

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Friday, Sept. 10

NO SCHOOL

Senior Menu: Creamed chicken over biscuits, peas and carrots pineapple..

Lake Region Marching Festival, 10 a.m.

JV Football vs. Sisseton at Langford, 7 p.m.

## Saturday, Sept. 11

Second Round Soccer Playoffs: Girls soccer at Dakota Valley, 2 p.m.

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Warner

Pumpkin Fest, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

United Methodist Charge Conference with lunch, noon.



## Sunday, Oct. 12

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

St. John's Lutheran: Worship St. John's, 9 a.m., and Zion, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 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.

1st Grade GBB, 3:30 p.m.

2nd Grade GBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Dance Team Practice, 5 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.**

## Nobel Peace Prize

The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded this morning to Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado for her pro-democracy work. The announcement came after a public bid by the White House on behalf of US President Donald Trump for his role in working to resolve eight conflicts. Multiple nominations in Trump's favor came after the committee's Jan. 31 deadline.

The announcement caps a week of selections. Yesterday, the Nobel Committee announced Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai will receive the literature prize for his work covering dystopian themes. The novelist and screenwriter is known for sprawling prose, with sentences that can run on for pages (his most recent book, "Herscht 07769," is one sentence long, spanning roughly 400 pages).

Earlier this week, scientists were recognized for their work to better understand the immune system (Nobel Prize in medicine), discoveries in quantum mechanics (physics), and for developing new molecular architecture (chemistry).

The Nobel Prize in economics will be announced Monday.

## NY Attorney General Charged

A federal grand jury indicted New York Attorney General Letitia James (D) yesterday on charges of bank fraud and making false statements to a financial institution.

The charges stem from James' 2020 purchase of a home in Norfolk, Virginia. James stands accused of violating her mortgage contract by renting out the home instead of treating it as a secondary residence—a decision prosecutors say stands to save her \$19K. James dismissed the allegations as baseless. She accuses the Trump administration of retaliation after bringing a civil fraud case against President Donald Trump that led to a since-tossed \$500M fine (the ruling was upheld).

Trump appointed the prosecutor in this case—his former aide and defense attorney Lindsey Halligan—to the role last month. Halligan has since brought an indictment against former FBI Director James Comey, another political foe of Trump's. Comey pleaded not guilty this week to charges of lying to Congress and obstruction.

## Rare Desert Bloom

A brief but brilliant flower bloom is unfolding in Chile's Atacama Desert, a rare event that occurs every five to seven years depending on rainfall patterns. The event is expected to last through the end of the month, amid the Southern Hemisphere's spring.

At elevations ranging from 8,000 to 13,000 feet, the desert is considered the driest region on Earth outside the Arctic and Antarctic. The Atacama averages less than 0.1 inches of rain per year—the town of Calama purportedly went without measurable rain for nearly 400 years, from 1570 to 1971. Meteorologists said this season brought a relatively enormous 2.3 inches of rain to parts of the desert during the winter season, fueling the vast number of dormant seeds.

Separately, scientists are studying the genome of the primary flower species in the bloom, the pata de guanaco, for clues to produce more drought-resistant crops.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The Las Vegas Aces look to win WNBA championship tonight (8 pm ET, ESPN) after being up 3-0 in WNBA Finals against the Phoenix Mercury.

Turning Point USA to host "All-American" Super Bowl halftime show amid NFL's decision to select Bad Bunny to perform at halftime of Super Bowl LX.

Judge dismisses Drake's defamation lawsuit against Universal Music Group over Kendrick Lamar's "Not Like Us" diss track.

NBA to play two preseason games in China this weekend for first time in six years.

Erik Spoelstra tapped to succeed Steve Kerr as head coach of Team USA men's basketball.

## Science & Technology

Intel unveils new computer processor, Panther Lake, in bid to reestablish reputation as leading chipmaker; Panther Lake to be manufactured at new \$20B Arizona facility and debut in laptops next year.

Astronomers detect lowest-mass dark matter object yet via tiny distortion caused by its gravity; object's mass is a million times that of our sun.

Behavioral scientists find some dogs show addictive-like behaviors toward toys, mirroring human addictions to gambling, gaming, and smartphones; research team to publish follow-up study examining how addictive traits differ by breed.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.3%, Dow -0.5%, Nasdaq -0.1%) as the US government shutdown continues.

The US directly purchases Argentine pesos and agrees to offer \$20B in financing as part of rescue effort to stabilize Argentina's economy.

IRS announces new federal tax brackets for 2026 to adjust for inflation.

At least 22 states are experiencing a recession or close to it, new analysis finds.

## Politics & World Affairs

Israeli government approves ceasefire deal with Hamas; 200 US troops will monitor the exchange of hostages and prisoners, expected within days.

White House denies striking a boat carrying Colombian citizens last week.

Texas' highest criminal court halts the execution of Robert Roberson, convicted of killing his 2-year-old daughter, who was diagnosed with shaken baby syndrome.

French appeals court increases the prison term for a man convicted of raping Gisèle Pelicot.

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## Lake Region Marching Festival

Groton

### Broadcast Sponsors:

Avantara Groton  
Basekamp Lodge  
Bierman Farm Service  
BK Custom Ts & More  
Blocker Construction  
Dacotah Bank  
Groton Ag Solutions  
Groton Chamber of Commerce  
Groton American Legion  
Groton Dairy Queen  
Harry Implement of Ferney  
KR Body Shop of Andover  
Lori's Pharmacy  
The Meat House of Andover  
Spanier Harvesting  
Sun and Sea Travel  
Weismantel Agency of Columbia  
Thanks to JVT for allowing us to use their cellular service to broadcast the event.

## Lake Region Marching Festival 2025 Line Up

Parade Route - Main Street from Railroad  
Avenue to Seventh Avenue  
Broadcast Locally at 89.3 FM

### Exhibition Band

10:00 A.M. #1 Groton Area High School Marching Band

### Middle School Bands

10:06 A.M. #2 Holgate-Simmons Middle School Marching Band

10:12 A.M. #3 Milbank Middle School Marching Band

### High School Bands

10:18 A.M. #4 Britton-Hecla High School Marching Band

10:24 A.M. #5 Frederick Area High School Marching Band

10:30 A.M. #6 Great Plains Lutheran High School Marching Band

10:36 A.M. #7 Northwestern High School Marching Band

10:42 A.M. #8 Redfield High School Marching Band

10:48 A.M. #9 T.F. Riggs High School Marching Band

10:54 A.M. #10 Warner High School Marching Band

11:00 A.M. #11 Watertown High School Marching Band

### Combined School Bands

11:06 A.M. #12 Aberdeen Roncalli Marching Band

11:12 A.M. #13 Castlewood Marching Band

11:18 A.M. #14 Hoven Marching Band

11:24 A.M. #15 Ipswich Marching Band

11:30 A.M. #16 Langford Area Marching Band

11:36 A.M. #17 Leola Marching Band

### Exhibition Band

11:42 A.M. #18 Groton Area Middle School Marching Band (EXHIBITION)

### Awards

Following Parade at Football Field



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## GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

### School Board Meeting

October 14, 2025 – 6:30 AM – GHS Conference Room

#### AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

#### POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approve of minutes of September 8, 2025 school board meeting as drafted.
2. Approve of September 2025 Financial Report, Custodial Accounts, and Investments.
3. Approve of September 2025 District bills for payment.
4. Approve of September 2025 School Lunch Report.
5. Approve of September 2025 School Transportation Report.
6. Authorize the Business Manager to pay district bills up to \$75,000 in advance, using the custodial advance payment account to be approved by the board for reimbursement at the following regular board meeting.

#### OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Proposal Presentations for Facilities Master Planning
  - a. JLG Architects
  - b. Co-Op Architects
  - c. Architecture Incorporated
3. Approve Proposal Response for Facilities Master Planning and authorize Superintendent to execute necessary contract documents.
4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

#### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Adopt Resolution of Cooperative Sponsorship with Doland School District for sports of Boys and Girls Wrestling.
2. Approve hiring Amanda Bisbee, Head Girls Softball Coach, for the 2025-2026 school year.
3. Approve hiring Sue Fjeldheim, Assistant Girls Softball Coach, for the 2025-2026 school year.
4. Appoint delegate to ASBSD Delegate Assembly – November 21, 2025.
5. First reading of recommended policy changes to Federal Grants Manual.
6. Declare property surplus or surplus at no value for disposal.
7. Declare vehicles surplus and authorize Business Manager to post for sale by sealed bids.
  - a. 2001 Dodge Van Wagon
  - b. 2002 Oldsmobile Intrigue
8. Executive session pursuant SDCL 1-25-2(1) personnel issue and SDCL 1-25-2(2) student issue.

#### ADJOURN



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## Groton's Events



**Nov. 11: Veteran's Day Program,  
2 p.m.**



**Dec. 5: Tour of Trees at Wage  
Memorial Library, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**



**Nov. 27:  
Community  
Thanksgiving  
at the  
Community  
Center,  
11:30 a.m.  
to 1:30 p.m.**



**Dec. 6: Olive Grove Holiday  
Party, 6 p.m.**

### **Snow Queen Festival**



**Nov. 30: Groton Snow Queen  
Contest, 4 p.m.**

**Jan. 25, 2026:  
88th Carnival  
of Silver  
Skates,  
2 p.m. &  
6:30 p.m.**



**Nov. 15:  
Legion Post  
#39 Turkey  
Party,  
6:30 p.m.**



**Jan. 25, 2026:  
Groton Robotics  
Pancake Feed at  
the Community  
Center,  
10 am. to 1 p.m.**

# GROTON

**Chamber of Commerce**

**120 N Main, Groton, SD 57445**

**605/397-8422 ~ GrotonChamber.com**

## The Life of Virginia Spencer

Virginia Spencer, 97, of Elk River, MN (formerly of Groton), passed away September 26, 2025 at the Guardian Angels Care Center in Elk River. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on October 25, 2025 at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel in Groton. Paul Kosel will officiate. Visitation will be held at the chapel for one hour prior to services.

Virginia Anderson was born on December 20, 1927. She grew up on a farm south of Claremont where she graduated from high school in 1945. She worked at Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. in Aberdeen until she married Morris Spencer on September 25, 1949. Together they owned and operated the Groton Independent until Oct. of 1986. Morris passed away while they were on vacation in Sante Fe, NM in 1996. She was an active member of the Emmanuel Lutheran Church until she moved to Minnetonka, MN in 2008 and then to Elk River in 2018.

Virginia is survived by daughter and son-in-law Kristine and Ken Ferrington, daughter-in-law Joy Spencer, grandchildren Paul (Jenny) Spencer and Katie Spencer, 3 great grandchildren, sister Janet Frey, sisters-in-law Connie Anderson and Elaine Rossow and several nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death are her husband Morris, son Gary, sister Mavis Nikolas, brother Chuck Anderson, brothers and sisters-in-law George Nikolas, Kenny Frey, Leonard and Alnora Spencer, Ruth and Glenn Suits, Luella and Fred Speer and Curt Rossow.

[www.paetznick-garness.com](http://www.paetznick-garness.com)







## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **'This shutdown feels different.' States might not get repaid when government reopens.**

**Going without federal reimbursement for shutdown costs could force states to cut their own budget priorities**

**BY: KEVIN HARDY-OCTOBER 10, 2025 5:00 AM**

States are doing what they generally do during a federal government shutdown: continuing to operate programs serving some of the neediest people.

That means schools are still serving federally subsidized meals and states are distributing funding for the federal food stamp program. For now.

If the shutdown drags on and federal dollars run out, states can only keep programs going for so long. States may choose to pay for some services themselves so residents keep their benefits.

But this time, state leaders have new worries about getting reimbursed for federal costs once the federal spending impasse is resolved. That's traditionally been the practice following a shutdown, but the Trump administration's record of pulling funding and targeting Democratic-led states has some officials worried about what comes after the shutdown.

Many states already struggled to balance their own budgets this year. And some fear going without federal reimbursement for shutdown costs could force states to make painful cuts to their own budget priorities.

Nevada State Treasurer Zach Conine, a Democrat, said the administration has not made good on its word to states in recent months — freezing some congressionally approved funding and cutting already awarded grants. So it's likewise unclear whether the federal government will follow previous practice and reimburse states for covering shutdown costs of crucial federal programs such as food assistance.

"I think everything is a risk with this administration. ... We in the states are kind of left holding the bag yet again as the federal government tries to sort out what it wants to be when it grows up," he told Stateline.

Nevada entered the shutdown with more than \$1.2 billion in reserves. Last week, Republican Gov. Joe Lombardo's office said in a statement that state funds would be adequate to cover "a short period of time with minimal disruption to services."

But the governor's office said a shutdown of more than 30 days would cause more significant challenges for the state.

Lombardo's office did not respond to Stateline's questions. But last week, it released a three-page document on the shutdown, saying it expected the federal government to reimburse states once the budget stalemate is resolved.

"As D.C. works through its issues, our administration will continue to support Nevadans in any way we can throughout this unnecessary federal government shutdown," Lombardo said in the statement.

While mandatory programs such as Medicaid and Social Security continue to send funds to beneficiaries during the shutdown, funding for other safety net programs such as food assistance are more uncertain. The federal government told states there were enough funds for the food stamp program to cover October benefits, though the special food program for women, infants and children may run out of money sooner.

By furloughing workers and halting federal spending, the shutdown could cost the national economy \$15 billion per week, President Donald Trump's economic advisers estimated.

The White House says a prolonged shutdown will affect the economies of every state by reducing employment, federal benefits and consumer spending. White House estimates say this could cost Michigan \$361 million per week in lost economic output, for example, while Florida could lose \$911 million each week.



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## 'Fend for themselves'

Some federal services are shuttered during a shutdown: The Environmental Protection Agency has ceased many research, permitting and enforcement efforts, and official jobs data is no longer being released. Federal funds for other programs, including food assistance, are expected to last through the end of the month. But states can elect to spend their own funds on these programs, which were previously authorized by Congress and state legislatures.

Before the shutdown, states were stockpiling reserve funding. The National Association of State Budget Officers reported most state budgets this year maintained or increased rainy day funds. At the same time, state and local governments are borrowing record amounts: As much as \$600 billion in municipal bonds is projected to be issued by the end of 2025.

"So states and localities are kind of getting the message they really need to fend for themselves much more than they ever had," said William Glasgall, public finance adviser at the Volcker Alliance, a nonprofit that works to support public sector workers.

Since January, the Trump administration has stripped states and cities of billions of dollars that Congress approved for education, infrastructure and energy projects. Glasgall said that record leaves states with legitimate concerns about getting repaid for their shutdown-related expenses — a prospect that would likely spark even more lawsuits from Democratic-led states.

"They've already, before the shutdown, started rolling back federal funding, and I don't see any reason why they would stop now," he said. "The recessions that have been announced are pretty harsh, and it's money we're expecting and not getting."

The last shutdown, which lasted five weeks during Trump's first term, delayed billions in federal spending and reduced gross domestic product — the value of all goods and services produced — by \$11 billion, the Congressional Budget Office estimated in 2019. Experts say states were repaid for costs they incurred providing federal services during that shutdown.

In Minnesota, State Budget Director Ahna Minge said staff have been studying previous shutdowns. But at a news conference with Democratic Gov. Tim Walz last week, she characterized this shutdown as "unpredictable."

"The current federal administration may not follow the historic playbook," she said.

Walz said farmers would be among the first hit as the federal Farm Service Agency has ceased operations in the middle of the state's harvest season. Among other duties, that agency works on disaster assistance and processes loans during harvest to protect farmers against commodity price fluctuations.

Minge said Minnesota officials think programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children have enough existing federal funds to operate through October. But she said the state budget cannot backfill all the commitments made by federal programs.

"What we know is that the longer a shutdown lasts, the greater the impact to state programs and services," she said.

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont, a Democrat, has pledged to use state dollars to keep WIC afloat if needed, The Associated Press reported. And Colorado lawmakers set aside \$7.5 million just before the shutdown to keep WIC running.

## Already under strain

In Maryland, the shutdown is compounding the economic instability from Trump's ongoing efforts to shrink the number of federal employees, agencies and spending.

With more than 160,000 federal employees, Maryland's economy relies heavily on the federal workforce. The Trump administration has said it may deny back pay to hundreds of thousands of furloughed federal workers, despite a law he signed in 2019 guaranteeing such back pay.

Chief Deputy Comptroller Andrew Schaufele told lawmakers last week that a shutdown could cost the state \$700,000 per day in lost tax revenue.

Democratic Gov. Wes Moore pledged to continue funding some federal programs, but said the state would not tap into its rainy day funds to do so.

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"We're going to continually evaluate how long we can go," he said at a news conference.

As for getting repaid, Moore spokesperson David Turner told Stateline that the state had received no indication that the federal government would deviate from past practice, "but we are monitoring closely."

This fiscal uncertainty hits states as they are already struggling to respond to the strain of federal agency layoffs and cuts in the major tax and spending law Trump signed this summer. The law slashed billions in social service funding and created costly new bureaucratic burdens for states, which administer Medicaid and food assistance programs.

"There's no way, really at this point, to sort of assess with any level of confidence what's going to happen when you also have these massive layoffs that were going on pre-shutdown," said Lisa Parshall, a professor of political science at Daemen University in New York. "There's just a real sense from states and localities — and I think rightly so — that that kind of reliability of the federal government is now in question."

It may not be a question of whether states are reimbursed for their shutdown expenses, but which states are reimbursed, Parshall said. The Trump administration has publicly targeted funding of liberal-led states and cities over policy disagreements, raising the possibility it could do something similar with the shutdown.

"Whether it's a good thing or a bad thing, you know, you could argue," she said. "But it's definitely a thing that seems to be adding to this level of uncertainty — this shutdown feels different."

In California, officials just closed a nearly \$12 billion shortfall when negotiating the budget that was approved in June. The budget deficit is expected to grow to more than \$17 billion next year, said H.D. Palmer, spokesperson for the State of California Department of Finance, which advises the governor and state agencies on budget issues.

"There isn't a long-term, open-ended line of credit available if this drags out," he said of the federal government shutdown.

The depth of reserve funds available varies by federally funded program, he said. CalFresh, California's name for its Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, has enough funds to cover food stamp benefits for this month, but anything beyond that is uncertain.

"If the duration of this is in the matter of days, it will be an inconvenience, but should not pose a massive problem," he said. "However, if it does drag out for an extended period of time, then clearly it's going to be a problem."

*Stateline reporter Kevin Hardy can be reached at [khardy@stateline.org](mailto:khardy@stateline.org).*

*This story was originally produced by Stateline, which is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network which includes South Dakota Searchlight, and is supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity.*

*Kevin Hardy covers business, labor and rural issues for Stateline from the Midwest.*

## Number of parolees on the run plummets, parole supervisor reports

**Changes tied to collaboration with law enforcement, policy shifts, improved relationships**

**BY: JOHN HULT-OCTOBER 9, 2025 3:54 PM**

SIOUX FALLS — There are fewer parolees on the run in South Dakota today than at any point since 2010, the Board of Pardons and Paroles heard Thursday.

In recent years, there have been around 3,600 people on parole supervision in the state at any given time. In early 2022, nearly 500 of them were classified as "absconders," meaning they'd lost touch with their parole officer.

The current numbers are 3,705 parolees, including 92 absconders.

The low number is a high water mark for parole officers, said Kayla Stucky, assistant director of parole services for the Department of Corrections.

"It's a big deal," said Stucky. "We can't really have a potluck because we're spread out all over the state, but we're all pretty excited about it."

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Stucky began working with parolees in 2014, and she told the board she's never seen fewer than 100 absconders. The last time the number was lower than that was in 2010, she said, and there were about 1,000 fewer total parolees at the time.

The number of absconders who parole agents can reasonably expect to catch is even smaller, Stucky said. About 75% of the absconders are Native American, she said, and about half of those absconders are on reservation land and outside state jurisdiction.

"That leaves roughly 30 absconders that we can apprehend," Stucky said.

## Multiple changes behind drop

There are a host of reasons for the dramatic drop. In late 2022, the state began to pull together a team it would later dub the Absconder Apprehension Unit, a group that collaborates more closely than parole agents had in the past with entities like the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Marshals Service.

In a press release issued five hours after Stucky's presentation, the Department of Corrections said U.S. Marshals have captured 250 people across the U.S. in the two years since the partnership began.

Policy changes have also played a role, Stucky told the board. Agents now use a checklist to determine who qualifies as an absconder based on their overall pattern of behavior. Are they ducking calls? Have they quit their job? Have they recently broken up with their partner and moved out?

"Just because a person misses an office visit doesn't mean we need to issue an attempt to locate," Stucky said.

Board Vice Chair Kirsten Aasen homed in on that factor on Thursday. She wanted to know how much of the change could be tied to a change in absconder criteria.

"That's the easy way to eliminate absconders," Aasen said. "You just don't call them that anymore."

Stucky said the change is less about classification and more about the way agents work with parolees. In the past, parole agents would issue an absconder warrant for people who didn't show up and couldn't be found for seven to 14 days. If that person showed up at the office as an absconder or on some other violation, they'd be taken to jail.

Agents are now able to detain parolees in the office, Stucky said, because of a policy change. While detained in an agent's office, they'll fill out job applications or work on problem-solving or other life skills exercises. They're sometimes asked to come back the next day for a few hours. They do, Stucky said, because they're less worried about getting locked up again.

"It's so much more beneficial than sending them back to jail," said Stucky.

## Changes to state law

Aasen was pleased to hear that "at least on paper, parole officers are working with" parolees more closely. She also wanted to know about a change to the state's drug ingestion law. Until July, failed drug tests could draw felony charges. Now, the first two offenses are misdemeanors.

"It always made sense to me," Aasen said, that parolees who use drugs would hide if they knew they'd fail a drug test.

The law hasn't been in effect for long enough to tell what difference it might make, Stucky said. But she did proffer that the change might help agents work with people who struggle with addiction and point them in the right direction.

"It gives us a little more leeway, because it's a misdemeanor," Stucky said.

Board Chair Myron Rau said he suspects another factor could soon come to influence the makeup of the parole population. A 2024 bill dubbed "Truth in Sentencing" requires people convicted of certain violent crimes to serve between 85% and 100% of their sentence before being eligible for release.

Rau said that's going to keep certain people off the streets for longer.

"We had to break that news to a guy this week who was in that category," he said.

*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.*



## COMMENTARY

### Governor squanders his credibility on civil discourse with 'eat a salad' comment

**Rhoden reneges on civility pledge with social media post about his Illinois counterpart**  
**SETH TUPPER**

Larry Rhoden spent his first eight months as governor steering South Dakota onto the high ground of civil discourse, only to follow Kristi Noem back into the gutter last week.

Noem, the head of the federal Department of Homeland Security, was in Broadview, Illinois. Protesters have been amassing for weeks at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility there to express disapproval with the Trump administration, resulting in clashes with authorities.

Following her usual impulse to provoke rather than problem-solve, Noem inserted herself into the tense situation with YouTuber and podcaster Benny Johnson in tow, filming her every confrontational move. That included a stroll up to the door of the Village of Broadview Municipal Building with her entourage to ask if she could use the restroom.

Somebody standing on the inside of the door kept it shut and said "no you cannot."

Noem swiveled and stormed off.

"That's what Governor Pritzker says is cooperation and keeping people safe," she blurted on her way past Johnson as he filmed the encounter.

Indeed, how could JB Pritzker, the Democratic governor of Illinois, forget his solemn oath to support the constitution, faithfully discharge his duties, and facilitate bathroom breaks for presidential Cabinet secretaries?

Rhoden, a Republican who succeeded Noem as South Dakota's governor in January, was similarly offended. He shared the footage of Noem's bathroom brouhaha on X (formerly Twitter) and added his own written comments.

"Kristi is the toughest woman I know," Rhoden said. "If Pritzker thinks a locked door will stop her from enforcing the LAW, then he is severely underestimating my friend."

But Rhoden wasn't finished. He followed Noem onto the low road and went even lower in his attack on Pritzker.

"Maybe he should clean up Chicago," Rhoden said. "Or at least eat a salad."

That's apparently supposed to be a joke about Pritzker's well-chronicled efforts to lose weight.

Not laughing? Neither am I.

It's disappointing that Rhoden would write those words or allow them to be written on his behalf. It's also hypocritical coming from a hat-wearing cowboy who's been on a high horse lecturing South Dakotans about civility ever since he pledged, upon becoming governor, that it would be "one of the pillars of my administration."

As recently as Sept. 12, Rhoden philosophized about the importance of "civil discourse" in the weekly column he distributes to the media. He said civility is the best way to honor Charlie Kirk, the conservative activist and commentator who was fatally shot a couple of days earlier in Utah.

On the same day he released that column, Rhoden used his official Facebook account to advocate — unsuccessfully, as it turned out — for the firing of a University of South Dakota professor who posted insensitive comments about Kirk in the hours after the shooting.

"We must not send the message to our kids that this is acceptable public discourse," Rhoden said.

That effort to tear down a USD professor's career for ill-advised but constitutionally protected free speech stands in contrast to Pritzker's past efforts to build up the same university. In 2007, Pritzker's family foundation donated \$5 million to help build the Theodore R. and Karen K. Muenster University Center, named in honor of the parents of Pritzker's wife, Mary Kathryn "MK" Pritzker, who was raised in South Dakota.

Rhoden, meanwhile, is fixated on more recent contributions totaling \$790,000 from Pritzker's issue-based nonprofit, Think Big America, to support a ballot question last fall that would have added abortion

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rights to the South Dakota constitution. Voters rejected the measure, as Rhoden noted in his X post about Noem's bathroom video.

"The last time JB Pritzker picked a fight" with Noem and South Dakota, Rhoden said, "it didn't go well for him."

Perhaps Rhoden needs a reminder that contributing to a ballot question committee does not equate to picking a fight, and a disagreement over immigration policy does not justify a demeaning comment about a fellow governor.

If he doesn't know that, he should spend more time reflecting on his own words from last month, when he admonished everyone to honor Charlie Kirk's legacy by "continuing to talk to each other and focusing on reason and principle, rather than personal attacks."

*Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.*

## Former governors, state AGs weigh in on Trump's deployment of National Guard troops

BY: JACOB FISCHLER-OCTOBER 9, 2025 4:26 PM

President Donald Trump's novel use of National Guard troops for law enforcement purposes has reopened a debate over states' authority to control police powers, as dueling briefs from current and former state leaders filed in Illinois' lawsuit against the president show.

A bipartisan group of former governors said Trump's federalization and deployment of National Guard members to Chicago to control "modest" protests upended the careful balance between state and federal powers.

At the same time, a group of 17 current Republican attorneys general told the court they supported the administration's move that they said was necessary to protect immigration enforcement officers.

Both groups submitted friend-of-the-court briefs in the suit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division brought by Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson to block the Trump administration's deployment of National Guard troops to the nation's third-largest city.

Trump on Wednesday called for the arrest of Johnson and Pritzker for not assisting Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, a provocative demand that raised further concerns about his administration's relationship with state leaders.

The bipartisan group supported Pritzker and Johnson's call for a restraining order to block the deployment, while the Republicans said the restraining order should be denied.

### Democratic attorneys general back Oregon

In another case, in which Oregon is challenging Trump's order to deploy troops to Portland, Democratic governors or attorneys general in 23 states and the District of Columbia argued in support of the state's position.

Democratic Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, who was among those siding with Oregon, said Wednesday he did so to "put an end to the dangerous overreach of power we are seeing with Donald Trump's Guard deployments."

The brief was also signed by Democratic state officials from Washington state, Maryland, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin, Kansas and Kentucky and the District of Columbia's attorney general.

### Former govs say deployment robs state authority

The federalist structure of the U.S. government, which bestows powers to both the federal and state governments, leaves broad police power to the states, the bipartisan group wrote.

Sending military forces to conduct law enforcement would unbalance that arrangement, they said.

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That group includes Democratic former Govs. Jerry Brown of California, Steve Bullock of Montana, Mark Dayton of Minnesota, Jim Doyle of Wisconsin, Parris Glendening and Martin O'Malley of Maryland, Jennifer Granholm of Michigan, Christine Gregoire, Jay Inslee and Gary Locke of Washington, Tony Knowles of Alaska, Terry McAuliffe of Virginia, Janet Napolitano of Arizona, Deval Patrick of Massachusetts, Bill Ritter Jr. of Colorado, Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas, Steve Sisolak of Nevada, Eliot Spitzer of New York, Ted Strickland of Ohio, Tom Vilsack of Iowa and Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania.

GOP former Govs. Arne Carlson of Minnesota, Bill Graves of Kansas, Marc Racicot of Montana, Bill Weld of Massachusetts and Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey also signed the brief.

"The present deployment of military resources, based on an assertion of nearly unfettered federal authority, is unlawful," they wrote. "The president's assertion of authority to deploy military troops on domestic soil based on his unreviewable discretion, and without the cooperation and coordination of state authorities, threatens to upset the delicate balance of state and federal authority that underlies our constitutional order."

The Trump administration misunderstands the section of federal law that Trump has relied on to federalize National Guard troops, the group said.

The administration's claim that only the president can decide if the conditions are met for National Guard units to be federalized "not only undermines state sovereignty but also deprives governors of a critical public safety tool," they wrote.

"If federalization of the National Guard is unreviewable, a president motivated by ill will or competing policy priorities could divert Guard resources away from critical state needs, including natural disasters or public health crises," they continued.

## **States need ICE enforcement, GOP govts say**

The group of current Republican attorneys general argued their states are harmed by the protests in Chicago and other cities that impede federal ICE officers from doing their jobs.

The attorneys general are Brenna Bird of Iowa, Austin Knudsen of Montana, Gentner Drummond of Oklahoma, Alan Wilson of South Carolina, Steve Marshall of Alabama, Tim Griffin of Arkansas, James Uthmeier of Florida, Chris Carr of Georgia, Raúl R. Labrador of Idaho, Todd Rokita of Indiana, Lynn Fitch of Mississippi, Catherine Hanaway of Missouri, Michael T. Hilgers of Nebraska, Marty Jackley of South Dakota, Ken Paxton of Texas and John B. McCuskey of West Virginia.

They described the protests in Chicago as acts of violence that require a strong response.

"Rather than protest peacefully, some of those protests became violent, threatening federal officers, harming federal property, and certainly impeding enforcement of federal law," they wrote. "President Trump's deployment of a small number of National Guard members to defend against this lawlessness is responsible, constitutional, and authorized by statute."

The attorneys general added that their states had been harmed by immigrants in the country without legal authorization who had settled in their states, which they said gave the president a public interest purpose in calling up troops to assist.

"The President's action of federalizing the National Guard furthers the public interest because it allows ICE agents to continue to perform their statutory duties of identifying, apprehending, and removing illegal aliens, which is the only way to protect the States from the harms caused by illegal immigration," they wrote.

*Jacob covers federal policy and helps direct national coverage as deputy Washington bureau chief for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.*



## Trump threatens 'permanent' cuts to Democratic programs on day nine of shutdown gridlock

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT-OCTOBER 9, 2025 1:36 PM

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Thursday he's prepared to cancel funding approved by Congress that he believes is going toward programs supported by Democrats, though he didn't share any additional details during a Cabinet meeting.

"We'll be cutting some very popular Democratic programs that aren't popular with Republicans," he said. "They wanted to do this, so we'll give them a little taste of their own medicine."

Meanwhile, on day nine of the government shutdown, members of the U.S. Senate for the seventh time failed to advance either a Democratic or Republican stopgap spending bill, and House Speaker Mike Johnson said partisan tensions in his chamber are so intense he is reluctant to bring members back until a resolution is found.

"This gets personal. Emotions are high. People are upset. I'm upset," Johnson told reporters at a morning press conference.

### Layoffs, denial of back pay also threatened

Trump has signaled throughout the shutdown he wants to unilaterally cancel funding approved by Congress, lay off federal workers by the thousands and may try to reinterpret a 2019 law that requires back pay for furloughed federal employees after the funding lapse ends.

He has yet to give any real details on those plans or say exactly when he'll try to take those steps, which would likely result in additional lawsuits.

Trump said during the hour-long public portion of the Cabinet meeting that Office of Management and Budget Director Russ Vought would be able to share more details, but Vought never spoke and Trump didn't call on him.

"The shutdown has been, you know, pretty damaging. I mean, not yet, because it's early. But it gets a little bit worse as it goes along," Trump said. "And we'll be making cuts that will be permanent and we're only going to cut Democrat programs. I hate to tell you. I guess that makes sense, but we're only cutting Democratic programs. But we're going to start that and we have Russell, who can talk to you about it if he wants to."

The president is generally required to faithfully execute the laws that Congress approves, including the government funding bills.

The White House budget office has frozen or canceled funding several times this year without going to lawmakers for approval, which is required under a 1970s law.

That has led to a slew of lawsuits and the Government Accountability Office repeatedly citing the administration for illegally impounding funds.

### No progress on votes

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers remained deadlocked over how to advance a stopgap bill to fund the government for a few weeks.

The Senate voted 54-45 on the House-passed bill that would fund federal programs through Nov. 21 and 47-50 on Democrats' counterproposal that would provide spending authority through Oct. 31 and make substantial changes to health care policy.

The tally for the seventh vote to advance those two proposals wasn't much different from the previous ones. Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto and Pennsylvania Sen. John Fetterman, both Democrats, as well as Maine independent Sen. Angus King voted with Republicans to advance their bill. Kentucky GOP Sen. Rand Paul voted no.

Legislation needs the support of at least 60 senators to advance under that chamber's legislative filibuster rule.

The vote came shortly after Speaker Johnson, R-La., made disparaging remarks about Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer during his press conference, with the two increasingly blaming each other

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for the funding impasse.

"There is one thing that Chuck Schumer cares about more than anything else and that is his Senate seat," Johnson said. "The guy has been in Congress for 44 years. He doesn't know how to live life outside this building and so he will do anything to make sure that he keeps that seat."

Johnson, asked about the increasing tensions between Republicans and Democrats over the funding lapse and health care policy, said it is likely better to keep lawmakers in that chamber separated until a resolution is reached.

"I'm a very patient man, but I am very angry right now because this is dangerous stuff," Johnson said. "And so, is it better for them, probably, to be physically separated right now? Yeah, it probably is, frankly."

"I wish that weren't the case. But we do have to turn the volume down. The best way to turn the volume down is to turn the lights back on and get the government open for the people."

## **Shutdown pay for members of the military**

Johnson reiterated that he does not intend to bring the House back from an extended recess to vote on a stand-alone bill to provide on-time paychecks to military members during the shutdown.

Johnson stuck to his position that the best way to ensure pay for U.S. troops is for Democrats to pass the GOP stopgap spending bill, despite Trump breaking with Johnson on that particular issue.

Trump, asked Wednesday about the upcoming Oct. 15 payday for military members, said "that probably will happen" and that the "military is always going to be taken care of."

But, Johnson said during his Thursday press conference the only way out is through the Republican stopgap bill that remains stalled in the Senate.

"We have already voted to pay the troops. We did it three weeks ago. We put that bill on the floor, and the Republicans voted to pay the troops, TSA agents, border patrol, air traffic control and everybody else," Johnson said. "So coming back here and doing it and having a duplicative vote to do the same thing they already did would accomplish nothing."

Schumer, D-N.Y., said during a floor speech the shutdown will not end until after Republicans and Democrats find a way to extend tax credits for people who buy their health insurance from the Affordable Care Act Marketplace past the end of the year.

Schumer also rebuked Johnson for the House schedule, which has only had members in Washington, D.C., for 12 days since the end of July.

"If you're someone who works two jobs or weekends or overtime to make ends meet, what on Earth are you supposed to think when House Republicans can't even be bothered to show up to reopen the government?" Schumer said.

## **New England senators initiate talks**

Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Susan Collins, R-Maine, said she has been speaking with New Hampshire Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen about possible solutions to the impasse.

"I have been in very close contact with Sen. Shaheen, who is very constructive, and is trying to find a path forward," Collins said.

"The ACA issue is important to a lot of us, not just to Democrats," she added. "The tax subsidies were enhanced during COVID. They do need to be reformed, but they do need to be extended as well. They expire at the end of the year. We need to open up government today before more harm is done, before people in the military don't have their paychecks."

*Ariana Figueroa and Shauneen Miranda contributed to this report.*

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

## State board approves \$1.67 million in loans to businesses

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER-OCTOBER 9, 2025 10:27 AM

The state Board of Economic Development approved two loans this week totaling \$1.67 million from state government to businesses.

The board met Wednesday and approved a \$900,000 South Dakota Works loan for Dakota Specialty Solutions to construct and purchase equipment for the agricultural science and chemical company's new distribution center in Canton.

The board also approved a \$769,724 South Dakota Works loan for Cypress Rail Solutions in Vermillion to purchase and renovate a facility to repair railcars. The facility is expected to service up to 25 cars each week, according to a press release.

The loan programs are administered by the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

"These projects highlight the diversity and strength of South Dakota's economy," Commissioner Bill Even said in the release. "They support two critical industries, transportation and agriculture, while creating good jobs and driving steady growth in local communities."

The South Dakota Works program offers loans to businesses for uses including construction, buying equipment and general expenses. The loans are typically less than \$1 million.

The board has approved nine loans from the program so far this year totaling \$6.25 million.

*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.*

## Majorities disapprove of RFK Jr. performance, doubt autism-Tylenol claims, KFF poll finds

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT-OCTOBER 9, 2025 9:01 AM

WASHINGTON — A majority of Americans disapprove of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s job performance and the federal government's evolving vaccine policy, according to a poll released Thursday by the nonpartisan health organization KFF.

In addition, the vast majority of those surveyed have heard the unproven claims made by President Donald Trump, Kennedy and others in late September that taking acetaminophen, also known as Tylenol, during pregnancy could be one possible environmental factor in a child later being diagnosed with autism.

A total of 77% of the people KFF polled said they knew of the statements, though whether people believe the claims, which have yet to be established by the medical community, varied.

Only 4% of those surveyed said it is "definitely true" that taking Tylenol during pregnancy increases the risk of the child developing autism, and 35% said the claim is "definitely false." Thirty percent said it is "probably true" and 30% said it is "probably false."

Combined, 65% said it's either probably or definitely false to say that taking acetaminophen during pregnancy increases the chance of a child developing autism, a complex disorder that experts believe is the result of both genetic and environmental factors.

When broken down by political party, 86% of Democrats, 67% of independents and 43% of Republicans said the claims were either probably or definitely false.

The survey shows 59% somewhat or strongly disapprove of how Kennedy is handling his new role at the top of the country's public health infrastructure.

The level of support changes considerably depending on political party affiliation, with 86% of Democrats, 64% of independents and 26% of Republicans disapproving.

A slightly higher number, 62%, either somewhat or strongly disapprove of the United States' vaccine policy.

A similar trend emerged when those polled were broken up by political parties. Eighty-eight percent of Democrats, 67% of independents and 31% of Republicans somewhat or strongly disapproved of vaccine



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policy.

The survey shows a declining share of Americans have faith in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide trusted information about vaccines, compared with previous KFF polls in September 2023 and earlier this year.

A total of 63% of respondents two years ago trusted the CDC on vaccines, but that has declined to 50%.

Democrats' faith in the CDC's vaccine recommendations has dropped from 88% two years ago to 64%, independents have gone from 61% to 47% and Republicans have remained relatively steady, only going from 40% to 39%.

Across political parties, a person's own doctor as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association remain broadly trusted for vaccine information.

Eighty-three percent said they trust their doctor or health care provider, 69% believed information from the American Academy of Pediatrics and 64% had faith in the AMA.

The poll of 1,334 adults took place from Sept. 23 to Sept. 29 and had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points for the full survey. Questions broken down by a person's political ideology had a margin of error of plus or minus 6 percentage points.

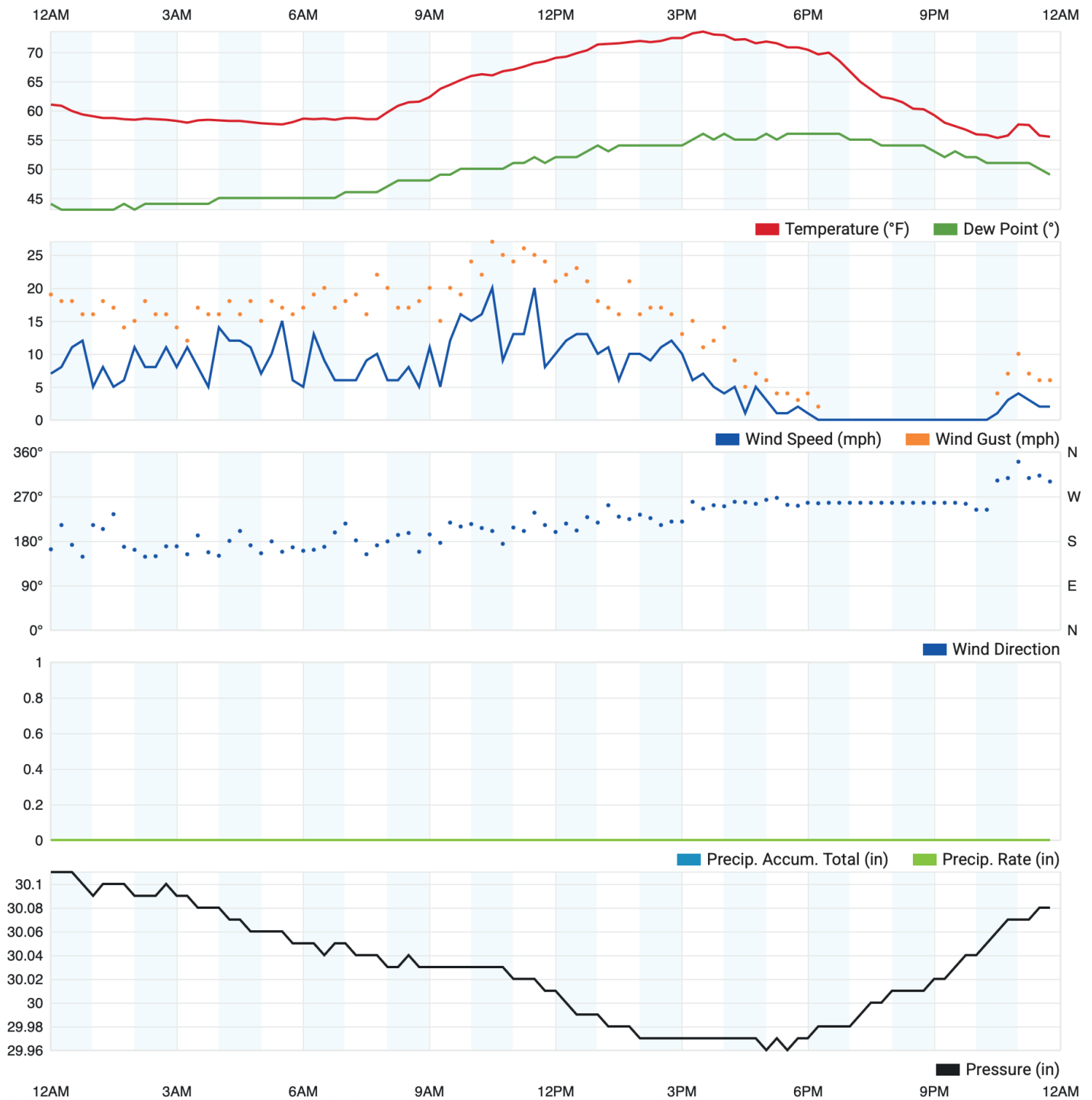
*Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

October 9, 2025



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Today



High: 66 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 43 °F

Partly Cloudy

Saturday



High: 65 °F

Chance  
Showers and  
Breezy

Saturday Night



Low: 56 °F

Chance  
Showers and  
Breezy

Sunday



High: 76 °F

Chance  
Showers and  
Breezy

## Sunny Today

## Weekend Rain Chances

Today

Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025



63 to 71 °

Saturday

Oct 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025



64 to 74 °

Sunday

Oct 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

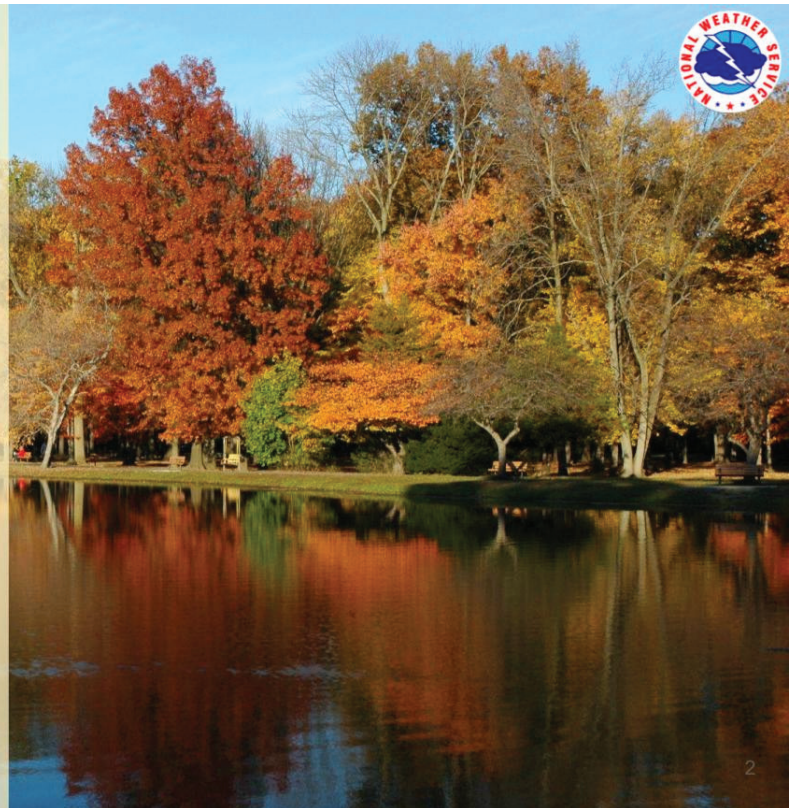


67 to 79 °

While most locations will see a 30% chance of rain on Saturday, the chances will focus over eastern SD and west central MN for Saturday night and Sunday (40-60%) .

Southerly winds gusting to 30-40mph Saturday into Sunday before shifting to the northwest by Sunday evening

October 10, 2025 3:30 AM



Get ready for a mild weekend! Highs will be in the 60s and 70s, but rain chances (30%) will return on Saturday. That rain potential will remain Saturday night into Sunday (40-60% chance) in eastern SD/western MN. We'll also experience gusty southerly winds of 30-40 mph this weekend.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 74 °F at 3:33 PM**

**Low Temp: 55 °F at 10:33 PM**

**Wind: 30 mph at 10:51 AM**

**Precip: : 0.00**

## Today's Info

Record High: 93 in 2015

Record Low: 10 in 1919

Average High: 63

Average Low: 36

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.75

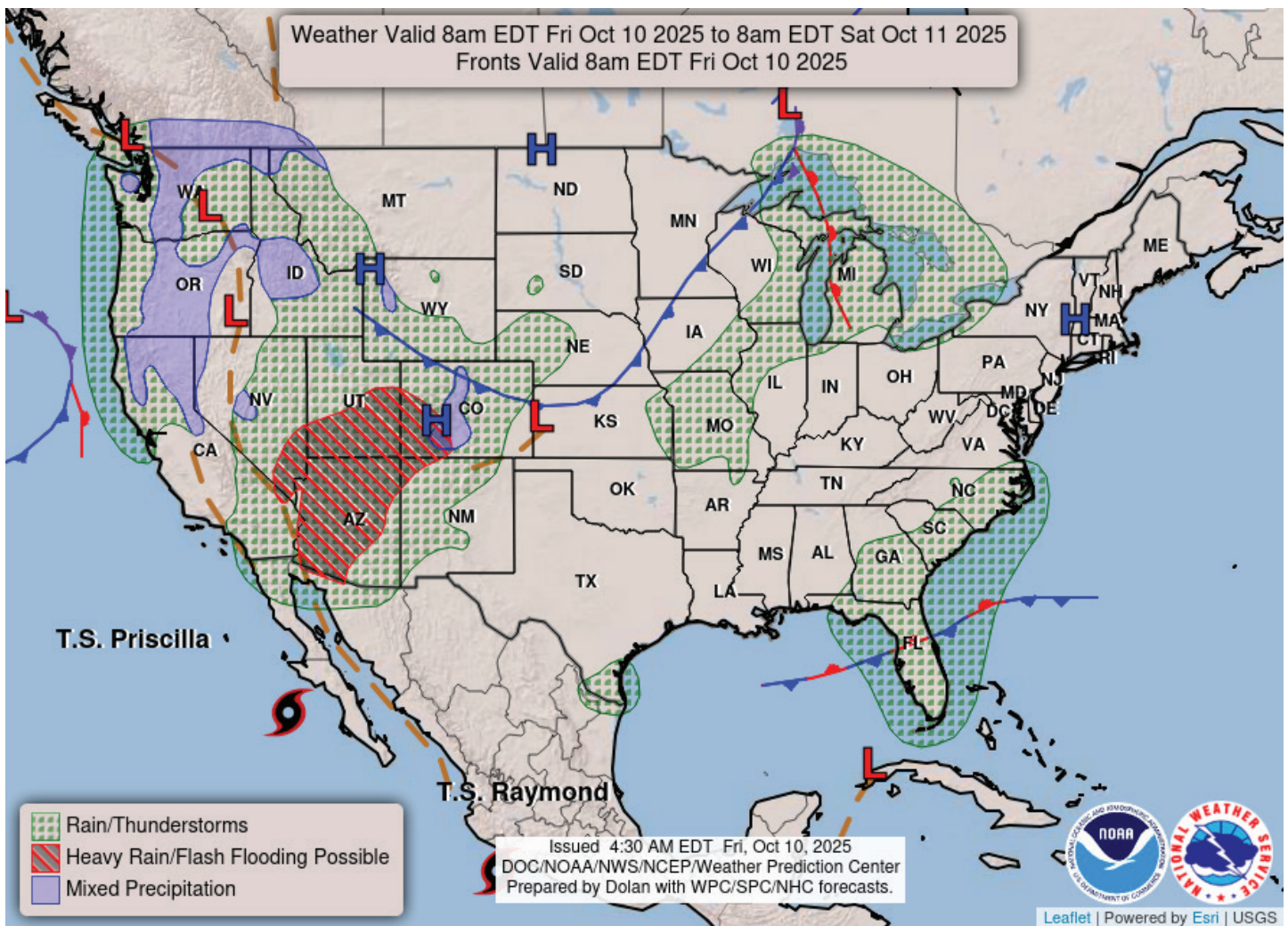
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 19.08

Precip Year to Date: 22.92

Sunset Tonight: 6:56 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:43 am



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## Today in Weather History

October 10, 1928: The temperature reached 90 degrees at Minneapolis, Minnesota, the latest such reading on record.

October 10, 1982: October 8th through October 10th, 1982, record amounts of snow piled up in the northern Black Hills. Not only was the storm an unprecedented breaker because it came so early in the season, but it was also a record snowfall producer for any time of year. Amounts of three to six feet were typical across the northern hills. On October 9th, 1982, thirty-two inches of snow buried Lead. The thirty-two inches that day is the most on record for 24 hours in South Dakota.

1780: The Great Hurricane of 1780 made landfall on the island of Barbados on this day with estimated wind gusts of 200 mph. This hurricane went on to affect the islands of St. Vincent, where only 14 of 600 homes stood at Kings Town. St. Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, and Puerto Rico were all impacted by this hurricane. This storm is the deadliest Atlantic hurricane on record, with between 20,000 and 22,000 deaths.

1804 - A famous snow hurricane occurred. The unusual coastal storm caused northerly gales from Maine to New Jersey. Heavy snow fell across New England, with three feet reported at the crest of the Green Mountains. A foot of snow was reported in the Berkshires of southern New England, at Goshen CT. (David Ludlum)

1846: A major hurricane, likely a Category 5, moved through the Caribbean Sea. This Great Havana Hurricane struck western Cuba on 10 October. It hit the Florida Keys on 11 October, destroying the old Key West Lighthouse and Fort Zachary Taylor.

1928 - The temperature at Minneapolis, MN, reached 90 degrees, their latest such reading of record. (The Weather Channel)

1949: A rapidly deepening area of low pressure produced gale to hurricane-force winds across much of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Michigan, and the Dakotas. Sustained 1-minute winds reached 85 mph at Rochester, MN, and 79 mph at La Crosse, WI, during the early afternoon. Winds gusts were as high as 100 mph. This storm produced extensive damage to buildings and power lines. Also, many corn crops were flattened.

1970: A slow-moving tropical depression produced 41.68 inches of rain in Jayuya, Puerto Rico from October 2-10th, 1970.

1973 - Fifteen to 20 inch rains deluged north central Oklahoma in thirteen hours producing record flooding. Enid was drenched with 15.68 inches of rain from the nearly stationary thunderstorms, which established a state 24 hour rainfall record. Dover OK reported 125 of 150 homes damaged by flooding. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1979 - A storm blanketed Worcester, MA, with 7.5 inches of snow, a record snowfall total for so early in the season for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eleven cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Colorado Springs CO with a reading of 23 degrees, and Havre MT with a low of 11 degrees above zero. Light snow was reported as far south as Kansas. Omaha NE reported their third earliest snow of record. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sunny and mild weather prevailed across the nation for Columbus Day. The afternoon high of 77 degrees at Kalispell MT was the warmest reading of record for so late in the autumn season. Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced wind gusts to 56 mph at Lorain OH. Snowflakes were observed at Milwaukee WI around Noon, but quickly changed to rain as temperature readings were in the lower 60s. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced torrential rains along the northeast coast of Florida. Augustine was deluged with 16.08 inches of rain. The heavy rain caused extensive flooding of homes and businesses, and left some roads under three feet of water. Ten cities from South Carolina to New England reported record low temperatures for the date, including Concord NH with a reading of 23 degrees. Temperatures dipped into the 30s in the Carolinas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2009: Nome, Alaska, experiences its first-ever October thunderstorm with five lightning strikes between 8 and 9 PM ADT.

2009: A band of snow dropped a dusting to over 6 inches of snow in central to western Iowa, into central Nebraska.



## Overcoming Trials

**Moses endured because He fixed His eyes on the Lord.**

Hebrews 11:23-29: 23 By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

Moses faced some tough times. He fled from a murder charge, spent years in the desert, led a grumbling nation whose allegiance ran hot and cold, and more. Today we'll explore what a challenge it was for Moses to stand toe-to-toe with a ruler who scorned him—and how he endured.

Even though he returned to Egypt with an unmistakable call from God (Exodus 3:10), appearing before Pharaoh must still have been intimidating. And Moses had to plead with him repeatedly for the Israelites' release. Pharaoh was not fazed by locusts, convinced by boils, or softened by water turning to blood. In fact, he made life even harder for the Israelites. In turn, the Hebrew people heaped ingratitude on the one tasked with liberating them.

Moses, however, kept returning to the palace until he'd achieved the Lord's purpose—the release of the Israelite slaves. And while leading the exodus from Egypt, "he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen" (Heb. 11:27). With a stack of trials behind and even more to come, Moses moved forward, aware that he was walking in the Lord's presence.

God had pledged to be with him (Exodus 3:12). So, fixing his focus on that promise and the One who made it, Moses wisely trusted that whatever trials he faced, God would bring victory.

*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: 10.07.25

17 26 33 45 56 19

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$575,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 25 Mins 28 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.08.25

4 10 15 17 19 10

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$4,520,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 40 Mins 28 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.09.25

9 11 27 42 46 17

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 55 Mins 28 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.08.25

1 16 21 30 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$45,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 55 Mins 28 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.08.25

8 13 19 34 53 24

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 24 Mins 28 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.08.25

8 10 44 48 54 14

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$244,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 24 Mins 28 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 **AP** Associated Press

### PREP VOLLEYBALL

Aberdeen Christian def. James Valley Christian School, 25-12, 25-16, 25-13  
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Britton-Hecla, 25-20, 25-22, 25-19  
Brandon Valley def. Yankton, 25-5, 25-18, 25-22  
Bridgewater-Emery def. Avon, 28-26, 25-9, 25-16  
Canton def. Garretson, 25-19, 25-13, 26-24  
Centerville def. Scotland, 25-9, 25-9, 25-16  
Clark-Willow Lake def. Redfield, 25-18, 25-17, 21-25, 25-13  
Corsica/Stickney def. Freeman, 25-22, 25-13, 26-28, 21-25, 15-10  
Custer def. Wall, 25-23, 25-12, 25-22  
Dakota Valley def. Madison, 25-22, 25-23, 25-12  
DeSmet def. Oldham-Ramona-Rutland, 25-20, 25-20, 25-18  
Deubrook def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-23, 25-22, 25-23  
Deuel def. Tiospa Zina, 25-8, 25-11, 25-15  
Douglas def. Belle Fourche, 25-18, 25-19, 25-19  
Ethan def. Hanson, 19-25, 25-18, 25-19, 25-27, 15-11  
Gayville-Volin High School def. Menno, 25-6, 25-9, 25-11  
Harding County def. Newell, 25-18, 25-8, 25-17  
Herreid-Selby def. North Central, 25-23, 25-19, 25-19  
Highmore-Harrold def. Wessington Springs, 23-25, 25-16, 27-25, 25-21  
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Miller, 21-25, 25-18, 23-25, 25-18, 15-10  
Iroquois-Lake Preston def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-12, 25-13, 25-23  
Lemmon High School def. New Underwood, 25-17, 25-20, 25-17  
Leola-Frederick High School def. Strasburg, N.D., 25-11, 25-16, 25-5  
Northwestern def. Faulkton, 25-11, 25-16, 25-14  
Oelrichs def. Edgemont, 0-0, undefined-undefined, undefined-undefined, undefined-undefined, undefined-undefined  
Platte-Geddes def. Gregory, 23-25, 13-25, 25-21, 25-19, 15-13  
Rapid City Christian def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-11, 25-18, 25-12  
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Tea, 25-22, 25-13, 25-17  
Sioux Falls Lutheran def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-17, 25-7, 25-14  
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-17, 25-14, 25-23  
St Thomas More def. Kadoka, 25-14, 25-17, 25-15  
Stanley County def. Colome, 25-9, 25-11, 25-18  
West Central def. McCook Central-Montrose, 25-20, 25-18, 27-25  
Hay Springs Triangular=  
Hay Springs, Neb. def. Lakota Tech, 25-14, 25-15  
Lakota Tech def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-22, 25-23

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

### PREP FOOTBALL

Mahpíya Lúta Red Cloud 68, Lower Brule 32  
Marty 62, Crazy Horse 8  
McLaughlin 7, Crow Creek Tribal School 0  
Todd County 46, Pine Ridge 0

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Winnebago, Neb. 50, St. Francis Indian 0

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

## Israeli military says ceasefire agreement in Gaza has taken effect

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — A ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas for the Gaza Strip came into effect at noon local time, the Israeli military said Friday, adding that troops were withdrawing to agreed-upon deployment lines. The announcement came hours after Israel's Cabinet approved President Donald Trump's plan for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, the release of the remaining hostages and of Palestinian prisoners.

Tens of thousands of people who had gathered in Wadi Gaza in central Gaza in the morning started walking north after the military's announcement at noon local time. Beforehand, Palestinians reported heavy shelling in parts of Gaza throughout Friday morning.

The Israeli Cabinet's approval of Trump's plan marks a key step toward ending a ruinous two-year war that has destabilized the Middle East.

A brief statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office early Friday said the Cabinet approved the "outline" of a deal to release the hostages, without mentioning other aspects of the plan that are more controversial.

An Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the withdrawal, said the military would control around 50% of Gaza in their new positions.

Shelling continues through early hours

After the Cabinet approval, Gaza residents reported intensified shelling well into Friday morning.

In central Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp, Mahmoud Sharkawy, one of the many people sheltering there after being displaced from Gaza City, said artillery shelling intensified in the early hours.

"The shelling has significantly increased today," said Sharkawy, adding that low flying military aircraft had been flying over central Gaza.

In northern Gaza, two Gaza City residents told The Associated Press that bombing had been ongoing since the early hours, mostly artillery shelling.

The managing director of Shifa hospital, Rami Mhanna, said the shelling in southern and northern Gaza City had not stopped following the Israeli Cabinet's approval of the ceasefire plan.

"It is confusing, we have been hearing shelling all night despite the ceasefire news," said Heba Garoun, who fled her home in eastern Gaza City to another neighborhood in the city after her house was destroyed.

Details of the deal

A senior Hamas official and lead negotiator made a speech Thursday laying out what he said were the core elements of the ceasefire deal: Israel releasing around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, opening the border crossing with Egypt, allowing aid to flow and Israeli forces withdrawing.

Khalil al-Hayya said all women and children held in Israeli jails will also be freed. He did not offer details on the extent of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Al-Hayya said the Trump administration and mediators had given assurances that the war is over, and that Hamas and other Palestinian factions will now focus on achieving self-determination and establishing a Palestinian state.

"We declare today that we have reached an agreement to end the war and the aggression against our people," Al-Hayya said in a televised speech Thursday evening.

To help support and monitor the ceasefire deal, U.S. officials said they would send about 200 troops to Israel as part of a broader, international team. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not authorized for release.



## Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado wins the Nobel Peace Prize

By KOSTYA MANENKOV, GEIR MOULSON and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

OSLO, Norway (AP) — Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, winning recognition as a woman “who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness.”

The former opposition presidential candidate was lauded for being a “key, unifying figure” in the once deeply divided opposition to President Nicolás Maduro’s government, said Jørgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee.

“In the past year, Ms. Machado has been forced to live in hiding,” Watne Frydnes said. Despite serious threats against her life, she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions. When authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist.”

He told the AP that the committee was able to reach Machado just before the announcement and “it came as a surprise.”

Exiled opposition candidate celebrates

Machado’s ally, Edmundo González, who lives in exile in Spain, posted a short video of himself speaking by phone with Machado.

“I am in shock,” she said, adding, “I cannot believe it.”

González celebrated Machado’s Nobel win in a post on X, calling it a “very well-deserved recognition for the long fight of a woman and of a whole people for our freedom and democracy.”

Maduro’s government has routinely targeted its real or perceived opponents.

Machado, who turned 58 this week, was set to run against Maduro, but the government disqualified her. González, who had never run for office before, took her place. The lead-up to the election saw widespread repression, including disqualifications, arrests and human rights violations.

Crackdown on dissent

The crackdown on dissent only increased after the country’s National Electoral Council, which is stacked with Maduro loyalists, declared him the winner despite credible evidence to the contrary.

The election results announced by the Electoral Council sparked protests across the country to which the government responded with force that ended with more than 20 people dead. They also prompted an end to diplomatic relations between Venezuela and various foreign countries, including Argentina.

Machado went into hiding and has not been seen in public since January. A Venezuelan court issued an arrest warrant for González over the publication of election results. He went into exile in Spain and was granted asylum.

Last year, Machado and González were awarded the European Union’s top human rights honor, the Sakharov Prize.

Machado becomes the 20th woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, of the 112 individuals who have been honored.

Speculation about Trump’s Nobel chances

There had been persistent speculation ahead of the announcement about the possibility of the prize going to U.S. President Donald Trump, fueled in part by the president himself and amplified by this week’s approval of his plan for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

Asked about lobbying for and by Trump, Watne Frydnes said: “I think this committee has seen any type of campaign, media attention. We receive thousands and thousands of letters every year of people wanting to say what for them leads to peace.

“This committee sits in a room filled with the portraits of all laureates, and that room is filled with both courage and integrity. So we base only our decision on the work and the will of Alfred Nobel.”

Last year’s award went to Nihon Hidankyo, a grassroots movement of Japanese atomic bombing survivors who have worked for decades to maintain a taboo around the use of nuclear weapons.

The peace prize is the only one of the annual Nobel prizes to be awarded in Oslo, Norway.

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Four of the other prizes have already been awarded in the Swedish capital, Stockholm this week — in medicine on Monday, physics on Tuesday, chemistry on Wednesday and literature on Thursday. The winner of the prize in economics will be announced on Monday.

## Russian strikes wound at least 20 in Ukraine's capital as child killed in separate attack

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian drone and missile strikes wounded at least 20 people in Kyiv, damaged residential buildings and caused blackouts across swathes of Ukraine early Friday, authorities said. A child was also killed in separate attacks in the southeast of the country.

In the heart of the Ukrainian capital, rescue crews pulled more than 20 people out of a 17-story apartment building as flames engulfed the sixth and seventh floors. Five people were hospitalized, while others received first aid at the scene, authorities said.

The Russian strikes had targeted civilian and energy infrastructure as Ukraine prepared for falling winter temperatures, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on social media.

Prime Minister Yuliia Svyrydenko also described the attack as "one of the largest concentrated strikes" against Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said that Friday's attack knocked out power on both sides of the city, divided by the Dnipro River, while Ukraine's biggest electricity operator, DTEK, said that repair work was already underway on multiple damaged thermal plants.

The energy sector has been a key battleground since Russia launched its all-out invasion of neighboring Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.

Each year, Russia has tried to cripple the Ukrainian power grid before the bitter winter season, hoping to erode public morale. Ukraine's winter runs from late October through March, with January and February the coldest months.

Ukraine's air force said Friday that the latest Russian barrage included 465 strike and decoy drones, as well as 32 missiles of various types. Air defenses intercepted or jammed 405 drones and 15 missiles, it said.

In the southeastern Zaporizhzhia region, residential areas and energy sites were pounded with attack drones, missiles and guided bombs, killing a 7-year-old boy and wounding his parents and others, military administration officials said. A hydroelectric plant in the area was taken offline as a precaution, they said.

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## Taiwan's president pledges to build air defense system in face of China threat

By KEN MORITSUGU and SIMINA MISTREANU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Taiwan will accelerate the building of a "Taiwan Shield" or "T-Dome" air defense system in the face of the military threat from China, its leader said Friday.

President Lai Ching-te also pledged to raise defense spending to more than 3% of GDP and to reach 5% by 2030. GDP, or gross domestic product, is a measure of the size of the overall economy.

"The increase in defense spending has a purpose," he said in an address to an outdoor crowd on Taiwan National Day. "It is a clear necessity to counter enemy threats and a driving force for developing our defense industries."

Taiwan is a self-governing island off China's east coast that the Chinese government claims as part of its territory and says must come under its rule.

The United States, while not recognizing Taiwan as a country, supplies its government with military equipment for its defense and opposes any use of military force by China to settle its dispute with Taiwan.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Friday criticized U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and military ties between Washington and Taipei.

"The Lai Ching-te authorities' attempt to seek independence through military means and resist reunification

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with force will only drag Taiwan into a perilous situation of military conflict,” said spokesperson Guo Jiakun.

Lai called Taiwan a “beacon of democracy” in Asia, drawing a distinction with China’s one-party state.

“Democratic Taiwan ... will strive to maintain the status quo, protect peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and promote regional prosperity and development,” he said from a large stage set up in front of the early 20th-century presidential office building.

Most of his speech focused on economic issues, including Taiwan’s response to the high tariffs that President Donald Trump has imposed on exports to the United States this year.

The government has launched a 93 billion New Taiwan dollar (\$3 billion) plan to help companies, workers and those in farming and fishing who are affected by the tariffs.

“We will also actively engage in reciprocal tariff negotiations with the U.S. to secure a reasonable rate,” Lai said.

Without mentioning Trump, he said America’s tariffs have added to the challenges already facing the world — namely the Russia-Ukraine war, the turmoil in the Middle East, and China’s continued military expansion.

The Chinese military regularly sends fighter jets and warships into the skies and waters off Taiwan and has staged major military exercises in the area in recent years.

Lai said his government would establish a rigorous defense system with high-level detection and effective interception capabilities.

His use of the phrase “T-Dome,” short for Taiwan Dome, was an apparent reference to the Iron Dome system that Israel has developed.

It was not immediately clear if the “T-Dome” referred to a new defense system or if it was a new name for existing initiatives. A Defense Ministry spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for clarification.

Taiwan’s Defense Ministry said in a report this week that it is training soldiers to shoot down drones and looking to procure anti-drone weapons systems in response to China’s expanding development and use of military drones.

Trump has pressured Taiwan to increase military spending to 10% of its GDP, an expectation reiterated on Tuesday by the nominee to be the Pentagon’s senior official for the Indo-Pacific region.

The “T-Dome” allows Taiwan to signal to the U.S. that it is increasing its defense spending rapidly, while keeping its military buildup defensive in nature, said Wen-Ti Sung, a fellow with the Atlantic Council.

“Lai clearly heard U.S. calls for Taiwan to increase its defense spending, which is why Lai spelled out very specific defense-budget-as-share-of-GDP targets and a specific timeline,” Sung added.

Taiwan, home to 23 million people, operates independently but has not declared formal independence, which would risk provoking a Chinese military response.

China and Taiwan have been governed separately since 1949, when a civil war brought the Communist Party to power in Beijing. Defeated Nationalist Party forces fled to Taiwan, where they set up their own government.

Taiwan’s Oct. 10 national day marks the anniversary of a 1911 uprising in China that led to the fall of its last imperial dynasty. It comes nine days after China’s national day on Oct. 1, when communist revolutionary leader Mao Zedong declared the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

## Peru’s Congress removes President Boluarte as a crime wave grips the country

By FRANKLIN BRICEÑO Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Peru’s Congress voted early Friday to remove deeply unpopular President Dina Boluarte from office as a crime wave grips the South American nation and quickly replaced her with 38-year-old lawyer José Jerí, the legislative body’s leader.

Lawmakers had set up a debate and impeachment trial late Thursday in the 130-member unicameral

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Congress after voting to accept four requests for a vote to remove Boluarte from office over what they said was her government's inability to stem crime.

They requested that Boluarte come before them shortly before midnight to defend herself, but when she did not appear they immediately voted to oust her. In short order, 124 lawmakers voted just past midnight to impeach Boluarte. There were no votes against the effort.

The shocking turn of events came just hours after a shooting at a concert in the capital inflamed anger over crime roiling the country.

Unlike eight previous attempts to remove Boluarte, almost all legislative factions expressed support for the latest requests.

Boluarte, Peru's first female president, took office in December 2022 after Parliament used the same mechanism to impeach her predecessor.

After Friday's vote, Boluarte spoke on national television, recounting her administration's achievements. "I have not thought of myself, but rather of Peruvians," she said.

Minutes into her speech, the broadcast was interrupted to show Jerí's swearing in.

Jerí, the president of the Congress, was sworn in early Friday as the interim president to serve out Boluarte's term. Elections are scheduled for next April and Boluarte's term was to end July 28, 2026.

Jerí said he would defend Peru's sovereignty and hand over power to the winner of the April election.

Boluarte was Peru's sixth leader in just under a decade. A normal presidential term is five years.

She assumed power in Peru in 2022 to complete the term of then-President Pedro Castillo, who was removed from office just two years into his five-year term after attempting to dissolve the legislature to avoid his own removal. She had served as Castillo's vice president before becoming president.

There were more than 500 protests demanding her resignation in the first three months of her presidency.

Plagued by scandals, her administration's inability to address Peru's incessant crime proved to be her undoing.

On Wednesday, she partially blamed the situation on immigrants living in the country illegally.

"This crime has been brewing for decades and has been strengthened by illegal immigration, which past administrations haven't defeated," she said during a military ceremony. "Instead, they've opened the doors of our borders and allowed criminals to enter everywhere... without any restrictions."

Official figures show that 6,041 people were killed between January and mid-August, the highest number during the same period since 2017. Meanwhile, extortion complaints totaled 15,989 between January and July, a 28% increase compared to the same period in 2024.

The country's latest presidential crisis erupted after a man opened fire and injured five people Wednesday during a concert of Peru's most popular cumbia groups, Agua Marina.

Prime Minister Eduardo Arana on Thursday defended Boluarte during a crime-focused hearing before Parliament, but it was not enough to dissuade lawmakers from pursuing the motions to see the president out of office.

"Parliament's concerns are not resolved by addressing a request for impeachment, much less by approving it," Arana told lawmakers. "We are not clinging to our positions. We are here, and we knew from the beginning that our first day here could also be our last day in office."

## Powerful earthquake off southern Philippines kills 2 people, causes damages and tsunami evacuations

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A 7.4-magnitude earthquake Friday morning off the southern Philippines killed at least two people, damaged a hospital and schools, knocked out power and prompted evacuations of coastal areas nearby due to a tsunami warning, which was later lifted.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., facing his latest natural disaster after a previous earthquake and back-to-back storms, said the potential damage was being assessed and rescue teams and relief operations were being prepared and would be deployed when it was safe to do so.



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The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said it was expecting damage and aftershocks from the earthquake, which was centered at sea about 43 kilometers (27 miles) east of Manay town in Davao Oriental province and was caused by movement in the Philippine Trench at a depth of 23 kilometers (14 miles).

At least two people died after being pinned in damaged houses in Davao Oriental, provincial Governor Nelson Dayanghirang Sr. told ABS-CBN News Channel, adding that about 250 patients were evacuated from a damaged hospital and would be temporarily housed in tents.

Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV said several buildings sustained cracks in their walls, including an international airport in Davao city, but it remained operational without any flights being canceled, Alejandro said.

"I was driving my car when it suddenly swayed and I saw powerlines swaying wildly. People darted out of houses and buildings as the ground shook and electricity came off," Jun Saavedra, a disaster-mitigation officer of Gov. Generoso town in Davao Oriental, told The Associated Press by cellphone.

"We've had earthquakes in the past, but this was the strongest," Saavedra said, adding that the intense ground swaying caused cracks in several buildings, including a high school, where about 50 students were brought to a hospital by ambulance after sustaining bruises, fainting or becoming dizzy due to the earthquake.

Gov. Generoso is a town about 100 kilometers (62 miles) south of Manay, where classes in all levels were also suspended.

Children evacuated schools in Davao city, which has about 5.4 million people and is the biggest city near the epicenter, about 250 kilometers (155 miles) west of Davao Oriental province.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Honolulu said small waves were detected on the coasts of the Philippines and Indonesia before the threat passed about two hours after the quake. It said small sea fluctuations may continue.

A tsunami warning that set off evacuations in six coastal provinces near Davao Oriental was later lifted without any major waves being detected, chief government seismologist Teresito Bacolcol said.

Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency said small tsunami waves were detected in North Sulawesi province with heights ranging from 3.5 to 17 centimeters (1.3 to 6.7 inches) in Melonguane, Beo, Essang and Ganalo in Talaud Islands districts.

The Philippines is still recovering from a Sept. 30 earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 that left at least 74 people dead and displaced thousands of people in the central province of Cebu, particularly in Bogu city and outlying towns.

The archipelago also is lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year, making disaster response a major task of the government and volunteer groups.

Also Friday, an earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.0 struck Friday off the coast of Papua New Guinea. The U.S. Geological Survey said it was centered in the Bismarck Sea 414 kilometers (257 miles) northeast of Lae, the South Pacific island nation's second-most populous city.

Lae police official Mary Jane Huafalong said no damage was reported.

## National Guard set to patrol Memphis but blocked in Illinois for 2 weeks

By CHRISTINE FERNANDO and SUDHIN THANAWALA Associated Press

National Guard troops were expected Friday to begin patrolling in Memphis, a day after a federal judge in Illinois blocked the deployment of troops in the Chicago area for at least two weeks.

The on-again, off-again deployments are the result of a political and legal battle over President Donald Trump's push to send the National Guard to several U.S. cities. His administration claims crime is rampant in those cities, despite statistics not always backing that up.

If a president invokes the Insurrection Act, they can dispatch active duty military in states that fail to put down an insurrection or defy federal law, but the judge in Chicago said Thursday she found no substantial

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evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois during Trump's immigration crackdown.

The ruling offered a victory for Democratic officials who lead the state and city.

"The court confirmed what we all know: There is no credible evidence of a rebellion in the state of Illinois. And no place for the National Guard in the streets of American cities like Chicago," Gov. JB Pritzker said.

In Tennessee, where Republican Gov. Bill Lee supports the deployment, the troops are expected to serve as "additional eyes and ears" across Memphis, supporting local, state and federal agencies, according to a city website.

The order in Illinois is set to expire Oct. 23 at 11:59 p.m. U.S. District Judge April Perry set an Oct. 22 hearing to determine if it should be extended for another 14 days.

In her ruling, she said the administration violated the 10th Amendment, which grants certain powers to states, and the 14th Amendment, which assures due process and equal protection.

It wasn't clear what the 500 Guard members from Texas and Illinois would do next. They were mostly stationed at a U.S. Army Reserve Center in Elwood, southwest of Chicago. A small number on Thursday were outside a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in Broadview, which for weeks has been home to occasional clashes between protesters and federal agents.

Officials at U.S. Northern Command directed questions to the Department of Defense, which cited its policy of not commenting on ongoing litigation. The troops are under the U.S. Northern Command and had been activated for 60 days.

U.S. Justice Department lawyer Eric Hamilton had said Thursday that the Guard's mission would be to protect federal properties and government law enforcers in the field, not "solving all of crime in Chicago."

The city and state have called the deployments unnecessary and illegal.

Also Thursday, a federal appeals court heard arguments over whether Trump had the authority to take control of 200 Oregon National Guard troops. The president had planned to deploy them in Portland, where there have been mostly small nightly protests outside an ICE building.

A judge on Sunday granted a temporary restraining order blocking the move. Trump had mobilized California troops for Portland just hours after the judge first blocked him from using Oregon's Guard.

Two dozen other states with a Democratic attorney general or governor signed a court filing in support of the legal challenge by California and Oregon. Twenty others, led by Iowa, backed the Trump administration.

Chicago's federal court issued other decisions this week related to immigration enforcement. In one, a judge said immigration agents have repeatedly violated a 2022 consent decree outlining how ICE can make so-called warrantless arrests. That decree requires ICE to show documentation for each arrest it makes for people besides those being targeted.

The president previously sent troops to Los Angeles and Washington.

In a California case, a judge in September said the deployment was illegal. By that point, just 300 of the thousands of troops sent there remained and the judge did not order them to leave.

## Dodgers advance to NLCS, beat Phillies 2-1 on Kerkering's 11th-inning error

By BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Philadelphia Phillies and Los Angeles Dodgers didn't blink as the pressure built, inning after scoreless inning. Both teams pushed a single run across, forcing extra innings. Then came one of postseason baseball's craziest endings.

Orion Kerkering made a wild throw past home instead of tossing to first after mishandling Andy Pages' bases-loaded comebacker with two outs in the 11th inning, and the Dodgers escaped with a 2-1 win Thursday for a 3-1 NL Division Series victory.

"That was a nail-biter," beer-soaked Dodgers catcher Will Smith said in the postgame celebration. "They cracked. We didn't."

Kerkering hung his head and put hands on knees after his throw sailed past catcher J.T. Realmuto as pinch-runner Hyeseong Kim crossed the plate, advancing the Dodgers to the NL Championship Series

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against the Chicago Cubs or Milwaukee.

"I was surprised he threw it home," Kim said through a translator. "I just ran as hard as I could."

Realmuto had pointed to first when the broken-bat, two-hopper hit off Kerkerling and rolled just in front of the mound.

"Just hit off my foot," Kerkerling said. "Once the pressure got to me, I just thought there's a little faster throw to J.T., little quicker throw than trying to cross-body it to Bryce (Harper at first). So just a horses--- throw."

Kerkerling picked up the ball and in one motion made a sidearm throw, 46 feet from the plate. The ball sailed up the third-base line, past Realmuto's outstretched mitt, and fans in the crowd of 50,563 at Dodger Stadium erupted after spending the final three innings on their feet. After originally running past the plate, Kim returned to touch it.

"It's brutal," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "It's one of those things that it's a PFP, a pitcher's fielding practice. He's done it a thousand times. And right there he was so focused, I'm sure, on just getting the hitter and just sort of forgot the outs and the situation."

Phillies manager Rob Thomson wrapped an arm around Kerkerling when the distraught 24-year-old reliever reached the dugout.

"He just got caught up in the moment a little bit," Thomson said. "I feel for him because he's putting it all on his shoulders."

This was the second postseason series to end on a walk-off error, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Nine years to the day earlier, a wild relay throw by Texas second baseman Rougned Odor on a potential double-play grounder allowed Josh Donaldson to score and give Toronto a 7-6, 10-inning win and a three-game AL Division Series sweep.

Los Angeles ended a postseason series with a walk-off win for the third time after Bill Russell's single against the Phillies in Game 4 of the 1978 NLCS and Chris Taylor's homer in the 2021 NL wild card game.

"They held us at bay for eight innings and we just couldn't push through there at the end," Phillies slugger Kyle Schwarber said.

Nick Castellanos' RBI double in the seventh off Emmet Sheehan had put the Phillies ahead but Jhoan Duran walked Mookie Betts with the bases loaded in the bottom half, forcing in the tying run.

Tommy Edman singled off Jesús Luzardo with one out in the 11th and took third on Max Muncy's two-out single that eluded diving shortstop Trea Turner.

"It was very stressful the last few innings," Edman said. "You knew that every little play meant that much more."

Kerkerling walked Kiké Hernández, loading the bases. Pages, in a 1-for-23 postseason slide, hit what appeared to be a routine grounder, the type every pitcher practices gloving from spring training on.

Philadelphia, wearing its powder blue throwback uniforms on the road for the second straight game, was knocked out in the Division Series for the second straight season while the defending World Series champion Dodgers reached the LCS for the eighth time in 13 years.

Dodgers rookie Roki Sasaki, averaging 99.5 mph on his fastball, threw three innings of hitless relief, combining with Tyler Glasnow, Sheehan and winner Alex Vesia on a four-hitter.

"Just felt like my fastball velo was back to where it used to be, and the command of the fastball was where I wanted it to be as well," Sasaki said through a translator. "Because of that I do really feel confident to be able to attack in zone."

Glasnow allowed two hits and three walks in six innings with eight of the 12 strikeouts by Dodgers pitchers.

"It's amazing," Glasnow said. "Everyone contributed. It was a great game."

## Trump gets long-sought Gaza hostage deal with a whole lot of help from Arab and Muslim allies

By JOSEPH KRAUSS, AAMER MADHANI and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After months of gridlock, President Donald Trump finally landed a long-sought Israel-Hamas ceasefire and hostage deal in Gaza — an agreement that only came together after a week-long diplomacy blitz and a whole lot of help from some Arab and Muslim allies.

The breakthrough is designed to bring about a pause in the fighting unleashed by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel. The group is expected to release 48 hostages — about 20 of them believed to be alive — in the coming days.

The brutal war finally reached a turning point because a badly battered Hamas recognized the hostages had become more of a liability than an asset, according to two senior U.S. officials who spoke to reporters on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss internal deliberations.

One of the officials said negotiators, led by special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, believed they finally had an opening when they sensed that "Hamas had enough."

Still, the way to an agreement had remained complicated, leaving the U.S. administration in the difficult position of negotiating through a thicket of distrust between Israel and its Middle East neighbors that was in danger of further metastasizing.

Major questions remain, including over governance and reconstruction of a territory that largely has been destroyed as well as whether Hamas will disarm — a key Israeli demand that the militants have not yet publicly accepted.

But for now Trump appears to be headed toward a delicate truce and making good on his campaign promise to bring home all remaining hostages.

**An Israeli strike on a U.S. ally**

In early September, long-running ceasefire talks mediated by the U.S., Egypt and Qatar were at a standstill.

Witkoff had walked away weeks earlier, blaming Hamas. The militant group then accepted a proposal that mediators said was almost identical to one approved by Israel, but there was no public response from Israel or the U.S.

Hamas stuck to its position that it would only release the remaining hostages in return for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected those terms, saying the war would only end with Hamas' surrender and the return of all the captives, with Israel maintaining open-ended security control over Gaza.

On Sept. 9, explosions rocked Doha. Israel had carried out an airstrike on Hamas leaders and negotiators as they had gathered to consider the latest ceasefire proposal in Qatar, a close U.S. ally and mediator. The strike killed five lower-ranking Hamas members and a Qatari security forces member.

It infuriated Gulf Arab leaders and angered the White House. Trump quickly went into damage control, seeking to reassure Qatar.

The strike alarmed U.S. allies across the region, including countries like Turkey and Egypt that have hosted Hamas political leaders. The war that Trump had pledged to end was at risk of spiraling across the Middle East once again.

But the Qataris remained engaged with Witkoff and Kushner, helping Trump's chief negotiators tailor what would become the president's 20-point peace plan before he would ultimately present it to other Arab and Muslim countries for support, the U.S. officials said.

Two weeks after the Doha strike, Trump met with the leaders of eight Arab and Muslim nations on the sidelines of an annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations that highlighted Israel's growing isolation. The president said it was his "most important meeting."

The president returned to Washington while Witkoff checked into the luxury Regency New York, staying near Kushner's New York apartment so the two could continue coordinating as they fine-tuned the document.

All the while, along with Secretary of State Marco Rubio, they continued to meet and hold calls with Arab and Muslim country leaders to try to build support.



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A ceasefire plan and an ultimatum

Less than a week later, Witkoff and Kushner were back in Washington with the finalized plan, as the president was set to meet with Netanyahu for the Israeli leader's fourth visit to the White House this year.

Witkoff and Kushner had come up with the idea of nudging Netanyahu to make a visible gesture toward reconciliation with the Qataris for the strike.

Trump dialed up Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and spoke to him before handing the phone to Netanyahu. The prime minister read from a written apology, expressing his regret for Israel violating Qatari sovereignty with the strike.

The White House later published photos of a grim-faced Trump with the phone awkwardly perched in his lap as Netanyahu delivered the apology.

In a press conference in Washington after the Sept. 29 meeting, Netanyahu said he had accepted Trump's plan.

Rubio said Trump's negotiators then stepped up their efforts through intermediaries in Qatar and Egypt to get Hamas on board, while Trump held phone calls and meetings with world leaders.

The U.S. plan calls for Hamas to release all the remaining hostages within 72 hours of the ceasefire in return for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, to give up power in Gaza and to disarm.

A crucial move by Trump

Hamas during negotiations made clear its willingness to release all hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners and to give up power to other Palestinians. But it said other elements of Trump's plan required more negotiation and offered nothing about disarming, a key Israeli demand.

The response was clearly a "yes, but."

The U.S. and Israel could have taken it as a "no" and blamed Hamas for the failure to reach a ceasefire on Israel's terms, as they had in the past. Israel could have vowed to press ahead with its invasion of Gaza City or even expand it.

But when the Hamas response landed late Friday, Israel was largely shut down for the Sabbath, and Trump was first to respond, concluding he believed Hamas was ready for peace.

In a brief statement later that night, Netanyahu said Israel was preparing for the implementation of the "first stage" of Trump's plan — the release of hostages — and was still committed to ending the war according to its own principles.

It made no mention of the fact that Hamas had not accepted some key demands.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said on Fox News on Thursday that he and many other Israeli officials were skeptical about Hamas' heavily qualified acceptance. But he said Trump's decision to frame it as a sign of momentum created opportunity.

In an interview with Fox News host and ally Sean Hannity after announcing the agreement, the president said he hoped it would help repair Israel's international standing.

"I spoke to Bibi Netanyahu just a little while ago," Trump told Hannity, using the Israeli prime minister's nickname. "I said, 'Israel cannot fight the world, Bibi.' They can't fight the world. And he understands that very well."

## As Tropical Storm Jerry churns in the Atlantic, Priscilla and a nor'easter threaten US with flooding

MIAMI (AP) — Tropical Storm Jerry churned Thursday in the Atlantic on its approach to the Leeward Islands as Tropical Storm Priscilla and Tropical Storm Raymond moved along Mexico's Pacific coast, threatening heavy rain and flooding in their paths, forecasters said.

Tropical Storm Raymond was announced midday Thursday by the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami, making it the third system now off the western coast of Mexico. Post-tropical cyclone Octave was also off Mexico's Pacific coast, but weakening.

Raymond was about 85 miles (155 kilometers) south-southeast of Zihuatanejo, Mexico. It had maximum

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sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph) and was traveling west-northwest at 15 mph (24 kph), forecasters said. Priscilla could bring flash flooding through the weekend across the U.S. Southwest, the hurricane center said.

Also Thursday, Subtropical Storm Karen formed far from land in the north Atlantic Ocean. The center said Karen was about 545 miles (880 kilometers) north-northwest of the Azores and packing maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph). There were no coastal watches or warnings in effect.

A subtropical storm tends to have a wide zone of strong winds farther from its center compared to a tropical storm, which generates heavier rains, according to the U.S. National Weather Service.

Off the coast of the U.S. Southeast, meanwhile, a storm without a name along with unusually high King Tides because the moon is closer than usual to the Earth threatened to bring days of heavy winds that could cause coastal flooding, especially along the vulnerable North Carolina Outer Banks and in frequently flooded Charleston, South Carolina.

About seven weeks remain in the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season, and meteorologists warned the Pacific Ocean cooling pattern called La Nina, which can warp weather worldwide and turbocharge hurricanes, has returned.

It may be too late in the hurricane season to impact tropical weather in the Atlantic, but this La Nina may have other impacts from heavy rains to drought across the globe.

Tropical Storm Jerry to move past the Leeward Islands

Jerry was centered about 100 miles (160 kilometers) east of the northern Leeward Islands and moving northwest at 17 mph (28 kph) with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (95 kph), the center said.

The storm was expected to pass just east of the northern Leeward Islands on Thursday night.

Officials in the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe warned of power outages on Thursday, noting the island's grid is grappling with power generation issues that began earlier this week and that inclement weather would worsen them.

A tropical storm warning was in effect for Barbuda and Anguilla, St. Barthelemy and St. Martin, Sint Maarten and Guadeloupe and the adjacent islands. A tropical storm watch was in effect for Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis and Montserrat and Saba and St. Eustatius, the hurricane center said.

The storm should strengthen into a hurricane Saturday. The Nor'easter expected to send rain and pounding waves into the Southeast U.S. is helping steer Jerry away from the islands and into the open Atlantic, forecasters said.

Coastal storm to bring flooding tides to southeast US coast

In Charleston, the combination of the coastal storm and the higher King Tides have forecasters predicting a high tide Friday morning of 8.5 feet (2.6 meters). That would be the 13th highest tide at the gauge in Charleston Harbor, which has been recording data for more than a century.

The city offered free parking in some garages starting Thursday morning when the tide was 0.6 feet (18 centimeters) below Friday's forecast but still flooded about a dozen streets.

Along the North Carolina Outer Banks, forecasters said the worst weather should start Friday through the weekend. They warned it was likely that highway N.C. 12 on Hatteras and Ocracoke islands would likely have to close again because of ocean overwash.

More homes could fall into the sea too. Twenty-one houses have collapsed because of rising sea levels and shifting beaches since 2020, with 10 of them destroyed by the churning waters in the past month as Hurricanes Humberto and Imelda moved well offshore, according to the National Park Service.

More storms in the Pacific

In the Pacific, Tropical Storm Raymond was forecast to remain off the southwestern coast of Mexico through Friday before nearing Baja California Sur on Saturday and Sunday. The hurricane center said the storm would strengthen by Friday before weakening over the weekend.

A tropical storm warning associated with Raymond was issued from Zihuatanejo to Cabo Corrientes, Mexico.

Tropical Storm Priscilla was centered about 170 miles (275 kilometers) west of Cabo San Lazaro, Mexico, and moving north-northwest at 8 mph (13 kph) with maximum sustained winds of about 50 mph (85 kph).

Priscilla had approached major hurricane status Tuesday before weakening to a tropical storm on Wednesday.

The storm is expected to move into the southwestern U.S. as it weakens further. Flood watches have been issued for parts of Arizona, California and Nevada.

Meanwhile, the former tropical storm Octave dissipated Thursday about 360 miles (580 kilometers) off the southern tip of Baja California, the hurricane center said.

## **Israeli Cabinet approves Trump's plan for Gaza ceasefire and release of hostages held by Hamas**

By SAMY MAGDY, MELANIE LIDMAN and WAFAA SHURAFU Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Israel's Cabinet early Friday approved President Donald Trump's plan for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the release of all the remaining hostages held by Hamas, a key step toward ending a ruinous two-year war that has destabilized the Middle East.

A brief statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the Cabinet approved the "outline" of a deal to release the hostages, without mentioning other aspects of the plan that are more controversial.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said that, according to the agreement, the ceasefire should begin immediately after government approval. The Israeli military now has 24 hours to pull back its forces to an agreed-upon line.

The broader ceasefire plan includes many unanswered questions, such as whether and how Hamas will disarm and who will govern Gaza. But the sides appeared closer than they have been in months to ending a war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, reduced much of Gaza to rubble, brought famine to parts of the territory and left dozens of hostages, living and dead, in Gaza.

The war, which began with Hamas' deadly attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, has also triggered other conflicts in the region, sparked worldwide protests and led to allegations of genocide that Israel denies.

Some 1,200 people were killed in the Hamas-led assault, and 251 were taken hostage. In Israel's ensuing offensive, more than 67,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and nearly 170,000 wounded, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants but says around half of the deaths were women and children.

In the hours leading up to the Israeli Cabinet's vote, Israeli strikes continued. Explosions were seen Thursday in northern Gaza, and a strike on a building in Gaza City killed at least two people and left more than 40 trapped under rubble, according to the Palestinian Civil Defense.

A senior Hamas official and lead negotiator made a speech Thursday laying out what he says are the core elements of the ceasefire deal: Israel releasing around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, opening the border crossing with Egypt, allowing aid to flow and withdrawing from Gaza.

Khalil al-Hayya said all women and children held in Israeli jails will also be freed. He did not offer details on the extent of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Al-Hayya said the Trump administration and mediators had given assurances that the war is over, and that Hamas and other Palestinian factions will now focus on achieving self-determination and establishing a Palestinian state.

"We declare today that we have reached an agreement to end the war and the aggression against our people," Al-Hayya said in a televised speech Thursday evening.

To help support and monitor the ceasefire deal, U.S. officials said that they would send about 200 troops to Israel as part of a broader, international team. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not authorized for release.

### **Cautious celebrations**

In the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, reactions to the announcement of a ceasefire were relatively muted and often colored by grief.

"I am happy and unhappy. We have lost a lot of people and lost loved ones, friends and family. We lost

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our homes," said Mohammad Al-Farra. "Despite our happiness, we cannot help but think of what is to come. ... The areas we are going back to, or intending to return to, are uninhabitable."

In Tel Aviv, families of the remaining hostages popped champagne and cried tears of joy after Trump announced the deal.

In Jerusalem on Thursday, Sharon Canot celebrated with some others.

"We are so excited this morning. We cried all morning," she said. "It's been two years that we are in horror."

Under the terms, Hamas intends to release all living hostages in a matter of days, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza, people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of an agreement that has not fully been made public. Some 20 of the 48 hostages still in captivity are believed to be alive.

In a short video posted by U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Trump was seen speaking by phone to a group of elated hostage families.

"They are all coming back on Monday," said Trump, who is expected to visit the region in the coming days. How the deal will unfold

The deal, which was expected to be signed in Egypt, will include a list of prisoners to be released and maps for the first phase of an Israeli withdrawal to new positions in Gaza, according to two Egyptian officials briefed on the talks, a Hamas official and another official.

Israel will publish the list of the prisoners, and victims of their attacks will have 24 hours to lodge objections.

The withdrawal could start as soon as Thursday evening, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to be publicly named speaking about the negotiations. The hostage and prisoner releases are expected to begin Monday, the officials from Egypt and Hamas said, though the other official said they could occur as early as Sunday night.

Five border crossings would reopen, including the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, the Egyptian and Hamas officials said.

Tom Fletcher, the U.N. humanitarian chief, told reporters Thursday that officials have 170,000 metric tons of medicine, aid and other supplies at ready for transport into Gaza when they are given a green light.

The Trump plan calls for Israel to maintain an open-ended military presence inside Gaza, along its border with Israel. An international force, comprised largely of troops from Arab and Muslim countries, would be responsible for security inside Gaza. The U.S. would lead a massive internationally funded reconstruction effort.

The plan also envisions an eventual role for the Palestinian Authority — something Netanyahu has long opposed. But it requires the authority, which administers parts of the West Bank, to undergo a sweeping reform program that could take years.

The Trump plan is even more vague about a future Palestinian state, which Netanyahu firmly rejects.

## Hungarian master of absurdist excess László Krasznahorkai wins Nobel literature prize

By KOSTYA MANENKOV, JILL LAWLESS and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai, whose surreal and anarchic novels combine a bleak world view with mordant humor, won the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for work the judges said upholds the power of art in the midst of "apocalyptic terror."

The Nobel judges said the 71-year-old author, whose novels sometimes consist of just one long sentence, is "a great epic writer" whose work "is characterized by absurdism and grotesque excess."

He's the first Nobel literature winner from Hungary since Imre Kertész in 2002 and joins a list of laureates that includes Ernest Hemingway, Toni Morrison and Kazuo Ishiguro.

"I am calm and very nervous," Krasznahorkai told Radio Sweden after getting news of the prize, which



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comes with an award of more than \$1 million. "This is the first day in my life when I got a Nobel Prize. I don't know what's coming in the future."

The work that won the Nobel Prize in literature

The American writer and critic Susan Sontag once described Krasznahorkai as the "contemporary master of the Apocalypse." His work has echoes of other European writers who explored the absurd tragicomedy of existence, including Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett.

Zsuzsanna Varga, a Hungarian literature expert at the University of Glasgow, said Krasznahorkai's novels probe the "utter hopelessness" of human existence, while also being "incredibly funny."

Krasznahorkai's near-endless sentences made his work the "Hotel California" of literature — once readers get into it, "you can never leave," she said.

Varga suggested readers new to Krasznahorkai's work start with "Satantango," his 1985 debut, which centered around the few remaining residents of a dying collective farm and set the tone for what was to follow.

Krasznahorkai has since written more than 20 books, including "The Melancholy of Resistance," a surreal, disturbing tale involving a traveling circus and a stuffed whale, and "Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming," the sprawling saga of a gambling-addicted aristocrat.

"Herscht 07769," from 2021, is set in a German town riven with unrest. Written as a series of letters to then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel, it has just one period in its 400 pages.

Several works, including "Satantango," and "The Melancholy of Resistance" were turned into films by Hungarian director Béla Tarr.

Krasznahorkai also wrote several books inspired by his travels to China and Japan, including "A Mountain to the North, a Lake to the South, Paths to the West, a River to the East," published in Hungarian in 2003.

How Krasznahorkai came to win

Krasznahorkai had been on the Nobel radar for some time, committee member Steve Sem-Sandberg said, calling his literary output "almost half a century of pure excellence."

The writer was born in the southeastern Hungarian city of Gyula, near the border with Romania, and studied law at universities in Szeged and Budapest before shifting his focus to literature.

Varga, the academic, said Krasznahorkai developed a cult following among young Hungarians during the twilight of Communism in the 1980s, when "authors were pretty much like pop stars."

János Szegő, Krasznahorkai's editor at the Budapest-based Magvető publishing house, said that the author's works deal with "life on the periphery," and are interested in "the techniques of power."

"All the populist tendencies of our time can also be found in his novels — from barbarism to the manipulation of the masses," Szegő said.

Krasznahorkai has been a critic of autocratic Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, especially his government's lack of support for Ukraine after the Russian invasion.

In an interview with Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet earlier this year, Krasznahorkai expressed criticism both of Orbán's political system and the nationalism present in Hungarian society.

"There is no hope left in Hungary today and it is not only because of the Orbán regime," he told the paper. "The problem is not only political, but also social."

Orbán nonetheless congratulated the writer in a Facebook post, saying: "The pride of Hungary, the first Nobel Prize winner from Gyula, László Krasznahorkai."

How Krasznahorkai and others reacted

Krasznahorkai received the 2015 Man Booker International Prize for his body of work and the National Book Award for Translated Literature in the U.S. in 2019 for "Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming."

He said none of his career was planned.

"I wanted at first to write only one book. And I didn't want to be a writer," he told Swedish radio, but rereading his first novel he discovered it wasn't perfect.

"I started to write another one because I wanted to correct 'Satantango,'" he said, and later "I tried to write a new book to correct the first two. ... My life is a permanent correction."

The literature prize has been awarded by the Nobel committee of the Swedish Academy 117 times to a

total of 121 winners. Last year's winner was South Korean author Han Kang. The 2023 winner was Norwegian writer Jon Fosse, whose work includes a seven-book epic made up of a single sentence.

The literature prize is the fourth to be announced this week, following the 2025 Nobels in medicine, physics and chemistry.

The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize will be announced Friday. The final Nobel, the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, will be announced Monday.

Nobel Prize award ceremonies are held on Dec. 10, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death in 1896. Nobel was a wealthy Swedish industrialist and the inventor of dynamite who founded the prizes.

Each prize carries an award of 11 million Swedish kronor (nearly \$1.2 million). Winners also receive an 18-carat gold medal and a diploma.

## **New York Attorney General Letitia James charged in fraud case after pressure campaign by Trump**

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, MICHAEL R. SISAK and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — New York Attorney General Letitia James was indicted Thursday in a mortgage fraud case that President Donald Trump urged his Justice Department to bring after vowing retribution against some of his biggest political enemies.

James, a Democrat who infuriated Trump after his first term with a lawsuit alleging that he built his business empire on lies about his wealth, was charged with bank fraud and making false statements to a financial institution in connection with a home purchase in Norfolk, Virginia, in 2020.

The top federal prosecutor for the Eastern District of Virginia, a former Trump aide, personally presented the case to the grand jury weeks after she was thrust into the role amid the administration's pressure to deliver charges.

The indictment, two weeks after a separate criminal case charging former FBI Director James Comey with lying to Congress, is the latest indication of the Trump administration's norm-busting determination to use the law enforcement powers of the Justice Department to pursue the president's political foes and public figures who once investigated him.

In a lengthy statement, James decried the indictment as "nothing more than a continuation of the president's desperate weaponization of our justice system."

"These charges are baseless, and the president's own public statements make clear that his only goal is political retribution at any cost. The president's actions are a grave violation of our Constitutional order and have drawn sharp criticism from members of both parties," she added.

Both the Comey and James cases followed a strikingly unconventional path toward indictment. The Trump administration last month pushed out Erik Siebert, the veteran prosecutor who had overseen both investigations for months and had resisted pressure to file charges, and replaced him with Lindsey Halligan, a White House aide who has worked as lawyer for Trump but had never previously served as a federal prosecutor.

Halligan presented the James case to the grand jury herself, as she did in the case against Comey, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. The person was not authorized to discuss the matter by name and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

James called the decision to fire Siebert and replace him with a prosecutor who is "blindly loyal" to the president "antithetical to the bedrock principles of our country," and she said she stood by her investigation of Trump and his company as having been "based on the facts and evidence — not politics."

Abbe Lowell, James' lawyer and a prominent attorney representing multiple Trump targets, said James "flatly and forcefully denies these charges." James is scheduled to make an initial appearance in the federal court in Norfolk, Virginia, on Oct. 24.

"We are deeply concerned that this case is driven by President Trump's desire for revenge," Lowell said in a statement. "When a President can publicly direct charges to be filed against someone — when it was reported that career attorneys concluded none were warranted -- it marks a serious attack on the rule of

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law. We will fight these charges in every process allowed in the law.”

James, 66, has been attorney general since 2019 after becoming the first Black woman to be elected to statewide office in New York. She cruised to reelection in 2022 after abandoning a short-lived run for governor.

The indictment pertains to James’ purchase of a modest house in Norfolk, where she has family. During the sale, she signed a standard document called a “second home rider” in which she agreed to keep the property primarily for her “personal use and enjoyment for at least one year,” unless the lender agreed otherwise.

Rather than using the home as a second residence, the indictment alleges, James rented it out to a family of three. According to the indictment, the misrepresentation allowed James to obtain favorable loan terms not available for investment properties.

In a post on X shortly after the indictment was handed up, Attorney General Pam Bondi wrote, “One tier of justice for all Americans.”

“No one is above the law,” Halligan, the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, said in a statement. “The charges as alleged in this case represent intentional, criminal acts and tremendous breaches of the public’s trust. The facts and the law in this case are clear, and we will continue following them to ensure that justice is served.”

Trump has been advocating charging James for months, posting on social media without citing any evidence that she’s “guilty as hell” and telling reporters at the White House, “It looks to me like she’s really guilty of something, but I really don’t know.”

The Justice Department has also been investigating mortgage-related allegations against Federal Reserve Board member Lisa Cook, using the probe to demand her ouster, and Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., whose lawyer called the allegations against him “transparently false, stale, and long debunked.”

But James is a particularly personal target. As attorney general, she sued the Republican president and his administration dozens of times. Last year, she won a staggering judgment against Trump and his companies in a lawsuit alleging he defrauded banks by overstating the value of his real estate holdings on financial statements.

An appeals court overturned the fine, which had ballooned to more than \$500 million with interest, but upheld a lower court’s finding that Trump had committed fraud.

The indictment comes a day after Comey made his first court appearance in his case, accusing him of lying to Congress in 2020. Comey’s lawyer told the judge that the defense plans to push to have the case dismissed ahead of trial, arguing that it is a vindictive prosecution brought at the direction of the president.

## **FACT FOCUS: Trump paints a grim portrait of Portland. The story on the ground is much less extreme**

By CLAIRE RUSH AND MELISSA GOLDIN Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — President Donald Trump, members of his administration and conservative influencers painted a bleak portrait of Portland, Oregon, at a roundtable event at the White House Wednesday, alleging that the city has been besieged by violence perpetrated by “antifa thugs” and that it is essentially a war zone.

“It should be clear to all Americans that we have a very serious left-wing terror threat in our country, radicals associated with the domestic terror group antifa that you’ve heard a lot about lately,” Trump said.

But the reality on the ground in Portland is far from the extremes described at the White House.

Here’s a closer look at the facts.

The protests

TRUMP: “In Portland, Oregon, antifa thugs have repeatedly attacked our offices and laid siege to federal property in an attempt to violently stop the execution of federal law.”

THE FACTS: There have been nightly protests outside the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in Portland for months, peaking in June when police declared one demonstration a riot. There

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have also been smaller clashes since then: On Labor Day, some demonstrators brought a prop guillotine — a display the U.S. Department of Homeland Security blasted as “unhinged behavior.”

The protests at the ICE facility, which is outside downtown, have largely been confined to one city block and have attracted a range of participants. During the day, a handful of immigration and legal advocates mill about and offer copies of “know your rights” flyers. Daytime marches to the building have also included older people and families with young children. At night, other protesters arrive, often using megaphones to shout obscenities at law enforcement.

While the administration claims protesters are antifa, short for “anti-fascists,” antifa is not a single organization but rather an umbrella term for decentralized far-left-leaning militant groups that confront or resist neo-Nazis and white supremacists at demonstrations.

The building was closed for three weeks from mid-June to early July because of damage to windows, security cameras, gates and other parts of the facility, federal officials said in court filings submitted in response to a lawsuit brought by Portland and Oregon seeking to block the Trump administration’s deployment of the National Guard. The building’s main entrance and ground-floor windows have been boarded up.

Protesters have also sought to block vehicles from entering and leaving the facility. Federal officials argue that this has impeded law enforcement operations and forced more personnel and resources to be sent from other parts of the country.

However, in the weeks leading up to the Trump administration’s move to federalize 200 members of the Oregon National Guard on Sept. 28, most nights drew a couple dozen people, Portland police correspondence submitted to the court shows.

Protests began growing again after the National Guard was ordered to Portland over the objections of local and state officials.

Since June, Portland police have arrested at least 45 people, with the majority of those arrests taking place in June. Meanwhile, federal prosecutors have charged at least 31 people with crimes committed at the building, including assaulting federal officers; 22 of those defendants had been charged by early July.

Is Portland on fire?

TRUMP: “The amazing thing is, you look at Portland and you see fires all over the place. You see fights, and I mean just violence. It’s just so crazy. And then you talk to the governor and she acts like everything is totally normal, there’s nothing wrong.”

THE FACTS: Fires outside the building have been seen on a handful of occasions. In June, a man was arrested after he lit a flare and tossed it onto a pile of materials stacked against the vehicle gate, according to federal prosecutors, who said the fire was fully extinguished within minutes.

More recently, social media videos of the Labor Day protest showed a small fire lit on the prop guillotine. And in early October, following the announcement of the National Guard’s mobilization, videos on social media showed a protester holding an American flag on fire — and conservative influencer Nick Sortor stomping the fire out.

There have also been some high-profile confrontations between protesters and counterprotesters. In late September, conservative media figure Katie Daviscourt was hit in the face with a flagpole and suffered a laceration, police logs show. In early October, Sortor, who has more than 1 million followers on X, was arrested along with two other protesters following an altercation. Local prosecutors ultimately declined to charge him after finding that one of the protesters had pushed him and that “any physical contact he had with other persons was defensive in nature.”

While Portland police correspondence submitted to the court notes a few instances of “active” energy and disturbances between protesters and counterprotesters, many entries describe low energy and “no issues” in the weeks leading up to the National Guard’s mobilization.

A new tongue-in-cheek website has also launched in recent days: isportlandburning.com shows multiple live cameras in the city and near-real-time data from the city’s fire department.

Shops and sewers

TRUMP: “I don’t know what could be worse than Portland. You don’t even have sewers anymore. They don’t even put glass up. They put plywood on their windows. But most of the retailers have left.”



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THE FACTS: This is false. Portland does have sewers — its sewer and stormwater system “includes more than 2,500 miles of pipes, nearly 100 pump stations, and two treatment plants,” according to the city’s website. The largest sewer pipe is the East Side Big Pipe, which has an inside diameter of 22 feet, while the smallest are only six inches in diameter.

Local and state officials have suggested that many of Trump’s claims appear to rely on images from 2020. Portland famously erupted in more than 100 days of large-scale unrest and violent protests after George Floyd’s killing by Minneapolis police that year. Police were unable to keep ahead of splinter groups of black-clad protesters who broke off and roamed the downtown area, at times breaking windows, spraying graffiti and setting small fires.

But Portland has largely recovered from that time. Under a new mayor and police chief, the city has reduced crime, and the downtown — which has more than 600 retail shops, many with glass storefronts — has seen a decrease in homeless encampments and increased foot traffic. This summer was reportedly the busiest for pedestrian traffic since before the coronavirus pandemic, and a recent report from the Major Cities Chiefs Association found that homicides from January through June decreased by 51% this year compared to the same period in 2024.

Gov. Tina Kotek said she told Trump during a phone call that “we have to be careful not to respond to outdated media coverage or misinformation that is out there.”

Accusation of a cover-up

KRISTI NOEM, Homeland Security Secretary: “I was in Portland yesterday and had the chance to visit with the governor of Oregon, and also the mayor there in town, and they are absolutely covering up the terrorism that is hitting their streets.”

THE FACTS: Noem did visit Portland on Tuesday and met with Kotek and Mayor Keith Wilson. Both officials disagree with Noem’s narrative.

Kotek has repeatedly said that “there is no insurrection in Portland,” including in conversations with Trump and Noem, and that the city does not need “military intervention.” She has also continually called for any protests to be peaceful and said that local law enforcement can “meet the moment.” After Trump threatened to send the National Guard to Portland, Wilson said in a statement that the city has protected freedom of expression while “addressing occasional violence and property destruction.”

Observations on the ground in Portland support Kotek’s statement. While the nightly protests at the ICE facility have been disruptive for nearby residents — a charter school relocated this summer to get away from crowd-control devices — life has continued as normal in the rest of the city. There is no evidence of the protests in other areas of the city, including the downtown area about two miles away.

Portland residents have taken to social media to push back against the Trump administration’s statements about their city with the hashtag #WarRavagedPortland, posting photos and videos that show protesters in inflatable unicorn and frog costumes, along with people walking their dogs, riding their bikes and shopping at farmers markets.

## Judge tosses out Drake’s defamation lawsuit against label over Kendrick Lamar’s ‘Not Like Us’

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A defamation lawsuit that Drake brought against Universal Music Group was tossed out Thursday by a federal judge who said the lyrics in Kendrick Lamar’s dis track “Not Like Us” were opinion.

The feud between two of hip-hop’s biggest stars erupted in the spring of 2024, with the pair trading a series of vitriolic tracks that culminated in Lamar landing the “metaphorical killing blow” with his megahit that May, Judge Jeannette A. Vargas said in her written opinion.

While the track’s lyrics explicitly branded Drake as a pedophile, Vargas said, a reasonable listener could not have concluded that “Not Like Us” was conveying objective facts about the Canadian superstar.

“Although the accusation that Plaintiff is a pedophile is certainly a serious one, the broader context of a heated rap battle, with incendiary language and offensive accusations hurled by both participants, would

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not incline the reasonable listener to believe that 'Not Like Us' imparts verifiable facts about Plaintiff," Vargas wrote.

After the decision Drake's legal team said in a statement: "We intend to appeal today's ruling, and we look forward to the Court of Appeals reviewing it."

"Not Like Us" — described by Vargas as having a "catchy beat and propulsive bassline" — was one of 2024's biggest songs.

It won record of the year and song of the year at the Grammys and helped make this year's Super Bowl halftime show the most watched ever, as fans speculated on whether Lamar would actually perform it. (He did, but with altered lyrics.)

The track, which calls out Canadian-born Drake by name, attacks him as "a colonizer" of rap culture, in addition to making insinuations about his sex life, including, "I hear you like 'em young" — implications that Drake rejects.

Filed in January, the lawsuit — which does not name Lamar — alleged that Universal Music Group intentionally published and promoted the track despite knowing that it contained false and defamatory allegations against Drake and suggested listeners should resort to vigilante justice. The track tarnished his reputation and decreased the value of his brand, the suit said.

UMG, the parent record label for both artists, denied the allegations.

"From the outset, this suit was an affront to all artists and their creative expression and never should have seen the light of day," it said in a statement. "We're pleased with the court's dismissal and look forward to continuing our work successfully promoting Drake's music and investing in his career."

In the suit, Drake also blamed the tune for attempted break-ins and the shooting of a security guard at his Toronto home.

The mansion was depicted in an aerial photo in the song's cover art, with what Vargas described as "an overlay of more than a dozen sex offender markers" — which, she said, was "obviously exaggerated and doctored."

"No reasonable person would view the Image and believe that in fact law enforcement had designated thirteen residents in Drake's home as sex offenders," she wrote.

Recapping "perhaps the most infamous rap battle in the genre's history," Vargas noted that prior to "Not Like Us," Drake mocked Lamar's height and shoe size and questioned his success in an April 2024 track called "Push Ups," while Lamar insulted Drake's fashion sense that same month in "Euphoria."

From there, Vargas wrote, the insults escalated, becoming "vicious, personal."

The judge said she considered the forum in which the insults occurred and concluded that the average listener does not think a dis track "is the product of a thoughtful or disinterested investigation, conveying to the public factchecked verifiable content."

Vargas wrote that "Not Like Us" was "replete with profanity, trash-talking, threats of violence, and figurative and hyperbolic language, all of which are indicia of opinion."

A reasonable listener, she added, "would conclude that Lamar is rapping hyperbolic vituperations."

## Judge blocks National Guard deployment in Illinois for 2 weeks

By CHRISTINE FERNANDO and SUDHIN THANAWALA Associated Press

A judge on Thursday blocked the deployment of National Guard troops in the Chicago area for at least two weeks, finding no substantial evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois during Trump's immigration crackdown.

It's a victory for Democratic officials who lead the state and city and have traded insults with President Donald Trump about his drive to put troops on the ground in major urban areas.

"The court confirmed what we all know: There is no credible evidence of a rebellion in the state of Illinois. And no place for the National Guard in the streets of American cities like Chicago," Gov. JB Pritzker said.

The judge said the administration violated the 10th Amendment, which grants certain powers to states, and the 14th Amendment, which assures due process and equal protection.

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It wasn't clear what the troops will do now, including a small number outside a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in Broadview. Officials at U.S. Northern Command directed questions to the Department of Defense, which declined to comment citing a policy that the department doesn't comment on ongoing litigation.

Guard was already in Illinois

The lawsuit was filed Monday by Chicago and Illinois as Guard members from Texas and Illinois were on their way to a U.S. Army Reserve Center in Elwood, southwest of Chicago. All 500 are under the U.S. Northern Command and had been activated for 60 days.

Some slept in vans Wednesday night outside the Broadview building, near Chicago, and emerged Thursday morning on patrol behind portable fences. For weeks, the ICE site has been the site of occasional clashes between protesters and federal agents.

Earlier Thursday, U.S. Justice Department lawyer Eric Hamilton said the Guard's mission would be to protect federal properties and government law enforcers in the field, not "solving all of crime in Chicago."

The nearly 150-year-old Posse Comitatus Act limits the military's role in enforcing domestic laws. But Trump has said he would be willing to invoke the Insurrection Act, which allows a president to dispatch active duty military in states that are unable to put down an insurrection or are defying federal law.

"Chicago is seeing a brazen new form of hostility from rioters targeting federal law enforcement," Hamilton told the judge.

Perry, however, wasn't swayed.

"I have seen no critical evidence that there is a danger of rebellion in the state of Illinois," she said hours later.

Order could be extended

The judge said the order would expire on Oct. 23 at 11:59 p.m. She set an Oct. 22 hearing by telephone to determine if the order should be extended for another 14 days.

Perry said the actions of the Department of Homeland Security are largely rooted in Trump's "animus toward Illinois elected officials." She expressed skepticism of the federal government's characterization of protests in Broadview.

"DHS's narrative of events is simply unreliable," said Perry, who was appointed to the bench by President Joe Biden.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson sat in a corner of the courtroom, which overflowed into a room with video of the hearing.

The city and state have called the deployments unnecessary and illegal.

"The president does not have the unfettered discretion to turn America's military against its own citizens when they exercise their constitutional rights," Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul said.

Trump, meanwhile, has portrayed Chicago as a lawless "hellhole" of crime despite statistics that show a significant drop in crime. He said Pritzker and Johnson should be arrested for not protecting agents during immigration sweeps. Pritzker's response: "Come and get me."

Court challenges elsewhere

Also Thursday, a federal appeals court heard arguments over whether Trump had the authority to take control of 200 Oregon National Guard troops. The president had planned to deploy them in Portland, where there have been mostly small nightly protests outside an ICE building.

A judge on Sunday granted a temporary restraining order blocking the move. Trump had mobilized California troops for Portland just hours after the judge first blocked him from using Oregon's Guard.

Two dozen other states with a Democratic attorney general or governor signed a court filing in support of the legal challenge by California and Oregon. Twenty others, led by Iowa, backed the Trump administration.

Chicago's federal court issued other decisions this week related to immigration enforcement. In one, a judge said immigration agents have repeatedly violated a 2022 consent decree outlining how ICE can make so-called warrantless arrests. That decree requires ICE to show documentation for each arrest it makes for people besides those being targeted.

Immigrant advocacy groups believe hundreds of people arrested around Chicago could qualify for reduced bond or have ankle monitors removed.

Guard expected on ground in Memphis

Trump previously sent troops to Los Angeles and Washington. In Tennessee, Memphis Mayor Paul Young said troops would begin patrolling Friday. Republican Gov. Bill Lee supports the role.

Police Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis said she hoped the Guard would direct traffic and have a presence in retail corridors, but not set up checkpoints or make the city "feel like there is this over-militarization in our communities."

In a California case, a judge in September said the deployment was illegal. By that point, just 300 of the thousands of troops sent there remained and the judge did not order them to leave.

## **Tesla hit with probe after crashes involving a self-driving feature that Musk has boasted about**

By BERNARD CONDON and MATT OTT AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Federal regulators have opened yet another investigation into Tesla's self-driving feature after dozens of incidents in which the cars ran red lights or drove on the wrong side of the road, sometimes crashing into other vehicles and causing injuries.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in a filing that it is looking into 58 incidents in which Teslas reportedly violated traffic safety laws while using the company's so-called Full Self-Driving mode, leading to more than a dozen crashes and fires and nearly two dozen injuries. The new probe adds to several other open investigations into Tesla technology that could upend Elon Musk's plans to turn millions of his cars already on the road into completely driverless vehicles with a over-the-air update to their software.

"The ultimate question is, 'Does the software work?'" asked Seth Goldstein, a Morningstar analyst with a "sell" rating on the stock. Added money manager Ross Gerber, "The world has become a giant testing ground for Elon's concept of full self-driving, and it's not working,"

The probe comes as Musk, whose fortune as the world's richest man derives partly from Tesla's levitating stock, has promised to roll out hundreds of thousands of driverless taxis in cities around the U.S. by the end of next year.

The new investigation covers 2.9 million vehicles, essentially all Teslas equipped with full self-driving technology, or FSD, a misnomer criticized for lulling drivers into handing full control over to their cars. Tesla has argued to regulators and in court cases that it has repeatedly told drivers the system cannot drive the cars by itself and whoever is behind the wheel must be ready to intervene at all times.

In the new probe, regulators reported that many of the Tesla drivers involved accidents said the cars gave them no warning about the unexpected behavior.

Tesla stock fell nearly 3% at one point Thursday but closed with a loss of just 0.7%.

The agency behind the latest probe, NHTSA, opened an investigation last year into driver-assistance features in 2.4 million Teslas after several crashes in fog and other low-visibility conditions, including one in which a pedestrian was killed. NHTSA also opened an investigation earlier this year for a "summon" technology that allows drivers to tell their cars to drive to their location to pick them up after reports of several fender benders in parking lots.

Another investigation was launched by the agency in August looking into why Tesla apparently has not been reporting crashes promptly as required.

That same month, a Miami jury found that Tesla was partly responsible for a deadly 2019 crash in Florida involving its Autopilot driver assist technology — which is different than full self-driving — and must pay the victims more than \$240 million in damages. Tesla said it would appeal the decision.

Money manager Gerber, a long-time Tesla investor who says he once was a big believer in the company's driver assistance feature, says the company should stop calling it full self-driving and admit the vision-only system using cameras on its cars needs to be supplemented with radar sensors and other hardware.



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Otherwise, regulators should force it to do that.

"They have to take responsibility for the fact that the software doesn't work right and either adjust the hardware accordingly — and Elon can just deal with his ego issues — or somebody is gonna have to come in and say, 'Hey, you keep causing accidents with this stuff and maybe you should just put it on test tracks until it works,'" he said.

The FSD system under investigation is what is called Level 2 driver-assistance software that requires drivers to pay full attention to the road. A new version of FSD was introduced earlier this week. The company is also testing a vastly upgraded version that does not require driver intervention, something that Musk has been promising to roll out for years.

Tesla is under pressure to show success with FSD because the main part of its business — selling cars — is struggling.

Customers who don't like Musk's support of President Donald Trump and far-right candidates in Europe have boycotted the company, sinking sales. Meanwhile, rival EV makers, including China's BYD, are stealing market share with cheaper, high-quality offerings.

In response, Musk on Tuesday announced Tesla would be selling two new, stripped down and cheaper versions of models already on the road, including its best-selling Model Y. But investors, hoping for lower prices or a completely new offering, were unimpressed, pushing the stock down 4.5%.

## What to know: Tropical Storm Priscilla to drench Southwest US, raising deadly flash flood risk

By MEAD GRUVER Associated Press

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP) — A region more accustomed to baking heat than soggy weather is about to get soaked, raising the risk of flash floods that can surprise — and kill — in minutes.

Downgraded from a powerful hurricane, Tropical Storm Priscilla has lost its punch in the eastern Pacific Ocean near the coast of Mexico's Baja California peninsula. But the storm still carries plenty of moisture and is now bearing down on the southwestern U.S., where flood warnings already were posted Thursday.

Forecasters expected rain bands from Priscilla's remnants to saturate areas of Arizona, Utah, New Mexico and Colorado through this weekend, bringing as much moisture in hours as some of those places might get all year.

Recent deadly flooding in Texas and New Mexico speaks to what can go badly with rain like that.

"We don't want to see people caught up in the hazards we are going to be seeing," said meteorologist Robert Rickey with the National Weather Service in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Arizona will be hit hardest

Northern Arizona is most at risk, with 2 to 3 inches (5 to 8 centimeters) of rain likely in and around Flagstaff, the national park gateway city south of the Grand Canyon.

Some areas could get even more, said Rickey, but where exactly that will happen is impossible to predict very long in advance.

High-elevation Flagstaff gets ample rain, upward of 2 feet (60 centimeters) a year, though not often in such big doses. Southwestern and northeastern Arizona see far less, in some places as little as 5 inches (13 centimeters) or less a year; Phoenix gets just 7 or 8 inches (18 to 20 centimeters) a year.

In such deserts, downpours on paved, urban landscapes with minimal drainage infrastructure and in backcountry areas mazed with canyons can become deadly fast.

Worried folks headed outdoors have been calling the National Weather Service asking if they should cancel. The agency has been kept open during the government shutdown.

"I had to have that kind of frank conversation with them," Rickey said. "Is the risk worth the reward?"

Never go here if heavy rain is possible

After heat, flooding is the deadliest weather phenomenon in the U.S., killing 145 people in 2024. Many victims were in their cars, braving high water that can be deceptively dangerous.

In Arizona, a "stupid motorist law" allows drivers to be billed up to \$2,000 if they drive around a bar-

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ricade or warning sign into a flooded area and have to be rescued.

By encouraging smarter driving, the law attempts to reduce the state's dozens of such rescues every year. Some, though, worry the law discourages people from seeking help right away, putting them in worse danger. The law isn't consistently enforced.

The Southwest's desert canyons and arroyos are notorious for flash flooding risk. Even a storm miles (kilometers) upstream can turn a dry wash into a raging torrent, churning debris downstream and blocking the way out for hikers and cars.

That is what happened in southern Utah a couple weeks ago, when a desert canyon flood trapped at least 10 people, all of whom were eventually accounted for by officials.

Mountains can also channel deadly flooding. In June, three people, including children ages 7 and 4, were killed in a flash flood at a riverside RV park.

Forested areas can become worse for flash flooding if they have recently burned clear of vegetation that can hold back water and allow it to soak into the ground. This weekend, that includes the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, which burned in a massive wildfire last summer.

The National Weather Service had posted a flash flood watch for most of Arizona, as well as southern Utah and smaller portions of California, Nevada and Colorado.

Strong storms already were moving north across Arizona and southern Utah, bringing up to an inch (2.5 centimeters) of rain in places. Scattered flash flood warnings were posted along the state line, including for Lake Powell and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

Hope for the best, prepare for the worst

Much of the Southwest's rain comes during the summer monsoon season of scattered storms from mid-June through September. Rain from autumn tropical systems like this one might happen once a year, said Rickey, the meteorologist.

In Flagstaff, heavy equipment was being positioned across the city, and staff were monitoring low water crossings and areas where wildfires have burned for potential flooding.

Self-serve sandbags were available to residents at a city park, and water was being released from a pond to make more room for runoff.

The Havasupai Tribe, whose reservation is deep in a gorge off the Grand Canyon and is prone to flooding, advised tourists in a social media post not to hike to certain areas if it is raining or flooding, and to seek higher ground if they see water rushing through the area.

The reservation is one of the most remote in the continental U.S. and is accessible only by mule or foot. Tourists worldwide visit for the blue-green waterfalls and creekside campground.

Mike Rock with Junipine Resort in Sedona, which sits along Oak Creek, said staff were monitoring road and weather conditions, and letting guests know to take precautions.

Picnic tables closer to the creek will be moved if the water rises. If flooding or rock falls shut down nearby roads, staff can stay at the resort, as is typical with bad weather, he said.

"All signs are indicating we're going to get pretty hard," he said.

## Texas appeals court again pauses execution of Robert Roberson in shaken baby case

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Texas' top criminal court on Thursday again paused the execution of Robert Roberson, just days before he was set to become the first person in the U.S. put to death for a murder conviction tied to a diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome.

This was the third execution date that Roberson's lawyers have been able to stay since 2016, including one scheduled nearly a year ago due to an unprecedented intervention from a bipartisan group of Texas lawmakers who believe he is innocent.

The latest execution stay was granted by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Roberson had been scheduled to receive a lethal injection on Oct. 16 for the death of his 2-year-old daughter Nikki Curtis.

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Since his first execution date more than nine years ago, Roberson's lawyers have filed multiple petitions with state and federal appeals courts, as well as with the U.S. Supreme Court, to stop his execution. They have also asked the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles and Gov. Greg Abbott to intervene, as part of their efforts to secure Roberson a new trial.

Will 'junk science' law secure Roberson a new trial?

"He is actually innocent," Gretchen Sween, one of Roberson's attorneys, told reporters after the court ruling. "I would like to prove that and get him home one day."

Roberson's attorneys have argued his then-undiagnosed autism helped convict him as authorities and medical personnel felt he didn't act like a concerned parent because his flat affect was seen as a sign of guilt. He was diagnosed with autism in 2018.

The court granted the stay based on Texas' 2013 junk science law, which allows a person convicted of a crime to seek relief if the evidence used against them is no longer credible. It cited its October 2024 ruling that overturned the conviction of another man, Andrew Roark, in another shaken baby case in Dallas. Roberson's lawyers argue that the two cases are indistinguishable.

The appeals court sent Roberson's case back to his trial court in East Texas for review to determine if he should get a new trial.

Matthew Bowman, Nikki's half-brother, said he and his family are disappointed by Thursday's ruling, and that they think Roberson should be executed. Bowman told The Associated Press he believes the evidence shows Roberson caused Nikki's injuries by repeatedly hitting her.

"In my opinion, he's the only one that could have done it that night. So we're hoping that the execution comes back," he said.

The Texas Attorney General's Office, which is seeking Roberson's execution, has not responded to an email requesting comment.

Appeals court focuses on similar shaken baby syndrome case

Roberson's lawyers had requested the stay based new legal and scientific developments and expert analyses that indicate Nikki's death was caused by illness and accident, not abuse. They included a joint statement from 10 independent pathologists who said the medical examiner's autopsy report, which concluded Nikki died from blunt force head injuries, was "not reliable."

Roberson's attorneys also alleged judicial misconduct, saying the judge who oversaw his trial hadn't disclosed he previously authorized the circumvention of Roberson's parental rights and allowed Nikki's grandparents to remove her from life support.

The appeals court denied both those claims and instead said it was granting the stay to review issues raised by Roark's case on its "own initiative."

In granting Roark a new trial, the appeals court found that the science had changed to undermine the prosecution's theory of a case involving shaken baby syndrome, and that Roark likely would not have been convicted under the "evolved scientific evidence." The Dallas County District Attorney's Office subsequently dropped the charges against Roark.

"I know that Roark changed the legal landscape in Texas and should mean relief for Robert," Sween said.

Roberson has long proclaimed his innocence, telling The Associated Press in an interview last week from death row in Livingston, Texas, that he never abused his daughter.

"I never shook her or hit her," he said.

The diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome refers to a serious brain injury caused when a child's head is hurt through shaking or some other violent impact, like being slammed against a wall or thrown on the floor.

Some authorities believe Nikki was a victim of child abuse

Prosecutors at Roberson's 2003 trial, as well as the office of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, have argued that Roberson hit Nikki and violently shook her, causing severe head trauma. They said she was a victim of child abuse and died from injuries related to shaken baby syndrome.

In a Sept. 26 op-ed in The Dallas Morning News, three pediatricians, including two with the Yale School of Medicine, said they reviewed the case and "are convinced that Nikki was a victim of child abuse."

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Shaken baby syndrome has come under scrutiny in recent years; some lawyers and medical experts say the diagnosis has wrongly sent people to prison. Prosecutors and medical societies say it remains valid.

Roberson's supporters include liberal and ultraconservative lawmakers, Texas GOP megadonor and conservative activist Doug Deason, bestselling author John Grisham, and Brian Wharton, the former police detective who helped put together the case against him.

GOP state Rep. Brian Harrison, one of the more conservative lawmakers in the Texas Legislature, praised the stay.

"For over two decades, Mr. Robert Roberson has never, not once, been afforded due process and he has never had a fair trial," Harrison told reporters on Thursday.

## Senators struggle to find a way forward as government shutdown enters ninth day

By STEPHEN GROVES, MARY CLARE JALONICK and MATT BROWN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The consequences of a government shutdown setting in, senators labored Thursday to find a way forward but found themselves struggling to overcome a fundamental lack of trust between the two parties.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune on Thursday afternoon floated an "off ramp" to the government funding impasse, suggesting that he could hold a later vote on expiring health care subsidies if Democrats would first support a stopgap spending bill to reopen the government.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer quickly dismissed the idea. "It's nothing new, they say it all the time. It doesn't do anything to make sure we get health care."

The exchange showed how congressional leaders remain trapped in a stalemate on the ninth day of the government shutdown despite the growing toll of federal closures. Government offices nationwide have shuttered, hundreds of thousands of federal employees have been furloughed and U.S. military troops and other government employees are on track to miss a scheduled payday.

Thune's overture suggested one possible path forward, but it was unclear how serious the offer was or whether it would lead to any real negotiations with Democrats. Still, pressure is growing on congressional leaders to reach a deal as rank-and-file lawmakers grew anxious about the lack of progress on ending the shutdown.

One Democratic senator who has pressed for a compromise, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, argued that the offer from Thune showed there is a growing desire among Republicans to reach a deal on Democrats' demand to extend subsidies for health plans offered under the Affordable Care Act.

"There needs to be official negotiation and until that happens, it's unlikely that things will get done," she said.

Still, President Donald Trump and Republicans have so far held to the stance that they will only negotiate on Democratic demands around health care benefits after they vote to reopen the government. They also say Schumer is beholden to the left wing of his party and only staging the shutdown fight to stave off a primary challenge.

Republicans jump on Schumer's comments

Schumer, a New York Democrat, told Punchbowl News in an interview that Democrats were winning the shutdown fight, saying, "Every day gets better for us."

Republicans quickly seized on those comments, arguing it showed that the New York senator is approaching the shutdown with purely political motives.

Thune stood on the Senate floor flanked by a poster printed with Schumer's words.

"This isn't a political game. Democrats might feel that way, but I don't know anybody else that does," said Thune, a South Dakota Republican. "The longer this goes on, the more the American people realize that Democrats own this shutdown."

Schumer, in his own floor speech, responded that it was Trump and Republicans who are "playing with people's lives."



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"Every day that Republicans refuse to negotiate to end this shutdown, the worse it gets for Americans and the clearer it becomes who is fighting for them," said Schumer.

When a handshake deal is not enough

Democrats have insisted they can't take Trump or House Speaker Mike Johnson at their word and therefore need more than a verbal commitment for any deal.

"We're in an environment where we need more than a handshake," said Sen. Chris Coons, a Delaware Democrat who has engaged in talks with Republicans.

Conflicts over spending power had already been raging before the shutdown as the White House pushed to assert maximum power over congressionally approved budgets. The White House budget office had canceled scores of government contracts, including cutting out the legislative branch entirely with a \$4.9 billion cut to foreign aid in August through a legally dubious process known as a "pocket rescission."

That enraged Democrats — and disturbed some Republicans who criticized it as executive overreach.

"I hate rescissions, to be honest with you, unless they're congressionally approved," said Sen. Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican.

Then, as the government entered a shutdown, Trump's budget director Russ Vought laid out arguments that the president would have even more power to lay off workers and even cancel pay due to furloughed federal workers once the funding lapse is solved. Vought has also announced that the administration was withholding billions of dollars for infrastructure projects in states with Democratic senators who have voted for the shutdown.

"We're only going to cut Democrat programs," Trump said in a Cabinet meeting Thursday. He added: "We're going to give them a little taste of their own medicine."

Yet on Capitol Hill, there has been an acknowledgment that the hardball tactics are making it harder to negotiate.

"I think with senators, carrots work better than sticks," said Sen. Kevin Cramer, a North Dakota Republican.

Failed votes and the consequences of an extended shutdown

The Senate failed, in a 54-45 vote, to advance a stopgap funding bill for the seventh time Thursday, and there has been no sign of significant progress to ending the impasse.

Lawmakers are now looking ahead to the dates when federal employees will miss a payday, nervous about both the financial implications for federal employees and military members and the political blowback. Several House Republicans representing districts with military installations are calling on the speaker to hold a vote on legislation to ensure troops are paid.

Active-duty military troops would miss a paycheck on Oct. 15. As Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, fielded questions on C-SPAN Thursday morning, one caller pleaded with him to pass legislation that would allow the military to get paid during the government shutdown.

The woman, identified as Samantha, said her husband serves in the military and that they "live paycheck to paycheck."

She pleaded with Johnson to call the House back to Washington, saying, "You could stop this."

Johnson said he was sorry to hear about her situation, blamed Democrats for refusing to pass the stopgap spending bill and added, "I am angry because of situations just like yours."

## LeBron James will miss opening night of his record 23rd NBA season due to sciatica

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP) — LeBron James will miss opening night of his record 23rd NBA season due to sciatica that will be re-evaluated in three to four weeks, the Los Angeles Lakers announced Thursday.

The 40-year-old superstar will be sidelined at least until the end of October with sciatica — pain in the nerves running from the buttocks and down the back of the legs — on his right side.

James has yet to participate in a full practice since the Lakers opened training camp last week, and coach JJ Redick said James was "on his own timeline" Thursday after practice. An hour later, the Lakers

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announced an injury timeline that means James is likely to miss at least their first five or six games, and possibly several more.

The Lakers open the regular season at home Oct. 21 against Golden State. They have eight games in a 13-day span beginning Oct. 24.

James began camp for his unprecedented 23rd NBA season last week with the lower-body nerve injury keeping him off the court. The Lakers held their sixth full practice of camp Thursday without the top scorer in NBA history, who also missed both of their first two preseason games while he worked to get back into competitive condition.

"You've got to play the cards you're dealt," Redick said. "That's a shame, but that's just the reality. ... No one has got any time with LeBron. That's not just (new center Deandre Ayton), but everybody. (James) hasn't been on the court with the team, but that's just the reality."

Redick and the rest of the Lakers expressed excitement last week about the chance to have their first full training camp together with James and Luka Doncic, who scarcely ever got to practice with his new team after joining Los Angeles in the middle of last season.

Instead, the Lakers are installing their offense and building court chemistry during this camp largely without James on the court. They're also getting limited time so far with Doncic, who is making a deliberate return to full speed after his participation in EuroBasket during a busy summer.

The Lakers return to the court Sunday at home against Golden State.

Doncic participated in some full practices last week, including scrimmages, but Ayton said Wednesday that he would love to get more practice time with the Lakers' two biggest stars.

"It's something I've just been waiting on," Ayton said. "Just got to prepare. JJ and the coaching staff probably have something where they can put stuff together for all of us to really grow chemistry."

James traveled with the Lakers on their preseason trips to Palm Desert, California, and San Francisco, but he has been performing individual drills and doing his own workouts.

James made news and scared his fans earlier this week when he teased "The Second Decision" on social media — for what turned out to be an advertisement for a cognac brand.

James has repeatedly said he doesn't know whether he will retire after this season, only saying that the end to the longest career in NBA history will be "sooner than later."

Redick had said he was hopeful that James and Doncic would participate in at least one preseason game that could be used as a "dress rehearsal" for the regular season, but that won't happen.

Redick still expects Doncic to play in the preseason at least once. The Lakers have four preseason games remaining, including two in Los Angeles.

## Wall Street's feverish rally takes a break as US stocks and gold pull back from their records

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street took a pause on Thursday as U.S. stocks and even the price of gold pulled back from record highs following torrid runs.

The S&P 500 slipped 0.3% from its latest all-time high for just its second loss in the last 10 days. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 243 points, or 0.5%, and the Nasdaq composite edged down by 0.1%.

Gold also fell following its stellar rally this year, losing 2.4% to drop back below \$4,000 per ounce, while Treasury yields held relatively steady in the bond market. They're taking a moment following big runs driven in large part by expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates to support the economy.

Financial markets have been climbing so relentlessly, including a 35% leap for the S&P 500 from a low in April, that worries are rising that prices may have shot too high and become too expensive. Concerns are particularly strong about the frenzy lifting stocks related to artificial-intelligence technology.

Dell Technologies sank 5.2% for the biggest loss in the S&P 500, but that only trimmed its surge since talking up its AI growth opportunities at an investment conference earlier in the week. The stock is still up nearly 11% for the week so far.

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Tesla also weighed on the market after falling 0.7%. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration opened a preliminary evaluation of its "Full Self-Driving" system due to safety concerns.

Those losses helped offset a 4.3% ascent for Delta Air Lines, which reported a stronger profit for the summer than analysts expected.

Delta also gave a forecasted range for profit during the year's final three months whose midpoint topped analysts' estimates. Its president, Glen Hauenstein, highlighted a broad-based acceleration in sales trends over the last six weeks, including for business travel domestically.

Such reports from companies are taking on more significance, offering windows into the strength of the economy. That's because the U.S. government's shutdown is delaying reports that would clearly show how the overall economy is doing. This is the second week where the U.S. government has not published its update on unemployment claims, for example, a report that usually helps guide Wall Street's trading each Thursday.

PepsiCo rose 4.2% after delivering a better profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected, saying momentum improved for its drinks business in North America.

Delivering bigger profits is one of two ways that companies can make their stock prices look less expensive following their big rallies. The other is if their stock prices fall.

Akero Therapeutics leaped 16.3% after Novo Nordisk, the Danish company behind the Wegovy weight-loss drug, said it would buy the drug developer based in South San Francisco, California. The price tag could reach \$5.2 billion if Akero's lead product candidate wins federal regulatory approval.

MP Materials, a company that mines and processes rare earths in California, rose 2.4% after China announced curbs on its exports of the materials, which are critical for the making of everything from consumer electronics to jet engines.

Costco Wholesale climbed 3.1% after the retailer said its revenue rose 8% in September from a year earlier.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 18.61 points to 6,735.11. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 243.36 to 46,358.42, and the Nasdaq composite slipped 18.75 to 23,024.63.

In stock markets abroad, indexes were mixed in Europe after Italy's Ferrari tumbled 15.4% following the release of financial forecasts that some analysts said were below their expectations.

Stocks in Shanghai leaped 1.3% after trading resumed there following a holiday.

Japan's Nikkei 225 jumped 1.8% for another one of the world's bigger moves. Technology giant SoftBank Group surged 11.4% after announcing a \$5.4 billion deal for the robotics unit of Swiss engineering firm ABB.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury edged up to 4.14% from 4.13% late Wednesday.

## Judge orders suspect in deadly LA wildfire to remain jailed, citing mental health concerns

By MIKE SCHNEIDER and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A federal judge in Florida ordered the man charged in California's deadly Palisades Fire to remain jailed Thursday after a prosecutor said he had traits of an arsonist and his family had worried about his declining mental state.

In ordering Jonathan Rinderknecht to be kept in detention, U.S. Magistrate Judge Nathan Hill said he had concerns about the suspect's mental health and his ability to get to California for future court hearings.

Federal officials have said Rinderknecht, who lived in Southern California at the time, started a small fire on New Year's Day that smoldered underground before reigniting nearly a week later on Jan. 7 and roaring through coastal Pacific Palisades and Malibu.

The fire, which left 12 dead in hillside neighborhoods, was one of two huge blazes that broke out that day. They killed more than 30 people in all and destroyed over 17,000 homes and buildings in Los Angeles County.

Prosecutors say the suspect is a flight risk

Assistant U.S. Attorney Rachel Lyons said during Thursday's hearing in federal court in Orlando that

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Rinderknecht was a flight risk because he had family in France and spoke French.

Shackled and wearing a red jail uniform, Rinderknecht listened attentively as an agent from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives recounted the family's concerns about the man's mental health.

ATF special agent Thomas Harrison testified that Rinderknecht moved into the home of his sister and brother-in-law in Brevard County, Florida, five months ago. But they have since moved out and started eviction proceeding against him out of fear for their safety. Rinderknecht threatened to burn their house down during an argument, prompting a call to the police, Harrison said. His father again called police after Rinderknecht said he had a gun he would use in self-defense, Harrison said.

No arrest was made or charges filed in either police call.

Lyons, the prosecutor, hinted that any possible sentence with a conviction could be magnified because deaths were involved.

The prosecutor added that Rinderknecht had become a loner with "a despondent view of the world," and spent a lot of time on ChatGPT, living paycheck to paycheck as an Uber driver, Lyons said.

In arguing that her client should be released under strict conditions, Assistant Federal Defender Aziza Hawthorne noted that officers never asked Rinderknecht's sister if she thought his threat was credible. The public defender also said there were never any allegations of physical violence and Rinderknecht had been seeing a psychiatrist recently.

Rinderknecht was not a flight risk, she said, and his family was supporting him during the criminal proceedings.

"He is not a risk to anyone," Hawthorne said.

After the hearing, outside the courtroom, one of his sisters comforted the other as she cried. None of the family members wanted to talk to reporters.

Rinderknecht was expected to remain in the Seminole County Jail until a hearing set for Oct. 17, when prosecutors are to present the evidence they have to charge him.

Investigators zeroed in on the suspect in January

Rinderknecht was arrested Tuesday but he was first interviewed by authorities on Jan. 24. Investigators said during the intervening months they worked to rule out other potential causes for the first fire's ignition, such as fireworks or lightning strikes. All the while they were combing through the suspect's phone to track his whereabouts on the day it began.

Kenny Cooper, special agent in charge of the ATF's Los Angeles Field Division, said his agency pursued more than 200 leads in the U.S. and abroad while scouring the hillsides where the fire was ignited.

"We literally had agents, with our partners, on their hands and knees crawling through fire debris," Cooper said. "We collected more than 13,000 items of evidence, including fire debris, digital data, DNA samples."

More than 500 scientific tests were done at an ATF lab and investigators also went back to the scene to recreate the fire under the exact conditions when it started on New Year's Day, he added.

"And I highlight this because I know there's questions on the length that it took us to come to this conclusion," Cooper said during Wednesday's news conference announcing the arrest.

The first fire smoldered underground for days

Cooper downplayed firefighters' role in failing to prevent the initial fire from reigniting, saying the blaze smoldered underground undetected and remained active for days.

"The person who started this fire is solely to blame," he said. "I will never blame our brave firefighters when we know how this fire started."

Interim Los Angeles Fire Chief Ronnie Villanueva, who was not in charge of the department in January, said crews worked the first fire for 36 hours, digging around it and extinguishing hot spots. He said their conclusion was that suppression efforts were successful and it was "totally, totally out." Villanueva said "holdover" fires linger in root systems and can reach as deep as 20 feet (6 meters), making them undetectable by imaging cameras.

"So even if someone would have put thermal imaging on it, they would have come up with final extinguishment like our firefighters did," he told The Associated Press.

The department released a report Wednesday that found firefighters lacked enough resources and



struggled to communicate clearly in the first 36 hours of the Palisades Fire and that those challenges hampered their response during a critical time. The report said the department did not pre-deploy enough resources despite warnings of severe winds.

## What to know about Texas court's decision to pause Roberson's execution in shaken baby case

By JIM VERTUNO and JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A Texas court's pause of the execution of Robert Roberson just days before he was set to die is likely to raise new arguments and scrutiny over cases that rely on the medical science and evidence in a diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome.

Roberson would have been the first person in the nation executed in a case tied to shaken baby syndrome. He remains on death row for now, but the pause in his execution — the third since 2016 — not only buys him more time, but also possibly a new trial.

Thursday's ruling by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals leaned into a decade-old state law that allows courts to review convictions based on science that has changed or been debunked, and a recent court ruling that overturned a conviction in another shaken baby case.

Roberson, 58, was convicted in 2003 in the death of his 2-year-old daughter Nikki Curtis. He had been scheduled to receive a lethal injection on Oct. 16. The ruling did not overturn his conviction or immediately reduce his sentence.

### Shaken baby syndrome

Critical to Roberson's case was the trial evidence of shaken baby syndrome, which refers to a serious brain injury caused when a child's head is hurt through shaking or some other violent impact, such as being slammed against a wall or thrown on the floor.

Shaken baby syndrome has come under scrutiny in recent years; some lawyers and medical experts say the diagnosis has wrongly sent people to prison. Prosecutors and medical societies say it remains valid.

### Texas' 'junk science' law and a similar case

In 2013, Texas lawmakers passed a measure nicknamed the "junk science law" that allows courts to take a second look at a case if the science anchoring a conviction evolves or is debunked. But that law has not yet led to a new trial for a death-row inmate.

That law was the basis in part of a delay in execution for Roberson back in 2016, but he was not granted a new trial and he remained on death row.

Thursday's ruling cited the court's own decision last year to overturn the conviction of a Dallas man sent to prison for 35 years based on a similar shaken baby diagnosis. In that case, the court said the medical evidence and expert testimony might have been different if presented under 2024 scientific standards.

### Rallying for Roberson

Roberson's case has drawn a wide variety of support from a coalition that included liberal and ultra-conservative lawmakers, bestselling novelist John Grisham and even one of the original detectives on Roberson's case. They all want him to secure a new trial. Those efforts have been opposed and criticized by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Republican.

### What's next for Roberson?

Roberson's legal team hailed the court-ordered review of his case as a major victory.

The case will go back to the county trial court in East Texas to decide if he deserves a new trial. If so, he could be cleared or convicted again.

Gretchen Sween, one of Roberson's attorneys, said Thursday there's no timeline for when the trial court will review his case but she's "determined to push this as fast as possible."

Roberson has maintained his innocence. His legal team argues his daughter died not from abuse but from complications related to pneumonia. Paxton, as well as some medical experts and other family members of Nikki, maintain the girl died because of child abuse and that Roberson had a history of hitting his daughter.

"Robert adored Nikki, whose death was a tragedy," Sween said. "We are confident that an objective

review of the science and medical evidence will show there was no crime.”

## **Troops will miss paychecks next week without action on the government shutdown**

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Heather Campbell lost her job working for a food bank over the summer because of federal funding cuts. Her husband serves as an officer in the Air Force, but now he’s facing the prospect of missing his next paycheck because of the government shutdown.

If lawmakers in Washington don’t step in, Campbell’s husband won’t get paid on Wednesday. Because the couple lacks the savings to cover all their expenses, they expect to survive on credit cards to pay the mortgage and feed their three children, racking up debt as the political stalemate drags on.

“You’re asking us to put our lives on the line or the people we love to put their lives on the line,” said Campbell, 39, who lives outside Montgomery, Alabama, near Maxwell Air Force Base. “And you’re not even going to give us our paycheck. What? There is a lot of broken trust there.”

The nation’s third shutdown in 12 years is once again raising anxiety levels among service members and their families because those in uniform are working without pay. While they would receive back pay once the impasse ends, many military families live paycheck to paycheck. During previous shutdowns, Congress passed legislation to ensure that troops kept earning their salaries, but time is running out before they miss their first paycheck in less than a week.

“There are so many things that Congress can’t agree on right now,” said Kate Horrell, the wife of a Navy veteran whose Washington, D.C., company provides financial advice to military families. “I don’t want to assume that they’re going to be able to agree on this.”

Paying the troops has support, but it’s unclear when a deal might pass

When asked if he would support a bill to pay the troops, President Donald Trump said, “that probably will happen.”

“We’ll take care of it,” Trump said Wednesday. “Our military is always going to be taken care of.”

Rep. Jen Kiggans, a Virginia Republican and former Navy helicopter pilot, has introduced a measure to maintain military and Coast Guard salaries, and it has bipartisan co-sponsors.

The House is closed for business until next week, leaving two days to take action before Wednesday’s payday. Missed paychecks for military service members are among the most serious pressure points in the shutdown, causing political pain for the lawmakers. Several proposals have been floated for voting on stand-alone legislation that would ensure no interruption in pay, but those are not expected to be brought up for consideration, for now.

Amanda Scott, whose husband is an Air Force officer in Colorado, said the uncertainty goes beyond the stress of just getting by — it chips away at the military’s ability to retain the best people and their readiness to fight.

“How ready and lethal are you if you don’t know if you can feed your family?” said Scott, 33, of Colorado Springs, who works for a defense contractor and volunteers as an advocate for military families. “A lot of these service members are highly skilled and can go out and make much more money in the civilian sector.”

Aid is available for service members, but it’s not enough for some families

Support is available for military families through nonprofits and charities. For example, some financial institutions are offering zero-interest loans, while each military branch has a relief organization.

But Campbell said she and her husband in Alabama can’t apply for a payday loan because they’re refinancing their house. They lack a substantial emergency fund because they were paying off student loans and moved several times in the last few years to military posts. It was often challenging for her to find steady work and child care.

“The opportunity to build up savings is really difficult on just one income,” Campbell said. “I don’t know many military families that have a month’s worth of income set aside just in case, let alone multiple months’

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worth."

Jen Cluff, whose husband recently left the Air Force, said her family was on a food aid program during the 2019 shutdown. But even the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC, which helps more than 6 million low-income mothers and young children, would run out of federal money within two weeks unless the shutdown ends, experts say.

"We made so little and had three young children," said Cluff, 42, of San Antonio. "We were definitely a family that had very little buffer."

If Congress had not passed legislation to pay troops during the last shutdown, missing more than two paychecks "would have been catastrophic for us," she said.

"Resentment can grow quickly," Cluff said of the shutdown, adding that "the general public, and many in government, truly don't understand the daily sacrifices our military members and their families make for our country."

Wider effects feared in military-heavy areas

The economic impact will ripple through regions with large military footprints, like coastal Virginia, home to the nation's largest Navy base and several other installations. The area's 88,000 active duty service members and their families likely have pulled back significantly on spending, said Rick Dwyer, executive director of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, an advocacy group.

"Think about service members who are deployed right now around the world," said Dwyer, who served in the Air Force during previous shutdowns. "They're having to wonder if their families are going to be able to pay the rent, the child care bills, the car payments."

A shutdown contingency plan posted on the Pentagon's website cites the use of funds to continue military operations from Trump's big tax and spending cut bill. The Congressional Budget Office has said money appropriated to the Defense Department under the new law could be used to pay active duty personnel.

It was not clear if the funding would be used for that. The Pentagon said Thursday that it could not provide information "at this time."

Its contingency plan says it will "continue to defend the nation and conduct ongoing military operations" as well as activities "necessary for the safety of human life and the protection of property."

Listed among the highest priorities are securing the U.S.-Mexico border, operations in the Middle East and the future Golden Dome missile defense program. The plan also noted that "child care activities required for readiness" would continue.

Raleigh Smith Duttweiler, chief impact officer for the National Military Family Association, said most child development centers on military bases are still operating. But she said most service members pay for child care off base.

"Last I checked, my kids' babysitter doesn't take an IOU from the federal government," said Duttweiler, whose husband is a Marine.

## What we know about the next steps in the deal to pause the war in Gaza

By LEE KEATH and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A breakthrough deal pausing the war in Gaza has been reached. But will it lead, as U.S. President Donald Trump proclaimed, to "a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace"?

It took pressure on both Israel and Hamas from the United States, Arab countries and Turkey, each saying it was time to end a 2-year-old war that has devastated the Gaza Strip, killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, sparked other conflicts around the region and increasingly isolated Israel.

That push sealed an agreement on a first phase that would free the remaining living Israeli hostages within days in exchange for the release of hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

But it left unanswered a long list of questions over what happens next.

Israel wants to ensure that Hamas disarms. Hamas wants to ensure Israel pulls its troops completely out

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of Gaza and is not allowed to restart the war. At the same time, a postwar government for Gaza must be worked out to replace Hamas' rule. Without that in place, reconstruction is unlikely to take place, leaving Gaza's more than 2 million people in continued misery.

With no trust between the sides, much relies on continued pressure from the deal's guarantors — the U.S., Egypt, Qatar and Turkey. Any hitch in working out those intertwined issues can unravel everything and potentially lead to Israel resuming its campaign to destroy Hamas.

Here is what we know about the deal.

**Immediate steps**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu plans to convene his smaller Security Cabinet and then the full Cabinet — expected late Thursday — to approve the deal.

A partial pullback of Israeli forces in Gaza will then start, according to Arab officials and a Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the text of the accord has not been released.

The extent of the withdrawal has not yet been made public, but Hamas officials have said troops will move out of populated areas.

Hamas has agreed to release the 20 living hostages within a few days, likely Monday, and Israel will free hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. Hamas also will hand over the remains of around 28 hostages believed to have died, though for logistical reasons that may take longer.

At the same time, hundreds of aid trucks will start moving into Gaza, with the numbers growing over time. Negotiations for the next phases would then begin.

**Troop withdrawal**

Hamas had long insisted it would not release its last hostages unless Israeli troops leave Gaza completely. Now, after agreeing to free them first, Hamas says it is relying on solid guarantees from Trump that the full withdrawal will happen.

But how long it will take — weeks, months, years -- is unknown.

Israel has spoken of keeping troops in a buffer zone within Gaza and in the Philadelphi Corridor, a strip of land on Gaza's border with Egypt.

Israel is unlikely to relinquish those areas unless Hamas disarms and the void left in running Gaza is filled by a body that Israel deems palatable.

An initial 20-point plan issued by Trump last week called for an Arab-led international security force to move into Gaza, along with Palestinian police trained by Egypt and Jordan. It said Israeli forces would leave areas as those forces deploy.

It is not known whether that system will be followed or an alternative will be negotiated.

**Disarmament**

Hamas long refused to give up its weapons, saying it had a right to armed resistance until Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories ends.

For Israel, it's a key demand. Netanyahu has repeatedly said its campaign will not end until Hamas' military capabilities are dismantled, including the network of tunnels built around the territory.

There are signs, however, that Hamas could agree to a "decommissioning" of its offensive weapons, handing them over to a joint Palestinian-Egyptian committee, according to the Arab officials with direct knowledge of the negotiations who spoke on condition of anonymity.

**Future government**

Israel has said it wants a Gaza purged of Hamas influence. But it has also rejected giving any role to the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority or any arrangement that could lead to the creation of a Palestinian state.

Hamas, which has ruled Gaza since 2007, has agreed to step down from governing the territory and hand over governance to a body of Palestinian technocrats.

What takes its place is still uncertain.

Under Trump's plan, agreed to by Netanyahu, an international body — the Council of Peace or Board of Peace, as both names have been floated — will govern.

It would hold most power while overseeing the administration of Palestinian technocrats running day-



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to-day affairs. It would also hold the commanding role of directing reconstruction in Gaza. Trump's initial 20-point plan called for former British Prime Minister Tony Blair to lead the body.

Hamas has so far not agreed, saying Gaza's government should be worked out among Palestinians in light of their rights to sovereignty.

The stakes

Israelis celebrated the agreement announced overnight after three days of talks in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh. For much of the Israeli public, freeing the last of the hostages held for two years has been their top priority.

But Palestinians in Gaza were more uncertain. There was relief that the relentless bombardment and ground offensives may stop for a time and aid may flow in. But there was also skepticism and worry over how long any pause in fighting would last, whether hundreds of thousands will be able to return to their homes, and whether Gaza — its cities largely in ruins — will ever be rebuilt.

Many Palestinians fear Israel will take any breakdown in the talks as a chance to resume its assault. For months, Netanyahu and his hard-line allies have insisted they will keep long-term direct security control over Gaza and have spoken of pushing out its Palestinian population, ostensibly on a "voluntary" basis. In Gaza, many believe that remains Israel's objective.

Pressure from the U.S. and its allies — if it continues after hostages are out — could prevent Israel from relaunching a full-fledged war.

But there is another, murkier scenario.

If Hamas and Israel cannot reach a final deal or negotiations drag on inconclusively, Gaza could slide into an unstable limbo, with Israeli troops still holding parts of it and Hamas still active. In that case, Israel would be unlikely to allow significant reconstruction, leaving Gaza's population languishing in tent camps or shelters.

## **Pope Leo condemns economies that marginalize the poor while the wealthy live in a bubble of luxury**

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Leo XIV criticized how the wealthy live in a "bubble of comfort and luxury" while poor people suffer on the margins, confirming in his first teaching document that he is in perfect lockstep with his predecessor Pope Francis on matters of social and economic injustice.

The Vatican on Thursday released the document, entitled "I have loved you," which Francis had begun to write in his final months but never finished. Leo, who was elected in May, credited Francis with the text, cited him repeatedly, but said he had made the document his own and signed it.

The 100-page document traces the history of Christianity's constant concern for poor people, from Biblical citations and the teaching of church fathers to the preaching of recent popes about caring for migrants, prisoners and victims of human trafficking.

Leo credits especially women's religious orders with carrying out God's mandate to care for the sick, feed the poor and welcome the stranger, and also praised lay-led popular movements advocating for land, housing and work for the society's most disadvantaged.

The conclusion Leo draws is that the Catholic Church's "preferential option for the poor" has existed from the start, is non-negotiable and is the very essence of what it means to be Christian. He calls for a renewed commitment to fixing the structural causes of poverty, while providing unquestioning charity to those who need it.

"When the church kneels beside a leper, a malnourished child or an anonymous dying person, she fulfills her deepest vocation: to love the Lord where he is most disfigured," Leo writes.

Citing Francis, a critique of the wealthy

Leo cites Francis frequently, including in some of the Argentine pope's most-quoted talking points about the global "economy that kills" and criticism of trickle down economics. Francis made those points from

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the very start of his pontificate in 2013, saying he wanted a "church that is poor and for the poor."

"God has a special place in his heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and he asks us, his church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest," Leo writes.

Echoing Francis, Leo rails against the "illusion of happiness" derived from accumulating wealth. "Thus, in a world where the poor are increasingly numerous, we paradoxically see the growth of a wealthy elite, living in a bubble of comfort and luxury, almost in another world compared to ordinary people."

Francis' frequent criticism of capitalism angered many conservative and wealthy Catholics, especially in the United States, who accused the Argentine Jesuit of being a Marxist.

In a recent interview, Leo said such misdirected criticism cannot be leveled against him. "The fact that I am American means, among other things, people can't say, like they did about Francis, 'he doesn't understand the United States, he just doesn't see what's going on,'" Leo told Crux, a Catholic site.

As a result, Leo's embrace of Francis' teaching on poverty and the church's obligation to care for the weakest is a significant reaffirmation, especially in Leo's first teaching document.

Francis' spirit in text and launch

Vatican officials insisted that the text was fully Leo's and declined to say how much Francis had written before he died.

"It's 100% Francis and it's 100% Leo," said Cardinal Michael Czerny, who runs the Vatican's development and migrants office and was a top Francis aide. Asked if the same conservatives who labeled Francis a Marxist or Communist will now accuse Leo of the same, Czerny noted that both are merely following the Gospel.

Such labels "say much more about the person who is using the label," Czerny said. "The problem is not Pope Francis' or Pope Leo's. The problem is the person," using such labels to reject the church's teaching.

Francis' spirit was very much infused in the document and in its official presentation on Thursday.

In addition to Czerny, the news conference featured a rare appearance by Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the Polish prelate whom Francis entrusted with carrying out his personal acts of charity over the course of his pontificate. Under Krajewski's quiet eye, the Vatican installed showers for homeless people off St. Peter's Square, provided COVID-19 vaccines for 6,000 migrants and people without access to Italy's health service, sent ambulances with medicine to Ukraine and hosted weekly luncheons for the hungry.

Krajewski said the document was proof that such gestures of charity toward the needy come straight from the Bible, recalling that Jesus didn't work 9-5 in an office, but rather went out and looked for people who needed him.

Krajewski regaled reporters with anecdotes of his behind-the-scenes dealings with Francis, who would jokingly reprimand him if his bank account had too much money in it because it meant he hadn't spent enough on poor people.

Signed on the feast of St. Francis

Leo signed the text on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the 13th-century mendicant friar who renounced his wealth to live poor among the poor. The date was not coincidental.

The late Pope Francis named himself after the saint and one of the pontiff's most important documents — "Fratelli Tutti" (Brothers All) — was itself published on the Oct. 4 feast day in 2020.

Leo, too, seems inspired by the saint's example: As a young priest, the former Robert Prevost left the comforts of home to work as a missionary in Peru as a member of the Augustinian religious order, one of the other ancient mendicant orders that considers community, the sharing of communal property and service to others as central tenets of its spirituality.

"The fact that some dismiss or ridicule charitable works, as if they were an obsession on the part of a few and not the burning heart of the church's mission, convinces me of the need to go back and reread the Gospel, lest we risk replacing it with the wisdom of this world," Leo writes.

## Rubio invites Brazilian foreign minister for talks as Brazil seeks to ease tariffs

By GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Thursday invited Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira to meet in person soon in Washington as Brazil seeks an easing of U.S. tariffs, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry said.

The call followed a Monday phone conversation between Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and U.S. President Donald Trump, during which Lula asked Trump to lift a 40% tariff on Brazilian imports.

"Following a positive dialogue on the bilateral agenda, both sides agreed their teams would meet soon in Washington to continue discussions on economic and trade issues," the Brazilian ministry said in a statement.

Rubio's outreach marks a step toward easing tensions between the two countries exacerbated by the tariffs and U.S. sanctions on top Brazilian officials. The sanctions were tied to the prosecution of former President Jair Bolsonaro, who was later sentenced to 27 years in prison for attempting a coup to remain in power after losing his 2022 election bid.

Lula and Trump first met briefly in September during the U.N. General Assembly in New York, when Trump described their interaction as having "great chemistry."

On Monday, the two leaders spoke for 30 minutes, exchanged phone numbers and Lula reiterated his invitation for Trump to attend the upcoming climate summit in Belem, according to Lula's office.

Trump later posted on Truth Social that the conversation focused on trade and the economy. "We will be having further discussions and will get together in the not too distant future, both in Brazil and the United States," he wrote.

The Trump administration imposed a 40% tariff on Brazilian goods in July, on top of a previous 10% tariff. Lula reminded Trump that the U.S. maintains a trade surplus with Brazil, one of only three G20 countries in that category.

The White House has echoed claims by Bolsonaro allies that his prosecution represented a breakdown in the rule of law and that the case was politically motivated.

Despite U.S. pressure, the Brazilian Supreme Court proceeded with Bolsonaro's trial and sentencing. In the aftermath, Trump said he was "very unhappy" and Rubio said on his X account that the U.S. government would "respond accordingly to this witch hunt."

Brazilian officials had expected retaliation from the U.S., but Lula expressed an optimistic tone Thursday in comments to a local radio station in which he praised Trump.

"He called me in the kindest way a human being can treat another," Lula said. "We are two 80-year-olds leading the greatest democracies in the West. We must show the world cordiality and harmony, not discord and conflict."

## US diplomat fired over relationship with woman accused of ties to Chinese Communist Party

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department said Wednesday that it has fired a U.S. diplomat over a romantic relationship he admitted having with a Chinese woman alleged to have ties to the Chinese Communist Party.

The dismissal is believed to be the first of its kind for violating a ban on such relationships that was introduced late last year under the Biden administration.

The Associated Press reported earlier this year that in the waning days of Democrat Joe Biden's presidency, the State Department imposed a ban on all American government personnel in China, as well as family members and contractors with security clearances, from any romantic or sexual relationships with Chinese citizens.

Tommy Pigott, a State Department spokesman, said in a statement that the diplomat in question was dismissed from the foreign service after President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio reviewed the case and determined that he had "admitted concealing a romantic relationship with a Chinese national with known ties to the Chinese Communist Party."

"Under Secretary Rubio's leadership, we will maintain a zero-tolerance policy for any employee who is caught undermining our country's national security," Pigott said.

The statement did not identify the diplomat, but he and his girlfriend had been featured in a surreptitiously filmed video posted online by conservative firebrand James O'Keefe.

In Beijing, a Chinese government spokesperson declined to comment on what he said is a domestic U.S. issue. "But I would like to stress that we oppose drawing lines based on ideological difference and maliciously smearing China," the Foreign Ministry's Guo Jiakun said at a daily briefing.

## **World leaders express hope after Israel and Hamas agreed to first phase of plan to end Gaza war**

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — World leaders on Thursday expressed hope for peace and urged Israel and Hamas to fulfill their commitments in the hours after U.S. President Donald Trump announced that the parties had agreed to the "first phase" of a deal signaling a major breakthrough in the two-year war in Gaza.

Hamas will release all 20 living hostages in the coming days in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza.

"This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace," Trump wrote on social media.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on social media: "With God's help we will bring them all home."

Here's how other leaders responded.

Turkey

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose country played a role in the negotiations, hailed the agreement. He thanked Trump in a statement on X for "demonstrating the necessary political will," as well as Qatar and Egypt for facilitating the deal.

"I extend my heartfelt greetings to my Palestinian brothers and sisters who have endured indescribable suffering for two years," Erdogan said, adding that Turkey would closely monitor the full implementation of the agreement.

Erdogan later said that Turkey hoped to participate in any task force that would be responsible for overseeing the ceasefire agreement. Getting humanitarian aid into Gaza, ensuring the exchange of hostages and prisoners, and pressing Israel to stop its military actions and "retreat to the designated lines" were of utmost importance, he added.

Egypt

President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi hailed the deal between Israel and Hamas as a "historic moment."

"This agreement does not only close the chapter of war; it also opens the door of hope for the peoples of the region for a future defined by justice and stability," el-Sissi wrote on social media.

Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, after phone calls from his European counterparts, expressed hope that the deal would start a "new chapter in the region, one in which the Palestinian and Israeli people enjoy security and stability, opening the door to a just and lasting peace between them."

Syria

Syria's Foreign Ministry welcomed the ceasefire announcement and expressed hope the development would pave the way "for a phase of regional stability."

The ministry also praised the mediation role of Qatar, Egypt, Turkey and the U.S.

United Arab Emirates



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The UAE, which struck a diplomatic recognition deal with Israel in 2020, praised the move toward a ceasefire, saying it hoped it would "constitute a positive step toward ending the humanitarian suffering in Gaza" while moving toward a two-state solution.

United Nations

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres said that the U.N. "will support the full implementation of the agreement and will scale up the delivery of sustained and principled humanitarian relief, and we will advance recovery and reconstruction efforts in Gaza."

He urged all "to seize this momentous opportunity to establish a credible political path forward" toward "recognizing the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and achieving a two-state solution that enables Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace and security."

China

China hoped for a "lasting and comprehensive" ceasefire in Gaza, with Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun saying that President Xi Jinping's government expects the agreement to ease the "humanitarian crisis" in Gaza and calm tensions in the Middle East.

"We are ready to work with the international community to make unremitting efforts to promote a comprehensive, fair and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue and the realization of peace and stability in the Middle East," he said, noting that China advocates for a two-state solution.

France

President Emmanuel Macron said that the agreement is a "great hope for the hostages and their families, for the Palestinians in Gaza, and for the entire region."

Macron commended "the efforts of President @realDonaldTrump, as well as the Qatari, Egyptian, and Turkish mediators who helped make it happen," and called on the warring parties "to strictly uphold" the terms of the deal.

Macron also said on X that European and Arab countries' foreign ministers will discuss the deal in Paris later Thursday. "This agreement must mark the end of the war and the beginning of a political solution based on the two-state solution," he said.

United Kingdom

Prime Minister Keir Starmer welcomed the agreement and urged an immediate lifting of restrictions on aid.

Speaking while on a trade mission to India, Starmer praised the "tireless diplomatic efforts" of the mediators and said the U.K. will support efforts to turn the ceasefire into a "sustainable path" to long-term peace.

"This is a moment of profound relief that will be felt all around the world, but particularly for the hostages, their families and for the civilian population of Gaza, who have all endured unimaginable suffering over the last two years," he said.

Germany

Chancellor Friedrich Merz welcomed the agreement and said that he was hopeful for a full deal this week.

Merz said that the developments are encouraging and that "hopes regarding Israel and the Gaza Strip increased again last night, but this is not yet really concluded, so we are of course watching the situation very closely and remain optimistic."

Saudi Arabia

The kingdom's foreign ministry expressed "hope that this important step will lead to urgent action to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of the brotherly Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, a complete Israeli withdrawal, the restoration of security and stability and the initiation of practical steps to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders."

Jordan

Jordan's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Ayman Safadi, praised the efforts of Egypt, Qatar and the United States and thanked Turkey for its role in the deal.

Safadi stressed the need for aid to enter Gaza, and said Jordan was ready to resume aid deliveries.

Lebanon

President Joseph Aoun said that he hoped the initial agreement would "constitute a first step toward a

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permanent ceasefire and an end to the humanitarian suffering of the brotherly Palestinian people in Gaza.”

Aoun called for “continued international and regional efforts to achieve a comprehensive and just peace in the region that guarantees the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people” and for Israel to “halt its aggressive policies in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria.”

Argentina

“I want to take the opportunity to say that I will sign the candidacy of Donald J. Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his extraordinary contribution to international peace,” Argentine President Javier Milei posted on X.

“Any other leader with similar achievements would have received it a long time ago,” the libertarian leader and Trump ally wrote.

## 50 years of the women’s basketball poll: From scrappy beginnings to a force in the sport

By DOUG FEINBERG AP Basketball Writer

Women’s college basketball wasn’t always dominated by UConn, Tennessee and South Carolina.

A half-century ago, tiny Immaculata won the first three national AIAW titles. Delta State soon followed before the likes of Louisiana Tech, Old Dominion and Rutgers started a slow trend of bigger programs becoming the backbone of a fledgling sport that many Americans were — and are — still learning to appreciate.

The women’s basketball poll has been there for it all. Founded by the Philadelphia Inquirer’s Mel Greenberg in 1976, it began six years before the first NCAA Tournament. The upcoming season marks the 50th year of the women’s basketball poll with the AP rankings serving as a roadmap for fans, players and coaches navigating the sport’s ups and downs.

This season opens at a critical moment, with basketball arguably the most popular women’s sport at the collegiate and professional level, bringing the brand endorsements, big audiences and complications that can come with success.

But it wasn’t always this way.

The poll’s beginnings

When the poll started in 1976, women’s games were almost never on national television and the internet wouldn’t come along for another few decades. That made it hard for coaches and fans to quickly understand where teams stacked up. The poll, which only ranked the top 20 teams at the time, was a way to solve that problem.

In the early days, coaches voted in the poll until it shifted to journalists before the 1994-95 season. Compiling it was no simple task before cellphones and the internet, forcing Greenberg to track down the coaches and then tabulate the results by hand before releasing the results to the public.

“The rankings became a thing. Every time they came out you’d see what other teams were doing,” said Cathy Rush, the Hall of Fame coach who led Immaculata to those three consecutive titles in the early 1970s. “Names we’d never seen before — all of a sudden they were ranked. It was so exciting when we had a big win or we lost to see where we would be each week.”

Delta State was the first No. 1 team in the history of the poll. Langston Rogers was the sports information director for the team at the time and recalled how the ranking was a defining moment for both the school and coach Margaret Wade, whose teams won three straight national titles in a run that included a 51-game winning streak.

“When the poll came out, I told Coach Wade we were No. 1 and she said with a laugh ‘I would hope so,’” Rogers said.

Who has ranked the most?

No team has been ranked more in the poll than Tennessee, which has appeared in 794 of the 885 polls. While the Lady Vols under coach Pat Summitt set the standard, UConn and Geno Auriemma have been the flag-bearer for the past 30 years. The Huskies have been No. 1 more than anyone else, reaching that

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spot a whopping 251 times, starting with their first appearance back in 1995.

"That's just another one of those statistics that blows my mind," Auriemma said. "It's amazing how everyone treats being No. 1 in the poll differently. It was for us, a validation that you guys are really good enough to be considered the best team in the country."

The Huskies beat the Lady Vols on Martin Luther King Day in 1995 when the poll was held back for the first time because of a daytime matchup of the No. 1 and 2 teams. The Huskies won and became the new number one the next day.

"Obviously it was quite exciting for us when we won that game," Auriemma said. "Maybe it wouldn't have been as much for Tennessee since they've been there before. But it was a pretty amazing feat. That was a big, big deal for my players, our program and the university. We were No. 1 in The AP poll, this was our shot at the national limelight."

The poll stays relevant through changing times

The technology has evolved over the years, allowing viewers to scan multiple games at a time on any number of screens at their fingertips. But the poll is as relevant as ever, playing a central role in everything from bragging rights to talent recruitment.

Rebecca Lobo, who led UConn to its first national championship in 1995, said that when she was being recruited by schools, they would send clippings of the poll with their team's rank highlighted to show where they were on the national landscape.

Nikki Fargas, who was an assistant at Tennessee before becoming a head coach at LSU and UCLA, remembers sending faxes and mailings out to potential recruits that showed poll rankings.

"When you're trying to bring in some of the top talent to your university to play, any nuggets you can provide to their families, their friends, that shows how consistent you've been how you've always been in the poll matters," she said. "Whether you're No. 1 for consecutive years or top five, those things matter when you're telling a story of your university."

More recently, Candace Parker said Summitt would remind her players at Tennessee of where they ranked and how some of their opponents were ahead of them. It was a motivation tactic — and one that apparently worked. Parker helped lead Tennessee to two consecutive national championships before launching a successful professional career.

"Pat knew how to light a fire," Parker said. "If someone was ranked ahead of us in the poll, she'd make it known."

## Trump was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize before. Experts say he's unlikely to win this year

By MARK LEWIS Associated Press

STAVANGER, Norway (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump's bid to win the Nobel Peace Prize has drawn added attention to the annual guessing game over who its next laureate will be.

Longtime Nobel watchers say Trump's prospects remain remote despite a flurry of high-profile nominations and some notable foreign policy interventions for which he has taken personal credit.

Experts say the Norwegian Nobel Committee typically focuses on the durability of peace, the promotion of international fraternity and the quiet work of institutions that strengthen those goals. Trump's own record might even work against him, they said, citing his apparent disdain for multilateral institutions and his disregard for global climate change concerns.

Still, the U.S. leader has repeatedly sought the Nobel spotlight since his first term, most recently telling United Nations delegates late last month "everyone says that I should get the Nobel Peace Prize."

A person cannot nominate themselves.

Public lobbying campaigns but a private committee decision

Trump's boasts and previous high-profile nominations make him the blockbuster name on the list of bookmakers' favorites. But it's unclear whether his name comes up in conversation when the five-member Nobel committee, appointed by Norway's parliament, meets behind closed doors.

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Trump has been nominated several times by people within the U.S. as well as politicians abroad since 2018. His name also was put forward in December by U.S. Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-NY), her office said in a statement, for his brokering of the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations between Israel and several Arab states in 2020.

Nominations made this year from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Pakistan's government occurred after the Feb. 1 deadline for the 2025 award.

Trump has said repeatedly that he "deserves" the prize and claims to have "ended seven wars." Last week, he teased the possibility of ending an eighth war if Israel and Hamas agree to his peace plan aimed at concluding the nearly two-year war in Gaza.

"Nobody's ever done that," he told a gathering of military leaders at Marine Corps Base Quantico in Virginia. "Will you get the Nobel Prize? Absolutely not. They'll give it to some guy that didn't do a damn thing."

Israel and Hamas have since agreed to the first phase of the peace plan for Gaza, paving the way for a pause in the fighting and the release of the remaining hostages held by Hamas in exchange for Palestinian prisoners. In the early hours of Thursday, families of hostages and their supporters started chanting "Nobel prize to Trump" as they gathered in Tel Aviv's hostages square.

**Sustained peace efforts prioritized over quick wins**

Nobel veterans say the committee prioritizes sustained, multilateral efforts over quick diplomatic wins. Theo Zenou, a historian and research fellow at the Henry Jackson Society, said Trump's efforts have not yet been proven to be long-lasting.

"There's a huge difference between getting fighting to stop in the short term and resolving the root causes of the conflict," Zenou said.

Zenou also highlighted Trump's dismissive stance on climate change as out-of-step with what many, including the Nobel committee, see as the planet's greatest long-term peace challenge.

"I don't think they would award the most prestigious prize in the world to someone who does not believe in climate change," Zenou said. "When you look at previous winners who have been bridge-builders, embodied international cooperation and reconciliation: These are not words we associate with Donald Trump."

**Avoiding political pressure**

The Nobel committee was met with fierce criticism in 2009 for giving then-U.S. President Barack Obama the prize barely nine months into his first term. Many argued Obama had not been in office long enough to have an impact worthy of the Nobel.

And Trump's own outspokenness about possibly winning the award might work against him: The committee won't want to be seen as caving in to political pressure, said Nina Græger, director of the Peace Research Institute Oslo.

Trump's prospects for the prize this year are "a long shot," she said. "His rhetoric does not point in a peaceful perspective."

The Nobel announcements began with the prize in medicine on Monday, and continued with physics on Tuesday and chemistry on Wednesday. The literature prize is being awarded on Thursday. The winner of the prize in economics will be announced on Monday.

## Today in History: October 10, Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Friday, Oct. 10, the 283rd day of 2025. There are 82 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 10, 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, accused of accepting bribes, resigned his office and pleaded no contest to one count of federal income tax evasion. President Richard Nixon soon after appointed Congressman Gerald Ford to replace Agnew. Nixon resigned in 1974 amid the Watergate scandal and Ford succeeded him.

Also on this date:

In 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy was established in Annapolis, Maryland, with an inaugural class of 50



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students.

In 1911, Chinese revolutionaries launched an uprising that led to the collapse of the Qing (or Manchu) Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China.

In 1935, the George Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess," featuring an all-Black cast, opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 124 performances.

In 1964, the Summer Olympics began in Tokyo, the first Summer Games to be telecast around the world.

In 1966, the Beach Boys' single "Good Vibrations," written by Brian Wilson and Mike Love, was released by Capitol Records.

In 1970, Fiji became independent of the United Kingdom, 96 years after the South Pacific island archipelago had been colonized.

In 2001, a month after the Sept. 11 attacks, U.S. jets stepped up bombing of the Afghan capital of Kabul while President George W. Bush unveiled a list of 22 most-wanted terrorists, including Osama bin Laden.

In 2014, Malala Yousafzai (mah-LAH'-lah YOO'-suhf-zeye), a 17-year-old Pakistani girl, and Kailash Satyarthi (KY'-lash saht-YAHR'-thee), a 60-year-old Indian man, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for risking their lives for the right of children to receive an education and to live free from abuse.

In 2018, Hurricane Michael, the first to strike the U.S. mainland as a Category 5 hurricane in 26 years, barreled onto the Florida Panhandle with 160 mph (257 kph) winds, causing nearly \$7 billion in total insured losses.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Coyote is 84. Entertainer Ben Vereen is 79. Actor Charles Dance is 79. Author Nora Roberts is 75. Rock singer David Lee Roth is 71. Country singer Tanya Tucker is 67. Actor Julia Sweeney is 66. Actor Bradley Whitford is 66. Football Hall of Famer Brett Favre is 56. Actor/TV host Mario Lopez is 52. NASCAR Hall of Famer Dale Earnhardt Jr. is 51. Hockey Hall of Famer Chris Pronger is 51.