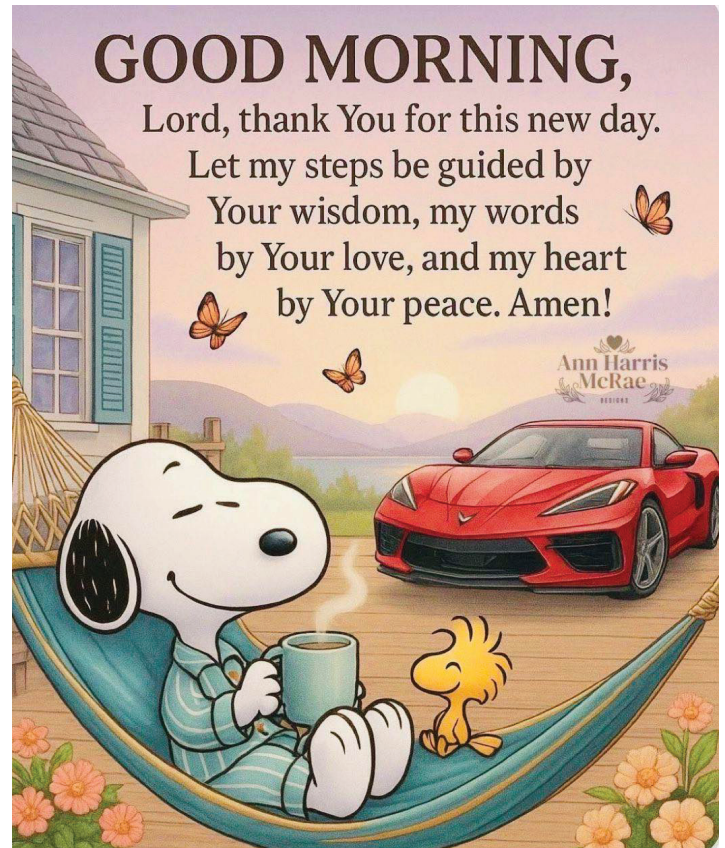


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Friday, Nov. 7

Senior Menu: Chicken pot pie casserole, roasted potatoes, applesauce, biscuits.

School Breakfast: Breakfast boats.

School Lunch: Chicken fajitas, mixed vegetable.

MS GBB hosts Aberdeen Christian (7th at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m.)

Saturday, Nov. 8

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

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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.

Shutdown Disrupts Skies

The Federal Aviation Administration is reducing flight capacity by 10% at 40 major airports beginning today. The cuts were prompted by staffing shortages, as air traffic controllers and TSA agents approach six weeks unpaid amid the government shutdown, now the longest ever.

The reductions could affect over 268,000 passengers on roughly 1,800 domestic flights daily and will continue until safety data improves. Controllers, who have missed one paycheck since the shutdown began Oct. 1 and are set to miss another next week, have increasingly been calling off work. Most were already working mandatory six-day workweeks due to chronic staffing shortages. Over 6,200 flights were delayed and 500 were canceled last Friday, marking the single worst day for delays since the shutdown began. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffey attributed roughly 65% of those delays to controller staffing, compared to the usual 5%.

Travelers began receiving cancellation notices yesterday, and several airlines have temporarily eased refund policies. See list of affected airports [here](#).

Nancy Pelosi Retirement

Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D, CA-11) announced yesterday she will not run for reelection next year. The decision signals the end of Pelosi's career as one of the most powerful women in American politics.

Pelosi has represented the San Francisco area since 1987. In 2001, she won a competitive race to become the No. 2-ranked Democrat in Congress, and became minority leader the following year. When Democrats won the House in 2006, Pelosi became the country's first female House speaker. In that capacity, she steered the Affordable Care Act through Congress, which provides health insurance for more than 21 million people and is projected to cost over \$3.5T annually by 2034. In 2018, she was reelected as speaker, the first lawmaker since the 1950s to do so.

Pelosi's retirement is expected to kick off a heated primary race between at least two Democrats: state Sen. Scott Wiener and progressive former tech executive Saikat Chakrabarti.

Dynasty Diamond Discovered

The Florentine Diamond, a 137.27-carat yellow gemstone once belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg imperial family, has resurfaced in a Canadian bank after being thought missing for more than a century. Descendants revealed that Empress Zita secretly safeguarded the jewel, entrusting her two sons with its location and requiring the secret to be kept for 100 years after Emperor Charles I's death in 1922.

The diamond—long the subject of speculation—has a history tied to European royalty, first documented with Florence's Medici family in the 17th century before passing to the Habsburgs. It was assumed lost or stolen amid the collapse of the empire around 1918, when Charles I—a nephew of Franz Ferdinand—fled Vienna. Escaping Nazi persecution, the family relocated to Canada during World War II, bringing the diamond with them alongside other family jewels.

The descendants said the diamond will remain in Canada in gratitude for sheltering the exiled family and will be displayed publicly.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Classic rock band Journey announces farewell tour, beginning with 60 North American shows running late February through early July.

Dallas Cowboys' Marshawn Kneeland dies of suspected suicide following police chase; 24-year-old defensive end scored Dallas' first touchdown in Monday's game against Arizona Cardinals.

Lionsgate releases first trailer for Michael Jackson biopic, with late singer played by nephew, Jaafar Jackson.

Warner Bros. to revive "Gremlins" franchise with original producer Steven Spielberg and original writer Chris Columbus.

Science & Technology

Microsoft to form superintelligence team focused on improving medical diagnostics with AI.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and wife, Dr. Priscilla Chan, shift philanthropy to fund AI advances in medicine.

Astrophysicists present evidence the universe's expansion is decelerating, challenging Nobel Prize-winning theory of universe expansion at ever-increasing rate.

Researchers create digital map with nearly 186,000 miles of Roman Empire roads, including over 68,000 previously unknown miles.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close down (S&P 500 -1.1%, Dow -0.8%, Nasdaq -1.9%).

Tesla shareholders approve Elon Musk's \$1T pay package pending hitting certain milestones over the coming decade; over 75% vote in favor.

President Donald Trump announces deal with Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk to lower prices on weight-loss drugs for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries as well as directly to consumers via TrumpRx.gov.

Boeing's criminal case over two 737 Max crashes in 2018 and 2019, which killed 346 people, dismissed by federal judge at Justice Department's request.

Politics & World Affairs

Federal judge orders the Trump administration to reinstate full SNAP benefits.

Supreme Court reinstates Trump administration policy requiring transgender Americans to mark sex, not gender identity, on passports.

Sudanese militia Rapid Support Forces agrees to a US-proposed ceasefire; Sudanese military has not responded as of this writing.

Kazakhstan will reportedly join the Abraham Accords, a group of Arab and Muslim-majority countries normalizing relations with Israel.

Typhoon Kalmaegi lands in Vietnam after killing at least 140 people in the Philippines.

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Tigers punch ticket to SoDak 16 with gritty win over Britton-Hecla

Groton Area shook off a determined Britton-Hecla squad Thursday night in Groton, earning a 3-1 victory in the Region 1A semifinals and securing a spot in next week's SoDak 16. The Tigers will face Rapid City Christian on Tuesday at a site to be determined.

Groton wasted no time setting the tone, rolling to a 25-13 win in the opening set after stringing together six straight points for a 9-2 lead. Britton-Hecla answered in the second, battling through 10 ties and five lead changes before closing on a three-point surge to take a 25-22 win.

The pivotal third set swung wildly — Britton-Hecla ran off nine straight points to go up 13-3, but the Tigers answered with eight straight of their own to surge in front 18-16 before securing a 25-21 win. In the fourth, Groton grabbed a 10-5 lead and never looked back, finishing the match with a 25-17 victory in front of a packed home crowd.

Head coach Chelsea Hanson said her team felt the nerves early.

"There was a little bit of tension," Hanson said. "This was a big environment, and without Chesney there was some stress. But I loved how they figured it out. They settled in, they communicated, and they trusted each other."

Hanson credited her seniors for steadying the group during the third-set comeback.

"We could have folded — easily. But our seniors took over," she said. "They didn't panic. They just chipped away one point at a time. That's experience."

She also praised sophomore setter Talli Wright, who stepped into a primary setting role.

"Huge shoes to fill," Hanson said. "And she handled it. Running the offense in this environment — that's a credit to her. Our hitting numbers show it."

Hanson also noted Britton-Hecla's strong effort.

"They came in hungry and played fearless. Their block was solid, and they made us adjust. But once we matched their energy, we took control."



The Groton Area Volleyball Team receives the SoDak16 Volleyball as the Tigers advance to Tuesday's match with Rapid City Christian.

(Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

Tiger Stat Line

Groton finished 80-for-88 serving with seven aces.

McKenna Tietz served 13-of-14 with two aces, Jerica Locke went 16-of-17 with two aces, and Sydney Locke added a 9-of-19 line with one ace.

At the net, the Tigers hit 128-for-153 with 50 kills — Tevan Hanson led the way going 27-for-37 with 13 kills, Rylee Dunker was 26-for-30 with 11, Jaedyn Penning posted a 39-for-44 night with 11, and Taryn Traphagen went 17-for-18 with 9 kills. Makenna Krause added 2 kills, Kella Tracy, Jerica Locke, and Talli Wright each added one.

Wright handled the bulk of the setting duties, distributing 34 assists, while Traphagen added 2.

Defensively, Groton dug up 69 balls, led by Jerica Locke's 22 digs, along with Penning's 13 and Sydney Locke's 11. At the net defensively, the Tigers tallied four blocks, with Dunker recording one solo block and one assist, and Traphagen contributing two block assists.

Britton-Hecla Stat Leaders

Britton-Hecla was led by Daynika Zuehlke with 11 kills, Karlie Zuehlke with 8, and Madelynn Micko with 7. Jaelee Grupe had 3 kills and an ace, Chellon Pruitt added 3 kills, and Kennady Van Lith also served an ace.

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Next Up — SoDak 16

#7 Groton Area (25-5) vs. #10 Rapid City Christian (28-11)

All three Northeast Conference co-champions — Hamlin, Clark/Willow Lake and Groton Area — advanced to the SoDak 16.

"This group deserves to keep playing," Hanson said. "We survived tonight — now we get to attack Tuesday."



Broadcast & Sponsors

The match streamed on GDILIVE.com with Justin Hanson and Pat Krause calling the action and Jeslyn Kosel producing.

Sponsors included Avantara Groton, BaseKamp Lodge, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Doug Abeln Seed Co., Ferney Farmers Union Co-op, Groton Ag Partners, Groton American Legion, Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, Hanlon Brothers, John Sieh Agency, KR Body Shop, Lori's Pharmacy, Milbrandt Enterprises, Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Sun & Sea Travel and The Meat House.

Class A - SoDak 16

#1 -



	1 Dakota Valley	30-3	11/11 TBD
	16 Platte-Geddes	14-19	

Match sites and times will be released on Friday, November 7

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#5 -

	5 Winner	25-6	11/11 TBD
	12 Wagner	23-7	

#2 -

	2 Dell Rapids	26-6	11/11 TBD
	15 Todd County	19-15	



STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#6 -

	6 Hamlin	20-4	11/11 TBD
	11 West Central	22-8	

#3 -

	3 Sioux Falls Christian	24-10	11/11 TBD
	14 McCook Central/Montrose	12-13	

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#7 -

	7 Groton Area	25-5	11/11 TBD
	10 Rapid City Christian	28-11	



#4 -

	4 Clark/Willow Lake	24-1	11/11 TBD
	13 Aberdeen Roncalli	18-11	

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#8 -

	8 Miller	23-7	11/11 TBD
	9 St. Thomas More	28-9	

Seed Points Averages (calculated Oct. 28)

#1 Dakota Valley 46.281 - #2 Dell Rapids 44.677 - #3 Sioux Falls Christian 44.625 - #4 Clark/Willow Lake 44.417 - #5 Winner 44.400 - #6 Hamlin 44.000 - #7 Groton Area 43.862 - #8 Miller 43.828 - #9 St. Thomas More 43.417 - #10 Rapid City Christian 43.270 - #11 West Central 43.071 - #12 Wagner 43.000 - #13 Aberdeen Roncalli 41.963 - #14 McCook Central/Montrose 40.417 - #15 Todd County 39.906 - #16 Platte-Geddes 39.387



Groton Post No. 39 American Legion

Annual Turkey Party

Saturday, Nov. 15, 2025

Starting at 6:30 p.m.

Groton Legion Post Home, 10 N. Main.

**Turkey, Ham and Bacon
to be given away**



Lunch served
by Auxiliary

FREE ADMISSION

DOOR
PRIZE!

Groton Daily Independent

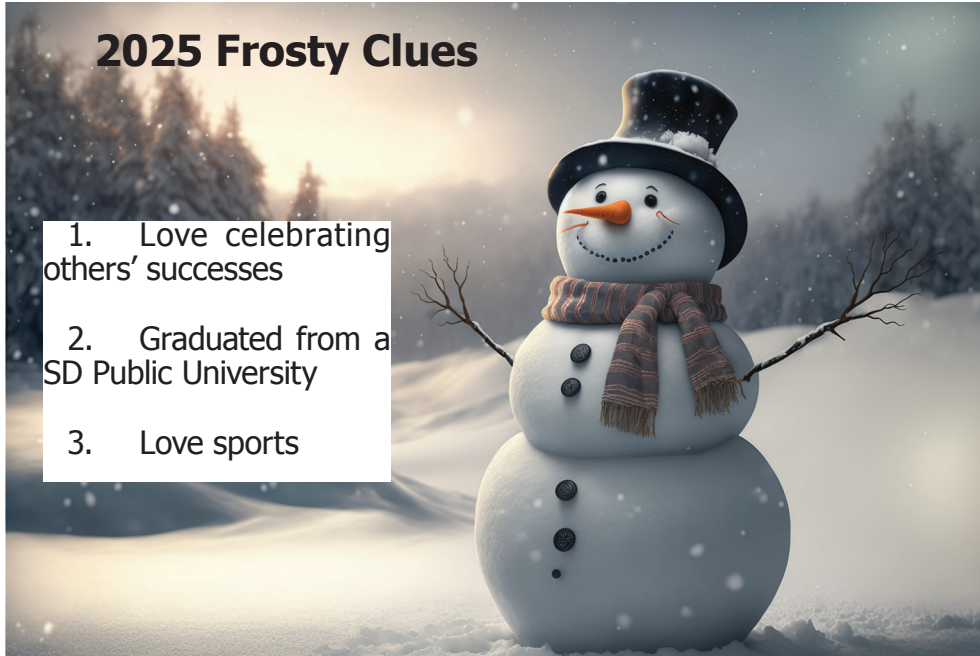
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Frosty is Back!!!

Please check the Groton Daily Independent for daily clues as to who the Groton Area Mystery Frosty is. The unveiling of Frosty will take place at the Groton Area Snow Queen Contest on Sunday, November 30th, at 4:00 pm.

2025 Frosty Clues

1. Love celebrating others' successes
2. Graduated from a SD Public University
3. Love sports



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Groton Chamber of Commerce

November 5, 2025 ~ 12pm City Hall

- Members present: Katelyn Nehlich, Douglas Heinrich, Ashley Bentz, April Abeln, and Carol Kutter
- The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by Heinrich and seconded by Kutter. All members present voted aye.
- The treasurer's report was given. Dacotah Bank checking account balance is \$11,544.35 in addition to the \$10,000 CD. The bucks account balance is \$3,159. The report was approved by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich.
- All members present voted aye. The \$12,000 city budget request was approved.
- A thank you was received from Groton Pumpkin Fest. They are looking for a new chair to coordinate that event.
- Shirt fliers were sent home with elementary school children the week of October 27th. Bentz will deliver some to St. John's Preschool. Fliers may be sent home with daycare kids.
- Total raised so far for the seesaw fundraiser is just under \$1,800.
- No money has been received for the Hwy 12 sign ad spots.
- The winner of the Downtown Trick or Treat basket was Preslee Giedt.
- The application for donated services from JVT/NVC for our Hwy 12 internet was approved.
- Our \$5,000 CD came due October 21st. \$10,000 has now been invested in a CD that will come due in March 2026.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Kutter to host a Christmas party at our January 7th board meeting. Ken's Food Fair will cater. All members present voted aye.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to set up a tree for Wage Memorial Library's Tour of Trees event. All members present voted aye. Individuals will be encouraged to donate nonperishable items and will receive 605 clothing in return. Tree will be set up November 6th at 1pm.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Nehlich to pick Audrey Smaller's window cling design as the winner. All members present voted aye.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to order window clings from BK Custom T's & More. All members present voted aye.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to publish a \$35 shop local ad in the GDI/GI as part of their Thanksgiving edition. All members present voted aye. Ads will also be done on the radio with our free ads from Dakota Broadcasting and will be posted on Facebook.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Kutter to advertise with GDI Live for the volleyball post season. All members present voted aye. Max fee will be \$70.
- Motion by Kutter and seconded by Heinrich to donate \$200 to PMS's Santa Day event. All members present voted aye.
- Motion by Kutter and seconded by Heinrich to donate a Chamber tumbler and 605 shirts to the 3 Snow Queen judges. All members present voted aye. It was asked if sponsors are printed in the programs.
- Motion by Kutter and seconded by Abeln to donate a tumbler, a 605 crew and tee to the Yelduz Shrine Festival of Trees event. All members present voted aye.
- Micaela Merkel, owner of Unload Laundry and Tanya Johnson, owner of Cloverly Home Décor, will be present at the December meeting for new business welcomes.
- Next Meeting: December 3rd, 12pm at City Hall

Upcoming events:

- o 11/09/2025 SEAS Catholic Church Soup Supper & Pie Auction 5-6:30pm
- o 11/11/2025 Veteran's Day Program 2pm
- o 11/12/2025 GHS Fall Food Drive 6-7pm sponsored by Groton FCCLA
- o 11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm
- o 11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1:30pm
- o 11/30/2025 Snow Queen 4pm GHS Gym
- o 12/05/2025 Tour of Trees at Wage Memorial Library 3:30-5:30pm
- o 12/06/2025 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party 6pm

USD to charge for parking at football championships

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. NewsMedia Association

PIERRE — Fans headed for the high school football championships at the Dakota Dome in Vermillion had better have some cash handy to pay for parking. At its meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 5, the South Dakota High School Activities Association board of directors learned that the University of South Dakota will charge \$5 per vehicle for parking at the championship games.

"We're not collecting any of this money," SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos told the board. He said the money was something USD officials thought they needed to collect for that particular event.

Swartos said a check with the association's lawyer found that the contract for the football championships is for the inside of the Dakota Dome and that USD controls the parking.

"It's something they do on their game days," Swartos said.

Board chairman Jeff Danielsen of Watertown said this time the parking charge will be paid by a different clientele. "Ninety percent of those folks (who park on USD game days) are supportive of the college" and are accustomed to paying for parking.

Danielsen said he hoped that the venues used by SDHSAA for state events would "care for the mission of the activities association." Part of that mission is trying to keep costs down so families can afford to go to state events.

The \$5 fee must be paid in cash. There will be no charge for handicapped parking or for high school students with a valid school I.D.

Swartos said the championship games next year are the last games of the current contract with USD. He said parking would be addressed in negotiations for a new contract. He also noted that while other venues could bid on hosting the championship games, USD has the only covered football field in the state.

USD will charge for parking in the four lots to the east of the Dakota Dome, in Lot 39 to the south and in the west grass lot. There will be free parking in Lot 36 which is to the south of Lot 39.

Games will take place Thursday, Nov. 13, through Saturday, Nov. 15. On Thursday the Class 9B game will be at 11 a.m. and the Class 9AA game will be at 7 p.m. On Friday the Class 9A game will be at 10 a.m., the Class 11B game will be at 2 p.m. and the Class 11AA game will be at 7 p.m. On Saturday the Class 11A game will be at noon and the Class 11AAA game will be at 5 p.m.

—30—

SDHSAA sets goals for new school year

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. NewsMedia Association

PIERRE — Some familiar challenges and some new ones are among the goals that the board of directors of the South Dakota High School Activities Association set for the coming year when it met Wednesday, Nov. 5.

One familiar goal is developing a sportsmanship initiative concerning fan, coach and player behavior. In the past the association has sought out and highlighted school initiatives in this area. It has worked with the student council advisory council and the "Bench Bad Behavior" initiative from the National Federation of High School Associations. It also developed a fan ejection policy.

For the coming year, the board will attempt to implement a targeted sportsmanship initiative with an estimated completion date of June 2026.

Another goal held over from last year is studying the concept of using a success factor in sports classifications. Currently high school sports are classified by enrollment. A success factor would use a variety of factors to move teams up or down in classification.

In the past, the association established the framework for a committee, sought input from the committee and member schools and reviewed success factor models from around the country.

SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos said a success factor may be a way to "throw a lifeline to a program that's drowning."

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In April of next year the association is due to present its findings to the board. If accepted by the board, adopting a success factor could lead to constitutional amendments or bylaw changes.

Another goal for the year is developing an initiative highlighting the value of the state high school activities association. In the past, social media posts with this message have been implemented and the association has used ideas from and contributed to the "Protect the Purpose" campaign sponsored by the NFHS.

At its meeting on Wednesday, Swartos showed the SDHSAA board of directors a fact sheet prepared by the staff. It lists the benefits of participating in high school sports and activities as higher GPAs, higher graduation rates, greater career aspirations, fewer school absences, fewer discipline problems and lower risk of drug use.

By June of 2026 the association hopes to incorporate that messaging with corporate partners, distribute materials to schools and other stakeholders.

The association also has the goal of working on the retention of more activities directors. To accomplish that goal the association will seek input from member schools on AD retention and develop ideas from that feedback. Recommendations will be presented to the board in June 2026.

"It's a tough gig," Swartos said of the job of high school activities director. In most years, 25% to 30% of the state's activities director jobs are open. According to Swartos, some schools have a new activities director every year, hurting the school's chance for its offerings to develop any sort of consistency.

Another goal concerns the recruitment of coaches. In the coming year the association will seek input from members on coach recruitment and develop ideas from member feedback. Recommendations are due to the board of directors in April 2026.

—30—

SDHSAA works on policy to keep fans off the courts

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. NewsMedia Association

PIERRE — The South Dakota High School Activities Association is working on a policy to keep fans from storming the court after state events.

"It's not a big occurrence," said SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos. "We're not trying to be fun haters but there are legitimate safety concerns."

At its July meeting, the SDHSAA board of director passed the first reading of a policy that said fans who enter the playing area prior to the awarding of medals and trophies would be removed from the facility immediately. It also said the offending school would be fined \$1,000 payable to the opposing team. Physical altercations between fans and players would be referred to law enforcement.

At its meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 5, the board considered an alternate version of the rule that removed the fine. Swartos said some bars offered to pay their school's fine if students storm the court.

Swartos said he was for removing the fine from the policy because it "almost serves as a permission slip" to storm the court.

Instead of taking action on the second reading, Swartos was instructed to develop a new policy for the board to consider that states that the school administration at the hosting venue is responsible for keeping fans off the court. The new wording will state that SDHSAA reserves the right to sanction a school that blatantly disregards the policy.



by Michael Klinski
investigative reporter

Fact brief: Is Congress getting paid during the shutdown?

Yes.

Members of the United States Senate and House are still receiving paychecks during the government shutdown, though some lawmakers are looking to change that.

Since 1983, Congress' pay has been funded by a permanent appropriation, and their paychecks aren't subject to annual renewal. However, at least 20 lawmakers have asked to have their pay withheld.

U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Wisconsin, Sen. John Kennedy, R-Louisiana, and others are introducing legislation that would eliminate paychecks for senators and representatives during shutdowns.

Members of Congress earn \$174,000 annually, while the Speaker of the House earns \$223,500 and Senate majority and minority leaders, including South Dakota Sen. John Thune, earn \$193,400.

As of 2015, the median net worth of Congress was \$1.1 million — 12 times greater than the average U.S. household.

The government has been shut down for 36 days as of Nov. 6, the longest in history.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Three of the nation's most SNAP-dependent counties are in South Dakota **Report highlights risks to local residents and retailers as federal government shutdown threatens food assistance program benefits**

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER

Three South Dakota counties have some of the highest percentages of federal food assistance participation in the country, based on a report from the Center for American Progress.

The report highlights retailers and areas most at risk of being harmed by changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Amid the federal government shutdown, President Donald Trump's administration has said it will eventually run out of money to fund SNAP benefits or will have to reduce benefits for the program, which provides 42 million low-income Americans — including 75,000 South Dakotans — with payment cards they can use to buy food. A federal judge on Thursday ordered the Trump administration to pay full November SNAP benefits by Friday.

South Dakota has counties with the nation's third-, sixth- and eighth-highest percentages of residents utilizing SNAP, according to the Center for American Progress report. Those are Todd County, where 49.3% of residents use SNAP, Ziebach County (43.5%) and Oglala Lakota County (43%).

The counties include tribal lands of the Rosebud, Cheyenne River and Oglala Sioux tribes, respectively.

Rosebud Sioux Tribe President Kathleen Wooden Knife wrote a letter to South Dakota's congressional delegates in October, urging them to reopen the government. Wooden Knife wrote that 60% to 70% of Rosebud tribal members, some of whom live off tribal land, rely on SNAP.

Sicangu Co., an economic development organization based on Rosebud land, plans to harvest and process five bison to distribute to SNAP recipients across the Rosebud Reservation. The estimated cost for the effort is about \$10,000.

RF Buche, with GF Buche Foods, said the grocery and convenience store chain will offer \$100 worth of groceries to each SNAP household if funds aren't processed by Nov. 10 (SNAP benefits in South Dakota are loaded onto payment cards on the 10th of every month). GF Buche stores are largely on or near tribal land.

Republican South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden told South Dakota Searchlight earlier this week he would not support using any state funds to supplement SNAP payments during the shutdown.

The state Department of Social Services, which administers SNAP in South Dakota, has said it's monitoring the rapidly evolving situation and has not yet provided any public guidance on its plan for November benefits.

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.

Trump administration ordered to pay full \$9B in November SNAP benefits amid shutdown

BY: JACOB FISCHLER

A federal judge in Rhode Island ordered the Trump administration Thursday to pay roughly \$9 billion for a full month of nutrition assistance benefits by the next day.

Chief Judge John J. McConnell Jr., who was appointed by Democratic former President Barack Obama, said the administration blew its chance to choose to pay only partial benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, when it failed to release funds by a Wednesday deadline.

He said a social media post by President Donald Trump showed the president sought to use hunger for political leverage during the government shutdown, which stretched into day 37 on Thursday.

Earlier, in a Friday oral order that he expanded in a Saturday written order, McConnell had said the government must either pay full benefits by Monday or partial benefits from a contingency fund by Wednesday.

The government did neither, he said Thursday.

The administration had argued it was impossible to pay the benefits, which go to 42 million Americans, within a few days, saying that the USDA had never calculated partial benefits and that coordinating new payments for SNAP, a federally funded program administered by the states, was difficult.

The administration quickly appealed the ruling to the 1st Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

"Today is a major victory for 42 million people in America. The court could not be more clear – the Trump-Vance administration must stop playing politics with people's lives by delaying SNAP payments they are obligated to issue," said Skye Perryman, President and CEO of Democracy Forward, co-counsel for the coalition challenging the administration.

'USDA cannot now cry'

But McConnell said the department created the problem, in part by failing to prepare for it far earlier. USDA was obligated to spend from a contingency fund to ensure SNAP benefits flowed into November uninterrupted, he said.

"USDA did not do so," he said. "Even when Nov. 1 came, USDA refused to use the congressionally mandated contingency funds. USDA cannot now cry that it cannot get timely payments to beneficiaries for weeks or months because states are not prepared to make partial payments.

"USDA arbitrarily and capriciously created this problem by ignoring the congressionally mandated contingency funds and failing to timely notify the states."

McConnell also pointed to Trump's post on Truth Social on Tuesday that indicated he would not authorize payments consistent with the judge's order until Democrats agreed to his terms to end the government shutdown.

"The day before the compliance was ordered, the president stated his intent to defy the court order when he said, 'SNAP payments will be given only when the government opens,'" McConnell said Thursday.

Child nutrition funding suggested

The USDA had said it would pay only partial November benefits from a contingency fund holding about \$4.5 billion, rather than tap into other money at its disposal, including a \$23 billion fund for child nutrition programs.

The coalition of cities and nonprofit organizations that sued to force the administration to pay SNAP benefits for November has argued the court should force USDA to pay full benefits for November.

In addition to the missed Wednesday deadline, the move violated a fundamental administrative law requiring federal agencies not to make arbitrary and capricious decisions, Kristin Bateman of the Democracy Forward Foundation, which is representing the groups, said Thursday.

The child nutrition program would not need its billions of dollars until June, she said, meaning that transferring funds for SNAP would only actually hurt the child nutrition program if the shutdown persists

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until then.

"A decision on such a highly unlikely set of events is not reasoned decision-making," Bateman said. "It's particularly unreasonable because the defendants have not explained why they would choose to let 42 million Americans, including 16 million children, go hungry now in order to guard against the extreme outside chance that come June, there won't be enough money to fund child nutrition programs."

McConnell agreed that invoking the child nutrition fund was "entirely pretextual," which was demonstrated in part by Trump's post and other statements by administration officials.

"The defendants' stated desire to conserve funding for the child nutrition programs is entirely pretextual, given the numerous statements made in recent weeks by the president and his administration officials who admit to withholding full SNAP benefits for political reasons," he said.

McConnell also noted that the case should be resolved as soon as possible to help provide food to hungry people or "needless suffering will occur."

'A state problem'

Tyler Becker, who argued on behalf of the USDA, said the department had done its part by making available to states a table showing how they should allocate partial November benefits for households of differing circumstances.

SNAP is a complex program, requiring coordination between the federal government and all 50 states, each of which has a different system for distributing benefits.

"The government did make the payments, is making the payments to the states," he said. "That's all the government does in the SNAP program."

He added that the government had shown earlier in the case some of the administrative difficulties of paying partial benefits.

In a separate case in Massachusetts federal court, some states said they could process the benefits immediately, while others cannot.

"This is a state problem," he said.

But McConnell cut him off shortly after, saying the federal government was responsible for ensuring people got their SNAP benefits.

"The problem that the government identified needed to be resolved one way or the other by Wednesday," he said. "And if it wasn't resolved by Wednesday, then you had to make the full payments, because that's the only way we could get money to people immediately and alleviate the irreparable harm, whether you could or couldn't do anything about that."

In a Sept. 30 contingency plan about how to proceed during a government shutdown, the USDA itself said it would pay for continuing benefits through the contingency fund, which at the time held \$6 billion. The administration later reversed that plan and said it could not tap the contingency fund.

In the Massachusetts case, which was brought by 25 Democratic states and the District of Columbia, the states argued Thursday that confusion stemming from a miscalculation the USDA made in determining November partial benefits was a reason to force the administration to pay for a full month.

USDA corrects miscalculation

The hearing followed a late Wednesday night filing from the USDA correcting an error it made in calculating the amounts beneficiaries would receive under its plan for partial payments.

The department said it will reduce the largest monthly food assistance payments by about 35% in November, down from a 50% cut the department initially estimated.

USDA miscalculated how to adjust benefit payments for SNAP to account for a lack of full funding during the government shutdown, a department official said in a filing to the U.S. District Court for Rhode Island.

The formula the government initially used and sent to states Tuesday would have resulted in about a 50% cut to the maximum monthly benefits, and left some households without benefits.

SNAP pays benefits on a sliding scale depending on the size of a household, the household's income and

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other expenses such as housing. By cutting the maximum benefit by one-half, the department would have spent about \$3 billion from a SNAP contingency fund instead of the full \$4.65 billion in the fund, which is what the court ordered it to spend.

The mixup created confusion for state administrators, the states in the Massachusetts litigation said.

"The fact they have been asked to suddenly shift on a dime yet again as a result of these entirely new tables, causing further chaos and delay, underscores that USDA's approach here is untenable and unlawful," the states wrote in a Thursday brief.

The error was first reported to McConnell by the coalition of cities and nonprofit organizations that sued to force the government to pay SNAP benefits this month.

Think tank discovers discrepancy

An analysis submitted by Sharon Parrott, a former White House budget officer who now leads the left-leaning think tank Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, showed that the table the department submitted to the court and sent to states on Tuesday would fall short of the court's order to spend the entire contingency fund.

The groups said the department's error was another reason the court should compel the government to transfer funds to pay out full benefits for November.

"Defendants' approach means that only around \$3 billion—out of the \$4.65 billion Defendants have said is available—will be spent on SNAP benefits in November, leaving more than \$1.5 billion in contingency funds unspent," they wrote in a Wednesday brief. "Defendants opted for partial (and delayed) SNAP payments, but even then, did not manage to do that correctly."

The department said in its filing later Wednesday that it independently discovered its miscalculation and worked to fix it before Parrott's declaration hit the court docket.

"Defendants realized this error and worked to issue new guidance and tables as soon as it was discovered, not in response to Plaintiffs' notice filed earlier this evening," USDA's brief said.

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.

Northeast SD Head Start considers temporary closure as it awaits funding delayed by shutdown

Line of credit from a bank keeps program running for now

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER

Funding for a Head Start program in South Dakota is delayed because of the federal government shutdown, forcing the program to obtain its own temporary funding and consider a potential closure next month.

Aberdeen-based Northeast South Dakota Head Start expected to receive just over \$3 million on Nov. 1 for its fiscal year 2026. The program is funded almost entirely by the federal government, serving 265 children and employing 70 people in eight towns across 13 counties. Children from low-income families receive free early learning, health and family well-being services.

The program remains open because of a line of credit through Dacotah Bank, said Juli Schultz, executive director of Northeast South Dakota Head Start. The credit will cover the cost of food and staff salaries for November.

If the shutdown continues into December, Schultz said the program will temporarily close.

"The shutdown needs to stop. People here are not puppets," Schultz said. "What's happening is they're playing with our lives, and they just need to move forward."

Head Start programs are funded annually, though at different times of the year. If the shutdown lasts until December or later, more programs would see their funding run out.

Eight of South Dakota's 16 Head Start programs are tribally operated. None of the other non-tribal Head

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Start programs has been affected yet, said Schultz, who is president of the South Dakota Head Start Association board. South Dakota Searchlight reached out to all tribal organizations, with three responding that their grants have not yet been impacted.

Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribal Education Director Sherry Johnson told South Dakota Searchlight in an email that the tribe's Head Start grant starts Dec. 1.

"We are in a panic. The tribe is looking for funding to keep them open," Johnson said.

Nationally, about 140 Head Start programs have been affected since the beginning of the shutdown last month; 21 programs in 18 states and Puerto Rico have closed temporarily, according to the National Head Start Association. Other programs have not been affected yet, or have stayed open thanks to a line of credit or because they've been able to secure funding through philanthropic organizations.

Launched six decades ago as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, Head Start programs provide a range of services beyond early education, such as medical and dental screenings, school meals and family support to children from low-income households who can't afford other child care options. Northeast South Dakota Head Start provides preschool classes, along with breakfast, lunch and a snack.

Schultz said the federal government had never previously failed to fund her program by the beginning of the Nov. 1 grant cycle.

Schultz worries about the effects on children and families if she has to temporarily close the program next month. In addition to providing many children "one main nutritious meal" for most of the week, Head Start is a safe space for children and provides families with child care and help accessing resources within the state and community.

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.

US Senate fails to pass war powers resolution blocking Trump attacks on Venezuela

South Dakota's Thune and Rounds each vote against joint resolution

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — A vote to stop President Donald Trump's deadly strikes on alleged drug-running boats off the coast of Venezuela failed Thursday in the U.S. Senate, nearly mirroring the outcome of a similar war powers vote last month.

Senate Republicans Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Rand Paul of Kentucky again joined Democrats in a 49-51 vote, just shy of the simple majority needed to advance legislation aimed at halting Trump's escalating campaign on what his administration describes as "narco-terrorists."

The joint resolution, brought to the floor by Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., directs the "removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Venezuela that have not been authorized by Congress."

Paul and Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., initially cosponsored the bill, and a dozen more Democratic senators and one independent signed on.

Schiff's similar measure failed 48-51 in early October.

Kaine forced Thursday's vote under the War Powers Resolution, a Vietnam War-era statute that gives Congress a check on the president's use of the military abroad.

The death toll from U.S. military strikes has risen to 67 since September, according to CNN. Notably, the Trump administration is relocating the country's most advanced aircraft carrier from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean, joining other Navy resources currently amassed there.

On Oct. 16, Trump publicly confirmed a New York Times report that he had authorized covert CIA operations in Venezuela and told reporters he was "looking at land" for possible further strikes.

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Kaine, Schiff push for war powers vote

"All of this together with the increased pace of strikes in the Caribbean and the Pacific suggest that we are on the verge of something that should not happen without a debate and vote in Congress before the American people," Kaine said on the floor before the vote.

Kaine and Schiff told reporters Thursday they viewed the White House Office of Legal Counsel opinion authorizing the fatal strike in the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean near Venezuela.

The document, which senators are allowed to read in a classified setting, "makes no effort to claim that there's a legal rationale for invading a sovereign nation, no effort to claim that it's about Venezuela, or could be used with respect to Venezuela or any country," Kaine said.

Schiff characterized the opinion as "broad enough to authorize just about anything."

Kaine urged Senate Republicans, who received a brief and review of the document earlier this week, to introduce and debate legislation authorizing the administration to continue its military force in the region.

"Anybody in Congress who thinks we ought to be bombing ships in the Caribbean and Pacific, introduce an AUMF (Authorization for Use of Military Force) and have a debate and vote on it," Kaine said, adding "but don't just abdicate this power."

Hegseth posts video

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth posted a grainy video online Tuesday of a vessel in flames after a strike, and said the United States targeted the boat in the Eastern Pacific that had been operated by "a Designated Terrorist Organization."

"Intelligence confirmed that the vessel was involved in illicit narcotics smuggling, transiting along a known narco-trafficking route, and carrying narcotics. The strike was conducted in international waters in the Eastern Pacific."

"No U.S. forces were harmed in the strike, and two male narco-terrorists — who were aboard the vessel — were killed," Hegseth wrote on social media.

It's unlawful for the U.S. military to intentionally kill civilians who are not actively taking part in hostilities against the U.S.

Ahead of Thursday's vote, Sen. James Risch, R-Idaho, defended the administration's "decisive actions to protect thousands of Americans from lethal narcotics."

"Some Democrat members and members of the media claim that President Trump does not have authority to conduct these strikes. I'll tell you right now, that is plain wrong," said Risch, chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Risch said he and fellow Senate Republicans have sat through "hours of briefings and analysis by government legal departments and attorneys" regarding the strikes.

Schiff and Kaine told reporters their access to information and briefings has been more limited.

Paul criticizes Trump moves

On the Senate floor ahead of the vote, Paul compared the strikes and buildup in the Caribbean to the U.S. military's "misguided" intervention in the Middle East.

"We owe it to our service members to only send them into harm's way when vital American interests are at stake. Who is in charge of Venezuela does not constitute such an interest," Paul said, alleging the strikes are about regime change in the South American nation ruled by dictator Nicolás Maduro.

"We overthrew Saddam Hussein thinking Iraq would be transformed into this great Jeffersonian democracy. Instead what occurred was an insurgency that led to some of the most brutal sectarian violence in living memory," Paul said.

Congress passed the War Powers Resolution in 1973 after the Nixon administration secretly bombed Vietnam and Cambodia, killing hundreds of thousands of people.

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

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US Senate talks continue on end to 37-day shutdown, but final deal elusive

Thune says 'clear path forward' on Democrats' health care demand is 'they get a vote, and we open up the government'

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA AND ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — Senate Democrats left their Thursday caucus lunch tight-lipped as an agreement to end the government shutdown, now the longest in U.S. history at 37 days, remained elusive.

Republicans have floated a deal that includes the reinstatement of federal workers laid off by President Donald Trump, but no votes were scheduled on a spending bill as of late Thursday afternoon. There was some speculation senators could work through the weekend.

The chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, said negotiations are still underway. But she said as part of a deal, she supported the rehiring of the thousands of federal workers the Trump administration fired in its Reductions in Force, or RIFs, during the government shutdown that began Oct. 1.

"Those who were RIF'd during the shutdown should be recalled," she said. "We're still negotiating that language."

Emboldened by this week's Election Day victories, where Democrats swept major local and state races, Senate Democrats are seeking to use that momentum as leverage to get Republicans to also agree to a health care deal to end the government shutdown.

While Democrats have pushed to extend tax credits for health care, Senate Majority Leader John Thune told reporters Thursday that the best he can offer is a vote on extending those subsidies, which expire this year.

The coming expiration has resulted in millions of people who buy their health insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace receiving notices of a drastic spike in premium costs.

"I can't speak for the House, and obviously I can't guarantee an outcome here, and they know that," Thune, a South Dakota Republican, said. "I think the clear path forward here, with regard to the ACA issue, is they get a vote, and we open up the government, and we head down to the White House and sit down with the president and talk about it."

Democrats that represent states with a high population of federal employees, such as Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia, are also seeking to strike a deal on RIFs. A federal judge blocked those Reductions in Force last month.

Kaine told reporters Wednesday that those negotiations are occurring with the White House.

"It is an item that is being discussed with the president, with the White House," Kaine said.

The progressive wing of the Democratic Party has stressed that unless there is a commitment from House Speaker Mike Johnson and President Donald Trump to extend health care tax credits, Democrats should not agree to pass a stopgap spending bill to reopen the government.

In session next week?

Senators are still scheduled to leave Capitol Hill late Thursday and be out next week on recess for the Veterans Day holiday.

But a couple Senate Republicans said late Thursday afternoon that lawmakers might stay in Washington, D.C. into Friday or later.

"I think they're trying to work towards a vote tomorrow, maybe through the weekend. I'm pro-through the weekend," Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., said in an interview following a GOP lunch meeting.

Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., likened the situation to a "goat rodeo," which is a hyperbolic phrase to refer to a disaster.

"We're probably going to have a vote tomorrow, and then we will get on, and then we will know where we are, and we'll know whether the Democrats are serious or not," Kennedy said, adding that he was

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unsure exactly what they were voting on.

Democrats quiet about any deal

Following their Thursday caucus lunch, Democrats did not seem closer to an internal agreement on how to move forward with resolving the government shutdown as they left their huddle.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said Democrats had a "very good, productive meeting."

One of the top negotiators for Democrats on finding a deal, New Hampshire Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, declined to comment.

Pennsylvania Democratic Sen. John Fetterman threw his hands up as he left the room.

"I don't know how productive it was," Fetterman, who has voted with Republicans to move legislation to reopen the government, said.

Some Democrats said they were unified, such as New Jersey Sen. Andy Kim, Michigan's Gary Peters and Connecticut's Chris Murphy, a top appropriator.

Peters did not specify what issue Democrats were unified on.

"I don't want to get into that, but it was an encouraging caucus (meeting) because there's a great deal of unity as we came out," he said.

Revised stopgap?

Additionally, a new continuing resolution, or CR, is needed, as the stopgap funding measure would have funded the government until Nov. 21, now just two weeks away.

The House, which Johnson has kept in recess since September, would also need to be called back to pass a new version of a CR.

As the government shutdown continues, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy warned this week that if funding is not restored, flights will need to be reduced by 10% in some air spaces due to a shortage of air traffic controllers, who have worked without pay for weeks.

The government shutdown has led to millions of federal workers furloughed or required to work without pay and has created uncertainty for vulnerable people who rely on food assistance and heating services, as well as stoppages in vital child development and nutrition programs.

In an effort to force Democrats to vote to reopen the government, the Trump administration has tried to withhold Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, benefits for 42 million people, until a court ordered the U.S. Department of Agriculture to release those benefits.

Frustrated with the government shutdown, Trump has also tried to pressure Republicans into doing away with the Senate's filibuster, which requires a 60-vote threshold, but Thune has resisted those calls.

Progressives: 'Do not cave'

Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, said during a Thursday press conference that he's "not promising anyone anything" when it comes to a House vote on extending health care tax subsidies.

Johnson criticized Senate Democrats for wanting a guarantee that the House would also take a vote on extending the ACA taxes.

"That's ridiculous," he said.

House progressives said they have one message for Senate Democrats: "Do not cave," as Rep. Pramila Jayapal put it during a Thursday morning press conference outside the U.S. House.

"Any deal must secure the extension of the ACA tax credits and ensure health care for the American people with agreement from the House, the Senate and the White House, full stop. We have the momentum," the Washington state Democrat said.

Rep. Chrissy Houlahan, D-Pa., who publicly confronted Johnson during a press conference Wednesday, said, "We require a deal that actually addresses the health care crisis, not that promises to think about addressing it down the road in two weeks, with concepts of a plan."

"Sadly, at this point in time, even I say it's impossible to trust our Republican colleagues to honor their

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promises and their obligations," Houlahan said.

April Verette, president of the labor union SEIU, which represents roughly 2 million members, spoke alongside Jayapal and Houlahan and praised Democrats as "courageous."

"We are determined to say 'Stick with this fight' because righteousness, morality is on our side," Verette said.

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

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

Here are airports hit by the FAA pullback on air traffic; 3,300 flights daily to be canceled

BY: JACOB FISCHLER

The 40 airports set to see a 10% reduction in flights during the government shutdown nearly matched the list of the nation's busiest airports, according to a preliminary list seen by States Newsroom, potentially leading to thousands of flight cancellations across the country.

A 10% reduction at the listed airports would mean 3,300 canceled flights per day, according to Airports Council International-North America, the trade group for airports.

The Federal Aviation Administration had not released an official list of airports by early Thursday afternoon, but three sources familiar with the matter provided tables listing the proposed airports.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Wednesday that the FAA would cut air traffic at 40 major airports starting Friday to help alleviate stress for air traffic controllers who have been working without pay since the federal government shut down on Oct 1.

The airports on the preliminary list are:

Anchorage, Alaska
Atlanta
Baltimore
Boston
Charlotte, North Carolina
Chicago Midway
Chicago O'Hare
Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky
Dallas/Forth Worth International
Dallas Love Field
Denver
Detroit
Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood, Florida
Honolulu
Houston George Bush Intercontinental
Houston W.P. Hobby
Indianapolis
Las Vegas
Louisville, Kentucky
Los Angeles
Miami
Minneapolis/St. Paul
Memphis, Tennessee

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Newark, New Jersey
New York LaGuardia International
New York John F. Kennedy International
Orlando, Florida
Oakland, California
Ontario, California
Portland, Oregon
Philadelphia
Phoenix
San Diego
San Francisco
Salt Lake City
Seattle/Tacoma
Teterboro, New Jersey
Tampa, Florida

Washington, D.C. Reagan National and Dulles International, both in Northern Virginia

Busy Nashville, Raleigh-Durham not on list

While there is significant overlap of the list with the nation's busiest airports, there are some exceptions.

The busiest passenger airport not included was in Nashville, Tennessee, the 28th-busiest airport in the country in 2024, according to Airports Council International-North America.

Austin, Texas; St. Louis; Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina; Sacramento, California; New Orleans; Kansas City; and San Jose, California, were also among the 40 busiest airports that will not see reductions Friday.

Memphis, Anchorage and Louisville rank outside the top 40 for passenger traffic, but are the top three for cargo movement.

Oakland and Indianapolis ranked just outside the top 40 for passenger travel. Teterboro's airport did not rank in the group's top 50 busiest.

\$327 million in daily economic output lost

A 10% reduction at the listed airports would decrease economic output at airports by about \$327 million daily, according to the council.

Because the reductions are to the nation's busiest airports that serve as hubs for the major airlines, they will also affect airports that aren't on the list but depend on flights to and from those hubs.

The group's president and CEO, Kevin M. Burke, said in a statement that the group and its members had adapted to quickly changing conditions during the shutdown, but that they were "reaching a breaking point."

"The current trajectory is unsustainable," Burke said. "With the busy holiday season on the horizon, Congress and the administration must come together now to reopen the federal government with a clean, bipartisan continuing resolution, pay federal employees, and restore operational certainty for the millions of air travelers who take to the skies every day."

Prioritizing safety

At a press conference Wednesday, Duffy said the decision was made to keep flying safe. He urged overworked air traffic controllers not to work second jobs, but was "not naive" that many would have to in order to pay their bills.

He said the agency's decision was made to prevent any accidents that could result from overworked controllers, while assuring the flying public that commercial air travel remained extremely safe.

President Donald Trump was less explicit during an Oval Office appearance Thursday.

"Fair question," he said when asked by a reporter if flying remained safe. "Sean Duffy announced they're cutting in certain areas 10%, and they want to make sure it's 100% safe. That's why they're doing it."

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Dems call for shutdown end

Some Democratic lawmakers, who have blocked a bill to temporarily reopen the government at fiscal 2025 levels in an effort to force Republicans to negotiate an extension to tax credits for insurance purchased on the Affordable Care Act marketplace, renewed those calls in light of the FAA's decision.

Sen. Tina Smith, a Minnesota Democrat, said in a statement the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport sees a daily average of 60,000 passengers on 750 flights.

She called on Trump and House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., to negotiate with her party on the expiring health insurance tax credits to reopen the government "so we don't see the impacts like the ones at MSP."

"The only path forward is through negotiating, so air traffic in the skies above Minnesota and the country can keep operating safely and at full capacity and our government can finally open up again," she said.

House Transportation and Infrastructure ranking Democrat Rick Larsen of Washington state called the Duffy move "drastic and unprecedented" and requested the FAA share data that went into the decision.

He also called for an end to the shutdown to allow air traffic controllers to be paid.

"Shutting down parts of our National Airspace System is a dramatic and unprecedented step that demands more transparency," he said. "The FAA must immediately share any safety risk assessment and related data that this decision is predicated on with Congress. If we want to resolve issues in the NAS, let us fix health care, open government and pay transportation and aviation safety workers."

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.

All 50 states will vie for funds from \$50 billion Rural Health Transformation Program

BY: SHAUNEEN MIRANDA

WASHINGTON — All 50 states have applied for the \$50 billion Rural Health Transformation Program in Republicans' "big, beautiful" law, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services said Thursday.

States had from Sept. 15 through Wednesday to apply for the program, which was authorized under the mega tax and spending cut package passed by Republicans and signed into law by President Donald Trump. The fund is intended to offset the budget impacts on rural areas due to sweeping Medicaid cuts.

However, the temporary fund could only offset a little more than one-third of the package's estimated \$137 billion cut to federal Medicaid spending in rural areas over the next decade, according to the non-partisan health research organization KFF.

Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Dr. Mehmet Oz said the program "moves us from a system that has too often failed rural America to one built on dignity, prevention, and sustainability" in a Thursday statement alongside the announcement.

Oz said "every state with an approved application will receive funding so it can design what works best for its communities — and CMS will be there providing support every step of the way."

Each state was asked to "design a plan for transforming its rural health care system" and outline in proposals how they "intend to expand access, enhance quality, and improve outcomes for patients through sustainable, state-driven innovation."

The program allocates \$25 billion equally to approved states between fiscal years 2026 and 2030. CMS said states meeting the baseline criteria will then "undergo a rigorous, data-driven merit review" for the remaining half of the funds.

In September, when announcing the application opening, CMS said the remaining half of funds would be administered to approved states based on "individual state metrics and applications that reflect the greatest potential for and scale of impact on the health of rural communities."

CMS said approved awardees will be notified by Dec. 31.

Shauneen Miranda is a reporter for States Newsroom's Washington bureau. An alumna of the University of Maryland, she previously covered breaking news for Axios.

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Former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to retire from Congress

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — U.S. House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, who made history as the first woman to hold the speaker's gavel, announced Thursday she will retire, ending a 40-year legislative career as one of the most powerful Democrats in Congress.

Her announcement came after Tuesday's elections. Pelosi had a hand in crafting what was known as Proposition 50 in California to redraw the state's congressional districts, in response to Republican redistricting efforts in Texas to gain more GOP seats in the House.

The remap passed, and Democrats swept major state races across the country, including the governorships in Virginia and New Jersey.

In a video posted to social media, Pelosi, 85, thanked her constituents in her San Francisco congressional district.

"I will not be seeking reelection to Congress," Pelosi said. "With a grateful heart, I look forward to my final year in service as your proud representative."

Tributes to Pelosi poured in throughout the day.

"She made history as the first woman speaker of the House of Representatives, yes, but in that moment she also altered the way we conceive political power," said Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. "She made the imaginary real, and for young people who knew no other world, she permanently shifted the boundaries of the possible."

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

States, donors and schools scramble to keep Head Start centers open — for now

The federal shutdown already has caused the closure of some preschool and early childhood centers

BY: KEVIN HARDY AND NADA HASSANEIN

With some early childhood education centers already closing their doors because of the federal government shutdown, local leaders are scrambling to find money to keep Head Start programs available to some of the country's most vulnerable children.

Head Start programs, which serve more than 700,000 low-income children across the country, are almost entirely federally funded. In addition to free preschool, centers provide health screenings, parent resources and meals for children up to 5 years old. But the record-long government shutdown has forced child care centers across the country to close as funding is exhausted.

The closures are creating stark choices for some of the most vulnerable families in society. Migrant farmworkers, for example, who are more likely to be without health insurance and tend not to have any vacation time, are faced with the prospect of missing work, and a paycheck, to care for their children. A network of Head Start programs for migrant farmworkers' children that operates in states across the South closed its sites on Friday.

To keep Head Start programs operating in her state, Massachusetts Democratic Gov. Maura Healey announced plans to advance \$20 million in additional funding for the program. Those grant funds were previously approved to improve and expand the Massachusetts program, which gets about 80% of its funding from the federal government.

In a statement last week, Healey said the state was doing everything it could to support those programs, "but we don't have the resources to make up for what the federal government owes."

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In Atlanta, private funders made an \$8 million loan to keep Georgia's largest Head Start providers afloat for the coming weeks.

Frank Fernandez, the president and CEO of Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, told CBS News that the measure was only a temporary solution: "Our elected officials must take action to end this shut-down and ensure the long-term sustainability of this critical program," Fernandez said.

In Washington state, some school systems that operate Head Start programs are using their own funds to keep kids in classrooms, the Seattle Times reported. Still, other operations are cutting back staff and services to make do.

In neighboring Oregon, state officials are working out details of a 60-day deal to use existing funds to keep Head Start going, the Oregon Capital Chronicle reported. State officials said Head Start providers must have experienced a delay in federal funds and the state assistance will not exceed the total amount of money awarded to a program by Oregon annually.

"It's important to note that this is not a loan to Head Start programs and is not 'backfilling,'" Kate Gonzales, a spokesperson for the state's early learning department said in a statement. "These are dual-funded programs so the state dollars are not replacing federal funds but can be drawn down earlier in the cycle."

Some sites already shuttered

Head Start sites in 18 states have already closed their doors, according to the First Five Years Fund, a nonprofit advocating for quality child care and early childhood education.

The National Head Start Association, a nonprofit representing Head Start programs, said full or partial closures have affected 8,000 children. Nationwide, programs serving 65,000 children hadn't received their federal funds as of Saturday, according to the group.

In Ohio, seven Head Start programs have exhausted their federal funds. Two have already closed, affecting 600 children and 150 employees. In the coming weeks, the Ohio Head Start Association says the other five will be forced to close their doors, affecting nearly 3,700 Ohio kids.

"Every day the shutdown continues, Ohio children and families are paying the price," Julie Stone, Executive Director of the association said in a statement. "Head Start isn't a political issue — it's a lifeline for working families."

Farmworkers' children

Agricultural farmworkers, many of whom travel for seasonal work, have been hit particularly hard.

East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, which runs 43 Head Start centers in multiple states, suspended services on Friday. Around 1,200 children of agricultural farmworkers are without services now, but the number of children served fluctuates by season. The network is funded to serve 3,000 children of farmworkers across Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Virginia, and partners with other groups in a few other states.

In Florida, that means more than 800 children of agricultural workers are going without care due to the lapse in federal funding, said John Menditto, chief legal officer of East Coast Migrant Head Start Project. The group has also had to furlough its staff.

About 60% of farmworkers are American citizens or are in the country legally. Head Start is open to all children, regardless of their parents' immigration status.

In rural North Florida, roughly 80 children have been without early education, language and disability therapies, said Leannys Mendoza Gutierrez, the campus director for the migrant Head Start program in rural Jennings, Florida, which cares for babies 6 weeks old to kids up to 5 years old.

"[Farmworkers] are putting food on our tables, for all of us," she said. "However, they are not so far receiving services due to this situation that we don't know when it's going to end."

Migrant farmworker families in Gutierrez's program work in North Florida and South Georgia on water-melon, cucumber, cabbage, pepper, tomato, strawberry and pine straw farms.

Many parents have been forced to skip work and lose pay because they have been unable to find child

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care alternatives, Gutierrez said. She added that her program steps in to cover pediatrician bills for families that don't have health insurance. The shutdown has prevented her program from offering such assistance, too, she said.

Many farmworkers don't have health insurance and already struggle with poverty, making staying home from work difficult. Many also receive food aid through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which has also been affected by the shutdown.

"The shutdown just accentuates everything," said Amy Liebman of the Migrant Clinicians Network, which works with clinics across the nation that serve migrant workers and their families. "Everyone's concerned, they're worried about the families they serve."

Two other programs, one serving kids in the capital area of Tallahassee and another, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, which serves about 1,700 kids of agricultural workers in Florida, have also suspended services, according to the National Head Start Association.

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.

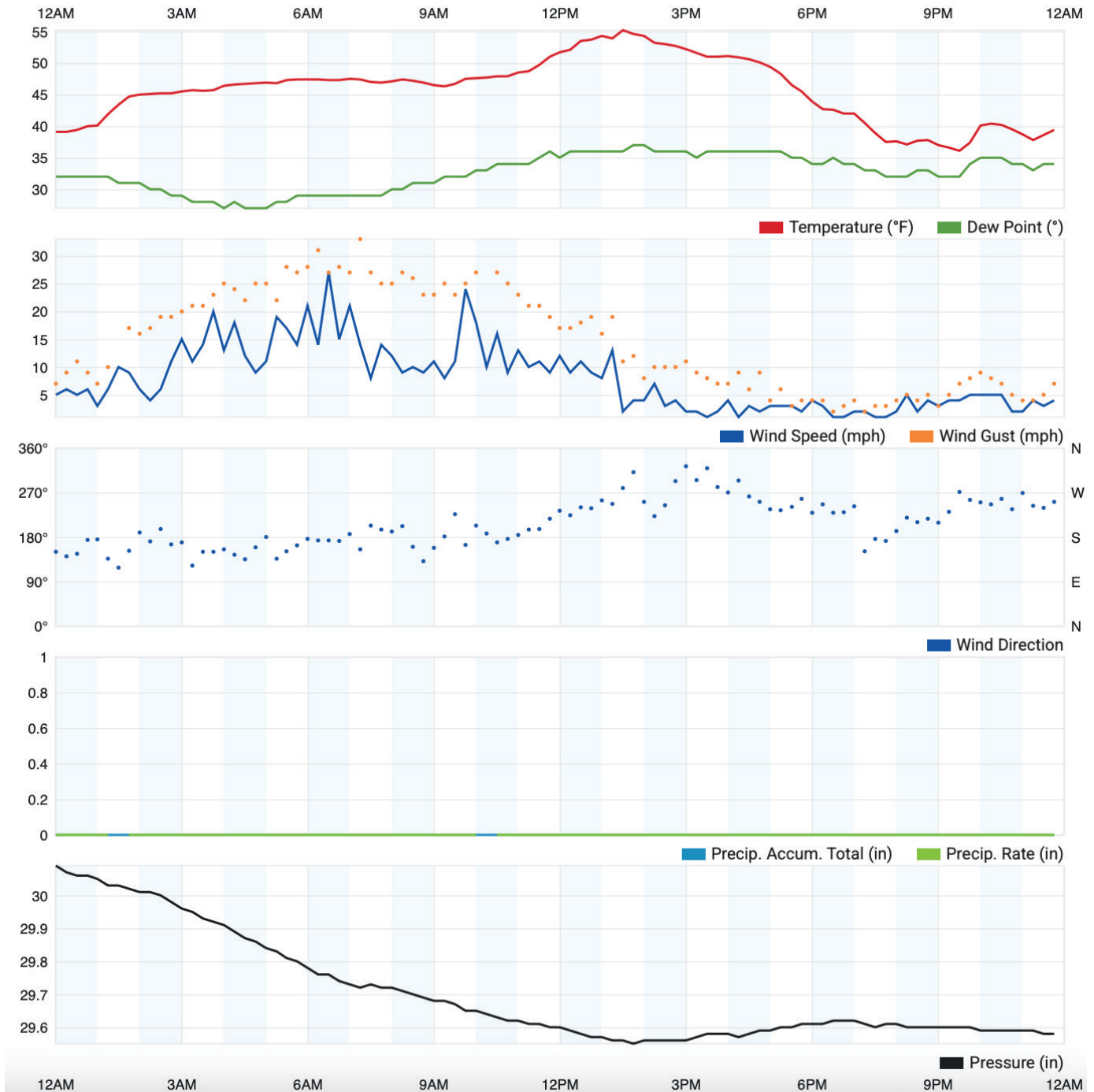
Nada Hassanein is a health care reporter for Stateline with a focus on inequities.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

November 6, 2025



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Friday

Friday Night

Saturday

Saturday Night

Sunday



High: 45 °F↓

Chance Rain
then Mostly
Cloudy



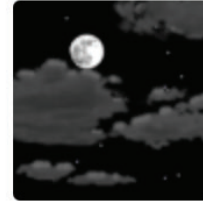
Low: 26 °F

Chance Snow



High: 32 °F

Chance Snow
then Mostly
Cloudy and
Breezy



Low: 14 °F

Partly Cloudy



High: 32 °F

Sunny



Precipitation Timeline Today-Saturday

November 7, 2025
3:00 AM

Key Messages

- Precipitation starts this evening & continues through Saturday afternoon
- Highway 83 corridor & west: mainly rain with this system...
- East of Highway 83: Precip starts as rain, transitions to mix & snow
- Chances for accumulations highest in the Sisseton Hills
- Snow may melt as the ground remains relatively warm**
 - Most likely time frame for accumulations: **Midnight - 9am**
 - Slick roads, bridges and overpasses possible but not guaranteed



	Fri			Sat						
	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm
Aberdeen	0%	10%	35%	45%	20%	25%	25%	10%	10%	0%
Britton	0%	5%	10%	40%	30%	45%	45%	15%	15%	0%
Chamberlain	0%	5%	40%	65%	30%	15%	20%	25%	20%	0%
Clark	0%	5%	5%	55%	45%	50%	50%	35%	35%	0%
Eagle Butte	5%	25%	35%	20%	25%	5%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Eureka	0%	30%	55%	35%	20%	25%	25%	5%	5%	0%
Gettysburg	0%	20%	45%	45%	15%	15%	15%	5%	5%	0%
McIntosh	10%	30%	25%	5%	55%	10%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Milbank	0%	0%	0%	25%	25%	45%	45%	20%	20%	5%
Miller	0%	10%	35%	55%	25%	25%	25%	20%	20%	0%
Mobridge	0%	30%	35%	30%	30%	5%	5%	5%	5%	0%
Murdo	0%	5%	45%	50%	10%	10%	10%	5%	5%	0%
Pierre	0%	10%	45%	45%	10%	5%	5%	5%	5%	0%
Redfield	0%	5%	25%	50%	30%	35%	35%	30%	30%	0%
Sisseton	0%	0%	5%	30%	35%	50%	50%	20%	20%	0%
Watertown	0%	0%	5%	50%	50%	45%	45%	30%	30%	0%
Webster	0%	5%	10%	50%	40%	50%	50%	20%	20%	0%
Wheaton	0%	0%	0%	15%	15%	35%	35%	15%	15%	0%
- Rain +				- Wintry Mix +			- Snow +			

A system will bring moisture with temperatures right around the freezing mark tonight into Saturday. There is the potential for accumulations, albeit not that much however fresh snow may make for a slippery commute Saturday morning.

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Low End - High End Snowfall Potential

November 7, 2025
3:15 AM

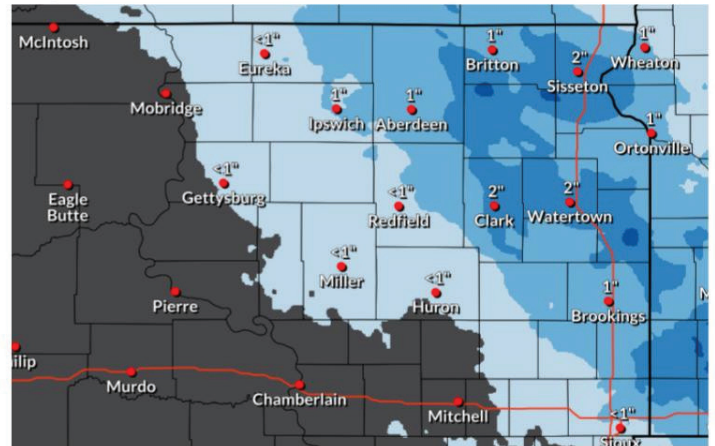
Maps below represent High & Low **EXTREMES** - most likely outcome is in between

Low End: more rain than snow, slightly warmer temperatures and snow melts before it accumulates...

*Not the most likely outcome for all locations, but some spots will not see anything stick or stick for very long

High End: Faster transition to snow & slightly colder temperatures so it sticks*

*Not outside the realm of possibilities that some locations could receive 1 to 2 inches accumulation, but also not the most likely outcome



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

These are the low and high outcomes (10th and 90th percent) meaning our snowfall accumulations will likely fall between these ranges. Slightly warmer air and a faster progression results in little if any actual accumulations with most of the snow melting on the ground. A little slower and colder and we could see an inch or two... possibly even higher up in the Sisseton hills. Most likely outcome is somewhere in-between.

Winter Driving

Avoid These Mistakes

- ➔ Not Preparing Your Vehicle
- ➔ Driving Too Fast
- ➔ Following Too Closely
- ➔ Not Clearing Snow/Ice
- ➔ Driving Fatigued
- ➔ Allowing Distractions



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 56 °F at 1:25 PM

Low Temp: 36 °F at 9:31 PM

Wind: 34 mph at 6:00 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 75 in 1909

Record Low: -9 in 1991

Average High: 47

Average Low: 23

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.23

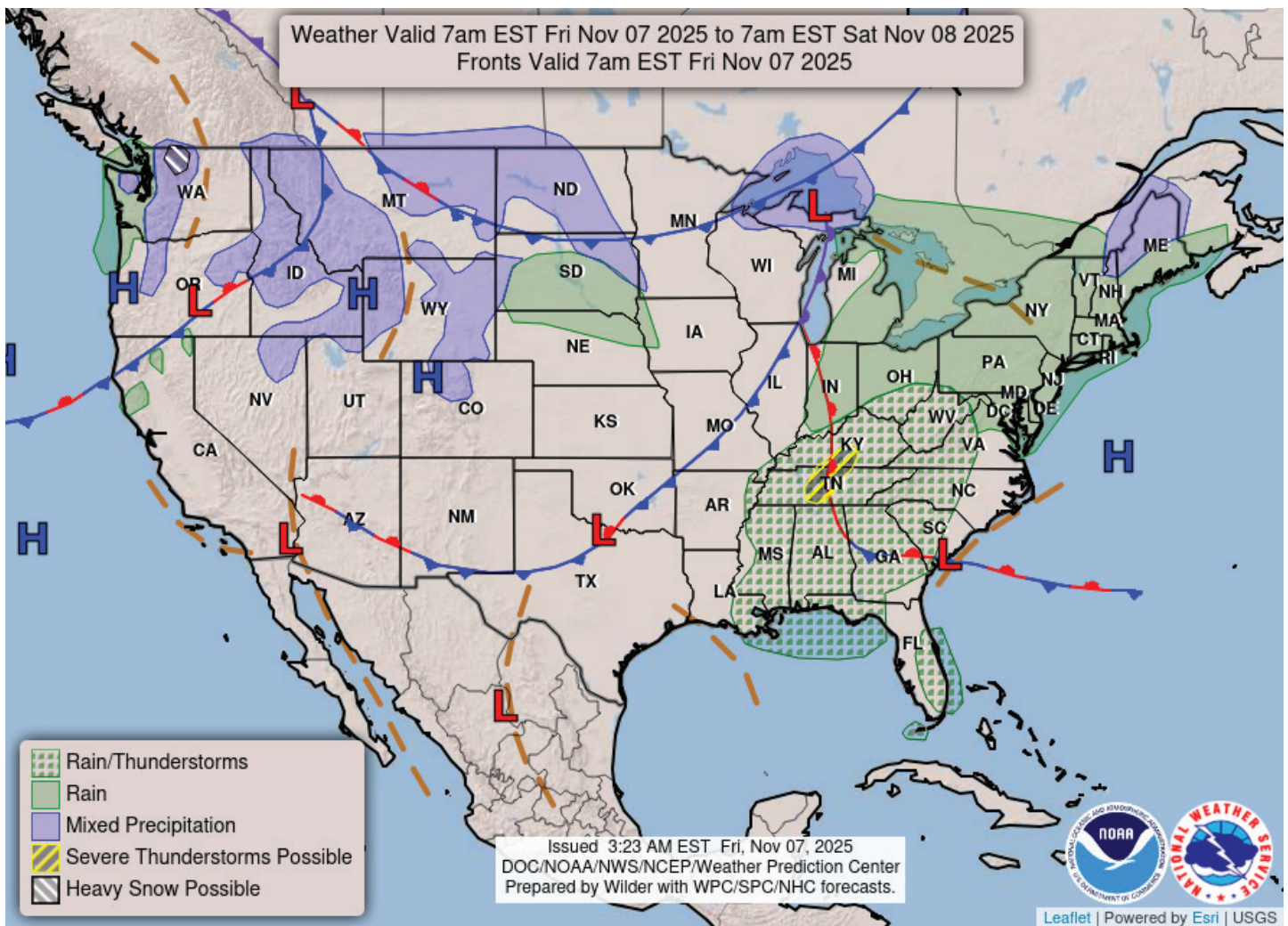
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 20.70

Precip Year to Date: 23.51

Sunset Tonight: 5:11 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:21 am



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Today in Weather History

November 7th, 1986: A major winter storm dumped 10 to 25 inches of snow over most of North Dakota. The snow combined with winds of 30 to 50 mph and gusts to 70 mph, creating blizzard conditions. Snow began over southern and eastern North Dakota on the morning of the 7th, and by late afternoon, had spread over the entire state. The snowfall was heavy at times and continued through the night of the 7th. In the southeast quarter, the snow alternated with rain, freezing rain, and sleet. By daybreak on the 8th, snow and blowing snow was occurring statewide. By late morning, the storm had intensified into a blizzard over almost all of North Dakota. The blizzard ended over extreme western North Dakota by late afternoon of the 8th and over the rest of the state that night. The most substantial snowfall occurred over south-central and east-central North Dakota. The highest wind gusts of the storm happened in the north-central and northeast sections of the state. Several wind gusts to 58 mph were recorded at Grand Forks, and a gust to 55 mph occurred at the Minot Air Force Base. Wind chills dipped to 40 below over some parts of the state. The storm happened on the opening day of deer hunting season and forced many hunters to cancel their trips.

November 7th, 2000: A storm system brought 4 to 10 inches of snow and northwest winds of 30 to 50 mph, with higher gusts to create blizzard conditions to South Dakota. Numerous schools and other events were canceled due to the blizzard conditions. In addition, several accidents occurred due to the slick roads and low visibilities. Some storm total snowfall amounts include; 9.5 inches in Selby; 8 inches in Glenham and 12SSW of Harrold; 7.3 inches near Onaka; 7 inches at Faulkton; and 6 inches in Miller.

1940: The Tacoma Narrows Bridge opened on July 1st, 1940, spanned the Puget Sound from Gig Harbor to Tacoma. At the time of the opening, the bridge was the third-longest suspension bridge in the world, covering nearly 6,000 feet. Before the bridge opened, high winds would cause the bridge to move vertically, giving the nickname Galloping Gertie. On this day in 1940, winds of 40 mph caused the bridge to collapse because of the physical phenomenon known as aeroelastic flutter.

1951: At 7 AM, a blinding flash, a massive ball of fire, and a terrific roar occurred over parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, caused by a disintegrating meteor. Windows were broken in and near Hinton, Oklahoma, by the concussion.

1957: A historic tornado outbreak impacted southeast Texas and southwestern Louisiana. Ten people were killed.

1986 - An early season blizzard struck the Northern Plains Region. North Dakota took the brunt of the storm with wind gusts to 70 mph, and snowfall totals ranged up to 25 inches at Devils Lake. (Storm Data)

1988 - Unseasonably warm weather continued across the state of Texas. Seven cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Waco and Del Rio with readings of 92 degrees. McAllen was the hot spot in the nation with a high of 96 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Shortly after daybreak strong thunderstorms developed over a narrow, but almost stationary, east-west band across New Orleans, in southeastern Louisiana. As a result, heavy rains persisted over the same area until mid afternoon before tapering off, and triggered flash flooding across a five county area. Eight to twelve inch rains deluged the area between 9 AM and 6 PM, and totals for the 48 hour period ending at 7 AM on the 8th ranged up to 19.78 inches, between Lake Lexy and Lake Borgne. Approximately 6000 homes in the area reported water damage. The rainfall total for November of 19.81 inches at New Orleans was their highest total for any given month of the year. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2001: Typhoon Lingling struck the southern Philippines, killing 171 people with 118 missing in Camiguin. The typhoon then struck Vietnam 5 days later, killing an additional 18 people.

2011: A powerful storm system moving through the southern Great Plains produced tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding across parts of Oklahoma and western north Texas on November 7-8, 2011. The system initially produced numerous thunderstorms, heavy rainfall, and flash flooding over portions of south-central Oklahoma during the late evening of November 6th and early morning of November 7th. Rainfall totals of 5-9 inches were reported across Jefferson, Carter, and Murray counties. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the NWS Office in Norman, Oklahoma.

2012: A Nor'Easter brought several inches of snow to the Northeast. Snowfall amounts of 2 to 6 inches were typical with locally higher amounts.

2013: Super Typhoon Haiyan made history as one of the largest and strongest typhoons ever recorded.



A Burden or a Bridge

Adversity can be a burden we carry or a bridge to a glorious future.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18: 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

How would you describe adversity? As Christians, we have the opportunity to see it as a bridge leading to an eternal future.

Our perspective is the determining factor in how we view hardship. If we focus only on the negative, we'll be drawn into despair. But if we look at problems from an eternal standpoint, our thinking will be transformed in three ways:

We won't lose heart, because we know we're being renewed from within. As we respond in submission to whatever God allows in our life and trust in His good purposes, our character is shaped into Christlikeness and our hope is restored.

The Lord will give us strength to endure. Paul said he was afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, struck down, and constantly threatened with death, yet he called it all "light and momentary" compared to eternity (2 Cor. 4:8-11; 2 Cor. 4:17 NIV).

Let's not view adversity as a thief of all joy and a hindrance to a good life. Instead, we should look beyond the present to what the trial is producing for us—"an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" (v. 17).

Viewing troubles through an eternal lens is an act of faith. It increases our trust in God, gives us greater passion, and strengthens us to victoriously cross the bridge of adversity.

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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Upcoming Groton Events

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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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.04.25

11 14 17 50 57 6

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$843,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 58 Mins 21 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.05.25

1 26 35 50 51 5

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$6,410,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 13 Mins 21 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.06.25

9 15 32 39 41 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 28 Mins 21 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.05.25

7 17 18 25 27

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$75,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 28 Mins 20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.05.25

7 10 18 21 61 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 57 Mins 20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.05.25

9 17 29 61 66 26

Power Play: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$467,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 57 Mins 20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

South Dakota State secures 68-62 win over Dakota State

By The Associated Press undefined

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Jaden Jackson scored 20 points as South Dakota State beat Dakota State 68-62 on Thursday.

Jackson also contributed three steals for the Jackrabbits (2-0). Joe Sayler scored 11 points while shooting 4 for 8.

Nathan Ojukwu finished with 15 points, six rebounds, four assists and three steals for the Trojans.

The Associated Press created this story using technology provided by Data Skrive and data from Sportradar.

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Brandon Valley def. Huron, 25-19, 25-18, 25-17

Harrisburg def. Brookings, 25-10, 25-10, 25-12

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Aberdeen Central, 25-18, 19-25, 25-16, 25-19

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Mitchell, 25-23, 25-18, 25-14

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Tea, 3-2

Spearfish def. Douglas, 25-11, 25-10, 25-11

SDHSAA Playoffs=

Quarterfinal=

Class A=

Region 1=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Webster, 26-28, 26-24, 25-20, 25-16

Semifinal=

Class A=

Region 1=

Groton def. Britton-Hecla, 25-13, 22-25, 25-21, 25-17

Region 2=

Clark-Willow Lake def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-14, 25-18, 25-20

Hamlin def. Sioux Valley, 25-20, 25-23, 25-10

Region 3=

Dell Rapids def. Madison, 25-17, 25-12, 25-18

West Central def. Baltic, 22-25, 14-25, 25-17, 25-12, 15-11

Region 4=

Dakota Valley def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-18, 25-12, 25-13

Sioux Falls Christian def. Lennox, 25-22, 25-23, 25-15

Region 5=

McCook Central-Montrose def. Parker/Marion, 25-13, 21-25, 25-17, 25-12

Wagner def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 21-25, 25-20, 25-15, 24-26, 15-3

Region 6=

Miller def. Chamberlain, 25-14, 25-11, 25-19

Platte-Geddes def. Mobridge-Pollock, 20-25, 25-23, 25-21, 22-25, 16-14

Region 7=

Todd County def. Lakota Tech, 26-24, 25-21, 25-23

Winner def. Pine Ridge, 25-9, 25-10, 25-19

Region 8=

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Rapid City Christian def. Hill City, 19-25, 25-9, 25-17, 25-22

St Thomas More def. Hot Springs, 25-20, 25-18, 25-14

Class B=

Region 1=

Northwestern def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-21, 25-23, 25-20

Warner def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-19, 23-25, 25-23, 25-21

Region 2=

Castlewood def. Estelline-Hendricks, 25-23, 18-25, 25-21, 25-23

Wolsey-Wessington def. DeSmet, 25-23, 25-15, 25-14

Region 3=

Chester def. Ethan, 21-12, 25-21, 25-12

Colman-Egan def. Sioux Falls Lutheran, 25-20, 25-19, 31-29

Region 4=

Gayville-Volin High School def. Tripp-Delmont-Armour, 25-15, 25-16, 28-26

Parkston def. Freeman, 25-14, 25-11, 25-19

Region 5=

Burke def. Gregory, 25-20, 25-13, 25-13

Corsica/Stickney def. Avon, 21-25, 17-25, 25-21, 25-23, 15-12

Region 6=

Herreid-Selby def. North Central, 25-15, 25-21, 25-22

Ipswich def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-16, 25-11, 25-18

Region 7=

Bennett County def. Edgemont, 25-7, 25-7, 25-18

Kadoka def. Jones County, 25-14, 25-20, 25-11

Region 8=

Harding County def. Faith, 25-16, 25-16, 24-26, 25-19

Lemmon High School def. Bison, 27-25, 25-13, 25-14

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

Typhoon Kalmaegi rampages across Vietnam as the Philippines prepares for a new storm

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

DAK LAK, Vietnam (AP) — Typhoon Kalmaegi brought fierce winds and torrential rains to Vietnam on Friday, killing at least five people, flattening homes, blowing off roofs and uprooting trees. In the Philippines, where the storm left scores dead earlier in the week, survivors wept over the coffins of their loved ones and braced for another typhoon.

As the storm moved on, recovery work began in battered towns and villages in both countries. Across central Vietnamese provinces, people cleared debris and repaired roofs on their homes.

Jimmy Abatayo, who lost his wife and nine close relatives after the typhoon unleashed flooding in the central Philippine province of Cebu, was overwhelmed with sorrow and guilt as he ran his palm over his wife's casket.

"I was able to swim. I told my family to swim, you will be saved, just swim, be brave and keep swimming," said Abatayo, 53, pausing and then breaking into tears. "They did not hear what I said because I would never see them again."

Mourning the dead in the Philippines

In Cebu, 139 people died, mostly in floodings. Villagers on Friday gathered to say goodbye to their dead, including at a basketball gym turned funeral parlor where relatives wept before a row of white coffins bedecked with flowers and small portraits of the deceased.

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A state of national emergency declared by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday was still effect in the Philippines, as the country braced for another potentially powerful storm, Typhoon Fung-wong, known locally as Uwan.

Across the country, Kalmaegi left at least 188 people dead and 135 missing, the Philippines Office of Civil Defense said, and more than half a million people were displaced.

Nearly 450,000 were evacuated to shelters, and over 318,000 remained there as of Thursday.

The weather bureau said Fung-wong would come early next week and predicted it would span an estimated 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) before making landfall late Sunday or early Monday in northern Aurora province. It could also potentially affect the densely populated capital region of Manila.

The toll in Vietnam

State media said five people were killed in Vietnam — three in Dak Lak and two in Gia Lai provinces — while three remained missing in Quang Ngai.

Fifty-two houses collapsed and nearly 2,600 others were damaged or had their roofs blown off, including more than 2,400 in Gia Lai alone. Power outages affected more than 1.6 million households.

Factories lost their roofs and equipment was damaged because of flooding in Binh Dinh province. In hard-hit Quy Nhon, residents woke up to find corrugated metal roofs and household items scattered along the streets.

As the skies cleared and sunlight broke through on Friday morning, residents in Dak Lak province stepped out to assess the wreckage left behind.

Streets were littered with fallen branches and twisted sheets of metal, and muddy water still pooled in low-lying areas where the river had surged to record heights overnight. Shopkeepers dragged out waterlogged goods to dry in the sun, while families swept mud from their doorsteps and patched together missing roof tiles.

Many areas in Vietnam reported uprooted trees, damaged power lines and flattened buildings as Kalmaegi weakened into a tropical storm and moved into Cambodia on Friday.

Tropical cyclones slamming the region

Kalmaegi struck Vietnam as the country's central region was still reeling from floods caused by record-breaking rains. Authorities said more than 537,000 people were evacuated, many by boat, as floodwaters rose and landslides loomed. The storm was forecast to dump up to 24 inches (600 millimeters) of rain in some areas before moving into Laos and northeast Thailand later on Friday.

Three fishermen were reported missing Thursday after their boat was swept away by strong waves near Ly Son Island off Quang Ngai province. Search efforts were later suspended due to worsening weather, state media said.

The Philippines experiences about 20 typhoons and storms each year and is among the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Vietnam, which is hit by around a dozen storms annually, has endured a relentless series this year. Typhoon Ragasa dumped torrential rain in late September, followed by Typhoon Bualoi and Typhoon Matmo, which together left more than 85 people dead or missing and caused an estimated \$1.36 billion in damage.

Scientists warn that a warming climate is intensifying storms and rainfall across Southeast Asia, making floods and typhoons increasingly destructive and frequent.

Kristen Corbosiero, a professor of atmospheric and environmental sciences at the University at Albany, said a normal year has 23 named storms by this time, but Kalmaegi and Fung-Wong are the 26th and 27th named storms. Kalmaegi is the fourth strongest typhoon this season, she said.

"If you look at the climatology for the Philippines and for Vietnam, it's almost the entire year that they can get them because the warm waters that fuel the storm just are there," Corbosiero said.

The FAA's order to cut flights nationwide due to the government shutdown is set to take effect

By JOSH FUNK and RIO YAMAT Associated Press

The Federal Aviation Administration's unprecedented order to scale back flights nationwide because of the record-long government shutdown is set to take effect Friday morning.

The 40 airports selected by the FAA span more than two dozen states and include hubs such as Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles and Charlotte, North Carolina, according to the order.

In some metropolitan areas, including New York, Houston, Chicago and Washington, multiple airports will be impacted, while the ripple effects could reach smaller airports as well.

Airlines scrambled to adjust their schedules and began canceling flights Thursday in anticipation of the FAA's official order, while travelers with plans for the weekend and beyond waited nervously to learn if their flights would take off as scheduled.

More than 810 flights have been called off nationwide, according to FlightAware. Delta Air Lines said it would scratch roughly 170 flights Friday, and American Airlines planned to cut 220 a day through Monday.

The FAA said the reductions would start at 4% and ramp up to 10% by Nov. 14. They are to be in effect between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. and impact all commercial airlines.

The agency said the cutbacks are necessary to relieve pressure on air traffic controllers who have been working without pay for more than a month. Many are pulling six-day work weeks with mandatory overtime, and increasing numbers of them have begun calling out as the financial strain and exhaustion mount.

"You can't expect people to go in to work when they're not getting a paycheck," said Kelly Matthews of Flat Rock, Michigan, a frequent business traveler who has canceled most of her upcoming trips. "I mean it's not a matter of them not wanting to do the job — but you can't afford to pay for gas, your day care and everything else."

The order comes as the Trump administration is ramping up pressure on Democrats in Congress to end the shutdown.

Airlines said they would try to minimize impact on customers. Some planned to focus on slashing routes to and from small and medium-size cities.

Carriers are required to refund customers whose flights are canceled but not to cover secondary costs such as food and hotel accommodations unless a delay or cancellation results from a contributing factor that is within the control of the airlines, according to the Department of Transportation.

Industry analyst Henry Hartevelt warned that the reductions will "have a noticeable impact across the U.S. air transportation system."

The cuts could also slow package service as two airports on the list are major distribution centers for delivery companies: FedEx in Memphis, Tennessee, and UPS in Louisville, Kentucky, the site of this week's deadly cargo plane crash.

Musk could become history's first trillionaire as Tesla shareholders approve giant pay package

By BERNARD CONDON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The world's richest man was just handed a chance to become history's first trillionaire. Elon Musk won a shareholder vote on Thursday that would give the Tesla CEO stock worth \$1 trillion if he hits certain performance targets over the next decade. The vote followed weeks of debate over his management record at the electric car maker and whether anyone deserved such unprecedented pay, drawing heated commentary from small investors to giant pension funds and even the pope.

In the end, more than 75% of voters approved the plan as shareholders gathered in Austin, Texas, for their annual meeting.

"Fantastic group of shareholders," Musk said after the final vote was tallied, adding "Hang on to your Tesla stock."

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The vote is a resounding victory for Musk showing investors still have faith in him as Tesla struggles with plunging sales, market share and profits in no small part due to Musk himself. Car buyers fled the company this year as he has ventured into politics both in the U.S. and Europe, and trafficked in conspiracy theories.

The vote came just three days after a report from Europe showing Tesla car sales plunged again last month, including a 50% collapse in Germany.

Still, many Tesla investors consider Musk as a sort of miracle man capable of stunning business feats, such as when he pulled Tesla from the brink of bankruptcy a half-dozen years ago to turn it into one of the world's most valuable companies.

The vote clears a path for Musk to become a trillionaire by granting him new shares, but it won't be easy. The board of directors that designed the pay package require him to hit several ambitious financial and operational targets, including increasing the value of the company on the stock market nearly six times its current level.

Musk also has to deliver 20 million Tesla electric vehicles to the market over 10 years amid new, stiff competition, more than double the number since the founding of the company. He also has to deploy 1 million of his human-like robots that he has promised will transform work and home — he calls it a "robot army" — from zero today.

Musk could add billions to his wealth in a few years by partly delivering these goals, according to various intermediate steps that will hand him newly created stock in the company as he nears the ultimate targets.

That could help him eventually top what is now considered America's all-time richest man, John D. Rockefeller. The oil titan is estimated by Guinness World Records to have been worth \$630 billion, in current dollars, at his peak wealth more than 110 years ago. Musk is worth \$493 billion, as estimated by Forbes magazine.

Musk's win came despite opposition from several large funds, including CalPERS, the biggest U.S. public pension, and Norway's sovereign wealth fund. Two corporate watchdogs, Institutional Shareholder Services and Glass Lewis, also blasted the package, which so angered Musk he took to calling them "corporate terrorists" at a recent investor meeting.

Critics argued that the board of directors was too beholden to Musk, his behavior too reckless lately and the riches offered too much.

"He has hundreds of billions of dollars already in the company and to say that he won't stay without a trillion is ridiculous," said Sam Abuelsamid, an analyst at research firm Telemetry who has been covering Tesla for nearly two decades. "It's absurd that shareholders think he is worth this much."

Supporters said that Musk needed to be incentivized to focus on the company as he works to transform it into an AI powerhouse using software to operate hundreds of thousands of self-driving Tesla cars — many without steering wheels — and Tesla robots deployed in offices, factories and homes doing many tasks now handled by humans.

"This AI chapter needs one person to lead it and that's Musk," said financial analyst Dan Ives of Wedbush Securities. "It's a huge win for shareholders."

Investors voting for the pay had to consider not only this Musk promise of a bold, new tomorrow, but whether he could ruin things today: He had threatened to walk away from the company, which investors feared would tank the stock.

Tesla shares, already up 80% in the past year, rose on news of the vote in after-hours trading but then flattened basically unchanged to \$445.44.

For his part, Musk says the vote wasn't really about the money but getting a higher Tesla stake — it will double to nearly 30% — so he could have more power over the company. He said that was a pressing concern given Tesla's future "robot army" that he suggested he didn't trust anyone else to control given the possible danger to humanity.

Other issues up for a vote at the annual meeting turned out wins for Musk, too.

Shareholders approved allowing Tesla to invest in one of Musk's other ventures, xAI. They also shot down a proposal to make it easier for shareholders to sue the company by lowering the size of ownership needed to file. The current rule requires at least a 3% stake.

US flight cancellations accelerate as airlines comply with government shutdown order

By JOSH FUNK and RIO YAMAT Associated Press

U.S. airlines began canceling hundreds of flights Thursday due to the Federal Aviation Administration's order to reduce traffic at the country's busiest airports starting Friday because of the government shutdown.

More than 790 planned Friday flights were cut from airline schedules, according to FlightAware, a website that tracks flight disruptions. That number, already four times higher than Thursday's daily total, was likely to keep climbing.

The 40 airports selected by the FAA span more than two dozen states and include hubs such as Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles and Charlotte, North Carolina, according to the agency's order, which was published Thursday evening. In some metropolitan areas, including New York, Houston, Chicago and Washington, multiple airports will be impacted.

The FAA said in the order that the reductions will start Friday at 4% and ramp up to 10% by Nov. 14. They are to be in effect between 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time and impact all commercial airlines.

The decision to reduce service at "high-volume" markets is meant to maintain travel safety as air traffic controllers exhibit signs of strain during the shutdown. It also comes as the Trump administration is ramping up pressure on Democrats in Congress to end the shutdown.

"With continued delays and unpredictable staffing shortages, which are driving fatigue, risk is further increasing, and the FAA is concerned with the system's ability to maintain the current volume of operations," the order reads.

Hours before the reductions went into place, airlines were scrambling to figure out where to cut. American Airlines said it reduced its schedule at the listed airports by 4% from Friday through Monday, about 220 cancellations each day, and would move from there toward the 10% target. The carrier said its international schedule was expected to remain untouched.

Passengers with plans for the weekend and beyond waited nervously to see if their flights would take off as scheduled. Some travelers began changing or canceling itineraries preemptively.

Flight cuts may impact smaller carriers

The restrictions also apply to a subset of smaller carriers that operate scheduled charter flights. International flights do not have to be reduced, according to the FAA.

Some airlines planned to focus on slashing routes to and from small and medium-size cities.

"This is going to have a noticeable impact across the U.S. air transportation system," industry analyst Henry Harteveldt said.

The flight reductions just weeks before the busy holiday season prompted some travelers to change their plans or look at other options.

Fallon Carter canceled her Friday flight from New York to Tampa, Florida, where she planned to spend the weekend at the beach. She was worried about making it back to Long Island to be a bridesmaid at her best friend's wedding.

"I don't know if I get there, will I get home?" Carter said.

The FAA is imposing the reductions to relieve pressure on air traffic controllers who are working without pay during the shutdown, which began Oct. 1, and have been increasingly taking sick days. Most controllers work mandatory overtime six days a week, leaving little time for side jobs to help cover bills unless they call out.

In recent weeks the FAA has delayed flights when airports or its other facilities are short on controllers. Shuffling schedules

Airlines said they would try to minimize impact on customers, some of whom will see weekend travel plans disrupted with little notice.

The airlines will be required to issue full refunds but not to cover secondary costs such as food and hotel accommodations unless a delay or cancellation results from a contributing factor that is within the control of the airlines, according to the Department of Transportation.

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The head of Frontier Airlines recommended that travelers buy backup tickets with another airline to avoid being stranded.

The cuts also could disrupt package deliveries because two airports with major distribution centers are on the list — FedEx operates at the airport in Memphis, Tennessee, and UPS in Louisville, Kentucky, the site of this week's deadly cargo plane crash.

The FAA also said commercial space launches will only be allowed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. starting Monday. That could force SpaceX to reschedule some upcoming planned afternoon launches.

The cuts could affect as many as 1,800 flights, or upward of 268,000 passengers, per day, according to an estimate from Cirium.

Airlines are used to dealing with canceling thousands of flights on short notice during severe weather, but the difference now is that these cuts during the shutdown will last indefinitely until safety data improves.

Shutdown already straining travel

The shutdown is putting unnecessary strain on the system and damaging confidence in the U.S. air travel experience, said U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Geoff Freeman.

Kelly Matthews, who lives in Flat Rock, Michigan, and flies every week, said she canceled most of her upcoming trips and understands why federal airport employees have stopped showing up.

"You can't expect people to go in to work when they're not getting a paycheck for the continuation of over a month now," she said. "I mean it's not a matter of them not wanting to do the job — but you can't afford to pay for gas, your day care and everything else."

Controller staffing worsening

The past weekend brought some of the worst staffing issues since the start of the shutdown.

From Friday to Sunday evening, at least 39 air traffic control facilities reported potential staffing limits, according to an AP analysis of operations plans shared through the Air Traffic Control System Command Center system. The figure, which is likely an undercount, was well above the average for weekends before the shutdown.

Vigil held in Kentucky to share sorrow over UPS plane crash that killed at least 13

By BRUCE SCHREINER and DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Two days after a deadly UPS plane disaster, a candlelight vigil was held Thursday in Louisville to remember the victims and thank first responders, while teams still worked to find or identify people caught in the crash and subsequent firestorm.

"Our hope is that we have located all of the victims at this point. But again, we do not know," Mayor Craig Greenberg said earlier in the day.

The inferno destroyed the enormous plane and spread to nearby businesses, killing at least 13 people, including a child and three UPS crew on the cargo hauler. No one expects to find survivors in the crash at UPS Worldport, the company's global aviation hub.

The plane had been cleared for takeoff Tuesday when a large fire developed in the left wing and an engine fell off, said Todd Inman, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board, which is leading the investigation.

Meanwhile, UPS Worldport operations resumed Wednesday night with its Next Day Air, or night sort, operation, spokesperson Jim Mayer said. All three runways at Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport were also open again.

Death toll rises to 13

Teamsters Local 89, which represents UPS workers, hosted a candlelight vigil, which began with a moment of silence at 5:14 p.m., the approximate time of the crash two days earlier.

"This incident was so sudden, so unexpected," the mayor told the crowd of 200. "No one had a chance to say goodbye to any of those who we have lost."

Greenberg disclosed that the death toll had risen to 13.

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Bob Travis, who is president of the Independent Pilots Association and flies for UPS, told vigil attendees that the work of emergency responders, public officials and the community has been "absolutely overwhelming and amazing."

"Everybody's seen the video," he said of the crash. "It's hard not to."

Names of pilots released

UPS released the names of three people who died in the plane: Capt. Richard Wartenberg, First Officer Lee Truitt and International Relief Officer Capt. Dana Diamond.

Truitt lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and had been a pilot for UPS since 2021, flying the MD-11 airliner, according to Truitt's LinkedIn profile. Before that, he was a captain for SkyWest Airlines, a flight instructor at Bode Aviation and graduated from The University of New Mexico.

Wartenberg lived in Independence, Kentucky, which sits south of Cincinnati, according to public records.

Diamond, the flight's international relief officer, live in Caldwell, Texas, less than a two-hour drive east of Austin, according to public records.

Black box provides insight

Earlier Thursday, Greenberg described the crash site as "horrific," with "charred, mangled metal." Part of the plane's tail, he said, appeared to be sticking out of a storage silo.

"You hear people say, 'Oh, you only see that in the movies.' This was worse than the movies," Greenberg told reporters.

The plane's last data recordings showed it had reached an altitude of 475 feet (145 meters) and a speed of 210 mph (340 kph) before crashing just outside the Louisville airport, Inman said Thursday.

The engine's main component and pieces of engine fan blades were recovered from the airfield. Inman said UPS indicated that no maintenance work was performed before the flight "that would delay it in any way." He noted that investigators will look at video to see what, if anything, was being done around the MD-11 aircraft in preceding days.

The UPS package handling facility in Louisville is the company's largest. The hub employs more than 20,000 people in the region, handles 300 flights daily and sorts more than 400,000 packages an hour.

Flames, panic and more questions

The crash and explosion caused even more blasts and destruction at businesses in an industrial corridor just outside the airport.

Sabit Aliyev, the owner of Kentucky Truck Parts and Service, still doesn't know if his business is standing. He said he was inside the shop Tuesday when the burning plane passed by, followed by an explosion. He went outside and recorded what sounded like another explosion.

"It was like hell," Aliyev said. "There was fire all over. It was sky high."

He and his workers fled over vacant land but were suddenly trapped by a high security fence until a police officer used bolt cutters to cut open a gate.

Jeff Guzzetti, a former federal crash investigator, said a number of things could have caused the fire as the 34-year-old plane was rolling down the runway.

"It could have been the engine partially coming off and ripping out fuel lines. Or it could have been a fuel leak igniting and then burning the engine off," Guzzetti said.

Flight records show the UPS plane was on the ground in San Antonio from Sept. 3 to Oct. 18, but it was unclear what maintenance was performed.

"We will look at every piece of maintenance done, from the San Antonio time all the way to the date of the flight. ... It's going to be a laborious process," Inman of the NTSB said.

He said there was no reason to take any immediate safety actions against other MD-11 planes in service.

OpenAI faces 7 lawsuits claiming ChatGPT drove people to suicide, delusions

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

OpenAI is facing seven lawsuits claiming ChatGPT drove people to suicide and harmful delusions even

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when they had no prior mental health issues.

The lawsuits filed Thursday in California state courts allege wrongful death, assisted suicide, involuntary manslaughter and negligence. Filed on behalf of six adults and one teenager by the Social Media Victims Law Center and Tech Justice Law Project, the lawsuits claim that OpenAI knowingly released GPT-4o prematurely, despite internal warnings that it was dangerously sycophantic and psychologically manipulative. Four of the victims died by suicide.

EDITOR'S NOTE — This story includes discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988.

The teenager, 17-year-old Amaurie Lacey, began using ChatGPT for help, according to the lawsuit filed in San Francisco Superior Court. But instead of helping, "the defective and inherently dangerous ChatGPT product caused addiction, depression, and, eventually, counseled him on the most effective way to tie a noose and how long he would be able to "live without breathing."

"Amaurie's death was neither an accident nor a coincidence but rather the foreseeable consequence of OpenAI and Samuel Altman's intentional decision to curtail safety testing and rush ChatGPT onto the market," the lawsuit says.

OpenAI called the situations "incredibly heartbreaking" and said it was reviewing the court filings to understand the details.

Another lawsuit, filed by Alan Brooks, a 48-year-old in Ontario, Canada, claims that for more than two years ChatGPT worked as a "resource tool" for Brooks. Then, without warning, it changed, preying on his vulnerabilities and "manipulating, and inducing him to experience delusions. As a result, Allan, who had no prior mental health illness, was pulled into a mental health crisis that resulted in devastating financial, reputational, and emotional harm."

"These lawsuits are about accountability for a product that was designed to blur the line between tool and companion all in the name of increasing user engagement and market share," said Matthew P. Bergman, founding attorney of the Social Media Victims Law Center, in a statement.

OpenAI, he added, "designed GPT-4o to emotionally entangle users, regardless of age, gender, or background, and released it without the safeguards needed to protect them." By rushing its product to market without adequate safeguards in order to dominate the market and boost engagement, he said, OpenAI compromised safety and prioritized "emotional manipulation over ethical design."

In August, parents of 16-year-old Adam Raine sued OpenAI and its CEO Sam Altman, alleging that ChatGPT coached the California boy in planning and taking his own life earlier this year.

"The lawsuits filed against OpenAI reveal what happens when tech companies rush products to market without proper safeguards for young people," said Daniel Weiss, chief advocacy officer at Common Sense Media, which was not part of the complaints. "These tragic cases show real people whose lives were up-ended or lost when they used technology designed to keep them engaged rather than keep them safe."

Federal judge orders Trump administration to fully fund SNAP benefits in November

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

A federal judge in Rhode Island ordered the Trump administration Thursday to find the money to fully fund SNAP benefits for November, a decision that the administration promptly appealed.

The ruling by U.S. District Judge John J. McConnell Jr. gave President Donald Trump's administration until Friday to make the payments through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, though it's unlikely the 42 million Americans — about 1 in 8, most of them in poverty — will see the money on the debit cards they use for groceries nearly that quickly.

The order was in response to a challenge from cities and nonprofits complaining that the administration

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was only offering to cover 65% of the maximum benefit, a decision that would have left some recipients getting nothing for this month.

"The defendants failed to consider the practical consequences associated with this decision to only partially fund SNAP," McConnell said in a ruling from the bench after a brief hearing. "They knew that there would be a long delay in paying partial SNAP payments and failed to consider the harms individuals who rely on those benefits would suffer."

McConnell was one of two judges who ruled last week that the administration could not skip November's benefits entirely because of the federal shutdown.

Shortly after the judges' rulings, lawyers for the Trump administration filed a motion to appeal, contesting both Thursday's decision and the earlier one last Saturday that ordered the federal government to use emergency reserves to fund the food program throughout November.

Vice President JD Vance told reporters the ruling was "absurd."

"What we'd like to do is for the Democrats to open up the government of course, then we can fund SNAP," Vance said at an unrelated White House event. "But in the midst of a shutdown, we can't have a federal court telling the president how he has to triage the situation."

The Trump administration chose partial payments this week

Last month, the administration said that it would halt SNAP payments for November if the government shutdown wasn't resolved.

A coalition of cities and nonprofits sued in federal court in Rhode Island, and Democratic state officials from across the country did so in Massachusetts.

The judges in both cases ordered the government to use one emergency reserve fund containing more than \$4.6 billion to pay for SNAP for November but gave it leeway to tap other money to make the full payments, which cost between \$8.5 billion and \$9 billion each month.

On Monday, the administration said it would not use additional money, saying it was up to Congress to appropriate the funds for the program and that the other money was needed to shore up other child hunger programs.

The partial funding brought on complications

McConnell harshly criticized the Trump administration for making that choice.

"Without SNAP funding for the month of November, 16 million children are immediately at risk of going hungry," he said. "This should never happen in America. In fact, it's likely that SNAP recipients are hungry as we sit here."

Tyler Becker, the attorney for the government, unsuccessfully argued that the Trump administration had followed the court's order in issuing the partial payments. "This all comes down to Congress not having appropriated funds because of the government shutdown," he said.

Kristin Bateman, a lawyer for the coalition of cities and nonprofit organizations, told the judge the administration had other reasons for not fully funding the benefits.

"What defendants are really trying to do is to leverage people's hunger to gain partisan political advantage in the shutdown fight," Bateman told the court.

McConnell said last week's order required that those payments be made "expeditiously" and "efficiently" — and by Wednesday — or a full payment would be required. "Nothing was done consistent with the court's order to clear the way to expeditiously resolve it," McConnell said.

There were other twists and turns this week

The administration said in a court filing on Monday that it could take weeks or even months for some states to make calculations and system changes to load the debit cards used in the SNAP program. At the time, it said it would fund 50% of the maximum benefits.

The next day, Trump appeared to threaten not to pay the benefits at all unless Democrats in Congress agreed to reopen the government. His press secretary later said that the partial benefits were being paid for November — and that it is future payments that are at risk if the shutdown continues.

And Wednesday night, it recalculated, telling states that there was enough money to pay for 65% of the maximum benefits.

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Under a decades-old formula in federal regulations, everyone who received less than the maximum benefit would get a larger percentage reduction. Some families would have received nothing and some single people and two-person households could have gotten as little as \$16.

Carmel Scaife, a former day care owner in Milwaukee who hasn't been able to work since receiving multiple severe injuries in a car accident seven years ago, said she normally receives \$130 a month from SNAP. She said that despite bargain hunting, that is not nearly enough for a month's worth of groceries.

Scaife, 56, said that any cuts to her benefit will mean she will need to further tap her Social Security income for groceries. "That'll take away from the bills that I pay," she said. "But that's the only way I can survive."

The next legal step is unclear

This type of order is usually not subject to an appeal, but the Trump administration has challenged other rulings like it before.

An organization whose lawyers filed the challenge signaled it would continue the battle if needed.

"We shouldn't have to force the President to care for his citizens," Democracy Forward President and CEO Skye Perryman said in a statement, "but we will do whatever is necessary to protect people and communities."

It often takes SNAP benefits a week or more to be loaded onto debit cards once states initiate the process.

Mamdani in Puerto Rico for an annual conference of New York political insiders

By ALEJANDRO GRANADILLO and ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani made a triumphant trip to Puerto Rico on Thursday for an annual summit that brings New York politicians and lobbyists to sunny San Juan for strategy meetings, workshops and boozy confabs.

Fresh off his election win, Mamdani was greeted by a cheering beachfront crowd at the Somos conference, where he promised them he would fight for working people.

His Democratic ally, New York Attorney General Letitia James, exhorted the crowd to sing "Mamdani, whoa-oh-oh-oh" along with her to the tune of old standard, "Volare."

The conference is something of a post-Election Day retreat for the state's political movers and shakers at a Hilton hotel in San Juan. This year, there are ballroom events billed as "Workforce Development Through Rising Communities" and "Celebrating Human Services Together," along with a series of legislative workshops. The whole affair is typically viewed as a chance to unwind, schmooze and party.

"I'm happy to be here at Somos, and I'm happy also to be here because ... you cannot tell the story of New York City without telling the story of Puerto Rico," Mamdani said shortly after arriving.

He added that he had already tried the traditional plantain dish, mofongo, and that "it was great."

Mamdani, 34, announced his transition team this week, hiring a group of veteran officials to help guide his shift to City Hall, as he plans to carry out an ambitious affordability agenda when he takes office next year.

Before landing in Puerto Rico, Mamdani spoke by phone with the city's outgoing mayor, Eric Adams, who promised that his team "will fully cooperate with this transition," according to a spokesperson for Adams. Adams did not attend the annual summit.

Mamdani is set to return to New York on Saturday.

The trip comes days after he defeated former Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Republican Curtis Sliwa in New York City's mayoral race.

Cowboys' Marshawn Kneeland found dead of apparent suicide at 24 after evading officers, police say

By SCHUYLER DIXON and JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

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Police in a Dallas suburb say 24-year-old Dallas Cowboys defensive end Marshawn Kneeland was found dead of an apparent suicide after evading authorities in his vehicle and fleeing the scene of an accident on foot.

Frisco police said Thursday they are investigating the suicide. They said Kneeland didn't stop for Texas Department of Public Safety troopers over a traffic violation in a chase that was joined by Frisco police on Wednesday night.

Authorities lost sight of the vehicle before locating it crashed minutes later. During the search after Kneeland fled the crash site on foot, officers said they received word that Kneeland might be suicidal.

As authorities were looking for Kneeland, a dispatcher told officers that people who knew him had received a group text from Kneeland "saying goodbye. They're concerned for his welfare," according to recordings from Broadcastify, which archives public safety radio feeds.

"We're talking to the girlfriend. She's trying to call his agent. But we're trying to get her to call him first. But she's saying he is armed and has a history of mental illness. And her quote was, 'He will end it all,'" another dispatcher told officers.

He was found dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound early Thursday morning, about three hours after the crash, police said without specifying where Kneeland's body was found. In the recordings from Broadcastify, officers said they had tried to get in contact with Kneeland by calling and texting him and had used a drone to try and locate him after the crash.

EDITOR'S NOTE — This story includes discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988. There is also an online chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org). Helplines outside the U.S. can be found at www.iasp.info/suicidalthoughts. ____

The Denver Broncos paid tribute to Kneeland with a moment of silence before their game Thursday night against the Las Vegas Raiders. The team also put his image on the scoreboard.

Kneeland's death came just days after he recovered a blocked punt in the end zone for a touchdown in a 27-17 loss to the Arizona Cardinals.

Kneeland was in his second season with the Cowboys. He was a 2024 second-round draft pick out of Western Michigan.

"I am shattered to confirm that my client and dearest friend Marshawn Kneeland passed away last night," Kneeland's agent, Jonathan Perzley, said in a statement that asked for privacy. "Marshawn poured his heart into every snap, every practice and every moment on the field. To lose someone with his talent, spirit and goodness is a pain I can hardly put into words."

Kneeland's rookie season was off to a promising start before he was sidelined for five games by a knee injury.

Kneeland had his first career sack in the season opener this year against Philadelphia. He played in seven games this season, missing two with an ankle injury.

"Marshawn was a beloved teammate and member of our organization," the Cowboys said. "Our thoughts and prayers regarding Marshawn are with his girlfriend Catalina and his family."

The Cowboys have frequently sought pass rushers and other defensive linemen in the first two rounds of the draft. Kneeland was drafted a year after defensive end Sam Williams was taken by Dallas in the second round. Williams blocked the punt that Kneeland recovered against the Cardinals.

Kneeland's mother, Wendy Kneeland, died suddenly while he was preparing for the draft. He had his mother's ashes in a necklace he wore after joining the Cowboys, according to The Dallas Morning News.

"We are deeply saddened by the tragic news of the passing of Cowboys' Marshawn Kneeland," the NFL said. "We have been in contact with the Cowboys and have offered support and counseling resources."

Miami Dolphins receivers coach Robert Prince, who had the same position with the Cowboys when Kneeland was a rookie last year, had tears in his eyes as he met with reporters Thursday.

"We spent a lot of time (together) when he was injured and working out in the weight room," Prince said. "We'd shoot the breeze. He was a Western Michigan kid and I coached with the Lions for a while so we had some Michigan-type stories. Good kid. I'm sorry to hear that about him."

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Kneeland had a career-high 57 tackles along with 4 1/2 sacks in nine games as a senior at Western Michigan.

"My heart is absolutely broken over the loss of Marshawn Kneeland," Western Michigan coach Lance Taylor said. "His leadership, energy and smile were infectious, and he left a lasting impact on everyone in our program. Having coached him during my first season here, we developed a special bond that went far beyond football."

Tributes poured in from around the NFL, including Tennessee Titans defensive tackle Jeffery Simmons, who raised the topic of suicide awareness with a reporter during training camp this year.

"It sucks seeing the news of our NFL brother!" Simmons wrote on X. "Even when someone is carrying the biggest smile, make sure to just check in on them. You just never know man. Don't be afraid to ask for help, we all go through things that we sometimes hide!"

Two of Kneeland's Dallas teammates, quarterback Dak Prescott and defensive lineman Solomon Thomas, had siblings who died by suicide and have foundations supporting suicide awareness and prevention. Thomas' sister, Ella, was the same age as Kneeland.

Kazakhstan will join the Abraham Accords with Israel in symbolic move to boost the Trump initiative

By MATTHEW LEE and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Kazakhstan is set to join the Abraham Accords between Israel and Arab and Muslim majority countries in a symbolic move aimed at boosting the initiative that was a hallmark of President Donald Trump's first administration.

The action, announced Thursday, is largely symbolic as Kazakhstan has had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1992 and is much farther geographically from Israel than the other Abraham Accord nations — Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates.

Those countries agreed to normalize relations with Israel as a result of joining the accords, something Kazakhstan did shortly after gaining independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The move was first confirmed to The Associated Press by three U.S. officials who insisted on anonymity to detail plans that hadn't yet been made public. Hours later, Trump posted on his social media site that he'd had "a great call between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, of Israel, and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, of Kazakhstan" and that Kazakhstan is the "first Country of my Second Term to join the Abraham Accords, the first of many."

Trump called Kazakhstan joining "a major step forward in building bridges across the World" and said "more Nations are lining up to embrace Peace and Prosperity through my Abraham Accords."

A signing ceremony would soon make it official, Trump, and "there are many more Countries trying to join this club of STRENGTH."

"So much more to come in uniting Countries for Stability and Growth — Real progress, real results," Trump wrote. "BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS!"

Trump, a Republican, made the announcement shortly before the start of a summit he hosted Thursday evening with the leaders of the five Central Asian nations, including Kazakhstan.

Despite their previous long-standing ties, the U.S. officials said Kazakhstan's participation in the Abraham Accords with Israel was important as it would enhance their bilateral trade and cooperation and signaled that Israel is becoming less isolated internationally, notably after massive criticism and protests over its conduct in the war against Hamas in Gaza.

One official maintained that Trump's nascent peace plan for Gaza had "completely changed the paradigm" and that many countries were now willing to "move toward the circle of peace" that it had created.

That official said specific areas of enhanced Israeli-Kazakh cooperation would include defense, cybersecurity, energy and food technology, although all of those have been subjects of previous bilateral agreements dating back to the mid-1990s.

Ahead of Thursday night's summit between Trump and the Central Asian leaders, Secretary of State Marco Rubio had a working breakfast with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, although the State Department made no mention of anything related to Israel.

Rubio and Tokayev "discussed expanding opportunities for commercial trade and investment as well as increased cooperation with Kazakhstan in energy, technology, and infrastructure," the department said in a statement.

Supreme Court lets Trump block transgender and nonbinary people from choosing passport sex markers

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed President Donald Trump's administration to enforce a policy blocking transgender and nonbinary people from choosing passport sex markers that align with their gender identity.

The decision is Trump's latest win on the court's emergency docket, and allows the administration to enforce the policy while a lawsuit over it plays out. It halts a lower-court order requiring the government to keep letting people choose male, female or X on their passport to correspond with their gender identity on new or renewed passports. The court's three liberal justices dissented.

The high court has sided with the government in nearly two dozen short-term orders on a range of policies since the start of Trump's second term, including another case barring transgender people from serving in the military.

In a brief, unsigned order, the conservative-majority court said the policy isn't discriminatory. "Displaying passport holders' sex at birth no more offends equal protection principles than displaying their country of birth," it said. "In both cases, the Government is merely attesting to a historical fact without subjecting anyone to differential treatment."

The court's three liberal justices disagreed, saying in a dissent that those passports make transgender people vulnerable to "increased violence, harassment, and discrimination."

"This Court has once again paved the way for the immediate infliction of injury without adequate (or, really, any) justification," Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson wrote, saying the policy stemmed directly from Trump's executive order that described transgender identity as "false" and "corrosive."

Transgender and nonbinary people who sued over the policy have reported being sexually assaulted, strip-searched and accused of presenting fake documents at airport security checks, she wrote.

The Supreme Court majority said being unable to enforce the policy harms the government because passports are part of foreign affairs, an area of executive branch control. The dissenters, though, said it's not clear exactly how individual identification documents affect the nation's foreign policy.

The State Department changed its passport rules after Trump, a Republican, handed down an executive order in January declaring the United States would "recognize two sexes, male and female," based on birth certificates and "biological classification."

Transgender actor Hunter Schafer, for example, said in February that her new passport had been issued with a male gender marker, even though she's marked female on her driver's license and passport for years.

The plaintiffs argue those passports aren't accurate, and can be unsafe for those whose gender expression doesn't match what's on the documents.

"Forcing transgender people to carry passports that out them against their will increases the risk that they will face harassment and violence," said Jon Davidson, senior counsel for the ACLU's LGBTQ & HIV Project. "This is a heartbreaking setback for the freedom of all people to be themselves, and fuel on the fire the Trump administration is stoking against transgender people and their constitutional rights."

Sex markers began appearing on passports in the mid-1970s and the federal government started allowing them to be changed with medical documentation in the early 1990s, the plaintiffs said in court documents. A 2021 change under President Joe Biden, a Democrat, removed documentation requirements

and allowed nonbinary people to choose an X gender marker after years of litigation.

A judge blocked the Trump administration policy in June after a lawsuit from nonbinary and transgender people, some of whom said they were afraid to submit applications. An appeals court left the judge's order in place.

Solicitor General D. John Sauer then turned to the Supreme Court, pointing to its recent ruling upholding a ban on transition-related health care for transgender minors and calling the Biden-era policy inaccurate.

White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly applauded Thursday's order. "This decision is a victory for common sense and President Trump, who was resoundingly elected to eliminate woke gender ideology from our federal government," she said.

Attorney General Pam Bondi also celebrated the order, saying there are two sexes and Justice Department attorneys would continue to fight for that "simple truth."

Trump unveils deal to expand coverage and lower costs on obesity drugs

By TOM MURPHY, AAMER MADHANI and JONEL ALECCIA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump unveiled a deal Thursday with drugmakers Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk to expand coverage and reduce prices for the popular obesity treatments Zepbound and Wegovy.

Known as GLP-1 receptor agonists, the drugs have soared in popularity in recent years, but patient access has been a consistent problem because of their cost — around \$500 a month for higher doses — and insurance coverage has been spotty. More than 100 million American adults are obese, according to federal estimates.

Coverage of the drugs for obesity will expand to Medicare patients starting next year, according to the administration, which said some lower prices also will be phased in for patients without coverage. Starting doses of new, pill versions of the treatments also will cost \$149 a month if they are approved.

"(It) will save lives, improve the health of millions and millions of Americans," said Trump, in an Oval Office announcement in which he referred to GLP-1s as a "fat drug."

Thursday's announcement is the latest attempt by the Trump administration to rein in soaring drug prices in its efforts to address cost-of-living concerns among voters. Pfizer and AstraZeneca recently agreed to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid after an executive order in May set a deadline for drugmakers to electively lower prices or face new limits on what the government will pay.

As with the other deals, it's not clear how much the price drop will be felt by consumers. Drug prices can vary based on the competition for treatments and insurance coverage.

Obesity drugs are popular, but costly

The obesity drugs work by targeting hormones in the gut and brain that affect appetite and feelings of fullness. In clinical trials, they helped people shed 15% to 22% of their body weight -- up to 50 pounds or more in many cases.

Patients usually start on smaller doses and then work up to larger amounts, depending on their needs. They need to stay on the treatments indefinitely or risk regaining weight, experts say.

The medications have proven especially lucrative for Lilly and Novo. Lilly said recently that sales of Zepbound have tripled so far this year to more than \$9 billion.

But for many Americans, their cost has made them out of reach.

Medicare, the federally funded coverage program mainly for people ages 65 and over, now covers the cost of the drugs for conditions such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, but not for weight loss alone. Trump's predecessor, Joe Biden, proposed a rule last November that would have changed that, but the Trump administration nixed it.

Few state and federally funded Medicaid programs, for people with low incomes, offer coverage. And employers and insurers that provide commercial coverage are wary of paying for these drugs in part because so many people might use them.

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The \$500 monthly price for higher doses of the treatments also makes them unaffordable for those without insurance, doctors say.

Trump tries to show he is in touch with cost-of-living concerns

Thursday's announcement comes as the White House is looking to demonstrate that Trump is in touch with Americans' frustrations with rising costs for food, housing, health care and other necessities.

"Trump is the friend of the forgotten American," said Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. at Thursday's announcement. "Obesity is a disease of poverty. And overwhelmingly, these drugs have only been available for people who have wealth."

(Obesity rates actually are slightly higher for middle-income Americans than they are for those with the lowest and highest incomes, according to 2017-2020 data collected by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)

Kennedy had previously expressed skepticism about GLP-1s, but he was full of praise for Trump for pushing to help a broader segment of Americans have access to the drug.

Trump, who has a history of commenting on people's appearance, asked the officials who joined him in the Oval Office whether they had used the weight-loss medications.

"Do you take any of this stuff, Howard?" Trump asked Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. "Not yet," Lutnick replied. "He's taking it," the president said of Steven Cheung, who is the White House director of communications.

The drug-pricing announcement came days after Democrats swept elections in races across the country. Economic worries were the dominant concern for those casting their ballots, according to findings from the AP voter poll.

Plan calls for phased-in price reductions

The White House sought to diminish price-reduction efforts by the previous Democratic administration as a gift to the pharmaceutical industry.

Trump, instead, consummated a deal that ensures Americans aren't unfairly financing the pharmaceutical industry's innovation, claimed a senior administration official, who briefed reporters ahead of Thursday's Oval Office announcement.

Another senior administration official said coverage of the drugs will expand to Medicare patients starting next year. The program will start covering the treatments for people who have severe obesity and others who are overweight or obese and have serious health problems, the official said. Those who qualify will pay \$50 copays for the medicine.

Lower prices also will be phased in for people without coverage through the administration's TrumpRx program, which will allow people to buy drugs directly from manufacturers, starting in January.

Administration officials said the average price of the drugs sold on TrumpRx will start at around \$350 and then drop to \$245 over the next two years.

A Novo Nordisk spokesperson declined to provide details on their pricing changes.

Lilly said it will sell a starter dose of Zepbound for \$299 a month and additional doses at up to \$449. Both represent \$50 reductions from current prices for doses it sells directly to patients.

Administration officials said lower prices also will be provided for state and federally funded Medicaid programs. And starting doses of new, pill versions of the obesity treatments will cost \$149 a month if they are approved.

U.S. health regulators on Thursday separately agreed to dramatically expedite review of Lilly's obesity pill, orforglipron. An FDA decision on Novo Nordisk's Wegovy pill is expected later this year.

Doctors who treat patients for obesity say help is needed to improve access. Dr. Leslie Golden says she has roughly 600 patients taking one of these treatments, and at least 75% struggle to afford them. Even with coverage, some face \$150 copayments for refills.

"Every visit it's, 'How long can we continue to do this? What's the plan if I can't continue?'" said Golden, an obesity medicine specialist in Watertown, Wisconsin. "Some of them are working additional jobs or delaying retirement so they can continue to pay for it."

Chicago judge says Border Patrol official lied about threats before restricting agents' use force

By CHRISTINE FERNANDO and SOPHIA TAREEN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — A federal judge in Chicago on Thursday issued an extensive injunction restricting federal agents' use of force, saying Thursday that a top Border Patrol official leading an immigration crackdown repeatedly lied about threats posed by protesters and reporters.

The preliminary injunction came in response to a lawsuit filed by news outlets and protesters who allege federal agents have used excessive force during the operation that has netted more than 3,000 arrests and led to heated clashes across the nation's third-largest city and its many suburbs.

"I see little reason for the use of force that the federal agents are currently using," said U.S. District Judge Sara Ellis. "I don't find defendants' version of events credible."

The order restricts agents from using certain riot control weapons, such as tear gas and pepper balls, "unless such force is objectively necessary" to prevent "an immediate threat." It also bars agents from using physical force, including shoving protesters and journalists to the ground, and it requires agents to give two warnings before using riot control weapons.

Ellis said her order will prevent the "chilling of First Amendment right."

A Department of Homeland Security official said in a statement that DHS plans to appeal the ruling, calling it "an extreme act by an activist judge that risks the lives and livelihoods of law enforcement officers."

The Chicago area crackdown, part of the Trump administration's growing federal intervention in Democratic strongholds, has triggered a litany of court action, including forcing improvements at a federal immigration facility activists say is a de facto detention center and blocking a National Guard deployment.

Thursday's ruling largely mirrors an earlier temporary order that required agents to wear badges and banned them from using certain riot-control techniques, such as tear gas, against peaceful protesters and journalists. After repeatedly chastising federal officials for not following her previous orders, she added a requirement for body cameras.

In delivering the injunction, Ellis quoted former late presidents including George Washington and a famous poem about Chicago by Carl Sandburg. She described protesters and advocates facing tear gas, having guns pointed at them and being thrown to the ground, saying "that would cause a reasonable person to think twice about exercising their fundamental rights."

A day earlier, attorneys for both sides repeatedly clashed in court over accounts of several tense incidents since the immigration crackdown began in September. Several involved Gregory Bovino, a Border Patrol commander who has led the crackdown, including an incident where he threw a canister of gas at a crowd after alleging he was hit by a rock.

Ellis said Bovino walked back the claim about the rock after video evidence didn't show it to be true.

"Bovino admitted that he lied," she said.

She also noted that Bovino denied using force on a man he was filmed "obviously tackling" to the ground.

Bovino, who led a similar operation in Los Angeles, has been forced to sit for hours of closed-door depositions related to growing legal challenges stemming from "Operation Midway Blitz." Clips of the private interviews, where Bovino is dressed in his green Border Patrol uniform and at times evasive, were played in court, along with body camera footage.

Bovino — head of a Border Patrol sector in El Centro, California — has repeatedly defended agents' use of force, while also dodging questions about Border Patrol agents tactics. He oversees nearly 230 agents from U.S. Customs and Border Protection that have been in the Chicago area.

In court Thursday, an attorney representing the federal government said Bovino has a body-worn camera after Ellis required him to get one and completed the training for using it at a previous hearing.

A message left Thursday for the Department of Homeland Security wasn't immediately returned.

During Wednesday's eight-hour hearing, witnesses gave emotional testimony when describing experiencing tear gas, being shot in the head with pepper balls while praying, and having guns pointed at them when recording agents in residential streets.

Ellis questioned witnesses about how these experiences impacted them and if they prevented them from protesting again. One after another, witnesses described their anxiety about returning to protests or advocacy work.

"I get really nervous because it just feels like I'm not safe," Leslie Cortez, a youth organizer in the Chicago suburb of Cicero, told Ellis. "And I question my safety when I go out."

A former teacher shot by student, 6, wins \$10M jury verdict against ex-assistant principal

By JOHN RABY and ERIK VERDUZCO Associated Press

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (AP) — A jury in Virginia awarded \$10 million Thursday to a former teacher who was shot by a 6-year-old student, siding with her claims in a lawsuit that an ex-administrator ignored repeated warnings that the child had a gun.

The jury returned its decision against Ebony Parker, a former assistant principal at Richneck Elementary School in Newport News.

Abby Zwerner was shot in January 2023 as she sat at a reading table in her first-grade classroom. She had sought \$40 million against Parker in the lawsuit.

Zwerner spent nearly two weeks in the hospital, required six surgeries and does not have the full use of her left hand. A bullet narrowly missed her heart and remains in her chest.

Zwerner did not address reporters outside the courthouse after the decision was announced. One of her attorneys, Diane Toscano, said the verdict sends a message that what happened at the school "was wrong and is not going to be tolerated, that safety has to be the first concern at school. I think it's a great message."

Parker was the only defendant in the lawsuit. A judge previously dismissed the district's superintendent and the school principal as defendants.

The shooting sent shock waves through this military shipbuilding community and the country at large, with many wondering how a child so young could gain access to a gun and shoot his teacher.

The lawsuit said Parker had a duty to protect Zwerner and others from harm after being told about the gun. Zwerner's attorneys said Parker failed to act in the hours before the shooting after several school staff members told her that the student had a gun in his backpack.

"Who would think a 6-year-old would bring a gun to school and shoot their teacher?" Toscano told the jury earlier. "It's Dr. Parker's job to believe that is possible. It's her job to investigate it and get to the very bottom of it."

Parker did not testify in the lawsuit. Her attorney, Daniel Hogan, had warned jurors about hindsight bias and "Monday morning quarterbacking" in the shooting.

"You will be able to judge for yourself whether or not this was foreseeable," Hogan said. "That's the heart of this case."

"The law knows that it is fundamentally unfair to judge another person's decisions based on stuff that came up after the fact. The law requires you to examine people's decisions at the time they make them."

Ken Trump, president of the National School Safety and Security Services, a consulting firm based in Cleveland, Ohio, said the verdict should put school leaders on notice to act when they are warned about students with guns and other threats.

"If you have information about a threat to student and staff safety, it is not just 'see something, say something,'" Trump said in a statement Thursday. "School administrators and staff need to also know how to 'do something.'"

The shooting occurred on the first day after the student had returned from a suspension for slamming Zwerner's phone two days earlier.

Zwerner testified she first heard about the gun prior to class recess from a reading specialist who had been tipped off by students. The shooting occurred a few hours later. Despite her injuries, Zwerner was able to hustle her students out of the classroom. She eventually passed out in the school office.

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Zwerner testified she believed that she had died that day.

"I thought I was either on my way to heaven or in heaven," Zwerner said. "But then it all got black. And so, I then thought I wasn't going there. And then my next memory is I see two co-workers around me and I process that I'm hurt and they're putting pressure on where I'm hurt."

Zwerner no longer works for the school district and has said she has no plans to teach again. She has since become a licensed cosmetologist.

Parker faces a separate criminal trial this month on eight counts of felony child neglect. Each of the counts is punishable by up to five years in prison in the event of a conviction.

The student's mother was sentenced to nearly four years in prison for felony child neglect and federal weapons charges. Her son told authorities he got his mother's handgun by climbing onto a drawer to reach the top of a dresser, where the firearm was in his mom's purse.

Nancy Pelosi won't seek reelection, ending her storied career in the US House

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi will not seek reelection to the U.S. House, bringing to a close her storied career as not only the first woman in the speaker's office but arguably the most powerful in American politics.

Pelosi, who has represented San Francisco for nearly 40 years, announced her decision Thursday.

"I will not be seeking reelection to Congress," Pelosi said in a video address to voters.

Pelosi, appearing upbeat and forward-looking as images of her decades of accomplishments filled the frames, said she would finish out her final year in office. And she left those who sent her to Congress with a call to action to carry on the legacy of agenda-setting both in the U.S. and around the world.

"My message to the city I love is this: San Francisco, know your power," she said. "We have made history. We have made progress. We have always led the way."

Pelosi said, "And now we must continue to do so by remaining full participants in our democracy and fighting for the American ideals we hold dear."

The decision, while not fully unexpected, ricocheted across Washington, and California, as a seasoned generation of political leaders is stepping aside ahead of next year's midterm elections. Some are leaving reluctantly, others with resolve, but many are facing challenges from newcomers eager to lead the Democratic Party and confront President Donald Trump.

Pelosi, 85, remains a political powerhouse and played a pivotal role with California's redistricting effort, Prop 50, and the party's comeback in this week's election. She maintains a robust schedule of public events and party fundraising, and her announced departure touches off a succession battle back home and leaves open questions about who will fill her behind-the-scenes leadership role at the Capitol.

Former President Barack Obama said Pelosi will go down in history as "one of the best speakers the House of Representatives has ever had."

An unmatched force in Congress

An architect of the Affordable Care Act during Obama's tenure, and a leader on the international stage, Pelosi came to Congress later in life, a mother of five mostly grown children, but also raised in a political family in Baltimore, where her father and brother both served in elected office.

Long criticized by Republicans, who have spent millions of dollars on campaign ads vilifying her as a coastal elite and more, Pelosi remained unrivaled. She routinely fended off calls to step aside by turning questions about her intentions into spirited rebuttals, asking if the same was being posed of her seasoned male colleagues on Capitol Hill.

In her video address, she noted that her first campaign slogan was "a voice that will be heard."

And with that backing, she became a speaker "whose voice would certainly be heard," she said.

But after Pelosi quietly helped orchestrate Joe Biden's withdrawal from the 2024 presidential race, she has decided to pass the torch, too.

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Last year, she experienced a fall resulting in a hip fracture during a whirlwind congressional visit to allies in Europe, but even still it showcased her grit: It was revealed she was rushed to a military hospital for surgery — after the group photo, in which she's seen smiling, poised on her trademark stiletto heels.

Pelosi's decision also comes as her husband of more than six decades, Paul Pelosi, was gravely injured three years ago when an intruder demanding to know "Where is Nancy?" broke into the couple's home and beat him over the head with a hammer. His recovery from the attack, days before the 2022 midterm elections, is ongoing.

Ahead of the 2026 midterm elections, Pelosi faced a potential primary challenge in California. Newcomer Saikat Chakrabarti, who helped devise progressive Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's political rise in New York, has mounted a campaign, as has state Sen. Scott Wiener.

While Pelosi remains an unmatched force for the Democratic Party, having fundraised more than \$1 billion over her career, her next steps are uncertain. First elected in 1987 after having worked in California state party politics, she has spent some four decades in public office.

Madam speaker takes the gavel

Pelosi's legacy as House speaker comes not only because she was the first woman to have the job but also because of what she did with the gavel, seizing the enormous powers that come with the suite of offices overlooking the National Mall.

During her first tenure, from 2007 to 2011, she steered the House in passing landmark legislation into law — the Affordable Care Act, the Dodd-Frank financial reforms in the aftermath of the Great Recession and a repeal of the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy against LGBTQ service members.

With Obama in the White House and Democratic Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada leading the Senate, the 2009-10 session of Congress ended among the most productive since the Lyndon B. Johnson era.

But a conservative Republican "tea party" revolt bounced Democrats from power, ushering in a new style of Republicans, who would pave the way for Trump to seize the White House in 2016.

Determined to win back control, Pelosi helped recruit and propel dozens of women to office in the 2018 midterm elections as Democrats running as the resistance to Trump's first term.

On the campaign trail that year, Pelosi told The Associated Press that if House Democrats won, she would show the "power of the gavel."

Pelosi returns to the speaker's office as a check on Trump

Pelosi became the first speaker to regain the office in some 50 years, and her second term, from 2019 to 2023, became potentially more consequential than the first, particularly as the Democratic Party's antidote to Trump.

Trump was impeached by the House — twice — first in 2019 for withholding U.S. aid to Ukraine as it faced a hostile Russia at its border and then in 2021 days after the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. The Senate acquitted him in both cases.

Pelosi stood up the Jan. 6 special committee to probe Trump's role in sending his mob of supporters to the Capitol, when most Republicans refused to investigate, producing the 1,000-page report that became the first full accounting of what happened as the defeated president tried to stay in office.

After Democrats lost control of the House in the 2022 midterm elections, Pelosi announced she would not seek another term as party leader.

Rather than retire, she charted a new course for leaders, taking on the emerita title that would become used by others, including Republican Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California during his brief tenure after he was ousted by his colleagues from the speaker's office in 2023.

Abraham Lincoln letter seeking job for Black friend and valet now on display at presidential museum

By JOHN O'CONNOR Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — The short, handwritten note is a typical letter of reference for a man seeking

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a job.

But the author is the president of the United States.

It is also 1861, and the job seeker is a Black man.

Abraham Lincoln penned the entreaty on behalf of his young friend, William Johnson, because ironically, his dark complexion caused freed Black White House staffers with lighter skin to shun him.

"The difference of color between him and the other servants is the cause of our separation," Lincoln wrote in the March 16, 1861, letter that private collector Peter Tuite donated in August to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, where it is now on public display. The letter's recipient, Navy Secretary Gideon Welles, reported he had no position available.

For a president in the mid-19th century to show such personal concern for a Black man's welfare is astounding. But consider that Lincoln was fewer than two weeks removed from his inauguration, taking over a country rent by secession, on the brink of a bloody Civil War.

The brief missive "contains layer upon layer" of revelations about Lincoln's presidential debut, said Christina Shutt, executive director of the library and museum.

"We see him trying to help a friend. We see that even the new president cannot casually hand out jobs," Shutt said. "We see issues of class and color within the White House."

Little is known about Johnson before he started work in 1859 as a valet and driver for Lincoln in Springfield. He traveled to Washington with the president-elect.

Lincoln referred to the then-28-year-old Johnson in letters as a "colored boy." But the individual favor he bestowed on Johnson was characteristic of the Great Emancipator, said James Conroy, a retired Massachusetts attorney and historian whose books include a survey of Lincoln's White House. Lincoln treated the White House staff, largely made up of freed African Americans, with respect. In a separate article on the subject, Conroy wrote that Lincoln never demanded service but asked staffers politely "and let them bear no hardship he could lift."

"Nobody can question that Lincoln was a very kindly guy, very empathetic, trying to help people when he could," Conroy told The Associated Press. "And that crossed Black and white and male and female and everything else. He was a genuinely good guy."

It wasn't until November that Lincoln found Johnson a position at the Treasury Department. Lincoln maintained a close working relationship with Johnson, paying him to shave the president daily and often act as chauffeur.

Johnson accompanied Lincoln to Pennsylvania in November 1863 for the Gettysburg Address. Johnson nursed Lincoln when he showed symptoms of a mild case of smallpox during the trip. Johnson died of smallpox in early 1864. It is possible he contracted it from the president or during one of several outbreaks in Washington at the time.

While Johnson was sick, Lincoln collected his paycheck and ensured it got to Johnson. Lincoln later paid for Johnson's coffin and offered to pay off a \$150 loan of Johnson's, but the bank forgave half of it.

Disease of 1,000 faces shows how science is tackling immunity's dark side

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

Doctor after doctor misdiagnosed or shrugged off Ruth Wilson's rashes, swelling, fevers and severe pain for six years. She saved her life by begging for one more test in an emergency room about to send her home, again, without answers.

That last-ditch test found the Massachusetts woman's kidneys were failing. The culprit? Her immune system had been attacking her own body all that time and nobody caught it.

"I just wish there was a better way that patients could get that diagnosis without having to go through all of the pain and all of, like, the dismissiveness and the gaslighting," she said.

Wilson has lupus, nicknamed the disease of 1,000 faces for its variety of symptoms — and her journey offers a snapshot of the dark side of the immune system. Lupus is one of a rogues' gallery of autoimmune

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diseases that affect as many as 50 million Americans and millions more worldwide – hard to treat, on the rise and one of medicine’s biggest mysteries.

Now, building on discoveries from cancer research and the COVID-19 pandemic, scientists are decoding the biology behind these debilitating illnesses. They’re uncovering pathways that lead to different autoimmune diseases and connections between seemingly unrelated ones – in hopes of attacking the causes, not just the symptoms.

It’s a daunting task. That friendly fire ravages nerves in multiple sclerosis, inflames joints in rheumatoid arthritis, dries out the eyes and mouth in Sjögren’s disease, destroys insulin production in Type 1 diabetes, weakens muscles in myositis and myasthenia gravis — and in lupus, it can cause body-wide havoc.

The list goes on: A new count from the National Institutes of Health tallied 140 autoimmune conditions, many rare but altogether a leading cause of chronic disease that’s often invisible.

“You look normal. People see you and they don’t think you have this horrible disease,” said Wilson, 43, who balances her illness with volunteering to help educate the public and even doctors about life with lupus.

While there’s still an enormous amount to learn, recent steps have some specialists daring to wonder if just maybe, ways to cure or prevent at least some of these diseases are getting closer.

In dozens of clinical trials, scientists are harnessing some of patients’ own immune cells to wipe out wayward ones that fuel lupus and a growing list of other diseases. It’s called CAR-T therapy and early results with these “living drugs” are promising. The first lupus patient was treated in Germany in March 2021 and remains in drug-free remission, the researchers said last month.

And a drug named teplizumab can delay the start of Type 1 diabetes symptoms in people destined to get sick, buying some time before they’ll need insulin. Citing that “tantalizing evidence,” the NIH’s new five-year plan for autoimmune research — if it gets funded — urges pursuing similar windows to intervene in other simmering diseases.

“This is probably the most exciting time that we’ve ever had to be in autoimmunity,” said Dr. Amit Saxena, a rheumatologist at NYU Langone Health.

Inside job

Your immune system has multiple overlapping ways to detect and attack bacteria, viruses or other bad actors. That includes teaching key soldiers -- T cells and antibody-producing B cells — how to distinguish what’s foreign from what’s “you.”

It’s a delicate balancing act, especially considering germs sometimes adapt features similar to human molecules so they can confuse and sneak past immune defenses. And while the immune system has built-in safeguards to curtail any misbehaving cells, autoimmune diseases set in when the system gets off-kilter.

Numerous genes involved in different immune functions can make people susceptible to common autoimmune diseases. That means if one family member is sick, others may be at increased risk. Such genes can include variants that once protected our ancestors from long-ago threats including the Black Death but that today can translate into a hyperactive immune system.

But “genes are not everything,” said Dr. Mariana Kaplan of NIH’s National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases.

Studies show if one identical twin develops an autoimmune disease, the other isn’t guaranteed to get sick. Non-genetic factors that trigger an immune response play a big role, such as infections, certain medicines, smoking, pollutants. In lupus, even a bad sunburn is suspect.

“At some point there is a second or third hit and the immune system says, ‘That’s it, I can’t handle any more of these insults,’” said Kaplan, who directs systemic autoimmunity research.

And women are more likely to get autoimmune diseases than men, maybe because of estrogen or their extra X chromosome. That’s especially evident in lupus; women account for 90% of cases, often young ones like Wilson.

Fainting spells and body-wide rashes began in her 20s and intensified with two pregnancies. Youngsters in tow, she saw a variety of doctors for fevers, swelling, joint and back pain until that fateful ER visit when she requested a urine test.

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Months of grueling treatment saved her kidneys. But over a decade later, the Littleton, Massachusetts, woman still lives with daily pain from lupus. Deep fatigue and brain fog — difficulty with concentrating, short-term recall, multitasking — wax and wane.

Therapies have improved in recent years, from high-dose steroids and drugs that broadly suppress the immune system to include additional options that focus on specific molecules. Wilson gets a monthly lupus-targeted IV treatment and takes about six daily medicines to calm her overactive immune system and related symptoms.

Worse are what are called flares, when symptoms abruptly and markedly worsen. For Wilson, they bring sudden high fevers, legs too swollen to walk, more intense pain, lasting days to a week. They impact her job at a medical lab and time with her husband, teen son and college-age daughter.

"It's not a bad life, it's just a bad day," she tells herself to get through.

Kaplan, the NIH scientist, has a biological explanation for the daily slog: The same inflammatory proteins that cause aches and fatigue during a cold or flu continually course through the bodies of patients with systemic autoimmune diseases like lupus.

Hunting the root causes

"These are my babies," said Dr. Justin Kwong, a research fellow in Kaplan's lab at NIH, as he carefully examines cells in an incubator.

Kwong is performing something so tricky it's not done in many laboratories: He's growing batches of neutrophils, the body's most common white blood cells.

They are first responders that race to the site of an injury or infection, and Kaplan suspects they're among the earliest immune cells to run amok and trigger certain autoimmune diseases.

How? Some types of neutrophils spew out their insides to form sticky spider-web like structures that trap and kill germs. The neutrophils die in the process.

But patients with lupus and some other diseases harbor abnormal neutrophils that form too many webs, Kaplan said. Her team is investigating if other immune defenses mistakenly sense the resulting debris as foreign, sparking a chain reaction.

"We think that's a fundamental initial process," Kaplan said. "We're trying to find why it happens, why it happens more often in women, and can we come up with strategies to stop this without harming the way we defend ourselves from infections."

Another common feature: Patients with a number of autoimmune diseases, especially women, often suffer heart attacks and strokes at unusually young ages. Kaplan's research suggests those aptly named NETS, or neutrophil extracellular traps, may be key — by damaging blood vessels and spurring hardened arteries typically seen in older people.

But neutrophils don't live long outside the body and testing mature ones from lupus patients' blood won't show how they went awry — something Kwong's baby neutrophils may aid.

Teasing apart patient differences

Whatever triggers it, lupus has bafflingly varied symptoms and treatments that can keep some patients symptom-free but not others.

That suggests "lupus is not a single disease," Kaplan said. "What we call lupus probably represents many different conditions that have some common factors."

How to subtype lupus isn't clear. But another disease, rheumatoid arthritis, may offer clues. Perhaps best recognized by painfully disfigured fingers, RA can attack any joint and even some organs, sometimes scarring lungs.

Like with lupus, RA treatment is trial-and-error and scientists are exploring different underlying factors to explain why. In one study, an international team used tiny samples of patients' joint tissue to identify six inflammatory subtypes of RA based on patterns of cells, how they clustered and their activity.

It "changed how we think about the disease," said Northwestern University rheumatology chief Harris Perlman, one of the coauthors. Now researchers are comparing cells in joint tissue before and after patients start a new drug to see if they could help guide treatment choices, he said.

Living with lupus

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Wilson learned to wear sunscreen and a big hat outdoors and how to ration her energy in hopes of avoiding flares. When her kids were old enough for school, she returned, too, getting degrees that led to laboratory research and data science jobs — and a better understanding of her own disease and its treatments.

One day her then-rheumatologist asked if she'd answer some medical students' questions. Wilson remembers many knew "what lupus looks like in a textbook" but not the patient perspective.

"I realized, my god, I need to start talking about this."

What that looks like now: One evening last February, Wilson bubbled with nerves and excitement at finally meeting some members of her online lupus support group. At UMass Chan Medical School, Wilson greeted the two women and two men with hugs. They shared symptoms and treatments — and rueful stories of well-meaning relatives urging them to just get more sleep to combat the lupus fatigue that rest can't conquer.

A month later, Wilson traveled to Washington for a meeting organized by the Lupus Research Alliance, where she urged scientists and drug company researchers to heed patient reports of changes in their everyday lives, such as whether a new therapy helps brain fog.

Drug studies that measure physical symptoms and blood markers are "only capturing half the story," she said. "If a treatment allows me to think clearly, to engage in my life, to be the person I know I am beneath all of this, then that is just as important as reducing inflammation."

While her doctor isn't recommending experimental treatments yet, Wilson recently joined the Lupus Landmark Study that will track biological samples from 3,500 patients to better understand disease variations. Whenever a flare strikes Wilson pricks her finger for a blood sample to share.

"It's important for me to also be a voice for patients because I think of myself and how lonely I was at the very beginning," Wilson said. For a long time, "I never wanted to talk about it. Especially my kids, I wanted them to know that I was going to be OK. And so you put on your makeup and your lipstick and your three shades of eye corrector and you go on."

There are more than 100 autoimmune diseases, and they mostly strike women. Here's what to know

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

Our immune system has a dark side: It's supposed to fight off invaders to keep us healthy. But sometimes it turns traitor and attacks our own cells and tissues.

What are called autoimmune diseases can affect just about every part of the body — and tens of millions of people. While most common in women, these diseases can strike anyone, adults or children, and they're on the rise.

New research is raising the prospect of treatments that might do more than tamp down symptoms. Dozens of clinical trials are testing ways to reprogram an immune system-gone-rogue, with some promising early successes against lupus, myositis and certain other illnesses. Other researchers are hunting ways to at least delay brewing autoimmune diseases, spurred by a drug that can buy some time before people show symptoms of Type 1 diabetes.

"This is probably the most exciting time that we've ever had to be in autoimmunity," said Dr. Amit Saxena, a rheumatologist at NYU Langone Health.

Here are some things to know.

What are autoimmune diseases?

They're chronic diseases that can range from mild to life-threatening, more than 100 with different names depending on how and where they do damage. Rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis attack joints. Sjögren's disease is known for dry eyes and mouth. Myositis and myasthenia gravis weaken muscles in different ways, the latter by attacking how nerves signal them. Lupus has widely varied symptoms including a butterfly-shaped facial rash, joint and muscle pain, fevers and damage to the kidneys, lungs and heart.

They're also capricious: Even patients faring well for long periods can suddenly have a "flare" for no

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apparent reason.

Why autoimmune diseases are so difficult to diagnose

Many start with vague symptoms that come and go or mimic other illnesses. Many also have overlapping symptoms – rheumatoid arthritis and Sjögren's also can harm major organs, for example.

Diagnosis can take multiple tests, including some blood tests to detect antibodies that mistakenly latch onto healthy tissue. It usually centers on symptoms and involves ruling out other causes. Depending on the disease it can take years and seeing multiple doctors before one puts the clues together. There are efforts to improve: The National MS Society is educating doctors about newly updated guidelines to streamline diagnosis of multiple sclerosis.

How the immune system gets out of whack

The human immune system is a complex army with sentinels to detect threats like germs or cancer cells, a variety of soldiers to attack them, and peacemakers to calm things down once the danger is over. Key is that it can distinguish what's foreign from what's "you," what scientists call tolerance.

Sometimes confused immune cells or antibodies slip through, or the peacemakers can't calm things down after a battle. If the system can't spot and fix the problem, autoimmune diseases gradually develop.

Autoimmune diseases are often set off by a trigger

Most autoimmune diseases, especially in adults, aren't caused by a specific gene defect. Instead, a variety of genes that affect immune functions can make people susceptible. Scientists say it then takes some "environmental" trigger, such as an infection, smoking or pollutants, to set the disease into motion. For example, the Epstein-Barr virus is linked to MS.

Scientists are zeroing in on the earliest molecular triggers. For example, white blood cells called neutrophils are first responders to signs of infection or injury — but abnormally overactive ones are suspected of playing a key role in lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and other diseases.

Women are at highest risk for autoimmune diseases

Women account for about 4 of 5 autoimmune patients, many of them young. Hormones are thought to play a role. But also, females have two X chromosomes while males have one X and one Y. Some research suggests an abnormality in how female cells switch off that extra X can increase women's vulnerability.

But men do suffer from autoimmune diseases. One especially severe one named VEXAS syndrome wasn't discovered until 2020. It mainly affects men over 50 and in addition to typical autoimmune symptoms it can cause blood clots, shortness of breath and night sweats.

Certain populations also have higher risks. For example, lupus is more common in Black and Hispanic women. Northern Europeans have a higher risk of MS than other groups.

Treatment for autoimmune diseases is complicated

According to investment research company Morningstar, the global market for autoimmune disease treatments is \$100 billion a year. That's not counting doctor visits and such things as lost time at work. Treatment is lifelong and, while usually covered by insurance, can be pricey.

Not so long ago there was little to offer for many autoimmune diseases beyond high-dose steroids and broad immune-suppressing drugs, with side effects that include a risk of infections and cancer. Today some newer options target specific molecules, somewhat less immune dampening. But for many autoimmune diseases, treatment is trial and error, with little to guide patient decisions.

Appeals court gives Trump another shot at erasing his hush money conviction

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal appeals court on Thursday gave new life to President Donald Trump's bid to erase his hush money conviction, ordering a lower court to reconsider its decision to keep the case in state court instead of moving it to federal court.

A three-judge panel in the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that U.S. District Judge Alvin Hellerstein erred by failing to consider "important issues relevant" to Trump's request to move the New York case to

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federal court, where he can seek to have it thrown out on presidential immunity grounds.

But, the appeals court judges said, they "express no view" on how Hellerstein should rule.

Hellerstein, who was nominated by Democratic President Bill Clinton, twice denied Trump's requests to move the case. The first time was after Trump's March 2023 indictment; the second followed Trump's May 2024 conviction and a subsequent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that presidents and former presidents cannot be prosecuted for official acts.

In the later ruling, at issue in Thursday's decision, Hellerstein said Trump's lawyers had failed to meet the high burden of proof for changing jurisdiction and that Trump's conviction for falsifying business records involved his personal life, not official actions that the Supreme Court ruled are immune from prosecution.

Hellerstein's ruling, which echoed his previous denial, "did not consider whether certain evidence admitted during the state court trial relates to immunized official acts or, if so, whether evidentiary immunity transformed" the hush money case into one that relates to official acts, the appeals court panel said.

The three judges said Hellerstein should closely review evidence that Trump claims relate to official acts.

If Hellerstein finds the prosecution relied on evidence of official acts, the judges said, he should weigh whether Trump can argue those actions were taken as part of his White House duties, whether Trump "diligently sought" to have the case moved to federal court and whether the case can even be moved to federal court now that Trump has been convicted and sentenced in state court.

Ruling came after oral arguments in June

Judges Susan L. Carney, Raymond J. Lohier Jr. and Myrna Pérez made their ruling after hearing arguments in June, when they spent more than an hour grilling Trump's lawyer and the appellate chief for Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office, which prosecuted the case and wants it to remain in state court.

Carney and Lohier were nominated to the court by Democratic President Barack Obama. Pérez was nominated by Democratic President Joe Biden.

"President Trump continues to win in his fight against Radical Democrat Lawfare," a spokesperson for Trump's legal team said in a statement. "The Supreme Court's historic decision on Immunity, the Federal and New York State Constitutions, and other established legal precedent mandate that the Witch Hunt perpetrated by the Manhattan DA be immediately overturned and dismissed."

Bragg's office declined to comment.

Trump was convicted in May 2024 of 34 felony counts of falsifying business records to conceal a hush money payment to adult film actor Stormy Daniels, whose allegations of an affair with Trump threatened to upend his 2016 presidential campaign. Trump denies her claim, said he did nothing wrong and has asked a state appellate court to overturn the conviction.

It was the only one of the Republican's four criminal cases to go to trial.

Trump team cites Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity

In trying to move the hush money case to federal court, Trump's lawyers argued that federal officers, including former presidents, have the right to be tried in federal court for charges arising from "conduct performed while in office." Part of the criminal case involved checks that Trump wrote while he was president.

Trump's lawyer, Jeffrey Wall, argued that prosecutors rushed to trial instead of waiting for the Supreme Court's presidential immunity decision. He also said they erred by showing jurors evidence that should not have been allowed under that ruling, such as former White House staffers describing how Trump reacted to news coverage of the hush money deal and tweets he sent while president in 2018.

"The district attorney holds the keys in his hand," Wall told the three-judge panel in June. "He doesn't have to introduce this evidence."

In addition to reining in prosecutions of ex-presidents for official acts, the Supreme Court's July 2024 ruling restricted prosecutors from pointing to official acts as evidence that a president's unofficial actions were illegal.

Wall, a former acting U.S. solicitor general, called the president "a class of one," telling the judges that "everything about this cries out for federal court."

Steven Wu, the appellate chief for the district attorney's office, countered that Trump was too late in seeking to move the case to federal court. Normally, such a request must be made within 30 days of an

arraignment. Exceptions can be made if "good cause" is shown.

Hellerstein concluded that Trump hadn't shown "good cause" to request a move to federal court as such a late stage. But the three-judge panel on Thursday said it "cannot be confident" that the judge "adequately considered issues" relevant to making that decision.

Wall, addressing the delay at oral arguments, said Trump's team did not immediately seek to move the case to federal court because the defense was trying to resolve the matter by raising the immunity argument with the trial judge, Juan Merchan.

Merchan rejected Trump's request to throw out the conviction on immunity grounds and sentenced him Jan. 10 to an unconditional discharge, leaving his conviction intact but sparing him any punishment.

Climate change boosted Hurricane Melissa's destructive winds and rain, analysis finds

By ISABELLA O'MALLEY Associated Press

Human-caused climate change boosted the destructive winds and rain unleashed by Hurricane Melissa and increased the temperatures and humidity that fueled the storm, according to an analysis released Thursday.

Melissa was one of the strongest Atlantic hurricanes to make landfall and brought destructive weather to Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic and Cuba, causing dozens of deaths across the Caribbean. Roofs were torn off of homes, hospitals were damaged, roads were blocked by landslides and crop fields were ruined.

The rapid analysis by World Weather Attribution found that climate change increased Melissa's maximum wind speeds by 7% and made the rainfall near the center of the storm 16% more intense. The scientists also wrote that the temperature and humidity in which the storm intensified were made six times more likely due to climate change compared to a pre-industrial world.

Rapid attribution analyses are a type of research that study factors influencing an extreme weather event and explore what the event would have been like in a world without climate change. They are typically published days or weeks after an extreme weather event.

Melissa slowly tracked across the region and drew in enormous amounts of energy from abnormally warm ocean water. The analysis reported ocean temperatures in Melissa's path through the Caribbean were about 1.4°C (2.5°F) warmer compared to a pre-industrial climate.

"Warmer ocean temperatures are effectively the engine that drives a hurricane ... the warmer the ocean temperatures, the greater the wind speed a hurricane can have," said Theodore Keeping, a climate scientist who works for WWA and contributed to the analysis.

Melissa is the fourth storm in the Atlantic this year to undergo rapid intensification, which is when a tropical cyclone's maximum sustained winds increase by at least 30 knots (about 35 mph or 56 kph) in 24 hours.

"A hurricane this rare would actually have had wind speeds about 10 mph (16 kph) less extreme" in a pre-industrial climate, said Keeping. He said research links hurricane wind speeds to economic damage and there would have been less destruction caused by Melissa if the winds were slower.

Scientists have linked rapid intensification of hurricanes in the Atlantic to human-caused climate change. Planet-warming gases released by humans, such as carbon dioxide, cause the atmosphere to hold more water vapor and increase ocean temperatures. Warmer oceans give hurricanes fuel to unleash more rain and strengthen more quickly.

"It's like basically taking a sponge and wringing it out, and climate change is making that sponge even larger," said Brian Tang, a professor of atmospheric science at University at Albany.

Tang, who was not involved in the WWA research, said the methodology of the study released Thursday seems robust, and one of the more novel aspects of the analysis was the connection the scientists drew between wind speeds and increase in damage, which he said is a challenging area of research.

Andrew Dessler, professor of atmospheric sciences at Texas A&M University, who was not involved in the WWA research, said the findings of the rapid analysis are in line with existing research about climate change and tropical storms in the Atlantic. "This is completely consistent with our expectation of what's

going to happen in the future," Dessler said.

Rapid attribution analyses help fill the need for an explanation about the influence of climate change shortly after a catastrophic weather event occurs, said Dessler. He said such analyses are "very valuable as a quick look" before the scientists are able to do more time-consuming calculations.

Dessler said one of the scariest aspects of Melissa was the storm's peak sustained winds of 185 mph (298 kph) winds. "That's pretty rare to have a storm that strong. And I think that, to the extent that this is a harbinger of the future, it's not good," he said.

Israel identifies latest hostage remains returned by Hamas from Gaza as those of a Tanzanian student

By MELANIE LIDMAN and AUDREY HOROWITZ Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli authorities confirmed Thursday that the remains of a hostage returned the previous day from Gaza are of a Tanzanian agricultural student in Israel who was killed on Oct. 7, 2023 in the Hamas-led attack that started the war.

The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the remains were identified as those of Joshua Loitu Mollel and that his family has been notified. The development was the latest step forward under the U.S.-brokered ceasefire.

Mollel, 21, had arrived at kibbutz Nahal Oz only 19 days before the attack, after finishing agricultural college back home and looking to gain experience in Israel he could apply in Tanzania. He is survived by two parents and four siblings in Tanzania.

"Joshua's return offers some comfort to a family that has endured unbearable uncertainty for over two years," the Hostages and Missing Families Forum Headquarters said in a statement.

Bodies still to be returned

There are now six bodies of hostages that remain in Gaza. The territory's militants have released 22 bodies of hostages since the ceasefire began last month. Among the six bodies still in Gaza is that of Sudthisak Rinthalak, an agricultural worker from Thailand, the only non-Israeli.

Hamas returned 20 living hostages to Israel on Oct. 13. The subsequent exchanges of the dead are the central component of the initial phase of the deal which requires Hamas return all hostage remains as quickly as possible.

The exchanges have gone ahead even as Israel and Hamas have accused each other of breaching other terms of the agreement.

Israel has handed over 285 bodies of Palestinians back to Gaza, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, which handles the exchanges.

Health officials in Gaza have said identifying the remains handed over by Israel is complicated by a lack of DNA testing kits. Israel has not disclosed how many bodies it is holding or where they were recovered, but has been returning 15 for each set of hostage remains handed over.

Hamas has said that recovering bodies is complicated by the widespread devastation in the coastal enclave and has returned one to three bodies every few days. Israel has pushed to speed up the returns. In several cases, the remains have turned out not to be those of hostages.

Another border concern for Israel

Separately, Israeli concerns over weapons smuggling with the use of drones along its 200-kilometer (130-mile) border with Egypt prompted the country's defense minister on Thursday to order a border area be designated as a closed-off military zone to curb the illegal activity.

Israel Katz said troops would also be authorized to fire on smugglers operating in the zone, according to a statement from his office.

"Anyone who enters the unauthorized area will be harmed," said Katz.

Katz on Wednesday met with top military and security officials who also agreed to work on designating arms smuggling as a terrorist threat so that "security forces deploy appropriate tools to combat the threat."

Gaza stabilization force in the works

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U.S. President Donald Trump's 20-point plan calls for an international stabilization force for Gaza and diplomats are working to define its role, persuade Arab countries to take part, and win wider international support.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the force would need the legitimacy of a U.N. Security Council mandate.

The United States said Wednesday that representatives from Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates met with 10 non-permanent U.N. Security Council members about getting support for a U.N. Security Council resolution on Gaza.

Also, the European Union's top diplomat Kaja Kallas said Wednesday the bloc is looking to extend the mandates of its two current missions helping the Palestinian Authority train a police force and bolster security procedures as a way to contribute to the stabilization force.

Released Israeli hostage alleges sexual abuse

A freed Israeli hostage said he was stripped naked and beaten by Palestinian militants who held him for two years in Gaza. His testimony makes him the latest of several hostages released from Gaza to report being sexually abused in captivity.

Parts of Ron Braslavski's account was published in the Daily Mail newspaper, ahead of the full interview set to air on Israel's Channel 13 later on Thursday night.

In the clips, Braslavski said his captors had starved and sexually abused him and he recounts how he prayed for the abuse to stop.

"It was sexual violence and its main purpose was to humiliate me," he said. "While I was there — every day, every beating — I'd say to myself, 'I survived another day in hell.'"

Braslavski was a guard at the Nova musical festival and was captured by the militants who overran the grounds during the October 2023 attack on southern Israel. He was released last month as part of the ceasefire agreement.

Released Palestinians who had been seized from Gaza during the war and held in Israeli prisons have reported being stripped down to their underwear during their initial detention and frequent beatings by guards, as well as sexual abuse, being bound for days, causing infections that led to amputations of limbs in some cases, and insufficient food or medical care.

At least 75 Palestinians have died in Israeli prisons and detention facilities during the war, according to the U.N. The Israeli military has said it abides by international standards in its prisons.

The 2023 attack killed about 1,200 people in Israel and saw 251 taken hostage. Israel's sweeping military offensive has killed more than 68,800 Palestinians in Gaza, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry, part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals, maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by independent experts.

Sudanese paramilitary group agrees to humanitarian truce proposed by US-led mediators

CAIRO (AP) — The Rapid Support Force, a paramilitary group that has been at war with the Sudanese military for over two years, said Thursday it has agreed to a humanitarian truce that was proposed by U.S.-led mediator group, also known as the Quad.

The RSF's agreement to the proposal comes over a week after the group seized el-Fasher city that has been under siege for over 18 months. It was also the last Sudanese military stronghold in the Sudan's western Darfur region.

A Sudan military official told The Associated Press that the army will only agree to a truce which includes withdrawing from civilian areas and giving up weapons.

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Today in History: November 7, first woman elected to Congress

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Friday, Nov. 7, the 311th day of 2025. There are 54 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 7, 1916, Jeannette Rankin of Montana won election to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming the first woman elected to either chamber of Congress.

Also on this date:

In 1917, Russia's Bolshevik Revolution took place as forces led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin overthrew the provisional government of Alexander Kerensky.

In 1940, Washington state's original Tacoma Narrows Bridge, nicknamed "Galloping Gertie," collapsed into Puget Sound during a windstorm just four months after opening to traffic.

In 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term in office, defeating Republican Thomas E. Dewey.

In 1972, President Richard Nixon was reelected in a landslide over Democrat George McGovern.

In 1989, L. Douglas Wilder won the governor's race in Virginia, becoming the first elected Black governor in U.S. history; David N. Dinkins was elected New York City's first Black mayor.

In 1991, basketball star Magic Johnson announced that he had tested positive for HIV and was retiring.

In 1996, NASA launched the Mars Global Surveyor from Cape Canaveral, Florida, the agency's first mission to the red planet in about two decades. The orbiter became the longest-operating spacecraft sent to Mars before NASA lost contact with it in November 2006.

In 2011, a jury in Los Angeles convicted Michael Jackson's doctor, Conrad Murray, of involuntary manslaughter for supplying a powerful anesthetic implicated in the pop star's 2009 death. (Murray was sentenced to four years in prison. He served two years and was released in October 2013.)

In 2020, Democrat Joe Biden clinched victory over President Donald Trump as a win in Pennsylvania pushed Biden over the threshold of 270 Electoral College votes. Trump refused to concede.

Today's Birthdays: Baseball Hall of Famer Jim Kaat is 87. Former Singer Johnny Rivers is 83. Singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell is 82. Retired Army general and former CIA Director David Petraeus is 73. Actor Christopher Knight (TV: "The Brady Bunch") is 68. DJ-producer David Guetta is 58. Actor Yunjin Kim is 52. Rock singer Lorde is 29.