

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, Sept. 12

School Breakfast: Egg wraps.
School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, green beans.
Football hosts Milbank, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 13

Soccer at Vermillion (Girls at 1 p.m., Boys at 2:30 p.m.)



Sunday, Sept. 14

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir 6 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m., and Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

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

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

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

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

GHS FCS Kickoff meeting, 2 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent
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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.

Utah Manhunt Continues

The FBI released images yesterday of a person of interest in the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk earlier this week. A search for the unidentified suspect continues as of this writing.

Officials say the shooter appeared to be college-aged, with surveillance images showing a person in sunglasses, a baseball cap, and a long-sleeved shirt with an American flag graphic. Authorities also recovered a hunting rifle in a wooded area near Utah Valley University's campus, where Kirk was hosting an outdoor debate event. A preliminary internal report suggested cartridges alongside the rifle were engraved with political messages; police have not yet publicly identified a motive.

President Donald Trump said yesterday he would posthumously award Kirk—cofounder of conservative student organization Turning Point USA—the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Lasker Award Winners

The winners of the 2025 Lasker Awards were announced yesterday for breakthroughs in immunology, neuroscience, and genetic technology. Established in 1945 by Mary and Albert Lasker to promote medical research, the prizes are among the most prestigious in US biomedical science, with each category awarding \$250K.

Lucy Shapiro (Stanford) won the special achievement award for her 55-year career decoding bacterial cell biology and mentoring new generations. The basic medical research award went to Dirk Görlich (Max Planck Society) and Steven McKnight (UT Southwestern) for discoveries showing how "low complexity domains" in proteins drive cell organization. The clinical medical research award honored Michael Welsh (Iowa), Paul Negulescu (Vertex), and Jesús González (formerly Vertex) for the development of a triple-drug combination for cystic fibrosis, benefiting over 90% of patients.

The Lasker Awards often predict Nobel winners; 83 recipients—including 31 in the last two decades—have won the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine.

Bolsonaro Coup Conviction

The majority of Brazil's five-justice Supreme Court panel voted yesterday to convict former President Jair Bolsonaro of plotting a military coup to stay in office following his electoral loss. The 70-year-old, who led the country from 2019 to 2022, was sentenced to 27 years and three months in prison.

The trial has divided Brazilian society since Bolsonaro was indicted in February. Thousands gathered Sunday in dueling Independence Day rallies for and against the nationalist populist leader. He has been under house arrest since August following accusations that he attempted to interfere with court proceedings. The Trump administration, which condemned the case this summer by imposing 50% tariffs on Brazilian goods and sanctioning the presiding judge, quickly criticized the ruling and warned it would respond.

Bolsonaro's lawyers are expected to raise questions about the sentence length and request house arrest due to Bolsonaro's ongoing health issues.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 77th Primetime Emmy Awards air Sunday (8 pm ET, CBS), hosted by comedian Nate Bargatze; see predictions for each category.

Canelo Alvarez takes on Terence Crawford tomorrow (9 pm ET, Netflix) for the undisputed super middle-weight boxing championship.

The 2025 World Track and Field Championships kick off from Tokyo tomorrow.

Chelsea Football Club charged with 74 breaches of Football Association rules related to payments to agents.

Science & Technology

Federal Trade Commission orders Alphabet, Meta, OpenAI, and several other AI chatbot makers to disclose information on products' effects on children.

Fossilized dinosaur eggs in central China are dated to roughly 85 million years ago using a novel laser-based method; further egg sampling may reveal how dinosaurs adapted to climatic shifts.

Marine biologists discover octopuses prefer their four front arms for exploring and four rear arms for walking by analyzing videos taken in the wild; finding could inform the design of life-saving robots.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.9%, Dow +1.4%, Nasdaq +0.7%) as consumer prices rise and weekly jobless claims approach four-year high.

US consumer price index rose 2.9% year over year in August, above 2.7% in July and the fastest pace since the start of the year.

Average US 30-year fixed mortgage rate falls to 11-month low of 6.35%.

Warner Bros. Discovery shares close up nearly 29% after report of recently merged Paramount Skydance preparing takeover bid.

Politics & World Affairs

Opening statements begin in the trial of man accused of attempting to assassinate then-candidate Donald Trump at his West Palm Beach golf club last September.

Suspect in Colorado school shooting earlier this week identified as 16-year-old student, dies by suicide after wounding two students.

Poland closes airspace in the country's east nightly for three months following Russian drone incursion; Latvia follows suit.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer fires ambassador to the US Peter Mandelson over his history of friendly emails with late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein (More)

Groton Netters sweeps Roncalli, improves to 5-0

The Groton Area volleyball team advanced to 5-0 on the season Thursday night with a 3-0 sweep of cross-county rival Aberdeen Roncalli, completing a program-wide sweep at every level from seventh grade through varsity.

The Tigers pulled out a tight first set, 25-23. Leading 11-10, Groton strung together six straight points to grab a 17-10 lead. Roncalli answered with a 6-0 run of its own to close the gap to 20-17, but the Tigers hung on.

"You knew it was going to be high intensity," Groton head coach Chelsea Hanson said. "There's no way to say, 'Oh, it's just another game,' because it's not. Roncalli is always scrappy defensively. A lot of balls I

thought were down, they dug right back up. It was a good win for us."

Groton controlled the second set 25-17. After Roncalli's brief 1-0 lead, the Tigers surged ahead 3-1 and never looked back.

The third set proved more competitive, featuring nine ties and seven lead changes. Roncalli held a 12-11 edge before Groton rattled off five straight points for a 16-12 lead. The Tigers carried that momentum to a 25-18 win to close out the sweep.

"They made us earn every point," Hanson said. "I think it really helped to get Rylee Dunker and Taryn



Tevan Hanson
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



McKenna Tietz
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Jerica Locke

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Sydney Locke

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Traphagen going in the middle, because Roncalli scouted Chesney pretty hard. But that's the nice part—we can adjust. Once they started defending one spot, we could go to other hitters. That opened things up."

Varsity

(Groton won 3-0: 25-23, 25-17, 25-18)

Groton

Jaedyn Penning – 9 kills

Tevan Hanson – 8 kills

Rylee Dunker – 8 kills, 1 block, 2 aces



Jaedyn Penning

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Taryn Traphagen – 8 kills, 1 block
Chesney Weber – 3 kills, 1 block
Kella Tracy – 1 kill
Roncalli
Jillian Ellwein – 9 kills
Karsyn Davis – 4 kills
Grace Cogley – 3 kills, 1 block
Reese Henrich – 2 kills
Elaina Roach – 1 kill
Ava Danielson – 1 kill
Cambry Feickert – 1 ace

Junior Varsity

(Groton won 2-1: 25-22, 20-25, 15-4)

Neely Althoff – 8 kills
McKenna Krause – 6 kills, 1 ace
Elizabeth Cole – 6 kills, 1 block
Liby Althoff – 4 kills, 4 aces
Emily Jones – 4 kills
Kinsley Rowen – 2 kills

McKenna Tietz – 1 kill
Tevan Hanson – 1 kill
Rylen Ekern – 1 ace

C Match (Groton won 2-0: 25-16, 25-10)

Addison Hoeft – 7 kills
Kinsley Rowen – 4 kills, 2 aces, 1 block
Rylen Ekern – 4 aces



Chesney Weber
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Taryn Traphagen
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Neely Althoff – 3 kills, 2 aces

Elizabeth Cole – 3 kills

Liby Althoff – 2 kills

Ryelle Gilbert – 1 kill, 2 aces

Brooklyn Spanier – 1 kill

Tori Schuster – 1 ace

The sweep extended beyond varsity, as Groton also won the 8th and 7th grade matches to complete what Hanson called a “super clean sweep.”

“Anytime we can come here and walk out with wins across the board, it’s a good night,” Hanson said.

Roncalli dropped to 4-2 with the loss. Groton travels to Clark on Thursday before competing at the Hamlin Tournament next Saturday.

According to South Dakota High School Activities Association power-point rankings, Groton Area sits in the No. 2 spot in Class A. Roncalli slipped from No. 11 down to No. 17 with the loss. Next up, the Tigers travel to Clark to face a Clark-Willow Lake team that is undefeated and currently ranked No. 11 in the state. Groton then competes at the Hamlin Tournament next Saturday.

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dan Richardt from Groton Ford, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Groton Legion, Heartland Energy, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes and Lounge and The MeatHouse. Grandparents sponsored the JV and C matches.



Rylee Dunker

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Golfers win Groton Invite as four were medalists

Four Groton Area golfers were medalists at the Groton Invitational Golf Meet held Thursday. Jace Johnson placed fourth, Liam Johnson was sixth, Jayden Schwan was ninth and Jarrett Erdmann placed 13th to lead Groton Area.

Groton Area won the team title with a 1 shot advantage over Sioux Valley, 347-348. Sisseton placed third with a 354 followed by Aberdeen Roncalli had a 368, Milbank a 373 and Redfield a 397.

Yardage	358	357	507	140	394	335	370	186	475	3122	358	357	507	140	394	335	370	186	475	3122	6244
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Par	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	36	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	36	72
4. Jace Johnson	6	4	5	3	5	5	5	4	4	41	5	6	5	3	4	5	4	4	5	41	82
6. Liam Johnson	5	5	6	4	7	4	5	4	5	45	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	6	41	86
9. Jayden Schwan	6	6	7	4	5	5	4	4	7	48	5	3	5	4	4	5	5	3	7	41	89
13. Jarrett Erdmann	5	6	6	4	7	6	5	4	5	48	6	6	5	3	5	5	4	3	5	42	90
23. Haden Harder	6	6	6	5	6	5	5	4	7	50	8	5	5	7	5	6	5	3	6	50	100
25. Graham Rose	6	7	6	5	7	6	6	5	5	53	4	5	6	5	6	7	7	4	5	49	102
56. Graham Rose	5	6	8	7	5	8	6	5	7	57	6	6	5	6	7	8	8	7	7	60	117



Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE



A production of the
Groton Daily Independent

For more info: GDILIVE.COM

Football
Milbank at Groton Area
Friday., Sept. 12, 7 p.m.
Doney Field



SDSU Extension encouraging physical activity with virtual fitness event

BROOKINGS, S.D. – South Dakota State University Extension is encouraging South Dakotans to get active with its fourth annual Fall into Fitness seasonal activity challenge.

This virtual movement challenge aims to motivate and inspire participants to get outside and get active during October. It is free and can be done by individuals or groups anywhere in the state.

Participants will track their minutes of activity daily from Oct. 1 to 31 and submit their totals after the event ends. Those who finish the challenge will receive a small thank you gift for participating. Larger prizes will be awarded to top achievers and three randomly drawn participants who submit their total minutes at the end of the challenge.

Challenge participants must be registered to qualify for prizes. To register, visit [extension.sdstate.edu/events and search "fitness"](https://extension.sdstate.edu/events-and-search/fitness).

Erin Hallenbeck, SDSU Extension Health and Physical Activity Field Specialist, said this event was renamed from "Walktober" to Fall into Fitness to reflect that all kinds of movement contribute to a healthy lifestyle, not just walking or running.

"Everyday activities like raking leaves, gardening, cleaning the house, dancing, biking, strength training, or even playing with kids or grandkids all count toward the challenge," Hallenbeck said. "Our goal is to help people stay active while showing that fitness can fit into many parts of daily life."

Participants will receive weekly emails to support their progress, and will be encouraged to move every day of the month. The challenge also encourages participants to focus on their mental health, as well, providing regular "mental health tasks" to do each day.

The Centers for Disease Control says physical activity supports physical and mental health and recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate to intense physical activity a week. Health benefits include improved brain health, focus, mood and a reduction in major health risks like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

Whitney Keller-Reetz, SDSU Extension Health and Community Field Specialist, encourages South Dakotans to join the challenge with a partner or group. Keller-Reetz pointed to research by the Baylor College of Medicine that group fitness and exercise classes can provide positive social interactions, accountability, and push people to work out harder than they would on their own.

For more information, contact Erin Hallenbeck, SDSU Extension Health and Physical Activity Field Specialist, at 605-782-3290 or Erin.Hallenbeck@sdstate.edu.

Northern State University Reports Steady Enrollment with Strong Transfer Student Growth

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Northern State University's fall 2025 enrollment resulted in pockets of growth and areas of stability despite a decrease in first-year students. Total headcount increased from 3,708 to 3,739, and undergraduate transfer students were up 33%, the highest among the regental schools. Additionally, 69% of freshman students were retained from last fall to this fall, resulting in a 4% increase in continuing undergraduate headcount. Full-time equivalent enrollment and student credit hours were steady compared with fall 2024.

Two-thirds of Northern's incoming freshman class are South Dakota students, and one-third are from Brown County.

"These statistics demonstrate that Northern is fulfilling its mission in providing access to higher education within the region while also meeting regional workforce demands," said Eric Kline, enrollment management officer. "Though we did not meet our freshman class recruitment goal, the overall enrollment picture was positive, showing some stability. Today's young adults have multiple options for educational pathways, and we are proud to serve the community and region in providing a safe, welcoming, affordable and quality education for those who become part of the Wolfpack."

In addition to providing undergraduate and graduate programs, Northern offers a unique mission in educating high school students across the state through its dual enrollment, Rising Scholars, Northern Academy and E-Learning programs. With a 5% increase in high school dual enrollment, high school students receive college credit in select courses as juniors or seniors.

The Northern State University Center for Statewide E-Learning enhances educational experiences for schools and students across South Dakota by offering high school courses that address critical unmet local needs. "E-Learning expands course offerings statewide, making quality education available to all South Dakota students," said Mary Cundy, E-Learning principal. This year they expect to teach approximately 3,000 high school students through the E-Learning Center.

Northern continues to expand opportunities for postsecondary education through its certificate, two-year, four-year and master's programs, which include flexible delivery options. As part of its ongoing commitment to serving the region, Northern welcomed its first cohort of nursing students this fall in the new Bachelor of Science in Nursing program and will open a state-of-the-art Business, Health and Innovation Center in spring 2026.

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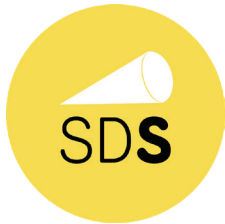


Taking a rest

The Groton City Park offers a shady spot for two walkers to rest and take in the summer afternoon. Pictured are Betty Breck and Bill Sundermeyer. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The baseball complex concession stand/bathroom/utility room building is loaded up and will soon be heading to the airport as a new building will be built this fall.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Overall enrollment is flat this fall at South Dakota public universities

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 5:46 PM

South Dakota public university enrollment this fall is 36,091 students, exactly the same as last fall, according to numbers released Thursday by the South Dakota Board of Regents.

Enrollment dropped for two universities and increased by less than 3% at four others:

- Black Hills State University in Spearfish increased by 2.36% to 3,425 students.
- Dakota State University in Madison grew by 1.8% to 3,842 students.
- Northern State University in Aberdeen grew by 0.84% to 3,739 students.
- South Dakota Mines in Rapid City decreased by 1.47% to 2,541 students.
- South Dakota State University in Brookings grew by 0.61% to 12,139 students.
- University of South Dakota in Vermillion decreased by 2.02% to 10,405 students.

System-wide enrollment peaked at 36,662 in 2017, and no year since then has equaled that mark.

The numbers could be a sign of the "2025 cliff" that officials have been fearing, attributed to a lower birth rate during the Great Recession of 2007-2009. There will be a 10% decline in high school graduates nationally from 2025 to 2037, Board of Regents Executive Director Nathan Lukkes told lawmakers last year.

Despite the flat trend overall, more South Dakota high school graduates are pursuing higher education in the state than in recent years, Lukkes said in a news release. South Dakota student enrollment increased this fall to 22,410, a 1% increase over last year, according to system data.

Black Hills State University reported the largest increase in student enrollment this fall by percentage and raw numbers, with 79 more students. It also reported its largest freshman class since 2019 at 500 enrollees, and a 58% increase in Native American enrollment, at 142 students.

South Dakota State University reported the highest percentage increase in full-time enrollment. Dakota State University's enrollment is a record high for that school, and Northern State University's enrollment is the highest since at least 1998.

Despite the decline in enrollment at USD, the university reported enrollment at its Sioux Falls campus increased by 19.1%. The university expanded degree programs to the campus in recent years, including

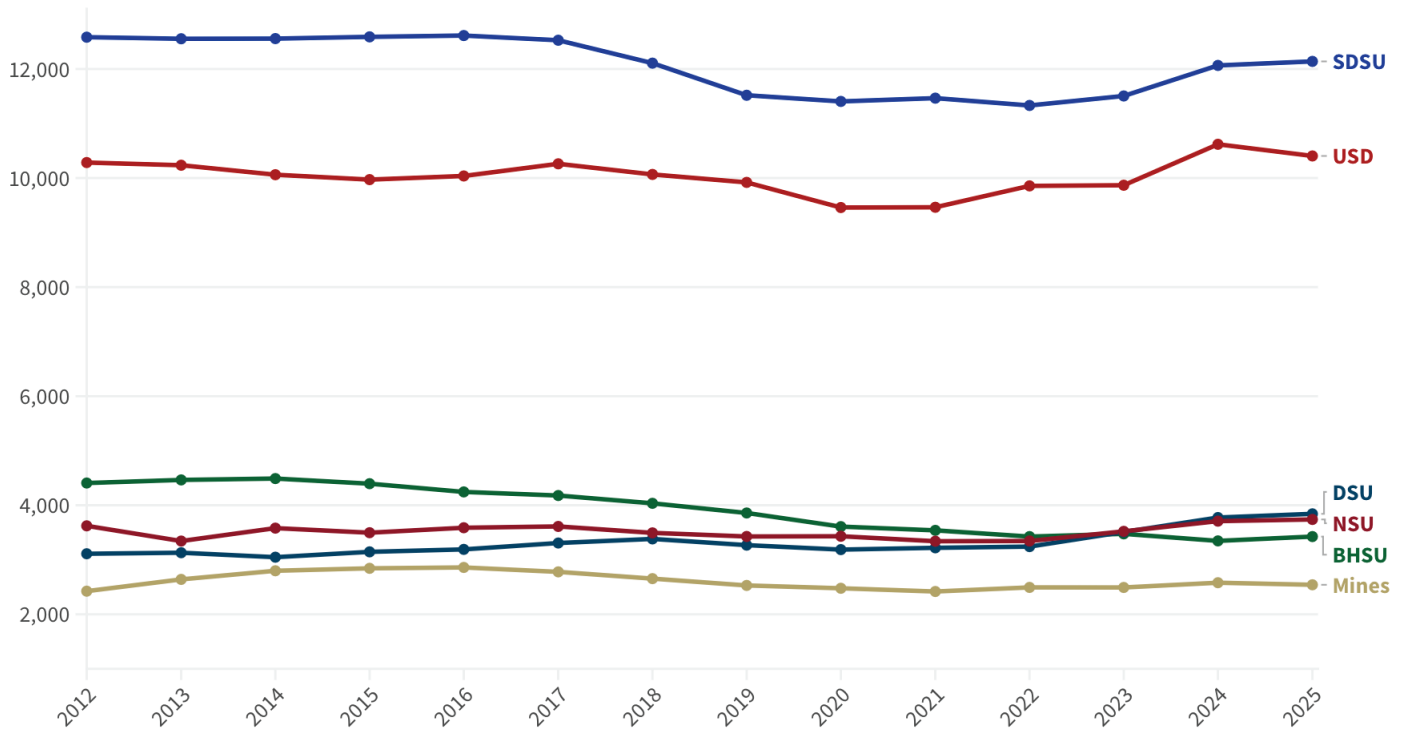


The University of South Dakota campus. (Courtesy of University of South Dakota)

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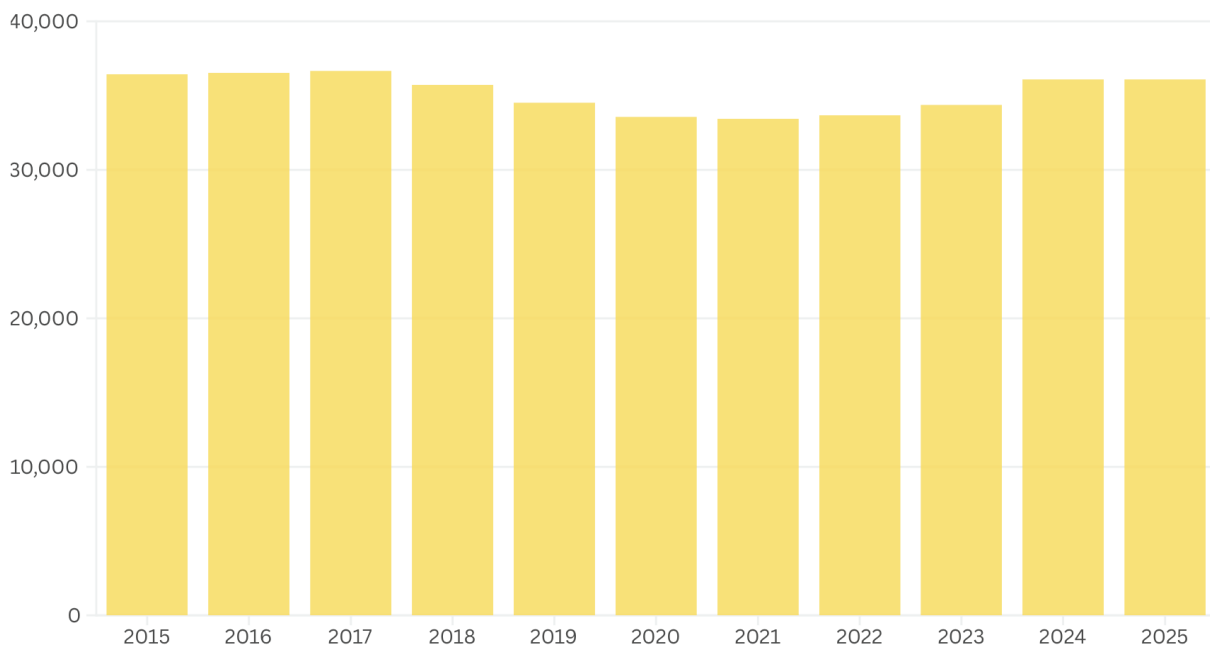
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South Dakota public university fall enrollments



Source: South Dakota Board of Regents • South Dakota Searchlight

Total South Dakota public university fall enrollment



Source: [South Dakota Board of Regents](#)

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its masters in business administration program and a bachelor's degree in elementary education. The university recently announced that it will move its medical school to Sioux Falls.

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.

State board awards \$2.8 million in tax relief to solar farm and \$10 million loan to cheese factory

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 3:57 PM

A South Dakota economic development board this week approved up to \$2.8 million in tax relief for a solar farm, a \$10 million state loan for a cheese factory and a \$7,500 state grant to help local businesses grow.

Officials expect the projects to result in a combined \$395 million in private investment and create 163 jobs.

"We're supporting a major expansion in food production, investing in renewable energy, and fueling local economic development," Gov. Larry Rhoden said in a press release. "Each project strengthens our communities and ensures long-term growth for our state."

The Board of Economic Development approved the awards Wednesday.

Bel Brands, known for producing mini-cheese wheels dipped in red wax, received approval for a state loan of up to \$10 million. The loan, offered through the Revolving Economic Development and Initiative (REDI) Fund, provides low-interest, long-term financing for companies that want to expand or relocate in South Dakota. The company plans to build an additional 100,000 square feet of space at its Brookings plant, which would double its production capacity.

Grant Solar LLC received approval for up to \$2.8 million in tax relief through the Reinvestment Payment Program to help build a 585-acre solar power facility in McCook County. The program refunds a portion of the state sales and use taxes paid on construction costs, with the goal of making capital projects more affordable to build in the state. Bel Brands was previously awarded up to \$2.6 million in tax relief from the same program for its expansion.

Ally Dakota Development, a group with offices in Watertown and Rapid City that provides development support to local businesses, was awarded a \$7,500 grant through the state's Economic Development Partnership Program. The program provides small grants to help local organizations hire staff, run programs, or carry out projects that support business growth.

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.

New but vacant Deadwood apartment complex revived by state infrastructure program

\$200 million fund, launched in 2023, has supported 78 building projects in 41 cities

BY: JOHN HULT-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 9:39 AM

A loan from South Dakota's Housing Infrastructure Financing Program could keep a 63-unit apartment complex in Deadwood from sitting empty.

The Housing Development Authority Board's approval this week of a \$2.1 million loan to rebuild the water lines at the now-vacant Deadwood Ridge Apartments marks the first time the group has voted to

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The Deadwood Ridge Apartments in Deadwood. (Courtesy of

Black Hills Pioneer)

pay for infrastructure money on a building that's already built.

Lawmakers created the \$200 million pool of funding in 2023 to address a statewide shortage in workforce housing. Half took the form of low-interest loans. The other \$100 million — half federal dollars, half state dollars — was earmarked for grants.

The money was meant to cover up to a third of a developer's cost on things like roads, water and sewer lines, and sidewalks through loans, grants or a combination of the two.

It's been two years since the fund began to disburse money across South Dakota. Thus far, the program's aided 78 projects in 41 cities. The initial pool of \$100 million in grant funding is gone, but

the program still has \$65 million available for loans.

The fund earned \$5 million in interest this year, and is meant to be rebuilt as projects repay their debt.

Fourteen projects have been completed, according to Amy Eldridge, director of rental housing development for the authority. Several others "are done, but they're working on completing the documentation" to certify as much.

Another 64 projects are being built now, Eldridge told the board.

Tuesday decisions

All the loans and grants must first be approved by the state's Housing Development Authority Board. When that board met Tuesday in Sioux Falls, its members approved an \$814,000 loan to help cover the infrastructure for a \$2.4 million, 94-rental unit project in Spearfish and an \$846,000 loan to help a \$2.6 million, 68-lot development for single family homes in Crooks.

The third ask for infrastructure funding was more expensive and complicated.

The Deadwood Ridge Apartments in Deadwood are already built, at a cost of \$11 million. The initial project didn't ask for or use any infrastructure funding, and was meant to open its doors to tenants in 2024 but didn't. The initial developers and engineers failed to submit their drinking water and wastewater plans to the state's Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources before the building began. When the time came to open, the unreviewed project failed to pass regulatory muster.

As a result, the infrastructure needed to be redesigned and rebuilt. Fixing the error and putting the apartments onto the market in the historic West River tourist community will cost another \$6.5 million.

On Tuesday, the housing board reviewed owner Daniel Henderson's request for help covering that cost. He asked the state to waive an infrastructure program rule that limits how much loan money can be used to cover labor costs, which in this case included fees for a new engineer.

Henderson's request, for a \$2.1 million loan, was \$1.5 million more than the board would typically allow for labor costs on a project of its size.

Board member Mark Roby, of Watertown, wanted to know what would happen if the board said no.

"There would be a building that sits in Deadwood that doesn't get leased out," Eldridge said.

Chas Olson, the authority's director, said there's enough funding to offer the loan, and the apartments

"are really badly needed" in Deadwood.

The board first approved the waiver, then the project application, after assurances that the complex owner was in a strong position to repay the loan. Both votes were unanimous.

Remaining funds

After the meeting, Olson told South Dakota Searchlight that loan applications have slowed down in part because major builders are working on approved projects. Developers are also likely waiting to gauge how those projects will impact demand for housing in their respective areas.

The fund was launched to address what a legislative summer study concluded was a 10,000-home shortage in workforce housing across the state.

So far, the infrastructure program has distributed or committed funds for more than 7,000 single-family home lots and more than 5,000 multi-family units.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Appeals court allows provision freezing Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 6:45 PM

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration can block Medicaid funding from going to Planned Parenthood after an appeals court on Thursday overturned a lower court's preliminary injunction.

Republicans in Congress included the one-year funding prohibition in their "big, beautiful" law, which President Donald Trump signed in early July.

The Department of Health and Human Services, however, has not been able to implement that policy change after a district court judge blocked it from taking effect in a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood.

The Trump administration appealed that ruling to the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which released a two-page order Thursday without explaining its decision.

The three-judge panel comprised Gustavo A. Gelpí, Lara E. Montecalvo and Seth R. Aframe, all of whom were nominated to their current position by former President Joe Biden.

"The July 21, 2025 preliminary injunction and the July 28, 2025 preliminary injunction are hereby stayed pending disposition of the respective appeals," they wrote.

The Trump administration did not immediately return messages seeking comment.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America President and CEO Alexis McGill Johnson wrote in a statement the court's decision means that patients, "who rely on the essential health care that Planned Parenthood health centers provide, can't plan for their futures, decide where they go for care, or control their lives, bodies, and futures — all because the Trump administration and its backers want to attack Planned Parenthood and shut down health centers.

"This is a blow, but the fight isn't over. For over 100 years, Planned Parenthood has faced unrelenting attacks, but we're still here providing care, information, and resources. We will continue to fight this unconstitutional law, even though this court has allowed it to impact patients."

Federal law for decades has barred funding for abortion services with exceptions for rape, incest, or the life of the pregnant patient.

The new law blocks Medicaid funding from going to Planned Parenthood for other types of health services, like annual physicals, cancer screenings, or birth control.

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.

South Dakota part of 12-state coalition urging Supreme Court to take up property rights case

BY: MARY STEURER-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 3:35 PM

North Dakota and 11 other states are advocating for the U.S. Supreme Court to consider the arguments of North Dakota ranchers in a dispute with an energy company.

WBI Energy used eminent domain to take a portion of the northwest North Dakota landowners' property for a pipeline project in 2018. The ranchers were compensated for their land under a confidential settlement with WBI in 2021, though the parties disagreed as to whether the group was also entitled to legal fees.

A North Dakota federal judge initially ordered WBI to pay the landowners about \$380,000 in legal expenses, though the 8th Circuit Court of Appeal overturned that decision earlier this year.

In early August, the landowners filed a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the appellate court's decision. They ultimately want the high court to reverse the circuit court's ruling.

Twelve Republican-led states in a Monday friend-of-the-court brief took the landowners' side.

Bob McNamara, the lead attorney representing the McKenzie County property owners, said it's "remarkable" to see so many states come together in support of the ranchers' petition.

The dispute centers on whether the parties have to follow federal or state law.

WBI took the ranchers' land under a federal law called the Natural Gas Act, which allows private businesses to use the federal government's eminent domain power for public natural gas infrastructure. While the landowners were paid for their land, the act doesn't say whether that sum must also include landowners' legal expenses.

Both the plaintiffs and the 12-state coalition that filed Monday's brief take the stance that when federal law is silent, state property law governs.

Under North Dakota law, WBI is required to pay their attorney fees, the ranchers say.

WBI and the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals disagree. The 8th Circuit in its ruling said that because WBI wielded the federal government's eminent domain power when it took the land, state law does not apply. When the federal government exercises eminent domain, it doesn't have to cover property owners' legal costs.

Allowing the appellate court's ruling to stand would upset the balance of power between states and the federal government, the states argue in their Monday filing.

"Under the Eighth Circuit's decision, landowners in seven states no longer have the benefit of state law property rights that landowners in the rest of the country have," the brief says.

The states expressed concern that the 8th Circuit's legal interpretation could allow the federal government to quietly assume more regulatory authority over property-related matters.

WBI has to file a response to the landowners' petition sometime in October, McNamara said. WBI declined a request for comment Thursday.

The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to consider the petition sometime in November, he added.

It's extremely rare for the U.S. Supreme Court to agree to review a case, though the justices have shown an interest in eminent domain and property rights issues, McNamara said previously.

He said the states' brief could help put the case on the high court's radar.

"The court listens to states when they say, 'This creates a big federalism problem,'" McNamara said.

The 11 states that signed onto the brief with North Dakota are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Nebraska, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas.

North Dakota Monitor reporter Mary Steurer can be reached at msteurer@northdakotamonitor.com.

Mary Steurer is a reporter based in Bismarck for the North Dakota Monitor. A native of St. Louis, Steurer previously worked as the local government reporter for the Casper Star-Tribune newspaper in Wyoming.

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Trump commemorates Charlie Kirk alongside 9/11 victims

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 3:00 PMUPDATED 3:05 PM

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump honored slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk as he remembered the victims of Sept. 11 during a ceremony Thursday in Virginia, and announced he would posthumously award the popular figure the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Kirk, the late co-founder and head of the political advocacy organization Turning Point USA, was fatally shot Wednesday while speaking on a college campus in Utah.

Trump described the attack as a “heinous assassination” and told a crowd gathered at the Pentagon that Kirk, 31, was “a giant of his generation, a champion of liberty and an inspiration to millions and millions of people.”

“We miss him greatly. Yet I have no doubt that Charlie’s voice and the courage he put into the hearts of countless people, especially young people, will live on,” Trump said.

Trump said the ceremony to posthumously award Kirk the highest civilian honor has not yet been scheduled but that he expects “a very big crowd.”

In recalling the deadliest attack on the United States, Trump said the “entire world came crashing down” for loved ones of the 2,977 victims.

“In the quarter of a century since those acts of mass murder, 9/11 family members have felt the weight of missed birthdays and empty bedrooms, journals left unfinished and dreams left unfulfilled,” Trump said. “To every member that still feels a void every day of your lives, the First Lady and I unite with you in sorrow and today, as one nation, we renew our sacred vow that we will never forget September 11, 2001.”

The president delivered remarks following Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, who praised Kirk as a “good and faithful servant.”

Hegseth said when faced with the tragic memory of 9/11 he finds hope in the “future of our great nation,” and invoked Kirk.

“The young soldiers who take the oath give me hope. The young cops who wear the badge give me hope. The young firefighters who answer the call give me hope. The young agents who patrol our border give me hope. The life, example, and even death of Christ-follower and American patriot Charlie Kirk give me hope, sheer courage, no matter the arena,” Hegseth said.

Vance in Utah

Vice President JD Vance, who had been scheduled to attend the 24th observance of 9/11 at Ground Zero in New York City, changed his travel plans to visit with Kirk’s family in Utah and fly with his casket to Arizona on Air Force Two, according to multiple media reports.

Trump did not cancel a scheduled visit to a New York Yankees game Thursday night as part of a 9/11 commemoration.

Vance issued a lengthy statement on social media Wednesday night sharing the story of his friendship with Kirk, including an acknowledgement they were both skeptical of Trump in 2016 before joining the president’s political agenda.

“So much of the success we’ve had in this administration traces directly to Charlie’s ability to organize and convene. He didn’t just help us win in 2024, he helped us staff the entire government,” Vance wrote.

Kirk’s advocacy organization worked with Trump’s 2024 campaign to mobilize young voters in the November election.

On Wednesday, Kirk was on the first of a 15-stop “American Comeback Tour” that was scheduled next week for events at Colorado State University.

The zealous political figure was known for his outreach and events on college campuses. According to Turning Point USA, the organization has started over 1,000 chapters in high schools and 800 on college campuses across the U.S.

Political violence

Kirk’s killing is the latest in a string of politically motivated violence in recent years.

A man fatally shot former Minnesota Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman, a Democrat, and her

husband in June. The alleged gunman, Vance Boelter, also shot and injured Democratic state Sen. John Hoffman and his wife. Boelter had in his possession several weapons and a list of several Minnesota and federal lawmakers, including some of their home addresses, according to authorities.

During last year's presidential campaign, a 20-year-old gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during an event in Pennsylvania. Just over two months later, another man attempted to shoot Trump at his golf course in Florida.

In 2022, a man wielding a hammer and zip ties broke into then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's home and fractured the skull of Paul Pelosi, the Democratic leader's husband.

On Jan. 6, 2021, thousands of people stormed the U.S. Capitol to stop the certification of the 2020 presidential election results. At least seven people died during or shortly after the attack and approximately 140 police officers were injured by the rioters.

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

Trump Education Department to divert grants from colleges serving students of color

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA-SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 1:12 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Education announced it will withhold \$350 million of congressionally approved funds to minority-serving colleges and universities and divert the funds elsewhere, saying that the institutions' admissions quotas are discriminatory.

The move eliminated fiscal 2025 discretionary funding for institutions that serve students who are Asian, Black, Indigenous and Hispanic, as well as a program for students of color pursuing careers in science and engineering. It's consistent with President Donald Trump's longstanding objective to eliminate programs that center on diversity, equity and inclusion.

"To further our commitment to ending discrimination in all forms across federally supported programs, the Department will no longer award Minority-Serving Institution grants that discriminate by restricting eligibility to institutions that meet government-mandated racial quotas," Education Secretary Linda McMahon said in a statement.

McMahon cited a July opinion from the U.S. Justice Department that it was unconstitutional for federal funds to go to Hispanic-serving institutions based on the student body makeup.

That opinion reversed a decades-long record of the federal government setting aside funding for higher education institutions that have a significant portion of students from racial or ethnic minority backgrounds.

The schools affected by Wednesday's announcement are Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions; Black institutions; Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions; Native American-serving nontribal institutions; and institutions receiving Minority Science and Engineering Improvement grants.

The announcement was vague about where the money would go instead, saying only it would be diverted "into programs that do not include discriminatory racial and ethnic quotas and that advance Administration priorities."

Up to 800 schools affected

Democrats swiftly condemned the move, which is likely to face legal challenges.

Rep. Bobby Scott of Virginia, the ranking member on the U.S. House Education and Workforce Committee, said in a statement that the move undercut efforts to help students of color reach financial stability.

"These institutions are effective engines of economic mobility because they meet students where they are and are dedicated to educating the whole person," Scott said in a statement.

Roughly 5 million students are enrolled in the more than 800 minority-serving institutions across the country. The schools aim to help students of color and students from low-income backgrounds pursue

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higher education.

Most of the minority-serving schools receive funding based on racial quotas, except for Black institutions and tribal colleges, whose designations are based on their historical missions to educate Black or Native American students.

The Department of Education will also reprogram funds from a program to develop Hispanic-serving institutions and from a program promoting postbaccalaureate opportunities for Hispanic Americans.

McMahon argued that because most minority-serving institutions require that a percentage of the student body reflect the racial background the institutions serve, it violates the constitutional guarantee of equal protections.

Administration cites equal protections

McMahon pointed to the Justice Department's July memo saying it would not defend a suit brought by the state of Tennessee against Hispanic-serving institutions.

The Supreme Court has explained that '[o]utright racial balancing' is 'patently unconstitutional,'" U.S. Solicitor General D. John Sauer wrote to House Speaker Mike Johnson.

"And its precedents make clear that the government lacks any legitimate interest in differentiating among universities based on whether 'a specified number of seats in each class' are occupied by 'individuals from the preferred ethnic groups,'" Sauer wrote.

The U.S. Supreme Court case that Sauer cited in his letter to Johnson is the 2023 decision to strike down affirmative action in college admissions that found two prominent universities' consideration of race in acceptances violated the U.S. Constitution.

Most minority-serving institutions, about 70%, are Hispanic-serving institutions, according to Rutgers University's Center for Minority Serving Institutions.

David Mendez, the head of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, an advocacy group, said in a statement that the loss in funding is "an attack on equity in higher education."

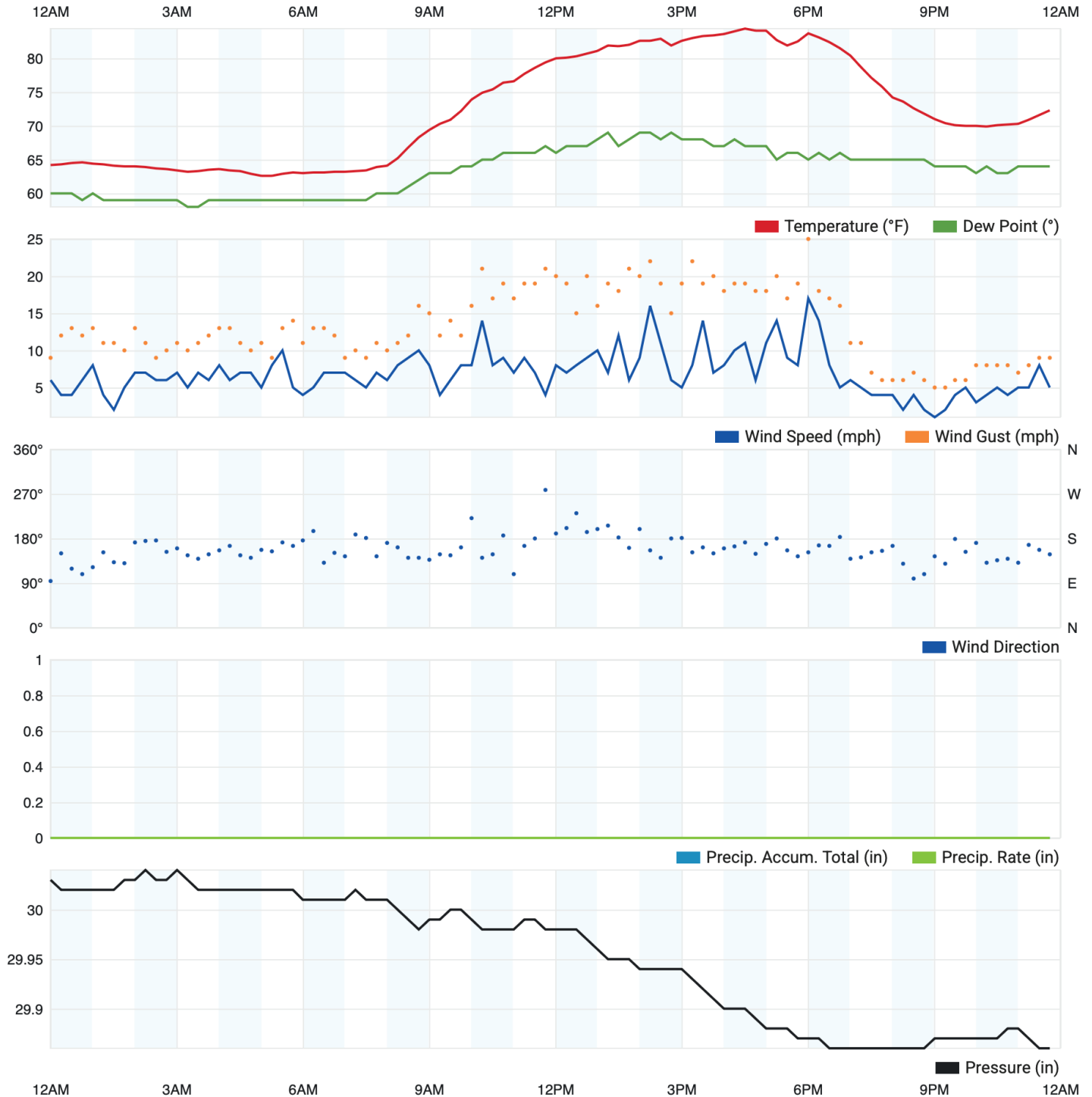
"Cutting this funding strips away critical investments in under-resourced and first-generation students and will destabilize colleges in 29 states," Mendez said. "The funds granted to HSIs have never supported only Latino students. These funds strengthen entire campuses, creating opportunities and resources that benefit all students, especially those pursuing (science, technology, engineering and math) fields, as well as enhancing the communities where these colleges and universities are located."

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

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 85 °F

Chance
T-storms

Tonight



Low: 64 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Saturday



High: 85 °F

Slight Chance
Showers then
Slight Chance
T-storms

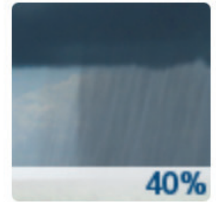
Saturday Night



Low: 64 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms

Sunday



High: 84 °F

Chance
Showers

Today



Highs: 80-90°F

Partly Sunny,
Warm & Humid
20% chance of
Showers &
Storms

Saturday



Highs: 76-89°F

30-60% chance
of Showers &
Storms mainly
across central SD

Sunday



Highs: 74-87°F

40-80% chance
of Showers &
Storms mainly
across central
and northeast SD



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

An unsettled weather pattern is expected to linger across the region today and through the upcoming weekend. Daily chances for showers and storms will be possible with a few strong to severe storms possible at times, especially across central and northeast South Dakota. Temperatures will remain well above normal and higher humidity values will persist the next few days.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

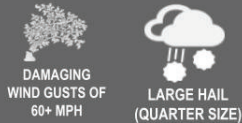
1

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Isolated Severe Storms
Possible

TIMING

9 PM - 6 AM CDT

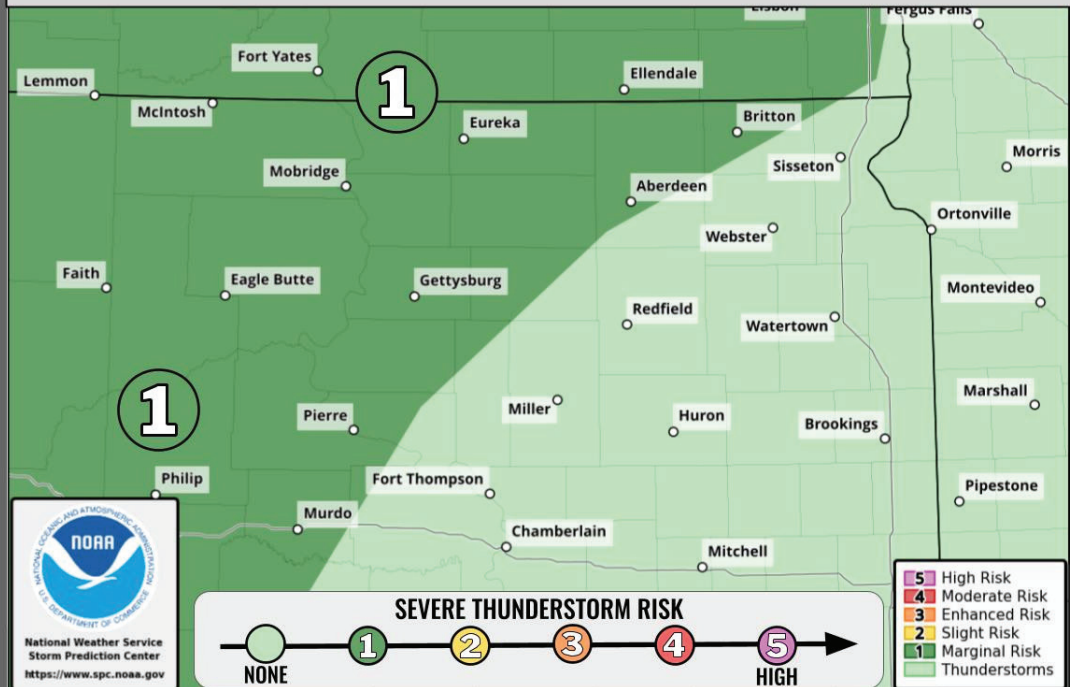
PRIMARY THREAT



SECONDARY THREATS



Isolated Severe Storms Possible Tonight



There is a Marginal Risk (level 1 out of 5) for isolated severe storms tonight into early Saturday central SD and parts of northeast SD. The main threats will be for damaging wind gusts and large hail, with a secondary threat of heavy rainfall.

THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

1

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Isolated Severe Storms
Possible

TIMING

**Morning: Central SD
Afternoon-Evening: East of
Missouri River**

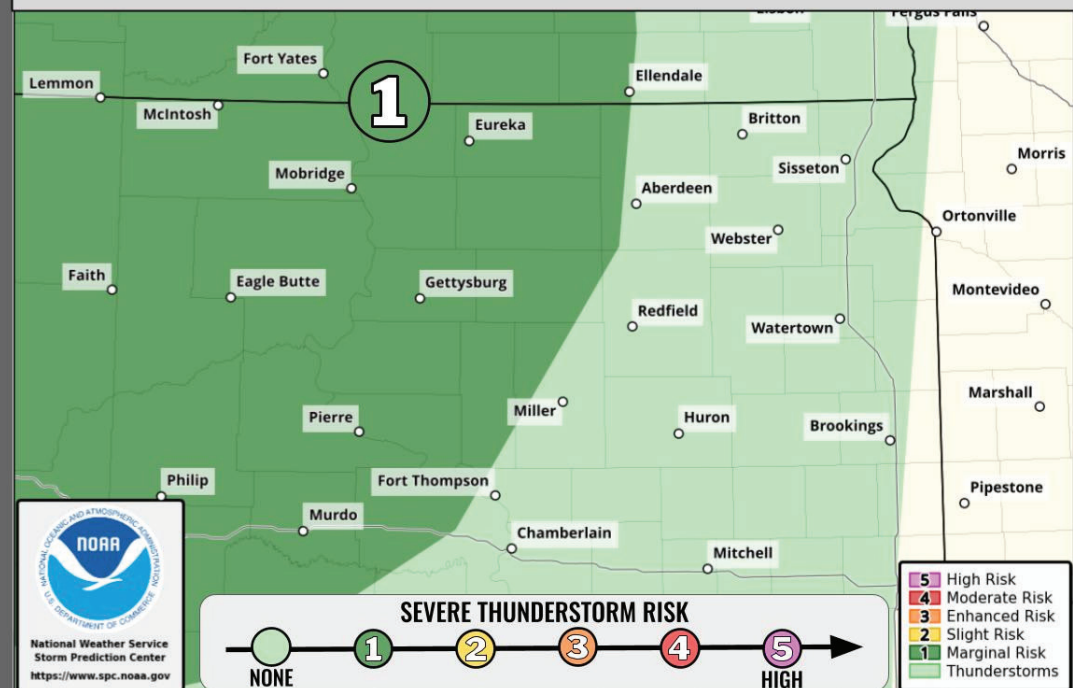
PRIMARY THREAT



SECONDARY THREATS



Isolated Severe Storms Possible Saturday



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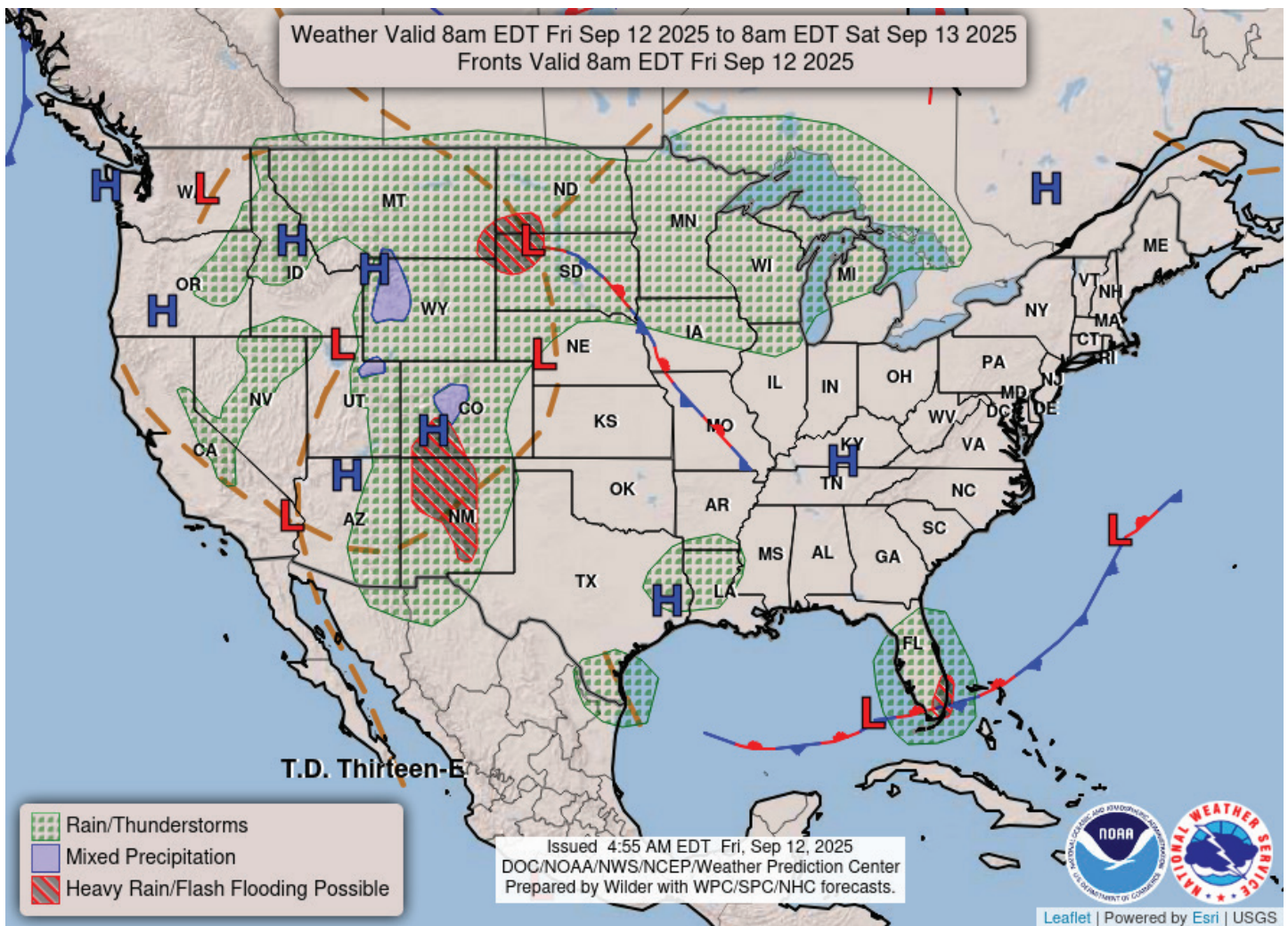
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 85 °F at 4:37 PM
Heat Index: 88 °F at 4:30 PM
Low Temp: 62 °F at 5:03 AM
Wind: 26 mph at 10:37 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1931
Record Low: 24 in 1902
Average High: 77
Average Low: 48
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.82
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.24
Average Precip to date: 17.16
Precip Year to Date: 20.54
Sunset Tonight: 7:49 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:08 am



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Today in Weather History

September 12, 1931: On this day in 1931, near-record or record heat came to an end across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west-central Minnesota. From September 9th through the 12th, many record highs were set at Aberdeen, Kennebec, Mobridge, Timber Lake, Watertown, and Wheaton. High temperatures during these four days ranged from 95 degrees to 109 degrees. Aberdeen rose to 107 degrees on the 10th, Kennebec rose to 109 on the 9th, Mobridge rose to 105 on the 9th, Timber Lake's high was 106 on the 9th, Watertown rose to 104 on the 10th, and Wheaton rose to 108 degrees on the 10th.

1857: The SS Central America sinks during a hurricane, killing 425 lives. Fourteen tons of gold was aboard the ship as well.

1882 - Hot and dry winds caused tree foliage in eastern Kansas to wither and crumble. (David Ludlum)

1950: A hailstorm struck southern parts of Oklahoma City on this day. The storm damaged about 4,000 homes, 300 businesses, and 750 cars, resulting in a loss estimated at \$987,000.

1961: Super Typhoon Nancy was an incredibly powerful tropical cyclone of the 1961 Pacific typhoon season. The system had possibly the strongest winds ever measured in a tropical cyclone and caused extensive damage and at least 173 deaths and thousands of injuries in Japan and elsewhere. A reconnaissance aircraft flying into the typhoon near its peak intensity on September 12 determined Nancy's one-minute sustained winds to be 215 mph. If these values are reliable, they would be the highest wind speeds ever measured in a tropical cyclone. However, it was later discovered that measurements and estimations of wind speeds from the 1940s to 1960s were excessive. Thus, Nancy's winds may be lower than its official best-track value.

1963: President Kennedy gave his, "We choose to go to the moon" speech at Rice University.

1977 - Thunderstorms deluged the Kansas City area with torrential rains in the early morning hours, and then again that evening. Some places were deluged with more than six inches of rain twice that day, with up to 18 inches of rain reported at Independence MO. Flooding claimed the lives of 25 persons. The Country Club Plaza area was hardest hit. 2000 vehicles had to be towed following the storm, 150 of which had to be pulled out of Brush Creek, which runs through the Plaza area. (The Kansas City Weather Almanac)

1979 - Hurricane Frederick smashed into the Mobile Bay area of Alabama packing 132 mph winds. Winds gusts to 145 mph were reported as the eye of the hurricane moved over Dauphin Island AL, just west of Mobile. Frederick produced a fifteen foot storm surge near the mouth of Mobile Bay. The hurricane was the costliest in U.S. history causing 2.3 billion dollars damage. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain which caused flooding in North Carolina, West Virginia, Virginia and Pennsylvania. Parts of Virginia received 3 to 4 inches of rain in just two hours early in the day. Later in the day, three to five inch rains deluged Cumberland County of south central Pennsylvania. Evening thunderstorms produced seven inches of rain at Marysville PA, most of which fell in three hours time. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - An afternoon tornado spawned a tornado which skipped across northern sections of Indianapolis IN damaging roofs and automobiles. It was the first tornado in central Indiana in September in nearly forty years of records. Hurricane Gilbert plowed across the island of Jamaica, and by the end of the day was headed for the Cayman Islands, packing winds of 125 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Snow whitened the mountains and foothills of northeastern Colorado, with eight inches reported at Buckhorn Mountain, west of Fort Collins. Two to three inches fell around Denver, causing great havoc during the evening rush hour. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region between mid afternoon and early the next morning. Thunderstorms produced hail three inches in diameter at Roswell NM, and wind gusts greater than 98 mph at Henryetta OK. Thunderstorms also produced torrential rains, with more than seven inches at Scotland TX, and more than six inches at Yukon OK. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2006: Major flash flooding occurred in a matter of minutes after torrential rain starting pounding the city of Evansville, Indiana. A total of about 250 occupied structures sustained some degree of damage. Over 30 water rescues were conducted from cars stalled in floodwaters.

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If we who are parents do not make discipline the most important priority in the life of our children, we willingly – and now knowingly – **contribute to their death!**

Solomon was widely recognized for his insightful proverbs. There were many who did not worship his God but respected and followed the advice that was embedded in his wisdom.

Many of his proverbs were written for his sons. But they were not intended to be limited to them. They were written to provide guidance for all fathers and mothers and children of all times and in all cultures.

A recurring theme throughout Proverbs is the importance of discipline. Solomon often reminds us that self-discipline is a life-long, never-ending necessity. But on one occasion he reminds fathers, which is also intended to include mothers, that there are some children who require life-long discipline which hopefully and eventually may accomplish its purpose. Though it

may seem futile and a waste of time and effort, with no results, parents are to persevere!

"Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death," is a rather stark warning. There may be times when parents think that education or guidance or advice or opportunity or wealth may bring hope for their children's future. But what value are all those things without discipline? The underlying rule to what he is saying is this: "The undisciplined life is not worth living because it will certainly end in death!"

What a vivid warning: If we who are parents do not make discipline the most important priority in the life of our children, we willingly - and now knowingly - contribute to their death! This is breathtaking and frightening. And notice that there is no age limit to discipline a child. Whenever a child needs discipline, parents are to step in and intervene! A child – or adult - is never beyond the need for discipline if it is necessary or required it will honor God.

Discipline may not be accepted, but parents must never give up hope. And there is one simple, Biblical rule we are to apply: the "if/then" rule - If you want our help, then you must honor Him.

Today's Prayer: It's not easy, Father, to be a parent and discipline our children. But You discipline us and are our example. If we want Your blessings, we must obey Your rules. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death." Proverbs 19:18

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: 09.09.25

6 43 52 64 65 22

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$381,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 39 Mins 9 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.10.25

14 24 38 49 50 5

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,750,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 54 Mins 9 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.11.25

5 40 42 47 48 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 9 Mins 9 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.10.25

7 25 29 31 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 9 Mins 10 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.10.25

2 12 27 31 60 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 38 Mins 10 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.10.25

2 24 45 53 64 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$50,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 38 Mins 10 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

08/09/2025 Groton Legion 30th Anniversary Celebration
08/07/2025 Groton Firemen Summer Splash in the GHS Parking Lot 7:30-8:30pm
08/11/2025 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 3:30-6pm
08/23/2025 Glacial Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/06-07/25 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
09/07/2025 Couples Sunflower Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
09/07/2025 9th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2025 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving 11:30am-1:30pm Community Center (Thanksgiving)
11/30/2025 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

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News from the Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Alliance, Neb. def. Rapid City Christian, 25-22, 21-25, 25-18, 20-25, 16-14
Bison def. Dupree, 13-25, 25-20, 25-23, 26-24
Bon Homme def. Platte-Geddes, 16-25, 25-20, 25-20, 29-27
Brandon Valley def. Watertown, 25-20, 22-25, 25-13, 25-18
Bridgewater-Emery def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-19, 25-23, 26-24
Britton-Hecla def. Deuel, 25-14, 25-23, 25-19
Burke def. Miller, 25-22, 25-19, 13-25, 20-25, 15-11
Castlewood def. Iroquois-Lake Preston, 25-15, 25-10, 25-8
Centerville def. Marty, 25-12, 25-10, 25-2
Chamberlain def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-15, 25-19, 25-15
Colman-Egan def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 21-25, 25-17, 25-22, 25-20
Corsica/Stickney def. Colome
Custer def. Hot Springs, 25-19, 25-17, 25-22
Dell Rapids St Mary's def. Canistota, 25-20, 25-13, 25-17
Deubrook def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-20, 25-22, 18-25, 25-20
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Canton, 21-25, 25-6, 19-25, 25-17, 15-12
Estelline-Hendricks def. Arlington, 25-14, 25-23, 25-21
Ethan def. Menno, 25-19, 25-17, 25-20
Faulkton def. Gettysburg, 25-10, 25-14, 25-12
Florence-Henry def. Langford, 25-16, 25-11, 18-25, 25-23
Gayville-Volin High School def. Freeman, 25-10, 25-9, 25-12
Harding County def. Edgemont, 16-25, 25-16, 25-27, 31-29, 16-14
Herreid-Selby def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-18, 25-16, 25-22
Ipswich def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-16, 25-5, 25-10
Kadoka def. Wall, 25-18, 25-9, 25-17
Lennox def. Madison, 25-8, 25-18, 26-24
Leola-Frederick High School def. Tiospa Zina, 25-2, 25-10, 25-11
Lyman def. New Underwood, 26-24, 25-20, 25-20
Milbank def. Hamlin, 25-9, 25-14, 25-9
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Hanson, 25-21, 19-25, 25-23, 25-20
Northwestern def. Warner, 23-25, 25-15, 25-18, 25-23
Parkston def. Sanborn Central-Woonsocket, 25-23, 24-26, 25-17, 24-26, 15-10
Philip def. Stanley County, 25-17, 25-22, 26-24
Redfield def. Sisseton, 25-22, 25-13, 25-21
Scotland def. Mitchell Christian, 25-13, 25-23, 25-10
Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-14, 25-13, 25-15
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-14, 25-16, 25-9
Sioux Falls Lutheran def. Oldham-Ramona-Rutland, 25-16, 25-21, 25-16
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Tea, 25-12, 25-9, 25-15
Tri-Valley def. Vermillion, 25-20, 25-23, 25-22
Tripp-Delmont-Armour def. Kimball-White Lake, 25-13, 25-13, 25-18
Wagner def. Gregory, 25-22, 25-11, 25-20
Webster def. Clark-Willow Lake, 25-17, 20-25, 25-22, 25-20
Wessington Springs def. Howard, 25-20, 25-20, 25-9
Wilmot def. Tri-State, N.D., 25-18, 22-25, 25-15, 25-21

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Winner def. Sully Buttes, 25-15, 25-12, 25-11
Wolsey-Wessington def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-22, 25-17, 25-20
Big East Conference Tournament=
Chester def. Flandreau, 25-5, 25-13, 25-3
McCook Central-Montrose def. Garretson, 25-15, 25-23, 25-19
Sioux Valley def. Beresford, 25-17, 26-24, 17-25, 25-20

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

PREP FOOTBALL=

Todd County 48, Mahpiya Luta Red Cloud 30
Winnebago, Neb. 44, Lower Brule 0

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Prince Harry makes surprise visit to Ukraine in support of wounded troops

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's Prince Harry has arrived in Ukraine for a surprise visit in support of wounded service members.

Harry's representatives confirmed they were in the capital, Kyiv, on Friday, though they declined to discuss the prince's schedule for security reasons.

This is the second time Harry has visited Ukraine since the start of Russia's full scale invasion in 2022. He made a trip to the western city of Lviv in April.

"We cannot stop the war but what we can do is do everything we can to help the recovery process," Harry told the Guardian newspaper while on an overnight train to Kyiv.

Harry, a British Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, is the founder of the Invictus Games, a Paralympic-style event designed to inspire military veterans around the world as they work to overcome battlefield injuries. Ukraine is bidding to host the games in 2029.

The Archewell foundation set up by Harry and his wife Meghan announced this week that it had donated \$500,000 to projects supporting injured children from Gaza and Ukraine. The money will be used to help the World Health Organization with medical evacuations and to fund work developing prosthetics for seriously injured young people.

The Guardian said that Harry will visit the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War, spend time with 200 veterans and meet Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko.

His visit coincided with a trip to Ukraine by British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, who announced a new set of U.K. sanctions targeting Russia's oil revenues and military supplies.

Cooper said the visit is a show of solidarity with Ukrainians facing intensified assault from Russia – including 6,500 drones and missiles in July, 10 times the level of a year ago.

Harry's appearance in Ukraine follows a four-day trip to the U.K., where he met his father, King Charles III, for the first time in 19 months. The meeting was seen as a first step in repairing frigid relations between Harry and other members of the royal family, which deteriorated after he and his wife, the former Meghan Markle, gave up royal duties and moved to California in 2020.

Harry and his father last met in February 2024, when the prince flew to London after receiving news that Charles had been diagnosed with cancer. Harry spent about 45 minutes with Charles before the king flew to his Sandringham country estate to recuperate from his treatment.

Prince Harry's last trip to Ukraine included a visit to the Superhumans Center, an orthopedic clinic in Lviv that treats wounded military personnel and civilians. The center provides prosthetic limbs, reconstructive

surgery and psychological help free of charge.

Harry's visit Friday come as Russia escalates its war against Ukraine.

It is less than a week after Russia's largest aerial attack on Ukraine since its all-out invasion began more than three years ago — an attack in which the main Ukrainian government building was hit. It also comes just days after numerous Russian drones entered the airspace of NATO member Poland — the country Harry traveled through to reach Ukraine.

Officials plead for help in finding person who assassinated Charlie Kirk on Utah college campus

By ERIC TUCKER, ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, JESSE BEDAYN and HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press OREM, Utah (AP) — A palm print. A shoe impression. And a high-powered rifle found in a wooded area. Those are among the clues authorities laid out as they pleaded for the public's help to find the person who assassinated conservative activist Charlie Kirk before dropping from a Utah university campus roof and vanishing.

The search continued early Friday, nearly two days later.

Federal investigators and state officials on Thursday released a series of photos and a video of the person they believe is responsible. Kirk was hit as he spoke to a crowd gathered in a courtyard at Utah Valley University in Orem.

More than 7,000 leads and tips have poured in, officials said. But authorities have yet to name a suspect or cite a motive in the killing, the latest act of political violence to convulse the United States.

"We cannot do our job without the public's help," Gov. Spencer Cox said during a Thursday evening news conference with FBI Director Kash Patel, who did not speak.

The direct appeals for public support, including new and enhanced photos of a person in a hat, sunglasses, a long-sleeve black shirt and a backpack, appeared to signal law enforcement's continued struggles. Two people who were taken into custody shortly after the shooting were determined not to be connected.

Other clues included a Mauser .30-caliber, bolt-action rifle found in a towel in the woods. A spent cartridge was recovered from the chamber, and three other rounds were loaded in the magazine, according to information circulated among law enforcement and described to The Associated Press. The weapon and ammunition were being analyzed by law enforcement at a federal lab.

Officials are offering a \$100,000 reward for information leading to an arrest. Cox said he's prepared to seek the death penalty.

Grisly video shared online

The attack, carried out in broad daylight as Kirk spoke about social issues, was captured on grisly videos that spread on social media.

The videos show Kirk, a close ally of President Donald Trump who played an influential role in rallying young Republican voters, speaking into a handheld microphone when suddenly a shot rings out. Kirk reaches up with his right hand as blood gushes from the left side of his neck. Stunned spectators gasp and scream before people start running away.

The shooter, who investigators believe blended into the campus crowd because of a "college-age" appearance, fired a single shot from the rooftop, according to authorities. Video released Thursday showed them then walking through the grass and across the street, before disappearing.

"I can tell you this was a targeted event," said Robert Bohls, the top FBI agent in Salt Lake City.

Trump, who was joined by Democrats in condemning the violence, said he would award Kirk the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the U.S. Vice President JD Vance and his wife, Usha, visited with Kirk's family Thursday afternoon in Salt Lake City. Vance posted a remembrance on X chronicling their friendship, dating back to initial messages in 2017, through Vance's Senate run and the 2024 election.

"So much of the success we've had in this administration traces directly to Charlie's ability to organize and convene," Vance wrote. "He didn't just help us win in 2024, he helped us staff the entire government."

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Kirk's casket was flown aboard Air Force Two from Utah to Phoenix, where his nonprofit political youth organization, Turning Point USA, is based. Trump told reporters he plans to attend Kirk's funeral. Details have not been announced.

Kirk was taking questions about gun violence

Kirk was a conservative provocateur who became a powerful political force among young Republicans and was a fixture on college campuses, where he invited sometimes-vehement debate on social issues.

One such provocative exchange played out immediately before the shooting as Kirk was taking questions from an audience member about gun violence.

The debate hosted by Turning Point at the Sorensen Center on campus was billed as the first stop on Kirk's "American Comeback Tour."

The event generated a polarizing campus reaction. An online petition calling for university administrators to bar Kirk from appearing received nearly 1,000 signatures. The university issued a statement last week citing First Amendment rights and affirming its "commitment to free speech, intellectual inquiry and constructive dialogue."

Last week, Kirk posted on X images of news clips showing his visit was sparking controversy. He wrote, "What's going on in Utah?"

Attendees barricaded themselves in classrooms

Some attendees who bolted after the gunshot rushed into two classrooms full of students. They used tables to barricade the door and to shield themselves in the corners. Someone grabbed an electric pencil sharpener and wrapped the cord tightly around the door handle, then tied the sharpener to a chair leg.

On campus Thursday, the canopy stamped with the slogan Kirk commonly used at his events — "PROVE ME WRONG" — stood, disheveled.

Kathleen Murphy, a longtime resident who lives near the campus, said she has been staying inside with her door locked.

"With the shooter not being caught yet, it was a worry," Murphy said.

Meanwhile, the shooting continued to draw swift bipartisan condemnation as Democratic officials joined Trump and other Republican allies of Kirk in decrying the attack, which unfolded during a spike of political violence that has touched a range of ideologies and representatives of both major political parties.

As AI tools reshape education, schools struggle with how to draw the line on cheating

By JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

The book report is now a thing of the past. Take-home tests and essays are becoming obsolete.

Student use of artificial intelligence has become so prevalent, high school and college educators say, that to assign writing outside of the classroom is like asking students to cheat.

"The cheating is off the charts. It's the worst I've seen in my entire career," says Casey Cuny, who has taught English for 23 years. Educators are no longer wondering if students will outsource schoolwork to AI chatbots. "Anything you send home, you have to assume is being AI'ed."

The question now is how schools can adapt, because many of the teaching and assessment tools that have been used for generations are no longer effective. As AI technology rapidly improves and becomes more entwined with daily life, it is transforming how students learn and study and how teachers teach, and it's creating new confusion over what constitutes academic dishonesty.

"We have to ask ourselves, what is cheating?" says Cuny, a 2024 recipient of California's Teacher of the Year award. "Because I think the lines are getting blurred."

Cuny's students at Valencia High School in southern California now do most writing in class. He monitors student laptop screens from his desktop, using software that lets him "lock down" their screens or block access to certain sites. He's also integrating AI into his lessons and teaching students how to use AI as a study aid "to get kids learning with AI instead of cheating with AI."

In rural Oregon, high school teacher Kelly Gibson has made a similar shift to in-class writing. She is also

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incorporating more verbal assessments to have students talk through their understanding of assigned reading.

"I used to give a writing prompt and say, 'In two weeks, I want a five-paragraph essay,'" says Gibson. "These days, I can't do that. That's almost begging teenagers to cheat."

Take, for example, a once typical high school English assignment: Write an essay that explains the relevance of social class in "The Great Gatsby." Many students say their first instinct is now to ask ChatGPT for help "brainstorming." Within seconds, ChatGPT yields a list of essay ideas, plus examples and quotes to back them up. The chatbot ends by asking if it can do more: "Would you like help writing any part of the essay? I can help you draft an introduction or outline a paragraph!"

Students are uncertain when AI usage is out of bounds

Students say they often turn to AI with good intentions for things like research, editing or help reading difficult texts. But AI offers unprecedented temptation, and it's sometimes hard to know where to draw the line.

College sophomore Lily Brown, a psychology major at an East Coast liberal arts school, relies on ChatGPT to help outline essays because she struggles putting the pieces together herself. ChatGPT also helped her through a freshman philosophy class, where assigned reading "felt like a different language" until she read AI summaries of the texts.

"Sometimes I feel bad using ChatGPT to summarize reading, because I wonder, is this cheating? Is helping me form outlines cheating? If I write an essay in my own words and ask how to improve it, or when it starts to edit my essay, is that cheating?"

Her class syllabi say things like: "Don't use AI to write essays and to form thoughts," she says, but that leaves a lot of grey area. Students say they often shy away from asking teachers for clarity because admitting to any AI use could flag them as a cheater.

Schools tend to leave AI policies to teachers, which often means that rules vary widely within the same school. Some educators, for example, welcome the use of Grammarly.com, an AI-powered writing assistant, to check grammar. Others forbid it, noting the tool also offers to rewrite sentences.

"Whether you can use AI or not depends on each classroom. That can get confusing," says Valencia 11th grader Jolie Lahey. She credits Cuny with teaching her sophomore English class a variety of AI skills like how to upload study guides to ChatGPT and have the chatbot quiz them, and then explain problems they got wrong.

But this year, her teachers have strict "No AI" policies. "It's such a helpful tool. And if we're not allowed to use it that just doesn't make sense," Lahey says. "It feels outdated."

Schools are introducing guidelines, gradually

Many schools initially banned use of AI after ChatGPT launched in late 2022. But views on the role of artificial intelligence in education have shifted dramatically. The term "AI literacy" has become a buzzword of the back-to-school season, with a focus on how to balance the strengths of AI with its risks and challenges.

Over the summer, several colleges and universities convened their AI task forces to draft more detailed guidelines or provide faculty with new instructions.

The University of California, Berkeley emailed all faculty new AI guidance that instructs them to "include a clear statement on their syllabus about course expectations" around AI use. The guidance offered language for three sample syllabus statements — for courses that require AI, ban AI in and out of class, or allow some AI use.

"In the absence of such a statement, students may be more likely to use these technologies inappropriately," the email said, stressing that AI is "creating new confusion about what might constitute legitimate methods for completing student work."

Carnegie Mellon University has seen a huge uptick in academic responsibility violations due to AI, but often students aren't aware they've done anything wrong, says Rebekah Fitzsimmons, chair of the AI faculty advising committee at the university's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy.

For example, one student who is learning English wrote an assignment in his native language and used

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DeepL, an AI-powered translation tool, to translate his work to English. But he didn't realize the platform also altered his language, which was flagged by an AI detector.

Enforcing academic integrity policies has become more complicated, since use of AI is hard to spot and even harder to prove, Fitzsimmons said. Faculty are allowed flexibility when they believe a student has unintentionally crossed a line, but are now more hesitant to point out violations because they don't want to accuse students unfairly. Students worry that if they are falsely accused, there is no way to prove their innocence.

Over the summer, Fitzsimmons helped draft detailed new guidelines for students and faculty that strive to create more clarity. Faculty have been told a blanket ban on AI "is not a viable policy" unless instructors make changes to the way they teach and assess students. A lot of faculty are doing away with take-home exams. Some have returned to pen and paper tests in class, she said, and others have moved to "flipped classrooms," where homework is done in class.

Emily DeJeu, who teaches communication courses at Carnegie Mellon's business school, has eliminated writing assignments as homework and replaced them with in-class quizzes done on laptops in "a lockdown browser" that blocks students from leaving the quiz screen.

"To expect an 18-year-old to exercise great discipline is unreasonable," DeJeu said. "That's why it's up to instructors to put up guardrails."

Israeli soldiers, and their mothers, increasingly reject calls to return to Gaza

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — As Israel calls up tens of thousands of reservists for its invasion of Gaza City, a growing number of soldiers — and their mothers — are saying no.

There are no official figures, but newly formed groups are broadcasting their refusal to serve despite the risk of imprisonment. It's a new phenomenon in the nearly two-year war sparked by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, though so far it has had no apparent effect on military operations.

The defiance is emerging as Israelis have joined mass protests accusing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of prolonging the war for political purposes instead of reaching a deal with Hamas to bring back the remaining 48 hostages, 20 of whom are believed to be alive.

Many opponents, including former senior security officials, fear that the latest offensive will achieve little and put the hostages at risk. Israel also faces heavy international criticism over the humanitarian catastrophe unleashed by the war and its blockade.

One group calling on Israel's leaders to stop sending their children into war is comprised of mothers who fear their sons will die in vain.

"I couldn't stop thinking of how to break his leg, break his arm, wound him in some way that he won't be able to go back," Noorit Felsenthal-Berger said as she wiped tears from her cheeks, terrified her youngest son will be forced to return.

Fatigue and dwindling morale

Avshalom Zohar Sal, a 28-year-old soldier and medic who served multiple tours in Gaza, said soldiers are exhausted, demoralized and no longer know what they are fighting for.

His doubts first surfaced last year, when he was serving in an area near where six hostages were later killed by their captors as Israeli troops closed in. "I felt this was my fault," he said.

His skepticism deepened during his most recent tour, in June, when he saw troops returning to the same areas where they had fought earlier in the war. He said some soldiers seemed less focused, leaving them vulnerable to attacks from a vastly diminished but still lethal Hamas.

"Don't put me in the position that I need to decide if I'm going to risk again my life," he said, addressing the military.

A group known as Soldiers for Hostages says it represents more than 360 soldiers who refuse to serve. While the number remains small, it is a contrast from the early days of the war, when reservists rushed

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for duty in the wake of the Oct. 7 attack. Such refusal is punishable by imprisonment, but that has only happened in a handful of cases.

"Netanyahu's ongoing war of aggression needlessly puts our own hostages in danger and has wreaked havoc on the fabric of Israeli society, while at the same time killing, maiming and starving an entire population" of civilians in Gaza, Max Kresch, a member of the group, said at a Sept. 2 news conference.

Another group known as Save Our Souls, or SOS, says it represents nearly 1,000 mothers of soldiers. A similar movement was credited with helping to end Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon in 2000.

"We have to be their voice," said Felsenthal-Berger, whose two sons have fought in Gaza. The group has held protests around the country, met with government officials and published letters. She says her sons, including one on active duty, are no longer in Gaza. She says they support her efforts but have not officially refused to serve.

Yifat Gadot says her 22-year-old son, who fought in Gaza for nine months at the start of the war, told her that soldiers there felt like sitting ducks. More than 450 Israeli soldiers have been killed since the start of the 2023 ground invasion, according to the army.

"I told him, 'We the mothers will do everything we can to get you out of Gaza and save you from this political war,'" she said.

Some of the women have encouraged their sons to refuse to report back for action in Gaza, while others say they respect their son's decisions. All say their message is aimed primarily at the country's leaders.

Netanyahu's office declined to comment.

Israelis are fed up, but military service is 'sacrosanct'

Israel's call-up of 60,000 reservists is the largest in months, in a country of fewer than 10 million people where military service is mandatory for most Jewish men. Many have already served multiple tours away from their families and businesses.

The Israeli government's failure to draft ultra-Orthodox men into the military has added to their anger. Religious men have long avoided military service through exemptions negotiated by their politically powerful leaders, who have been a key component of Netanyahu's government. That has fueled resentment among the broader public — a sentiment that has grown during nearly two years of war.

The military does not provide figures on absences or refusals and says each case is evaluated on its merits. "The contribution of the reservists is essential to the success of missions and to maintaining the security of the country," it said.

At least three soldiers associated with the Soldiers for Hostages group have been imprisoned this year for refusing to serve, with some jailed for up to three weeks, the group said.

Support for the war ran high after Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251.

But sentiment has changed over the course of the war, especially since Israel ended a ceasefire in March that had facilitated the release of hostages. The war has killed more than 64,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The agency doesn't say how many of the dead were civilians or militants, but says about half the dead were women and children.

A recent poll found that around two-thirds of Israelis, including about 60% of Israeli Jews, think Israel should agree to a deal that includes the release of all the hostages, the cessation of hostilities and the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

The poll, conducted by the Israel Democracy Institute in the last week of August, surveyed 600 people in Hebrew and 150 people in Arabic. It has a margin of sampling error of 3.6 percentage points.

Hamas has long said it would accept a deal along those lines, but Netanyahu has refused. He has said the war will end only when all the hostages are returned and Hamas is disarmed, with Israel maintaining open-ended security control over the territory.

Mairav Zonszein, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group, said that pushing soldiers in a deeply divided country to keep fighting could have a lasting impact on Israel's capabilities.

Many believe that divisions over a planned judicial overhaul in 2023, which generated mass protests and

threats from soldiers not to serve, weakened Israel ahead of the Oct. 7 attack.

Still, refusing military service remains a red line for many in Israel. "The military, and serving in it, is still sacrosanct," Zonszein said.

Brazilian Supreme Court panel sentences Bolsonaro to more than 27 years in prison for coup attempt

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — A panel of Brazilian Supreme Court justices sentenced former president Jair Bolsonaro to 27 years and three months in prison Thursday after convicting him of attempting a coup to remain in office despite his 2022 electoral defeat.

Bolsonaro, who has always denied any wrongdoing, can try to appeal the ruling. He is currently under house arrest in Brasilia.

Four of the five justices reviewing the case in the panel found the far-right politician guilty on five counts, in a ruling that will deepen political divisions and was expected to prompt a backlash from the U.S. government. It makes Bolsonaro the first former Brazilian president to be convicted of attempting a coup.

The five counts are: attempting a coup after losing the 2022 race to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in a plot that prosecutors alleged included plans to kill Lula; participating in an armed criminal organization; attempted violent abolition of the democratic rule of law; damage qualified by violence; and deterioration of listed heritage.

Bolsonaro's co-conspirators, all of them former Brazilian officials, were also sentenced for their roles in the attempted coup. Gen. Braga Netto, Bolsonaro's former defense minister and running mate in 2022, received 26 years. Admiral Almir Garnier got 24 years. Gen. Augusto Heleno received 21 years and Gen. Paulo Sérgio Nogueira got 19 years. Lieutenant Colonel Mauro Cid, who cooperated with investigations, was given two years under an open regime.

Chief Justice Luís Roberto Barroso joined the panel at the end of the session and called the trial a "watershed moment in Brazil's history."

US officials call it 'witch hunt'

The U.S. government immediately criticized the ruling and warned it would respond.

U.S. President Donald Trump said he was "very unhappy" with the conviction. Speaking to reporters as he departed the White House, he said he'd always found Bolsonaro to be "outstanding."

And later, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on his X account that Trump's government "will respond accordingly to this witch hunt."

Trump's administration had already applied a 50% tariff on imported Brazilian goods, which it said was in reaction to the process against Bolsonaro.

Bolsonaro won't go to prison yet

The sentence doesn't mean Bolsonaro will immediately go to prison. The court panel has now up to 60 days to publish the ruling. Once it does, Bolsonaro's lawyers have five days to file motions for clarification.

His lawyers have said that they will try to appeal both the conviction and sentence before the full Supreme Court of 11 justices, although some experts think it's unlikely to be accepted.

"It's unlikely, but not impossible, that there will be appeals to the full Supreme Court," said Rafael Mafei, lawyer and law professor at University of São Paulo and ESPM university. "But of course, the defenses will try, because they should."

One of the justices, Cármen Lúcia, said she was convinced by the evidence the Attorney General's Office presented against the former president. "He is the instigator, the leader of an organization that orchestrated every possible move to maintain or seize power," she said.

Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, the former president's eldest son, said on X the conviction was a "supreme persecution" and that history would show they were on the right side.

Trial has divided Brazilians

The trial has been followed by a divided society, with people backing the process against the former

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president, while others still support him. Some have taken to the streets to back the far-right leader who contends he is being politically persecuted.

Observers say the U.S. might announce new sanctions against Brazil after the trial, further straining their fragile diplomatic relations.

Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who is overseeing the case, said Tuesday that Bolsonaro was the leader of a coup plot and of a criminal organization, and voted in favor of convicting him.

Lawmaker Eduardo Bolsonaro, another of the former president's sons, on Thursday talked about his father on his social media platforms. But instead of mentioning his father's conviction, he pushed for his amnesty, which he is seeking through Congress.

"It is time to do nothing less than what is correct, just," he said.

Thomas Traumann, a former government minister and political consultant based in Rio de Janeiro, said it is "the most important day for Brazil's democracy since the 1988 constitution was approved."

"It is the first time a former President, a former Defense minister and a former military commander are punished for trying to stop an elected government from taking office," Traumann said.

"The threats of the American government make this decision of the Supreme Court an even braver one. The relations between the two countries will get worse and maybe get better once the Trump administration understands there are limits to the will it wants to impose," he added.

Bolsonaro remains a political force

Justice Luis Fux, in his dissenting opinion on Wednesday, disagreed with de Moraes and the other two justices, casting the lone acquittal vote.

"No one can be punished for cogitation," Fux said. "A coup d'état does not result from isolated acts or individual demonstrations lacking coordination, but rather from the actions of organized groups, equipped with resources and strategic capacity to confront and replace the incumbent power."

Bolsonaro faced accusations he attempted to illegally hang onto power after his 2022 electoral defeat to current President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Prosecutors charged Bolsonaro with counts including attempting to stage a coup, being part of an armed criminal organization, attempted violent abolition of the democratic rule of law, as well as being implicated in violence and posing a serious threat to the state's assets and listed heritage.

"Bolsonaro attempted a coup in this country, and there is hundreds of pieces of evidence," Lula said early Thursday in an interview with local TV Band, ahead of the trial.

Bolsonaro already barred from running for office

Despite his legal woes, Bolsonaro remains a powerful political player in Brazil.

The far-right politician had been previously banned from running for office until 2030 in a separate case. He is expected to choose an heir who is likely to challenge Lula next year.

The ruling may push Bolsonaro's allied lawmakers to seek some amnesty for him through Congress.

"I had the honor to serve as Jair Messias Bolsonaro's chief of staff. I have never seen any act from him that wasn't out of love for Brazil and absolute honesty. Bolsonaro is the greatest popular right-wing leader in the country's history," Sen. Ciro Nogueira said on X.

Lindbergh Farias, the Workers' Party leader in the lower house, told journalists outside the court that the trial "should bury the discussion about amnesty in Congress."

"This is for everyone who fought the military dictatorship years ago. Our democracy is strong now," Farias said.

After the court panel debates on Bolsonaro's sentence, the embattled former leader could face increased pressure to pick a political heir to likely challenge Lula in the general elections next year.

"There is a God in heaven who sees everything, who loves justice and hates iniquity," former first lady Michelle Bolsonaro wrote on social media.

What to know after Brazil's Bolsonaro is convicted and sentenced for coup attempt

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — Brazil's former President Jair Bolsonaro has been convicted of attempting a coup to stay in office after losing his reelection bid in 2022.

He is the first former president found guilty of trying to overturn an election in the country with the largest economy in Latin America. Bolsonaro has always denied wrongdoing.

Four of the five justices on the Supreme Court panel voted to convict him Thursday and sentenced him to 27 years and three months in prison. But this doesn't mean he will go to prison right away.

Here's what to know about the process against Bolsonaro and what's coming next:

The charges

Prosecutors charged him with five crimes, including attempting a coup after losing the 2022 race to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, participating in an armed criminal organization, attempted violent abolition of the democratic rule of law, damage qualified by violence, and deterioration of listed heritage.

According to the evidence presented by the attorney general, Bolsonaro gathered Cabinet and military officials to discuss an emergency decree that would have suspended the election results in order to investigate unproven electoral fraud claims.

Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who oversaw the case, said Bolsonaro carried out a series of acts from 2021 through Jan. 8, 2023 that constituted the attempted coup. The actions included casting doubt on Brazil's electronic voting system, drafting a decree to annul the election results and encouraging the riots on Jan. 8, 2023, that aimed to force a military takeover.

Will Bolsonaro go to prison?

He won't go to prison now, but he will remain under house arrest.

With the sentence announced, the court panel has up to 60 days to publish the ruling. Once it does, Bolsonaro's attorneys have five days to file motions for clarification.

His lawyers have said that they will try to appeal both the conviction and sentence before the full Supreme Court of 11 justices, although some experts think it's unlikely to be accepted.

"It's unlikely, but not impossible, that there will be appeals to the full Supreme Court," said Rafael Mafei, lawyer and law professor at University of São Paulo and ESPM university. "But of course, the defenses will try, because they should," he added.

The Supreme Court's press office told The Associated Press that, according to the court's jurisprudence, the full court can accept an appeal only if there's at least two dissenting votes in a ruling. And in this case, only one of the five justices disagreed and called for Bolsonaro's acquittal.

Once there's a firm sentence, Bolsonaro could go to prison.

But it is unlikely he would be transferred to a regular prison. As a former president, he has the right to special incarceration, which could take place at the Federal Police's main building in Brasilia.

Reaction by the United States

Bolsonaro's trial got renewed attention after U.S. President Donald Trump linked a 50% tariff on imported Brazilian goods to his ally's legal situation, calling it a "witch hunt."

Observers think the U.S. might announce new sanctions against Brazil after the trial, and the Trump administration on Thursday hinted that it might.

Trump said he was "very unhappy" with the conviction, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on his X account that the U.S. government "will respond accordingly to this witch hunt."

Government officials or Supreme Court justices could be sanctioned, like de Moraes already was in late July, said Oliver Stuenkel, a professor of international relations at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, a think tank and university.

The reaction "could also involve broader visa restrictions for government officials, or more tariffs," Stuenkel said. "It's quite unpredictable."

What's next for the far-right in Brazil?

Despite his legal woes, Bolsonaro remains a powerful political player in Brazil. The conviction could add pressure on him to pick a political heir to possibly challenge Lula in the general elections next year. It could also compel allied lawmakers to seek some amnesty for the former president through Congress.

Bolsonaro had previously been previously from running for office until 2030 in a separate case.

Officials clear building at US Naval Academy following reports of threats, 1 person injured

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — The United States Naval Academy in Maryland was put on lockdown Thursday and a building was cleared in response to reports of threats made to the military school, and one person was injured, officials said.

The person injured was airlifted to a hospital and was in stable condition, Lt. Naweed Lemar, the spokesperson for the base that hosts the academy, said in a statement.

By early Friday, he said the lockdown was lifted and the academy in Annapolis had “been given the all clear.”

Naval Support Activity Annapolis security and local law enforcement had responded to the reports of suspicious activity, Lemar said. Additional details about the threat and how the person was injured were not immediately available.

Lemar had said earlier that the academy was on lockdown “out of an abundance of caution.”

Police were seen near Bancroft Hall, which houses midshipmen in its more than 1,600 dorm rooms. It is considered the biggest single college dormitory in the world, according to the school’s website.

Choose your America: In the aftermath of the Kirk slaying, a snapshot of a fractured nation

By TIM SULLIVAN AP National Writer

The governor of Utah struggled to find the right words to describe the question so many have been asking: What is happening in America?

The silence lasted nearly 10 seconds. He looked down. He opened and closed his mouth.

“Our nation is broken,” Spencer Cox finally said, hours after the public killing of Charlie Kirk. The governor described violent attacks on both Democrats and Republicans, including the killing of Minnesota lawmaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, two assassination attempts on President Donald Trump and the firebombing of Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro’s official residence.

His words stood out not just for the stark language about America’s troubles, but for his sober acknowledgement that the violence reaches across the political divide.

It can be hard to remember all the scenes of political violence in just the past few years: Butler, Pennsylvania, the Minneapolis suburbs, San Francisco, New York City, West Palm Beach. And more. Taken together, they are enough to make Americans wonder: Is there a way forward? What might it look like?

“Nothing I say can unite us as a country,” said Cox, a Republican. “Nothing I can say right now will fix what is broken.”

A troubled nation

Many people, of course, feel America is broken. You can hear about the country’s many troubles — its ideological divides, its anger, its lack of civility — from conservatives and liberals, from socialist firebrands and evangelical preachers, from Democrats and Republicans. It is, perhaps, one of the few beliefs that unites Americans right now.

So many seem to genuinely want those divides to be mended, for the country to be knitted back together. But the question of why America is broken, and who is to blame, and how to repair it? That’s where things get complicated.

Because no matter what you believe, today — in both the myriad reactions to Kirk’s violent public death

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and in general — you can pick the America you want. You can pick the America that you believe exists. You can see a president who is systematically removing the rights of Americans, or a president who is standing up for a forgotten middle class. You can see signs of fascism in the masked immigration agents hauling people off the streets, or an administration that is finally enforcing immigration laws for the good of all citizens.

In Charlie Kirk, you can see a polite, boy-next-door type with a captivating debating style who loved America, the church, his family, and the resurgence of conservatism across the country, especially among young people. Or you can see a political hybrid of the social media age, a powerful political operative who was willing to exploit America's racial divide in search of support and who insisted, falsely, that voter fraud cost Trump the 2020 elections.

When Cox spoke mournfully about America's predicament, he clearly hoped Kirk's death could help bring America together. More likely, though, the killing could drive the wedges deeper.

Just listen to how people reacted to his death. Choose the take you want to believe.

A divided society, a divided reaction

In the hours immediately after the shooting, officials in both parties appeared anxious to show restraint and decorum, expressing their grief, support for Kirk's family and repulsion at political violence.

"Words cannot describe the shock and horror I felt today," Arizona Republican chair Gina Swoboda said in a statement, saying America "must never condone or excuse acts of political violence."

Maine's Democratic governor, Janet Mills, who has sparred with Trump, said she was "horrified by what has happened to Charlie Kirk."

"Differing views — regardless of who holds them and how much you may detest them — should never be met with violence," she wrote.

Soon, though, even with only the barest facts about the shooting known, the anger began to spill out. Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene said she was praying that "this country rises up and ends this." Then others began speaking up, with politicians warning about "leftwing Brown Shirts" and Christians under attack.

Trump quickly conferred martyr status onto Kirk, ordering flags lowered at federal buildings and blaming leftist rhetoric for Kirk's assassination in a lengthy video statement released on social media late Wednesday. "For years, those on the radical left have compared wonderful Americans like Charlie to Nazis and the world's worst mass murders and criminals," Trump said, speaking from the Oval Office and citing only attacks on Republicans.

Democratic politicians, for the most part, appeared eager to avoid any sign that they were demonizing Kirk. But it wasn't that way in some left-wing neighborhoods on social media. "Charlie Kirk isn't a martyr," wrote a commentator on X with 130,000 followers, echoing many others. "He's a casualty of the violence he incited."

That carried echoes of the praise for Luigi Mangione, the man charged with murdering the UnitedHealthcare CEO in Manhattan last year, and the explosion of social media memes celebrating the July shooting death of a prominent real-estate executive in the same borough.

The country's politicians strive to balance it all

Online, of course, it's easy to remain anonymous, and it can be impossible to distinguish true praise for political violence and vigilantism with adolescent trolling. It's different for politicians, who can't stay anonymous — and who are often looked to in moments like this to help show their supporters and constituents the way.

Unlike Trump, his presidential predecessors spoke far more gently, in keeping with their particular styles. Former Presidents Joe Biden and Barack Obama said they were praying for Kirk's family. George W. Bush called for divine guidance to move the nation to civility. Their statements sounded, unsurprisingly, like many of the things they said during their presidencies.

That kind of message took root in some places. In Connecticut, College Republicans and College Democrats issued a joint statement decrying violence. And on Wednesday, Cox — a Republican politician thrust into the limelight by tragedy, like so many public servants before him — spoke emotionally about a belief

in free speech that goes back to America's founding, and about how hatred can lead to violence.

"Is this it?" he asked. "Is this what 250 years has wrought on us?"

"I pray that is not the case."

Kids and current events: How to help them deal with what they see around them

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In hardly any time at all, the footage of the horrifying moment when a bullet hit conservative activist Charlie Kirk in the neck cascaded across the internet.

Whether seeing it inadvertently or seeking it out, onlookers far from the crowd at a Utah college could be exposed to disturbingly close and potentially bloody glimpses of his shooting and the resulting chaos. It's the product of a digital-first world where the presence of smartphones and social media makes current events readily accessible and often, practically unavoidable.

And, of course, among those seeing it were kids, teens and other young people — those who live with their phones practically attached and are often far more chronically online than their parents.

It raises a question that modern-day parents are sadly having to ask more frequently: How do you talk to your kids about what's going on, what they're seeing and hearing?

Don't ignore it

It's a basic parental impulse to want to protect kids, to shield them from harsh realities or complicated situations, to think they're too young to know about the ways in which the world can be unsafe or terrible.

Yet when it comes to the actual world around us, that's not realistic, experts say. Information is EVERYWHERE.

"For parents to assume that their children are not being exposed to this is just not a good way of approaching it," says Jodi Quas, professor of psychology at the University of California, Irvine. "Children talk at school, children overhear teachers, they overhear adults, they overhear their parents' conversations."

That's only exacerbated by phones, tablets and other technology that connect children to the world, even if parents try to set screen limits or parental controls.

"In this adult world, you could easily think that it's very easy to protect yourself from this, of course you don't have to look at it, of course, you can turn away," says Kris Perry, executive director of Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development. "But what's happening with children, especially in social media contexts, is that the algorithms are so sophisticated and the feed is so tailored to them that you should assume your child has been exposed to this event through a source that you did not choose."

Don't assume they know everything, either

In talking to young people, parents should try to get a sense of what knowledge kids do have about the events at hand, instead of rushing in with assumptions, says Riana Elyse Anderson, associate professor of social work at Columbia University's School of Social Work.

"It could be that young people are seeing things that were actual images from the event, or it could be things that have been doctored or changed because of different editing or AI software," Anderson says. "So it's really important for us to get a sense of what they think they know."

Process your own feelings first

Of course, if parents are looking to reassure their kids about their safety, or talk to them about what they've seen or national events, parents should take the time to acknowledge their own feelings and thoughts first.

"Parents have to stop and take a breath and be ready — put your own oxygen mask on as they say — so that you can process your own feelings before you start talking to your child, so that you're more stable and able to listen carefully and be less reactive," Perry says.

Parents need to remember that they are their children's role models, Quas says.

"If parents are highly agitated, parents are so distressed that they can't regulate their own emotions, it

really doesn't matter what they say to children. Children are going to be afraid," she says.

Make it an ongoing conversation

Kait Gillen's 10-year-old son doesn't even have a phone of his own yet, but was next to his mom at home in Virginia when the alerts of Kirk's shooting and subsequent death started alerting on her phone.

"He was visibly shaken by it and wanted to know who had done it," Gillen says, questions that still have no answers. They talked about it for a bit, and she promised him they could talk about it more as he needed to.

She knows it's not the last of the conversation about the incident, as he talks to schoolmates and others, and it won't be the last time this type of conversation could be needed as he grows up and gets a phone of his own, joining the larger world.

"As much as I want to shield him ... he is going to be exposed to it," she says. "And so I can't keep him from it. But what I can do is try to give him the tools to understand and process what he is feeling."

Utah governor pleads for public's help in finding person who shot Charlie Kirk on university campus

By ERIC TUCKER, ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, JESSE BEDAYN and HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press

OREM, Utah (AP) — The shooter who assassinated conservative activist Charlie Kirk and then vanished off a roof and into the woods remained at large more than 24 hours later Thursday as federal investigators appealed for the public's help by releasing photos of the person they believe is responsible.

Investigators obtained clues, including a palm print, a shoe impression and a high-powered hunting rifle found in a wooded area along the path the shooter fled. But they had yet to name a suspect or cite a motive in the killing they were treating as the latest act of political violence to convulse the United States across the ideological spectrum.

The photos of a person in a hat, sunglasses and a long-sleeve black shirt, with a backpack, as well as a \$100,000 reward for information leading to an arrest suggested that law enforcement thought tips from the public might be needed to crack the case. Two people who were taken into custody shortly after Wednesday's shooting at Utah Valley University were later released, forcing officials to chase new leads on a separate person of interest they pursued Thursday.

During a news conference Thursday with FBI Director Kash Patel, authorities showed a video of a person being sought in connection with the killing racing across the roof of the building where the shot was fired, dropping down to the ground and fleeing into the woods. In the process, officials say, the shooter left behind imprints, including a palm print, that investigators hope can yield clues to their identity.

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox pleaded for the public's help in the search for the shooter.

"We have people all over the country trying to bring this perpetrator to justice," he said, adding that the FBI had received more than 7,000 leads and tips.

He said they're getting everything in order to pursue the death penalty.

The direct appeals for public support at the nighttime news conference, including new and enhanced photos, appeared to signal law enforcement's continued struggles a day and a half into the search to identify the shooter and pinpoint the person's whereabouts.

Authorities didn't take questions, and Patel did not speak at the news conference.

One clue in the investigation was a Mauser .30-caliber, bolt-action rifle found in a towel in the woods. A spent cartridge was recovered from the chamber, and three other rounds were loaded in the magazine, according to information circulated among law enforcement and described to The Associated Press. The weapon and ammunition were being analyzed by law enforcement at a federal lab.

Grisly video shared online

The attack, carried out in a broad daylight as Kirk spoke about social issues from a university courtyard, was captured on grisly videos that spread on social media.

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The videos show Kirk, a close ally of President Donald Trump who played an influential role in rallying young Republican voters, speaking into a handheld microphone when suddenly a shot rings out. Kirk can be seen reaching up with his right hand as blood gushes from the left side of his neck. Stunned spectators gasp and scream before people start running away.

The shooter, who investigators believe blended into the campus crowd because of a "college-age" appearance, fired a single shot from the rooftop where they were perched before jumping off.

"I can tell you this was a targeted event," said Robert Bohls, the top FBI agent in Salt Lake City.

Trump, who was joined by Democrats in condemning the violence, said he would award Kirk the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the U.S., while Vice President JD Vance and his wife, Usha, arrived Thursday afternoon in Salt Lake City to visit with Kirk's family. Vance posted a remembrance on X chronicling their friendship, dating back to initial messages in 2017, through Vance's Senate run and the 2024 election.

"So much of the success we've had in this administration traces directly to Charlie's ability to organize and convene," Vance wrote. "He didn't just help us win in 2024, he helped us staff the entire government."

Kirk's casket was flown aboard Air Force Two from Utah to Phoenix, where his nonprofit political youth organization, Turning Point USA, is based. Trump told reporters he plans to attend Kirk's funeral. Details have not been announced.

Kirk was taking questions about gun violence

Kirk was a conservative provocateur who became a powerful political force among young Republicans and was a fixture on college campuses, where he invited sometimes-vehement debate on social issues.

He was shot while attending one such event Wednesday, a debate hosted by Turning Point at the Sorenson Center on campus in what was billed as the first stop on Kirk's "American Comeback Tour."

The event generated a polarizing campus reaction. An online petition calling for university administrators to bar Kirk from appearing received nearly 1,000 signatures. The university issued a statement last week citing First Amendment rights and affirming its "commitment to free speech, intellectual inquiry and constructive dialogue."

Last week, Kirk posted on X images of news clips showing his visit was sparking controversy. He wrote, "What's going on in Utah?"

One such provocative exchange played out immediately before the shooting, as he was taking questions from an audience member about gun violence when the shot was heard.

Attendees barricaded themselves in classrooms

Some attendees who bolted after the gunshot rushed into two classrooms full of students. They used tables to barricade the door and to shield themselves in the corners. Someone grabbed an electric pencil sharpener and wrapped the cord tightly around the door handle, then tied the sharpener to a chair leg.

Madison Lattin was watching a few dozen feet from Kirk's left when she heard the bullet hit him.

"Blood is falling and dripping down, and you're just like so scared, not just for him but your own safety," she said.

On campus Thursday, the canopy stamped with the slogan Kirk commonly used at his events "PROVE ME WRONG" stood, disheveled.

Kathleen Murphy, a longtime resident who lives near the campus, said she has been staying inside with her door locked.

"With the shooter not being caught yet, it was a worry," Murphy said.

Meanwhile, the shooting continued to draw swift bipartisan condemnation as Democratic officials joined Trump and other Republican allies of Kirk in decrying the attack, which unfolded during a spike of political violence that has touched a range of ideologies and representatives of both major political parties.

"The murder of Charlie Kirk breaks my heart. My deepest sympathies are with his wife, two young children, and friends," said Gabrielle Giffords, the former Democratic congresswoman who was wounded in a 2011 shooting in her Arizona district.

Trump draws cheers and boos while marking 9/11 by attending a New York Yankees game

By WILL WEISSERT and STEPHEN WHYNO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump attended the New York Yankees 9-3 victory over the Detroit Tigers on Thursday night, drawing a mixed reaction from a raucous crowd while marking the 24th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Authorities installed security glass for the president outside the upper level box suite belonging to the Steinbrenner family, which owns the Yankees, on the third base side over the Tigers dugout at Yankee Stadium.

Wearing a suit and tie, Trump sat next to Yankees team president Randy Levine and chatted with him throughout the game, though he sat by himself at other times. During the national anthem, the president was shown on the stadium jumbotron and received boos from some in the crowd, cheers from others.

When Judge hit a home run in the bottom of the first, Trump stood and applauded, as did members of an entourage that included Attorney General Pam Bondi and Lee Zeldin, a former New York congressman who is now head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

In the second inning, Trump's attendance was announced and he was shown on the big screen for an extended period while "Hail to the Chief" played. He smiled and pumped his fist. Boos were heard at first, but many in the crowd eventually cheered.

A presidential visit always prompts extra security at sporting events, but things were heightened after conservative activist and close Trump ally Charlie Kirk was assassinated in Utah on Wednesday. When Trump attended the Sept. 11 observance ceremony at the Pentagon earlier Thursday, authorities moved the ceremony inside as an added precaution.

Trump's attendance recalled President George W. Bush's ceremonial first pitch 24 years earlier as the Yankees played the Arizona Diamondbacks in the 2001 World Series — a moment that came to symbolize national resilience after the attacks mere weeks earlier.

Later in Thursday's game, when "YMCA" was played, Trump spelled out the letters with his arms but stayed seated.

The president left shortly after the seventh-inning stretch, which featured the singing of "God Bless America," as it traditionally does at Yankees games on Sept. 11, in addition to "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." Trump was shown on the big screen three times in quick succession and the announcer said, "Welcome back, New York's own, the 45th and 47th President" and thanked Trump.

Among the announced crowd in the Bronx of nearly 41,000, that prompted cheers of "USA! USA!" and some chants of Trump's last name as he stood, grinned and pumped his fist in a downward motion. There were also some in the crowd who booed, and they got louder each time Trump was shown.

Before the game started, Trump stopped by the Yankee clubhouse. He shook hands with the players and team staff members and talked about being close for years with late, longtime Yankees owner George Steinbrenner. He noted of his past attending games with Steinbrenner, "We won every time I came."

"You think that was easy sitting with him for a game? It wasn't. It was brutal. But he won, and you're going to win," the president said.

Captain Aaron Judge called meeting Trump "a surreal moment," and something that inspired him and his teammates.

"We put on a show," said Judge, who hit two home runs to tie Joe DiMaggio for fourth in Yankees history. "He came in here, and he told us we were going to win, so I think that gave everybody the confidence in this room to go out there and do it. I guess we've got to have him around more often."

Just before Trump walked in to deliver that message, relief pitcher Fernando Cruz was the last player in a towel. His teammates urged him to quickly get dressed.

Manager Aaron Boone announced prior to Trump's arrival that Yankees shortstop Anthony Volpe had quietly been playing with a partial labrum tear in his left shoulder. As he greeted him, Trump patted Volpe softly on the shoulder.

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With Trump on hand, all stadium entrances featured metal detectors and Secret Service agents, some with sniffer dogs, while New York Police Department helicopters thundered overhead.

Authorities opened the gates three hours before the first pitch, and long lines began forming even before that, though most of the crowd moved into the stadium smoothly. The Yankees said ticketholders were "strongly urged to arrive as early as possible." The Secret Service also asked fans to consider leaving their bags at home.

Faster-moving lines were a departure from Trump's appearance at the U.S. Open men's final in Queens last weekend. That sparked security lines long enough that some fans didn't make it to their seats until more than an hour into the match, despite organizers delaying its start by 30 minutes.

The Yankees game is Trump's eighth major sporting event since returning to the White House in January. He attended the Super Bowl in New Orleans, the Daytona 500, UFC fights in Miami and Newark, New Jersey, the NCAA wrestling championships in Philadelphia, the FIFA Club World Cup final in East Rutherford, New Jersey, and last weekend's U.S. Open match.

The Yankee Stadium scoreboard featured a large Major League Baseball logo over an American flag and a red, white and blue ribbon under the inscription "September 11, 2001, We Shall Not Forget."

The large American flag behind the left field bleachers, and the smaller flags for each of baseball's 30 teams that ring the stadium's upper level, were lowered to half-staff after Trump issued an executive order honoring Kirk.

Trump was born in the New York borough of Queens and, though he's lived in Florida in recent years, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said the president "remains a New Yorker at heart." Still, Trump's appearances at baseball games haven't always been welcomed by fans.

During his first term in 2019, Trump tried to make a low-profile appearance as the Washington Nationals hosted the Houston Astros in the World Series, but was booed roundly when shown on the stadium's big screen. There were even chants of "Lock him up!"

Israel's strike on Qatar has infuriated Arab leaders. That bodes ill for Trump's Mideast priorities

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Just a few months ago, the rulers of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar welcomed U.S. President Donald Trump to their palaces with camel parades and pomp. Now, those same leaders are united in anger after Israel's strike targeting Hamas leaders in Qatar's capital, Doha.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman called for "an Arab, Islamic and international response to confront the aggression" and deter Israel's "criminal practices."

The UAE's Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan flew to Qatar and embraced its ruling emir, a scene that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago, when the UAE and Saudi Arabia led a boycott of the country after accusing it of supporting terrorist groups, something strongly denied by Doha.

Israel's attack in Qatar violated "all international laws and norms," Sheikh Mohammed said.

The strike has triggered the worst fears of leaders in the oil-rich Gulf: that the U.S. might abandon its decades-old commitment to protect them from regional aggressors in the mold of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein or — it now seems — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Those fears could undermine Trump's priorities in the region, from ending the war in Gaza and expanding his signature Abraham Accords — which forged ties between Israel and the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco — to countering Chinese and Russian influence. Netanyahu's dream of new normalization deals across the Gulf seems further than ever.

Ironclad US support as Israel flouts norms

Trump seems to have registered the anger of Gulf leaders. He has distanced himself from the strike, saying it "does not advance Israel or America's goals" and promising Qatar that it would not be repeated.

But his ironclad support for an Israeli government that has increasingly flouted international norms in the wars unleashed by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack is a source of concern in the Gulf.

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Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, called the strike an act of "state terror" and singled out Netanyahu by name, accusing him of "barbarism."

He also questioned the future of Qatar's mediation efforts, saying there was nothing "valid" about the current talks after the strike. Israel targeted Hamas leaders as they were weighing a U.S. ceasefire proposal, killing at least five lower-ranking members and a member of Qatar's security forces.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, has threatened to strike again if Qatar keeps hosting Hamas in its role as a regional mediator — which it has done for years with the full knowledge and support of the U.S.

"I say to Qatar and all nations who harbor terrorists, you either expel them or you bring them to justice," Netanyahu said Wednesday. "Because if you don't, we will."

Those comments were denounced Thursday by the UAE's foreign ministry. Aggression against any member of the Gulf Cooperation Council — a six-nation bloc that includes the UAE and Qatar — "constitutes an attack on the collective Gulf security framework," the ministry said in a statement.

Asked about Netanyahu's comments, a White House official said Trump made clear that he was "not thrilled about the situation" following Tuesday's strikes.

The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity, added that Trump remains steadfast in his belief that "unilaterally bombing inside Qatar, a sovereign nation and close ally of the United States, that is working very hard and bravely taking risks with us to broker peace" is at odds with both Israel and U.S. goals.

Signs of frustration from the UAE

The UAE was the driving force behind the 2020 Abraham Accords.

It led other Arab nations in normalizing relations with Israel in agreements brokered by Trump that were widely seen as the biggest foreign policy achievement of his first term. Netanyahu has repeatedly expressed hope of expanding these deals, even after this week's attack in Qatar.

The Israel-UAE agreement has held through two years of regional wars but could be in danger if Israel stays on its current trajectory.

Last week, the UAE warned Israel that any move to annex the occupied West Bank would be a "red line," without specifying what action it might take.

Israel's decision to pause annexation plans five years ago was billed as a concession to the UAE in the talks leading up to the accords. Now Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners are pressing for it after presiding over a dramatic expansion of Jewish settlements.

Trump, in his first term, lent unprecedented support to Israel's claims to territory seized in war. It's unclear if he will apply the brakes this time around.

Saudi Arabia drifts further away

Both Trump and Netanyahu hope to reach a similar normalization deal with Saudi Arabia, a regional powerhouse and custodian of Islam's two holiest sites. The Biden administration seemed to be on the verge of brokering such a deal on the eve of Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack.

Since then, it has appeared increasingly unlikely.

Saudi Arabia says it will only normalize ties with Israel if it opens up a path to an independent Palestinian state in Gaza, the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war. Israel's current government and most of its political class were staunchly opposed to Palestinian statehood before the war and now say it would reward Hamas.

The Saudi crown prince has stuck by his demands and ramped up his rhetoric, accusing Israel of "genocide" at one point last year. Prince Mohammed has also pursued warmer ties with Iran, Israel's main nemesis, which Saudi Arabia itself had long viewed as a regional menace.

All three Gulf nations still have powerful incentives to stick with the grand bargain struck with the United States after the 1991 Gulf War — when they agreed to host American bases and help stabilize energy markets in exchange for military protection. That's been strained in Qatar after a June attack by Iran targeting a military base hosting U.S. troops.

But Israel's strike is widely seen as an even greater violation of those understandings. That could make future deals harder to close.

Americans mark the 24th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks with emotional ceremonies

By PHILIP MARCELO and LISEBERTH GUILLAUME Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Nearly a quarter century has passed since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, but for many, the emotions of the day remain raw as ever.

On Thursday, America marked the 24th anniversary of the deadly attacks with solemn ceremonies in New York, at the Pentagon and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The commemorations were punctuated by moments of silence, the tolling of bells and the reading of the names of the nearly 3,000 killed.

"Even 24 years later, it's heart-wrenching," said Jennifer Nilsen, who wore a T-shirt emblazoned with an image of her husband, Troy Nilsen, as she attended the commemoration at ground zero in lower Manhattan. "It feels the same way every year."

Michelle Pizzo, wearing a shirt with the image of her late husband, Jason DeFazio, said she hoped more people could take a minute to reflect on the day.

"Younger kids don't realize that you have to remember," she said.

Emma Williamson, 20, of Massachusetts, made a point to travel from her college uptown to stand near ground zero, where two memorial pools ringed by waterfalls and parapets inscribed with the names of the dead mark the spots where the twin towers once stood.

"I wasn't born when it happened, but it was really an important day in America," she said. "It's kind of the last time we all stuck together, and that matters."

The reading of names and moments of silence

The 9/11 anniversary, often promoted as a day of national unity, came during a time of increased politician tension.

The assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a Utah college a day earlier prompted additional security measures at ground zero, where FBI Director Kash Patel was among the dignitaries in attendance.

Vice President JD Vance and his wife, second lady Usha Vance, had planned to attend but instead flew to Salt Lake City to visit with Kirk's family. Kirk's casket was then taken to his home state of Arizona aboard Air Force Two.

Many in the crowd at ground zero held up photos of lost loved ones as a moment of silence marked the exact time when the first hijacked plane struck the iconic twin towers.

Loved ones then read aloud the names of the victims, with many giving personal remembrances, well wishes and updates on their lives.

Zoe Doyle, daughter of Frank Joseph Doyle, said her family created a nonprofit in his honor that's built schools in South Africa and is feeding and educating thousands of children.

Manuel DaMota Jr. said he remembers his father and namesake, Manuel DaMota, not just with grief, but with gratitude for the example he set.

"In a world filled with division and conflict, I do my best to honor my father by choosing connection, empathy and hope," he said.

Melissa Pullis, whose husband Edward Pullis died in the towers, said this year is more difficult than others because two of the couple's three children are getting married.

"You can't walk your princess down the aisle," she said through tears. "You are missed every day. We will always say your name, and we will always fight for justice."

Ceremonies in Virginia and Pennsylvania honor victims

At the Pentagon in Virginia, the 184 service members and civilians killed when hijackers steered a jetliner into the headquarters of the U.S. military were honored in a ceremony attended by President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump.

The president, in his remarks, recounted moments from that day, including snippets of conversations from passengers who were aboard the hijacked airplanes.

"Today, as one nation, we renew our sacred vow that we will never forget Sept. 11, 2001," Trump said

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during the observance, which took place in an internal courtyard of the building rather than its traditional location outside its walls near the building's 9/11 memorial.

"The enemy will always fail," he added. "We defy the fear, endure the flames."

The president, who attended a New York Yankees game in the Bronx on Thursday evening, also announced Kirk would be posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, calling him a "giant of his generation" and a "champion of liberty."

And in a rural field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, a ceremony attended by Veterans Affairs Secretary Doug Collins honored the victims of Flight 93, the hijacked plane that crashed after crew members and passengers tried to storm the cockpit.

Elsewhere, people marked the anniversary with service projects and charitable works as part of a national day of service. Volunteers took part in food and clothing drives, park and neighborhood cleanups, blood banks and other community events.

Reverberations from attacks persist

In all, the attacks by al-Qaida militants killed 2,977 people, including many financial workers at the World Trade Center and firefighters and police officers who had rushed to the burning buildings trying to save lives.

The attacks reverberated globally, altering the course of U.S. foreign and domestic policy. It led to the "Global War on Terrorism" and the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and related conflicts that killed hundreds of thousands of civilians and troops.

The U.S. government has also spent billions of dollars providing health care and compensation to tens of thousands of people who were exposed to the toxic dust that billowed over parts of Manhattan when the twin towers collapsed.

While the hijackers died in the attacks, federal officials have struggled to conclude the long-running legal case against the man accused of masterminding the plot, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. The former al-Qaida leader was arrested in 2003, but has never received a trial.

The Trump administration has also acknowledged its considering ways to take control of the ground zero memorial plaza and its underground museum, which are run by a public charity.

Judge temporarily blocks US effort to remove dozens of immigrant Guatemalan and Honduran children

By JACQUES BILLEAUD and MORGAN LEE Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — A federal judge in Arizona temporarily blocked the Trump administration from removing dozens of Guatemalan and Honduran children living in shelters or foster care after coming to the U.S. alone, according to a decision Thursday.

U.S. District Judge Rosemary Márquez in Tucson extended until at least Sept. 26 a temporary restraining order issued over the Labor Day weekend. Márquez raised concern over whether the government had arranged for any of the children's parents or legal guardians in Guatemala to take custody of them.

Laura Belous, attorney for the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project, which represents the children, said in court that the minors expressed no desire to be repatriated to their native countries of Guatemala and Honduras amid concerns they could face neglect, possible child trafficking or hardships associated with individual medical conditions.

Lawyers for the children said their clients fear going home and the government is not following laws designed to protect migrant children.

Belous' organization filed a lawsuit in Arizona on behalf of 57 Guatemalan children and another 12 from Honduras between the ages 3 and 17.

Trump administration also seeks to deport unaccompanied children from Washington, DC

The suit, along with a related lawsuit before a federal judge in Washington responds to the administration's Labor Day weekend attempt to remove Guatemalan migrant children who were living in government shelters and foster care after coming to the U.S. alone.

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In a late night operation Aug. 30, the administration notified shelters that they would be returning the children to Guatemala and needed to have the kids ready to leave in a matter of hours. Scores of children got as far as boarding planes in Texas on the morning of Aug. 31 and were set to depart to Guatemala.

At Thursday's hearing in Tucson, Denise Ann Faulk, an assistant U.S. attorney under the Trump administration, emphasized that the child repatriations were negotiated with Guatemala at high diplomatic levels and would avoid lengthy prohibitions on returning to the U.S.

Nearly all the children were in the custody of the U.S. Health and Human Services Department's Office of Refugee Resettlement and living at shelters in the Phoenix and Tucson areas. Similar lawsuits filed in Illinois and Washington, D.C., seek to stop the government from removing the children.

The Arizona lawsuit demands that the government allow the children their right to present their cases to an immigration judge, to have access to legal counsel and to be placed in the least restrictive setting that is in their best interest.

The Trump administration has argued it is acting in the best interest of the children by trying to reunite them with their families at the behest of the Guatemalan government. After Guatemalan officials toured U.S. detention facilities, the government said that it was "very concerned" and that it would take children who wanted to return voluntarily.

Details reflect shifting immigration patterns

Children began crossing the border alone in large numbers in 2014, peaking at 152,060 in the 2022 fiscal year. July's arrest tally translates to an annual clip of 5,712 arrests, reflecting how illegal crossings have dropped to their lowest levels in six decades.

Guatemalans accounted for 32% of residents at government-run holding facilities last year, followed by Hondurans, Mexicans and Salvadorans. A 2008 law requires children to appear before an immigration judge with an opportunity to pursue asylum, unless they are from Canada and Mexico. The vast majority are released from shelters to parents, legal guardians or immediate family while their cases wind through court.

The Arizona lawsuit was amended to include 12 children from Honduras who have expressed to an Arizona legal aid group that they do not want to return to Honduras, as well as four additional children from Guatemala who have come into government custody in Arizona since the lawsuit was initially filed on Aug. 30.

Judge Márquez said she found it "frightening" that U.S. officials may not have coordinated with the children's parents. She also expressed concern that the government was denying the children access to review by an experienced immigration judge, and noted that legal representatives for the children were notified of preparations for child departures with little notice, late at night.

"On a practical matter, it just seems that a lot of these things that (the Office of Refugee Resettlement) has taken upon themselves to do — such as screening and making judicial determinations that should be made by an immigration judge with expertise and time to meet with a lawyer and meet with a child — is just surpassed by saying 'we're reuniting them'" with parents, Márquez said in court as she pressed Faulk for more information.

Márquez was appointed as a federal judge in 2014 after being nominated by then-President Barack Obama. In documents related to her confirmation, she listed herself as having volunteered at the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights project in the early 2000s.

A request for comment from the judge was declined. Chief Deputy Clerk Mags Everette cited restrictions under a code of conduct for judges.

NHL makes 5 players acquitted of sexual assault charges eligible to sign contract, play this season

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NHL is reinstating five players who were acquitted of sexual assault charges stemming from an incident in 2018 when they were members of Canada's world junior team, announcing Thursday they will be eligible to sign a contract Oct. 15 and take part in games Dec. 1.

The move comes roughly seven weeks since Carter Hart, Michael McLeod, Dillon Dube, Cal Foote and

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Alex Formenton were found not guilty by a judge in London, Ontario. The Canadian government told lawyers for the players last month it would not appeal the ruling.

They were not in the NHL at the time of the incident.

None of the players had current contracts and all are free agents. Hart was with Philadelphia, McLeod and Foote with New Jersey, and Dube with Calgary, while Formenton was playing in Europe, and their respective teams let their previous deals expire last year after charges were laid.

The NHL conducted its own investigation beginning in the spring of 2022 when the allegations came to light. It called the events that transpired "deeply troubling and unacceptable" and that while they were not found to be criminal, said the players' conduct did not meet the standard of moral integrity.

The players met with league officials after the verdict and expressed regret and remorse, the NHL said. Keeping them from playing until Dec. 1 brings their total time away to nearly two years.

The NHL Players' Association in a statement said it was pleased Dube, Foote, Formenton, Hart and McLeod are getting the opportunity to resume their careers.

"The players cooperated with every investigation," the union said. "Upon their full acquittal by Superior Court Justice Maria Carroccia, we initiated discussions with the NHL regarding the players' return to work. To avoid a protracted dispute that would cause further delay, we reached the resolution that the league announced today. We now consider the matter closed and look forward to the players' return."

Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly, earlier in the week, said an update was coming "in the relatively near future" and declined to go into the contents of the investigative process.

"Obviously, we take the matter very seriously, and that's why it's still under review," Daly said Tuesday in Las Vegas.

Training camps open next week, and the season begins Oct. 7. Many teams are holding rookie camps, scrimmages or participating in tournaments in the leadup to that.

Speaking Thursday at a prospects tournament hosted by Buffalo, Columbus general manager Don Waddell said: "The league obviously has followed this case and looked into it and the decision was made. You've got to support the decision by the NHL."

Asked about Hart on Wednesday in Voorhees, New Jersey, the head of the company that owns the Flyers, said they would not comment at this point.

"The NHL's made it clear they'll speak first," Comcast Spectacor chairman and CEO Dan Hilferty said. "But right now, we're not prepared to comment on the Carter Hart situation. The NHL has told us they are running the show."

Hart, McLeod, Dube and Foote last took part in NHL games in January 2024 before leaving their teams with charges pending. It was not immediately clear how many of the players would be signed when eligible, though Hart as a 27-year-old goaltender with significant experience appears to be the most likely.

Appeals court allows Trump's administration to block Medicaid funds to Planned Parenthood

BOSTON (AP) — A U.S. appeals court panel on Thursday allowed President Donald Trump's administration to block Medicaid funds to Planned Parenthood while legal challenges continue.

A federal judge in July ruled Planned Parenthood clinics nationwide must continue to be reimbursed for Medicaid funding as the nation's largest abortion provider fights Trump's administration over efforts to defund the organization in his signature tax legislation.

Medicaid is a government health care program that serves millions of low-income and disabled Americans. Nearly half of Planned Parenthood's patients rely on Medicaid.

A provision in Trump's tax bill instructed the federal government to end Medicaid payments for one year to abortion providers that received more than \$800,000 from Medicaid in 2023, even to those like Planned Parenthood that also offer medical services like contraception, pregnancy tests and STD testing.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its member organizations in Massachusetts and Utah filed a lawsuit in July against Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

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"While the Trump administration wants to rip away reproductive freedom, we're here to say loud and clear: we will not back down," Dominique Lee, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts said in a statement. "This is not over."

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services didn't immediately respond to an online request for comment.

Planned Parenthood said Thursday's ruling means that more than 1.1 million patients can't use their Medicaid insurance at its health centers. That also puts as many as 200 of those health centers at risk of closure, Planned Parenthood said in a statement.

Planned Parenthood says it is the nation's leading provider and advocate of affordable sexual and reproductive health care, as well as the nation's largest provider of sex education.

Things to know about the bribery prosecution of ex-Sen. Bob Menendez and his wife, Nadine Menendez

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez is already in prison. His wife is headed there next.

The onetime political power couple's criminal prosecution culminated Thursday with a judge sentencing Nadine Menendez to 4½ years behind bars. Her punishment came three months after her husband, a New Jersey Democrat, started his 11-year prison sentence.

The unusual facts of the case — including gold bars, cash and a Mercedes-Benz — and breast cancer surgery that led to Nadine Menendez facing trial a year later than her husband teed up a surprising scenario: The then-senator's lawyers tried to pin the blame on her. But at her sentencing, Nadine Menendez said Bob Menendez was a manipulative liar who "strung me like a puppet."

Here's a look at how their cases have played out:

How did the prosecution evolve?

Federal authorities investigated the senator for several years before a 2022 raid on the couple's home in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, turned up \$480,000 in cash, gold bars worth an estimated \$150,000 and a Mercedes-Benz convertible that prosecutors said were bribes.

At the time Menendez was chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a position he resigned after he, his wife and three New Jersey businessmen were hit with bribery charges in September 2023.

Prosecutors later added a charge alleging that he conspired with his wife and the businessmen for him to act as an agent of Egypt. As a member of Congress, Menendez was prohibited from being an agent of a foreign government. Authorities said it was the first time the charge was brought against a sitting member of Congress, signaling that U.S. national security was at stake.

It was the second federal case against Menendez after a jury deadlocked in 2017 on corruption charges in New Jersey. Prosecutors did not seek to retry him.

He had held public office continuously since 1986, serving as a state legislator before 13 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2006 then-New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine appointed Menendez to the Senate seat he vacated when he became governor.

How did the couple explain the cash and gold bars?

Unusual upbringings and family traditions. Neither testified at trial, but both asserted through their lawyers that there were innocent explanations for the loot.

Bob Menendez's lawyers said stashing tens of thousands of dollars in cash in the home — including inside jackets and boots — stemmed from lessons learned by his family when it lost its life savings except for cash hidden in their home when they left Cuba.

They said he emerged from poverty and the trauma of his father's suicide when he was 23 to become "the epitome of the American Dream," rising from mayor of Union City, New Jersey, to serve decades in Congress. By his January sentencing, his lawyer said he had become a joke known by some as "Gold Bar Bob."

Nadine Menendez's lawyers said her family had a tradition of keeping gold bars in their homes that were

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gifts after fleeing war-torn Lebanon when she was a child. They said she treasured jewelry and other objects not for their monetary value but because of their connections to relatives.

What happened to the businessmen?

Jose Uribe was accused of giving Nadine Menendez the Mercedes-Benz in exchange for Bob Menendez pressuring the New Jersey attorney general's office to stop investigating some of Uribe's associates. He pleaded guilty, testified against the others and is set to be sentenced Oct. 9.

Wael Hana, a longtime friend of Nadine Menendez, and Fred Daibes, a prominent real estate developer, were tried alongside Bob Menendez and convicted of bribery and other charges. Hana was sentenced to eight years in prison, and Daibes got seven years.

Among other things, Hana was accused of providing cash to Nadine Menendez to save her Englewood Cliffs home after she missed nearly \$20,000 in mortgage payments. In return, they said, Bob Menendez began helping Hana preserve a business monopoly he had arranged with the Egyptian government to certify that imported meat met religious requirements.

Daibes paid bribes — including cash and gold — in exchange for Bob Menendez attempting to persuade a federal prosecutor to go easy on him in a bank fraud case, prosecutors said. Menendez also helped him secure a \$95 million investment from a Qatari investment fund, prosecutors said.

What about the finger-pointing between the couple?

The alleged crimes, spanning from 2018 until charges were revealed in 2023, began almost as soon as the woman then known as Nadine Arslanian began dating the senator in 2018. They were married in 2020.

Nadine Menendez remained publicly silent as her husband's lawyers heaped much of the blame for the alleged crimes on her during his trial, alleging that she instigated and carried out many of the crucial bribery-related acts as her husband went about his senatorial duties.

They said her desperate financial situation led her to seek help from relatives and friends and keep quiet about cash and gold in her closet.

At her sentencing Thursday, Nadine Menendez told the judge that her husband's lawyers filled her in before that trial on their strategy to blame on her. Their reasoning, she said, was that if he was acquitted, her case would go away because she was not a politician.

Judge Sidney Stein agreed that she was wrongly maligned at the earlier trial, telling her, "You are not the person they tried to depict."

In a presentencing letter to the judge, Bob Menendez also said his wife was unfairly blamed and she was "not the person who Prosecutors, or for that fact, what the Defense Attorneys made her out to be."

Nadine Menendez does not have to report to prison until next summer. She asked the judge to make sure she can visit her husband in the meantime.

As she left court Thursday, she was asked if she wants a divorce. She said no.

NC lawmakers likely to propose tougher pretrial release laws after fatal stabbing

By GARY D. ROBERTSON Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina's top legislative leaders said Thursday that they are aiming to advance a package of proposed laws in part designed to tighten pretrial release rules following the fatal stabbing of a Ukrainian refugee on a Charlotte commuter train that prompted national attention and calls for tougher-on-crime policies.

More oversight of and less discretion for local magistrates who make decisions on criminal suspects — like the man now accused of murder in last month's death of 23-year-old Iryna Zarutsky — likely will be introduced when the Republican-controlled General Assembly reconvenes Sept. 22.

"We must deliver justice for Iryna and the countless families across our state that have fallen victim to a justice system that does not support them and does not keep them safe," Senate leader Phil Berger said at a Legislative Building news conference.

The package — outlines of which were offered by Berger and House Speaker Destin Hall — also could

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include an effort to restart the death penalty in the state and prevent the governor and other executive branch officials from creating commissions that Berger contends encourage local policies favoring perpetrators. He mentioned a task force established in 2020 by then-Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper addressing racial inequities in the criminal justice system following the death of George Floyd.

The suspect in Zarutsky's stabbing, Decarlos Brown Jr., was arrested soon after the Aug. 22 attack. But last week's release of train video showing what looked like a random attack brought criticism from President Donald Trump and conservative activists who blamed government and judicial officials.

Brown had a lengthy criminal record that included serving more than five years in prison after pleading guilty to robbery using a deadly weapon. In January he was charged with misusing the 911 system, and a Mecklenburg County magistrate released him on the misdemeanor without requiring bond on a written promise to return for court.

A 2023 state law that was backed by Charlotte-area law enforcement officials required judges, not magistrates, to set conditions for pretrial release for certain violent offenders, and not magistrates. But Hall said Brown should have never been allowed to leave custody in January given his criminal history and mental health concerns. He and Berger also said eliminating the option for county magistrates to grant cashless bail for defendants with past violent felony convictions would result in more consistency in decisions.

Magistrates "have a lot of discretion in given cases. And in the past in this state, that's worked. But it's clearly not working anymore," Hall said.

Hall said the way magistrates are selected also will be examined. Currently they are nominated by the chief trial court clerk in each county and appointed by the senior chief trial judge. They initially serve for two years, followed by four-year terms.

Berger said Thursday that he is also looking at ways to restart capital punishment. Brown's first-degree murder count is punishable by life in prison or death. North Carolina has not carried out an execution since 2006, as legal challenges over the use of lethal injection drugs and a doctor's presence at executions have in part delayed action. U.S. prosecutors have also charged Brown with a federal crime that carries up to life in prison or the death penalty.

Any approved package would go to Democratic Gov. Josh Stein for his signature. Republicans are one House seat short a veto-proof majority at the General Assembly.

Stein spokesperson Morgan Hopkins said the governor is "advocating for more funding to recruit and retain law enforcement officers and to train judges and magistrates on best practices for setting release conditions for defendants with mental illness." Both Hopkins and Hall mentioned seeking bipartisan solutions.

Former Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Whatley — who like Cooper is running for U.S. Senate in next year's election — also spoke at Thursday's news conference. Cooper's campaign has pushed back against Whatley's critique of the 2020 criminal justice task force that Cooper created, saying it had nothing to do with Brown's most recent alleged crime.

Suspect in Trump assassination attempt veers off topic and forfeits opening statement at trial

By DAVID FISCHER Associated Press

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (AP) — A suspect on trial for trying to assassinate President Donald Trump while he played golf in South Florida last year forfeited his right to continue making an opening statement on Thursday when he veered off topic and talked about Adolf Hitler and the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

Ryan Routh, who is representing himself, was warned by U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon to stay on topic. The judge twice asked jurors to leave the courtroom so she could deal with the unconventional turn in Routh's opening statement.

Both Routh and prosecutors had been given 40 minutes each to make opening statements, but Routh's initial argument, read from a written statement, lasted less than 10 minutes before the judge said he had forfeited the right to continue because he was addressing unrelated matters.

"I gave you one more chance and you continued to read what has no relevance for this case," Cannon

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said.

During the prosecution's opening statement, Assistant U.S. Attorney John Shipley told jurors that Routh wanted to make sure that Trump wasn't re-elected to the White House.

"This plot was carefully crafted and deadly serious," Shipley said.

Routh has pleaded not guilty to charges of attempting to assassinate a major presidential candidate, assaulting a federal officer and several firearm violations.

Prosecutors have said Routh, 59, methodically plotted to kill Trump for weeks before aiming a rifle through the shrubbery as Trump played golf on Sept. 15, 2024, at his West Palm Beach country club. A Secret Service agent spotted Routh before Trump came into view. Officials said Routh aimed his rifle at the agent, who opened fire, causing Routh to drop his weapon and flee without firing a shot.

Just nine weeks earlier, Trump had survived another attempt on his life while campaigning in Pennsylvania. That gunman had fired eight shots, with one bullet grazing Trump's ear, before being shot by a Secret Service counter sniper.

Five witnesses testified Thursday, including two Secret Service agents, two FBI agents and a witness who followed Routh in his car after the shooting so he could write down his license plate.

Tommy McGee, the witness, testified that he was driving by the golf course when he heard the gunshot and saw a man running out of bushes into the street, almost hitting his car. McGee said the suspect looked at him straight in the eye. Once the suspect jumped in a car and fled, McGee said, he followed him out of a desire to help the police, not realizing that Trump was involved.

Routh asked only a few questions of the witnesses on cross-examination, and when he did he referred to himself in the third-person, leading to some awkward exchanges with Secret Service Agent Robert Fercano, who had spotted him in the bushes. Routh asked the agent if he had been harmed by what happened, and Fercano replied, "I wasn't physically harmed, but I was mentally harmed from you pointing a gun at me."

Fercano described being in a golf cart only five feet (1.5 meters) from Routh when he saw him pointing a gun from the bushes.

The trial began nearly a year after prosecutors say Fercano thwarted the attempt to shoot the Republican presidential nominee. It's expected to run two or three weeks. The trial's start comes as police search for the gunman who killed conservative influencer Charlie Kirk at a campus in Utah on Wednesday in what political leaders are calling an assassination.

Cannon is a Trump-appointed judge who drew scrutiny for her handling of a criminal case accusing Trump of illegally storing classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach.

Routh was a North Carolina construction worker who in recent years had moved to Hawaii. A self-styled mercenary leader, Routh spoke out to anyone who would listen about his dangerous, sometimes violent plans to insert himself into conflicts around the world, witnesses have told The Associated Press.

In the early days of the war in Ukraine, Routh tried to recruit soldiers from Afghanistan, Moldova and Taiwan to fight the Russians. In his native Greensboro, North Carolina, he was arrested in 2002 for eluding a traffic stop and barricading himself from officers with a fully automatic machine gun and a "weapon of mass destruction," which turned out to be an explosive with a 10-inch (25.4-cm) fuse.

Trump administration requests emergency ruling to remove Cook from Fed board

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration has asked an appeals court to remove Lisa Cook from the Federal Reserve's board of governors by Monday, before the central bank's next vote on interest rates.

The request represents an extraordinary effort by the White House to shape the board before the Fed's interest rate-setting committee meets next Tuesday and Wednesday. At the same time, Senate Republicans are pushing to confirm Stephen Miran, President Donald Trump's nominee to an open spot on the Fed's board, which could happen as soon as Monday.

Trump sought to fire Cook Aug. 25, but a federal judge ruled late Tuesday that the removal was illegal

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and reinstated her to the Fed's board. Trump has accused Cook of mortgage fraud because she appeared to claim two properties as "primary residences" in July 2021, before she joined the board. Such claims can lead to a lower mortgage rate and smaller down payment than if one of them was declared as a rental property or second home. Cook has denied the charges.

On Tuesday, U.S. District Court Judge Jia Cobb ruled that the administration had not satisfied a legal requirement that Fed governors can only be fired "for cause," which she said was limited to misconduct while in office. Cook did not join the Fed's board until 2022.

In their emergency appeal, Trump's lawyers argued that even if the conduct occurred before her time as governor, her alleged action "indisputably calls into question Cook's trustworthiness and whether she can be a responsible steward of the interest rates and economy."

The administration asked an appeals court to issue an emergency decision reversing the lower court by Monday. If their appeal is successful, Cook would be removed from the Fed's board until her case is ultimately resolved in the courts, and she would miss next week's meeting.

If the appeals court rules in Cook's favor, the administration could seek an emergency ruling from the Supreme Court.

Either way, the Fed is expected to cut its benchmark interest rate next week by a quarter-point to about 4.1%. When the Fed reduces its key rate, it often, over time, lowers borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans, and business loans. Some of those rates have already fallen in anticipation of cuts from the Fed.

Should Miran, a top economic adviser to Trump, win approval in time to join the Fed next week, he could push for a steeper half-point reduction to the Fed's rate.

Yet there are 12 officials who vote on whether and by how much to cut, including the seven members of the Fed's board as well as five of the Fed's 12 regional bank presidents, who vote on a rotating basis.

Trump's two other appointees to the Fed — Christopher Waller and Michelle Bowman — might also support a half-point cut, but several of the Fed's bank presidents have expressed concern about stubbornly elevated inflation and would almost certainly oppose such a large reduction.

If the Fed approves a quarter-point cut, it is possible there could be dissenting votes both from officials who preferred no cut and from those who support a half-point.

Judge issues nationwide block on Trump policy that cuts off Head Start for people in US illegally

By MAKIYA SEMINERA AP Education Writer

A federal judge has issued a nationwide block on a Trump administration directive that prevented children in the U.S. illegally from enrolling in Head Start, a federally funded preschool program.

Head Start associations in several states filed suit against the policy change by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The ruling by a federal judge in Washington state on Thursday comes after a coalition of 21 Democratic attorneys general succeeded in temporarily halting the policy's implementation within their own states.

With the new ruling, the policy is now on hold across the country.

Andrew Nixon, an HHS spokesman, said the agency disagrees with the court's decisions and is evaluating next steps.

In July, HHS proposed a rule reinterpretation to disallow immigrants in the country illegally from receiving certain social services, including Head Start and other community health programs. Those programs were previously made accessible by a federal law in President Bill Clinton's administration.

The change was part of a broader Trump administration effort to exclude people without legal status from accessing social services by making changes to federal eligibility rules.

Those immigrants would be barred from accessing the impacted programs because they would be reclassified as federal public benefits — an alteration that Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said could disincentivize illegal immigration. People in the country unlawfully are largely ineligible for federal public benefits, which include food stamps and student loans.

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In issuing the preliminary injunction Thursday, Judge Ricardo Martinez said he saw no reason for a change to the interpretation of eligibility that has been in place for decades. He said it threatened access to services that families rely upon.

"It also results in parents losing childcare, risking missed work, unemployment, forced dropouts, and inability to pay life expenses and support families," Martinez wrote.

The policy changes threatened to lead to the disenrollment of more than 100,000 children from Head Start programs, which have historically played a large role in supporting immigrant families, said Ming-Qi Chu, one of the American Civil Liberties Union attorneys representing the plaintiffs.

"This happened very abruptly with no transition plan in place," Chu said.

Head Start providers weren't previously required to screen applicants' immigration status, which the plaintiffs argued would sow distrust with the program and ultimately lead to a decline in enrollment. Ambiguity over whose immigration status would be checked — a caregiver's, a child's or another household member's status — also could create confusion for families, the plaintiffs said.

Head Start was started six decades ago as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. Nationwide, its centers serve more than half a million low-income children.

The early childhood education program has weathered waves of instability and disruptions to its services. Federal grant freezes and subsequent temporary closures of some Head Start programs started just a few weeks into President Donald Trump's second term earlier this year.

How Charlie Kirk shaped a generation of young people into a conservative force

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and BILL BARROW Associated Press

Charlie Kirk began plotting a way to mold young minds into conservatism at an age when he was still sorting out his own path. Looking to channel his political inclinations into action after a rejection from West Point, Kirk was 18 when he launched a grassroots organization from an Illinois garage that would grow alongside the rise of President Donald Trump and fuel the "Make America Great Again" movement.

Kirk admitted later he had "no money, no connections and no idea what I was doing" when he started Turning Point USA in 2012. But his rhetorical gifts for countering progressive ideas by inflaming cultural tensions and making provocative declarations instantly resonated with college audiences during the Obama administration and Trump's first presidency.

As video clips of his early campus appearances spread online, it helped him secure a steady stream of donations that transformed Turning Point into one of the country's largest political organizations, attracting young people to star-studded gatherings and making it a presence at high schools and colleges around the country.

"No one understood or had the heart of the youth in the United States of America better than Charlie," Trump said on Wednesday after Kirk was assassinated while speaking at a college in Utah.

In the early stages, Kirk described his group as a student organization that advocated for free markets and limited government. He needled peers who bashed capitalism and backed presidential candidate and democratic socialist Bernie Sanders yet "shamelessly enjoy the fruits of the free market," like Starbucks, Amazon and Netflix.

Over time, Turning Point began holding mass rallies that drew tens of thousands of young voters each year to hear top conservative leaders — Trump included — speaking on glitzy stages with massive screens, pyrotechnics and lighting shows befitting a stadium concert.

Alongside Turning Point's growth, Kirk's fame skyrocketed, and he leveraged his nonprofit, celebrity status and a successful podcast into considerable personal wealth.

It is not immediately clear who will lead Turning Point after Kirk's death.

"You don't replace a Charlie Kirk," Trump told reporters on Thursday. "He was unique."

Turning Point spreads conservative ideas across college campuses

Kirk's bread-and-butter remained anchored on college campuses.

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His final appearance Wednesday at Utah Valley University was the opening event of his latest series, titled the "American Comeback Tour."

In his college stops, Kirk would often sit beneath a tent, as he was when he was shot. He was often behind his "Prove Me Wrong" table, where he held forth.

He mainly drew young conservatives — many sporting "Make America Great Again" hats — who said they often felt unwelcome or out of place at school. And he had hundreds of Turning Point employees and volunteers there to recruit students into becoming GOP voters and activists themselves.

The real draw, however, was Kirk arguing with students. He seemed to relish jeers when he had a less friendly audience.

Kirk frequently repeated Trump's false claims that former Vice President Kamala Harris was directly responsible for all immigrants who were in the U.S. illegally. He called George Floyd, a Black man whose death by a Minneapolis police officer sparked a national debate over racial injustice, a "scumbag."

He espoused culturally conservative views, advocating for gun rights, condemning abortion, holding up women as wives and mothers — and men as heads of households. And he mastered the art of the "what about?" retort, turning questions back on progressives and liberals who challenged him.

Kirk was sometimes kept away from schools. In 2018, Turning Point said a Chicago university denied requests for him to speak on their campus citing safety concerns, and a Florida high school would not allow him to speak to students two months after a teenager with an assault rifle had killed 17 people there.

Tommy Richardson, a 36-year-old from Mesa, Arizona, arrived at the Turning Point headquarters after Kirk's death was announced. He praised Kirk as a charismatic leader who helped shape his generation of conservatives and "was a champion of everything we believe."

"That's a huge legacy that will have repercussions for the political landscape for decades to come," he said.

Kirk helped mobilize youth for Trump

In 2024, Kirk used his speech at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee to praise Trump as an economic master and argue that Gen Z voters could not afford another Democratic administration.

"Democrats have given hundreds of billions of dollars to illegals and foreign nations, while Gen Z has to pinch pennies just so that they can never own a home, never marry, and work until they die, childless," he said.

Speaking directly to his generation, the multimillionaire influencer said, "You don't have to stay poor. You don't have to accept being worse off than your parents. You don't have to support leaders who lied to you and took advantage of you for your vote."

According to AP VoteCast, a survey of the 2024 electorate, 47% of voters aged 18-29 opted for Trump, while 51% went for Harris. But that was a much narrower gap than in 2020, when Joe Biden outpaced Trump 61% to 36%.

"I want to express my tremendous gratitude to Charlie Kirk. He's really an amazing guy. Amazing guy. And his whole staff for their relentless efforts to achieve this very historic victory," Trump said at a Turning Point gathering in Arizona last December.

Vice President JD Vance said Kirk's influence continued past the inauguration.

"So much of the success we've had in this administration traces directly to Charlie's ability to organize and convene," Vance said on X late Wednesday. "He didn't just help us win in 2024, he helped us staff the entire government."

Young conservatives call him mentor and inspiration

Several young politicians and figures credit Kirk with inspiring or boosting their public careers.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said he was one of the first "to believe in me." When she ran for Congress from New Hampshire in 2022, Kirk endorsed her in the Republican primary. She lost the general election.

Kirk "believed in the potential and promise of young people," she said. "He inspired millions of them to get involved in politics and fight for our nation's conservative values."

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Vance said Kirk first reached out through a private message on Twitter after a Fox News appearance in 2017 when he was an author and not a politician. They became friends, and Kirk was one of the first people Vance called when he thought of running for the U.S. Senate in early 2021. Kirk introduced him to people who eventually ran his campaign — and to Donald Trump Jr.

"Don took a call from me because Charlie asked him too," Vance posted on X.

Anna Paulina Luna, a Florida Republican congresswoman, said Kirk recruited her as national Hispanic outreach director when she was planning to attend medical school.

"He's part of the reason I'm in office right now," Luna said of Kirk from outside the Capitol Wednesday.

Kennedy Peterson, 20, was among the young people who came to Turning Point headquarters after Kirk's death was announced Wednesday.

"From the day that he started with the Campus Victory Project, I think that his intentions were to create a world that he thought was better than what we have now," Peterson said.

Rising inflation and a deteriorating job market puts the Fed and Americans in a difficult spot

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation rose last month as the price of gas, groceries and airfares jumped while new data showed applications for unemployment aid soared, putting the Federal Reserve in an increasingly tough spot as it prepares to cut rates at its meeting next week despite persistent price pressures.

Consumer prices increased 2.9% in August from a year earlier, the Labor Department said Thursday, up from 2.7% the previous month and the biggest jump since January. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices rose 3.1%, the same as in July. Both figures are above the Federal Reserve's 2% target.

A separate government report Thursday showed that weekly applications for unemployment aid jumped 27,000 to 263,000, the highest in nearly four years. Requests for jobless benefits are a proxy for layoffs. Recent reports have also showed that hiring has weakened dramatically this year and was lower than previously estimated last year.

The data raises the specter of "stagflation," a trend that last bedeviled the U.S. economy in the 1970s. The term refers to a period of slower growth, higher unemployment along with rising inflation. It is unusual because a weak economy typically keeps inflation in check.

Such a scenario could create major headaches for the Fed as it prepares for a meeting next week, when policymakers are widely expected to cut their short-term rate to about 4.1% from 4.3%. The Fed is under relentless pressure from President Donald Trump to cut rates. At the same time, stubborn inflation while the job market is weakening is difficult for the central bank because they are diverging trends that require polar reactions from Fed policymakers to address.

Typically the Fed would cut its key rate when unemployment rises to spur more spending and growth. Yet it would do the opposite and raise rates — or at least keep them unchanged — in the face of rising inflation.

Last month, Chair Jerome Powell signaled that Fed officials are increasingly concerned about weaker hiring, setting the stage for a rate cut next week. Wall Street investors think there is an 85% chance the Fed will cut twice more after that, according to futures pricing tracked by CME Fedwatch.

"Consumer inflation came in mildly hotter than forecast, but not nearly high enough to prevent the Fed from starting to cut rates next week," Kathy Bostjancic, chief economist for Nationwide, said. "The labor market is losing steam and reinforces that the Fed needs to start cutting rates next week and that it will be the start of a series of rate reductions."

Where inflation heads next is a key question for the Fed. While Thursday's report showed inflation picked up, data released Wednesday suggested prices at the wholesale level are cooling. Economists also noted that a separate measure of inflation that the Fed prefers, which will be released in about two weeks, should come in lower than Thursday's figures and paint a more benign picture of prices.

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On a monthly basis, overall inflation accelerated, rising 0.4% from July to August, faster than the 0.2% pace the previous month. Core prices rose 0.3% for the second straight month.

Many economists and some key members of the Fed think that the current pickup in inflation reflects one-time increases from Trump's sweeping tariffs and won't lead to a lasting inflationary trend. They argue that a weaker job market will hold down wages and force companies to keep prices in check.

Subadra Rajappa, head of U.S. rates strategy at Societe Generale, said that while inflation was elevated last month, there were also signs that the cost of services moderated, suggesting that outside of tariffs, prices are cooling.

Yet Joe Brusuelas, chief economist at RSM, a tax and consulting firm, says that higher-income households are still spending sufficiently to push some prices higher, such as hotel and airfare costs, which leapt last month. Such spending could keep inflation stubbornly high even in a weak job market, he said.

"The Fed's getting ready to cut into a sustained increase in prices," he said. "Very unusual spot. ... we can see tariff induced inflation in a slow, steady and methodical manner."

Goods prices picked up last month, a sign Trump's sweeping tariffs are pushing up costs. Gas prices jumped 1.9% just from July to August, the biggest monthly increase since a 4% rise in December. Grocery prices climbed 0.6%, pushed higher by more expensive tomatoes, apples, and beef. Rental costs also increased, rising 0.4%, faster than the previous month.

Clothing costs rose 0.5% just last month, though they are still just slightly more expensive than a year ago. Furniture costs rose 0.3% and are 4.7% higher than a year earlier.

Some restaurant owners have boosted prices to offset the rising costs of food. Cheetie Kumar, who owns Mediterranean eatery Ajja in Raleigh, North Carolina, said she's facing higher costs on everything ranging from spices she imports from India, coffee and chocolate she gets from Brazil, and soy she gets from Canada.

"Those are things that I cannot source locally, we do source a lot of produce and meat and everything else from local farmers, but I don't know any nutmeg growers in North Carolina," she said.

Her overall costs are up about 10% from a year ago, with beef costs up 7%, and much bigger increases for things like coffee, chocolate (300%) and spices (100%).

She's raised prices on some of her menu items by \$1 or \$2, but said she's at the limit of how much she can do so before demand wanes and she stops earning a profit.

Bigger companies are also feeling the pinch.

E.L.F. Cosmetics said this spring that it was raising prices by \$1. Last month, however, CFO Mandy Fields said it is no longer certain whether the \$1 price increases will be enough to offset rising tariff costs.

Shoppers have yet to feel the big sting that economists had predicted earlier in the year. Many retailers ordered goods ahead of tariffs and have also absorbed a big chunk of the costs rather than passing them along to consumers, who've grown increasingly leery of price increases.

But Walmart and other big chains have warned of costs increases as they replenish their inventories, with the full impact of tariffs in effect.

Bob Menendez's wife says she was ex-senator's 'puppet' as she gets 4½ years in prison for bribery

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez's sobbing wife told a judge that her husband was "not the man I thought he was" before she was sentenced Thursday to 4½ years in prison for selling the powerful New Jersey politician's influence in exchange for bribes of cash, gold bars and a luxury car.

U.S. District Judge Sidney H. Stein sentenced Nadine Menendez, 58, for her April conviction for colluding from 2018 to 2023 with her husband, the former Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in a variety of corrupt schemes, some involving assisting the Egyptian government.

Nadine Menendez, tearfully addressing the judge for several minutes before he sentenced her, described her husband as a manipulative liar.

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"I put my life in his hands and he strung me like a puppet," she said. "The blindfold is off. I now know he's not my savior. He's not the man I thought he was."

Standing outside the courthouse afterward, she said she doesn't plan to divorce her 71-year-old husband, who is serving an 11-year sentence for taking bribes, extortion, and acting as an agent of the Egyptian government.

Stein told the defendant that she wasn't the person she was portrayed as during last year's trial of her husband and two New Jersey businessmen, when the judge said she was painted as "the true force behind the conspiracies."

But he said she also wasn't the "innocent observer of what was happening around you," as her lawyer claimed.

"You knew what you were doing. Your role was purposeful," he said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lara Pomerantz said Nadine Mendendez was "the second-most culpable member" of the scheme, after her husband, and that she "did so without hesitation."

"The defendant was not a bit player" the prosecutor said. "She played a critical role in selling the power of a U.S. senator."

When she spoke, Nadine Menendez partly blamed her husband, saying she was duped by his power and stature and that she felt compelled to do whatever he wanted, such as calling or meeting with certain people.

"I would never have imagined someone of his ranking putting me in this position," she said, though she acknowledged that in retrospect, she was a grown woman and should have known better.

Prior to the hearing, Bob Menendez submitted a letter to the judge saying he regretted that he didn't fully preview what his lawyer said about his wife during his trial and in closing arguments.

"To suggest that Nadine was money hungry or in financial need, and therefore would solicit others for help, is simply wrong," he wrote.

In addition to prison time, Stein sentenced Nadine Menendez to three years of supervised release. He said he granted her leniency in part because of the trial she endured, her difficult childhood in Lebanon, her abusive romantic partners, her health conditions and her age.

Stein said a prison term was important for general deterrence purposes: "People have to understand there are consequences."

Nadine Menendez won't have to surrender to prison until next summer. Stein set a reporting date of July 10, accommodating a defense request that she be allowed to remain free to complete necessary medical procedures before she heads behind bars. Federal prosecutors did not object to the request.

Prosecutors had sought a prison sentence of at least seven years.

Her lawyer, Sarah Krissoff, asked that her client serve only a year behind bars, citing longstanding trauma, past abusive relationships, a brain injury and her difficult recovery from breast cancer. That diagnosis came just prior to last year's trial, when she was to be tried along with her husband. She ended up being tried separately.

"People with brain injuries don't just happen to engage in yearslong white-collar crimes. They choose to do so," Pomerantz shot back. "Her choices are what caused that conduct."

After the sentencing, Krissoff said her client plans to appeal.

Prosecutors say Nadine Menendez played a large and crucial role in her husband's crimes, serving as an intermediary between the senator and three New Jersey businessmen who literally lined his coat pockets with tens of thousands of dollars in cash in return for favors he could deliver with his political clout.

During a 2022 FBI raid on the couple's New Jersey home, investigators found \$480,000 in cash, gold bars worth an estimated \$150,000 and a luxury convertible in the garage.

Prosecutors said that, among his other corrupt acts, the senator met with Egyptian intelligence officials and speeded that country's access to U.S. military aid as part of a complex effort to help his bribe-paying associates, one of whom had business dealings with the Egyptian government.

South Korean workers detained in immigration raid leave Atlanta and head home

By KATE BRUMBACK and KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A plane carrying more than 300 workers from South Korea who were detained during an immigration raid at a battery factory in Georgia last week left Atlanta shortly before noon Thursday, bound for South Korea.

The workers traveled by bus from a detention center in southeast Georgia to Atlanta earlier in the day for their flight, which is expected to land in South Korea on Friday afternoon. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said the detainees released by U.S. authorities included 316 Koreans, 10 Chinese nationals, three Japanese nationals and one Indonesian.

The workers were among about 475 people detained during last week's raid at the battery factory under construction on the campus of Hyundai's sprawling auto plant west of Savannah. They had been held at an immigration detention center in Folkston, 285 miles (460 kilometers) southeast of Atlanta.

South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung on Thursday called for improvements to the United States' visa system, saying Korean companies will likely hesitate to make new investments in the U.S. until that happens.

Lee said during a news conference that Korean and U.S. officials had a back-and-forth discussion over whether the detainees had to be handcuffed while they traveled by bus to Atlanta — something the Koreans "strongly opposed." He said there was also a debate over whether they would be leaving under "voluntary departure" or deportation.

While those discussions were ongoing, U.S. officials started to return the detainees' belongings. Then, however, "everything suddenly halted," Lee said, adding that they were told that was due to instructions from the White House.

"President Trump had directed that the (detainees) should be allowed to return home freely and those who didn't want to go didn't have to," he said. "We were told that, because of that instruction, the process was paused and the administrative procedures were changed accordingly."

A South Korean Foreign Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the diplomatic process, said Trump had halted the process to hear from South Korea on whether the Koreans should be allowed to stay to continue their work and help train U.S. workers or should be sent back to South Korea.

Lee said the U.S. gave the detainees a choice between staying and going home. Ultimately, one South Korean national who has relatives in the U.S. chose to stay, Lee said.

The Trump administration's mass deportation agenda has included a string of workplace raids, but this one stood out for its scope and the fact that the target was a manufacturing site state officials have touted as Georgia's largest economic development project. Hyundai Motor Group began manufacturing EVs a year ago at the \$7.6 billion plant, which employs about 1,200 people.

In a statement Wednesday, Gov. Brian Kemp's office stressed its "strong relationship with the Republic of Korea and Korean partners like Hyundai, stretching back 40 years to the establishment of Georgia's trade office in Seoul."

"We are thankful they are reiterating their commitment to adhere to all state and federal laws, just as we remain committed to not allowing this unfortunate incident to undo the decades of mutually beneficial partnerships we've built together," a spokesperson said.

The detention of South Korean nationals also made the raid unusual as they are not often caught up in immigration enforcement actions.

Video released by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Saturday showed a caravan of vehicles driving up to the site and then federal agents directing workers to line up outside. Some detainees were ordered to put their hands up against a bus as they were frisked and then shackled around their hands, ankles and waist. Others had plastic ties around their wrists as they boarded a Georgia inmate-transfer bus.

How to use 8 arms? Octopuses tend to explore with their front

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limbs

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Humans may be right-handed or left-handed. It turns out octopuses don't have a dominant arm, but they do tend to perform some tasks more often with their front arms, new research shows.

Scientists studied a series of short videos of wild octopuses crawling, swimming, standing, fetching, and groping -- among other common activities -- to analyze how each of the eight arms were moving.

"All of the arms can do all of this stuff -- that's really amazing," said co-author and marine biologist Roger Hanlon of the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

Octopus limbs aren't specialized as many mammal limbs are. However, the three octopus species in the study showed a clear preference for using their four front arms, which they did about 60% of the time. The back arms were used more frequently for tilting and rolling that help move the octopus forward.

"The forward arms do most of the exploring, the rear arms are mostly for walking," said Mike Vecchione, a Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History zoologist who was not involved in the study.

Researchers analyzed video clips taken between 2007 and 2015 in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. It was the first large study to examine precise limb actions in the wild.

Unlike previous research of octopus behavior in a laboratory setting, the new work showed that octopuses did not show a preference for right or left arms in their natural environment.

Results were published Thursday in Scientific Reports.

"I'm in awe that the researchers managed to do this," said Janet Voight, an octopus biologist at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, who had no role in the study.

Octopuses are shy and elusive creatures. The species studied spend most of their time hidden in dens -- meaning that filming them required patience and perseverance over many years.

Octopus limbs are complex -- used for mobility and sensing the environment. Each arm contains between 100 and 200 suckers -- complex sensory organs "equivalent to the human nose, lips, and tongue," said Hanlon.

If an arm is bitten off by a predator, as often happens in the wild, octopuses have multiple backups.

"When you've got eight arms and they're all capable," Hanlon said, "there's a lot of redundancy."

Politicians who have experienced violence directly react to Charlie Kirk shooting

WASHINGTON (AP) — The fatal shooting of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at an event in Utah had particular resonance for public figures who have experienced political violence themselves.

Kirk, who served as chief executive and cofounder of the youth organization Turning Point USA, made frequent appearances on college campuses and in other settings, engaging in political dialogue with students in public settings.

Several leaders who have survived public attacks or had family members victimized joined in bipartisan condemnation of the attack on Kirk.

Nancy Pelosi

The former House speaker's husband was seriously injured at their California home in 2022 by a man wielding a hammer, who authorities said was a believer in conspiracy theories.

Pelosi, a Democrat, posted that "the horrific shooting today at Utah Valley University is reprehensible. Political violence has absolutely no place in our nation."

Donald Trump

The president sustained a minor ear injury when he was shot at a campaign event last year. He was also the target of a failed assassination attempt while playing golf in Florida. He had a close relationship with Kirk and announced his passing Wednesday on his Truth Social site.

Trump described Kirk on Truth Social as a "great guy from top to bottom. GOD BLESS HIM!"

He also posted, "No one understood or had the Heart of the Youth in the United States of America bet-

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ter than Charlie."

Gabrielle Giffords

The former U.S. representative, a Democrat, suffered a serious brain injury from a 2011 shooting while meeting with constituents at a shopping center in her Arizona congressional district. She survived and has taken up the cause of fighting gun violence.

Giffords posted on social media that she was "horrified" to hear of Kirk's shooting.

"Democratic societies will always have political disagreements," she wrote, "but we must never allow America to become a country that confronts those disagreements with violence."

Steve Scalise

The House majority leader, a Louisiana Republican, was shot at practice for a charity baseball game involving members of Congress in the Virginia suburbs in 2017. The man who attacked Scalise had grievances against Trump and Republicans and was later fatally shot by police.

Scalise asked people on the social media platform X to "please join me in praying for Charlie Kirk after this senseless act."

Josh Shapiro

The Pennsylvania governor, a Democrat and potential national candidate, was evacuated with his family from the governor's mansion earlier this year after a man broke into the building and set a fire that caused significant damage.

"We must speak with moral clarity," Shapiro wrote on X. "The attack on Charlie Kirk is horrifying and this growing type of unconscionable violence cannot be allowed in our society."

Gretchen Whitmer

The Michigan governor, a Democrat, was the subject of a failed kidnapping plot by right-wing extremists who hoped to ignite a civil war. Two men were imprisoned for their 2020 attempt to kidnap the governor during her first term.

"We should all come together to stand up against any and all forms of political violence," Whitmer wrote on social media.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

The Health and Human Services secretary appeared to invoke his family's losses as he reacted to Kirk's killing. Kennedy's father, for whom he was named, was assassinated in 1968 as he sought the Democratic presidential nomination. Kennedy Sr. was an outspoken critic of the Vietnam War and an advocate for civil rights legislation as attorney general during his brother's presidency and after John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963.

"Once again, a bullet has silenced the most eloquent truth teller of an era," Kennedy wrote on social media. He called Kirk a "relentless and courageous crusader for free speech."

Americans still give awards shows consideration, a new AP-NORC poll finds

By ANDREW DALTON and AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Many Americans still want to thank the academy, at least a little.

About half of U.S. adults say they've watched all or most of an awards show on TV or streaming in the past year, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, while just over half say they've watched clips from an awards show. About 6 in 10 say they've watched an awards show, clips or both in the last year.

The results suggest that some vitality remains in the seemingly stodgy old tuxedo-and-gown world of the Emmys, Grammys, Oscars, Tonys and Golden Globes, whose makers have fought to make them relevant when Americans have more entertainment and engagement choices than ever.

And they come at a moment when the Oscars and the Emmys have seen a short-term uptick in viewers after cultural shifts that brought a huge long-term drop in people gathering around a television to watch

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an awards show together.

"These days, it's more focused on the performances," said Walter Hanley, 69, who used to work in the music industry and still watches most music awards shows. "Back in the '70s and '80s when I would attend regional Grammys in person, it was more about the awards — sound engineering and producers and that kind of thing."

Hanley thinks the pivot has helped awards shows keep up with the times. "You have to cater to what the viewers want," he said.

Some awards shows have rebounded

The Oscars, which remain the most viewed and most engaged-with awards show, are coming off a five-year high in viewers. Nearly 20 million people watched "Anora" win best picture and four other top trophies in March.

But that's down from the more than 55 million who watched "Titanic" win 11 in 1998, when awards shows truly were the king of the world.

Some, like Christine Steingraber, 64, watch most of the awards shows that air on TV. The Oscars are her favorite, but she watches the Emmys and the Grammys, too, even when she's not familiar with the shows or the artists up for awards.

"It opens up another perspective as to whether I want to see that show or hear that artist," she said.

The biggest awards shows — like the Oscars, the Grammys and the Emmys — have streaming partners, but they generally don't appear there until the following day. By that point, viral moments and winners' reactions have already been plastered online in short clips.

The poll suggests that awards shows may be appealing to a new generation. People under the age of 45 are more likely to say they have watched both an awards show and clips in the past year, compared with people age 45 or older.

Clips help extend awards shows' lives

Meme-able moments like the "La-La Land" fiasco or Will Smith's slap at the Oscars or the hits and misses of Golden Globes monologues have shown the shows can still have life after social media took over for TV for many.

The survey found that the people who watched full awards shows largely overlap with clip viewers, although people are slightly more likely to say they've just watched clips rather than just watching shows. About 4 in 10 say they haven't watched clips or shows.

Awards shows — whether they're consumed through clips or live viewing — are more popular among Black and Hispanic adults than among white adults. About 7 in 10 Black and Hispanic adults say they've watched clips or at least most of a show in the past year, compared with just over half of white adults.

Shows including the BET Awards and the Latin Grammys have reached more targeted audiences, just as the MTV Video Music Awards became a way to bring young viewers into the awards audience starting in the mid-1980s.

Rose Lucas, 77, says she used to watch the BET Awards, because she enjoyed the R&B and hip-hop performances. She enjoys music awards shows, but she doesn't typically watch the full show live. She's more likely to watch short clips of performances the next day.

"I don't watch any of them live anymore. I don't tune in to them," Lucas said. "(They are) too long. I'm not as interested anymore."

Most people aren't watching frequently

When the Emmys return on Sunday, all eyes will be on the winners — and the ratings. The last Emmys got a much bigger boost than its predecessor, held in January 2024 because of Hollywood's strikes — one of several challenges including the coronavirus pandemic and this year's wildfires that have thrown awards show norms out of whack.

Television has in some ways overtaken movies as a prestige screen art, but that hasn't translated into similar awards prestige. The Emmys audience is less than half that of the Oscars.

The long-term awards ratings decline closely tracks with real-time broadcast and cable television viewing across the board for virtually everything in the U.S. but football.

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And while there are dozens of awards shows each year, only a handful have a significant audience. The poll found that about 3 in 10 Americans said they had watched awards shows at least “several times” in the past year.

That could be a result of Americans having more options than ever in what to watch — and many being too busy to tune in.

Inez Parker, 88, said she watches awards shows on live TV, and she expects she’ll tune into the Emmys this weekend. But she doesn’t stream the show again or watch clips after the fact — she’s too busy for that.

“I usually watch all of it,” she said. “I’ll watch it live, and that’s it. I don’t watch it again.”

Today in History: September 12, Voyager 1 leaves the solar system

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 12, the 255th day of 2025. There are 110 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Sept. 12, 2013, Voyager 1, launched 36 years earlier, became the first man-made spacecraft ever to leave the solar system.

Also on this date:

In 1857, the S.S. Central America (also known as the “Ship of Gold”) sank off the coast of South Carolina after sailing into a hurricane in one of the worst maritime disasters in American history; 425 people were killed and thousands of pounds of gold sank with the ship to the bottom of the ocean.

In 1940, the Lascaux cave paintings, estimated to be 17,000 years old, were discovered in southwestern France.

In 1958, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Cooper v. Aaron*, unanimously ruled that Arkansas officials who were resisting public school desegregation orders could not disregard the high court’s rulings.

In 1959, the Soviet Union launched its Luna 2 space probe, which made a crash landing on the moon.

In 1962, in a speech at Rice University in Houston, President John F. Kennedy reaffirmed his support for the manned space program, declaring: “We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”

In 1977, South African Black student leader and anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko, 30, died while in police custody, triggering an international outcry.

In 1994, truck driver Frank Eugene Corder piloted a stolen single-engine Cessna airplane into restricted airspace in Washington, D.C., and crashed it into the South Lawn of the White House. He died in the crash.

In 2003, in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, U.S. forces mistakenly opened fire on vehicles carrying police, killing eight of them.

In 2008, a Metrolink commuter train struck a freight train head-on in Los Angeles, killing 25 people.

In 2011, Novak Djokovic beat Rafael Nadal to win his first U.S. Open championship.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Linda Gray is 85. Singer Maria Muldaur is 82. Author Michael Ondaatje is 82. Actor Joe Pantoliano is 74. Photographer Nan Goldin is 72. Composer Hans Zimmer is 68. Actor Rachel Ward is 68. TV host-commentator Greg Gutfeld is 61. Actor-comedian Louis (loo-ee) C.K. is 58. Golfer Angel Cabrera is 56. Country singer Jennifer Nettles (Sugarland) is 51. Rapper 2 Chainz is 48. Singer Ruben Studdard is 47. Basketball Hall of Famer Yao Ming is 45. Singer-actor Jennifer Hudson is 44. Actor Alfie Allen is 39. Actor Emmy Rossum is 39. Los Angeles Dodgers first baseman Freddie Freeman is 36. Country singer-songwriter Kelsea Ballerini is 32. Actor Sydney Sweeney is 28.