securing the necessary votes to become pope are now slim. He was long considered the best hope for an African pope but had a fairly spectacular falling out with Francis that may have spoiled any chance of winning over moderates.

When he was first made a bishop in 1979 by John Paul, at 34, he was the youngest bishop ever. He headed the Vatican's charity office Cor Unum and then, under Francis, led its liturgy office.

But he clashed on several occasions with Francis, none more seriously than in 2020, when he and Benedict co-authored a book in advocating the "necessity" of continued celibacy for Roman Catholic priests.

The book came out as Francis was weighing whether to allow married priests in the Amazon to address a shortage there. Some alleged that Sarah manipulated Benedict into lending the retired pope's name and moral authority to a book that had all the appearances of being a counterweight to the current pope's own teaching.

The prospect of a retired pope trying to influence the current pope was the nightmare scenario canon lawyers and theologians warned about in 2013 when Benedict retired and chose to retain the white cassock of the papacy and call himself "emeritus Pope Benedict XVI." In the end, Benedict removed his name from future editions of the book, but the episode exacerbated the tensions between conservatives and Francis.

Sarah, for his part, insisted he acted in good faith, remained loyal to Francis and denied he had manipulated Benedict. But in the aftermath, Francis dismissed Benedict's secretary and several months later retired Sarah as the Vatican's liturgy chief. Even Sarah's supporters lamented the episode hurt his future papal chances.

— By Nicole Winfield in Vatican City

Cardinal Marc Ouellet

Date of Birth: June 8, 1944

Nationality: Canadian

Position: Retired

Experience: Head of the Vatican's office for bishops; president of Pontifical Commission for Latin America; archbishop of Quebec, Canada; rector of seminary in Colombia; member of the Sulpician religious order

Made a cardinal by: John Paul

Ouellet, 80, has long been on many a list of "papabile," or cardinals possessing the characteristics of a

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possible pope, given his work in the Vatican, pastoral experience and familiarity with Latin America, which counts more Catholics than any other region.

But his chances may have dimmed after he was accused of misconduct by a woman as part of a class-action lawsuit in his former archdiocese of Quebec, Canada. Ouellet strenuously denied the allegations, sued the woman for defamation, and Francis shelved the church investigation into him after a church investigator determined there weren't enough elements to bring forward a canonical trial.

Ouellet led the Vatican's influential bishops office for over a decade, overseeing the key clearinghouse for potential candidates to head dioceses around the world. Francis kept Ouellet in the job until 2023, even though Ouellet had originally been appointed by the more conservative Benedict.

Though Ouellet himself is considered more of a conservative than Francis, he still selected pastorally minded bishops to reflect Francis' belief that bishops should "smell like the sheep" of their flock. Ouellet defended priestly celibacy for the Roman Catholic Church and upheld the ban on women's ordination but called for women to have a greater role in church governance.

He kept good contacts with the Latin American church, having headed the Vatican's Pontifical Commission for Latin America for over a decade. In 2019, the Vatican's bishops' office started taking charge of investigating bishops accused of covering up for predator priests, a job that would have made Ouellet no friends among those sanctioned but may have also given him lots of otherwise confidential information about fellow cardinals.

— By Nicole Winfield in Vatican City

Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn

Date of Birth: Jan. 22, 1945

Nationality: Austrian

Position: Archbishop of Vienna

Experience: Edited the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the compendium of church teaching; member of the Dominican religious order

Made a cardinal by: John Paul

Schoenborn, 80, was a student of Benedict's, and thus on paper seems to have the chops to appeal to conservatives.

However, he became associated with one of Francis' most controversial moves by defending his outreach to divorced and civilly remarried Catholics as an "organic development of doctrine," not the rupture that some conservatives contended. Schoenborn's parents divorced when he was a teen, so the issue is personal.

He also took heat from the Vatican when he criticized its past refusal to sanction high-ranking sexual abusers, including his predecessor as archbishop of Vienna.

Schoenborn has expressed support for civil unions and women as deacons, and was instrumental in editing the 1992 update of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the handbook of the church's teaching that Benedict had spearheaded when he headed the Vatican's doctrine office.

He has been good-natured in indulging reporters who swarm cardinals each morning as they arrive for the preconclave meetings, offering responses in a variety of languages depending on the journalist asking.

Asked in Italian what sort of pope might be chosen, Schoenborn recalled that Francis' big meetings about the future of the church, known as synods, suggested continuity with Francis' focus on the church in the developing world.

"It was evident during the synod the weight and importance shifted towards the 'South' — Africa, Asia, Latin America," he said.

Black dandyism etches place into Met Gala history — and global visibility

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Black dandyism is taking center stage at the Met Gala, with cultural powerhouses leading this subversive, sharply tailored style into the global fashion spotlight.

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As a gala host committee member, Janelle Monáe and other trendsetters are helping shape the conversation, framing Black dandyism as a proud tradition — rather than a mere trend — claiming its long-overdue moment of visibility.

"It's always important to educate and reeducate to the world as much as we possibly can through art and through our greatness," said Monáe, the Grammy-nominated performer who had made dandy style a signature of her fashion.

Monáe, inspired by family members who proudly sported the look throughout her upbringing, views the spotlight as an opportunity to pay homage to the past and inspire the future.

"Dandyism is pretty much a part of my fashion DNA through tailoring and suiting," the singer-actor said. "I've honored my ancestors and my family who wore their uniforms, wore their suits to serve our community. It fell right in line with who I am, and the people I want to bring with me that helped build this country."

On Monday, with the world watching, a wave of fashion disruptors and stylists will usher Black dandyism from the margins to the Met Gala, as the Metropolitan Museum of Art unveils its new costume exhibit, "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style." It marks the Met's first show centered exclusively on Black designers and the first in more than two decades to spotlight menswear. It's also a tribute to the rich legacy of dandyism, a style that has long carved space for radical self-expression, especially for those overlooked or misunderstood.

"It's been a long time coming," said Kyle Smith, the NFL's first-ever fashion editor, who has styled the league's top players, including Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow, Los Angeles Rams wideout Puka Nacua and receiver Kenny Stills.

"It's great to see the recognition that Black culture is having or has in fashion for years," Smith said. "It's been there and very subtle, or just not recognized. I think this year's theme is long overdue. I'm excited to see everybody's outfits and how they interact with the idea of Black dandyism."

Pillars of Black dandyism

This year's Met Gala co-chairs include Pharrell Williams, Lewis Hamilton, Colman Domingo, A\$AP Rocky and honorary chair LeBron James, with Monáe joining the host committee alongside the likes of Simone Biles, Spike Lee, Ayo Edebiri and André 3000.

"I think honoring minorities, honoring Black and brown people in these spaces and outside every day, is important," said Monáe, who plans to use the red carpet to debut an exclusive collaboration with 1800 Tequila. "The ones who have dedicated their lives to this country to serve, build and give us art to sustain us for a lifetime. We should continue to honor them and push forward and stand on their shoulders."

Several trailblazers helped popularize Black dandyism, a style whose roots trace back to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. From the beginning, dandyism served as a sartorial declaration, reclaiming elegance and luxury as tools of empowerment, challenging stereotypes and honoring Black legacy.

This Met Gala moment stands on the shoulders of icons like Frederick Douglass, who wielded sharp dress as a form of power, and Duke Ellington, who transformed suiting into cultural brilliance.

Host committee member Dapper Dan reimagined Harlem fashion, remixing luxury into bold statements of Black pride, while the late André Leon Talley — with his capes and commanding presence — redefined fashion authority.

Today's Black dandies carry that legacy forward, blending tradition and rebellion in every lapel for a style that speaks volumes before a word is ever spoken.

"We are the walking versions that they imagined," said El Lewis, an Atlanta-based stylist, who has worked with several entertainers including Usher, Young Thug, Chloe and Halle Bailey, and Justin Skye. "A lot of these people died not being able to have these realities come to fruition. We have a lot of autonomy to ourselves, and I think that's what they were probably seeking. They wanted to be able to do anything at any moment at any time. And I think that's what they get to see us do."

Met Gala pushes dandyism forward

Stylist Brian Robinson said that if Talley were alive, he would have left an unforgettable mark on the gala's defining looks.

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"He would definitely be behind conversation pieces underneath the restraint to educate," Robinson said of Talley, the influential former creative director and editor at large at Vogue magazine. He died at the age of 73 in 2022.

"He would have been able to put dandyism in a positive light for people to understand the importance of being able to celebrate and highlight our culture," said Robinson, who has worked with Keyshia Cole and Naturi Naughton. "He would push for the understanding of the agricultural aesthetic of style, being able to understand how it highlights not only your personality, but how it can also make you feel good as a person."

Smith hopes the Met Gala inspires people to embrace the joy of dressing up, because that's the heart of dandyism. He's eager to see that spirit reflected both on the streets and in the player tunnels at professional games.

"I want to see it more in our tunnel fits in the NFL," he said. "Take some fashion tips from the Met. Look at what everybody's wearing and how they're exploring fashion. I want to see how everybody expresses themselves and how they leave their mark in the fashion world."

Trump signs executive order directing federal funding cuts to PBS and NPR

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday signed an executive order aiming to slash public subsidies to PBS and NPR as he alleged "bias" in the broadcasters' reporting.

The order instructs the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and other federal agencies "to cease Federal funding for NPR and PBS" and further requires that they work to root out indirect sources of public financing for the news organizations. The White House, in a social media posting announcing the signing, said the outlets "receive millions from taxpayers to spread radical, woke propaganda disguised as 'news.'"

It's the latest move by Trump and his administration to utilize federal powers to control or hamstring institutions whose actions or viewpoints he disagrees with. Since taking office, Trump has ousted leaders, placed staff on administrative leave and cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in funding to artists, libraries, museums, theaters and others, through takeovers of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Trump has also pushed to withhold federal research and education funds from universities and punish law firms unless they agreed to eliminate diversity programs and other measures Trump has found objectionable.

The broadcasters get roughly half a billion dollars in public money through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and have been preparing for the possibility of stiff cuts since Trump's election, as Republicans have long complained about them.

Paula Kerger, PBS' CEO and president, said in a statement last month that the Trump administration's effort to rescind funding for public media would "disrupt the essential service PBS and local member stations provide to the American people."

"There's nothing more American than PBS, and our work is only possible because of the bipartisan support we have always received from Congress," she said. "This public-private partnership allows us to help prepare millions of children for success in school and in life and also supports enriching and inspiring programs of the highest quality."

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting sued Trump earlier this week over his move to fire three members of its five-person board, contending that the president was exceeding his authority and that the move would deprive the board of a quorum needed to conduct business.

Just two weeks ago, the White House said it would be asking Congress to rescind funding for the CPB as part of a \$9.1 billion package of cuts. That package, however, which budget director Russell Vought said would likely be the first of several, has not yet been sent to Capitol Hill.

The move against PBS and NPR comes as his administration has been working to dismantle the U.S. Agency for Global Media, including Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which were designed to model independent news gathering globally in societies that restrict the press. Those efforts

have faced pushback from federal courts, who have ruled in some cases that the Trump administration may have overstepped its authority in holding back funds appropriated to the outlets by Congress.

Army plans for a potential parade on Trump's birthday call for 6,600 soldiers, AP learns

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Detailed Army plans for a potential military parade on President Donald Trump's birthday in June call for more than 6,600 soldiers, at least 150 vehicles, 50 helicopters, seven bands and possibly a couple thousand civilians, The Associated Press has learned.

The planning documents, obtained by the AP, are dated April 29 and 30 and have not been publicly released. They represent the Army's most recent blueprint for its long-planned 250th anniversary festival on the National Mall and the newly added element — a large military parade that Trump has long wanted but is still being discussed.

The Army anniversary just happens to coincide with Trump's 79th birthday on June 14.

While the slides do not include any price estimates, it would likely cost tens of millions of dollars to put on a parade of that size. Costs would include the movement of military vehicles, equipment, aircraft and troops from across the country to Washington and the need to feed and house thousands of service members.

High costs halted Trump's push for a parade in his first term, and the tanks and other heavy vehicles that are part of the Army's latest plans have raised concerns from city officials about damage to roads.

Asked about plans for a parade, Army spokesman Steve Warren said Thursday that no final decisions have been made.

Col. Dave Butler, another Army spokesman, added that the Army is excited about the plans for its anniversary.

"We want to make it into an event that the entire nation can celebrate with us," said Butler. "We want Americans to know their Army and their soldiers. A parade might become part of that, and we think that will be an excellent addition to what we already have planned."

Others familiar with the documents, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the plans have not been finalized, said they represent the Army's plans as it prepares for any White House approval of the parade. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

There has been no formal approval yet. Changes to the plans have been made in recent weeks and more are likely.

In a Truth Social post Thursday night that did not mention the June 14 plans, Trump wrote, "We are going to start celebrating our victories again!" He vowed to rename May 8, now known as Victory in Europe Day, as "Victory Day for World War II," and to change November 11, Veterans Day, to "Victory Day for World War I."

What would go into the potential Army parade

Much of the equipment would have to be brought in by train or flown in.

Some equipment and troops were already going to be included in the Army's birthday celebration, which has been in the works for more than a year. The festival was set to involve an array of activities and displays on the National Mall, including a fitness competition, climbing wall, armored vehicles, Humvees, helicopters and other equipment.

A parade, however, would increase the equipment and troops involved. According to the plans, as many as 6,300 of the service members would be marching in the parade, while the remainder would be responsible for other tasks and support.

The Army's early festival plans did not include a parade, but officials confirmed last month that the Army had started discussions about adding one.

The plans say the parade would showcase the Army's 250 years of service and foresee bringing in soldiers from at least 11 corps and divisions nationwide. Those could include a Stryker battalion with two companies of Stryker vehicles, a tank battalion and two companies of tanks, an infantry battalion with

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Bradley vehicles, Paladin artillery vehicles, Howitzers and infantry vehicles.

There would be seven Army bands and a parachute jump by the Golden Knights. And documents suggest that civilian participants would include historical vehicles and aircraft and two bands, along with people from veterans groups, military colleges and reenactor organizations.

According to the plan, the parade would be classified as a national special security event, and that request has been submitted by the National Park Service and is under review.

And it is expected that the evening parade would be followed by a concert and fireworks.

One of the documents raises concerns about some limitations, which include where troops would be housed and "significant concerns regarding security requirements" as equipment flows into the city. It says the biggest unknown so far is which units would be participating.

Trump has long wanted a big military parade

In his first term, Trump proposed having a parade after seeing one in France on Bastille Day in 2017. Trump said that after watching the two-hour procession along the famed Champs-Élysées that he wanted an even grander one on Pennsylvania Avenue.

That plan was ultimately dumped due to the huge costs — with one estimate of a \$92 million price tag — and other logistical issues. Among those were objections from city officials who said including tanks and other heavy armored vehicles would tear up the roads.

Trump said in a social media post in 2018 that he was canceling the event over the costs and accused local politicians of price gouging.

This year, as plans progressed for the Army to host its birthday festival in Washington, talk about a parade began anew.

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser acknowledged in April that the administration reached out to the city about holding a parade on June 14 that would stretch from Arlington, Virginia, where the Pentagon and Arlington National Cemetery are located, across the Potomac River and into Washington.

Bowser at the time said she didn't know if the event was being "characterized as a military parade" but added that tanks rolling through the city's streets "would not be good."

"If military tanks were used, they should be accompanied with many millions of dollars to repair the roads," she said.

In 2018, the Pentagon appeared to agree. A memo from the defense secretary's staff said plans for the parade — at that time — would include only wheeled vehicles and no tanks to minimize damage to local infrastructure.

May Day demonstrations in US and around the globe protest Trump agenda

By SOPHIA TAREEN, THOMAS ADAMSON and YURI KAGEYAMA Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. and around the world rallied Thursday in May Day protests that united many in anger over President Donald Trump's agenda from aggressive tariffs that are stoking fears of global economic turmoil to his administration's immigration crackdowns.

In the United States, organizers framed this year's International Workers' Day protests as a pushback against what they see as the administration's sweeping assault on labor protections, diversity initiatives and federal employees. Protesters lined streets in many cities from New York to Philadelphia to Los Angeles and held a boisterous rally outside the White House in Washington.

Huge turnout as US May Day protests focus on Trump

In Chicago, thousands of people rallied in a West Side park before marching through downtown to the lakefront. Some played drums and danced while others chanted "No justice, no peace!" The crowd included union workers, immigrant rights advocates, pro-Palestinian activists and students calling for better-funded public schools.

"We need to stand up and fight back," said Latrina Barnes, a 48-year-old certified nurses assistant, adding that worries Medicaid and Medicare might be affected under the Trump administration inspired her to

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protest in a May Day rally for the first time.

Some rallygoers used humor to protest, displaying a Trump puppet, an inflatable Trump baby chicken and a Trump pinata shaped like a bull.

Vermont U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders spoke outside Philadelphia's City Hall during a rally after which the crowd marched in the streets. Dozens sat in an intersection wearing signs reading "Workers over billionaires," and police began taking some of them into custody, leading them to nearby buses.

In downtown Los Angeles, thousands of demonstrators marched, hoisting signs saying "Immigrants make America great," "Migration is beautiful" and "It's not the time to be silent." With bands playing and flags waving, the gathering had the feel of a celebration.

"We're bringing the fight to the billionaires and politicians who are trying to divide us with fear and lies," said April Verrett, president of the Service Employees International Union, which represents 2 million workers.

A number of speakers demanded elected officials protect workers' and immigrants' rights. With the slogan "One Struggle, One Fight — Workers Unite," the event was organized by the Los Angeles May Day Coalition, made up of labor unions and community-based groups.

In Atlanta, hundreds gathered at a downtown park across from the state Capitol. The crowd included some retired U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention workers. The CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and is expected to lose around 2,400 employees due to cuts by the Trump administration.

"We really want to stand up for all of our fellow laborers who were laid off or just fired with no real reason," said Deblina Datta, who worked on global immunization efforts before retiring in 2023. "We really want to make a cry that without the CDC, bad things will happen."

In New York City, hundreds of lawyers and their supporters gathered near courthouses in Lower Manhattan for a "National Rule of Law Day" rally to decry what some called the Trump administration's disrespect of the legal system.

Hours later, a few thousand people were back in the same public square for a May Day march with labor activists, union members and others carrying LGBTQ flags and signs condemning Trump's crackdown on immigrants.

The arrest of Columbia University graduate student and Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil sent a message "that anyone who disagrees with this president will face consequences," Veronica Salama, the New York Civil Liberties Union lawyer representing him, told the crowd.

"This is about all of us in the face of escalating repression," Salama said. "We recognize the interconnectedness of our struggles."

European rallies target trade policies, rise of far-right

French union leaders condemned the "Trumpization" of world politics, saying demonstrations throughout the country were fueled by anger over U.S. military and trade influence in Europe. Far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon accused the U.S. of pushing Europe toward conflict and economic subservience.

"If the North Americans don't want our goods anymore, we can just sell them to others," he said.

In Germany, union leaders warned that extended workdays and rising anti-immigrant sentiment were dismantling labor protections. In Bern, Switzerland, thousands marched behind banners denouncing fascism and war — part of a wider backlash against the global surge of hard-right politics.

In Spain, thousands marched in Madrid, Barcelona and other cities, with demands ranging from a shorter workweek to answers for a historic power outage that blacked out the Iberian Peninsula earlier this week. Trump's name also surfaced.

"The world has changed a bit with Trump's arrival," said Ángel López, 56, a worker from Madrid. "The arrival of the far right to a country like the United States is a major global shift."

Trump-fueled economic fears raised in Asia protests

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te cited the new U.S. tariffs under Trump as he promoted a sweeping economic package aimed at shoring up jobs and industry. In the Philippines, protest leader Mong Palatino warned that "tariff wars and policies of Trump" threatened local industries and people's livelihoods.

Some 2,500 union members marched from the Taiwanese presidential office in Taipei, warning that

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Trump's tariffs could lead to job losses.

"This is why we hope the government can propose plans to protect the rights of laborers," said union leader Carlos Wang.

In Manila, thousands of Filipino workers rallied near the presidential palace, where police blocked access with barricades. Protesters demanded wage hikes and stronger protections for local jobs and small businesses.

In Jakarta, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto addressed a cheering crowd at the National Monument Park. "The government that I lead will work as hard as possible to eliminate poverty from Indonesia," he said.

Istanbul mayor's arrest is focus of protests in Turkey

In Turkey, May Day served as a platform not only for labor rights but for broader calls to uphold democratic values.

Tens of thousands gathered on Istanbul's Asian shore where some protested the jailing of Istanbul's opposition mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu. His imprisonment in March sparked the country's largest protests in more than a decade.

Authorities blocked access to central Istanbul and shut down transit lines. Istanbul governor's office said 384 people had been detained.

Singapore's long-ruling party seeks stronger election victory in test for new prime minister

By EILEEN NG Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Singaporeans will vote Saturday in a general election that is set to return to power the city-state's long ruling party, and it will be closely watched as a gauge of public confidence in Prime Minister Lawrence Wong's leadership.

The People's Action Party has won every election since the Asian financial hub gained independence in 1965. Wong, who took office last year, hopes to clinch a stronger mandate after the PAP suffered a setback in 2020 polls over voters' rising discontent with the government.

Here's what to know about the Singapore election.

How does the vote work?

Singapore holds a general election every five years and voting is compulsory. Its electoral system involves single-member wards along with group representation constituencies (GRCs) where voters pick a team of up to six members rather than individual candidates. The team includes at least one member from a minority ethnic group.

The GRCs ensure minority representation in Parliament, but critics say they entrench the PAP and make it harder for the opposition to contest. Ethnic Chinese are the majority in Singapore, while Malays and Indians are in the minority.

Nearly 2.76 million voters are registered to elect 97 members of Parliament, but five seats have already been won uncontested by the PAP after the opposition failed to nominate candidates in a GRC. There are 33 constituencies, comprising 15 single-member wards and 18 GRCs.

Voting opens at 8 a.m. (OOOO GMT), runs for 12 hours, and results are expected the same night.

What's at stake?

The election is the first test for Wong, 52, since he succeeded Lee Hsien Loong, who stepped down last year after two decades at the helm. Lee's departure marked the end of a family dynasty started by his father, Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's first leader, who built the former colonial backwater into one of the world's richest nations during 31 years in office.

Known for its clean and effective governance, the PAP is seen as a beacon of stability and prosperity. While it is assured of victory, its support is being chipped away by unhappiness over government control and a high cost of living. Widening income disparity, increasingly unaffordable housing, overcrowding caused by immigration and restrictions on free speech have also loosened the PAP's grip on power.

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In 2020 polls, the PAP's share of popular support slipped to a near-record low of 61%, down from nearly 70% in 2015. The PAP kept 83 out of 93 parliamentary seats, but it ceded more seats to the opposition, which won 10 seats, the most ever.

The opposition has acknowledged it cannot unseat the PAP but is appealing to voters for a stronger voice in Parliament.

Wong, a U.S.-trained economist and former finance minister, warned this would only weaken the government as it navigates economic turbulence following U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff hikes. The government has lowered its growth forecast, and warned of a possible recession.

"If the PAP has a weakened mandate, you can be sure there will be people tempted to push us around. It will be harder for us to advance Singapore's interest. But with a clear mandate from you, my team and I can speak up for Singapore confidently," Wong said while campaigning this week.

The PAP has fielded many new faces to refresh the party. Wong offered cash handouts, vouchers and other goodies in this year's national budget, and sought to engage younger voters in developing a more balanced and inclusive Singapore. A strong PAP performance would help seal Wong's leadership and determine whether the one-party dominance in Singapore could endure over the next decade.

"The ruling party has portrayed the ongoing tariffs war as a crisis for trade-reliant Singapore," said Eugene Tan, a law professor at Singapore Management University. "Will voters rally behind the PAP, or will they come to view the political system ... as being robust enough and can accommodate more political diversity and competition?"

Who are the PAP's rivals?

The Workers Party, led by lawyer Pritam Singh, is the biggest opposition party and the only one with a presence in Parliament. Singh was named as Singapore's first opposition leader after the WP won 10 seats in the 2020 polls. But despite gaining ground over the years, the opposition still struggles with limited resources and talent, and fragmented support.

The WP is fielding only 26 candidates in this election. Singh has said even if the WP won all 26 seats, it wouldn't hamper the PAP but lead to a more balanced political system and greater accountability. The remaining seats are contested by nine smaller opposition parties and coalitions, as well as two independent candidates.

"The WP threat is taken seriously by the PAP and it will be a keener contest than in 2020. It remains to be seen how many more seats it will win. But even an additional seat won will add to the WP's standing and builds on the momentum to erode the one-party dominant system," said law professor Tan.

Trump threatens sanctions against buyers of Iranian oil after US-Iran nuclear talks are postponed

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday threatened sanctions on anyone who buys Iranian oil, a warning that came after planned talks over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program were postponed.

Trump wrote on social media, "All purchases of Iranian Oil, or Petrochemical products, must stop, NOW!" He said any country or person who buys those products from Iran will not be able to do business with the United States "in any way, shape, or form."

It was unclear how Trump would implement such a ban as he threatened to levy secondary sanctions on nations that import Iranian oil. But his statement risked further escalating tensions with China — Iran's leading customer — at a time when the relationship is severely strained over the U.S. president's tariffs.

Based on tanker tracking data, the U.S. Energy Information Administration concluded in a report published last October that "China took nearly 90% of Iran's crude oil and condensate exports in 2023." Trump has separately placed 145% tariffs on China as a way to raise federal revenues and rebalance global trade.

Trump's social media threat came after Oman announced planned nuclear negotiations for this coming weekend had been postponed. Omani Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaidi made the announcement in a post

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on the social platform X.

"For logistical reasons we are rescheduling the US Iran meeting provisionally planned for Saturday May 3rd," he wrote. "New dates will be announced when mutually agreed."

Al-Busaidi, who has mediated the talks through three rounds so far, did not elaborate.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also blamed "logistical and technical reasons" for the postponement.

"On Iran's part, there is no change in our determination to secure a negotiated solution," he wrote on X. "We are more determined than ever to achieve a just and balanced deal: guaranteeing an end to sanctions, and creating confidence that Iran's nuclear program will forever remain peaceful while ensuring that Iranian rights are fully respected."

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, newly tapped to take over the duties of national security adviser in addition to his current role as America's top diplomat, reiterated that if Iran wants nuclear power plants, it can import enriched uranium.

"Iran simply needs to say, 'We've agreed to no longer enrich,'" Rubio said on Fox News Channel's "Hannity" on Thursday night. About the talks, he added, "This is the best opportunity they're going to have."

Meanwhile, a person familiar with the U.S. negotiations said America "had never confirmed its participation" in a fourth round of talks in Rome. However, the person said the U.S. expected the talks to occur "in the near future." The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door negotiations.

Rome will see the Vatican begin its conclave next week to pick a new pope after the death of Pope Francis. Two other rounds of U.S.-Iran talks have been held in Muscat, the capital of Oman.

The talks seek to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of some of the crushing economic sanctions the U.S. has imposed on the Islamic Republic closing in on a half-century of enmity. The negotiations have been led by Araghchi and U.S. Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to unleash airstrikes targeting Iran's program if a deal isn't reached. Iranian officials increasingly warn that they could pursue a nuclear weapon with their stockpile of uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels.

The U.S. president with his threat on social media would be going after Iran's major economic resource. It produced an average of 2.9 million barrels a day in 2023 of crude oil, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers did limit Tehran's program. However, Trump unilaterally withdrew from it in 2018, setting in motion years of attacks and tensions. The wider Middle East also remains on edge over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, the U.S. continues an airstrike campaign, called "Operation Rough Rider," that has been targeting Yemen's Houthi rebels, who long have been backed by Iran. U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth early Thursday warned Iran over the rebels.

"Message to IRAN: We see your LETHAL support to The Houthis. We know exactly what you are doing," he wrote. "You know very well what the U.S. Military is capable of — and you were warned. You will pay the CONSEQUENCE at the time and place of our choosing."

Last Saturday's round of talks, which included experts drilling down into the details of a possible deal, also took place as an explosion rocked an Iranian port, killing at least 70 people and injuring more than 1,000 others.

The Justice Department ended a decades-old school desegregation order. Others are expected to fall

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — When the Justice Department lifted a school desegregation order in Louisiana this week, officials called its continued existence a "historical wrong" and suggested that others dating to the Civil Rights Movement should be reconsidered.

The end of the 1966 legal agreement with Plaquemines Parish schools announced Tuesday shows the

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Trump administration is "getting America refocused on our bright future," Assistant Attorney General Harmeet Dhillon said.

Inside the Justice Department, officials appointed by President Donald Trump have expressed desire to withdraw from other desegregation orders they see as an unnecessary burden on schools, according to a person familiar with the issue who was granted anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

Dozens of school districts across the South remain under court-enforced agreements dictating steps to work toward integration, decades after the Supreme Court struck down racial segregation in education. Some see the court orders' endurance as a sign the government never eradicated segregation, while officials in Louisiana and at some schools see the orders as bygone relics that should be wiped away.

The Justice Department opened a wave of cases in the 1960s, after Congress unleashed the department to go after schools that resisted desegregation. Known as consent decrees, the orders can be lifted when districts prove they have eliminated segregation and its legacy.

The small Louisiana district has a long-running integration case

The Trump administration called the Plaquemines case an example of administrative neglect. The district in the Mississippi River Delta Basin in southeast Louisiana was found to have integrated in 1975, but the case was to stay under the court's watch for another year. The judge died the same year, and the court record "appears to be lost to time," according to a court filing.

"Given that this case has been stayed for a half-century with zero action by the court, the parties or any third-party, the parties are satisfied that the United States' claims have been fully resolved," according to a joint filing from the Justice Department and the office of Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill.

Plaquemines Superintendent Shelley Ritz said Justice Department officials still visited every year as recently as 2023 and requested data on topics including hiring and discipline. She said the paperwork was a burden for her district of fewer than 4,000 students.

"It was hours of compiling the data," she said.

Louisiana "got its act together decades ago," said Leo Terrell, senior counsel to the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department, in a statement. He said the dismissal corrects a historical wrong, adding it's "past time to acknowledge how far we have come."

Murrill asked the Justice Department to close other school orders in her state. In a statement, she vowed to work with Louisiana schools to help them "put the past in the past."

Civil rights activists say that's the wrong move. Many orders have been only loosely enforced in recent decades, but that doesn't mean problems are solved, said Johnathan Smith, who worked in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division during President Joe Biden's administration.

"It probably means the opposite — that the school district remains segregated. And in fact, most of these districts are now more segregated today than they were in 1954," said Smith, who is now chief of staff and general counsel for the National Center for Youth Law.

Desegregation orders involve a range of instructions

More than 130 school systems are under Justice Department desegregation orders, according to records in a court filing this year. The vast majority are in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi, with smaller numbers in states like Florida, Louisiana and South Carolina. Some other districts remain under separate desegregation agreements with the Education Department.

The orders can include a range of remedies, from busing requirements to district policies allowing students in predominately Black schools to transfer to predominately white ones. The agreements are between the school district and the U.S. government, but other parties can ask the court to intervene when signs of segregation resurface.

In 2020, the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund invoked a consent decree in Alabama's Leeds school district when it stopped offering school meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The civil rights group said it disproportionately hurt Black students, in violation of the desegregation order. The district agreed to resume meals.

Last year, a Louisiana school board closed a predominately Black elementary school near a petrochemi-

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cal facility after the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund said it disproportionately exposed Black students to health risks. The board made the decision after the group filed a motion invoking a decades-old desegregation order at St. John the Baptist Parish.

Closing cases could lead to legal challenges

The dismissal has raised alarms among some who fear it could undo decades of progress. Research on districts released from orders has found that many saw greater increases in racial segregation compared with those under court orders.

"In very many cases, schools quite rapidly resegregate, and there are new civil rights concerns for students," said Halley Potter, a senior fellow at The Century Foundation who studies educational inequity.

Ending the orders would send a signal that desegregation is no longer a priority, said Robert Westley, a professor of antidiscrimination law at Tulane University Law School in New Orleans.

"It's really just signaling that the backsliding that has started some time ago is complete," Westley said. "The United States government doesn't really care anymore of dealing with problems of racial discrimination in the schools. It's over."

Any attempt to drop further cases would face heavy opposition in court, said Raymond Pierce, president and CEO of the Southern Education Foundation.

"It represents a disregard for education opportunities for a large section of America. It represents a disregard for America's need to have an educated workforce," he said. "And it represents a disregard for the rule of law."

US Forest Service starts clearing homeless camp in Oregon national forest

By JENNY KANE and CLAIRE RUSH Associated Press

BEND, Ore. (AP) — Dozens of homeless people who have been living in a national forest in central Oregon for years were being evicted Thursday by the U.S. Forest Service, as it closed the area for a wildfire prevention project that will involve removing smaller trees, clearing debris and setting controlled burns over thousands of acres.

The project has been on the books for years, and the decision to remove the encampment in the Deschutes National Forest comes two months after the Trump administration issued an executive order directing federal agencies to increase timber production and forest management projects aimed at reducing wildfire risk.

Deschutes National Forest spokesperson Kaitlyn Webb said in an email that the closure order was "directly tied to the forest restoration work." Homeless advocates, meanwhile, seized on the timing on Thursday as U.S. Forest Service officers blocked the access road.

"The fact that they are doing this with such vigor shortly after they announced that the forests would be opened up for logging I don't think is a coincidence," said Jesse Rabinowitz, spokesperson for the National Homelessness Law Center.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees the U.S. Forest Service, and the service's Pacific Northwest Region did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment.

"The closure does not target any specific user group and will restrict all access, including day use and overnight camping, while crews operate heavy machinery, conduct prescribed burns, and clean up hazardous materials," Webb said. "It's not safe for the public to be in the area while heavy machinery is operating, trees are being felled, mowing operations are active, and prescribed burning is occurring."

Campers who had set up trailers, recreational vehicles and tents amidst the ponderosa pines in the forest scrambled in the darkness Wednesday night to pack up and get their engines working again. Authorities closed the two-lane road in the early hours of Thursday morning, and it wasn't immediately clear how many people were left in the forest by the afternoon, though some were unable to leave.

The U.S. Forest Service has been working for years on plans to close part of the Deschutes National Forest near Bend for forest restoration and wildfire mitigation. But the number of people living in that part

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of the forest has grown, with many losing homes during the coronavirus pandemic due to job losses and high housing costs, Rabinowitz said.

The wildfire mitigation effort

President Donald Trump's administration has acted to roll back environmental safeguards around future logging projects on more than half of U.S. national forests, under an emergency designation that cites dangers from wildfires.

Whether the administration's move will boost lumber supplies as Trump envisioned in an executive order he signed in March remains to be seen. Former President Joe Biden's administration also sought more logging in public forests to combat fires, which have become more intense amid drier and hotter conditions linked to climate change, yet U.S. Forest Service timber sales stayed relatively flat under his tenure.

The Cabin Butte Vegetation Management Project, a wildfire mitigation treatment on some 30,000 acres (12,000 hectares), is prompting the closures in the Deschutes National Forest.

The goal of the work is to reduce wildfire risk and restore damaged habitats where development encroaches on natural areas near Bend, Deschutes National Forest officials said in a statement. Recreation sites and trails in that area will be closed through April next year.

Multiple U.S. Forest Service officials and vehicles were stationed at the Deschutes National Forest road closure on Thursday. A sign on the metal gate blocking the road said the temporary emergency closure will last at least one year.

Violators could face up to six months in jail, fines up to \$5,000, or both.

Judge declines to block the closure

On Wednesday night, Mandy Bryant, who said she had lived in the encampment for about three years, was cleaning up her site and trying to get a trailer to start so she could move it.

"You could feel the heaviness in the air and just the stress and depression that people are feeling," she told The Associated Press. "We're up there on the list of groups of people that society doesn't really care for."

Four people living in the encampment including Bryant, along with two homeless advocates, filed for a restraining order to stop the closure. The claim argued it would cause irreparable harm to more than 100 people who were living there, many of whom have disabilities.

The government responded in court filings that U.S. Forest Service staff in January began notifying homeless people living in the area of the upcoming closure. Original plans for the project were published in 2019 and were authorized by the U.S. Forest Service in 2023, the court filings said.

U.S. District Court Judge Michael McShane denied the restraining order on Tuesday and issued a written opinion on Thursday.

"The public's significant interest in restoring natural habitats, preventing catastrophic wildfires, and preserving the overall health of Deschutes National Forest is not outweighed by the interest of 150 or so individuals in residing on this particular plot of land," he wrote in his ruling.

Webb, the Deschutes National Forest spokesperson, told The Oregonian/OregonLive that the government's goal is "voluntary compliance," but Forest Service officers and staff will patrol and "enforce the closure and ensure public safety."

Trump nominates Mike Waltz for UN ambassador in major shake-up of national security team

By ZEKE MILLER, AAMER MADHANI, SEUNG MIN KIM and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Thursday that he is nominating national security adviser Mike Waltz as United Nations ambassador while Secretary of State Marco Rubio would take over Waltz's duties on an interim role.

He announced the major shake-up of his national security team shortly after news broke that Waltz and his deputy are leaving the administration. Waltz has been under scrutiny for weeks after reporting from The Atlantic that he had mistakenly added the magazine's editor-in-chief to a Signal chat being used to

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discuss military plans.

"I am pleased to announce that I will be nominating Mike Waltz to be the next United States Ambassador to the United Nations. From his time in uniform on the battlefield, in Congress and, as my National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz has worked hard to put our Nation's Interests first," Trump wrote on social media.

"In the interim, Secretary of State Marco Rubio will serve as National Security Advisor, while continuing his strong leadership at the State Department. Together, we will continue to fight tirelessly to Make America, and the World, SAFE AGAIN."

There is precedent for the secretary of state to serve simultaneously as national security adviser. Henry Kissinger held both positions from 1973 to 1975.

It's not clear how long Rubio will hold both jobs.

But he'll be doing double duty at a moment when the Trump administration is facing no shortage of foreign policy challenges — the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, Iran's rapidly advancing nuclear program and an uncertain world economy in the midst of Trump's global tariff war.

Waltz came under searing criticism in March after revelations that he added journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to a private text chain on an encrypted messaging app that was used to discuss planning for a sensitive military operation against Houthi militants in Yemen.

Vice President JD Vance pushed back on characterizations that Waltz was ousted.

"The media wants to frame this as a firing. Donald Trump has fired a lot of people," Vance said in an interview with Bret Baier of Fox News Channel. "He doesn't give them Senate-confirmed appointments afterwards."

Trump scrapped first UN pick

Trump's decision to move Waltz to the U.N. comes weeks after he pulled his pick for the job, Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York, from consideration over fears about Republicans' tight voting margins in the U.S. House.

"I'm deeply honored to continue my service to President Trump and our great nation," Waltz said Thursday.

His shift from national security adviser to U.N. ambassador nominee means he will now have to face a Senate confirmation hearing.

The process, which proved to be difficult for a number of Trump's Cabinet picks, will give lawmakers, especially Democrats, the first chance to grill Waltz on his decision to share information about an imminent U.S. airstrike on Signal.

Sen. Chris Coons, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, signaled that Waltz will face difficult questions.

"I look forward to a thorough confirmation hearing," Coons said on social media.

Several aides under consideration for Waltz's job

Trump is believed to be weighing several senior aides to eventually take on the national security adviser role, including special envoys Steve Witkoff and Richard Grenell, National Security Council senior director for counterterrorism Sebastian Gorka and senior State Department official Michael Anton, according to several people familiar with the ongoing deliberations.

Witkoff, a fellow New York City real estate maverick who has known Trump for years, has played a key role in negotiations to end the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas conflict and has been the administration's chief interlocutor in the Iran nuclear talks launched last month.

Witkoff has expressed no interest in taking the job, which requires hands-on management of numerous agencies, but could, if asked by Trump, assume temporary control of the NSC, according to one U.S. official familiar with the matter.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, said Witkoff would prefer to stay in his current special envoy role, which is relatively independent and not tied to any particular bureaucracy.

Grenell, in addition to being Trump's envoy for special missions, is serving as the interim president at the Kennedy Center. He served as ambassador to Germany during Trump's first administration, was special

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presidential envoy for Serbia and Kosovo peace negotiations, and did a stint as acting director of national intelligence. He's also weighing running in next year's California governor's race.

Waltz had previously taken "full responsibility" for building the Signal message chain and administration officials described the episode as a "mistake" but one that caused Americans no harm. Waltz maintained that he was not sure how Goldberg ended up in the messaging chain, and insisted he did not know the journalist.

Trump and the White House — which insisted that no classified information was shared on the text chain — publicly stood by Waltz throughout the episode. But the embattled national security adviser was under siege from personalities such as Laura Loomer, who has encouraged Trump to purge aides who she believes are insufficiently loyal to the "Make America Great Again" agenda.

As reports began to circulate that Waltz could be leaving the administration, Loomer appeared to take credit in a post on the social media site X, writing: "SCALP."

"Hopefully, the rest of the people who were set to be fired but were given promotions at the NSC under Waltz also depart," Loomer wrote in another post.

Waltz gets 'soft landing' with UN nomination

Retired Navy Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery, an analyst at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies in Washington, said with the U.N. nomination Trump presented Waltz with a "soft landing" as he removed him from the powerful national security advisory post just over 100 days into the administration.

The Signal episode hurt Waltz. But even more damaging were the attacks by Loomer and his hawkish views on Iran and Russia, which are more in line with Republican orthodoxy, Montgomery said.

"He hurt himself by having to constantly defend his staff that were under inappropriate attack," Montgomery said. "I think Waltz tried as hard as he could to adjust his traditional thinking about foreign policy to the president's more opportunistic system, but the president is just a hard person to adjust to."

Hegseth continues to face scrutiny

Questions have also swirled around Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and his role in the Signal chat.

While Waltz set it up, Hegseth posted times for aircraft launches and bomb drops into the unsecured app and shared the same information with dozens of people in a second chat, including his wife and brother.

The Associated Press reported that Hegseth also bypassed Pentagon security protocols to set up an unsecured line for a personal computer in his office — beside terminals where he was receiving classified information. That raises the possibility that sensitive information could have been put at risk of potential hacking or surveillance.

The Pentagon inspector general is investigating Hegseth's use of Signal, and he has faced criticism from Democrats and even some Republicans. It has added to the turmoil at the Pentagon at a time when Hegseth has dismissed or transferred multiple close advisers. Nonetheless, Trump has maintained public confidence in Hegseth.

Judge bars deportations of Venezuelans from South Texas under the Alien Enemies Act

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

A federal judge on Thursday barred the Trump administration from deporting any Venezuelans from South Texas under an 18th-century wartime law and said President Donald Trump's invocation of it was "unlawful."

U.S. District Court Judge Fernando Rodriguez Jr. is the first judge to rule that the Alien Enemies Act cannot be used against people who, the Republican administration claims, are gang members invading the United States. Rodriguez said he wouldn't interfere with the government's right to deport people in the country illegally through other means, but it could not rely on the 227-year-old law to do so.

"Neither the Court nor the parties question that the Executive Branch can direct the detention and removal of aliens who engage in criminal activity in the United States," wrote Rodriguez, who was nominated by Trump in 2018. But, the judge said, "the President's invocation of the AEA through the Proclamation

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exceeds the scope of the statute and is contrary to the plain, ordinary meaning of the statute's terms."

In March, Trump issued a proclamation claiming that the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua was invading the U.S. He said he had special powers to deport immigrants, identified by his administration as gang members, without the usual court proceedings.

"The Court concludes that the President's invocation of the AEA through the Proclamation exceeds the scope of the statute and, as a result, is unlawful," Rodriguez wrote.

In an interview on Fox News, Vice President JD Vance said the administration will be "aggressively appealing" the ruling and others that hem in the president's deportation power.

"The judge doesn't make that determination, whether the Alien Enemies Act can be deployed," Vance said. "I think the president of the United States is the one who determines whether this country is being invaded."

The chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Rep. Adriano Espaillat, D-N.Y., said in a statement the judge had made clear "what we all knew to be true: The Trump administration illegally used the Alien Enemies Act to deport people without due process."

The Alien Enemies Act has only been used three times before in U.S. history, most recently during World War II, when it was cited to intern Japanese-Americans.

The proclamation triggered a flurry of litigation as the administration tried to ship migrants it claimed were gang members to a notorious prison in El Salvador.

Rodriguez's ruling is significant because it is the first formal permanent injunction against the administration using the AEA and contends the president is misusing the law. "Congress never meant for this law to be used in this manner," said Lee Gelernt, the ACLU lawyer who argued the case, in response to the ruling.

Rodriguez agreed, noting that the provision has only been used during the two World Wars and the War of 1812. Trump claimed Tren de Aragua was acting at the behest of the Venezuelan government, but Rodriguez found that the activities the administration accused it of did not amount to an invasion or "predatory incursion," as the statute requires.

"The Proclamation makes no reference to and in no manner suggests that a threat exists of an organized, armed group of individuals entering the United States at the direction of Venezuela to conquer the country or assume control over a portion of the nation," Rodriguez wrote. "Thus, the Proclamation's language cannot be read as describing conduct that falls within the meaning of 'invasion' for purposes of the AEA."

If the administration appeals, it would go first to the New Orleans-based 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. That is among the nation's most conservative appeals courts and it also has ruled against what it saw as overreach on immigration matters by both the Obama and Biden administrations. In those cases, Democratic administrations had sought to make it easier for immigrants to remain in the U.S.

The administration, as it has in other cases challenging its expansive view of presidential power, could turn to appellate courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, in the form of an emergency motion for a stay pending an appeal.

The Supreme Court already has weighed in once on the issue of deportations under the AEA. The justices held that migrants alleged to be gang members must be given "reasonable time" to contest their removal from the country. The court has not specified the length of time.

It's possible that the losing side in the 5th Circuit would file an emergency appeal with the justices that also would ask them to short-circuit lower court action in favor of a definitive ruling from the nation's highest court. Such a decision likely would be months away, at least.

The Texas case is just one piece of a tangle of litigation sparked by Trump's proclamation.

The ACLU initially filed suit in the nation's capital to block deportations. U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg issued a temporary hold on removals and ordered the administration turn around planes that had left with detainees headed to El Salvador, a directive that was apparently ignored. Later, the Supreme Court weighed in.

The justices stepped in again late last month with an unusual postmidnight order halting deportations from North Texas, where the ACLU contended the administration was preparing for another round of

flights to El Salvador.

Apple posts stronger-than-expected Q2 results, says majority of US iPhones sold will come from India

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writers

Apple CEO Tim Cook said Thursday that the majority of iPhones sold in the U.S. in the current fiscal quarter will be sourced from India, while iPads and other devices will come from Vietnam as the company works to avoid the impact of President Trump's tariffs on its business.

Apple's earnings for the first three months of the year topped Wall Street's expectations thanks to high demand for its iPhones, and the company said tariffs had a limited effect on the fiscal second quarter's results.

Cook added that for the current quarter, assuming things don't change, Apple expects to see \$900 million added to its costs as a result of the tariffs, but Cook said the company remains "confident" in this business.

The Cupertino, California-based company earned \$24.78 billion, or \$1.65 per share, in the first three months of the year, up 4.8% from \$23.64 billion, or \$1.53 per share, in the same period a year earlier.

Revenue rose 5.1% to \$95.36 billion from \$90.75 billion.

Analysts, on average, were expecting earnings of \$1.62 per share on revenue of \$94.19 billion, according to a poll by FactSet.

The numbers for the January-March period provide a snapshot of how Apple was faring before President Trump's unveiling of sweeping tariffs in April that rattled the financial markets amid fears a trade war would reignite inflation and shove the U.S. economy into a recession.

"While it is likely that some of the sales growth was driven by consumers accelerating purchases ahead of expected tariff increases, margins remained healthy on the other side of the balance sheet," said Thomas Monteiro, an analyst at Investing.com. He added that the company "still has room for maneuver" regardless of the economic backdrop and will "likely not need to significantly deplete cash reserves to keep moving the needle."

Apple's reliance on Chinese factories to make its iPhones and other devices thrust the technology trendsetter into the crosshairs of Trump's trade war. The exposure caused Apple's stock price to plunge 23% shortly after the president announced the severity of the reciprocal tariffs, temporarily erasing \$773 billion in shareholder wealth in the process.

Most of those losses have since been recovered after Trump temporarily exempted iPhones and other electronics from the reciprocal tariffs, but Apple's stock remains down by nearly 5% since the April fusillade of tariffs.

Besides the trade war, Apple has been hurt by its inability to live up to its own hype surrounding artificial intelligence features on the iPhone 16 lineup that came out last fall.

The technology wasn't ready when the iPhone 16 went on sale. Some AI features have rolled out in parts of the world as part of software updates, but Apple still hasn't been able to live up to its original promise to make Siri smarter and more versatile. The missteps prompted Apple to pull advertising campaigns promoting AI breakthroughs on the iPhone, although the company still intends to release more features powered by the technology at some point.

Apple had been counting on its late entry into the AI craze to revive demand for the iPhone after last year's sales dipped 2% from 2023's levels. Apple said Wednesday that its phone sales climbed 1.9% to \$46.84 billion for the first three months of the year. Wall Street had expected iPhone sales of \$45.62 billion.

But the company continues to see its China business decline, with revenue from the Greater China region down 2.3% to \$16 billion for the quarter. Other regions, including the Americas, Europe and the rest of Asia, saw sales increases.

When Trump initially indicated his 145% tariffs on Chinese-made goods would apply to the iPhone, U.S. consumers rushed to stores to buy new devices rather than risk prices spiking higher after the duties began driving up costs. But the flurry of panic buying won't show up until Apple reports its results for the

April-June quarter this summer.

Trump's trade war has ramped up the pressure on Cook to work the same diplomatic sleight of hand that enabled the iPhone to avoid being stung by the China tariffs that the president imposed during his first administration.

Cook signaled his intention remain on good terms with Trump by arranging private meetings with him and personally donating \$1 million to the president's second inauguration ceremony before sitting on the dais when Trump was sworn into office on January 20. Apple subsequently announced plans to invest \$500 billion in the U.S. while hiring 20,000 workers during the next four years.

Trump's trade war also is prompting a push to Apple to shift all the production of the iPhones that it sells in the U.S. from China to India, where the company has been building up its supply chain for the past seven years, according to a recent story in the Financial Times. But the complicated logistics of making such a huge move likely couldn't be completed until next year, at the earliest, leaving Apple vulnerable to the vagaries of Trump's trade war.

Apple's stock fell \$5.81, or 2.7%, to \$207.51 in after-hours trading.

Driver who killed 4 by smashing through an Illinois after-school camp may have had health emergency

By JOHN O'CONNOR Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — The driver of a car that barreled through a building used for a popular after-school camp in central Illinois, killing three children and a teenager, was not under the influence of drugs or alcohol and may have had a medical emergency, police said Thursday.

No decisions have been made on whether to file charges against the 44-year-old driver, Illinois State Police Director Brendan F. Kelly said at a news conference. The driver is not in custody, Kelly said.

Evidence that she may have had a medical emergency was "not conclusive" and the investigation is ongoing, Kelly said.

The car went off the road Monday, crossing a field and smashing into the side of the building in Chatham used by Youth Needing Other Things Outdoors, also known as YNOT. It traveled through the building, striking people before exiting the other side.

Six other children were hospitalized. Four of them remained hospitalized, including one in critical condition, a state police spokesperson said after Thursday's news conference.

Those killed were Rylee Britton, 18, of Springfield, Ainsley Johnson, 8, Kathryn Corley, 7, and Alma Buhnerkempe, 7. All of the children were from Chatham, a community of about 15,000 outside the Illinois capital of Springfield.

The driver was not injured but was taken to a hospital for evaluation after the crash, Kelly said. She voluntarily submitted blood and urine samples that tested negative for drugs and alcohol, he said.

"Some evidence has been developed indicating the possibility of a medical emergency leading up to the crash," Kelly said. "However, the investigation of this information and other evidence has not yet concluded and will continue until all leads and research have been exhausted."

He would not elaborate on the possible health issue or say what evidence investigators have indicating a medical emergency may have occurred. He also would not say whether the driver was conscious and alert when emergency responders reached her.

Security camera footage showed the vehicle was "a substantial distance" away when it left the roadway, said Jamie Loftus, founder of YNOT Outdoors. It crossed the field, a road, the sidewalk and YNOT's parking lot before crashing through the building "with no apparent attempt to alter its direction," Loftus said earlier this week. The vehicle then crossed a gravel road and crashed into a pole and fence.

Kelly said the vehicle traveled more than 1,300 feet (396 meters) but would not elaborate and also would not say how fast the vehicle was moving.

He said he could not provide a timeline for completing the investigation and said charges, if appropriate, would be up to the Sangamon County state's attorney.

Harvey Weinstein's lawyers get their turn to question accuser Miriam Haley at #MeToo retrial

By JENNIFER PELTZ and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Harvey Weinstein's lawyers got their turn Thursday to question a woman who alleges the one-time Hollywood heavyweight held her down and forced oral sex on her nearly two decades ago.

Miriam Haley, testifying for a third day at Weinstein's rape retrial, was grilled about details of her recollections — such as exactly how she once propped open an apartment building door — and the bigger picture of her story.

Defense lawyer Jennifer Bonjean underscored that Haley, who was then looking for entertainment production work, stayed in touch with Weinstein despite feeling humiliated when he complimented her legs and asked for a massage at a meeting a few months before the alleged 2006 assault.

"You understood these were sexual overtures?" Bonjean asked.

Haley said she did.

"You rebuffed them, and he still gave you his phone number, right?"

"Yes," said Haley, who got a short gig on the Weinstein-produced "Project Runway" shortly after that meeting, which happened in his company's hotel suite during the 2006 Cannes Film Festival.

Haley has repeatedly testified that she was pursuing only job opportunities, nothing else, from Weinstein.

Bonjean also sparred with the witness over her decision to get a lawyer and hold a press conference airing her allegations as the #MeToo movement exploded in October 2017, fueled by other women's claims that the Oscar-winning producer had sexually assaulted or harassed them.

Weinstein, 73, has pleaded not guilty and denies sexually assaulting anyone. His lawyers argue that all of his accusers consented to sexual encounters in hopes of getting work in show business.

Haley, who has also gone by the name Mimi Haleyi, is the first of three accusers expected to testify at the retrial. She is reprising and adding some new details to testimony that led to Weinstein's since-overturned 2020 conviction.

She testified Wednesday that Weinstein assaulted her after inviting her to his apartment for what she expected to be a friendly, professional meeting. She said he pushed her onto a bed, ignoring her pleas of: "No, no — it's not going to happen."

She and two friends testified that she told them soon after that Weinstein had sexually assaulted her.

Haley testified that she took a prearranged flight to Los Angeles on Weinstein's dime the next day, and a few weeks later agreed to meet him at a Manhattan hotel. She said she had expected to talk in the lobby, but was instead directed to his room, where she says she had unwanted, but not forced, sex with him.

Even after that, Haley testified, she kept in touch, sometimes sending emails signed "Lots of love" to Weinstein and his assistant. She said that she was still trying to capitalize professionally on knowing Weinstein and that she "suppressed a lot of things" to cope with them.

Bonjean pointed out Thursday that when Haley went public in 2017, she didn't mention her subsequent sexual encounter with Weinstein, nor their continued contact.

"You told the press only part of the story, correct?" Bonjean asked.

"I told the part that was relevant to what I was trying to share," Haley said.

She denied Bonjean's suggestion that she spoke out in hopes of suing Weinstein, though she later sued and got a roughly \$475,000 settlement.

Focusing on the Cannes meeting, Bonjean pressed Haley on what to make of the fact that she had secured a meeting with a top producer while she had limited experience herself.

"So, as somebody in my position, I should have turned it down, is what you're saying?" Haley shot back.

"I'm not saying you should have done anything," Bonjean replied.

She will step away from Weinstein's defense team to attend to another trial after she finishes questioning Haley, who is due back on the stand Friday.

Weinstein's retrial includes charges related to Haley and another accuser from the original trial, Jessica

Mann, who alleges Weinstein raped her in 2013. He's also being tried, for the first time, for allegedly forcing oral sex on former model Kaja Sokola in 2006.

Mann and Sokola also are expected to testify.

The Associated Press generally does not name people who allege they've been sexually assaulted unless they give permission for their names to be used. Haley, Mann and Sokola have done so.

Trump's health agency urges therapy for transgender youth, not broader gender-affirming health care

By GEOFF MULVIHILL, CARLA K. JOHNSON and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

President Donald Trump's administration released a lengthy review of transgender health care on Thursday that advocates for a greater reliance on behavioral therapy rather than broad gender-affirming medical care for youths with gender dysphoria.

The 409-page Health and Human Services report questions standards for the treatment of transgender youth issued by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health and is likely to be used to bolster the government's abrupt shift in how to care for a subset of the population that has become a political lightning rod.

Major medical groups and those who treat transgender young people sharply criticized the new report as inaccurate.

This "best practices" report is in response to an executive order Trump issued days into his second term that says the federal government must not support gender transitions for anyone under age 19.

"Our duty is to protect our nation's children — not expose them to unproven and irreversible medical interventions," National Institutes of Health Director Dr. Jay Bhattacharya said in a statement. "We must follow the gold standard of science, not activist agendas."

The report questions the ethics of medical interventions for transgender young people, suggesting that adolescents are too young to give consent to life-changing treatments that could result in future infertility. It also cites and echoes a report in England that reinforced a decision by its public health services to stop prescribing puberty blockers outside of research settings.

The report's focus on therapy alone troubles advocates

The report accuses transgender care specialists of disregarding psychotherapy that might challenge preconceptions, partly because of a "mischaracterization of such approaches as 'conversion therapy,'" a discredited practice that seeks to change patients' sexual orientation or gender identification. About half the states have banned conversion therapy for minors.

The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry has said evidence shows conversion therapies inflict harm on young people, including elevated rates of suicidal thoughts.

HHS said its report does not address treatment for adults, is not clinical guidance and does not make any policy recommendations. However, it also says the review "is intended for policymakers, clinicians, therapists, medical organizations, and importantly, patients and their families," and it declares that medical professionals involved in transgender care have failed their young patients.

The report could create fear for families seeking care and for medical providers, said Shannon Minter, the legal director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "It's very chilling to see the federal government injecting politics and ideology into medical science," Minter said.

"It's Orwellian. It is designed to confuse and disorient," Minter added.

Child and adolescent psychiatrist Dr. Scott Leibowitz, a co-author of the influential WPATH standards for youth, said the new report "legitimizes the harmful idea that providers should approach young people with the notion that alignment between sex and gender is preferred, instead of approaching the treatment frame in a neutral manner."

Major medical groups did not contribute; the administration won't say who did

While Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has repeatedly pledged to practice "radical transparency," his department did not release any information about who authored the document. The administration

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says the new report will go through a peer-review process and will only say who contributed to the report after "in order to help maintain the integrity of this process."

The report contradicts American Medical Association guidance, which urges states not to ban gender-affirming care for minors, saying that "empirical evidence has demonstrated that trans and non-binary gender identities are normal variations of human identity and expression."

It also was prepared without input from the American Academy of Pediatrics, according to its president, Dr. Susan Kressly.

"This report misrepresents the current medical consensus and fails to reflect the realities of pediatric care," Kressly said. She said the AAP was not consulted "yet our policy and intentions behind our recommendations were cited throughout in inaccurate and misleading ways."

Dr. Jack Drescher, a New York psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who works on sexual orientation and gender identity issues, said the report is one-sided and "magnifies the risks of treatments while minimizing benefits."

Talk therapy is already a prominent part of treatments

The Trump administration's report says "many" U.S. adolescents who are transgender or are questioning their gender identity have received surgeries or medications. In fact, such treatments remain rare as a portion of the population. Fewer than 1 in 1,000 adolescents in the U.S. received gender-affirming medication — puberty blockers or hormones — according to a five-year study of those on commercial insurance released this year. About 1,200 patients underwent gender-affirming surgeries in one recent year, according to another study.

Gender-affirming care for transgender youth under standards widely used in the U.S. includes developing a plan with medical experts and family members that includes supportive talk therapy and can — but does not always — involve puberty blockers or hormone treatment. Many U.S. adolescents with gender dysphoria may decide not to proceed with medications or surgeries.

Jamie Bruesehoff, a New Jersey mom, said her 18-year-old daughter, who was assigned male at birth, identified with girls as soon as she could talk. She began using a female name and pronouns at 8 and received puberty blockers at 11 before eventually beginning estrogen therapy.

"She is thriving by every definition of the word," said Bruesehoff, who wrote a book on parenting gender-diverse children. "All of that is because she had access to this support from her family and community and access to evidence-based gender-affirming health care when it was appropriate."

Politics looms over doctor's offices

A judge has blocked key parts of Trump's order, which includes denying research and educational grants for medical schools, hospitals and other institutions that provide gender-affirming care to people 18 or younger. Several hospitals around the country ceased providing care. The White House said Monday that since Trump took office, HHS has eliminated 215 grants totaling \$477 million for research or education on gender-affirming treatment.

Most Republican-controlled states have also adopted bans or restrictions on gender-affirming care. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling is pending after justices heard arguments in December in a case about whether states can enforce such laws.

The Jan. 28 executive order is among several administration policies aimed at denying the existence of transgender people. Trump also has ordered the government to identify people as either male or female rather than accept a concept of gender in which people fall along a spectrum, remove transgender service members from the military, and bar transgender women and girls from sports competitions that align with their gender. This month, HHS issued guidance to protect whistleblowers who report doctors or hospitals providing gender-affirming care. Judges are blocking enforcement of several of the policies.

This latest HHS report, which Trump called for while campaigning last year, represents a reversal in federal policy. The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which is part of HHS, found that no research had determined that behavioral health interventions could change someone's gender identity or sexual orientation. The 2023 update to the 2015 finding is no longer on the agency's website.

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'Buena Vista Social Club,' 'Death Becomes Her' and 'Maybe Happy Ending' lead Tony Award nominations

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Three Broadway shows — "Buena Vista Social Club," "Death Becomes Her" and "Maybe Happy Ending" — each earned a leading 10 Tony Award nominations Thursday, as nominators spread out the joy and gave nods to George Clooney, Sarah Snook and Bob Odenkirk in their debuts.

Twenty-nine shows got at least one nomination across the 26 Tony categories, even long-closed shows like "A Wonderful World: The Louis Armstrong Musical" and "Swept Away."

James Monroe Iglehart, who played Armstrong in his musical, wasn't expecting the nomination and woke to his phone blowing up. "I was like, 'What's going on? Is everything OK?' And then I was, 'OK! How cool is that?'" he said. "I'm just really excited to be a part of this crop of amazing performers."

"Buena Vista Social Club," which takes its inspiration from Wim Wenders' 1999 Oscar-nominated documentary on the making of the album "Buena Vista Social Club," will face off for best musical crown with "Death Becomes Her," based on the 1992 cult classic film of the same name about frenemies who seek a magic eternal youth and beauty potion.

The category also includes "Maybe Happy Ending," a rom-com musical about a pair of androids that crackles with humanity and "Dead Outlaw," a musical about a real life alcoholic drifter who was shot dead in 1911 and whose afterlife proved to be stranger than fiction as he was displayed at carnivals and sideshows for decades.

A second show with a corpse, the British import "Operation Mincemeat," also made it, the improbably true story about a British deception operation designed to mislead Nazi Germany about the location of the Allied landing at Sicily.

"What I think is so cool about this year is that the shows are so widely different and I love that for Broadway," says Christopher Gattelli, the choreographer and first-time director of "Death Becomes Her," who earned nods for both jobs.

"We have chamber pieces and really small intimate shows and these wildly funny black box shows, and so, I love that it's been such a great scope of a year. I love that we get to add to that mix."

"Dead Outlaw" — conceived by David Yazbek, who wrote the music and lyrics with Erik Della Penna — reunites Yazbek with book writer Itamar Moses and the director David Cromer, who collaborated so winningly on the Tony-winning "The Band's Visit." Yazbek said Thursday that the team learned a lesson with that show that they applied to "Dead Outlaw."

"If you make the thing you want to make and make it true to itself and leave the rest of it up to the fates, then you might actually get the reception that you want. And so we sort of stuck to that approach," he said.

Best play category

In the best play category, "English," Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Sanaz Toossi's look at four Iranian students preparing for an English language exam, made the cut. As did "The Hills of California," Jez Butterworth's look at a family gathering for the impending death of its matriarch set in a hotel in the summer of 1976 in England.

They'll compete with "John Proctor Is the Villain," Kimberly Belflower's examination of girlhood, feminism, the #MeToo movement and a compelling rebuttal to "The Crucible," and "Purpose," Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' drawing-room drama about an accomplished Black family destroying itself from within.

The category is completed with "Oh, Mary!," an irreverent, raunchy, gleefully deranged revisionist history by Cole Escola centered on Mary Todd Lincoln, portrayed as a boozy, narcissistic, potty-mouthed first lady determined to strike out of the subordinate role into which history has placed her.

Jacobs-Jenkins, whose "Appropriate," won best play revival last year, said Thursday morning that his category was filled with plays that started regionally or off-Broadway, showing the art's strength.

"I hope people kind of see the diversity of what's happening in terms of writing for the American stages right now. It's really an amazing time," he said. "I think that's just the testament to how fruitful the form is."

Acting nods and some missing

Audra McDonald, as expected, heard her name called for her turn as Rose in a hailed revival of "Gypsy,"

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a role that led to previous Tonys for the likes of Angela Lansbury, Tyne Daly and Patti LuPone. McDonald, already a holder for the most Tonys by a performer — with six — now vies for a seventh.

She will face off against Nicole Scherzinger in "Sunset Blvd.," Megan Hilty and Jennifer Simard in "Death Becomes Her," and Jasmine Amy Rogers from "Boop! The Musical," which follows the Depression-era cartoon character as she goes on a journey of transformation.

McDonald credits the late Broadway star Gavin Creel for suggesting she lead "Gypsy" some eight years ago during a dinner party at her house. It wasn't on her radar, and she didn't think a Black-led "Gypsy" would fly. Creel insisted. He died the first day of "Gypsy" rehearsals. "We have another reason to thank him," she said.

Clooney got a nod as a leading actor in a play for his retelling the story of legendary reporter Edward R. Murrow in an adaptation of his 2005 film "Good Night, and Good Luck." Another hot ticket — a revival of David Mamet's "Glengarry Glen Ross" earned Odenkirk a nod, but not for his co-stars Kieran Culkin or comedian Bill Burr. (The snub derails Culkin possibly winning an Oscar, an Emmy and a Tony in less than 18 months.)

Snook, Culkin's "Succession" co-star, earned a nomination for playing all 26 parts in "The Picture of Dorian Gray" and "Stranger Things" star Sadie Sink earned one for leading "John Proctor is the Villain." "Stranger Things: The First Shadow," an effects-driven prequel to her old Netflix hit show, earned five nods, including for lead actor Louis McCartney.

The news was less good for Kit Connor and Rachel Zegler, both in their Broadway debuts. Neither got nominations for their "Romeo + Juliet" pitched to Generation X and millennials. Robert Downey Jr., who also made his Broadway debut in the play "McNeal," also wasn't recognized. Mia Farrow earned a nomination for "The Roommate" but her co-star, the Broadway diva Patti LuPone, did not.

And, in a shock, an edgy "Othello" with Denzel Washington and Jake Gyllenhaal that producers are charging north of \$900 for orchestra seats, got not a single nomination. Idina Menzel's return to Broadway in "Redwood," a contemporary fable about trees, grief and the quest for healing, also got no nominations, nor did "The Last Five Years," with Nick Jonas and Tony-winner Adrienne Warren.

Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," starring Jim Parsons and Katie Holmes, earned a best play revival Tony nomination, but nothing for its actors. Elton John's musical about 1980s televangelist Tammy Faye Bakker and the Stephen Sondheim revue starring Tony Award-winners Bernadette Peters and Lea Salonga both came up blank.

The Tony Awards will be handed out June 8 at Radio City Music Hall during a telecast hosted by "Wicked" star and Tony winner Cynthia Erivo.

NASA astronauts step outside space station to perform the 5th all-female spacewalk

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — An astronaut who missed out on the first all-female spacewalk because of a spacesuit sizing issue got her chance six years later on Thursday.

NASA's Anne McClain emerged from the International Space Station alongside Nichole Ayers. Both military officers and pilots, they launched to the orbiting lab in March to replace NASA's two stuck astronauts, who are now back home.

Minutes before floating out, McClain noticed strands of string on the index finger of her right glove. Mission Control briefly delayed the start of the spacewalk to make sure her glove was safe.

Outside for nearly six hours, the spacewalkers prepared the station for another new set of solar panels and moved an antenna on the 260-mile-high (420-kilometer-high) complex. They were welcomed back inside by the space station's commander, Japanese astronaut Takuya Onishi.

"We are so happy to have you back, and your dinner is ready so don't worry about it," Onishi said.

The space station had to be raised into a slightly higher orbit Wednesday evening to avoid space junk: part of a 20-year-old Chinese rocket.

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McClain, an Army colonel and helicopter pilot, should have taken part in the first all-female spacewalk in 2019, but there weren't enough medium-size suits. The first women-only spacewalk was by Christina Koch and Jessica Meir. The latest was the fifth all-female spacewalk in 60 years of spacewalking.

Koch soon will become the first woman to fly to the moon. She and three male astronauts will fly around the moon without landing next year under NASA's Artemis program, the successor to Apollo.

Men still outnumber women in NASA's astronaut corps.

Of NASA's 47 active astronauts, 20 are women. And of the seven astronauts currently living at the space station, McClain and Ayers are the only women. It was the first spacewalk for Ayers, an Air Force major and former fighter pilot, and the third for McClain.

Kohl's ousts CEO Buchanan after investigation into some vendor transactions

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Business Writer

Kohl's said it has terminated its new CEO Ashley Buchanan after an investigation determined that he directed the retailer to engage in vendor transactions that involved undisclosed conflicts of interest.

Kohl's named Chairman Michael Bender as interim CEO, effective immediately. In connection with the appointment, Bender will step down as a member of the board's audit, compensation and nominating and environmental, social and governance committee, according to the retailer's regulatory filing.

The news comes less than four months after Buchanan, who had been previously the CEO of arts and crafts chain Michaels, took over the job on January 15. Buchanan's appointment marks the third CEO for Kohl's in three years as the department store struggles to reverse sluggish sales.

Kohl's said Thursday that Buchanan's firing is unrelated to its performance, financial reporting, results of operations and did not involve any of its other employees.

Kohl's will conduct a search for a permanent CEO and said it will name a new chair in due course. The company couldn't be immediately reached for comment. Buchanan didn't immediately return a message sent to his LinkedIn account.

According to the Securities and Exchange Commission filing, Buchanan's termination follows a probe conducted by outside counsel and overseen by the board's audit committee. It found Buchanan had directed Kohl's to conduct business with a vendor founded by an individual with whom Buchanan has a personal relationship on "highly unusual terms favorable to the vendor" and that he also caused Kohl's to enter into a multimillion-dollar consulting agreement with the same individual who was a part of the consulting team.

It also found that in neither case did Buchanan disclose this relationship as required under Kohl's code of ethics.

In connection with his termination and in accordance with the terms of his equity award agreements, Buchanan will forfeit all equity awards he received from the company, including the recruitment awards made as of January 15, according to the filing. Buchanan will also be required to reimburse Kohl's for a pro rata portion of his signing incentive in the amount of \$2.5 million, according to the documents.

As a result of Buchanan's termination, the board has determined to withdraw his nomination for election as a director of the company at the company's annual shareholders' meeting to be held on May 14.

Buchanan had succeeded Tom Kingsbury, who stayed on as an adviser and is retaining his position on Kohl's board until his retirement next month. Kingsbury served as Kohl's interim CEO in December 2022 and was named its permanent leader in February 2023.

The firing comes at a time when Kohl's, which operates 1,600 stores across the country, is wrestling with sluggish sales. Its middle income shoppers have pulled back on discretionary spending in the face of still-high prices for necessities. It's also faced stiff competition from Walmart and Amazon, which have been improving their fashion offerings at affordable prices.

And like other retailers, it is confronting uncertainty surrounding President Donald Trump's expansive tariffs.

On Thursday, Kohl's offered a preliminary look at sales and profits for the current quarter that showed

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continued weakness, though the expected results are on track to beat Wall Street estimates. It said that it expects to report a decline in comparable sales — those coming from established physical stores and online channels — in the range of 4.3% to 4%, and a loss of 24 cents to 20 cents per share for the fiscal first quarter.

Analysts expected earnings per share loss of 54 cents and a drop in comparable sales of 6.4%, according to FactSet.

It expects to report final fiscal first-quarter results on May 29.

Shares of the company, based in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, rose nearly 9% in late morning trading.

Sex assault reports in the US military fell last year, fueled by a big drop in the Army

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of sexual assaults reported across the U.S. military dipped by nearly 4% last year, fueled by a significant drop in the Army, according to a new Pentagon report. It was the second year in a row with a decrease, reversing a troubling trend that has plagued the Defense Department for more than a decade.

Senior defense officials said that while the decline is a good sign, the number of reported assaults is still too high and the military needs to do more to get victims to report the often undisclosed crime.

According to the report, there were 8,195 reported sexual assaults in 2024 involving members of the military, compared with 8,515 in 2023. In 2022, there were 8,942 reported sexual assaults, a spike that triggered widespread alarm and led to new programs and an infusion of funding to try to combat the problem.

The overall decrease was due to a 13% drop in reported sexual assaults across the Army, which is the largest military service.

All the other services saw increases. The Navy had the largest jump of 4.3%, while the Air Force had a 2.2% increase and the Marine Corps rose by less than 1%.

Of the 8,195 total, there were 512 service members who reported an assault that happened before they entered the military. The Pentagon encourages reporting so that victims can get any support they need. In addition, 641 were civilians who said they were assaulted by a member of the military.

Uncertainty about impact of job cuts on sexual assault programs

Speaking to reporters Thursday, Nate Galbreath, director of the Pentagon's sexual assault prevention and response office, said it's still not clear how the Trump administration's personnel and budget cuts will affect these programs. He said officials are asking for details on the number of assault prevention staff who have been laid off or who took any of the early retirement offers.

Andra Tharp, director of the command climate office, added that "when the hiring freeze went into effect, there were about 300 prevention workforce positions posted on USA jobs that are essentially on hold." But, she said, some departments have been able to get exemptions.

Galbreath said the department also is now able to link sexual assaults to military readiness. He said a survey showed that service members who had experienced assault were more likely to leave the military, be demoted, miss a promotion or have some other type of negative action put in their files than those who hadn't been victimized.

He said the survey followed troops who said in 2016 that they had experienced a sexual assault, and a group of others who did not.

As a result, he said the Defense Department is working to develop a recovery program to teach healthy coping skills and other assistance for victims. The department also has a Safe Helpline where troops can seek help.

Sexual harassment complaints rise

While reported assaults decreased, the number of sexual harassment complaints went from 2,980 in 2023 to 3,014 last year. Most were filed by female service members, and the vast majority of those ac-

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cused were male.

The number of cases in which misconduct was substantiated increased a bit last year over the 2023 total. The number of discharges and administrative actions against alleged perpetrators continued to increase, and court-martial charges declined — both trends going back several years.

Officials noted that nearly three-quarters of the court-martial cases ended in convictions, a slight increase over the previous year.

Sexual assault reports in the military have gone up for much of the past decade, except for a tiny decrease in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Officials say they are optimistic about the recent decreases but say much more work needs to be done.

As in previous years, most sexual assault reports are filed by those between ages 18 and 24 and involve lower-ranking service members.

Impact of Pentagon changes

While it is difficult to point to any one reason for the two-year decline, the Defense Department has been making a series of changes over the past year that officials say may be contributing.

The services were using more than \$1 billion to improve programs and hire up to 2,500 personnel as part of a new “prevention workforce” and place them at military installations worldwide.

So far, about 1,400 have been hired, but that process has stalled due to the Trump administration’s budget and personnel cuts across the federal government. Defense officials said they are working to spread the existing workers around to lessen the gaps until more can be hired.

The latest report also reflects the first full year since new prosecution procedures have been in place, putting independent lawyers in charge of those decisions and sidelining commanders after years of pressure from Congress.

Officials said it is too soon to tell what effect those changes are having on prosecutions.

The Pentagon releases a report every year on the number of sexual assaults reported by or about troops. But because sexual assault is a highly underreported crime, the department also does a confidential survey every two years to get a clearer picture of the problem. That online survey came out last year, so it was not done this year.

Last year’s survey said more than 29,000 active-duty service members said they had experienced unwanted sexual contact in the previous year, compared with nearly 36,000 in the 2021 survey, according to several defense officials. The decrease was the first in eight years.

But officials said the survey also indicates that a large number of service members never file a report.

Defense officials have long argued that an increase in reported assaults is a positive trend because so many people are reluctant to report them, both in the military and in society as a whole. Greater reporting, they say, shows there is more confidence in the reporting system and greater comfort with the support for victims.

Scientists once thought only humans could bob to music. Ronan the sea lion helped prove them wrong

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

Ronan the sea lion can still keep a beat after all these years.

She can groove to rock and electronica. But the 15-year-old California sea lion’s talent shines most in bobbing to disco hits like “Boogie Wonderland.”

“She just nails that one,” swaying her head in time to the tempo changes, said Peter Cook, a behavioral neuroscientist at New College of Florida who has spent a decade studying Ronan’s rhythmic abilities.

Not many animals show a clear ability to identify and move to a beat aside from humans, parrots and some primates. But then there’s Ronan, a bright-eyed sea lion that has scientists rethinking the meaning of music.

A former rescue sea lion, she burst to fame around a decade ago after scientists reported her musi-

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cal skills. From age 3, she has been a resident at the University of California, Santa Cruz's Long Marine Laboratory, where researchers including Cook have tested and honed her ability to recognize rhythms.

Ronan joined a select group of animal movers and shakers -- which also includes Snowball the famed dancing cockatoo -- that together upended the long-held idea that the ability to respond to music and recognize a beat was distinctly human.

What is particularly notable about Ronan is that she can learn to dance to a beat without learning to sing or talk musically.

"Scientists once believed that only animals who were vocal learners — like humans and parrots — could learn to find a beat," said Hugo Merchant, a researcher at Mexico's Institute of Neurobiology, who was not involved in the Ronan research.

But in the years since Ronan came into the spotlight, questions emerged about whether she still had it. Was her past dancing a fluke? Was Ronan better than people at keeping a beat?

To answer the challenge, Cook and colleagues devised a new study, published Thursday in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

The result: Ronan still has it. She's back and she's better than ever.

This time the researchers focused not on studio music but on percussion beats in a laboratory. They filmed Ronan bobbing her head as the drummer played three different tempos — 112, 120, and 128 beats per minute. Two of those beats Ronan had never been exposed to, allowing scientists to test her flexibility in recognizing new rhythms.

And the researchers asked 10 college students to do the same, waving their forearm to changing beats. Ronan was the top diva.

"No human was better than Ronan at all the different ways we test quality of beat-keeping," said Cook, adding that "she's much better than when she was a kid," indicating lifetime learning.

The new study confirms Ronan's place as one of the "top ambassadors" of animal musicality, said University of Amsterdam music cognition researcher Henkjan Honing, who was not involved in the study.

Researchers plan to train and test other sea lions. Cook suspects other sea lions can also bob to a beat — but that Ronan will still stand out as a star performer.

McDonald's store traffic falls unexpectedly as diners grow uneasy about economy

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

McDonald's store traffic fell further than expected in the first quarter as economic uncertainty weighed on diners.

The trouble was particularly acute in the U.S., where same-store sales — or sales at locations open at least a year — slumped 3.6%. That was the biggest U.S. decline McDonald's has seen since 2020, when a pandemic shuttered stores and restaurants and other public spaces nationwide.

McDonald's Chairman and CEO Chris Kempczinski said lower- and middle-income consumers, worried about inflation and the economic outlook, cut back on fast food during the January-March period.

Industrywide traffic from consumers making \$45,000 per year or less was down by double-digit percentages, he said, and traffic from middle-income consumers was down nearly as much. Only traffic from those making \$100,000 or more remained solid, he said.

"We believe McDonald's can weather these difficult conditions better than most," Kempczinski said Thursday in a conference call with investors. "However, we're not immune to the volatility in the industry or the pressures that our consumers are facing."

McDonald's rivals have reported similar downturns. Yum Brands, which owns the Taco Bell, KFC, Habit Burger & Grill and Pizza Hut brands, said Wednesday that its U.S. same-store sales fell 2% in the first quarter. Chipotle also reported weaker-than-expected same-store sales in the first quarter.

McDonald's same-store sales fell 1% globally in the first quarter, as growing traffic in Japan, China and

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the Middle East failed to overcome weakness in markets like the U.K. Without the impact of the extra leap year day in 2024, same-store sales were flat, the company said. Wall Street had been expecting an increase of nearly 2%, according to analysts polled by FactSet.

The Chicago-based chain has responded by introducing a U.S. McValue menu, which lets customers buy one item for \$1 when they buy a full-priced item. It also announced Thursday that its \$5 Meal Deal will run through the rest of this year. That deal was introduced last June and extended several times.

Kempczinski said the \$5 Meal Deal is resonating well with consumers but the McValue menu is not driving the additional sales the company expected, so McDonald's may make changes to it.

Kempczinski said McDonald's had expected the first quarter to be its weakest this year. Already, things are looking up.

In April, a McDonald's meal tied to "A Minecraft Movie," which was offered in 100 countries, sold out of its collectible figures in less than two weeks. New chicken strips and the U.S. return of the snack wrap — expected later this year — are also expected to drive traffic, Kempczinski said.

McDonald's reaffirmed its financial targets for the full year despite the impact of tariffs. And Kempczinski said McDonald's internal surveys show that anti-American sentiment, particularly in Canada and Northern Europe, doesn't seem to be impacting how consumers feel about the McDonald's brand.

McDonald's shares were down 1% in morning trading Thursday.

McDonald's first quarter revenue fell 3% to \$5.95 billion, short of analysts' forecast of \$6.09 billion, according to FactSet.

Net income fell 3% to \$1.86 billion. Adjusted for restructuring charges and other one-time items, the company earned \$2.67 per share, beating Wall Street projections by a penny.

Measles jumps borders in North America with outbreaks in Canada, Mexico and US

By DEVI SHASTRI and MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

Dr. Hector Ocaranza knew El Paso would see measles the moment it began spreading in West Texas and eastern New Mexico.

Highways connect his border city with the epicenter of Texas' massive outbreak, which is up to 663 cases. They're the same roads used by thousands of families and commercial truckers who cross into Mexico and back each day.

"Diseases know no borders," said Ocaranza, El Paso's top public health doctor, "so as people are mobile, they're going to be coming and receiving medical attention in El Paso but they may be living in Juarez." It took a couple of months, but El Paso now has the highest measles case count in the state outside of West Texas with 38. Neighboring Ciudad Juarez has 14 cases as of Monday.

North America's three biggest measles outbreaks continue to balloon, with more than 2,500 known cases; three people have died in the U.S. and one in Mexico. It started in the fall in Ontario, Canada; then took off in late January in Texas and New Mexico; and has rapidly spread in Chihuahua state, which is up to 786 cases since mid-February.

These outbreaks are in areas with a notable population of certain Mennonite Christian communities who trace their migration over generations from Canada to Mexico to Seminole, Texas. Chihuahua health officials trace their first case to an 8-year-old Mennonite child who visited family in Seminole, got sick and spread the virus at school. And Ontario officials say their outbreak started at a large gathering in New Brunswick involving Mennonite communities.

Mexican and U.S. officials also say the genetic strains of measles spreading in Canada match the other large outbreaks.

"This virus was imported, traveling country to country," said Leticia Ruíz, director of prevention and disease control in Chihuahua.

North and South American countries have struggled to maintain the 95% measles vaccination rate needed

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to prevent outbreaks, said Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, director of the Pan American Health Organization. And a recent World Health Organization report said measles activity in the Americas region is up elevenfold from the same time last year and that the risk level is "high" compared to the rest of the world's "moderate" level.

Measles cases have been confirmed in six of the region's countries — Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, the United States and Mexico — and investigating the disease's spread is labor-intensive and pricey. The response to each measles case in the U.S. costs an estimated \$30,000 to \$50,000, according to Dr. David Sugerman, a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention scientist.

Measles at the U.S.-Mexico border

The cases in Ciudad Juarez have no direct connection to the Mennonite settlement in Chihuahua, said Rogelio Covarrubias, a health official in the border city. The first measles case in El Paso was in a child at Fort Bliss, Ocaranza said.

More than half of El Paso's cases are in adults, which is unusually high, and three people have been hospitalized. The health department is holding vaccination clinics in malls and parks and says hundreds have gotten a shot. The vaccines are free — no questions asked, no matter which side of the border you live on.

Communication about measles between the two health departments is "informal" but "very good," Ocaranza said. Covarrubias said his team was alerted last week to a case of someone who became sick in El Paso and returned home to Juarez.

"There is constant concern in Ciudad Juarez ... because we have travelers that pass through from across the world," Covarrubias said. "With a possible case of measles without taking precautions, many, many people could be infected."

Measles at the U.S.-Canada border

Michigan health officials said the outbreak of four cases in Montcalm County are linked to Ontario.

The state's chief medical executive, Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, expects to see more cases. Michigan has a 95% vaccination rate for measles, mumps and rubella, but it hides weak spots — counties with 70% vaccination rates and individual schools where just 30% of kids vaccinated.

"If we think about measles as a forest fire, we've got these burning embers that are floating in the air right now," Bagdasarian said. "Whether those embers result in another wildfire just depends on where they land."

In Canada, six out of 10 provinces have reported measles cases. Alberta has the second-most with 83 as of April 12, according to government data.

Case counts in Ontario reached 1,020 as of Wednesday, mostly in the southwest part that borders Michigan. In one of the hardest-hit regions, Chatham-Kent Public Health officials announced a public exposure at a Mennonite church on Easter Sunday.

"It sometimes feels like we're just behind, always trying to catch up to measles," Dr. Sarah Wilson, a public health physician for Public Health Ontario. "It's always moving somewhere."

Do you really need that extra ChapStick? Here are tips to reduce and tame workplace clutter

CATHY BUSSEWITZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — It starts with a Post-it note scrawled with a reminder. Then a chocolate bar you'll probably eat later. An extra charging cord or two find their way into the mix, along with a laptop, a folder full of projects, a lanyard from a recent conference and a permission slip sent home from school.

And soon, the pile of things on your desk that are set aside for later becomes a giant, overwhelming stack.

The chaos of modern life and the ease of accumulating cheap items through online shopping have contributed to an abundance of clutter. That's true in home offices and traditional workspaces alike. And those jumbles of misplaced belongings can drain our mental resources, distracting us from work and dragging down our productivity.

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"Clutter reduces our bandwidth. It negatively affects our perception of our environment or ourselves," said Marietta Van Den Berg, psychiatrist and medical director for Surrey Memorial Hospital in British Columbia. "It influences whether we make good choices or not. And it even influences our levels of stress and our levels of sleep."

Researchers at UCLA found that women who were living with a high density of household objects had high levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

As households and workplaces embark on spring cleaning, it's possible to reduce clutter and find more mental peace.

"Things circulate into our lives all too easily. We need a competitive plan for things to circulate out," said Matt Baier, owner of Matt Baier Organizing in Stamford, Connecticut. "A good example of that is buying on Amazon. It's so easy. Boxes come in. We have so many houses that are just piled with boxes, opened and unopened, things that need to be returned, boxes that need throwing out."

A pile of postponed decisions

There are many reasons we accumulate clutter. Sometimes we don't know where to put whatever's landed in our hands. Other times a paper represents a task — whether it's paying a bill or making a phone call — that we can't tackle right away.

"Clutter is actually just a postponed decision or action," Van Den Berg said. "It's things we pick up and put down. So we're not making a decision about that piece of paper on your desk, or that book."

Taking a minute to put an item away in its proper place can save time in the long run. The paper that requires a phone call can go into a bin labeled "Action Items."

"If everything's chaotic and you can't find anything, you're not bringing your best self to work," said Renee Brown, owner of Renee Brown Organizing, based in Minneapolis.

Making time for decluttering

A messy workspace can be intimidating. But you don't have to tackle it all in one day, Brown said. Committing to small decluttering sessions over the course of a week or months can make a difference.

"Look at your schedule. Can you find 15 minutes or 30 minutes and block it?" Brown asked. If you have more time, spend an hour. Set a timer and see how much you can get done, she advised.

Some workplaces are setting aside time for employees to declutter their files and email inboxes weekly or quarterly, said Jenny Albertini, owner of Decluttered by Jenny, who works with individual and corporate clients.

"It's OK to spend an hour a week or however much you need to declutter your inboxes, organize your files," Albertini said. "Having that time scheduled in is what makes people feel accountable."

Employees can gather on Zoom to support each other while decluttering, she said.

Start by sorting

Many professional organizers suggest sorting objects of the same category together. That way, you can see how much of each group you have and let go of any extras. After gathering office supplies, you may find you have more staplers or charging cords than you'll ever need.

And with the full picture, Albertini said, "we can suddenly say, 'Oh, I didn't realize I kept buying extra pens, because some were in this drawer, and some were over in this cup, and some were in that shopping bag on the floor.'"

Baier, who demonstrates decluttering strategies on YouTube, recommends sorting on a clean surface such as a folding table. Set up bins for trash, recycling and papers to shred. Bankers boxes are convenient for sorting, and you can label them with sticky notes for categories such as electronics, office supplies and keepsakes, he said.

Label one box "elsewhere" for items that belong in a different room; but distribute them later so you don't get distracted, Baier said.

Once you've sorted items into categories, then go through each box to eliminate what you don't need.

Tackling piles of papers

When facing a mass of paperwork, consider whether you're legally required to keep certain files, and

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then ask, "when was the last time you used this document?" Albertini said.

"Do you have anything coming up that you know you need it for? Is this hard copy the only one? Would you be able to do your work or task if you didn't have this anymore?" she said.

Baier recommends dividing papers into four groups: running files, which you need to act on; sitting files, which you need to access regularly; sleeping files, which you need to keep just in case but can store remotely; and dead files, which you no longer need.

"Identify why you keep the files, because when you're clear on why you keep something, it takes you to where it should go," Baier said.

With a paper decluttering system in place, you can repeat it annually and it should only take about 20 minutes, he said.

Digital decluttering

When organizing digital files, take the same approach as paper: Sort into categories, then reduce. Work in short bursts of time to prevent decision fatigue, Albertini said.

"We're really looking to deduplicate items or reduce the number that you have that really aren't that special," Albertini said.

With presentations, delete drafts and keep the final product. If you have photos of an event, choose the best two or three and delete the rest. With email, ask yourself, "Will I need this email again to get my job done? Will it provide knowledge or motivation for future work?" If the answer is no, delete it, Albertini said.

In some email programs, you can automatically send mail from a specific client or team into a folder. If you have thousands of unread emails, you can move those to a digital archive at the end of the year, Brown said.

Think before you buy

One obvious way to reduce office clutter is to buy fewer things. It can be tempting to buy drawer dividers or trays to organize pens and scissors. But another route is to reuse cardboard iPhone or greeting card boxes.

"You don't have to go out and get expensive items," Brown said. "Let's find what you already have in the house and use it instead."

Today in History: May 2, Nelson Mandela claims election victory

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Friday, May 2, the 122nd day of 2025. There are 243 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On May 2, 1994, Nelson Mandela claimed victory in the wake of South Africa's first democratic elections.

Also on this date:

In 1863, during the Civil War, Confederate Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was accidentally wounded by his own men at Chancellorsville, Virginia; he died eight days later.

In 1927, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Buck v. Bell*, upheld 8-1 a Virginia law allowing the forced sterilization of people in order to promote the "health of the patient and the welfare of society."

In 1972, a fire at the Sunshine silver mine in Kellogg, Idaho, claimed the lives of 91 miners who succumbed to carbon monoxide poisoning.

In 1997, Tony Blair, whose Labour Party crushed John Major's long-reigning Conservatives in a national election, became Britain's youngest prime minister in 185 years, at age 43.

In 2011, al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, who'd been killed hours earlier in a raid by American forces at his Pakistan compound, was buried at sea.

In 2017, Michael Slager, a white former police officer whose killing of Walter Scott, an unarmed Black man running from a traffic stop, was captured on cellphone video, pleaded guilty to federal civil rights charges in Charleston, South Carolina. (Slager would be sentenced to 20 years in prison.)

In 2018, in a Fox News interview, attorney Rudy Giuliani said President Donald Trump had reimbursed Trump's personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, for \$130,000 in hush money paid to porn actor Stormy Daniels

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days before the 2016 presidential election, comments that appeared to contradict Trump's past claims that he didn't know the source of the money.

In 2022, a draft was leaked of a Supreme Court ruling throwing out the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion rights ruling that had stood for a half-century. The court cautioned that the draft was not final. (The decision would be released in essentially the same form the following month.)

Today's Birthdays: Singer Engelbert Humperdinck is 89. Actor David Suchet (SOO'-shay) is 79. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., is 78. Singer-songwriter Larry Gatlin is 77. Rock singer Lou Gramm (Foreigner) is 75. Actor Christine Baranski is 73. Basketball Hall of Famer Jamaal Wilkes is 72. Fashion designer Donatella Versace is 70. Filmmaker Stephen Daldry is 65. Country singer Ty Herndon is 63. Actor-wrestler Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson is 53. Former soccer player David Beckham is 50. Actor Kumail Nanjiani is 47. Actor Ellie Kemper is 45. Singer Lily Allen is 40. NASCAR driver Kyle Busch is 40. Olympic figure skating gold medalist Sarah Hughes is 40. Musician Lucy Dacus is 30. Princess Charlotte of Wales is 10.