

Groton Daily Independent

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Thursday, June 5:

Senior Menu: Cheeseburger casserole, carrots, apple sauce, whole wheat bread.
Emmanuel Lutheran Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.
Legion at Watertown, 5 p.m. (DH)
Jr. Legion at Miller 5:30 p.m. (DH)
Jr. Teeners at Lake Norden, 5 p.m. (DH)
U10 B&W at Sisseton, 5:30 p.m. (DH); U8 W&R hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m.
T-Ball practice at 6 p.m.

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

Happy Thursday
Good Morning



May your day be filled
with Beeutiful moments.

Friday, June 6

Senior Menu: Cold turkey sub, lettuce/cheese/tomato, macaroni salad, five cup salad.

Saturday, June 7

Day of Play at Groton Baseball Complex
Amateurs host Northville, 7 p.m.
Legion hosts W.I.N., 5 p.m.
Jr. Teeners hosts W.I.N., 1 p.m.
U12 ALL hosts Britton, 1 p.m. (DH); U10 ALL hosts Webster, 11 a.m. (DH); U8 ALL hosts Britton, 9 a.m. (DH)
Softball in Groton: U8B vs. Britton, 9 a.m.; U8G vs. Britton, 10 a.m.; U10B vs. U10G DH, 11 a.m.; U12/U14 Intersquad Scrimmage DH, 1 p.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.

New Travel Ban

President Donald Trump signed a travel ban yesterday, preventing nationals from 12 countries from entering the United States and partially restricting entry from seven others. The order, which cites national security risks, is scheduled to go into effect at 12:01 am ET Monday.

The ban follows a Jan. 20 executive order requiring the Department of Homeland Security and other agencies to assess national security risks and hostile attitudes toward the US from foreign countries. The White House says countries targeted by yesterday's ban have high visa overstay rates or fail to properly vet or share threat information on their citizens entering the US.

Countries whose foreign nationals will be banned are Afghanistan, Myanmar (Burma), Chad, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen. Countries with partial restrictions include Burundi, Cuba, Laos, Sierra Leone, Togo, Turkmenistan, and Venezuela.

Untangling Spiderweb

Ukraine released drone footage yesterday of this week's sweeping attack on Russia's bomber fleet. The attack on Sunday is by far Ukraine's most complex operation in the three-year war.

Ukraine says Operation Spiderweb took 18 months to plan. The attack involved smuggling 117 remotely operated drones into Russia on the roofs of mobile log cabins, with pilots launching them near-simultaneously to military airfields across multiple time zones. Of the four airfields targeted, the farthest is roughly 3,000 miles from Kyiv. Ukraine says it damaged 41 bomber planes, destroying about half of them permanently. Satellite imagery has so far confirmed the destruction of at least 12 strategic bombers. Ukraine estimates the cost to Russia at more than \$7B.

President Donald Trump says Russian President Vladimir Putin plans to respond to the attack, forestalling a potential ceasefire.

NBA Finals Tip Off

The Oklahoma City Thunder hosts the Indiana Pacers for Game 1 of the NBA Finals tonight (8:30 pm ET, ABC).

The Thunder, which last won the finals in 1979 as the now-defunct Seattle SuperSonics, is the overwhelming favorite following a league-best 68-14 regular season record. Point guard and regular-season MVP Shai Gilgeous-Alexander is also favored to be named the finals MVP.

The Pacers arrive at Paycom Center as the biggest underdog since the Cleveland Cavaliers in the 2017 finals against the Golden State Warriors. Fans are looking to point guard Tyrese Haliburton and forward Pascal Siakam to lead the team to its first NBA Finals win. The Indianapolis-based team won three ABA championships in the early 1970s before the ABA and NBA merged.

The rare matchup of two small-market teams has sparked concern about TV ratings and ticket sales.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 2025 Tribeca Film Festival kicks off in New York City; includes 118 feature films from filmmakers across 36 countries.

Will Ferrell to adapt his 2020 film "Eurovision" into a Broadway musical.

Edmund White, pioneering novelist and essayist known for chronicling gay life in America, dies at age 85.
American Coco Gauff, 21, reaches her third French Open semifinal.

Science & Technology

Male mice can grow ovaries in the womb if their mothers have iron deficiency; marks the first time dietary minerals have been linked to sexual development in offspring.

Astronomers discover the smallest star orbited by a giant planet found to date; roughly 241 light-years from Earth, the pair contradict current planet formation theory.

AI-assisted analysis allows estimates of individual manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls; a number may be older than believed, dating to 2,000-2,400 years ago.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 +0.0%, Dow -0.2%, Nasdaq +0.3%) as steel and aluminum tariff hikes kick in and latest data show slowdown in US private-sector job growth.

Private payrolls increase by 37,000 in May, the lowest monthly job total since March 2023.

Amazon to invest \$10B in North Carolina to build cloud computing data center and artificial intelligence campus.

Reddit sues Anthropic for allegedly using the site's data to train AI models without a proper licensing agreement.

OpenAI tops 3 million paying business users, up from 2 million in February.

Federal Reserve lifts asset cap on Wells Fargo, which restricted its size for more than seven years, after the bank showed improvement in its corporate governance and risk management practices.

Politics & World Affairs

White House bars foreign students from attending Harvard University.

Department of Education threatens Columbia University's accreditation; says the university violated federal antidiscrimination laws by tolerating harassment of Jewish students.

President Donald Trump's megabill will cut taxes by \$3.7T and add \$2.4T to the national debt through 2034, new analysis finds; tariffs as of May 13 to reduce primary deficits over the next decade by \$2.5T.

FBI arrests alleged co-conspirator in last month's Palm Springs fertility clinic bombing; latest suspect is accused of sending 180 pounds of bomb-making materials to the lead suspect, who died in the attack.

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Strong Hitting Not Enough As Groton Jr. Teeners Falls To Lake Norden Lakers

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U fell 6-5 to Lake Norden Lakers 14U on Wednesday at Lake Norden SD despite out-hitting them six to five. TC Schuster led Groton Jr. Teeners 14U with two hits.

Lake Norden Lakers 14U got on the board in the bottom of the first inning after Caleb Drenth doubled down the right field line, Trig Heinrich walked, and Lake Norden Lakers 14U scored on a passed ball, each scoring one run.

Lake Norden Lakers 14U added one run in the third. Bentley Trowbridge singled to center field, making the score 4-1.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U made the score 5-4 in the top of the fifth after Schuster doubled, scoring one run, Jordan Schwan doubled, scoring two runs, and a steal of home scored one run.

Trowbridge walked, which helped Lake Norden Lakers 14U tie the game at five in the bottom of the fifth.

Kobe Stevenson earned the win for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. The righty gave up zero hits and zero runs over two-thirds of an inning, striking out none and walking none. Schwan took the loss for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. The pitcher went four innings, surrendering six runs (two earned) on five hits, striking out eight and walking four. Landry Weiss stepped on the mound first for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. The starter surrendered six hits and five runs (four earned) over four and one-third innings, striking out seven and walking two.

Schwan drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Jr. Teeners 14U with two runs batted in. The right-handed hitter went 1-for-3 on the day.

Drenth went 2-for-2 at the plate to lead Lake Norden Lakers 14U in hits. Lake Norden Lakers 14U turned one double play in the game.

Groton Jr. Teeners Take Lead And Never Look Back In Win Over Lake Norden Lakers

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U easily dispatched Lake Norden Lakers 14U on Wednesday at Lake Norden SD, 13-3.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U jumped out to the lead in the top of the second inning after Gavin Hanten doubled, scoring two runs, an error scored one run, and Keegan Kucker singled, scoring two runs.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U scored six runs on one hit in the top of the third inning. Kolton Antonsen grounded out, scoring one run, Kucker drew a walk, scoring one run, and Jordan Schwan hit an inside the park home run, scoring three runs.

Kyson Kucker earned the win for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. The hurler allowed two hits and three runs (two earned) over four innings, striking out seven and walking six. Trig Heinrich took the loss for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. The pitcher went one inning, allowing six runs on one hit, striking out one and walking six. Kobe Stevenson started the game for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. The righty allowed three hits and five runs (two earned) over two innings, striking out one and walking four. Lincoln Shilhanek tossed one inning of no-run ball for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U in relief. The reliever surrendered zero hits, striking out none and walking one.

Tucker Leicht, Hanten, Schwan, Kucker, Trayce Schelle, and Wesley Borg each collected one hit for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. Hanten, Antonsen, Schwan, and Kucker each drove in two runs for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. Groton Jr. Teeners 14U had patience at the plate, accumulating 10 walks for the game. Noah Scepianiak and Schwan led the team with two free passes each. Schwan and Kucker each stole multiple bases for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. Groton Jr. Teeners 14U ran wild on the base paths, collecting eight stolen bases for the game.

Evan Schultz and Landry Weiss each collected one hit for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. Lake Norden Lakers 14U had patience at the plate, accumulating seven walks for the game. Schultz, Bentley Trowbridge, and Maddox Jacobson led the team with two walks each. Caleb Drenth and Trowbridge each stole multiple bases for Lake Norden Lakers 14U. Lake Norden Lakers 14U stole 10 bases in the game.

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Groton Jr. Teeners 14U 5 - 6 Lake Norden Lakers 14U

📍 Away 📅 Wednesday June 04, 2025

	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
GRTN	0	1	0	0	4	5	6	1
LKNR	3	0	1	0	2	6	5	1

BATTING

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Kucker #2 (C)	3	1	0	0	0	2
T Schelle #3 (CF)	1	1	0	0	1	0
T Schust... #21 (SS)	2	1	2	1	0	0
J Schwan #11 (P)	3	1	1	2	0	0
Z Fliehs #23 (3B)	1	1	0	0	1	0
L Shilha... #22 (1B)	3	0	1	0	0	0
S Crank #20	3	0	1	1	0	1
K Antonsen #7 (2B)	2	0	0	0	0	2
A Zimmer... #6 (RF)	2	0	0	0	0	1
K Kucker #1 (LF)	2	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	22	5	6	4	2	7

2B: J Schwan, T Schuster 2, **TB:** J Schwan 2, L Shilhanek, T Schuster 4, K Kucker, S Crank, **HBP:** T Schuster, T Schelle, Z Fliehs, **SB:** J Schwan, T Schelle, Z Fliehs, K Kucker, S Crank, **LOB:** 7

PITCHING

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U	IP	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Schwan #11	4.0	5	6	2	4	8
Totals	4.0	5	6	2	4	8

L: J Schwan, **P-S:** J Schwan 87-46, **HBP:** J Schwan 2, **BF:** J Schwan 24

Lake Norden Lakers 14U	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Stevens... #1 (3B)	2	1	0	0	0	1
C Drenth #22 (C)	2	1	2	1	0	0
E Schultz #17 (CF)	3	1	1	0	0	1
T Heinrich #11 (1B)	1	1	0	0	2	1
L Weiss #12 (P)	3	2	1	0	0	1
B Trowbri... #3 (SS)	2	0	1	1	1	1
L Scheel #20 (RF)	1	0	0	0	1	1
M Jacob... #15 (2B)	2	0	0	0	0	1
G Campbell (LF)	2	0	0	0	0	1
Totals	18	6	5	2	4	8

2B: C Drenth 2, E Schultz, L Weiss, **TB:** C Drenth 4, E Schultz 2, L Weiss 2, B Trowbridge, **HBP:** C Drenth, K Stevenson, **SB:** C Drenth, **LOB:** 5

Lake Norden Lakers 14U	IP	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
L Weiss #12	4.1	6	5	4	2	7
K Steven... #1	0.2	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	5.0	6	5	4	2	7

W: K Stevenson, **P-S:** L Weiss 89-48, K Stevenson 7-4, **HBP:** L Weiss 2, K Stevenson, **BF:** L Weiss 24, K Stevenson 3

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Groton Jr. Teeners 14U 13 - 3 Lake Norden Lakers 14U

📍 Away 📅 Wednesday June 04, 2025

	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
GRTN	0	5	6	0	2	13	6	1
LKNR	0	1	2	0	0	3	2	5

BATTING

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
T Schelle #3 (SS)	3	2	1	0	1
K Kucker #2 (C)	2	0	1	2	1
J Schwan #11 (CF)	2	1	1	2	2
Z Fliehs #23 (1B)	2	0	0	0	1
S Crank #20 (3B)	3	1	0	0	1
W Borg #12 (2B)	4	1	1	0	0
N Scepta... #13 (LF)	1	2	0	0	2
T Leicht #5 (DH)	2	1	1	0	1
G Hanten #4 (RF)	2	2	1	2	1
K Antonsen #7	3	1	0	2	0
CR: A Zimmer... #6	0	2	0	0	0
Totals	24	13	6	8	10

2B: G Hanten, T Schelle, **HR:** J Schwan, **TB:** T Leicht, W Borg, G Hanten 2, J Schwan 4, T Schelle 2, K Kucker, **HBP:** Z Fliehs, K Kucker, **SB:** A Zimmerman 3, J Schwan 2, T Schelle, K Kucker 2, **LOB:** 8

PITCHING

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
K Kucker #1	4.0	2	3	2	6
L Shilh... #22	1.0	0	0	0	1
Totals	5.0	2	3	2	7

W: K Kucker, **P-S:** K Kucker 96-45, L Shilhanek 19-10, **WP:** K Kucker, **HBP:** K Kucker, **BF:** K Kucker 22, L Shilhanek 4

Lake Norden Lakers 14U	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Stevenson #1 (P)	3	0	0	0	0
C Drenth #22 (C)	2	1	0	0	0
E Schultz #17 (CF)	1	1	1	0	2
T Heinrich #11 (1B)	2	0	0	0	1
L Weiss #12 (3B)	3	0	1	0	0
B Trowbri... #3 (SS)	1	1	0	0	2
L Scheel #20 (RF)	3	0	0	0	2
M Jacob... #15 (2B)	1	0	0	0	2
G Campbell (LF)	2	0	0	0	0
Totals	18	3	2	0	7

TB: E Schultz, L Weiss, **HBP:** C Drenth, **SB:** C Drenth 2, T Heinrich, M Jacobson, E Schultz, B Trowbridge 4, L Weiss, **LOB:** 8

Lake Norden Lakers 14U	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
K Steven... #1	2.0	3	5	2	4
T Heinri... #11	1.0	1	6	6	1
B Trowbr... #3	2.0	2	2	1	0
Totals	5.0	6	13	9	10

L: T Heinrich, **P-S:** T Heinrich 50-21, B Trowbridge 36-23, K Stevenson 66-30, **WP:** T Heinrich 3, **HBP:** B Trowbridge, K Stevenson, **BF:** T Heinrich 11, B Trowbridge 10, K Stevenson 15

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Groton Senior Citizens

May 5: Groton Seniors met for a meeting and cards. Ten members were present. Meeting was about the flowers to plant at the community center. Meeting was adjourned and cards played. The winners of each game. Pinochle-John Aldrich, Whist- Dick Donovan, Canasta -Pat Larson. Door prizes Pat Larson, Tony Goldade, Don Hoops. Lunch was served by Darlene Fischer

May 12: Ten Groton Seniors met to play cards. Cards were played, the winners Pinochle- Don Hoops, Whist- Darlene Fischer, Canasta - Pat Larson, Door prizes- Pat Larson, Don Hoops, Tony Goldade. Lunch was served by Don Hoops.

May 19: Groton Seniors met for their pot luck dinner. Thirteen members attended president had the table prayer. After dinner bingo was played. Don Hoops and Ruby Donovan both won black out. Cards were played after bingo. Door prizes Bruce Shilhanek, Elda Stange.

Chad Harlander Named 2025 Gypsy Day Parade Grand Marshal

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Northern State University is proud to announce Chad Harlander as the 2025 Gypsy Day Parade Grand Marshal.

A 1994 graduate of Northern State University with a Bachelor of Science in Community Services, Harlander has dedicated his career to supporting youth and families across Minnesota, South Dakota and beyond. He is the founder of the REACH Program, which serves students facing adversity and provides support to help them succeed academically, emotionally and socially. Since its inception in the Hutchinson School District, the REACH Program has expanded to 46 schools in three states and continues to grow nationally.

In addition to his work with REACH, Harlander serves as Director of the Hope Division for the Day of Champions organization, a program focused on helping at-risk student-athletes develop discipline, respect, trust and a strong work ethic through weeklong sports camps. He also partners with former Minnesota Viking Chad Greenway through the "Day to REACH" football camps, offering mentorship and outreach to youth across the region.

Over the years, Harlander has reached thousands of students and their families. His leadership and compassion have created lasting impact in communities, and the data speaks volumes. REACH students in the Hutchinson School District now pass an average of 93 percent of their classes—up from 25 percent prior to the program's launch. The program also offers the REACH Gives Scholarship, which has provided over \$185,000 in scholarships to graduating students since 2007.

Through his work, Harlander has earned recognition as a leader, mentor and changemaker—someone whose influence continues to uplift others and inspire positive change.

"It is an absolute honor to come back to Aberdeen and the Northern State University FAMILY and serve as the Grand Marshal for Gypsy Days! NSU provided many life lasting friendships, memories, family and the path to providing support to our children in school settings across MN," Harlander said.

The 2025 Gypsy Day Parade will be held Saturday, Sept. 20, in Aberdeen. This year's theme is "Wolves Through Time."

For more information about Northern State University's 2025 Gypsy Days, visit northern.edu/gypsy-days.

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Johnson at State A Golf Tourney

Carlee Johnson finished 41st out of 84 golfers at the State A Girls Championship in Madison June 2-3. She shot a 99 the first day and a 97 the second day.

Coach Joel Guthmiller said, "She played well, and gained some more valuable state tournament experience." (Courtesy Photos)

Tue, June 3 <i>Madison Golf & Country Club (Red - Ladies)</i>																						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total	
Tue, June 3 - Carlee Johnson	5	4	3	4	6	4	5	5	7	43	4	5	5	10	5	6	7	5	9	56	99	
Mon, June 2 <i>Madison Golf & Country Club (Red - Ladies)</i>																						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total	
Mon, June 2 - Carlee Johnson	5	4	6	4	7	4	6	7	7	50	3	7	5	6	4	4	6	7	5	47	97	

Starting Hole

Eagle or Better

Birdie

Par

Bogey

Double Bogey or Worse

Starting Hole
 Eagle or Better
 Birdie
 Par
 Bogey
 Double Bogey or Worse

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Inagural Fast Pitch Softball in Groton

These are the first pitches from the inaugural fast pitch softball season. U10 Black playing Ipswich Taylor Fliehs pitching and Avery Roettelle catching. (Courtesy Photos)

Sully County Fatal Crash

What: Three vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Highway 83, mile marker 161, one mile south of Agar, SD

When: 9:54 a.m., Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Driver 1: 16-year-old male from Pierre, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2017 Dodge Ram 1500

Seat belt Used: No

Driver 2: 37-year-old male from Gettysburg, SD, no injuries

Vehicle 2: 2021 Peterbilt 379

Seat belt Used: Yes

Driver 3: 50-year-old male from Luck, WI, no injuries

Vehicle 3: 2017 Volvo Tractor

Seat belt Used: Yes

Sully County, S.D.- A Pierre, SD teen died this morning in a three-vehicle crash on US Highway 83, one mile south of Agar, SD.

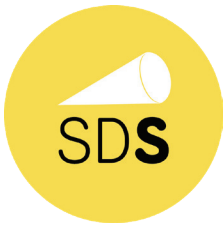
The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2017 Dodge Ram 1500 was traveling northbound on US Highway 83 and crossed over into the southbound lanes. An approaching Peterbilt semi in the southbound lane pulled off the roadway onto the shoulder and was struck by the Dodge on the rear trailer tires, causing the Dodge to spin in the southbound lane. A second semi, a 2017 Volvo tractor and trailer, also in the southbound lanes, turned into the west ditch and collided with the Dodge, which came to rest in the middle of the roadway.

The driver of the Dodge was pronounced deceased at the scene. The drivers of the Peterbilt and Volvo semis were not injured.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

South Dakota bonding authority approves \$1 billion for Sanford Health's merger efforts

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - JUNE 4, 2025 4:21 PM

A South Dakota bond authority has backed a plan to issue up to \$1 billion in bonds — the largest financing package in the authority's history — for Sanford Health to support its recent merger with Marshfield Clinic Health System of Wisconsin.

The South Dakota Health and Educational Facilities Authority voted unanimously Wednesday to authorize the bond package, allowing Sanford to refinance existing debt, pay for previously completed projects, and complete construction at hospitals and clinics in South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

The authority is governed by a seven-member board appointed by the governor. The state created the authority in 1972 to issue tax-exempt bonds that help nonprofit hospitals and public universities borrow money at lower cost. Investors buy the bonds and earn interest as the borrower pays back the debt. The aim is to give South Dakota residents greater access to education and health care.

The tax-exempt status means those investors don't have to pay taxes on the interest their bonds earn. That makes the bonds more attractive, in this instance helping Sanford borrow the money at a lower interest rate than they'd get from a bank.

Many of Sanford's bond-funded projects are outside South Dakota, but the board is allowed to approve multi-state financing if part of the funding is used in-state, explained Dustin Christopherson. He is the assistant director of the authority and responded to South Dakota Searchlight's questions via email.

Christopherson said the bond approval does not involve public tax dollars, and the state has no financial responsibility for repaying the debt. The authority does not lend the state's credit to borrowers. Instead, it acts as a conduit, allowing Sanford to access the lower, tax-exempt interest rates.

Sanford officials plan to return to the board later with a request for up to \$2.1 billion in longer-term financing that would replace the initial bonds and potentially cover more projects.

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

Six SD nursing homes are among nation's worst-rated, eligible for federal improvement program

Dells Rapids center has been a 'special focus facility' for nearly two years

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JUNE 4, 2025 2:14 PM

Six of South Dakota's 96 nursing homes are on the newest monthly federal list of the nation's worst-rated care facilities.

Five of the facilities are eligible for a special program to improve quality of care through increased regulatory oversight, and one is already in the program.

The eligible South Dakota facilities as of the April report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are Avantara Norton in Sioux Falls, Riverview Healthcare Center in Flandreau, Good Samaritan

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Society Sioux Falls Village, Lake Andes Senior Living and Wilmot Care Center.

One facility, Dells Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Dell Rapids, has been in the Special Focus Facility program for nearly two years. Good Samaritan Society Sioux Falls Center — separate from the society's similarly named Sioux Falls Village — graduated in July 2023, after spending 27 months in the program.

Nursing homes are identified by the state as special-focus facilities based on their last three standard health survey inspections. Special-focus facilities must meet more stringent criteria two times in a row to be eligible for graduation. Dells Nursing and Rehabilitation Center did not pass its most recent inspection in January, so it will restart the process toward graduation.

Because the number of special-focus facilities is capped, eligible facilities — even those that have earned CMS' lowest ratings for quality — can't be named a special-focus facility until other homes in the same state already in the program are terminated from Medicare and Medicaid or improve and "graduate" from the program.

That's a process that can take several years. As a result, there are homes in each state that are eligible for special-focus status due to ongoing quality-of-care problems, but can't enroll in the program. It's also why two of the five eligible South Dakota facilities have waited more than three years as candidates: Avantara Norton and Riverview Healthcare Center.

Typically, the homes that are deemed eligible for special-focus designation have about twice the average number of violations cited by inspectors; they have more serious problems than most other nursing homes, including harm or injury to residents; and they have an established pattern of serious problems that has persisted over a long period of time.

Facility summaries

The five South Dakota homes eligible for inclusion in the Special Focus Facility program all have 1-out-of-5-star ratings from CMS.

The federal agency penalizes and fines nursing homes for serious citations or if the facility fails to correct a citation for a long period of time. A portion of fines collected are returned to the state, which can be reinvested to support nursing home residents and improve their quality of life and care.

Following are summaries of the problems cited at each of those facilities, along with the one South Dakota facility already in the program and a facility that graduated in 2023.

Dells Nursing and Rehab Center: The 48-bed facility, operated as a for-profit corporation, has participated in the SFF program for 22 months. The home has been cited for 19 deficiencies since the start of 2024 and has been fined \$67,773 in the last three years.

It was flagged for "immediate jeopardy" to its residents in February 2024 after a resident left the facility without staff knowledge for a third time in a year. The last two times, the patient was found wandering the facility parking lot. The first time, in June 2023, the resident was found a mile away. An alarm was set on the resident's tracking device to alert staff if the resident left the facility. The home was cited for 19 deficiencies since the beginning of 2024, with about \$67,800 in fines during that time.

The facility was found noncompliant for infection control in its latest state survey inspection report in March.

Avantara Norton: The 110-bed facility in Sioux Falls is owned by for-profit company Legacy Healthcare. The home has been cited for 15 deficiencies since the start of 2024 and has been fined \$175,402 in the last three years. It's been a special focus candidate for 39 months.

The home received a serious deficiency in its November 2024 report for failing to protect a resident from neglect by a certified nursing assistant. The resident was not cared for in a timely manner, possibly contributing to two skin sores. The staff member was disciplined and educated, according to the report.

The facility's most recent inspection report in March included several citations, including a quality of life citation affecting several residents primarily due to poor call light response times and aid. In an interview, one resident told the state inspector "no one cared" at the facility, that he did not receive timely showers or help out of bed, and that staff response times to call lights vary from five minutes to three hours.

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He and other residents said they would sometimes have to call the receptionist's desk on the phone to ask her to send staff for help. Residents also said there were not enough staff to meet their needs, according to the report. Staff confirmed they occasionally experience staffing shortages. Administrators said they would require regular call light audits to review progress.

The facility's most recent complaint inspection in April found a registered nurse was stealing controlled substances from the facility for four months. The nurse tested positive for hydrocodone and oxycodone and admitted to the accusation.

Riverview Healthcare Center: The 49-bed facility in Flandreau, owned by for-profit company EmpRes Healthcare Management, has been cited for eight deficiencies since the beginning of 2024, including an "immediate jeopardy" flag for failing to respond and report abuse allegations. It has been fined \$81,568 in the last three years and been a special focus candidate for 37 months.

According to the January 2025 report, a certified nursing assistant kicked a resident in the shin twice and covered another resident's mouth with a washcloth to quiet them. Several staff reported their suspicions but the staff member continued working and the nursing home did not conduct an investigation or follow its abuse and neglect policy. According to the facility's correction plan, the staff member was put on administrative leave, the administration educated staff on its abuse and neglect policy, and staff interviewed residents randomly and on a weekly basis to hear concerns or look for signs of abuse and neglect.

In its most recent state recertification inspection report from February, citations included improper ulcer prevention and improper food preparation and storage. In a complaint inspection in February, the facility was cited for quality of care problems and failing to provide a safe, clean environment, among other citations. An inspector also found hazards including rusty, exposed edges of an emergency exit door, chunks of missing floor, baseboards, wallpaper and paint, and a hole in a ceiling.

Good Samaritan Society Sioux Falls Village: The 177-bed nonprofit facility in Sioux Falls has been a special-focus candidate for eight months. The home has been cited three times since the start of 2024 and fined \$67,504 in the last three years. It has been a special focus candidate for nine months.

The facility was flagged for "immediate jeopardy" to resident health in its June 2024 report because a resident left the facility without staff's knowledge twice within a few days and because another resident fell multiple times without receiving prompt assistance.

In its most recent complaint inspection report in September, the facility was investigated for alleged abuse and neglect. A staff member was "written up" for lack of care and false charting, for saying they'd checked in on residents and changed them when they hadn't. The staff member's charting will be audited, administration said in their correction plan, and the facility will randomly audit to ensure residents received scheduled baths, toileting and repositioning according to their care plan.

Lake Andes Senior Living: The 43-bed for-profit facility in Lake Andes is affiliated with Accura Healthcare. The home has been cited 18 times since the start of 2024 and was fined \$91,601 in the last three years. It has been a special focus candidate for six months.

The home was flagged for "immediate jeopardy" to patient health in two citations in the September report, including not notifying four diabetic residents' doctors when their blood sugar levels veered outside a normal range and failing to manage and prevent a COVID outbreak among residents. The report does not provide details on the size or results of the outbreak.

It was also cited in a September complaint inspection when a resident left the facility without supervision. The facility reviewed its policy for missing residents, ran drills among staff and audited alerting technology used by the facility.

Wilmot Care Center: The 29-bed nonprofit nursing home has been cited 17 times since the beginning of 2024 and has paid \$10,377 in the last three years. The facility has been a special-focus candidate for two months.

The facility was flagged for "immediate jeopardy" to residents in its February 2024 report and its March 2025 report both for quality of life and care deficiencies. In March, an inspector found a water leak from the facility's whirlpool tub next to an electrical box, which increased the risk of electrical shock to residents and staff. In February last year, a resident left the facility without staff's knowledge and was retrieved by

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a staff member about a half-mile away. Staff left the facility's front door unlocked and the resident cut off their tracking and alert device before leaving the facility.

Good Samaritan Society Sioux Falls Center: The 98-bed nonprofit nursing home graduated from the special-focus program in July 2023, after spending over two years on the list. It was cited for four deficiencies since the beginning of 2024 and has been fined twice for a total of \$38,301 in the last three years.

The home was found noncompliant during its last state inspection report in June last year for infection prevention and control, food storage and preparation, and using expired medications.

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.

COMMENTARY

Federal cuts are a 'punch in the gut' for firefighters who protect our homes and forests

by Riva Duncan

You probably don't see wildland firefighters on the job because they usually work in remote areas. But with wildfires moving from the backcountry to backyards, the public is becoming more aware of the men and women who do this dangerous work. At the same time, people probably don't know much about the very real health risks of the job. Now, it's getting harder for anyone to know.

On April 1, the administration began laying off most of the staff working on the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer. The registry was proposed in a bill in 2018 so researchers could study why all firefighters, structure and wildland, suffer from certain types of cancers at much higher rates than the rest of the population. The bill was passed unanimously by Congress and signed into law by President Trump in his first term.

The registry was open to all U.S. firefighters — career, volunteer, wildland, active or retired. Participants completed a confidential survey about their service history, with data linked to state cancer registries to spot trends and risks.

It was groundbreaking for the National Firefighter Registry to recognize and include the unique job hazards posed by those who fight fires in the backcountry and areas close to homes. You might assume wildland firefighters protect themselves with breathing masks, but that is not the case.

This personal protective equipment is unworkable because wildland firefighting includes hiking for miles and digging in the dirt for days and weeks at a time. I've been a federal wildland firefighter for 35-plus years all over the nation. Too many times to count, I have worked on wildfires and prescribed burns where thick, acrid smoke had us on our knees gagging, tears streaming from our eyes and our noses dripping gunk.

Now I work for an organization that encourages wildland firefighters — especially those who work for federal agencies — to sign up for this cancer registry. I know we're a challenging profession to study as we're somewhat nomadic, assigned to wildfires across the West all summer, often in remote places. That helps explain why there's been so much less research on wildland firefighters than on structure firefighters. And there's nearly no specific research on women firefighters. To be included was a major step.

More than 23,000 firefighters have signed up for the National Firefighter Registry since it went live in 2023, and thousands more are eligible to join. But with all the layoffs of federal workers, the registry website stopped. The National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety confirmed that the program was shut down because no support staff were left to manage the website.

The International Association of Firefighters, a powerful union that represents many municipal fire departments (but not firefighters in the Forest Service, BLM or Park Service), went directly to Health and Human Services Secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., to fight for restoration of this program and several oth-

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ers. Kennedy promised to bring them all back online and kept his promise.

But he did not address the staffing issue, and he didn't say whether researchers already let go would be re-hired. No one knows what will happen to the data already collected.

A related firefighter health issue is "presumptive health." It presumes that firefighters diagnosed with certain cancers and cardiovascular diseases got those illnesses as a result of their work. Before 2022, it was nearly impossible for a federal wildland firefighter to prove to the Labor Department's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs that they'd become ill because of hazards faced on the job.

But in 2022, the Labor Department declared that federal firefighters are at increased risk of certain types of cancers and cardiovascular diseases. Congress codified this declaration into law in 2023 and established a special claims website.

Now, that website is also down.

A Forest Service firefighter I spoke with called the staff cuts that black out firefighting health statistics just another "punch in the gut."

He added, "We're getting ready to go into what looks like another challenging fire season with yet another distraction to worry about. But, when the fire call comes, we'll respond like we always do and worry later."

It should not have to be this way.

Riva Duncan is a contributor to Writers on the Range, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. She is vice president of Grassroots Wildland Firefighters.

Federal judge unseals some records in Abrego Garcia case

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - JUNE 4, 2025 4:43 PM

WASHINGTON — The Maryland federal judge overseeing the lawsuit concerning the wrongly deported Kilmar Abrego Garcia unsealed documents Wednesday that the Trump administration had asked to keep unavailable to the public under the so-called state secrets privilege.

The order from U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis unsealed three documents that she said did not contain any privileged information. Xinis questioned the Trump administration's broad use of the privilege during a hearing last month.

The request to unseal the documents came from a coalition of news organizations, arguing First Amendment rights and the public's right to information in a case that has become a flashpoint between the judiciary branch and the Trump administration.

"The Press Movants rightly contend that, at common law, the public enjoys a presumptive right to access court records, overcome only when outweighed by competing interests," Xinis wrote Wednesday.

President Donald Trump has said Abrego Garcia, who was removed in March due to an "administrative error," will not return to the U.S. and Department of Justice attorneys on behalf of the Trump administration have argued in court that the Maryland man is in the custody of El Salvador and the federal government has no authority to bring him back.

In a separate case of another wrongly deported immigrant to El Salvador, the Department of Justice submitted a document detailing that Secretary of State Marco Rubio was personally working with the Salvadoran government to return a 20-year-old referred to in court documents as only "Cristian," after another federal judge ordered his return.

Discovery documents

Some of the filings that were unsealed Wednesday had been public until the Trump administration moved to seal them.

One unsealed record related to an April discovery request Abrego Garcia's attorneys made to the government seeking information about how the administration was facilitating Abrego Garcia's return from El Salvador. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Trump administration must facilitate the Maryland man's return, but stopped short of requiring it.

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Another document related to the Trump administration's request for more time in discovery proceedings. "It does not disclose any potentially privileged or otherwise sensitive information for which a compelling government interest outweighs the right to access," Xinis wrote.

One document was partially redacted, because it "includes some information potentially implicated by the state secrets privilege," Xinis wrote.

The document, signed by Abrego Garcia attorney Jonathan G. Cooper, objected to the Trump administration's attempt to pause discovery. The government had argued that complying with discovery in the lawsuit would hinder efforts to facilitate Abrego Garcia's return.

"As we explained to the government, in our meet-and-confer, we do not understand why the production of documents or interrogatory responses — none of which has occurred in the public eye — has any bearing on efforts to facilitate Mr. Abrego Garcia's release and return," Cooper wrote in the partially redacted document unsealed Wednesday.

A fourth document, a transcript from a late April hearing, will be released but redacted until the high-profile case is settled, Xinis wrote.

"Although the Court does not wholly agree with the Defendants' overbroad characterizations of the government interests at stake, the Court does recognize that certain information touches upon Defendants' asserted state secrets privilege as applied to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the State Department," she wrote about the partially redacted transcript.

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

Trump-backed giant tax and spending bill bloats deficit by \$2.4T, nonpartisan CBO says

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - JUNE 4, 2025 4:40 PM

WASHINGTON — The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released detailed analysis Wednesday showing Republicans' "big, beautiful bill" would increase federal deficits by \$2.4 trillion during the next decade.

CBO projects that if enacted as written, the legislation would result in 10.9 million people losing access to health insurance by 2034, a number that includes "1.4 million people without verified citizenship, nationality, or satisfactory immigration status who would no longer be covered in state-only funded programs in 2034."

The score is the most up-to-date analysis by Congress' official scorekeeper on how the sweeping tax and spending cuts package the House approved last month will impact the federal budget in the years ahead.

Republicans have been highly critical of the CBO's assessment of the legislation's real-world impacts, arguing that keeping tax rates as they are now, instead of letting them rise at the end of the year when the 2017 GOP tax law expires, will boost economic growth.

House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, R-La., lambasted the CBO during a press conference shortly after the report came out, arguing its economic growth projections haven't been completely accurate.

"This bill will actually reduce the deficit, if you recognize the historical economic growth that has always been there," Scalise said. "To say you're going to get 1.8% growth. At a minimum, we think you can get 2.5 to 4% growth. Scott Bessent, the Treasury secretary, says over 4% economic growth. So I get that we've got to play by the rules of the referee, but the referee has been wrong."

During the last decade, U.S. growth only surpassed 3% during one year, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Gross domestic product growth measured 2.5% in 2014, 2.9% in 2015, 1.8% in 2016, 2.5% in 2017, 3% in 2018, 2.6% in 2019, -2.2% in 2020 during the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, 6.1% in 2021, 2.5% in 2022, 2.9% in 2023 and 2.8% in 2024.

White House budget director Russ Vought posted on social media that the CBO score "confirms what

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we knew about the bill at House passage.”

“The bill REDUCES deficits by \$1.4 trillion over ten years when you adjust for CBO’s one big gimmick—not using a realistic current policy baseline,” Vought wrote. “It includes \$1.7 trillion in mandatory savings, the most in history. If you care about deficits and debt, this bill dramatically improves the fiscal picture.”

Disagreement over the ‘big beautiful bill’

GOP lawmakers have also sought to brush aside criticism from some of their own members, including Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul and Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson, who both argue the legislation must cut spending more to reduce the federal deficit in the long run.

Billionaire and former Trump administration staffer Elon Musk has also become increasingly vocal about his opposition to the package, writing on social media this week that the “massive, outrageous, pork-filled Congressional spending bill is a disgusting abomination.”

The House voted mostly along party lines in May to send the sweeping spending and tax cuts package to the Senate, which is expected to debate and amend the legislation in the weeks ahead.

CBO’s analysis will likely inform some of that conversation, and help senators better understand how the policy changes proposed by their House colleagues would affect state government budgets and the communities they represent.

The CBO previously shared analysis of each of the 11 bills that make up the package, but those didn’t reflect several changes GOP House leaders made just hours before the floor vote in that chamber.

Updated numbers

The updated projections show Republicans’ plan to extend the 2017 tax law and make other tweaks to tax policy would increase the deficit by \$3.754 trillion during the next decade. That increase to the deficit caused by the tax changes, which CBO has also found would decrease resources for low-income families over the next decade while increasing resources for top earners, would be partly offset by spending reductions on certain programs.

The Armed Services Committee’s bill would increase deficits by \$144 billion, more than the \$100 billion ceiling Republicans envisioned in the budget outline that was supposed to set guardrails on the package. Homeland Security’s provisions would increase deficits by \$79 billion. And the Judiciary Committee’s language would increase deficits by \$9 billion during the 10-year budget window.

The section of the package drafted by the Energy and Commerce Committee, which would make substantial changes to Medicaid and several other programs within the panel’s jurisdiction, would decrease spending by \$1.086 trillion during the 10-year budget window.

The panel’s bill has four subcategories: energy, environment, communications and health. The health provisions, which include substantial changes to Medicaid, would reduce federal spending by \$902 billion between 2025 and 2034.

Language barring Medicaid from covering gender transition procedures for anyone in the state-federal health program would reduce federal spending by \$2.6 billion during the next decade.

Requiring some people on Medicaid to work, participate in community service or attend educational programs for at least 80 hours a month would reduce federal spending by \$344 billion during the next 10 years.

Blocking any Medicaid funding from going to Planned Parenthood would cut federal costs by \$261 million during the 10-year budget window. Federal law already bars health care programs like Medicaid from covering abortions unless the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, or it endangers the life of the woman.

Separate analysis from CBO, released later Wednesday, projects that 7.8 million people would lose access to Medicaid because of the policy changes laid out in the House GOP bill. Another 2.3 million would lose access to health insurance due to changes to tax policy and 1.3 million people would no longer be able to purchase health insurance through the Affordable Care Act marketplace.

CBO estimates that about 500,000 people would be impacted by interactions among the various health

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care policy changes. That number, subtracted from the numbers of those who would lose access, leads to a total of 10.9 million people losing access to health insurance by 2034.

Democratic criticism

Energy and Commerce Committee ranking member Frank Pallone Jr., a New Jersey Democrat, wrote in a statement that it's "shocking House Republicans rushed to vote on this bill without an accounting from CBO on the millions of people who will lose their health care or the trillions of dollars it would add to the national (deficit).

"The truth is Republican leaders raced to pass this bill under cover of night because they didn't want the American people or even their own members to know about its catastrophic consequences."

The Agriculture Committee's provisions, including pushing off some of the cost of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to states, would reduce federal spending by \$238 billion during the next decade.

The Education and Workforce Committee's language would decrease federal spending by \$349 billion. The Financial Services section of the package would reduce federal spending by \$5 billion. Natural Resources would lower spending by \$18 billion. And Transportation and Infrastructure would reduce spending by nearly \$37 billion.

The Oversight and Government Reform bill would decrease spending by \$12 billion, significantly less than the minimum of \$50 billion the panel was supposed to cut under the reconciliation instructions included in the budget resolution.

Ariana Figueroa contributed to this report.

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.

Trump tariffs would lower deficit but slow U.S. economic growth, nonpartisan CBO finds

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - JUNE 4, 2025 4:23 PM

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's tariffs would decrease the deficit over the next decade but overall shrink the U.S. economy and raise costs for consumers, according to a Congressional Budget Office analysis released Wednesday.

Tariffs are paid to the U.S. government by domestic companies and purchasers who buy goods from abroad.

The nonpartisan CBO found that tariffs would reduce the nation's primary deficit by \$2.5 trillion from now until 2035, plus an additional \$500 million saved from avoiding even more mounting interest payments on the U.S. debt.

But the office also found that tariffs would slow down the U.S. economy over the same time, in part by affecting behavior in the private sector.

For example, businesses may pull back from investment and growth when faced with higher costs. The CBO, the official financial scorekeeper for Congress, estimates that Trump's tariffs, as they stand now, would lower the U.S. gross domestic product, or the total value of a country's goods and services, on average by 0.6% per year through 2035.

In addition to increasing costs on supplies and other assets businesses use in production, the tariffs are expected to raise prices on consumer goods in the next couple years. The CBO projects the price index used to measure personal consumption will be 0.9% higher by the end of 2026.

While lower-income households spend a higher percentage of their income on consumer goods, the CBO projects that prices will increase the most on goods like home appliances and vehicles more likely to be purchased by higher earners.

The eight-page analysis only takes into account the effects of Trump's tariffs as of May 13. These include

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the following taxes calculated on the value of imports: a baseline 10% on goods from most countries; a base of 30% on all goods from China and Hong Kong; 25% on most foreign vehicles and auto parts; 25% on steel and aluminum; and 25% on certain goods from Canada and Mexico.

The CBO released the figures in response to a request from U.S. Senate Democrats wanting to know the cost of the administration's import taxes.

The report did not take into account any tariff changes after May 13, including Trump's doubling to 50% the import taxes on steel and aluminum. The report also did not factor in changes that could result from a May 29 trade court decision striking down most of Trump's tariffs — though an appeals court swiftly left them in place while the case plays out.

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

Thune votes yes as U.S. Senate panel advances IRS nominee Long

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - JUNE 4, 2025 12:21 PM

WASHINGTON — Republican U.S. Senate tax writers voted Tuesday to move Missouri Republican former Congressman Billy Long one step closer to taking the reins at the Internal Revenue Service, despite protests from Democrats over his alleged involvement with a company that peddled fake tribal tax credits.

Members of the Senate Committee on Finance advanced Long's nomination along party lines, 14-13, to the full Senate as the revenue collection agency faces the possibility of a more complex tax code as congressional Republicans are poised to extend and expand President Donald Trump's 2017 tax cuts.

Senate Finance Chair Mike Crapo said Tuesday that Long presented a "vision to transform the IRS through systems modernization, a renewed focus on efficiency and a much-needed change in IRS culture" during his May confirmation hearing.

"If confirmed, I look forward to working with him to ensure the IRS focuses on helping American taxpayers to better understand and meet their tax responsibilities, and that it enforces the law with integrity and fairness to all," the Idaho Republican said.

Sen. Ron Wyden, the committee's top Democrat, slammed the nominee in remarks delivered ahead of the vote. Wyden said Long "has no tax policy experience, but he has lots of tax fraud experience."

"When he left office, he threw in with a bunch of fly-by-night operators selling tax deals that were sketchy at best," Wyden said.

Wyden highlighted contributions Long received to his dormant U.S. Senate campaign from officials at the Arkansas-based White River Energy Corps after revelations that Long was tied to the company and its sales of nonexistent tax credits.

The Oregon Democrat said Long's "scandals here are too big to ignore."

Long testified before the committee on May 20 and denied any wrongdoing.

Long, who served in the House from 2011 to 2023 and previously spent multiple years as a talk radio host, told lawmakers on the panel that he plans to get rid of "stinking thinking" at the IRS and implement a "comprehensive plan" to modernize the agency and "invest in retaining skilled members of the team."

The agency has lost more than 11,000 employees, or 11% of its workforce, either through deferred resignations or mass firing of probationary workers since Trump began his second term, according to a May 2 report from the agency's inspector general.

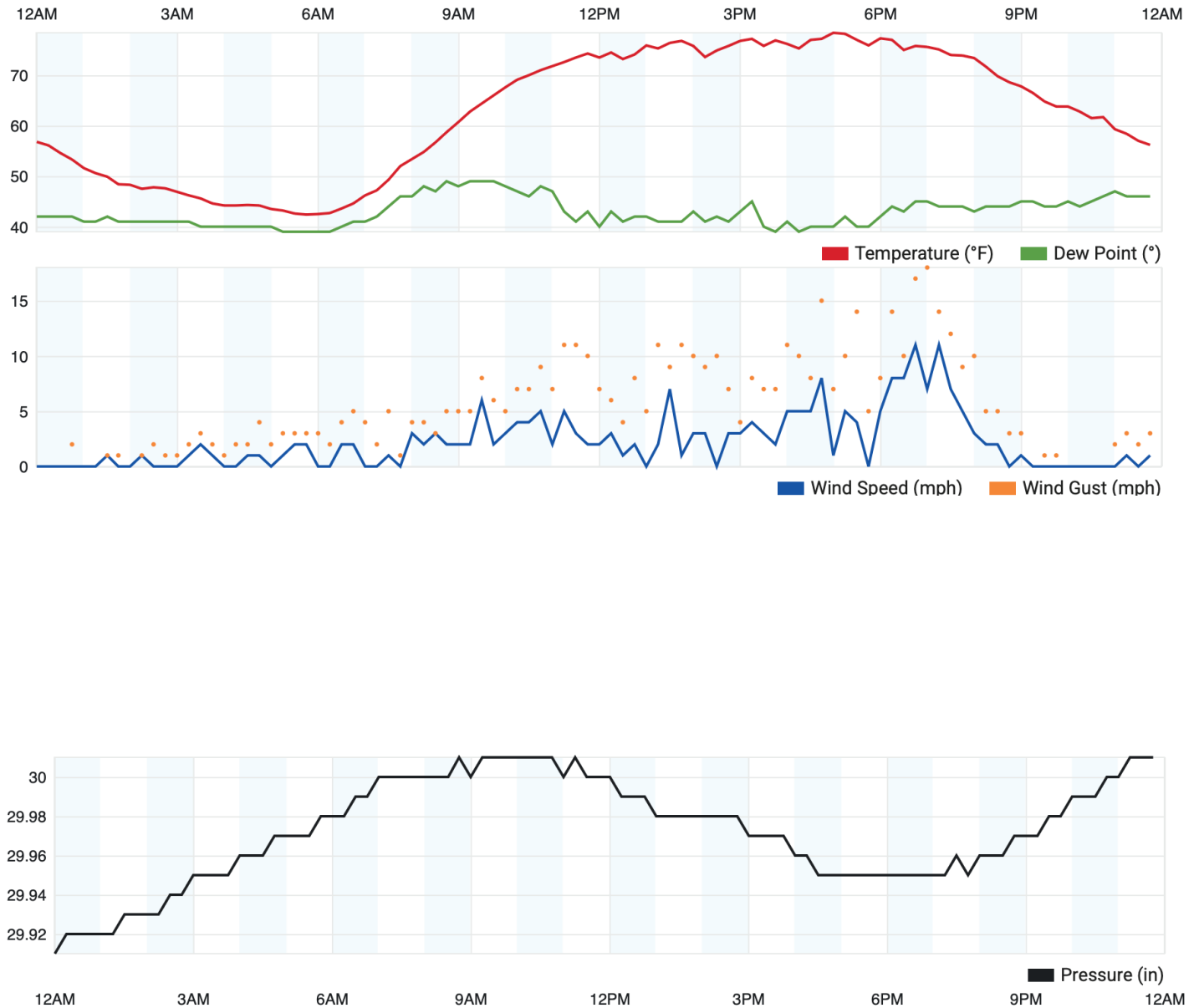
Trump announced Long as his pick for the IRS post in December.

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

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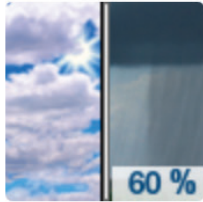
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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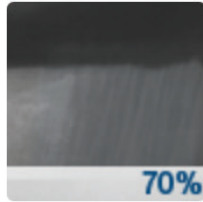
Today



High: 72 °F

Mostly Cloudy
then Showers
Likely

Tonight



Low: 50 °F

Showers
Likely

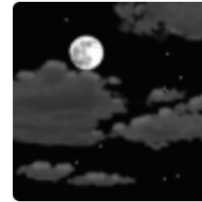
Friday



High: 72 °F

Slight Chance
Showers then
Slight Chance
T-storms

Friday Night



Low: 49 °F

Partly Cloudy

Saturday



High: 80 °F

Partly Sunny
then Chance
T-storms



The Rest of the Week

June 5, 2025

3:03 AM

Occasional Rain Showers Through Friday

Today



High:
62 to 75°

Chance of rain:
60 to 90%
- *Highest over
central SD*

Tonight



Lows:
46 to 56°

Chance of rain:
40 to 85%
- *Highest south
central to east
central SD*

Friday



High:
68 to 73°

Chance of rain:
40 to 50%
- *East of the James
River*



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

High chances of rain (60 to 90%) today and tonight with a possibility of an isolated thunderstorm as well. No severe weather is anticipated with the main threat being lightning. Rain showers and a possible thunderstorm will continue Friday, mainly along and east of the James River. Highs will run in the 60s to the mid 70s today with similar temps expected for Friday.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

1

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Isolated severe storms
possible

TIMING

**Saturday afternoon
into the evening**

PRIMARY THREATS



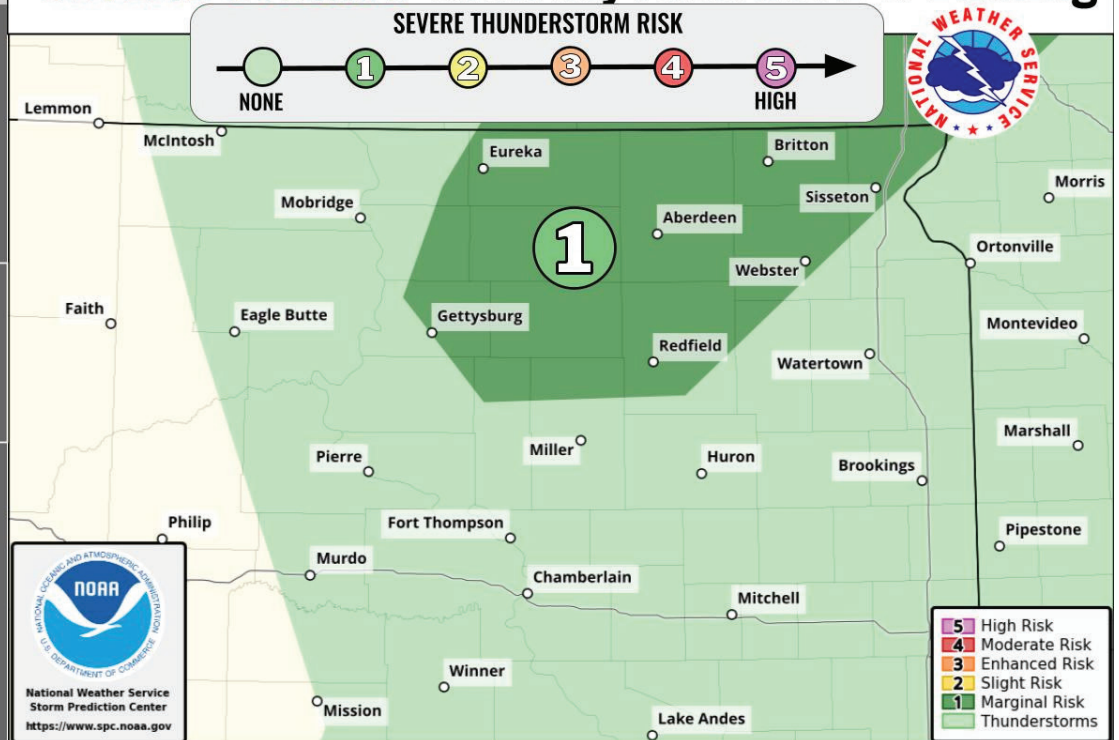
LARGE HAIL



DAMAGING WIND

Get your up to date
forecast at weather.gov/abr

SEVERE STORMS Saturday Afternoon & Evening



Isolated severe storms are possible Saturday afternoon and evening, ahead of a cold front. This includes portions of north central and northeastern South Dakota. Main threats from the strongest storms include quarter sized hail and wind gusts of 60 mph. Get your up to date forecast at weather.gov/abr

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 79 °F at 5:18 PM

Low Temp: 42 °F at 5:32 AM

Wind: 18 mph at 6:51 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 35 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 104 in 2021

Record Low: 37 in 1907

Average High: 77

Average Low: 52

Average Precip in June.: 0.55

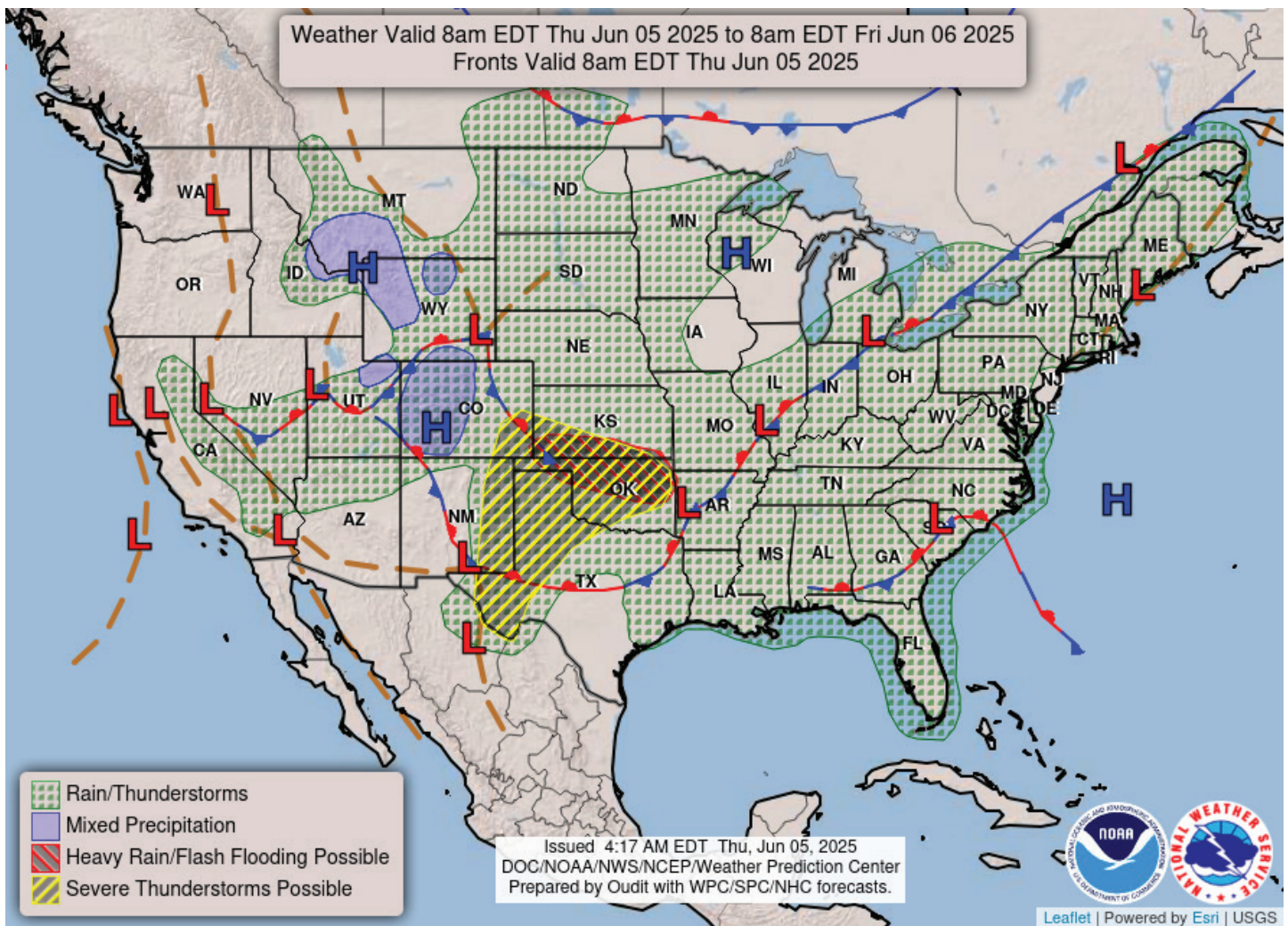
Precip to date in June: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 7.80

Precip Year to Date: 6.05

Sunset Tonight: 9:18:45 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:42:54 am



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Today in Weather History

June 5th, 1925: A severe thunderstorm that probably produced multiple small tornadoes moved northwest from Presho in Jones County. There were significant gaps of about 15 miles at times between tornadoes. One of these tornadoes passed 10 miles north of Ree Heights and ended north of Miller. Half a dozen barns suffered damage west and north of Ree Heights. The strongest of the tornadoes was an estimated F2 strength. Also, on this date, a tornado moved from the southern edge of Fargo, North Dakota, and on into Moorhead, Minnesota.

June 5th, 1996: Hail, between a golf ball and tennis ball size, broke many windshields and dented vehicles in Watertown. Some houses in Watertown had windows broken out because of the large hail. Golfball-sized hail also covered most of the ground at the Watertown Airport.

June 5th, 1999: Winds gusting to 74 mph knocked down several trees throughout Groton. One tree removed a major transmission line and ripped the electrical service line off a house. Power was out for parts of Groton for several hours. The high winds shattered the windows at a store on Main Street and tore a standing board on a loose sign, which damaged five new vehicles at a dealership in Groton. The high winds also destroyed a small service building and the surrounding fence at Groton's main juncture of natural gas pipelines. Winds up to 70 mph brought several trees and many large tree branches down in Henry. Winds gusting to 80 mph snapped off several trees, blew a garage down, and brought power lines down in Hazel. In Watertown, winds gusted to over 70 mph, blowing a portion of a roof off a house and destroying the attached garage on another house. Near Watertown, a pole barn was destroyed, a hay bale was blown into a home's basement window, and part of their deck was torn away. Near Florence, winds up to 80 mph tipped over and damaged a small shed, destroyed another storage shed, and also wholly demolished a three-stall garage.

June 5th, 2008: Very heavy rains of 3 to 7 inches caused extensive flooding throughout Dewey County. Many roads, bridges, dams, and culverts, along with some buildings, were damaged or destroyed by the flooding. One man, west of Promise, used a boat to get back and forth from his ranch. A federal disaster declaration was issued for Dewey County and the Cheyenne River Reservation.

1859 - Frost was reported from Iowa to New England. The temperature dipped to 25 degrees in New York State, and up to two inches of snow blanketed Ohio. The cold and snow damaged the wheat crop. (David Ludlum)

1908 - Helena MT was deluged with 3.67 inches of rain to establish their all-time 24 hour rainfall record. (4th-5th) (The Weather Channel)

1916 - A tornado struck the town of Warren AR killing 83 persons. There were 125 deaths that day in a tornado outbreak across Missouri and Arkansas. (David Ludlum)

1917 - Residents near Topeka KS reported disk-shaped hailstones six to ten inches in diameter, and two to three inches thick. The hailstorm was accompanied by a tornado. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - International Falls, MN, dipped to a record low reading of 34 degrees during the morning. Williston, ND, and Glasgow, MT, reported record warm afternoon highs of 94 degrees. Major flooding was reported along the Guadalupe River in South Texas, with the water level at Cuero reaching 18 feet above flood stage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty cities in the south central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Asheville NC with a reading of 40 degrees. Fifteen cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 108 degrees at Glasgow MT was a record for June. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Southern Atlantic Coast during the day and into the night. Four tornadoes were reported, and there were 87 reports of large hail and damaging winds. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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"What are you planting?" asked the salesman of the elderly gentleman.

"Seeds," said the old farmer, rather nonchalantly.

"Of course they're seeds. I can see that. I'm not dumb or blind," he said with a bit of sarcasm in his voice.

"Well, if you are so interested, hang around for a few months and see what comes up. You might be surprised. Might even be something you like," came the reply.

Planting seeds and gardening is a craft. It is done with care and concern. Nothing is left to chance, and the only uncontrollable aspect of farming is the weather.

"The wages of the righteous is life," wrote Solomon, "but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death."

The word "wages" in this verse comes from the agricultural world and describes the crop or yield that is gained at the time of harvest. Earnings are the result of work.

But both have a similar meaning: Our lifestyle and way of living have implications far beyond the moment. Righteousness brings a fulfilling life now, and after this life—eternal life with God. The alternative lifestyle, unrighteousness, is one of sin and leads to death—eternal separation from God.

Our God is a just God and will reward each of us for the "seeds" we plant.

Our old farmer knew what the crop would be from the seeds he planted. He didn't have to wait and be surprised at harvest time.

Neither do we.

God's Word leaves no doubt about sowing seeds and the coming harvest: "Do not be deceived," is God's warning, "for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap."

Prayer: Father, may we examine our lives in light of your Word and plant "seeds of righteousness" each day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death." Proverbs 10:16

We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.03.25

16 24 29 36 45 13

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$223,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 10 Mins
18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.04.25

1 6 26 41 51 8

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$37,400,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 25
Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.04.25

11 12 14 40 41 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 40 Mins 17
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.04.25

4 12 16 22 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$21,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 40
Mins 17 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.04.25

13 33 35 36 56 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 9 Mins
17 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.04.25

5 17 23 35 45 24

Power Play: 10x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$44,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 9 Mins
17 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

Thune's first big test as Senate leader has arrived with Trump's tax bill

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Only six months into the job, Senate Majority Leader John Thune faces a massive challenge as he tries to quickly push President Donald Trump's sprawling tax and spending cuts package to passage with the support of a divided GOP conference.

While most Republican senators are inclined to vote for the bill, Thune can stand to lose only four votes in the face of united Democratic opposition — and many more Republicans than that are critical of the version sent over by the House.

To get it done by July 4 — Trump's deadline — Thune has to figure out how to balance the various, and sometimes conflicting, demands emerging from his members. And he has to do it in a way that doesn't endanger Republican support in the House, which passed the legislation by only one vote last month after weeks of contentious negotiations.

It's a complicated and risky undertaking, one that is likely to define the first year of Thune's tenure and make or break his evolving relationship with Trump.

"This is when John's leadership is going to be desperately needed," said North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, one of the Republican holdouts who is pushing back on the bill's quick phaseout of certain energy tax credits. "You can say no all you want, as long as you don't say no to the wrong 51 people."

So far, the well-liked South Dakota Republican is in a good place, both with colleagues and the White House. Thune has worked closely with Trump, despite a rockier relationship at the end of Trump's first term. While acknowledging that the Senate will likely change the bill to address concerns about changes to Medicaid and other programs, Thune has repeatedly said that "failure is not an option."

"Individual pieces of it people don't like," Thune said Tuesday. "But in the end, we have to succeed."

To get there, Thune has been meeting in his office with senators to hear them out, bringing in his colleagues individually and in small groups to discuss portions of the bill. Republican senators say the outreach is a stark change from his predecessor, Mitch McConnell, who was more feared than loved and kept a tight circle of advisers.

McConnell stepped down from the leadership post in January after almost two decades amid a series of health episodes and growing criticism from senators on the right flank, who felt that he consolidated power and ignored their concerns.

"It's very much a change," said North Dakota Sen. Kevin Cramer. Thune has "already made a lot of people happier by the listening part," he said.

One happier senator is Florida Sen. Rick Scott, who sparred openly with McConnell and ran against Thune to replace him. Scott, who criticizes the bill as not doing enough to cut federal spending, has also met with the new leader.

"I'd be very surprised if anybody doesn't believe he's receptive to their ideas," Scott said of Thune. And when people feel heard, Scott said, "there's a greater chance they will go along with something."

Thune has also carefully navigated his relationship with the president, after sharply criticizing Trump in 2020 for trying to overturn his election defeat.

Trump declined to endorse Thune's reelection bid two years later. Thune endorsed South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott over Trump in the presidential primary before eventually endorsing Trump. The two made amends in the final months of Trump's presidential campaign and have since forged a working relationship of mutual benefit. Thune has stayed in close touch with the White House, visiting Trump several times to discuss the bill, including on Wednesday.

While the collaborative approach has won favor from Trump and colleagues who were agitating for a change, Thune has a long way to go in a short time. Passing the legislation will require hard choices, and

not every demand can be met.

Still, Thune's South Dakota colleague, Republican Sen. Mike Rounds, says he has already proved himself a "winner" with Trump and the conference by quickly moving the president's Cabinet nominations through the Senate mostly without controversy. The Senate also recently blocked California air regulations that Republicans have long opposed after Thune delayed the vote for weeks to assuage procedural concerns from GOP moderates like Maine Sen. Susan Collins.

"Everybody wants to work with John," Rounds said. "He's not making anybody mad right now."

Rounds says Thune has also learned how to crack down when he needs to. Since taking power, Thune has shortened Senate vote times that were sometimes stretching for hours to just 15 minutes, in most cases. It was a hard lesson for some senators, but it won him respect from Republicans and, privately, even some Democrats.

But as they were adjusting to the change, some senators unexpectedly missed votes because of Thune's new policy, Rounds said.

"Did he get yelled at a little bit? Yeah," he said. "But once they got cut off once or twice, pretty soon they realized, if you want to vote, make it on time."

Israel says it has recovered the bodies of 2 Israeli-American hostages from the Gaza Strip

By MELANIE LIDMAN, NATALIE MELZER and WAFAA SHURAFI Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israel has recovered the bodies of two Israeli-American hostages taken in Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack that ignited the war in the Gaza Strip. Israeli strikes overnight and into Thursday meanwhile killed at least 13 people, including three local journalists, according to health officials in the territory.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the remains of Judith Weinstein and Gad Haggai were recovered and returned to Israel in a special operation by the army and the Shin Bet internal security agency.

"Together with all the citizens of Israel, my wife and I extend our heartfelt condolences to the dear families. Our hearts ache for the most terrible loss. May their memory be blessed," he said in a statement.

Kibbutz Nir Oz announced the deaths of Weinstein, 70, and Haggai, 72, both of whom had Israeli and U.S. citizenship, in December 2023.

The military said they were killed in the Oct. 7 attack and taken into Gaza by the Mujahideen Brigades, the small armed group that it said had also abducted and killed Shiri Bibas and her two small children. The army said it recovered the remains of Weinstein and Haggai overnight into Thursday from the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

A teacher who helped children and a chef who played jazz

The couple were taking an early morning walk near their home in Kibbutz Nir Oz on the morning of Oct. 7 when Hamas militants stormed across the border and rampaged through several army bases and farming communities.

In the early hours of the morning, Weinstein was able to call emergency services and let them know that both she and her husband had been shot, and send a message to her family.

Weinstein was born in New York and taught English to children with special needs at Kibbutz Nir Oz, a small community near the Gaza border. The kibbutz said she also taught meditation techniques to children and teenagers who suffered from anxiety as a result of rocket fire from Gaza. Haggai was a retired chef and jazz musician.

"My beautiful parents have been freed. We have certainty," their daughter, Iris Haggai Liniado, wrote in a Facebook post. She thanked the Israeli military, the FBI and the Israeli and U.S. governments and called for the release of all the remaining hostages.

The couple were survived by two sons and two daughters and seven grandchildren, the kibbutz said.

Reporters among 13 killed in Israeli strikes

At least 10 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes in Khan Younis overnight, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies. It was not immediately clear if the strikes were related to the recovery mission.

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In Gaza City, three local reporters were killed and six people were wounded in a strike on the courtyard of the al-Ahli Hospital, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It did not immediately identify the journalists or say which outlets they worked for.

The Israeli military said it was looking into reports on the strike at al-Ahli. The army says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because it is embedded in populated areas.

Over 180 journalists and media workers have been killed since the start of the Israel-Hamas war, the vast majority of them in Gaza, according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists. Israel has said many of those killed in its strikes were militants posing as reporters.

Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in the Oct. 7 attack and abducted 251 hostages. They are still holding 56 hostages, around a third of them believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals. Israeli forces have rescued eight living hostages from Gaza and recovered dozens of bodies.

Israel's military campaign has killed more than 54,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were civilians or combatants. The offensive has destroyed large parts of Gaza and displaced around 90% of its population of roughly 2 million Palestinians.

Ceasefire talks deadlocked

The United States, Egypt and Qatar have been trying to broker another ceasefire and hostage release after Israel ended an earlier truce in March and imposed a blockade that has raised fears of famine, despite being eased in recent weeks. But the talks appear to be deadlocked.

Hamas says it will only release the remaining hostages in return for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. It has offered to hand over power to a politically independent Palestinian committee.

Netanyahu has rejected those terms, saying Israel will only agree to temporary ceasefires to facilitate the return of hostages. He has vowed to continue the war until all the hostages are returned and Hamas is defeated or disarmed and sent into exile.

He has said Israel will maintain control over Gaza indefinitely and will facilitate what he refers to as the voluntary emigration of much of its population to other countries. The Palestinians and much of the international community have rejected such plans, viewing them as forcible expulsion that could violate international law.

New Zealand Parliament suspends 3 Māori Party lawmakers for haka protest

By CHARLOTTE GRAHAM-McLAY Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — New Zealand legislators voted Thursday to enact record suspensions from Parliament for three lawmakers who performed a Māori haka to protest a proposed law.

Hana-Rāwhiti Maipi-Clarke received a seven-day ban and the leaders of her political party, Debbie Ngarewa-Packer and Rawiri Waititi, were barred for 21 days. Three days had been the longest ban for a lawmaker from New Zealand's Parliament before.

The lawmakers from Te Pāti Māori, the Māori Party, performed the haka, a chanting dance of challenge, in November to oppose a widely unpopular bill, now defeated, that they said would reverse Indigenous rights.

The protest drew global headlines and provoked months of fraught debate among lawmakers about what the consequences for the lawmakers' actions should be and the place of Māori culture in Parliament.

Why the punishment was so strict

A committee of the lawmakers' peers in April recommended the lengthy bans. It said the lawmakers were not being punished for the haka, but for striding across the floor of the debating chamber toward their opponents while doing it.

Judith Collins, the committee chair, said the lawmakers' behavior was egregious, disruptive and potentially intimidating.

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Maipi-Clarke, 22, rejected that description Thursday, citing other instances when legislators have left their seats and approached opponents without sanction. The suspended legislators said they are being treated more harshly than others because they are Māori.

"I came into this house to give a voice to the voiceless. Is that the real issue here?" Maipi-Clarke asked Parliament. "Is that the real intimidation here? Are our voices too loud for this house?"

Why this haka was controversial

Inside and outside Parliament, the haka has increasingly been welcomed as an important part of New Zealand life. The sacred chant can be a challenge to the viewer but is not violent.

As Māori language and culture have become part of mainstream New Zealand in recent years, haka appear in a range of cultural, somber and celebratory settings. They also have rung out in Parliament to welcome the passage of high-profile laws.

Some who decried the protest haka in Parliament cited its timing, with Maipi-Clarke beginning the chant as votes were being tallied and causing a brief suspension of proceedings. She has privately apologized for the disruption to Parliament's Speaker, she said Thursday.

A few lawmakers urged their peers to consider rewriting rules about what lawmakers could do in Parliament to recognize Māori cultural protocols as accepted forms of protest. One cited changes to allow breastfeeding in the debating chamber as evidence the institution had amended rules before.

Who approved the suspensions

Normally the parliamentary committee that decides on punishments for errant lawmakers is in agreement on what should happen to them. But panel members were sharply divided over the haka protest and the lengthy punishments were advanced only because the government has more legislators in Parliament than the opposition.

One party in the government bloc wanted even longer suspensions and had asked the committee if the Māori party lawmakers could be jailed. Most in opposition rejected any punishment beyond the one-day ban Maipi-Clarke already served.

Speaker Gerry Brownlee urged lawmakers last month to negotiate a consensus and ordered a free-ranging debate that would continue until all agreed to put the sanctions to a vote. But no such accord was reached after hours of occasionally emotional speeches in which opposition lawmakers accused the government of undermining democracy by passing such a severe punishment on its opponents.

While the bans were certain to pass, even as the debate began Thursday it remained unclear whether opposition lawmakers would filibuster to prevent the suspensions from reaching a vote. By evening, with no one's mind changed, all lawmakers agreed the debate should end.

Every government lawmaker voted for the punishments, while all opposition members voted against them.

The law that prompted the protest

Thursday's debate capped a fraught episode for race relations in New Zealand, beginning with the controversial bill that the Māori Party lawmakers opposed.

The measures would have rewritten principles in the country's founding document, a treaty between Māori tribal leaders and representatives of the British Crown signed at the time New Zealand was colonized.

The bill's authors were chagrined by moves from Parliament and the courts in recent decades to enshrine the Treaty of Waitangi's promises. Opponents warned of constitutional crisis if the law was passed and tens of thousands of people marched to Parliament last November to oppose it.

Despite growing recognition for the treaty, Māori remain disadvantaged on most social and economic metrics compared to non-Māori New Zealanders.

Nintendo Switch 2 launch, after an 8 year wait, draws big lines

By AYAKA MCGILL Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Eager customers lined up outside electronics stores hours in advance in Tokyo on Thursday to collect their pre-ordered Nintendo Switch 2 video game consoles.

The much anticipated Switch2 is an upgrade to its eight-year-old predecessor with new social features

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meant to draw players into online gaming. The new consoles were sold through a competitive lottery system that Nintendo said got about 2.2 million applications in Japan alone.

Outside the official draw, some retailers offered their own lotteries to pre-order the devices.

Koji Takahashi was among those who missed out on the official draw but he was selected in the second round of a lottery held by a major electronics retailer in Japan.

He was first in line waiting outside the store, arriving four hours ahead of its opening. He hoped to secure a limited supply of Nintendo accessories to buy along with his pre-ordered Switch 2.

"I feel very sorry for those who weren't successful in the lottery. But I also had tough time getting this far, so I hope they forgive me!" Takahashi said.

The new console comes with a larger and higher resolution screen than its predecessor, with improved processing power, offering smoother and more vivid graphics.

Nintendo has said it expects to sell 15 million Switch 2 consoles for the fiscal year through March 2026.

The company has promised to roll out attractive software for the Switch 2 later this year, including "The Legend of Zelda" games, a Pokemon title and a Kirby game, as well as offerings from outside software companies.

Nintendo is capitalizing on the launch with the opening of a store in San Francisco and the Super Nintendo World amusement facility in Orlando, Florida, both set for this month.

David Jolly, a Trump critic and former GOP congressman, to run for Florida governor as a Democrat

By KATE PAYNE Associated Press/Report for America

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — A former Republican congressman and vocal critic of Donald Trump says he wants to become governor in the president's adopted home state of Florida, and that he's running as a Democrat.

David Jolly formally announced his bid Thursday, becoming the latest party convert hoping to wrest back control of what had been the country's premier swing state that in recent years has made a hard shift to the right. Under state law, term-limited Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis can't run for reelection in 2026.

Even as Florida serves as a place for the Trump administration to poach staff and test policies, Jolly says he's confident that issues such as affordability, funding public schools, and strengthening campaign finance and ethics laws will resonate with all voters in 2026. He predicts elections next year will herald nationwide change.

"I actually think Republicans in Tallahassee have gone too far in dividing us. I think we should get politicians out of the classrooms, out of the doctor's offices," Jolly said.

"I think enough people in Florida, even some Republicans, now understand that. That the culture wars have gone too far," he said.

Jolly was first elected to his Tampa Bay-area congressional seat during a 2014 special election, and was reelected for one full term. The attorney and former lobbyist underwent a political evolution that spurred him to leave the Republican Party in 2018 to become an independent and then a registered Democrat. And he has built a national profile for himself as an anti-Trump political commentator on MSNBC.

Jolly said he has considered himself "part of the Democratic coalition" for five or so years, and believes in what he sees as the party's "fundamental values" — that government can help people, that the economy should be "fair" to all, and that immigrants should be celebrated.

"I struggled to exercise those values in the Republican Party," Jolly said, continuing: "The actual registration as a Democrat wasn't a pivot. It was a kind of a formality."

Jolly has broken from his old party on immigration, as Florida lawmakers race to help Trump fulfill his promise of mass deportations. Jolly skewered Republicans who he said have "conflated immigration and crime," which he described as wrong and immoral.

"If you were born here or if you immigrated here, or if you're a Tallahassee politician who steals Medic-

aid money, we're going to be tough on crime," Jolly added, referring to a probe into the use of Medicaid settlement funds by a charity associated with first lady Casey DeSantis.

Jolly's gubernatorial run as a Democrat draws comparisons to the failed bid of former Republican congressman-turned-independent-turned-Democrat Charlie Crist, who lost to DeSantis in 2022 by 19 points. It was Crist, running as a Democrat, who ousted Jolly from his congressional seat in 2016.

Jolly joined the Florida Democratic Party at what is arguably one of its most vulnerable points in years. Florida currently has no Democrats elected to statewide office, and there are now 1.2 million more registered Republicans than Democrats, according to the state's active voter rolls. The GOP has made significant inroads in formerly Democratic strongholds in the state, such as Miami-Dade County.

The day that Jolly announced his new affiliation, the-then top Democrat in the Florida Senate, Jason Pizzo, revealed he was leaving the party, declaring that "the Democratic Party in Florida is dead." Pizzo, a former prosecutor, has said he'll launch his own run for governor as a candidate with no party affiliation.

On the Republican side, Jolly will face Trump-backed Rep. Byron Donalds, who is also a frequent presence on cable news as a surrogate for the president. Among the other names floated as potential GOP candidates are former Rep. Matt Gaetz and Casey DeSantis.

Vigil held for victims of Boulder firebombing attack as suspect's family fights deportation

By COLLEEN SLEVIN, JESSE BEDAYN, REBECCA SANTANA and HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press
BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — Hundreds of people squeezed into the Jewish Community Center in Boulder, Colorado, for a vigil that featured prayer, singing and emotional testimony from a victim and witnesses of the firebombing attack in the city's downtown, while a federal judge has blocked the deportation of the suspect's family.

Mohamed Sabry Soliman, 45, has been charged with a federal hate crime and state counts of attempted murder in Sunday's attack on a group demonstrating for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza. He is being held in a county jail on a \$10 million cash bond and is scheduled to make an appearance in state court on Thursday.

Witnesses say Soliman threw two Molotov cocktails at the group and authorities say he confessed to the attack that injured 15 people.

Rachelle Halpern, who has been walking with the group since 2023, said during Wednesday evening's vigil that she remembers thinking it was strange to see a man with a canister looking like he was going to spray pesticide on the grass. Then she heard a crash and screams and saw flames around her feet.

"A woman stood one foot behind me, engulfed in flames from head to toe, lying on the ground with her husband," she said. "People immediately, three or four men immediately rushed to her to smother the flames."

Her description prompted murmurs from the audience members. One woman's head dropped into her hands.

"I heard a loud noise, and the back of my legs burning, and don't remember those next few moments," said a victim, who didn't want to be identified and spoke off camera, over the event's speakers. "Even as I was watching it unfold before my eyes, even then, it didn't seem real."

Defendant's family investigated

U.S. District Judge Gordon P. Gallagher on Wednesday granted a request from his wife and five children, who like Soliman are Egyptian, to block their deportation after U.S. immigration officials took them into custody. They have not been charged.

Federal authorities have said Soliman has been living in the U.S. illegally, and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said Wednesday that the family was being processed for removal. It's rare that a criminal suspect's family members are detained and threatened with deportation.

"It is patently unlawful to punish individuals for the crimes of their relatives," attorneys for the family wrote in the lawsuit.

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Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin described the plaintiff's claims as "absurd" and "an attempt to delay justice." She said the entire family was in the country illegally.

Soliman's wife, Hayam El Gamal, a 17-year-old daughter, two minor sons and two minor daughters were being held at an immigration detention center in Texas, said Eric Lee, one of the attorney's representing the family.

Soliman told authorities that no one, including his family, knew about his planned attack, according to court documents. El Gamal said she was "shocked" to learn her husband had been arrested in the attack, according to her lawsuit.

Victims increase to 15 people and a dog

On Wednesday, authorities raised the number of people injured in the attack to 15 from 12, plus a dog.

Boulder County officials said in a news release that the victims include eight women and seven men ranging in age from 25 to 88. Details about how the victims were impacted would be explained in criminal charges set to be filed Thursday, according to Boulder County District Attorney's office spokesperson Shannon Carbone.

Soliman had planned to kill all of the roughly 20 participants in Sunday's demonstration at the popular Pearl Street pedestrian mall, but he threw just two of his 18 Molotov cocktails while yelling "Free Palestine," police said.

According to an FBI affidavit, Soliman told police he was driven by a desire "to kill all Zionist people" — a reference to the movement to establish and protect a Jewish state in Israel. Authorities said he expressed no remorse about the attack.

The family's immigration status

Before moving to Colorado Springs three years ago, Soliman spent 17 years in Kuwait, according to court documents.

Soliman arrived in the U.S. in August 2022 on a tourist visa that expired in February 2023, McLaughlin said in a post on X. She said Soliman filed for asylum in September 2022 and was granted a work authorization in March 2023, but that has also expired.

Hundreds of thousands of people overstay their visas each year in the United States, according to Department of Homeland Security reports.

Soliman's wife is an Egyptian national, according to her lawsuit. She is a network engineer and has a pending EB-2 visa, which is available to professionals with advanced degrees, the suit said. She and her children all are listed as dependents on Soliman's asylum application.

The case against Soliman

Soliman told authorities that he had been planning the attack for a year, the affidavit said.

Soliman's attorney, Kathryn Herold, declined to comment after a state court hearing Monday. Public defenders' policy prohibits speaking to the media.

The attack unfolded against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas war, which has contributed to a spike in antisemitic violence in the United States. It happened at the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Shavuot and barely a week after a man who also yelled "Free Palestine" was charged with fatally shooting two Israeli Embassy staffers outside a Jewish museum in Washington.

Draisaitl scores in OT, Oilers beat the Panthers in overtime in Game 1 of the Stanley Cup Final

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — When the Stanley Cup was brought out onto the ice prior to Game 1 of the final, just as it was last year, everything the Edmonton Oilers expressed about this time being different came into focus.

"Last year, I was kind of looking at it with googly eyes," goaltender Stuart Skinner said. "This year seeing it, it's: 'I was here last year, I saw it. It's time to get back to work and do my thing.' It definitely felt completely different."

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The Oilers made the start of the series completely different, erasing a multigoal deficit to beat the defending Florida Panthers 4-3 on Wednesday night on Leon Draisaitl's power play goal in overtime. A year since falling behind three games to none, Edmonton has a lead in the rematch and is one step closer to flipping the script.

"It's huge," said Skinner, who made some big stops among his 29 saves. "The way that we showed up right from the get go and the way that we continued to keep on going, even though we were down by two, that shows a lot of character by us."

Draisaitl provided the heroics, scoring on the power play with 31 seconds left in the OT period after Tomas Nosek's penalty for putting the puck over the glass. The goal was his third in overtime this year in the playoffs, tying the record for a single postseason, after Draisaitl had six during the regular season.

"He's invaluable," said Oilers captain Connor McDavid, who set up the tying and winning goals. "He does so many good things: clutch, faceoffs. You name it, he does it."

For a while, it appeared the Oilers would lose Game 1 this year as well. Draisaitl's goal 1:06 in was followed later in the first period by Sam Bennett deflecting a shot past Skinner after falling into him.

Edmonton coach Kris Knoblauch unsuccessfully challenged for goaltender interference, with the NHL's situation room ruling that the Oilers' Jake Walman tripped Bennett into Skinner. The resulting penalty paved the way for Florida's Brad Marchand to score the go-ahead goal on a power play.

Bennett scored his second of the night early in the second period to put the Panthers up 3-1. They entered 31-0 over the past three playoffs since coach Paul Maurice took over when leading at the first or second intermission.

"I mean, they pushed," Marchand said. "They obviously are a very good team, and doesn't take much for them to score. So, not surprising, the push they did. They're a great team. We've just got to keep going."

Fourth-liner Viktor Arvidsson brought the crowd back to life early in the second, and fellow Swede Matias Ekholm — playing in just his second game back from an extended injury absence — tied it with 13:27 remaining in regulation off a perfect pass from McDavid.

Florida counterpart Sergei Bobrovsky's made some incredible saves, including one to rob Trent Frederic earlier in overtime. In between, he was greeted with derisive chants of "Ser-gei! Ser-gei!" that followed goals he allowed.

At the other end, Skinner made a handful of saves that were vital to keeping the Panthers from extending their lead or going back ahead late in the third, getting friendlier chants of "Stuuuu! Stuuuu!" every time he turned aside a difficult shot.

"He was great again," McDavid said. "He gave us a chance."

Up next

Game 2 is Friday night in Edmonton before the series shifts to Florida for Games 3 and 4.

Trump promised to welcome more foreign students. Now, they feel targeted on all fronts

By JOCELYN GECKER AP Education Writer

To attract the brightest minds to America, President Donald Trump proposed a novel idea while campaigning: If elected, he would grant green cards to all foreign students who graduate from U.S. colleges.

"It's so sad when we lose people from Harvard, MIT, from the greatest schools," Trump said during a podcast interview last June. "That is going to end on Day One."

That promise never came to pass. Trump's stance on welcoming foreign students has shifted dramatically. International students have found themselves at the center of an escalating campaign to kick them out or keep them from coming as his administration merges a crackdown on immigration with an effort to reshape higher education.

An avalanche of policies from the Trump administration — such as terminating students' ability to study in the U.S., halting all new student visa interviews and moving to block foreign enrollment at Harvard — have triggered lawsuits, countersuits and confusion. Foreign students say they feel targeted on multiple

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fronts. Late Wednesday, Trump himself took the latest action against international students, signing an executive order barring nearly all foreigners from entering the country to attend Harvard.

In interviews, students from around the world described how it feels to be an international student today in America. Their accounts highlight pervasive feelings of fear, anxiety and insecurity that have made them more cautious in their daily lives, distracted them from schoolwork and prompted many to cancel trips home because they fear not being allowed to return.

For many, the last few months have forced them to rethink their dreams of building a life in America.

A standout student from Latvia feels 'expendable'

Markuss Saule, a freshman at Brigham Young University-Idaho, took a recent trip home to Latvia and spent the entire flight back to the U.S. in a state of panic.

For hours, he scrubbed his phone, uninstalling all social media, deleting anything that touched on politics or could be construed as anti-Trump.

"That whole 10-hour flight, where I was debating, 'Will they let me in?' — it definitely killed me a little bit," said Saule, a business analytics major. "It was terrifying."

Saule is the type of international student the U.S. has coveted. As a high schooler in Latvia, he qualified for a competitive, merit-based exchange program funded by the U.S. State Department. He spent a year of high school in Minnesota, falling in love with America and a classmate who is now his fiancée. He just ended his freshman year in college with a 4.0 GPA.

But the alarm he felt on that flight crushed what was left of his American dream.

"If you had asked me at the end of 2024 what my plans were, it was to get married, find a great job here in the U.S. and start a family," said Saule, who hopes to work as a business data analyst. "Those plans are not applicable anymore. Ask me now, and the plan to leave this place as soon as possible."

Saule and his fiancée plan to marry this summer, graduate a year early and move to Europe.

This spring the Trump administration abruptly revoked permission to study in the U.S. for thousands of international students before reversing itself. A federal judge has blocked further status terminations, but for many, the damage is done. Saule has a constant fear he could be next.

As a student in Minnesota just three years ago, he felt like a proud ambassador for his country.

"Now I feel a sense of inferiority. I feel that I am expendable, that I am purely an appendage that is maybe getting cut off soon," he said. Trump's policies carry a clear subtext. "The policies, what they tell me is simple. It is one word: Leave."

From dreaming of working at NASA to 'doomscrolling' job listings in India

A concern for attracting the world's top students was raised in the interview Trump gave last June on the podcast "All-In." Can you promise, Trump was asked, to give companies more ability "to import the best and brightest" students?

"I do promise," Trump answered. Green cards, he said, would be handed out with diplomas to any foreign student who gets a college or graduate degree.

Trump said he knew stories of "brilliant" graduates who wanted to stay in the U.S. to work but couldn't. "They go back to India, they go back to China" and become multi-billionaires, employing thousands of people. "That is going to end on Day One."

Had Trump followed through with that pledge, a 24-year-old Indian physics major named Avi would not be afraid of losing everything he has worked toward.

After six years in Arizona, where Avi attended college and is now working as an engineer, the U.S. feels like a second home. He dreams of working at NASA or in a national lab and staying in America where he has several relatives.

But now he is too afraid to fly to Chicago to see them, rattled by news of foreigners being harassed at immigration centers and airports.

"Do I risk seeing my family or risk deportation?" said Avi, who asked to be identified by his first name, fearing retribution.

Avi is one of about 240,000 people on student visas in the U.S. on Optional Practical Training — a post-

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graduation period where students are authorized to work in fields related to their degrees for up to three years. A key Trump nominee has said he would like to see an end to postgraduate work authorization for international students.

Avi's visa is valid until next year but he feels "a massive amount of uncertainty."

He wonders if he can sign a lease on a new apartment. Even his daily commute feels different.

"I drive to work every morning, 10 miles an hour under speed limit to avoid getting pulled over," said Avi, who hopes to stay in the U.S. but is casting a wider net. "I spend a lot of time doomscrolling job listings in India and other places."

A Ukrainian chose college in America over joining the fight at home — for now

Vladyslav Plyaka came to the U.S. from Ukraine as an exchange student in high school. As war broke out at home, he stayed to attend the University of Wisconsin.

He was planning to visit Poland to see his mother but if he leaves the U.S., he would need to reapply for a visa. He doesn't know when that will be possible now that visa appointments are suspended, and he doesn't feel safe leaving the country anyway.

He feels grateful for the education, but without renewing his visa, he'll be stuck in the U.S. at least two more years while he finishes his degree. He sometimes wonders if he would be willing to risk leaving his education in the United States — something he worked for years to achieve — if something happened to his family.

"It's hard because every day I have to think about my family, if everything is going to be all right," he said.

It took him three tries to win a scholarship to study in the U.S. Having that cut short because of visa problems would undermine the sacrifice he made to be here. He sometimes feels guilty that he isn't at home fighting for his country, but he knows there's value in gaining an education in America.

"I decided to stay here just because of how good the college education is," he said. "If it was not good, I probably would be on the front lines."

Trump orders investigation into Biden's actions as president, ratcheting up targeting of predecessor

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and MATT BROWN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Wednesday directed his administration to investigate Joe Biden's actions as president, alleging aides masked his predecessor's "cognitive decline" and casting doubts on the legitimacy of his use of the autopen to sign pardons and other documents.

The order marked a significant escalation in Trump's targeting of political adversaries and could lay the groundwork for arguments by the Republican that a range of Biden's actions as president were invalid.

Biden responded in a statement Wednesday night: "Let me be clear: I made the decisions during my presidency. I made the decisions about the pardons, executive orders, legislation, and proclamations. Any suggestion that I didn't is ridiculous and false."

The Justice Department under Democratic and Republican administrations has recognized the use of an autopen to sign legislation and issue pardons for decades, Trump presented no evidence that Biden was unaware of the actions taken in his name, and the president's absolute pardon power is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

"This conspiracy marks one of the most dangerous and concerning scandals in American history," Trump wrote in a memo. "The American public was purposefully shielded from discovering who wielded the executive power, all while Biden's signature was deployed across thousands of documents to effect radical policy shifts."

Trump directed Attorney General Pam Bondi and White House counsel David Warrington to handle the investigation.

It's unclear how far Trump will push this effort, which would face certain legal challenges. But it reflects his fixation on Biden, who defeated him in 2020, an election that Trump never conceded and continues to falsely claim was rigged against him.

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Trump frequently suggests that Biden was wrong to use an autopen, a mechanical device that replicates a person's authentic signature. Although they've been used in the White House for decades, Trump claims that Biden's aides were usurping presidential authority.

Biden issued pardons for his two brothers and his sister shortly before leaving office, hoping to shield them from potential prosecution under Trump, who had promised retribution during last year's campaign. Other pardon recipients included members of a congressional committee that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol.

Trump often suggests that his political opponents should be investigated, and he has directed the Justice Department to look into people who have angered him over the years. They include Chris Krebs, a former cybersecurity official who disputed Trump's claims of a stolen election in 2020, and Miles Taylor, a former Department of Homeland Security official who wrote an anonymous op-ed sharply critical of the president in 2018.

Meanwhile, House Oversight Chairman James Comer of Kentucky, a Republican, requested transcribed interviews with five Biden aides, alleging they had participated in a "cover-up" that amounted to "one of the greatest scandals in our nation's history."

"These five former senior advisors were eyewitnesses to President Biden's condition and operations within the Biden White House," Comer said in a statement. "They must appear before the House Oversight Committee and provide truthful answers about President Biden's cognitive state and who was calling the shots."

Interviews were requested with White House senior advisers Mike Donilon and Anita Dunn, former White House chief of staff Ron Klain, former deputy chief of staff Bruce Reed and Steve Ricchetti, a former counselor to the president.

Comer reiterated his call for Biden's physician, Kevin O'Connor, and former senior White House aides Annie Tomasini, Anthony Bernal, Ashley Williams and Neera Tanden to appear before the committee. He warned subpoenas would be issued this week if they refuse to schedule voluntary interviews.

"I think that people will start coming in the next two weeks," Comer told reporters. He added that the committee would release a report with its findings, "and we'll release the transcribed interviews, so it'll be very transparent."

Democrats have dismissed the effort as a distraction.

"Chairman Comer had his big shot in the last Congress to impeach Joe Biden and it was, of course, a spectacular flop," said Rep. Jamie Raskin, the Maryland Democrat who served as the ranking member on the oversight committee in the previous Congress. "And now he's just living off of a spent dream. It's over. And he should give up the whole thing."

Republicans on the committee are eager to pursue the investigation.

"The American people didn't elect a bureaucracy to run the country," said Rep. Brandon Gill, a freshman Republican from Texas. "I think that the American people deserve to know the truth and they want to know the truth of what happened."

The Republican inquiry so far has focused on the final executive actions of Biden's administration, which included the issuing of new federal rules and presidential pardons that they claim may be invalid.

Comer cited the book "Original Sin" by CNN's Jake Tapper and Axios' Alex Thompson, which details concerns and debates inside the White House and Democratic Party over Biden's mental state and age.

In the book, Tapper and Thompson wrote, "Five people were running the country, and Joe Biden was at best a senior member of the board."

Biden and members of his family have vigorously denied the book's claims.

"This book is political fairy smut for the permanent, professional chattering class," said Naomi Biden, the former president's granddaughter.

Biden withdrew from the presidential race last summer after a debate against Trump in which he appeared to lose his train of thought multiple times, muttered inaudible answers and misnamed different government programs.

The disastrous debate performance pushed questions about his age and mental acuity to the forefront,

ultimately leading Biden to withdraw from the presidential race. He was replaced on the ticket by Kamala Harris, who lost the election to Trump.

A US judge halts the deportation of the Egyptian family of the Boulder firebombing suspect

By COLLEEN SLEVIN, JESSE BEDAYN, REBECCA SANTANA and HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press
BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — A federal judge on Wednesday ordered the government to immediately halt deportation proceedings against the family of a man charged in the firebombing attack in Boulder, Colorado, to ensure the protection of the family's constitutional rights.

U.S. District Judge Gordon P. Gallagher granted a request from the wife and five children of Mohamed Sabry Soliman, who are Egyptian, to block their deportation. U.S. immigration officials took the family into custody Tuesday.

Soliman, 45, has been charged with a federal hate crime and state counts of attempted murder in Sunday's attack in downtown Boulder. Witnesses say he threw two Molotov cocktails at a group demonstrating for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza, and authorities say he confessed to the attack in custody.

His family members have not been charged.

Federal authorities have said Soliman has been living in the U.S. illegally, and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said earlier Wednesday that the family was being processed for removal. It's rare that a criminal suspect's family members are detained and threatened with deportation.

"It is patently unlawful to punish individuals for the crimes of their relatives," attorneys for the family wrote in the lawsuit.

Eric Lee, one of the attorney's representing the family, said efforts to deport them should not happen in a democracy.

"The punishment of a four-year-old child for something their parent allegedly did, who also has a presumption of innocence, is something that should outrage Americans regardless of their citizenship status," he said.

Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin described the plaintiff's claims as "absurd" and "an attempt to delay justice."

"Just like her criminal husband, she and her children are here illegally and are rightfully in ICE custody for removal as a result," she said in a statement.

Witnesses describe attack at vigil

Around 200 people squeezed into the local Jewish Community Center on Wednesday evening for a vigil that featured prayer, songs, a short speech by Colorado Gov. Jared Polis and emotional testimony from a victim and witnesses to the attack.

Rachelle Halpern, who has been walking with the group since 2023, said she remembers thinking it was strange to see a man with a canister looking like he was going to spray pesticide on the grass. Then she heard a crash and screams and saw flames around her feet.

"A woman stood one foot behind me, engulfed in flames from head to toe, lying on the ground with her husband," she said. "People immediately, three or four men immediately rushed to her to smother the flames."

Her description prompted murmurs from the audience members. One woman's head dropped into her hands.

"I heard a loud noise, and the back of my legs burning, and don't remember those next few moments," said a victim, who didn't want to be identified and spoke off camera, over the event's speakers. "Even as I was watching it unfold before my eyes, even then, it didn't seem real."

Defendant's family investigated

Soliman's wife, Hayam El Gamal, a 17-year-old daughter, two minor sons and two minor daughters all are Egyptian citizens, according to El Gamal's lawsuit. They were being held at an immigration detention center in Texas, Lee said.

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"We are investigating to what extent his family knew about this heinous attack, if they had knowledge of it, or if they provided support to it," Noem said in a statement.

Noem also said federal authorities would immediately crack down on people who overstay their visas, following the Boulder attack.

Soliman told authorities that no one, including his family, knew about his planned attack, according to court documents. El Gamal said she was "shocked" to learn her husband had been arrested in the attack, according to her lawsuit.

Victims increase to 15 people and a dog

Earlier Wednesday, authorities raised the number of people injured in the attack to 15 from 12, plus a dog.

Boulder County officials said in a news release that the victims include eight women and seven men ranging in age from 25 to 88. Details about how the victims were impacted would be explained in criminal charges set to be filed Thursday, according to Boulder County District Attorney's office spokesperson Shannon Carbone.

Soliman had planned to kill all of the roughly 20 participants in Sunday's demonstration at the popular Pearl Street pedestrian mall, but he threw just two of his 18 Molotov cocktails while yelling "Free Palestine," police said. Soliman didn't carry out his full plan "because he got scared and had never hurt anyone before," police wrote in an affidavit.

According to an FBI affidavit, Soliman told police he was driven by a desire "to kill all Zionist people" — a reference to the movement to establish and protect a Jewish state in Israel. Authorities said he expressed no remorse about the attack.

The family's immigration status

Before moving to Colorado Springs three years ago, Soliman spent 17 years in Kuwait, according to court documents.

Soliman arrived in the U.S. in August 2022 on a tourist visa that expired in February 2023, McLaughlin said in a post on X. She said Soliman filed for asylum in September 2022 and was granted a work authorization in March 2023, but that has also expired.

Hundreds of thousands of people overstay their visas each year in the United States, according to Department of Homeland Security reports.

Soliman's wife was born in Saudi Arabia and is an Egyptian national, according to her lawsuit. She is a network engineer and has a pending EB-2 visa, which is available to professionals with advanced degrees, the suit said. She and her children all are listed as dependents on Soliman's asylum application.

The case against Soliman

Soliman told authorities that he had been planning the attack for a year, the affidavit said.

Soliman is being held in a county jail on a \$10 million cash bond and is scheduled to make an appearance in state court on Thursday. His attorney, Kathryn Herold, declined to comment after a state court hearing Monday. Public defenders' policy prohibits speaking to the media.

The attack unfolded against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas war, which has contributed to a spike in antisemitic violence in the United States. It happened at the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Shavuot and barely a week after a man who also yelled "Free Palestine" was charged with fatally shooting two Israeli Embassy staffers outside a Jewish museum in Washington.

Trump announces travel ban and restrictions on 19 countries set to go into effect Monday

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Wednesday resurrected a hallmark policy of his first term, announcing that citizens of 12 countries would be banned from visiting the United States and those from seven others would face restrictions.

The ban takes effect Monday at 12:01 a.m., a cushion that may avoid the chaos that unfolded at airports

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nationwide when a similar measure took effect with virtually no notice in 2017. Trump, who signaled plans for a new ban upon taking office in January, appears to be on firmer ground this time after the Supreme Court sided with him.

Some, but not all, 12 countries also appeared on the list of banned countries in Trump's first term. The new ban includes Afghanistan, Myanmar, Chad, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

There will be heightened restrictions on visitors from Burundi, Cuba, Laos, Sierra Leone, Togo, Turkmenistan and Venezuela.

In a video released on social media, Trump tied the new ban to Sunday's terror attack in Boulder, Colorado, saying it underscored the dangers posed by some visitors who overstay visas. The suspect in the attack is from Egypt, a country that is not on Trump's restricted list. The Department of Homeland Security says he overstayed a tourist visa.

Trump said some countries had "deficient" screening and vetting or have historically refused to take back their own citizens. His findings rely extensively on an annual Homeland Security report of visa over-stays of tourists, business visitors and students who arrive by air and sea, singling out countries with high percentages of remaining after their visas expired.

"We don't want them," Trump said.

The inclusion of Afghanistan angered some supporters who have worked to resettle its people. The ban makes exceptions for Afghans on Special Immigrant Visas, generally people who worked most closely with the U.S. government during the two-decade-long war there.

Afghanistan was also one of the largest sources of resettled refugees, with about 14,000 arrivals in a 12-month period through September 2024. Trump suspended refugee resettlement his first day in office.

"To include Afghanistan — a nation whose people stood alongside American service members for 20 years — is a moral disgrace. It spits in the face of our allies, our veterans, and every value we claim to uphold," said Shawn VanDiver, president and board chairman of #AfghanEvac.

Trump wrote that Afghanistan "lacks a competent or cooperative central authority for issuing passports or civil documents and it does not have appropriate screening and vetting measures." He also cited its visa overstay rates.

Haiti, which avoided the travel ban during Trump's first term, was also included for high overstay rates and large numbers who came to the U.S. illegally. Haitians continue to flee poverty, hunger and political instability deepens while police and a U.N.-backed mission fight a surge in gang violence, with armed men controlling at least 85% of its capital, Port-au-Prince.

"Haiti lacks a central authority with sufficient availability and dissemination of law enforcement information necessary to ensure its nationals do not undermine the national security of the United States," Trump wrote.

The Iranian government offered no immediate reaction to being included. The Trump administration called it a "state sponsor of terrorism," barring visitors except for those already holding visas or coming into the U.S. on special visas America issues for minorities facing persecution.

Other Mideast nations on the list — Libya, Sudan and Yemen — all face ongoing civil strife and territory overseen by opposing factions. Sudan has an active war, while Yemen's war is largely stalemated and Libyan forces remain armed.

International aid groups and refugee resettlement organizations roundly condemned the new ban. "This policy is not about national security — it is about sowing division and vilifying communities that are seeking safety and opportunity in the United States," said Abby Maxman, president of Oxfam America.

The travel ban results from a Jan. 20 executive order Trump issued requiring the departments of State and Homeland Security and the Director of National Intelligence to compile a report on "hostile attitudes" toward the U.S. and whether entry from certain countries represented a national security risk.

During his first term, Trump issued an executive order in January 2017 banning travel to the U.S. by citizens of seven predominantly Muslim countries — Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen.

It was one of the most chaotic and confusing moments of his young presidency. Travelers from those nations were either barred from getting on their flights to the U.S. or detained at U.S. airports after they landed. They included students and faculty as well as businesspeople, tourists and people visiting friends and family.

The order, often referred to as the "Muslim ban" or the "travel ban," was retooled amid legal challenges, until a version was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018.

The ban affected various categories of travelers and immigrants from Iran, Somalia, Yemen, Syria and Libya, plus North Koreans and some Venezuelan government officials and their families.

Trump and others have defended the initial ban on national security grounds, arguing it was aimed at protecting the country and not founded on anti-Muslim bias. However, the president had called for an explicit ban on Muslims during his first campaign for the White House.

Trump moves to block US entry for foreign students planning to study at Harvard University

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is moving to block nearly all foreign students from entering the country to attend Harvard University, his latest attempt to choke the Ivy League school from an international pipeline that accounts for a quarter of the student body.

In an executive order signed Wednesday, Trump declared that it would jeopardize national security to allow Harvard to continue hosting foreign students on its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"I have determined that the entry of the class of foreign nationals described above is detrimental to the interests of the United States because, in my judgment, Harvard's conduct has rendered it an unsuitable destination for foreign students and researchers," Trump wrote in the order.

It's a further escalation in the White House's fight with the nation's oldest and wealthiest university. A federal court in Boston blocked the Department of Homeland Security from barring international students at Harvard last week. Trump's order invokes a different legal authority.

Trump invoked a broad federal law that gives the president authority to block foreigners whose entry would be "detrimental to the interests of the United States." On Wednesday, he cited the same authority when announcing that citizens of 12 countries would be banned from visiting the U.S. and those from seven others would face restrictions. Trump's Harvard order cites several other laws, too, including one barring foreigners associated with terrorist organizations.

In a statement Wednesday night, Harvard said it will "continue to protect its international students."

"This is yet another illegal retaliatory step taken by the Administration in violation of Harvard's First Amendment rights," university officials said.

It stems from Harvard's refusal to submit to a series of demands made by the federal government. It has escalated recently after the Department of Homeland Security said Harvard refused to provide records related to misconduct by foreign students.

Harvard says it has complied with the request, but the government said the school's response was insufficient.

The dispute has been building for months after the Trump administration demanded a series of policy and governance changes at Harvard, calling it a hotbed of liberalism and accusing it of tolerating anti-Jewish harassment. Harvard defied the demands, saying they encroached on the university's autonomy and represented a threat to the freedom of all U.S. universities.

Trump officials have repeatedly raised the stakes and sought new fronts to pressure Harvard, cutting more than \$2.6 billion in research grants and moving to end all federal contracts with the university. The latest threat has targeted Harvard's roughly 7,000 international students, who account for half the enrollment at some Harvard graduate schools.

"Admission to the United States to study at an 'elite' American university is a privilege, not a right," Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a post on X. "This Department of Justice will vigorously defend the

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President's proclamation suspending the entry of new foreign students at Harvard University based on national security concerns."

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., called the measure ridiculous and said it has nothing to do with national security.

"It's a thinly veiled revenge ploy in Trump's personal feud with Harvard, and continued authoritarian overreach against free speech," Jayapal said on the social media site X.

The order applies to all students attempting to enter the United States to attend Harvard after the date of the executive order. It provides a loophole to allow students whose entry would "benefit the national interest," as determined by federal officials.

Trump's order alleges that Harvard provided data on misconduct by only three students in response to the Homeland Security request, and it lacked the detail to gauge if federal action was needed. Trump concluded that Harvard is either "not fully reporting its disciplinary records for foreign students or is not seriously policing its foreign students."

"These actions and failures directly undermine the Federal Government's ability to ensure that foreign nationals admitted on student or exchange visitor visas remain in compliance with Federal law," the order said.

For foreign students already at Harvard, Secretary of State Marco Rubio will determine if visas should be revoked, Trump wrote.

The order is scheduled to last six months. Within 90 days, the administration will determine if it should be renewed, the order said.

A State Department cable sent last week to U.S. embassies and consulates said federal officials will begin reviewing the social media accounts of visa applicants who plan to attend, work at or visit Harvard University for any signs of antisemitism.

In a court filing last week, Harvard officials said the Trump administration's efforts to stop Harvard from enrolling international students have created an environment of "profound fear, concern, and confusion." Countless international students have asked about transferring from the university, Harvard immigration services director Maureen Martin said in the filing. ____

Associated Press writer Cheyanne Mumphrey in Phoenix contributed to this report.

Man charged with supplying explosive chemicals to bomber of Palm Springs fertility clinic

By JAIMIE DING, OLGA RODRIGUEZ and JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Federal authorities arrested a man they say collaborated with the bomber of a fertility clinic in May, alleging that he supplied chemicals used to make explosives and traveled to California to experiment with them in the bomber's garage months before the attack.

The two men connected in fringe online forums over their shared beliefs against human procreation, authorities told reporters Wednesday. The blast gutted the fertility clinic in Palm Springs and shattered the windows of nearby buildings, with officials calling the attack terrorism and possibly the largest bomb scene ever in Southern California. The clinic was closed, and no embryos were damaged.

Guy Edward Bartkus of California, the bomber, died in the May 17 explosion. Authorities arrested Daniel Park, 32, of Washington state on Tuesday after he was extradited from Poland, where he fled to four days after the attack. Park is charged with providing and attempting to provide material support to terrorists.

Park spent years stocking up on ammonium nitrate, a chemical that can be used to make explosives, before shipping it to Bartkus and later visiting him in Twentynine Palms, California. He stayed for about two weeks earlier this year, and the two conducted bomb-making experiments in the detached garage of Bartkus' family home, said Akil Davis, the FBI's assistant director in charge.

Park, 32, was taken into custody at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli told reporters. He appeared in federal court Wednesday in Brooklyn and, through his lawyer, waived his right to a detention hearing in New York.

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Judge Cheryl Pollak ordered him to remain detained, saying he posed a serious risk. He will be sent to California, and federal defender Jeffrey Dahlberg said Park reserves the right to have a hearing on probable cause there. A date for that hearing has not been set, prosecutors said.

A cache of chemicals

Authorities searched Park's home in Kent, a suburb of Seattle, and found large quantities of several chemicals and handwritten notes of chemical explosive equations, according to a federal complaint. One was for "an explosive recipe that was similar to the Oklahoma City bombing," Davis said, a reference to the 1995 explosion that killed 168 people and was the deadliest homegrown attack in U.S. history.

Park shipped 180 pounds (about 82 kilograms) of ammonium nitrate to Bartkus in January and bought another 90 pounds (about 41 kilograms) and had it shipped to him days before the explosion, authorities said. Park purchased ammonium nitrate online in several transactions between October 2022 and May 2025, according to a federal complaint.

Three days before Park visited him in January, Bartkus asked an AI chat application about explosives, detonation velocity, diesel and gasoline mixtures, the complaint said. The discussion centered on how to create the most powerful blast.

In a search of Bartkus' family's home, authorities found "large quantities" of explosives material. Bartkus' relatives told investigators the two were "running experiments" in the garage. Bartkus' family did not raise any concerns to officials, authorities said.

An analysis of the blast site showed that ammonium nitrate could have been used in the explosive mixture, though it could not be "conclusively established," the complaint said.

A shared ideology

Park and Bartkus, 25, met in online forums dedicated to the anti-natalist movement, bonding over a "shared belief that people shouldn't exist," Davis said.

Anti-natalism is a fringe theory that opposes childbirth and population growth and contends that people should not continue to procreate. Officials said Bartkus intentionally targeted the American Reproductive Centers, a clinic that provides services to help people get pregnant, including in vitro fertilization and fertility evaluations.

Bartkus appeared to take responsibility for the attack on a website he set up that contained audio recordings, according to the complaint.

"Basically I'm anti-life. And IVF is like kind of the epitome of pro-life ideology," he allegedly said in one of the recordings.

Investigators have not said whether Bartkus intended to kill himself in the attack or why he chose that specific facility.

Park appeared to be a frequent poster in an anti-natalist Reddit forum going back nearly a decade, according to court papers. In 2016 he spoke of recruiting others to the movement, which he described as hopeful. "When people are lost and distraught, death is always an option," he allegedly wrote.

Relatives told federal investigators that Park made "pro-mortalist" statements since high school, according to the complaint.

More recently, in March, he posted in the forum to say he was seeking to find fellow anti-natalists in and around Washington to "start some protests or just any in-person events," according to court papers. The post did not receive any public comments.

Park and Bartkus visited each other going back at least a year, their relatives told investigators, according to court records.

Trump tax bill will add \$2.4 trillion to the deficit and leave 10.9 million more uninsured, CBO says

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's big bill in Congress would unleash trillions in tax cuts and slash spending, but also spike deficits by \$2.4 trillion over the decade and leave some 10.9 million

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more people without health insurance, raising the political stakes for the GOP's signature domestic priority.

Republican leaders in Congress, determined to muscle the sweeping package forward, had little to say after the analysis released Wednesday by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. GOP senators spent more than an hour at the White House in what they called a robust afternoon discussion with Trump.

"We're committed to making a law that will make the lives of the American people better," Senate Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota said afterward. He vowed to "get this done one way or another."

But Democrats angling to halt the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, named after the president's own catchphrase, piled on with relentless opposition.

"In the words of Elon Musk, this bill is a 'disgusting abomination,'" said Rep. Brendan Boyle of Pennsylvania, the top Democrat on the House Budget Committee, reviving the billionaire former Trump aide's criticism of the package.

The analysis comes at a crucial moment as Trump is pushing Congress, where Republicans have majority control, to send the final product to his desk to become law by the Fourth of July. The House passed the bill last month by a single vote, but it's now slogging through the Senate, where Republicans want a number of significant changes, including those discussed with Trump.

And the politics are only intensifying.

Musk blindsided Congress with an all-out assault against the bill this week, leaving House Speaker Mike Johnson rushing to do damage control. The GOP speaker said he called Musk to discuss the criticism, but had not heard back. Musk has threatened to use his political apparatus to go after Republicans in the midterm elections.

"I hope he comes around," Johnson, R-La., told reporters.

Hours later, Musk, whose business interests could be impacted by green energy rollbacks in the bill, implored voters to call their representatives and senators. "Bankrupting America is NOT ok!" he wrote on social media, "KILL the BILL."

Tax breaks, but also cuts to health care

The work of the CBO, which for decades has served as the official scorekeeper of legislation in Congress, is closely watched by lawmakers and others seeking to understand the budgetary impacts of the sprawling 1,000-page-plus package.

The bill includes roughly \$3.75 trillion in tax cuts — extending the expiring 2017 individual income tax breaks and temporarily adding new ones that Trump campaigned on, including no taxes on tips. The revenue loss would be partially offset by nearly \$1.3 trillion in reduced federal spending elsewhere, namely through Medicaid and food assistance.

As a result, some 7.8 million people would no longer have health insurance with changes to Medicaid, including 5.2 million from the proposed new work requirements on those nondisabled adults up to age 65, with some exceptions, the analysis said. Some 1.4 million people who are in the United States without legal status in state-funded health programs would no longer have coverage.

Also, some 400,000 people would lose insurance coverage from the termination of a medical provider tax that key Republicans, including Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri, want to keep in place to ensure rural hospitals can keep paying their bills.

Republicans argue that their proposals are intended to strengthen Medicaid and other programs by rooting out waste, fraud and abuse. They want the federal funding to go to those who most need health care and other services, often citing women and children.

But Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said those claims are bogus and are simply part of long-running GOP efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, as most states have expanded Medicaid to serve more people under the program.

"They just want to strangle health care," Schumer said.

Additionally, the CBO had previously estimated that nearly 4 million fewer people would have food stamps each month due to the legislation's proposed changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP, including new work requirements for some older Americans and parents of school-age children. Some would see their benefits reduced by about \$15 by 2034, the CBO has said.

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Republicans criticize the CBO

Ahead of the CBO's release, the White House and Republican leaders criticized the budget office in a preemptive campaign designed to sow doubt in its findings.

Thune said the CBO was "flat wrong" because it underestimated the potential revenue growth from Trump's first round of tax breaks in 2017. The CBO last year said receipts were \$1.5 trillion, or 5.6% greater than predicted, in large part because of the "burst of high inflation" during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

White House Budget Director Russ Vought said when you adjust for "current policy," which means not counting some \$4.5 trillion in existing tax breaks that are simply being extended for the next decade, the overall package actually doesn't pile onto the deficit. He argued that the spending cuts alone, in fact, help reduce deficits by \$1.4 trillion over the decade.

But Democrats and even some Republicans call that "current policy" accounting move a gimmick. Still, it's the approach Senate Republicans intend to use during their consideration of the package to try to show it does not add to the nation's deficits. Vought argued that the CBO is the one using a "gimmick" by tallying the costs of continuing those tax breaks that would otherwise expire.

"Russ is right," Johnson, the House speaker, posted on social media. "Our One Big Beautiful Bill will REDUCE the deficit WHILE delivering on the mandate given to us by the American people."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt has also suggested that the CBO's employees are biased, even though certain budget office workers face strict ethical rules — including restrictions on campaign donations and political activity — to ensure objectivity and impartiality.

What's at stake

The individual income tax breaks that had been approved during Trump's first term in the White House will expire in December if Congress fails to act, in what Republicans warn would be a massive tax hike on many American households.

During the meeting at the White House, Trump pushed senators for his priorities — the new tax breaks on tips, overtime pay and others — while some of the most conservative GOP senators pushed for steeper spending cuts to stem deficits.

And they joked about Musk.

Trump briefly brought up Musk, senators said. GOP Sen. Roger Marshall described it as "a laughing conversation for 30 seconds."

The package also includes a massive buildup of \$350 billion for border security, deportations and national security that is central to the GOP agenda, as well as a \$4 trillion increase to the nation's \$36 trillion debt limit, which the Treasury Department says is needed by this summer to pay the nation's bills.

CBO aims for impartiality

More than 50 years ago, the CBO was established by law after Congress sought to assert its control, as outlined in the Constitution, over the budget process.

Staffed by some 275 economists, analysts and other employees, the CBO says it seeks to provide Congress with objective, impartial information about budgetary and economic issues.

Its current director, Phillip Swagel, a former Treasury official in Republican President George W. Bush's administration, was reappointed to a four-year term in 2023.

Guatemalan man deported to Mexico returns to US after court orders Trump administration to do so

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

A Guatemalan man deported to Mexico, whom President Donald Trump's administration was working to bring back after a court order, landed in the United States on Wednesday, his attorneys confirmed.

The man, identified in court documents by initials O.C.G., landed in California via a commercial flight and made contact with his legal team while waiting in line to go through U.S. Customs and Border Protection, said Trina Realmuto of the National Immigration Litigation Alliance.

He was later taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and was being trans-

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ported to a detention facility in Arizona, she said in an email to The Associated Press.

The Trump administration said in court filings last month that it was working to bring him back after he was deported to Mexico, despite his fears of being harmed there, days after a federal judge ordered the administration to facilitate his return.

The U.S. Department of Justice didn't immediately respond to a request for comments and details from the AP.

The man, who is gay, was protected from being returned to his home country under a U.S. immigration judge's order at the time. But the U.S. put him on a bus and sent him to Mexico instead, a removal that U.S. District Judge Brian Murphy found likely "lacked any semblance of due process."

Mexico later returned him to Guatemala, where he was in hiding, according to court documents.

In a court filing before his return, government lawyers said that a so-called significant public benefit parole packet had been approved. The designation allows people who aren't eligible to enter the U.S. to do so temporarily, often for reasons related to law enforcement or legal proceedings.

An earlier court proceeding had determined that the man risked persecution or torture if returned to Guatemala. But he also feared returning to Mexico, where he says he was raped and extorted while seeking asylum in the U.S., according to court documents.

"As far as we know, it is the first time since January 20 that (Department of Homeland Security) has facilitated return following a district court order," Realmuto said.

The case is among a string of findings by federal courts against recent Trump administration deportations. Those have included other deportations to third countries and the erroneous deportation of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, an El Salvadoran man who had lived in Maryland for roughly 14 years.

The U.S. Supreme Court ordered the Trump administration to facilitate Abrego Garcia's return to the U.S. from a notorious Salvadoran prison, rejecting the White House's claim that it couldn't retrieve him after mistakenly deporting him. Both the White House and the El Salvadoran president have said they are powerless to return him.

Trump says Putin told him that Russia will respond to Ukrainian attack on airfields

By HANNA ARHIROVA and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump said Russian President Vladimir Putin told him "very strongly" in a phone call Wednesday that he will respond to Ukraine's weekend drone attack on Russian airfields as the deadlock over the war drags on.

Trump said in a social media post that his lengthy call with Putin "was a good conversation, but not a conversation that will lead to immediate Peace."

It's the first time Trump has weighed in on Ukraine's daring attack inside Russia. The U.S. did not have advance notice of the operation, according to the White House, a point Trump emphasized during the call with Putin, according to Putin's foreign affairs adviser.

The call comes as the U.S. leads a diplomatic push to broker a peace deal following nearly 3½ years of war.

Trump, in his post, did not say how he reacted to Putin's promise to respond to Ukraine's attack, but it showed none of the frustration that Trump has expressed with his Russian counterpart in recent weeks over his prolonging of the war.

Yuri Ushakov, Putin's foreign affairs adviser, said at a briefing that the two leaders characterized the call as "positive and quite productive."

"I believe it was useful for Trump to hear our assessments of what happened," Ushakov said, noting that the discussion of the attacks was one of the key topics.

Zelenskyy responds to Trump-Putin call

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on social media: "Many have spoken with Russia at vari-

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ous levels. But none of these talks have brought a reliable peace, or even stopped the war. Unfortunately, Putin feels impunity."

The Ukrainian leader urged more pressure on Russia and said that Putin's planned response "means, that with every new strike, with every delay of diplomacy, Russia is giving the finger to the entire world — to all those who still hesitate to increase pressure on it."

The sentiment was echoed by top Zelenskyy adviser Andrii Yermak, who said at a briefing in Washington that Russia understands strength and doesn't have the political will to end the war.

But that "does not mean Ukraine closed the door to continue the negotiations," said Yermak, who was part of a Ukrainian delegation that met with lawmakers, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, special envoy Steve Witkoff and other officials in the U.S. this week.

Trump has repeatedly promised to end the war quickly but lost patience in recent weeks, publicly pleading with Putin to stop fighting and even saying the Russian leader "has gone absolutely CRAZY."

Trump, however, has not committed to backing a bipartisan push to further sanction Russia.

The call was Trump's first known talk with Putin since May 19. They also discussed, according to Trump and Ushakov, Iran's nuclear program and the possibility of Russia engaging in talks with Tehran.

It was not clear if Trump also planned to speak with Zelenskyy. The White House did not respond to a message Wednesday afternoon.

Zelenskyy and Putin weigh in on the state of talks

The Ukrainian leader earlier Wednesday dismissed Russia's conditions for a ceasefire as "an ultimatum" and renewed his call for direct talks with Putin to break the stalemate.

Putin, however, showed no willingness to meet with Zelenskyy, expressing anger Wednesday about what he said were Ukraine's recent "terrorist acts" on Russian rail lines in the Kursk and Bryansk regions on the countries' border.

"How can any such (summit) meetings be conducted in such circumstances? What shall we talk about?" Putin asked in a video call with top Russian officials.

Putin accused Ukraine of seeking a truce only to replenish its stockpiles of Western arms, recruit more soldiers and prepare new attacks.

He also spoke Wednesday to Pope Leo XIV, who has promised to make "every effort" to help end the war.

Leo urged Putin to make a gesture that would promote peace and stressed the importance of dialogue, the Vatican said.

Russia and Ukraine had exchanged memos setting out their conditions for a ceasefire for discussion Monday in Istanbul, the second direct meeting in just over two weeks.

Russia and Ukraine have established red lines that make a quick deal unlikely. The Kremlin's proposal contained a list of demands that Kyiv and its Western allies see as nonstarters.

The second round of talks lasted just over an hour and made no progress on ending the war, with the sides agreeing only to swap thousands of their dead and seriously wounded troops.

Also, a new prisoner exchange with Russia could take place over the weekend, Zelenskyy said.

He described the latest negotiations as "a political performance" and "artificial diplomacy" designed to stall for time, delay sanctions and convince the United States that Russia is engaged in dialogue.

Military strikes continue during diplomacy

In tandem with the talks, both sides have kept up military actions along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line.

Ukraine's Security Service gave more details Wednesday about its spectacular weekend drone strike on Russian air bases, which it claimed destroyed or damaged 41 aircraft, including strategic bombers.

It released more footage showing drones swooping under and over parked aircraft and featuring some planes burning. It claimed the planes struck included A-50, Tu-95, Tu-22, Tu-160, An-12, and Il-78 aircraft. It said the drones had highly automated capabilities, partly piloted by an operator and partly by artificial intelligence that flew the devices along a planned route in case the signal was lost.

The drones were not fully autonomous and a “human is still choosing what target to hit,” said Caitlin Lee, a drone warfare expert at RAND, a think tank.

Ukraine’s security agency said it also set off an explosion Tuesday on the seabed beneath the Kerch Bridge, a vital transport link between Russia and illegally annexed Crimea, claiming it caused damage to the structure.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said there was no damage.

Russia’s Defense Ministry said Wednesday that its troops have taken control of another village in Ukraine’s northern Sumy region, on the border with Russia.

Putin announced on May 22 that Russian troops aim to create a buffer zone that might help prevent Ukrainian cross-border attacks. Since then, Russia claims it has taken control of nine Sumy villages.

Judge says migrants sent to El Salvador prison must get a chance to challenge their removals

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge ruled on Wednesday that the Trump administration must give more than 100 migrants sent to a notorious prison in El Salvador a chance to challenge their deportations.

U.S. District Court Chief Judge James Boasberg said that people who were sent to the prison in March under an 18th-century wartime law haven’t been able to formally contest the removals or allegations that they are members of the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. He ordered the administration to work toward giving them a way to file those challenges.

The judge wrote that “significant evidence” has surfaced indicating that many of the migrants imprisoned in El Salvador are not connected to the gang “and thus languish in a foreign prison on flimsy, even frivolous, accusations.”

Boasberg gave the administration one week to come up with a manner in which the “at least 137” people can make those claims, even while they’re formally in the custody of El Salvador. It’s the latest milestone in the monthslong legal saga over the fate of deportees imprisoned at El Salvador’s notorious Terrorism Confinement Center.

After Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 in March and prepared to fly planeloads of accused gang members to El Salvador and out of the jurisdiction of U.S. courts, Boasberg ordered them to turn the planes around. This demand was ignored. Boasberg has found probable cause that the administration committed contempt of court after the flight landed. El Salvador President Nayib Bukele posted a taunting message on social media — reposted by some of Trump’s top aides — that read “Oopsie, too late.”

The U.S. Supreme Court later ruled that anyone targeted under the AEA has the right to appeal to a judge to contest their designation as an enemy of the state. Boasberg, in his latest, ruling wrote that he was simply applying that principle to those who’d been removed.

Boasberg said the administration “plainly deprived” the immigrants of a chance to challenge their removals before they were put on flights. Therefore, he says the government must handle the migrants cases now as if they “would have been if the Government had not provided constitutionally inadequate process.”

The Department of Justice did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The administration and its supporters have targeted Boasberg for his initial order halting deportations and his contempt inquiry, part of their growing battle with the judiciary as it puts the brakes on Trump’s efforts to unilaterally remake government. The fight has been particularly harsh in the realm of immigration, where Trump has repeatedly said it’d be impossible to protect the country from dangerous immigrants if each one has his or her day in court.

“We cannot give everyone a trial!” the president posted on his social media site, Truth Social, after the Supreme Court intervened a second time in the AEA saga, halting a possible effort to evade its initial ruling by temporarily freezing deportations from northern Texas.

Boasberg wrote that he accepted the administration’s declaration, filed under seal, providing details of the government’s deal with El Salvador to house deportees and how that means the Venezuelans are

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technically under the legal control of El Salvador and not the United States. He added, while noting there is a criminal penalty for providing false testimony, that believing those representations was "rendered more difficult given the Government's troubling conduct throughout this case."

He also noted parallels with another case where the Trump administration admitted it mistakenly deported a Maryland man to El Salvador and has been ordered by a judge, appellate judges and the U.S. Supreme Court to "facilitate" his return.

That man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, remains in El Salvador more than two months later.

ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt welcomed Boasberg's ruling.

"This is a significant step forward to getting these men the chance to show that they should not ever have been removed under a wartime authority," Gelernt told reporters in San Diego after a hearing in a separate, unrelated case.

In that case, a federal judge Wednesday found the Trump administration violated a settlement to provide legal advice to thousands of families that were separated at the border. U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw said he would likely decide on concrete steps by early next week.

In the AEA case, Boasberg's order is only the latest of a blizzard of legal rulings.

Several judges have temporarily halted deportations under the act in parts of Texas, New York, California, Pennsylvania and elsewhere, finding the administration's 24 hour window that it gave detainees to challenge their designation under the act did not meet the Supreme Court's requirement of providing a "reasonable" chance to seek relief. Deportations of people in the country illegally can continue in those areas under laws other than the AEA,

Some of the judges in those cases have also found that Trump cannot use the act to target a criminal gang rather than a state, noting that the act has only been invoked three prior times in history — during the War of 1812 and during World Wars I and II.

The Supreme Court will likely eventually decide those issues. The Trump administration contends that the gang is acting as a shadow arm of Venezuela's government.

What is the CBO? A look at the small office inflaming debate over Trump's tax bill

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A small government office with some 275 employees has found itself caught in the political crossfire as Congress debates President Donald Trump's "one big beautiful bill."

The Congressional Budget Office has projected that the legislation would increase federal deficits by about \$2.4 trillion over 10 years. That's a problem for a Republican Congress that has spent much of the past four years criticizing former President Joe Biden and Democrats for the nation's rising debt levels.

The White House and Republican leaders in Congress are taking issue with CBO's findings. They say economic growth will be higher than the office is projecting, resulting in more revenue coming into government coffers. Meanwhile, Democrats are touting CBO's findings as evidence of the bill's failings.

Here's a look at the office at the center of Washington's latest political tug-of-war.

What is the CBO?

Lawmakers established the Congressional Budget Office more than 50 years ago to provide objective, impartial analysis to support the budget process. The CBO is required to produce a cost estimate for nearly every bill approved by a House or Senate committee and will weigh in earlier when asked to do so by lawmakers.

It also produces a report during each Congress on how to reduce the debt if lawmakers so choose, with each option including arguments for and against. Plus, it publishes detailed estimates when presidents make proposals that would affect mandatory spending, which includes programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

Lawmakers created the office to help Congress play a stronger role in budget matters, providing them with an alternative to the Office of Management and Budget, which is part of a Republican or Democratic

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administration, depending upon the president in office.

Is the CBO partisan?

CBO hires analysts based on their expertise, not political affiliation. Staff is expected to maintain objectivity and avoid political influence. In evaluating potential employees, the CBO says that for most positions it looks at whether that person would be perceived to be free from political bias.

Like other federal employees, the CBO's staff is prohibited from making political contributions to members of Congress.

The CBO's director, Phillip Swagel, served in former Republican President George W. Bush's administration as an economic adviser and as an assistant secretary at the Treasury Department.

He was reappointed to a second term as CBO director in July 2023 by then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., upon the joint recommendation of the chairmen of the House and Senate Budget committees, one a Republican and the other a Democrat.

Why is the CBO being attacked now?

The stakes are incredibly high with Republicans looking to pass their massive tax cut and immigration bill by early July.

Outside groups, Democrats and some Republicans are highlighting CBO's analysis that the bill will increase federal deficits by about \$2.4 trillion over 10 years and leave 10.9 million more people uninsured in 2034.

Republicans spent much of Biden's presidency focused on curbing federal deficits. They don't want to be seen as contributing to the fiscal problem.

GOP lawmakers say the CBO isn't giving enough credit to the economic growth the bill will create, to the point where it would be deficit-neutral in the long run, if not better.

"The CBO assumes long-term GDP growth of an anemic 1.8% and that is absurd," said White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt. "The American economy is going to boom like never before after the 'One Big, Beautiful Bill' is passed."

Republicans began taking issue with the CBO even before Trump and the current Congress were sworn into office.

"CBO will always predict a dark future when Republicans propose tax relief – but the reality is never so dire," Rep. Jason Smith, the Republican chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said in a December press release.

Recently, House Speaker Mike Johnson has been taking digs at the office.

"The CBO is notorious for getting things WRONG," he said in a Facebook post.

What did CBO say about the tax cuts enacted in Trump's first term?

In April 2018, CBO said that tax receipts would total \$27 trillion from fiscal years 2018 to 2024.

Receipts came in about \$1.5 trillion higher than the CBO projected. Republicans have seized on that discrepancy.

But the numbers don't tell the whole story. Some of the criticism of the CBO ignores the context of a global pandemic as the federal government rushed to prop the economy up with massive spending bills under both Trump and Biden.

In a blog post last December, Swagel pointed out three reasons for the higher revenues: The primary reason was the burst of inflation that began in March 2021 as the country was recovering from COVID. That burst of inflation, he said, led to about \$900 billion more in revenue.

There was also an increase in economic activity in "the later years of the period" adding \$700 billion. Also, new tariffs added about \$250 billion, with other legislation partially offsetting those three factors.

How CBO compares in its assessment

The CBO's projection for the Republican bill is similar to some outside groups estimates.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget says the bill would add nearly \$3 trillion to the debt through 2034 when including interest payments. That number rises to \$5 trillion if some of the temporary provisions, such as no tax on tips and overtime, are made permanent.

The nonpartisan Penn Wharton Budget Model, which conducts economic analysis of public policy issues,

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estimated the House-passed bill increases deficits by \$2.8 trillion over 10 years. That number rises to \$3.2 when using dynamic scoring to measure the bill's macroeconomic effects.

Jury deliberations near in Weinstein sex crimes retrial

NEW YORK (AP) — Jurors in Harvey Weinstein's sex crimes retrial are due to start deliberating Thursday, with dozens of witnesses, scores of documents and two days of closing arguments to sift through.

The seven-woman, five-man jury will start its private discussions after getting legal instructions from the judge Thursday morning.

Closing arguments concluded Wednesday, with prosecutor Nicole Blumberg saying the former movie studio boss "held the golden ticket" to show-business success and used it to sexually assault women who were afraid to cross him.

Weinstein, 73, has pleaded not guilty to raping a woman in 2013 and forcing oral sex on two others in 2006. Defense lawyer Arthur Aidala told jurors Tuesday that Weinstein had entirely consensual encounters with the women, arguing that they were "using him" to advance their fledgling careers in entertainment.

Over the last seven years, the case has been seen as something of a crucible for the #MeToo movement. The anti-sexual-misconduct outcry took flight after allegations against Weinstein became public in 2017.

He was later convicted of sex crimes in New York and California. The New York conviction was overturned last year, and the case was sent back for retrial.

The new trial was expanded to include an accuser who wasn't part of the first trial. One of the criminal sex act charges is based on her allegations.

Weinstein chose not to testify.

NBA working on plan for US-vs.-world format at All-Star Game next season, AP source says

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — The NBA is working on a plan to turn next season's All-Star Game into a U.S.-vs.-world competition, a person with knowledge of the situation said Wednesday.

It remains unclear how the format will work, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the league has not made any final determinations. Speaking to Fox Sports 1 earlier Wednesday, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver — who has talked about such a game on multiple occasions — was asked if U.S. vs. the world is possible.

"Yes," Silver said.

Silver addressed the idea on March 27 as well at the league's most recent board of governors meeting, when he revealed that the NBA was scrapping the All-Star mini-tournament format that was used this season.

At that time, the AP reported that the 2026 game — to be played Feb. 15 in Inglewood, California, just past the midpoint of the Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics — will be moved from its traditional prime-time Sunday night slot to one that starts on Sunday afternoon. That's happening because the game will be aired on NBC under the terms of the new 11-year media rights deals that kick in next season. NBC is also the Olympic broadcaster in the U.S.

So, NBC could show Olympic events in the morning and early afternoon, then the All-Star Game, then have prime-time Olympic programming.

The move comes on the heels of a popular tournament, the 4 Nations Face-off, that essentially took the place of the NHL All-Star Game this year, as well as strong competition at the Paris Olympics, where the Americans won a fifth consecutive gold medal by rallying past Nikola Jokic and Serbia in the semifinals, then topping host France and Victor Wembanyama in the title game — behind a barrage of late 3-pointers from Stephen Curry.

"What better time to feature some form of USA against the world?" Silver said on FS1. "I'm not exactly

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sure what the format will be yet. I obviously paid a lot of attention to what the NHL did, which was a huge success. ... But also, going back, last summer, our Olympic competition was a huge success."

There is one big challenge regarding any U.S.-vs.-world format. About 70% of NBA players are American, while 30% are international, so it would in theory be easier for an international player to make the All-Star team — if the rosters are the same size.

International players, when asked at this year's All-Star Game if they would want a U.S.-vs.-world matchup, sounded enthusiastic.

"I would love to. My opinion is that it's more purposeful," Wembanyama said back in February. "There's more pride in it. More stakes."

Added Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo, who's from Greece: "I would love that. Oh, I would love that. I think that would be the most interesting and most exciting format. I would love that. For sure, I'd take pride in that. I always compete, but I think that will give me a little bit more extra juice to compete."

The latest format for the All-Star Game — a four-team, three-game mini-tournament in San Francisco with the first team to 40 points winning each — was a miss. It came after years of the league asking players for a more competitive game.

The 211-186 final score at Indianapolis in 2024 was the last straw, and the league — for one year, anyway — thought the tournament was the answer.

Measles vaccination rates drop after COVID-19 pandemic in counties across the US

By DEVI SHASTRI and NICKY FORSTER Associated Press

Childhood vaccination rates against measles fell in the years after the COVID-19 pandemic in nearly 80% of the more than 2,000 U.S. counties with available data — including in states that are battling outbreaks this year.

A Johns Hopkins University study, published in JAMA this week, illustrates where more vulnerable communities are located. The results mirror trends established at state and national levels: Routine childhood vaccination rates are dropping.

"When you look at the state level or national level ... you really don't see those drastic drops. Those are there. They're real and they're really problematic," said Lauren Gardner, an expert in infectious disease modeling at Johns Hopkins University who is the paper's senior author. Gardner also built the university's COVID-19 database.

Most of the measles cases in the U.S. this year — 1,088 nationally as of Friday — are in unvaccinated people. It has been spreading among communities due to international and domestic travel. Three people have died from measles during this year's outbreaks, and 2025 is inching closer to becoming the worst for measles in more than three decades.

Measles was eliminated in the U.S. in 2000, and the vaccine is safe and highly effective. Public schools nationwide require two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine before kindergarten, but the number of children with non-medical exemptions from those requirements hit an all-time high in the 2023-2024 school year. Health experts say community-level vaccination needs to be at 95% or higher to prevent outbreaks.

The Johns Hopkins study looked at 2,066 counties across 33 states, comparing kindergarten vaccination rates averaged over school years from 2017-2020 to averages from 2022-2024. Where kindergarten data wasn't available, the researchers used a comparable rate.

Here's what it looks like in counties where there have been outbreaks this year, including in Texas counties that are the epicenter of measles.

Texas

Texas has logged 742 measles cases since late January, most in West Texas.

Gaines County has 411 cases, the most in the state. Almost 2% of its population got measles. While the county saw a two percentage-point increase in vaccination rates after the pandemic, its 82.4% rate

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remains below herd immunity.

Terry County (60 cases) and Yoakum County (20 cases) dropped below the 95% threshold for herd immunity after the pandemic, to 93.7% and 91.8% respectively.

Lubbock County — which has seen 53 cases and is the closest metro area to Gaines County — was just below 95% before the pandemic, but dropped three percentage points after to 91.8%.

El Paso County on the border of Mexico has had the third-most measles cases in Texas this year with 57. Its vaccination rate is higher than 95% but saw a 2.1 percentage-point decline to 96.5%.

Kansas

Counties with outbreaks in Kansas include Gray with 25 cases, Haskell with 11 and Stevens with seven. Vaccination rates in Gray County dropped 23 percentage points after the pandemic, from 94% to 71%. Haskell County dropped 18 percentage points to 65%. And Stevens County dropped 0.5 percentage points to 90.5%.

Colorado

Colorado's outbreak, which is linked to an international flight that landed at the Denver airport in mid-May, involves seven cases: six in state residents and one out-of-state traveler.

Two people who got measles live in Arapahoe County in the Denver metro, where the vaccination rate dropped 3.5 percentage points to 88.4%. Three others live in El Paso County, home to Colorado Springs, where the vaccination rate dropped 3.8 percentage points to 80% post-pandemic.

North Dakota

Pre-pandemic data in North Dakota wasn't available to Johns Hopkins researchers, but they looked at rates from school years ending in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

North Dakota's first outbreak started in Williams County, which now has 16 measles cases. In the time-frame researchers looked at, vaccination rates in Williams rose from 84.6% in 2022 to 87.7% in 2023, only to drop back to 83.5% in 2024.

Cass County has seven cases, and its rate has stayed steady at about 92.7%, while Grand Forks County, which has 10 measles cases, dropped from 95.4% to 93.4%.

Edmund White, a groundbreaking gay author, dies at 85

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Edmund White, the groundbreaking man of letters who documented and imagined the gay revolution through journalism, essays, plays and such novels as "A Boy's Own Story" and "The Beautiful Room is Empty," has died. He was 85.

White's death was confirmed Wednesday by his agent, Bill Clegg.

Along with Larry Kramer, Armistead Maupin and others, White was among a generation of gay writers who in the 1970s became bards for a community no longer afraid to declare its existence. He was present at the Stonewall raids of 1969, when arrests at a club in Greenwich Village led to the birth of the modern gay movement and for decades was a participant and observer through the tragedy of AIDS, the advance of gay rights and culture and the recent backlash.

A resident of New York and Paris for much of his adult life, he was a novelist, journalist, biographer, playwright, activist, teacher and memoirist. "A Boy's Own Story" was a bestseller and classic coming-of-age novel that demonstrated gay literature's commercial appeal. He wrote a prizewinning biography of playwright Jean Genet, books on Marcel Proust and Arthur Rimbaud. He was a professor of creative writing at Princeton University, where colleagues included Toni Morrison and his close friend, Joyce Carol Oates.

"Among gay writers of his generation, Edmund White has emerged as the most versatile man of letters," cultural critic Morris Dickstein wrote in The New York Times in 1995. "A cosmopolitan writer with a deep sense of tradition, he has bridged the gap between gay subcultures and a broader literary audience."

Childhood yearnings

White was born in Cincinnati in 1940, but age at 7 moved with his mother to the Chicago area after his parents divorced. His father was a civil engineer "who reigned in silence over dinner as he studied his pa-

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per." His mother was a psychologist "given to rages or fits of weeping." Trapped in "the closed, sniveling, resentful world of childhood," at times suicidal, White was at the same time a "fierce little autodidact" who sought escape through the stories of others, whether Thomas Mann's "Death in Venice" or a biography of dancer Vaslav Nijinsky.

"As a young teenager I looked desperately for things to read that might excite me or assure me I wasn't the only one, that might confirm my identity I was unhappily piecing together," he wrote in the 1991 essay "Out of the Closet, On to the Bookshelf."

As he wrote in "A Boy's Own Story," he knew as a child that he was attracted to boys, but for years was convinced he must change — out of a desire to please his father (whom he otherwise despised) and a wish to be "normal." Even as he secretly wrote a "coming out" novel while a teenager, he insisted on seeing a therapist and begged to be sent to boarding school. One of the funniest and saddest episodes from "A Boy's Own Story" told of a brief crush he had on a teenage girl, ended by a polite and devastating note of rejection.

"For the next few months I grieved," White writes. "I would stay up all night crying and playing records and writing sonnets to Helen. What was I crying for?"

Early struggles, changing times

Through much of the 1960s, he was writing novels that were rejected or never finished. Late at night, he would "dress as a hippie, and head out for the bars." A favorite stop was the Stonewall, where he would down vodka tonics and try to find the nerve to ask a man he had crush on to dance. He was in the neighborhood on the night of June 28, 1969, when police raided the Stonewall and "all hell broke loose."

"Up until that moment we had all thought homosexuality was a medical term," wrote White, who soon joined the protests. "Suddenly we saw that we could be a minority group — with rights, a culture, an agenda."

White's debut novel, the surreal and suggestive "Forgetting Elena," was published in 1973. He collaborated with Charles Silverstein on "The Joy of Gay Sex," a follow-up to the bestselling "The Joy of Sex" that was updated after the emergence of AIDS. In 1978, his first openly gay novel, "Nocturnes for the King of Naples," was released and he followed with the nonfiction "States of Desire," his attempt to show "the varieties of gay experience and also to suggest the enormous range of gay life to straight and gay people — to show that gays aren't just hairdressers, they're also petroleum engineers and ranchers and short-order cooks."

His other works included "Skinned Alive: Stories" and the novel "A Previous Life," in which he turns himself into a fictional character and imagines himself long forgotten after his death. In 2009, he published "City Boy," a memoir of New York in the 1960s and '70s in which he told of his friendships and rivalries and gave the real names of fictional characters from his earlier novels. Other recent books included the novels "Jack Holmes & His Friend" and the memoir "Inside a Pearl: My Years in Paris."

"From an early age I had the idea that writing was truth-telling," he told The Guardian around the time "Jack Holmes" was released. "It's on the record. Everybody can see it. Maybe it goes back to the sacred origins of literature — the holy book. There's nothing holy about it for me, but it should be serious and it should be totally transparent."

US- and Israeli-backed group pauses food delivery in Gaza after deadly shootings

By WAFAA SHURAFI Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — An Israeli- and U.S.-backed group paused food delivery at its three distribution sites in the Gaza Strip after health officials said dozens of Palestinians were killed in a series of shootings near the sites this week. Israeli strikes across the territory, meanwhile, killed 26 people overnight and into Wednesday, officials said.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation said it was in discussions with the Israeli military on better guiding foot traffic near the distribution hubs and enhancing military training procedures to promote safety.

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The move came a day after Israeli forces acknowledged opening fire as people headed toward a GHF site in the now mostly uninhabited southern city of Rafah, a military zone off limits to independent media.

Gaza health officials, the Red Cross and the U.N. rights office said 27 people were killed on Tuesday, and witnesses blamed Israeli forces. Israel's military said it fired near people it described as suspects who it said approached its forces and ignored warning shots. It says it is looking into reports of casualties.

Health officials say dozens have been killed since new aid sites opened

At least 80 people have been killed in the vicinity of the sites or heading to them since they opened last week, according to hospital officials, including dozens in similar shootings at roughly the same location on Sunday and Monday, when the military also said it had fired warning shots.

GHF says there has been no violence in the aid sites themselves but has acknowledged the potential dangers people face when traveling to them on foot. Thousands of Palestinians walk to the sites early each morning, desperate for food and hoping to beat the crowds, and pass near Israeli forces in the predawn darkness.

GHF said it asked Israel's military, the Israel Defense Forces, to "introduce measures that guide foot traffic in a way that minimizes confusion or escalation risks near IDF military perimeters; develop clearer IDF-issued guidance to help the population transit safely; enhance IDF force training and refine internal IDF procedures to support safety."

In a separate development, Israeli strikes across Gaza killed at least 26 people late Tuesday and into Wednesday, according to hospital officials. One of the strikes hit a tent in Gaza City, killing seven people, including two women and a 7-year-old girl, according to Shifa Hospital.

The military said it was looking into the reports. Israel says it only targets militants and blames Hamas for civilian deaths because the militant group is entrenched in populated areas.

A controversial new aid system

Israel and the United States say they supported the establishment of the new aid system to prevent Hamas from stealing aid and selling it to finance its militant activities. Israel has not claimed that Hamas fired in the area of the GHF sites.

The United Nations, which operates a longstanding aid system that can deliver to hundreds of locations across the territory, denies there has been any systematic diversion of aid by Hamas, saying it has mechanisms to prevent that.

The U.N. has refused to take part in the new system, saying it violates humanitarian principles by allowing Israel to control who gets aid and by forcing Palestinians to travel to just three distribution hubs, two of which are in the southernmost city of Rafah.

"The world is watching, day after day, horrifying scenes of Palestinians being shot, wounded or killed in Gaza while simply trying to eat," U.N. humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher said in a statement. He called for a flood of aid to be let in and for the world body to be the one delivering it.

Israel imposed a complete ban on food and other imports for 2 1/2 months before easing the restrictions in May. U.N. agencies say lingering restrictions, the breakdown of law and order inside Gaza, and widespread looting have made it difficult to deliver assistance.

Warnings of famine as the war grinds on

Experts warned earlier this year that Gaza is at risk of famine if Israel does not lift its blockade and stop the military campaign it renewed in March, when it shattered a ceasefire with Hamas. Israel has since ramped up its offensive, in what it says is meant to pressure Hamas to agree to a ceasefire more favorable to Israel's terms.

The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. They are still holding 58 hostages, around a third believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

Israel's military campaign has killed over 54,000 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were civilians or combatants.

The ministry is led by medical professionals but reports to the Hamas-run government. Its toll is seen

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as generally reliable by U.N. agencies and independent experts, though Israel has challenged its numbers. Israel says it has killed some 20,000 militants, without providing evidence.

The offensive has destroyed vast areas, displaced around 90% of the population, and left people almost completely reliant on international aid.

US and Europe trade negotiators say progress but no breakthroughs on tariff talks in Paris

By CATHERINE GASCHKA, SAM McNEIL and PAUL WISEMAN undefined

PARIS (AP) — Europe and the United States say progress has been made but there were no breakthroughs during a meeting in Paris to negotiate a settlement of a tense tariff spat with worldwide economic ramifications between two global economic powerhouses.

The European Union's top trade negotiator, Maroš Šefčovič, met Wednesday with his American counterpart, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, on the sidelines of a meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

"I am pleased that negotiations are advancing quickly," said Greer. He said the EU negotiators showed a "willingness by the EU to work with us to find a concrete way forward to achieve reciprocal trade. I look forward to continued constructive engagement in the coming days and weeks."

"We're advancing in the right direction at pace," Šefčovič said at a news conference. He said ongoing technical meetings between EU and U.S. negotiators in Washington would be followed by a video conference between himself and Greer to "assess the progress and charter the way forward."

Brussels and Washington are unlikely to reach a substantive trade agreement in Paris. The issues dividing them are too difficult to resolve quickly.

President Donald Trump regularly fumes about America's persistent trade deficit with the European Union, which was a record \$161 billion last year, according to the U.S. Commerce Department.

Trump blames the gap between what the U.S. sells and what it buys from Europe on unfair trade practices and often criticizes the EU's 10% tax on imported cars. America's tax on imported cars was 2.5% until Trump raised it to 25% in April. The EU has argued its purchases of U.S. services, especially in the technology sector, all but overcome the deficit.

After the Trump administration's surprise tariffs on steel last week rattled global markets and complicated the ongoing, wider tariff negotiations between Brussels and Washington, the EU on Monday said it is preparing "countermeasures" against the U.S.

The EU has offered the U.S. a "zero for zero" deal which would see both sides end tariffs on industrial goods, including autos. Trump has rejected that idea, but EU officials say it's still on the table.

The EU could buy more liquefied natural gas and defense items from the U.S., and reduce duties on cars, but it is not likely to budge on calls to scrap the value added tax, which is akin to a sales tax, or open up the EU to American beef.

"We still have a few weeks to have this discussion and negotiation," French Trade Minister Laurent Saint-Martin said in Paris on Wednesday ahead of the OECD meeting. "If the discussion and negotiation do not succeed, Europe is capable of having countermeasures on American products and services as well."

Greta Peisch, who was general counsel for the U.S. trade representative in the Biden administration, said the zero-for-zero proposal could provide a way to make progress if the Trump administration "is looking for a reason not to impose tariffs on the EU."

But Peisch, now a partner at the Wiley Rein law firm, wondered: "How motivated is the U.S. to come to a deal with the EU?" Trump, after all, has longstanding grievances and complaints about EU trade practices.

One target of his ire is the value-added tax, similar to U.S. state sales taxes.

Trump and his advisers consider VATs unfair protectionism because they are levied on U.S. products. But VATs are set at a national level, not by the EU, and apply to domestic and imported products alike, so they have not traditionally been considered a trade barrier. There is little chance governments will overhaul their tax systems to appease Trump.

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Likewise, the Europeans are likely to balk at U.S. demands to scrap food and safety regulations that Washington views as trade barriers. These include bans on hormone-raised beef, chlorinated chicken and genetically modified foods.

"When you start talking about chickens or GMOs or automobile safety standards, you're talking about the ways countries choose to regulate their economies," said William Reinsch, a former U.S. trade official now with the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "We think that's protectionist. They think it's keeping their citizens healthy ... It's been a sore point for 60 years."

French Open: Coco Gauff digs deep to beat Keys and will face 361st-ranked Boisson in the semifinals

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

PARIS (AP) — Coco Gauff kept double-faulting. She kept missing plenty of other strokes. She kept losing games in bunches. And all the while, she would let out a sigh or bow her head or look generally uncomfortable.

What the 21-year-old Gauff never did Wednesday during a tense and topsy-turvy French Open quarterfinal against another American woman with a Grand Slam title, Madison Keys, was give up hope or go away. And, in a contest filled with plenty of mistakes, it was Gauff who emerged to grab eight of the last nine games for a 6-7 (6), 6-4, 6-1 victory over Keys and a third trip to the semifinals at Roland-Garros.

"I have had that in me from a young age," said the No. 2-seeded Gauff, who won the 2023 U.S. Open as a teenager and was the French Open runner-up the year before. "When times become more difficult, knowing that I can dig deep in those tough moments."

Where did that come from?

"Just a love to win, the will to win. It's not something that's taught or anything. It's just I have always had that in me, and not just in tennis but in everything. I'm a very competitive person," she said. "My philosophy is if I can just leave it all out there, then the loss will hurt a lot less than regrets of maybe not giving it your all."

Gauff needed to overcome 10 double-faults — three in the opening tiebreaker alone — and the first set she's dropped in the tournament, as well as deal with the big-hitting Keys, the No. 7 seed, who entered with an 11-match Grand Slam winning streak after her title at the Australian Open in January.

They combined for 101 unforced errors and just 40 winners across more than two hours under a closed roof at Court Philippe-Chatrier on a drizzly, chilly day.

Nearly half of the games — 14 of 29 — featured breaks of serve. But from 4-all in the second set, Gauff held four times in a row while pulling away. She made two unforced errors in the last set, including just one double-fault.

After falling behind 4-1 at the start, and twice being a single point from trailing 5-1, Gauff switched to a racket with a different tension in the strings to see if that would help.

"Maybe it did, and maybe it didn't. I'd like to think that it helped a little bit," she said. "Sometimes that stuff could just be mental. Maybe you're thinking, 'Oh, I changed my racket, I'm going to play better, and you start doing it. I don't know.'"

She'll play Thursday for a berth in another major final, facing 361st-ranked French wild-card entry Lois Boisson, who is on one of the most stunning runs in tennis history. Boisson beat No. 6 Mirra Andrejeva 7-6 (6), 6-3 in the quarterfinals to follow up her upset of No. 3 Jessica Pegula in the fourth round.

Boisson, 22, is the first woman to reach the semifinals in her Grand Slam debut since 1989, when Monica Seles and Jennifer Capriati both did it at the French Open. A crowd that offered support to Gauff against Keys via shouts of "Allez, Coco!" was raucous as can be behind Boisson, rattling the 18-year-old Andrejeva.

The other women's semifinal is quite a matchup: three-time defending champion Iga Swiatek vs. No. 1-ranked Aryna Sabalenka. They advanced with quarterfinal victories Tuesday.

It was Swiatek who stopped Gauff at Roland-Garros in the semifinals last year and in the final three years ago.

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"I have a lot more work left to do," said Gauff, who raised her arms overhead then spread them wide apart after the last point against Keys, "but I'm going to savor this one today."

Repeatedly, Gauff scrambled this way or that to get her racket on a shot from Keys and send it back, often leading to a miss.

"The court being a little bit slower, coupled with the fact that she covers the court so well, just put a little bit of pressure on me to go a little bit more for my shots and maybe press a little bit too much, too soon," said Keys, who occasionally admonished herself with a slap on her right leg.

"There were a lot of points where I felt like, playing someone else," Keys said, "I would have won the point."

What we know about the shootings near Gaza aid distribution sites

By SAM MEDNICK and LEE KEATH Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Shootings have erupted nearly daily since last week in the Gaza Strip in the vicinity of new hubs where desperate Palestinians are being directed to collect food. Witnesses say nearby Israeli troops have opened fire. Hospital officials say at least 80 people have been killed and hundreds wounded.

The Israeli military has said it fired warning shots in several instances, and has also fired directly at a few "suspects" who ignored warnings and approached its forces. It has denied opening fire on civilians, and has not claimed Hamas fired in the area of the hubs, though it says it is still investigating.

What we know about the shootings that have occurred as crowds walked toward aid distribution hubs:

Crowds pass close to Israeli forces

Three aid distribution hubs are being run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a newly formed group of mainly American contractors. Israel wants GHF to replace humanitarian groups in Gaza that distribute aid in coordination with the U.N.

Israel accuses Hamas of siphoning off aid under the U.N.-led system. But the U.N. and aid groups deny there is a significant diversion of aid to militants, and say the new system — which they have rejected — allows Israel to use food as a weapon, violates humanitarian principles and won't be effective.

GHF started distributing aid on May 26, following a nearly three-month Israeli blockade that has pushed Gaza's population of more than 2 million people to the brink of famine. The GHF system limits food distribution to hubs guarded by armed contractors. Of the three hubs that are open, one is in central Gaza and two are in the far south on the outskirts of the mostly uninhabited southern city of Rafah; not all have operated every day.

On Wednesday, GHF paused aid distribution, saying that it was discussing measures to improve civilian safety with the Israeli military, including changes to traffic management and troop training.

All the hubs are located in Israeli military zones, where journalists have no access.

To reach the sites in Rafah, Palestinians must walk for miles along a designated route where GHF says the Israeli military keeps security. In statements to the public, GHF has warned people to stay on the road, saying leaving it "represents a great danger."

Distribution usually starts at 5 a.m. each day. But thousands of Palestinians start walking hours earlier, desperate not to miss out on food. That means large crowds passing by Israeli troops in the dark.

Heaviest fire has erupted at a nearby roundabout

While shootings have been reported near all three hubs, the heaviest occurred Sunday and Tuesday at the Flag Roundabout. The traffic circle is located on the designated route about a kilometer (1,000 yards) northwest of GHF's distribution hub in the Tel al-Sultan district of Rafah. The hub is a few hundred meters from an Israeli army base.

Witnesses said that in the early hours Sunday, as crowds made their way down the coastal road toward the hub, Israeli troops fired warning shots and made announcements through drones flying overhead, telling them to turn back and return when the hub opened at 5 a.m.

By 3 a.m., thousands were massed at the Flag Roundabout, waiting for the hub to open. That was when Israeli troops started firing, with guns, tanks and drones, three Palestinian witnesses said. They said they

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saw people falling dead or wounded as the crowd scattered for cover.

Mohammed Ahmed, one man in the crowd, said he saw no provocative acts before the shooting. He said troops "may have opened fire because they felt threatened by the thousands of people in the area."

Witnesses gave similar accounts of Tuesday's shooting, around 4 a.m. at the same roundabout.

Israel says it fires warning shots to control crowds

The Israeli military said it fired warning shots Sunday at "several suspects" approaching them. On Tuesday it said it "fired to drive away suspects." In a statement, army spokesman Effie Defrin said "the numbers of casualties published by Hamas were exaggerated" but that the incident was being investigated.

He accused Hamas of "trying to disrupt the arrival of aid" to Palestinians and pointed to drone footage that the military says shows armed men firing at civilians trying to collect aid in the nearby city of Khan Younis, where there are no GHF sites.

The Associated Press could not independently verify the video, and it was not clear who was being targeted. In its statements on the incidents near the GHF sites, the military has not reported the presence of armed Palestinians.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation says there has been no violence in or around their distribution centers and that its personnel have not opened fire.

On Tuesday, GHF acknowledged that the Israeli military was investigating whether civilians were wounded "after moving beyond the designated safe corridor and into a closed military zone" in an area that was "well beyond our secure distribution site."

A spokesperson said GHF was "saddened to learn that a number of civilians were injured and killed after moving beyond the designated safe corridor."

Hospitals overwhelmed by casualties

Officials at the Red Cross field hospital in Rafah and at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis have reported being overwhelmed by casualties brought from areas close to the distribution sites. They have said most suffered from gunshot wounds, including women and children.

An aid worker at one hospital said the morgue was overflowing and that wounded filled every bed, or were on the floor, many with gunshots to the buttocks and legs. The worker spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Aid workers in Gaza say there is still a lot of uncertainty about what is happening and why so many people are being shot, injured and killed. The aid workers are unable to operate at the sites because they are in military zones.

Humanitarian groups had warned for weeks that having people collect aid in areas with a military presence would expose them to violence.

"This was a ludicrous and ineffective distribution mechanism that was going to end up deadly, which is, tragically, exactly what we are seeing," said Arwa Damon, founder of the International Network for Aid, Relief and Assistance.

The UN-run system operates differently

The existing U.N.-run system operates differently, with workers taking aid to Palestinians wherever they are.

"It is appalling that the humanitarian sector that knows how to do their job is being prevented from doing it because of the false narrative that Hamas controls the aid," Damon said.

Deadly encounters around aid distribution aren't entirely new. In February 2024, Israeli troops guarding an aid convoy heading to northern Gaza opened fire as a crowd of desperate Palestinians stripped supplies off the trucks. More than 100 people were killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which is led by medical professionals but reports to the Hamas-run government.

After investigating the incident, Israel said its troops fired on a "number of suspects" who ignored warning shots and advanced toward its forces. It said a stampede around the trucks caused "significant harm to civilians." EU and U.N. officials at the time said most of the casualties were from Israeli fire.

A race for food boxes

Groton Daily Independent

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Palestinians have described a frenzied free-for-all to get food once they reach the GHF's distribution sites. Boxes of food are left piled up on pallets in an area surrounded by fences and earth berms. Once the sites' gates are opened, the crowds rush in, with everyone grabbing what they can. Witnesses say some people take multiple boxes, which quickly run out, and that many leave empty-handed.

GHF issued a video at the Tel al-Sultan hub showing Palestinians racing furiously toward the boxes.

Aid workers say the supplies are far from enough. GHF says each box contains enough food for a family of five to eat for three to four days. Most boxes contain flour, sugar, cooking oil, pasta and tuna cans, among other items.

"Our team on the ground reports these boxes are woefully insufficient for ensuring children's well-being," said Tess Ingram of UNICEF. "It doesn't have to be this way."

A hungry wild elephant raids a grocery store in Thailand for snacks

BANGKOK (AP) — A hungry wild elephant caused havoc in a grocery store in Thailand on Monday when he strolled in from a nearby national park and helped himself to food on the shelves.

Videos of the incident showed the huge male elephant, known as Plai Biang Lek, briefly stopping in front of the shop, located next to a main road near the Khao Yai National Park in northeastern Thailand, before ducking his whole body inside.

The elephant stopped in front of the shop's counter, calmly snatching and chomping snacks, and did not flinch as the national park workers tried to shoo him away.

The elephant later backed out of the shop still holding a bag of snacks with his trunk. He left little damage behind, except mud tracks on the floor and the ceiling of the shop.

In a video posted on social media, Kamploy Kakaew, the shop owner, appeared amused as she described the moment the elephant rifled her shop. She said he ate about nine bags of sweet rice crackers, a sandwich and some dried bananas she had bought that morning.

Kamploy said the elephant left without hurting anyone after getting his snacks.

Danai Sookkanthachat, a volunteer park worker familiar with the elephant, said Plai Biang Lek, who is about 30 years old, is a familiar sight in the area and has been known to enter people's houses in search of food. This was the first time he had seen him going into a grocery store.

"After he left the shop, he went on to open a bedroom window of another house," he told The Associated Press.

Danai said wild elephants in the Khao Yai National Park area have been coming out of the woods to ransack people's kitchens for many years, but this year he has started seeing them going into more random places to find food.

There were an estimated 4,000 wild elephants in Thailand in 2024, according to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation. As farmers push into forests for agriculture, elephants have been forced to venture out of their shrinking habitats in search of food, leading to confrontations that can turn deadly.

Today in History: June 5, Robert F. Kennedy assassinated

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, June 5, the 156th day of 2025. There are 209 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 5, 1968, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy was shot and mortally wounded after claiming victory in California's Democratic presidential primary at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles; assassin Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was arrested at the scene.

Also on this date:

In 1794, Congress passed the Neutrality Act, which prohibited Americans from taking part in any military action against a country that was at peace with the United States.

In 1950, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Henderson v. United States*, struck down racially segregated railroad

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dining cars traveling across state lines.

In 1967, the Six-Day War began as Israel, anticipating a possible attack by its Arab neighbors, launched a series of airfield strikes that destroyed nearly the entire Egyptian air force.

In 1975, Egypt reopened the Suez Canal to international shipping, eight years after it was closed as a result of the 1967 Six-Day War with Israel.

In 1976, 11 people were killed when the Teton Dam in Idaho failed, releasing 80 billion gallons of water.

In 1981, the Centers for Disease Control reported that five men in Los Angeles had come down with a rare kind of pneumonia; they were the first recognized cases of what later became known as AIDS.

In 2002, 14-year-old Elizabeth Smart was abducted from her Salt Lake City home. (Smart was found and rescued by police in a Salt Lake City suburb in March 2003.)

In 2004, Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, died in Los Angeles at age 93 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

In 2016, Novak Djokovic became the first man in nearly a half-century to win four consecutive major championships, finally earning an elusive French Open title with a win over Andy Murray to complete a career Grand Slam.

Today's Birthdays: Broadcast journalist Bill Moyers is 91. USA Track & Field Hall of Famer John Carlos is 80. Musician-artist Laurie Anderson is 78. Author Ken Follett is 76. Finance author Suze Orman is 74. Musician Kenny G is 69. Actor-comedian Jeff Garlin is 63. Author Rick Riordan is 61. Actor Ron Livingston is 58. Singer Brian McKnight is 56. Actor Mark Wahlberg is 54. Actor Liza Weil is 48. Actor-comedian Nick Kroll is 47. Rock musician Pete Wentz (Fall Out Boy) is 46. Singer-actor Troye Sivan is 30.