

# Groton Daily Independent

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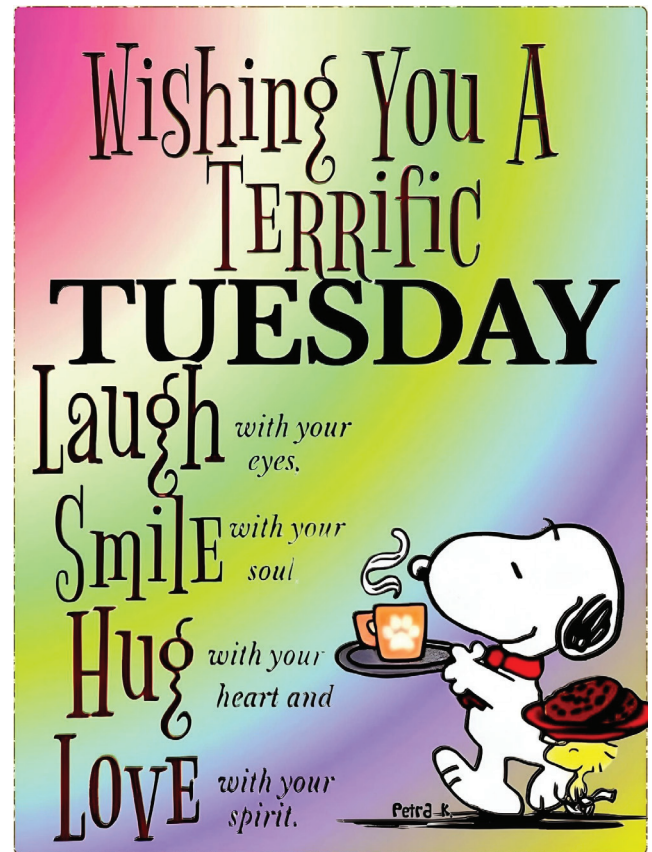
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## Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026

School Breakfast: Scones.  
School Lunch: Chicken breast, cooked broccoli.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.  
Groton United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.  
MS BBB at Roncalli, 4 p.m.  
4th Grade BBB Practice, 5:30 p.m.

## Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2026

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.  
School Lunch: Cheese quesadilla, black beans.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.  
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.  
Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.  
2nd Grade BBB Practice, 5 p.m.



6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.  
3rd/4th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.  
5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

## Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026

School Breakfast: Egg wraps.  
School Lunch: Lasagna bake, green beans.  
Little Leaders Cheer Clinic, 3:30 p.m.  
Basketball: Tiospa Zina at Groton: (JVBBB-4, JVGBB-5, VBBB-6:15, VGBB-7:30)  
4th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.  
Boys Wrestling Triangular with Webster at Redfield, 6 p.m.

## Friday, Jan. 16, 2026

School Breakfast: Cereal.  
School Lunch: French bread pizza, corn.  
Boys Wrestling at Philip Invitational, 10 a.m.  
Girls Wrestling at Harrisburg Invitational, 4 p.m.  
JH BBB at Milbank (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)

**Groton Daily Independent**  
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# 1440

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

## Transgender Athletes Cases

The Supreme Court will hear its first-ever cases today on transgender athletes' participation in sports. The outcome of the cases—originating in Idaho and West Virginia—is likely to impact laws across more than 20 states with similar measures.

Boise State University student Lindsay Hecox, 24, sued Idaho over its 2020 law barring transgender athletes from women's and girls' sports teams at public schools of all levels, including public colleges. Fifteen-year-old Becky Pepper-Jackson, who has publicly identified as a girl since the third grade and has been taking puberty-blocking medication, challenged a similar law in West Virginia. Federal courts have blocked the two laws on the grounds that they discriminate "on the basis of sex" in violation of Title IX. The states have appealed, arguing sex and gender identity are separate matters.

An estimated 122,000 transgender teenagers participate in high school sports—a little over 1% of the US' more than 8 million teenage athletes. See public perceptions on the topic here.

## Powell Probe Backlash

Former Federal Reserve chairs and top economists issued a statement yesterday condemning a federal probe into Fed Chair Jerome Powell as a threat to the central bank's independence.

The Justice Department launched a criminal investigation into whether Powell misled Congress about the scope of a roughly \$2.5B renovation of the Fed's headquarters. Powell characterized the allegation as a pressure campaign by President Donald Trump to push the central bank to lower interest rates, or the cost of borrowing money. The rates, which influence economic growth, are reviewed about every six weeks by an independent board that Powell leads. Trump has criticized the Fed for not lowering rates faster and, last month, floated suing Powell over the renovation; Trump denies prior knowledge of the probe.

Separately, the Supreme Court will hear a case next week on whether Trump can fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook over mortgage fraud allegations.

## Myanmar on Trial

The UN's top court yesterday began hearings in a long-running case brought by the West African nation of Gambia, which accuses Myanmar of genocide against the Rohingya, a primarily Muslim minority group. The proceedings mark the first genocide case the International Court of Justice will hear in full in more than a decade and could set a precedent for other allegations, including South Africa's case against Israel.

More than 700,000 Rohingya have fled from Buddhist-majority Myanmar to Bangladesh since 2017, after the Myanmar military launched a widespread operation in the western part of the country. UN investigators have documented accounts of killings, mass rape, and destroyed villages. Myanmar denies the accusations and maintains its actions were security measures against militant groups.

In the ICJ's 80-year history, the closest precedent came in 2007, when a case against Serbia over the 1995 Srebrenica massacre found that Serbia had failed to prevent genocide. However, the court did not hold Serbia directly responsible for the killings.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Houston Texans beat Pittsburgh Steelers 30-6 in last NFL wild-card game; playoffs resume Saturday with 49ers vs. Seahawks and Bills vs. Broncos.

Paramount sues Warner Bros. Discovery for financial details of roughly \$83B Netflix deal, announces plans to nominate directors to Warner Bros. board.

Real Madrid cuts ties with head coach Xabi Alonso after 2-3 loss to Barcelona in Spanish Super Cup, names B team coach Álvaro Arbeloa as replacement.

## Science & Technology

Apple selects Google's Gemini to power the iPhone maker's artificial intelligence features, including a new iteration of Siri.

Nvidia and Eli Lilly to jointly invest \$1B in AI-powered drug discovery lab.

Repeated same-sex sexual activity is observed in 23 nonhuman primate species, suggesting behavior evolved to strengthen social bonds and reduce conflict.

Researchers identify gut bacteria in infants that reduce likelihood of developing allergies and asthma later in life, opening door to new preventive treatments.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close up (S&P 500 +0.2%, Dow +0.2%, Nasdaq +0.3%), with S&P 500 and the Dow hitting records; gold and silver prices also hit record highs.

Alphabet briefly tops \$4T market cap in intraday trading; Apple and Microsoft briefly crossed the historic mark last year, while Nvidia is the only tech company to hold firm above the threshold.

Dina Powell McCormick, former deputy national security adviser to President Donald Trump, named new president and vice chair of Meta.

Meta reportedly planning to cut around 10% of roughly 15,000 roles in its Reality Labs unit.

## Politics & World Affairs

Malaysia and Indonesia become the first countries to block xAI's Grok chatbot over sexually explicit deepfakes, including nonconsensual images of women and children.

Roughly 15,000 nurses walk out of three New York City hospital systems—Mount Sinai Hospital, NewYork-Presbyterian, and Montefiore Medical Center—as contract negotiations stall; hospitals hire temporary nurses to stay open.

Canadian authorities arrest suspect in the country's biggest gold heist in history: the April 2023 theft of 6,600 gold bars worth nearly \$15M from Toronto's Pearson International Airport.

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Coming Up on  
GDILIVE.COM

Groton  
Area  
Tigers  
Groton, SD

# GDILIVE



A production of the  
*Groton Daily Independent*



For more info: [GDILIVE.COM](http://GDILIVE.COM)



**Thurs., Jan. 15, 2026 - Tiospa Zina  
Basketball Doubleheader in Groton  
Boys Varsity 6:15, Girls Varsity 7:30**



**Sat., Jan. 17, 2026 - Dakota Valley  
Boys Basketball in Groton  
C at 2:00, JV at 3:15, Varsity at 4:30**

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## Tigers clamp down after fast start, roll past Northwestern 55-20

MELETTE — After an evenly played opening quarter, the Groton Area girls basketball team tightened up defensively and pulled away for a 55-20 victory over Northwestern Tuesday night to improve to 6-4 on the season.

Both teams shot well early, with Groton hitting 8-of-15 shots in the first quarter and Northwestern connecting on 6-of-11. The Tigers jumped out to an 8-0 lead before the Wildcats answered to close within one at 13-12. Groton carried a 19-14 advantage into the second quarter, but the game shifted quickly as the Tigers went on a 16-point run to turn a 15-14 edge into a 31-14 lead. Northwestern struggled to find the basket in the period, going 1-of-9 from the field, while Groton hit 5-of-14 shots to take a 34-16 lead into halftime.

Head coach Matt Locke said the message between quarters was clear. "We finally go score a few baskets, then all of a sudden we can't stop anybody. That's not going to work. We've got to be consistent on both ends."

Groton carried that defensive focus into the second half. Northwestern managed just one field goal on seven attempts in the third quarter, while the Tigers hit 5-of-11 shots to extend the margin to 50-20 after three quarters, putting the game into a running clock for the remainder of the night.

"I don't care who you play, if you only let them shoot 29 times, your ball pressure is doing its job," Locke said. "We flipped the script the last three quarters."



**Sydney Locke looks for an open teammate to pass off the ball.** (Photo

by Paul Kosel)



**Talli Wright looks for an opening to drive to the basket.** (Photo

by Paul Kosel)

Offensively, Groton shot 48 percent on two-point attempts and 39 percent from three-point range, finishing 7-of-18 beyond the arc. McKenna Tietz led the Tigers with 20 points, knocking down three three-pointers while also grabbing three rebounds, dishing two assists and collecting four steals. Taryn Trap-hagen followed with 11 points, five rebounds, three assists and two steals. Jaedyn Penning added seven points on perfect



**Jaedyn Penning forces her way through three defenders.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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2-of-2 shooting from long range, along with three rebounds, three assists and three steals. Sydney Locke finished with five points, one rebound, one assist and two steals, while Jerica Locke added four points, four rebounds, five assists and three steals. Rylee Dunker contributed four points and five rebounds, Kella Tracy scored two points with three rebounds and an assist, and Talli Wright had two points, two rebounds and a steal as eight Tigers found the scoring column.

Groton finished with 26 rebounds, 15 assists and 15 steals, committing 12 turnovers in the win.

Northwestern shot 8-of-29 from the field and 1-of-3 at the free-throw line, turning the ball over 20 times. Ashley



**McKenna Tietz made three three-pointers and finished the night with 20 points to lead the Tigers.** (Photo by

Paul Kosel)

Haven led the Wildcats with six points, while Breelyn Satter, Tara Blachford, Mikayla Schmidt and Sophia Trosky each scored three, and Lilly Haven added two. Northwestern dropped to 3-4 on the season.

Locke said he was pleased with his team's patience on offense as well. "We're working on our motion offense, trying to get more flow, and it's coming."

The Tigers return home Thursday to host Tiospa Zina Wambdi in a doubleheader.

Groton also swept the undercard games. The junior varsity Tigers earned a 44-11 victory, leading 15-0 after the first quarter, 30-2 at halftime and 37-6 after three. Tevan Hanson led Groton with 16 points, Kella Tracy added 13, Makenna Krause scored nine, Ashlynn Warrington had four and Sydney Locke finished with two. Northwestern's Kylie Henjum scored eight.

In the C-game, Groton rolled to a 48-13 win. The Tigers led 13-1 after one quarter, 24-7 at halftime and 33-11 after three. Andi Iverson scored 11 points to lead Groton, Kinsley Rowen and Ruelle Gilbert each added 10, Brynlee Dunker had nine, while Teagan Hatten and Taylynn Traphagan scored four apiece. Rachel Melius led Northwestern with six.



**Rylee Dunker takes aim at the basket.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

The games were broadcast live on [GDILIVE.COM](http://GDILIVE.COM), The varsity game was sponsored by Avantara - Groton, Agtegra, Bierman Farm Service, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Heartland Energy and The MeatHouse in Andover. Ryan Tracy did the commentary, Jeslyn Kosel ran the camera, and Paul Kosel did the stats and technology. The junior varsity and C games were sponsored by Grandparents.

## Groton school board approves 2026-2027 school calendar, accepts four employee resignations

The Groton school board tackled a mix of planning and forward-looking opportunities during its regular meeting Monday night, approving the 2026–2027 school calendar, accepting the resignations of four employees and discussing how potential state legislation could affect the district.

The board approved the next academic year calendar, starting the school year with open house events on August 17. Staff development dates are scheduled for August 12, 17 and 18; October 9; January 4, 2027; February 12, 2027; and May 18, 2027.

The first day of school will take place August 19, graduation is May 15, 2027; and the last scheduled day for the 2026-2027 school year is May 17, 2027, though that date may shift depending on snow days next year.

The board also accepted some staff resignations, two of which have already happened and two which will take place later this school year.

The board approved the resignation of instrumental music teacher Joshua Friez effective December 19 with no discussion.

Board President Grant Rix read a letter from Alexandria Homsombath, administrative assistant, who thanked the district for her time working there. Her resignation was effective as of January 5.

Special Education Paraprofessional Stacey Wellnitz expressed appreciation for her time with the district in her letter announcing her resignation effective January 22.

Finally, the board approved the resignation/retirement of Karin Bartell, assistant cook/baker, effective May 15.

In other business, the board also gave the go-ahead for the district's health science teacher and HOSA advisor Brittany Hubbard to explore interest in organizing a Global Medical Squads trip to Belize for students and parents.

An opportunity has come up for members of the Future Health Professionals group to volunteer while getting experience in a medical clinic that will provide primary health resources to under-resourced communities, Hubbard told the board. The trip would be in the summer, and students would pay their own way. Hubbard asked the board for permission to gauge interest in putting together a group to participate.

- Business Manager Becky Hubsch updated the board that the Day County Commission will hold a first reading of an ordinance at its 9 a.m. January 23 meeting related to wind farm setbacks in Day County. It is an issue that has riled up some in the area, and some misinformation has spread about where tax dollars from those projects goes.

- Superintendent Joe Schwan updated the school board on early information from the 2026 state Legislative Session. The governor's State of the State Address is scheduled for 1 p.m. Tuesday. As of Monday morning, there were 55 bills pre-filed in the House of Representatives and 79 bills pre-filed in the Senate.

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## 2026-2027 Groton Area School District

Drafted 12/01/2025

**August 2026**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**August**  
 12 - Staff Development @ NSU/New Teachers  
 17 - Staff Development  
 17 - Open House Events  
 18 - Staff Development  
 19 - First Day of School  
 Student Contact: 9; Inservice: 2.5

**January 2027**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**January**  
 4 - No School - Staff Development Day  
 5 - School Resumes  
 Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 1

**September 2026**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**September**  
 4 - No School - LABOR DAY BREAK  
 7 - No School - LABOR DAY  
 Student Contact: 20; Inservice: 0

**February 2027**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

**February**  
 11 - Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 12 - No School - Staff Development  
 15 - No School - PRESIDENT'S DAY  
 Student Contact: 18; Inservice: 2

**October 2026**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**October**  
 8 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (1:30-8:00 PM)  
 9 - No School - Staff Development Day  
 12 - No School - NATIVE AMERICAN DAY  
 20 - End of 1st Quarter (41)  
 Student Contact: 20; Inservice: 2

**March 2027**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**March**  
 9 - End of 3rd Quarter (44)  
 18-19 - No School - SPRING BREAK  
 26 & 29 - No School - EASTER BREAK  
 Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 0

**November 2026**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**November**  
 11 - Veterans Day Program  
 25-27 - No School - THANKSGIVING BREAK  
 Student Contact: 18; Inservice: 0

**April 2027**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**April**  
 17 - PROM  
 22 - Middle School Spring Concert (7:00 PM)  
 27 - Elementary Spring Concert (7:00 PM)  
 29 - High School Concert/Awards/Art Show (7:00 PM)  
 Student Contact: 20; Inservice: 0

**December 2026**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**December**  
 10 - MS/HS Christmas Concert (7:00 PM)  
 22 - Elementary Christmas Concert (1:00 PM)  
 22 - Early Dismissal  
 22 - End of 2nd Quarter (42/83)  
 Student Contact: 16; Inservice: 0

**May 2027**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**May**  
 15 - Graduation  
 17 - End of 4th Quarter (42/86)  
 18 - Staff Development  
 Student Contact: 9; Inservice: 0.5

Faculty Inservice  
 No School  
 Important Dates  
 End of Quarter/Semester  
 Early Dismissal



## Liam Johnson named to SDMEA Middle School All-State Jazz Band

Liam Johnson has been selected to the 2026 South Dakota Music Educators Association (SDMEA) Middle School All-State Jazz Band, earning first chair alto saxophone honors.

The All-State Jazz Band brings together top middle school musicians from across South Dakota through a competitive audition process. Students rehearse under the direction of guest clinicians and perform a public concert as part of the SDMEA state music conference.

This year's ensemble will rehearse January 30-31 at the Mitchell Performing Arts Center, with the final concert scheduled for 3 p.m. Saturday, January 31, in Mitchell.

The SDMEA Middle School All-State Jazz Band provides students the opportunity to perform advanced jazz literature while developing ensemble skills alongside peers from across the state.



### Houston Texans (12-5) @ Pittsburgh Steelers (10-7)

The Houston Texans punched their ticket to the Divisional Round with a 30-6 win over the Pittsburgh Steelers in Wild Card Weekend action. Houston's defense set the tone, scoring two touchdowns and stifling Pittsburgh's offense all night, while the Texans handed the Steelers another tough postseason defeat. After a back-and-forth first half that saw Houston hold a slim 7-6 lead at the break, the Texans exploded in the fourth quarter with 23 unanswered points to pull away. Houston's ground game also made an impact, led by Woody Marks' 112 rushing yards and a touchdown.

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for details



**Annual Membership Rates**

Student is \$29.82 per month or \$255.60 per year  
Single is \$35.15 per month or \$319.50 per year  
2-Person is \$55.45 per month or \$575.10 per year  
Family is \$67.10 per month or \$702.26 per year

**Month-to-Month Rates**

Student is \$35.15 per month  
Single is \$40.48 per month  
2-Person is \$59.78 per month  
Family is \$72.43 per month

**While many other rates have gone up, ours has not.  
Same rates for several years!**

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**SOUTH DAKOTA  
NEWS WATCH**

Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

## Hot topics aplenty on 2026 legislative session agenda

**Bart Pfankuch**

**South Dakota News Watch**

With a slate of hot-button policy issues on the table and limited funding to work with, state Sen. Jim Mehlhaff of Pierre said it is difficult to predict how the 2026 legislative session will play out in the Capitol this year.

"A legislative session is just like the rest of my life – it usually goes just the way I didn't plan," the Republican Senate majority leader said of the roughly two-month session that convenes Tuesday, Jan. 13. "Maybe we can have respectful discussions and find good compromises, but it could also become a rodeo-and-a-half, too."

All joking aside, South Dakota lawmakers are expected to tackle a roster of topics that could have long-lasting impact on the state and its roughly 925,000 residents.

Mehlhaff said that in addition to the annual battle over how to spend state money, legislators are also sure to dive headlong this session into property tax reform and legislation regarding data centers.

Rep. Mike Derby, a Republican from Rapid City, said other major policy issues on the 2026 agenda include efforts to change the state's electoral process, possible regulation of tax increment financing districts and refining how economic development tools are used in the state.

Hovering over any policy debates, however, will be the difficult task of developing and passing an annual state spending plan following a year when overall tax revenues fell by 1.4%. In response, Republican Gov. Larry Rhoden has proposed no funding increases for schools, state employees and government-funded health programs.

"That's what we're going to spend all session talking about," said Derby, who will lead budget discussions as chairman of the Joint Appropriations Committee. "We have a long list of ideas people want to discuss."

### **Annual budget**

Passing a spending plan for the upcoming fiscal year is the Legislature's only required action each year. After several years of receiving a total of roughly \$1.3 billion in federal funds related to the COVID-19 pandemic, lawmakers are back into what Derby describes as budget "normalization" mode.

In his budget address in December, Rhoden proposed a lean budget but did include \$14 million in discretionary funds lawmakers could possibly use to advance one-time local, regional or statewide projects.

Derby noted that the governor's budget recommendation is subject to review and alteration. For instance, some lawmakers might try to use the discretionary money to give one-time bumps to state employees, schools and Medicaid providers, he said.

Other ideas that could rise up during budget negotiations include funding of airport expansions, finding ways to tap into funds from unclaimed property and using money Rhoden targeted toward boosting state reserves to fund new or ongoing projects instead.

### **Property tax relief**

Lawmakers tried and failed in 2025 to reform the property tax system, which largely funds local schools and county governments.

The push to reform the property tax system comes as many South Dakota homeowners have seen sharp increases in property valuations that have correspondingly caused their tax bills to jump. Most state government operations are funded through the state sales and use taxes.

A summer task force made 19 recommendations on how to reduce the burden on homeowners, and those ideas are still on the table.

Rhoden has offered a plan to allow counties to vote in a local sales tax to offset a reduction in property

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taxes, and gubernatorial candidate U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson has floated a plan to give homeowners a \$400 annual property tax credit.

Mehlhoff told News Watch he will offer a plan this session to increase the statewide sales tax by 2% and use that money to remove the burden of funding schools from local taxpayers.

## Pros and cons of data centers

The decision on whether to allow construction of data centers that use extensive electricity and water to store huge amounts of computer data is perhaps the hottest topic in South Dakota right now.

The issue drew a large crowd and high emotions at Tuesday's Sioux Falls City Council meeting.

"There's going to be a robust debate about whether we should incentive data centers to come to South Dakota or put up barriers to them," Mehlhoff said.

A bill has already been filed to provide tax exemptions for data centers in an attempt to encourage their development in the state.

Mehlhoff, who is a co-sponsor of that bill, said he would rather see data centers built in the United States, including South Dakota, instead of in foreign countries such as China.

## Democrats to push prison reform

The recent large expenditures related to building new prisons for men and women in South Dakota will translate into efforts in the upcoming session to reform elements of the state judicial system and current criminal sentencing laws, said Rep. Erin Healy, a Sioux Falls Democrat who is the House minority leader.

In the past two years, lawmakers have approved construction of a \$650 million men's prison for a site in eastern Sioux Falls and an \$87 million women's prison now being built in Rapid City.

Healy said she expects to see legislation filed to keep low-level offenders out of prison and to provide better prison programs to reduce recidivism.

"I think people are realizing that incarcerating people is a very expensive endeavor and that if we take care of people after arrest or before re-entry (into society) that we can avoid some of those costs," Healy said. "We can help people before they enter the system because it costs us less money but also because it's the right thing to do."

Healy expects to file a bill to provide some criminal immunity from drug charges to anyone who witnesses someone else suffering an overdose.

Amid a tight budget year, Democrats will be looking for new revenue streams in 2026 to counter the funding freezes Gov. Rhoden has proposed for schools, state employees and Medicaid-funded health programs, Healy said.

She also said the rhetoric in the Capitol might be heightened due to the upcoming 2026 gubernatorial election as candidates and their supporters seek to drive home messaging they believe will resonate with voters.

Rhoden, one of those candidates, faces primary challengers from within and outside of the state Legislature.

"There are going to be some interesting developments and potentially we're going to see some new priorities coming out from different camps aligned with gubernatorial candidates," Healy said.

*This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch, an independent, nonprofit organization. Read more stories and donate at [sdnewswatch.org](http://sdnewswatch.org) and sign up for an email to get stories when they're published. Contact content director Bart Pfankuch at [bart.pfankuch@sdnewswatch.org](mailto:bart.pfankuch@sdnewswatch.org).*



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Property rights coalition proposes more limits on eminent domain in South Dakota

**Lawmakers previously banned carbon capture pipelines from using the process**

**BY: MEGHAN O'BRIEN**

PIERRE — The South Dakota coalition that successfully pushed for a state ban on eminent domain for carbon capture pipelines last winter will propose broader limits on eminent domain and more protections for landowners this legislative session.

Sen. Mark Lapka, R-Leola, announced the efforts. One would send a proposed state constitutional amendment to voters in November that would further restrict eminent domain.

"Codified law is too easily amendable over time," Lapka said. "It's the constitutionally protected rights that hold firm forever."

The amendment would "eliminate eminent domain for private gain," Lapka said, while allowing for public works projects such as public highways, water lines and other infrastructure.

Eminent domain is a legal process for gaining access to privately owned land when a deal can't be reached with landowners. It's often used for public infrastructure projects. It became controversial in South Dakota when Iowa-based Summit Carbon Solutions attempted to use it for a five-state pipeline that would capture carbon dioxide from ethanol plants and transport it to an underground sequestration site in North Dakota. The project would benefit from federal tax credits incentivizing the prevention of heat-trapping emissions into the atmosphere.

Landowner opposition to the Summit project in South Dakota culminated in the Legislature's passage of a law last year banning carbon pipelines from using eminent domain. Summit is still pursuing the project and has permits in other states, but has been denied permits twice by South Dakota's Public Utilities Commission.

Lapka announced his new proposals at a property rights rally Monday in the state Capitol rotunda, attended by dozens of South Dakota farmers, ranchers and lawmakers.

Along with the constitutional amendment, Lapka announced what he's calling the "Bossly Bill," named for Jared Bossly, of rural Aberdeen, who is suing Summit Carbon Solutions for allegedly trespassing on his land while it was asserting its right to use eminent domain.

Lapka said the bill will mirror language in a decision by the South Dakota Supreme Court in 2024. The decision said Summit had not proven it was a common carrier. That meant the company could not use eminent domain to access landowners' property.

Lapka's bill would "clean up" the language that exists in state law, he said, and protect against "invasive tactics."

There was a bill introduced last legislative session that would have empowered citizens to sue for allegedly deceptive practices, fraud, harassment, intimidation or misrepresentation during the acquisition of land access agreements by carbon pipeline land agents. The bill narrowly failed in the Senate after passing the House.

The text of the bills announced by Lapka had not been released as of Monday afternoon. The 2026 session of the South Dakota Legislature begins Tuesday and continues through March.

*Meghan O'Brien is the audio reporter for South Dakota Searchlight where she covers the state government and its impact on South Dakotans. She's previously reported in Nebraska with a focus on health care and rural communities across the state.*

## Democrats clash with Noem over new limits on oversight visits to immigration facilities

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — A dozen Democratic members of Congress Monday asked a federal judge for an emergency hearing, arguing the Department of Homeland Security violated a court order when Minnesota lawmakers were denied access to conduct oversight into facilities that hold immigrants.

The oversight visits to Minneapolis ICE facilities followed the deadly shooting of 37-year-old Renee Good by federal immigration officer Jonathan Ross. Federal immigration officers have intensified immigration enforcement in the Twin Cities following the shooting, leading to massive protests there and across the country.

"On Saturday, January 9—three days after U.S. citizen Renee Good was shot dead by an ICE agent in Minneapolis—three members of Congress from the Minnesota delegation, with this Court's order in hand, attempted to conduct an oversight visit of an ICE facility near Minneapolis," according to Monday's filing in the District Court for the District of Columbia.

Democratic U.S. Reps. Ilhan Omar, Angie Craig and Kelly Morrison of Minnesota said they were denied entry to the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building shortly after arriving for their visit on Saturday morning.

Lawmakers said in the filing the Minnesotans were denied access due to a new policy from Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. The new Noem policy, similar to one temporarily blocked by U.S. Judge Jia Cobb last month, requires seven days notice for lawmakers to conduct oversight visits.

"The duplicate notice policy is a transparent attempt by DHS to again subvert Congress's will ... and this Court's stay of DHS's oversight visit policy," according to the new filing by lawyers representing the 12 Democrats.

### DHS cites reconciliation bill

Noem in filings argued the funds for immigration enforcement are not subject to a 2019 appropriations law, referred to as Section 527, that allows for unannounced oversight visits at facilities that hold immigrants.

She said that because the facilities are funded through the "One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act" passed and signed into law last year, the department does not need to comply with Section 527.

The OBBBA, passed through a congressional process called reconciliation, is allowed to adjust federal spending even though it is not an appropriations law.

"This policy is consistent with and effectuates the clear intent of Congress to not subject OBBBA funding to Section 527's limitations," according to the Noem memo.

Congress is currently working on the next funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security. The lawmakers in their filing argue "members of Congress must be able to conduct oversight at ICE detention facilities, without notice, to obtain urgent and essential information for ongoing funding negotiations."

"Members of Congress are actively negotiating over the funding of DHS and ICE, including consideration of the scope of and limitations on DHS's funding for the next fiscal year," according to the filing.

The Democrats who sued include Joe Neguse of Colorado, Adriano Espaillat of New York, Jamie Raskin of Maryland, Robert Garcia of California, J. Luis Correa of California, Jason Crow of Colorado, Veronica Escobar of Texas, Dan Goldman of New York, Jimmy Gomez of California, Raul Ruiz of California, Bennie Thompson of Mississippi and Norma Torres of California.

Neguse, the lead plaintiff in the case, said in a statement that the "law is crystal clear."

"Instead of complying with the law, DHS is abrogating the court's order by re-imposing the same unlawful policy," he said. "Their actions are outrageous and subverting the law, which is why we are going back to court to challenge it — immediately."

*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.*

## South Dakota looks to space for final stretch of high-speed internet access initiative

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR

It's expensive to extend fiber-optic cable to the remaining locations in South Dakota that don't have high-speed internet, so the state is leaning into providers offering service from satellites in space.

The state's ConnectSD initiative, which began in 2019, had helped bring broadband access to 91% of South Dakota by 2024. A state report noted the remaining 9% would be costly, given the price of bringing miles of fiber to remote areas with few customers.

The broadband initiative has cost \$300 million so far, with funding from federal, state and private sources. Gov. Larry Rhoden announced recently that the state will soon receive another \$72 million in federal funding for the effort.

A little more than a third of the new funding will go toward "Low Earth Orbit Satellite" technologies, like SpaceX's Starlink, to reach 2,705 of the 7,060 locations in the state targeted for the funds. Most of the other targeted connections will come by way of fiber-optic cable, and 177 will come via signals beamed from cellular towers.

The satellite funding will not be used to pay for individual subscriptions, said a spokesperson for the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

"Instead, the award reserves network capacity with the provider so service is available in those locations," said Bri Vande Pol. "The provider is reimbursed on a per-location basis only when a customer subscribes to the service."

Vande Pol said the federal funding requires providers to make high-speed internet available to each eligible location for at least 10 years. She said the provider receives 25% of the award upon confirming service is available, and the remaining payments for the reserved network capacity are made quarterly over the 10-year period.

The new federal money comes from the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment program, authorized by the 2021 Infrastructure and Jobs Act, passed during the Biden administration.

"Under the Trump administration's changes to that program, states are encouraged to use a technology-neutral approach and connect locations in the most efficient way possible," Vande Pol said.

"In some of South Dakota's most remote areas, Low Earth Orbit satellite service is a strong, reliable solution that meets performance standards while allowing us to maximize the reach of available BEAD funding," she added.

As of June 2025, South Dakota's ConnectSD program had used \$84.4 million in state general funds, \$88.5 million in federal funds and \$129.6 million in private investment from broadband providers to connect about 31,000 locations. The state and federal money has mostly been spent on grants to service providers, to help them expand their networks.

Rhoden's latest proposed budget asks lawmakers to authorize \$87 million in federal funding to be spent on broadband in the coming fiscal year.

Rhoden spokeswoman Josie Harms said the \$72 million figure announced in a press release represents "the amount that will actually be awarded to the subrecipients."

"The \$87 million amount is the total spending authority, which includes the project costs as well as administrative costs and marketing costs," she wrote in an email to South Dakota Searchlight.

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

## Arizona US Sen. Mark Kelly sues Hegseth over penalties for 'illegal orders' video

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — Arizona Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly sued Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and the department on Monday for trying to demote Kelly's retirement rank and pay after he appeared in a video where he and other lawmakers told service members they didn't need to follow illegal orders.

Kelly's suit, filed in the federal district court for the District of Columbia, says attempts by the Trump administration to punish him violate the First Amendment, the separation of powers, due process protections and the Speech and Debate clause of the Constitution.

"Pete Hegseth is coming after what I earned through my twenty-five years of military service, in violation of my rights as an American, as a retired veteran, and as a United States Senator whose job is to hold him—and this or any administration—accountable," Kelly wrote in a statement. "His unconstitutional crusade against me sends a chilling message to every retired member of the military: if you speak out and say something that the President or Secretary of Defense doesn't like, you will be censured, threatened with demotion, or even prosecuted."

Kelly appeared in the video alongside Michigan Sen. Elissa Slotkin, Colorado Rep. Jason Crow, Pennsylvania Reps. Chris Deluzio and Chrissy Houlahan and New Hampshire Rep. Maggie Goodlander — all of whom are former members of the military or intelligence agencies, though none of the others are still subject to the military's legal system.

President Donald Trump was irate after seeing the video, posting on social media that he believed it represented "SEDITIONOUS BEHAVIOR, punishable by DEATH!"

### DOD investigation

The Defense Department announced in late November that it was looking into "serious allegations of misconduct" against Kelly, a retired Navy captain, for participating in the video.

Kelly said during a press conference on Capitol Hill in December the Defense Department investigation into him, along with one by the FBI into all of the lawmakers in the video, marked "a dangerous moment for the United States of America when the president and his loyalists use every lever of power to silence United States senators for speaking up."

Hegseth, who originally threatened to court-martial Kelly, said in early January the Defense Department would instead downgrade his retirement rank and pay.

"Captain Kelly has been provided notice of the basis for this action and has thirty days to submit a response," Hegseth wrote in a social media post. "The retirement grade determination process directed by Secretary Hegseth will be completed within forty five days."

Kelly said at the time he would challenge Hegseth's course of action.

### First Amendment cited

The 46-page lawsuit marks the next step in the months-long saga, with Kelly asking a federal judge to declare the effort to demote him "unlawful and unconstitutional."

"The First Amendment forbids the government and its officials from punishing disfavored expression or retaliating against protected speech," the lawsuit states. "That prohibition applies with particular force to legislators speaking on matters of public policy. As the Supreme Court held 60 years ago, the Constitution 'requires that legislators be given the widest latitude to express their views on issues of policy,' and the government may not recharacterize protected speech as supposed incitement in order to punish it."

The lawsuit alleges that the Pentagon's actions against Kelly "also trample on protections the Constitution singles out as essential to legislative independence."

"It appears that never in our nation's history has the Executive Branch imposed military sanctions on a Member of Congress for engaging in disfavored political speech," the lawsuit states. "Allowing that unprecedented step here would invert the constitutional structure by subordinating the Legislative Branch

to executive discipline and chilling congressional oversight of the armed forces.”

Kelly’s legal team asked the judge to grant “emergency relief” in their favor by Friday, Jan. 16.

The case was assigned to Senior Judge Richard J. Leon, who was nominated to the bench by President George W. Bush.

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

## US Senate Republicans defend independence of the Fed after DOJ launches Powell probe

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s feud with Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell has escalated into a Department of Justice investigation, raising alarm bells among some Republicans in the Senate, where Trump will need broad backing from GOP lawmakers to get his choice for the next Fed chairman approved after Powell’s term ends in May.

Retiring North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, who sits on the narrowly divided Banking Committee that will hold hearings on the next nominee, wrote in a statement he won’t approve anyone to fill Powell’s seat if Trump or administration officials try to further erode its independence.

“If there were any remaining doubt whether advisers within the Trump Administration are actively pushing to end the independence of the Federal Reserve, there should now be none,” Tillis wrote. “It is now the independence and credibility of the Department of Justice that are in question.”

Tillis added he plans to “oppose the confirmation of any nominee for the Fed—including the upcoming Fed Chair vacancy—until this legal matter is fully resolved.”

### Powell fights back in a video

Trump has criticized Powell repeatedly since retaking the Oval Office in January, pressing him to reduce interest rates faster and signaling he wanted to fire him.

Powell said in a video released this weekend that Justice Department officials on Friday “served the Federal Reserve with grand jury subpoenas, threatening a criminal indictment related to my testimony before the Senate Banking Committee last June.”

Powell alleged the DOJ investigation is not purely about oversight of the multi-year renovation project at the Fed’s offices in Washington, D.C., but “a consequence of the Federal Reserve setting interest rates based on our best assessment of what will serve the public, rather than following the preferences of the president.”

“This is about whether the Fed will be able to continue to set interest rates based on evidence and economic conditions—or whether instead monetary policy will be directed by political pressure or intimidation,” Powell said.

Trump first nominated Powell to be chairman of the Federal Reserve in November 2017 for a four-year term that began in February 2018, writing in a statement that Powell had “demonstrated steady leadership, sound judgment, and policy expertise.”

“Mr. Powell will bring to the Federal Reserve a unique background of Government service and business experience,” Trump wrote. “He previously served as Under Secretary at the Department of Treasury in the administration of President George H.W. Bush. Mr. Powell also has nearly three decades of business experience.”

The Senate voted 84-13 in January 2018 to confirm Powell to the role.

President Joe Biden re-nominated Powell in November 2021 for another four-year term that began in May 2022 after the Senate voted 80-19 to confirm him for a second time.

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## Tillis leverage on committee

Trump hasn't said publicly whom he will nominate to succeed Powell as Fed chairman, but whoever he picks will need to move past the Senate Banking Committee in order to receive a confirmation vote on the floor and actually take on the role.

The Banking Committee holds 13 Republicans and 11 Democrats, giving Tillis considerable leverage to block any Trump nominee from advancing if all of the Democrats on the panel also vote against reporting that person to the floor.

Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren, ranking member on the committee, wrote in a statement that "Trump is abusing the authorities of the Department of Justice like a wannabe dictator so the Fed serves his interests, along with his billionaire friends."

"As Donald Trump prepares to nominate a new Fed Chair, he wants to push Jerome Powell off the Fed Board for good and install another sock puppet to complete his corrupt takeover of America's central bank," Warren wrote. "This Committee and the Senate should not move forward with any Trump nominee for the Fed, including Fed Chair."

Chairman Tim Scott, R-S.C., had not released any public statements about the Department of Justice investigation into Powell as of Monday morning.

## Murkowski sees 'attempt at coercion'

Alaska Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who isn't on the committee, released a written statement after speaking with Powell on Monday morning, saying "it's clear the administration's investigation is nothing more than an attempt at coercion."

"If the Department of Justice believes an investigation into Chair Powell is warranted based on project cost overruns—which are not unusual—then Congress needs to investigate the Department of Justice," Murkowski wrote. "The stakes are too high to look the other way: if the Federal Reserve loses its independence, the stability of our markets and the broader economy will suffer. My colleague, Senator Tillis, is right in blocking any Federal Reserve nominees until this is resolved."

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., wrote in a statement the Justice Department's actions represent "the kind of bullying that we've all come to expect from Donald Trump and his cronies."

"Anyone who is independent and doesn't just fall in line behind Trump gets investigated," Schumer wrote. "Jay Powell and the Fed aren't the reason Trump's economy and his poll numbers are in the toilet. If he's looking for the person who caused that he should look in the mirror."

Former Federal Reserve chairmen, Treasury secretaries and White House economic advisers released a written statement that the Fed's "independence and the public's perception of that independence are critical for economic performance, including achieving the goals Congress has set for the Federal Reserve of stable prices, maximum employment, and moderate long-term interest rates."

"The reported criminal inquiry into Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell is an unprecedented attempt to use prosecutorial attacks to undermine that independence," they wrote. "This is how monetary policy is made in emerging markets with weak institutions, with highly negative consequences for inflation and the functioning of their economies more broadly. It has no place in the United States whose greatest strength is the rule of law, which is at the foundation of our economic success."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters in the afternoon she didn't know if Trump had seen Powell's video but defended the president's right to denounce the Fed's actions under his leadership.

"Look, the president has every right to criticize the Fed chair. He has a First Amendment right, just like all of you do," Leavitt said. "And one thing for sure, the president has made it quite clear that Jerome Powell is bad at his job. As for whether or not Jerome Powell is a criminal, that's an answer the Department of Justice is going to have to find out and it looks like they intend to find that out."

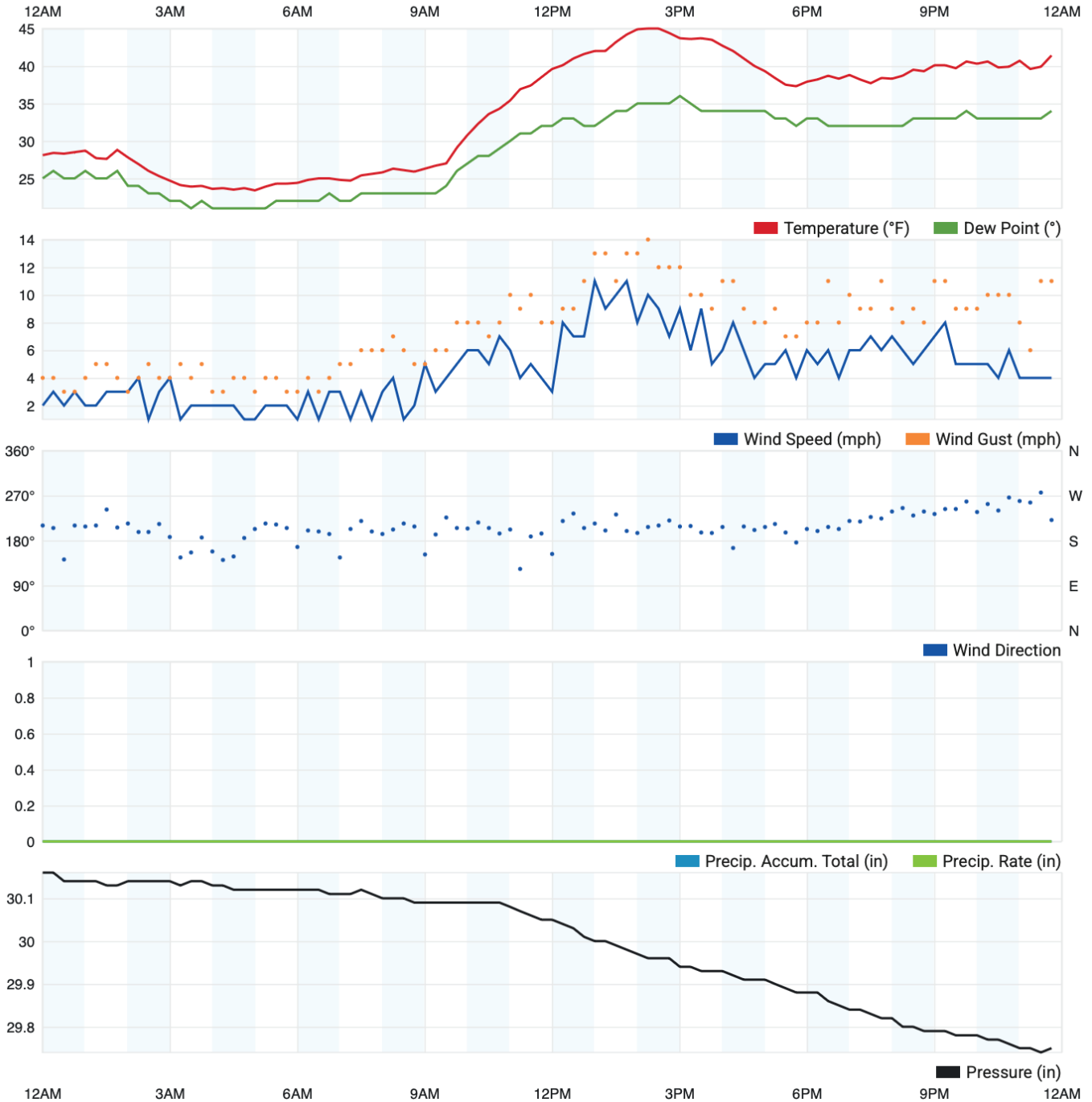
*Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

January 12, 2026



# Broton Daily Independent

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Today



High: 44 °F

Partly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 14 °F

Slight Chance  
Sprinkles/Flurries  
then Partly  
Cloudy

Wednesday



High: 24 °F

Mostly Sunny

Wednesday  
Night



Low: 18 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Thursday



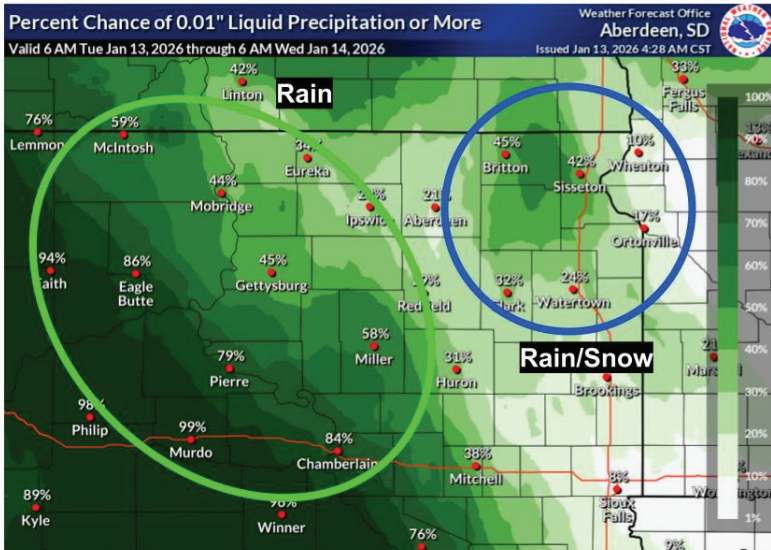
High: 41 °F

Partly Sunny  
then Slight  
Chance Rain  
and Breezy



## Precipitation and Wind Today

January 13, 2026  
5:17 AM CST



### Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)

	1/13 Tue								1/14 Wed			Maximum
	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am		
Aberdeen	40	30	31	35	35	29	26	26	26	24	40	
Britton	28	29	31	35	33	30	28	28	28	24	35	
Chamberlain	28	26	30	32	32	28	26	24	23	20	32	
Clark	20	26	31	37	36	31	31	30	30	28	37	
Eagle Butte	25	33	36	40	41	37	35	32	30	24	41	
Eureka	25	32	36	40	38	32	30	28	24	20	40	
Gettysburg	26	30	33	39	39	32	31	29	28	24	39	
McIntosh	25	35	38	45	44	38	33	30	26	21	45	
Milbank	26	30	32	36	35	30	29	30	30	26	36	
Miller	31	33	36	40	38	31	29	28	28	25	40	
Mobridge	25	30	32	37	35	31	30	28	24	21	37	
Murdo	21	30	32	38	39	36	32	30	30	26	39	
Pierre	17	24	28	35	36	31	28	24	23	20	36	
Redfield	25	30	32	38	37	30	28	28	28	26	38	
Sisseton	35	32	33	37	35	31	31	30	30	26	37	
Watertown	31	30	33	38	37	32	30	30	30	28	38	
Webster	24	29	31	36	35	31	30	29	29	26	36	
Wheaton	25	28	31	33	31	31	31	31	31	28	33	

- Light Rain is expected over central and north central SD this morning into afternoon.
- Rain/snow over portions of northeastern SD into western MN tonight. Little to no accumulation expected.
- Wind gusts of 35 to 45 mph are expected this afternoon, creating elevated fire weather concerns in central and north central SD.

Light rain is expected over central and north central South Dakota this morning and afternoon, and a rain/snow mix is expected over northeastern South Dakota and western Minnesota tonight. In both cases, little to no accumulation is expected. Wind gusts of 35 to 45 miles per hour are also expected this afternoon, which will create elevated fire weather concerns over central and north central South Dakota this afternoon.

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## Snowfall Thursday into Friday

January 13, 2026  
5:17 AM CST

Minor snowfall accumulations are possible over northeastern SD and western MN Thursday and Friday.

### Key Messages

- Light snow expected Thursday through Friday.
  - Highest chances are east of the James River valley.
  - **The probability for an inch of snow is highest over the Sisseton Hills (About 50%).**
- Gusty winds combining with falling snow may lead to **areas of drifting/blowing snow that could significantly reduce visibility at times.**
  - There is low confidence on exact timing and coverage of where visibility reductions will take place.

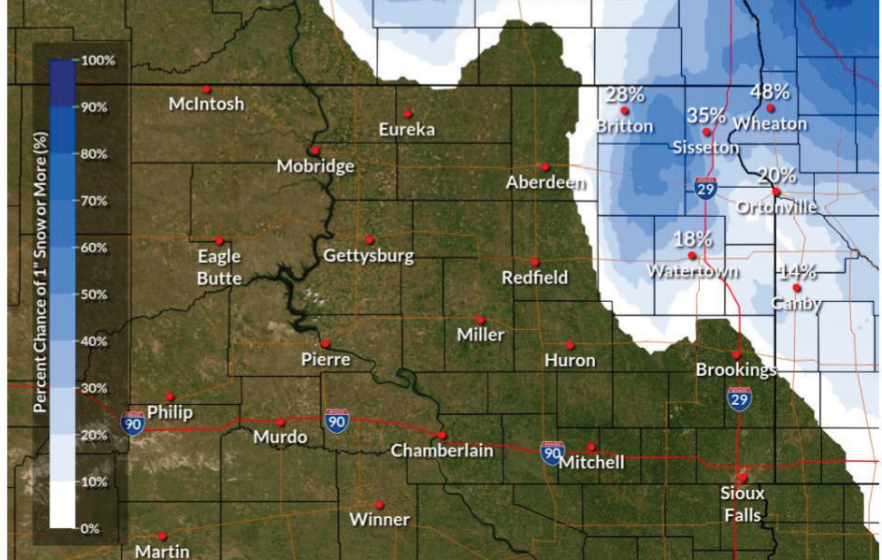
### Percent Chance of 1" Snow or More

Valid Thu 6:00AM through Fri 6:00PM CST

Weather Forecast Office

Aberdeen, SD

Issued Jan 13, 2026 3:01 AM CST



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Light snow is expected beginning Thursday evening and continuing through Friday. Accumulations are generally expected to be minor, but some areas such as the Sisseton Hills could see an inch in accumulation. Where snow is falling, gusty winds and snow may combine to significantly reduce visibility at times. However, there is low confidence on the exact timing and coverage of any visibility reductions.



### Strong Wind Gusts

Thursday, Jan 15th - Friday, Jan 16th

	Thu 1/15				Fri 1/16				Sat 1/17
	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am
Aberdeen	13	21	31	39	36	43	46	36	26
Miller	13	20	37	40	40	44	50	38	28
Mobridge	15	18	40	40	43	46	50	36	28
Murdo	13	20	41	45	45	48	56	40	30
Ortonville	8	16	25	34	32	35	39	35	26
Pierre	10	12	36	40	41	45	49	37	27
Sisseton	9	18	31	39	37	38	44	37	27
Watertown	9	19	29	38	36	39	41	36	27

10m Wind Gust (mph)

#### Information:

The table displays the weather element values based on model predictions from the National Blend of Models.

### Additional Details

#### Incoming Wind:

- Winds increase Thursday, remaining strong overnight and through the day Friday.
- Gusts between 40 and 60 miles per hour will be possible

#### Potential Impacts:

- When combined with falling snow, strong winds will significantly reduce visibilities.
- Travel may become hazardous, especially for high profile vehicles.

Valid: Thu 12 am CST - Sat 12 am CST

Issued: Tue, Jan 13, 2026, 4 am CST



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 45 °F at 2:12 PM

Low Temp: 23 °F at 4:26 AM

Wind: 15 mph at 2:07 PM

Precip: : 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 56 in 1987

Record Low: -40 in 1912

Average High: 23

Average Low: 2

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.26

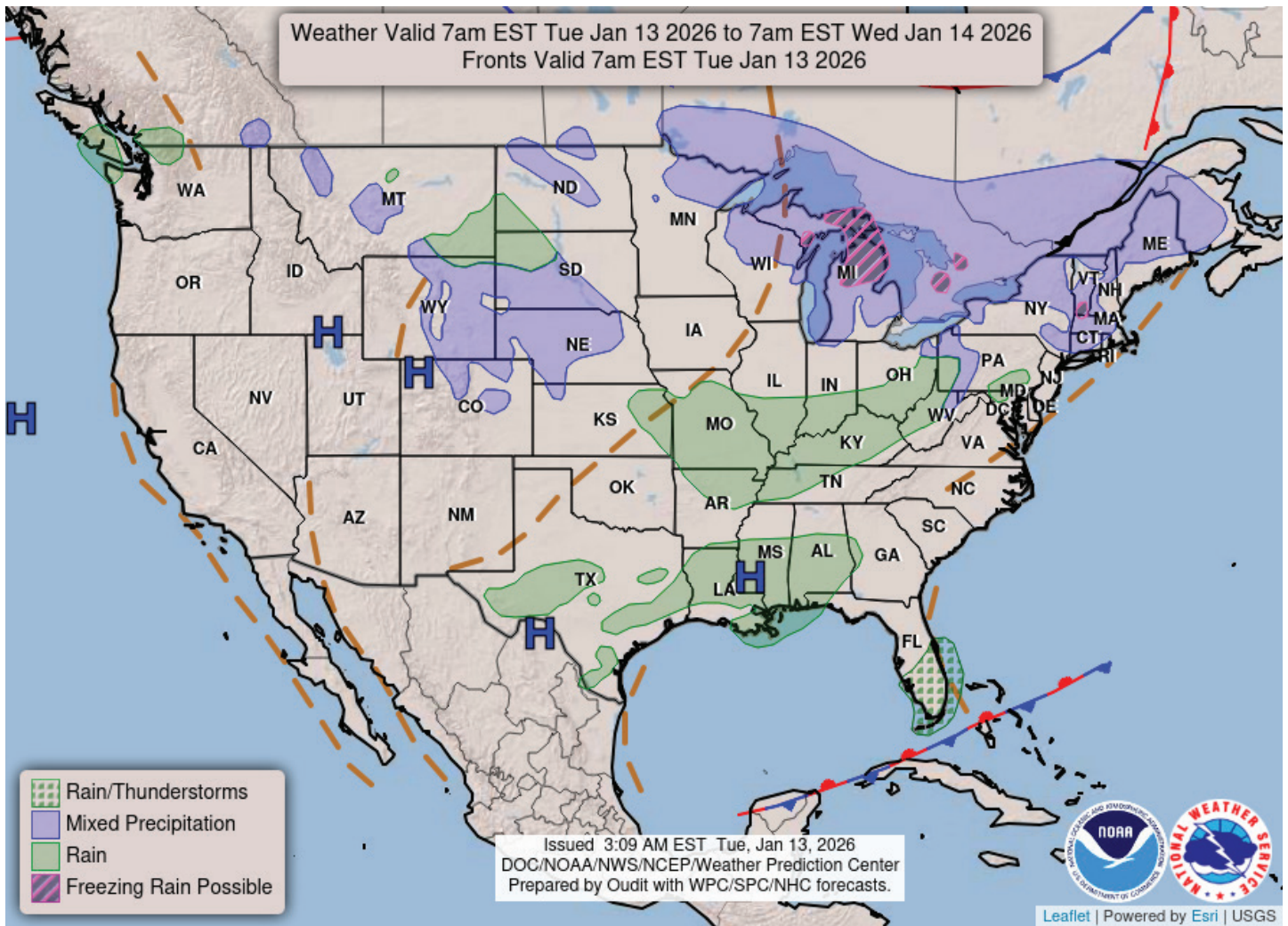
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.26

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:12 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:08 am



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## Today in Weather History

January 13, 1913: The temperature at Rapid City, South Dakota, rose sixty-four degrees in just fourteen hours.

January 13, 1916: An extreme cold affected central and northeast South Dakota and west-central Minnesota on January 13th, 1916. Record low temperatures were set at Kennebec, Timber Lake, Wheaton, and Watertown. Timber Lake recorded a low temperature of 37 degrees below zero. Wheaton fell to 38 degrees below zero. Kennebec recorded a low of 39 degrees below zero, with 40 degrees below zero recorded at Watertown on this day in 1916. Aberdeen and Mobridge recorded 38 degrees below zero and 36 degrees below zero, respectively.

January 13, 2009: After a clipper system dropped from 1 to 4 inches of snow on the 13th, Arctic air and blustery north winds pushed into the area. The coldest air and the lowest wind chills of the season spread across much of central and northeast South Dakota. Wind chills fell to 35 to 50 degrees below zero late in the evening of the 13th and remained through the 14th and into the mid-morning hours of the 15th. Across northeast South Dakota and west-central Minnesota, wind chills were as low as 60 degrees below zero by the morning of the 15th. Many vehicles did not start because of the extreme cold, and several schools had delayed starts. The Arctic high-pressure area settled in on the morning of the 15th, bringing the region's coldest temperatures in many years. The combination of a fresh and deep snowpack, clear skies, and light winds allowed temperatures to fall to record levels at many locations on the 15th. Daytime highs remained well below zero across the area. This was one of the coldest days that most areas experienced since the early 1970s. The records were broken by 1 to as much as 7 degrees. Some of the record lows included -30 degrees at Kennebec; -31 degrees at Sisseton; -32 degrees at Milbank; -33 degrees at Mobridge; -35 degrees at Andover and near Summit; -38 degrees at Eureka; -39 degrees 8 miles north of Columbia and Castlewood; -42 degrees at Aberdeen; and -47 degrees at Pollock. Some near-record low temperatures included -24 degrees at Pierre, -29 degrees at Redfield and Victor; -32 degrees at Roscoe; and -34 degrees at Watertown. In Aberdeen, the low temperature of -42 degrees is the third coldest temperature ever recorded.

1862: Known as the Great Flood of 1862, a series of storms from December 1861 to January 1862 produced the largest flood in the recorded history of Oregon, Nevada, and California. Estimated property damage in California alone was \$10 million in 1862 dollars. More than 200,000 head of cattle lost their lives. The State of California went bankrupt, and the economy evolved from ranching to farm-based. The same areas are expected to be flooded again if another ARkStorm (USGS name) impacts California, which could cause over \$750 billion (2011 USD), making it more disastrous than California's long-overdue major earthquake. California is currently overdue for a Megastorm, and such an event would have severe impacts on the entire U.S. economy.

1886 — A great blizzard struck the state of Kansas without warning. The storm claimed 50 to 100 lives, and eighty percent of the cattle in the state. (David Ludlum)

1888 — The mercury plunged to 65 degrees below zero at Fort Keough, located near Miles City MT. The reading stood as a record for the continental U.S. for sixty-six years. (David Ludlum)

1912 — The temperature at Oakland, MD, plunged to 40 degrees below zero to establish a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1950: January 1950 was one of the worst winter months on record for Seattle, Washington, and surrounding areas. By the end of the month, Seattle measured 57.2 inches of snow, the most snowfall in any month since records began in 1894. The normal January snowfall is 1.4 inches. On this day, a crippling blizzard produced 40 to 50 mph winds and an astounding 20 inches.

1989 — Friday the 13th was bad luck primarily for the south central U.S. as an upper level weather disturbance spread a mixture of snow and sleet and freezing rain across Texas and Oklahoma. Snowfall totals in central Oklahoma ranged up to 8.5 inches at Norman. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

## When God Doesn't Heal

**In times of suffering, loss, and hurt, remember that God will work all things for good in His children's lives.**

Proverbs 3:3-6: 3 Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

4 So you will find favor and good repute In the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

If God is all-powerful, why don't more people experience miraculous healings? There are several reasons for this. Sometimes we do not ask Him. Other times, we might ask but with wrong motives or a lack of faith. And then there is the reason that we do not like to hear: God may choose not to heal.

Consider Paul, who asked the Lord three times to remove his "thorn" (2 Corinthians 12:7-8). Yet it remained. We can learn from the apostle's response—he did not question God's authority, nor did he complain. Instead, recognizing that divine strength would show through his weakness, Paul trusted God.

We, too, can trust that our Father will work all things for good in His children's lives (Romans 8:28). In fact, character growth usually occurs in times of suffering, loss, or hurt. While adversity is uncomfortable, we can feel hope and even joy in what God is accomplishing through our painful experiences.

Ultimately, our Father brings glory to Himself and good to His children. There are instances when this involves miraculous healing, but He often refines us by allowing the hardship. As with silver and gold, our hearts are refined and purified in the fiery furnace of struggles. But thankfully, we can trust in God's plan and rest in His love.

*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*

# Groton Daily Independent

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## The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.09.26

12 30 36 42 47 16

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$215,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 55 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.12.26

9 20 25 30 51 10

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$12,740,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 10 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.12.26

21 23 24 28 39 1

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 25 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.10.26

1 8 23 24 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$188,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 25 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.12.26

11 23 24 54 56 5

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 54 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

01.12.26

5 27 45 56 59 4

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$156,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 54 Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL**

Avon 50, Gregory 39  
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 80, McLaughlin 37  
De Smet 61, Iroquois-Lake Preston 24  
Dell Rapids St Mary's 55, Elkton-Lake Benton 48  
Groton 55, Northwestern 20  
Hankinson, N.D. 46, Langford 38  
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 42, Garretson 18  
Tri-Valley 48, Baltic 42  
Waubay/Summit 62, Webster 40

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

### **BOYS PREP BASKETBALL**

Emery 61, Colman-Egan 30  
Garretson 59, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 44  
Herreid-Selby 62, South Border, N.D. 50  
Mobridge-Pollock 62, Gettysburg 51  
Strasburg, N.D. 44, Leola-Frederick High School 34

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

## **'Dances with Wolves' actor Nathan Chasing Horse standing trial in Las Vegas**

By JESSICA HILL Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The jury trial for Nathan Chasing Horse, the former "Dances with Wolves" actor accused of sexually abusing Indigenous women and girls, is expected to begin Tuesday in Las Vegas.

Prosecutors allege he used his reputation as a spiritual leader and healer to take advantage of his victims over two decades. Chasing Horse has pleaded not guilty to 21 charges, including sexual assault, sexual assault with a minor, first degree kidnapping of a minor and the use of a minor in producing pornography.

The case sent shock waves across Indian Country when he was arrested and indicted in early 2023. There were many setbacks and delays, but the case finally proceeded to trial after prosecutors added allegations that he filmed himself having sex with a child.

Best known for portraying the character Smiles A Lot in the 1990 movie "Dances with Wolves," Chasing Horse was born on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, which is home to the Sicangu Sioux, one of the seven tribes of the Lakota nation.

After starring in the Oscar-winning film, according to prosecutors, Chasing Horse proclaimed himself to be a Lakota medicine man while traveling around North America to perform healing ceremonies.

Prosecutors claim Chasing Horse led a cult called The Circle, and his followers believed he could speak with spirits. His victims went to him for medical help, according to a court transcript from a grand jury hearing.

One victim was 14 years old when she approached him hoping he would heal her mother, who was diagnosed with cancer. Chasing Horse previously had treated the victim's breathing issues and her mother's spider bite, according to a court transcript. He allegedly told her the spirits wanted her to give up her virginity in exchange for her mother's health. He allegedly had sex with her and said her mother would die if she told anyone, according to the victim's testimony to the grand jury.

The original indictment was dismissed in 2024 after the Nevada Supreme Court ruled prosecutors abused the grand jury process when they provided a definition of grooming as evidence without any expert testimony.

The high court, specifying that the dismissal had nothing to do with his innocence or guilt, left open the possibility of charges being refiled. In October 2024, the charges were refiled with new allegations that he recorded himself having sex with one of his accusers when she was younger than 14.

Prosecutors have said the recordings, made in 2010 or 2011, were found on cellphones in a locked safe inside the North Las Vegas home that Chasing Horse is said to have shared with five wives, including the girl in the videos.

Jury selection will begin Tuesday. The trial is expected to last four weeks, and prosecutors plan to call 18 witnesses. A week before the trial, Chasing Horse attempted to fire his private defense attorney, saying his lawyer hadn't come to visit him. Judge Jessica Peterson removed Chasing Horse from the courtroom when he tried to interrupt her, and she denied his request.

This case is a reminder that violence also occurs within Native communities and is not just something committed by outsiders, said Crystal Lee, CEO and founder of the organization United Natives, which offers services to victims of sexual abuse.

Chasing Horse's trial requires hard conversations about Native perpetrators, she said.

"How do we hold them accountable?" she said. "How do we start these tough conversations?"

## People inside Iran describe heavy security and scattered damage in first calls to outside world

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iranians made phone calls abroad for the first time in days Tuesday after authorities severed communications during a crackdown on nationwide protests that activists say killed at least 646 people, giving a glimpse of life after being cut off from the outside world.

Witnesses described a heavy security presence in central Tehran, burned-out government buildings, smashed ATMs and few passersby. Meanwhile, people remain concerned about what comes next, including the possibility of strikes after U.S. President Donald Trump said he could possibly use the military to defend peaceful protesters. Trump also has said Iran wants to negotiate with Washington.

"My customers talk about Trump's reaction while wondering if he plans a military strike against the Islamic Republic," said shopkeeper Mahmoud, who gave only his first name out of concerns for his safety. "I don't expect Trump or any other foreign country cares about the interests of Iranians."

Reza, a taxi driver who also gave just his first name, said protests remain on many people's minds. "People — particularly young ones — are hopeless but they talk about continuing the protests," he said.

Iranians reach out, but world can't reach in

Several people in Tehran were able to call The Associated Press on Tuesday morning and speak to a journalist there. The AP bureau in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, was unable to call those numbers back. The witnesses said text messaging still was down and that internet users in Iran could connect to government-approved websites locally but nothing abroad.

Anti-riot police officers, wearing helmets and body armor, carried batons, shields, shotguns and tear gas launchers, according to the witnesses. Police stood watch at major intersections. Nearby, the witnesses saw members of the Revolutionary Guard's all-volunteer Basij force, who similarly carried firearms and batons. Security officials in plainclothes were visible in public spaces as well.

Several banks and government offices were burned during the unrest, they said. Banks struggled to complete transactions without the internet, the witnesses added.

However, shops were open, though there was little foot traffic in the capital. Tehran's Grand Bazaar, where the demonstrations began Dec. 28, was to open Tuesday. However, a witness described speaking to multiple shopkeepers who said the security forces ordered them to reopen no matter what. Iranian state media had not acknowledged that order.

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The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

It also appeared that security service personnel were searching for Starlink terminals as people in northern Tehran reported authorities raiding apartment buildings with satellite dishes. While satellite television dishes are illegal, many in the capital have them in their homes and officials broadly had given up on enforcing the law in recent years.

On the streets, people also could be seen challenging plainclothes security officials, who were stopping passersby at random.

State television also read a statement about mortuary and morgue services being free — a signal some likely charged high fees for the release of bodies amid the crackdown.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a statement carried by state TV, praised the tens of thousands who took part in pro-government demonstrations nationwide on Monday.

"This was a warning to American politicians to stop their deceit and not rely on traitorous mercenaries," he said. "The Iranian nation is strong and powerful and aware of the enemy."

State TV on Monday aired chants from the crowd, which appeared in the tens of thousands, of "Death to America!" and "Death to Israel!" Others cried out, "Death to the enemies of God!" Iran's attorney general has warned that anyone taking part in protests will be considered an "enemy of God," a death-penalty charge.

Iran says it communicated with Washington

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, speaking to the Qatar-funded satellite news network Al Jazeera in an interview aired Monday night, said he continued to communicate with U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff.

The communication "continued before and after the protests and are still ongoing," Araghchi said. However, "Washington's proposed ideas and threats against our country are incompatible."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Iran's public rhetoric diverges from the private messaging the administration has received from Tehran in recent days.

"I think the president has an interest in exploring those messages," Leavitt said. "However, with that said, the president has shown he's unafraid to use military options if and when he deems necessary, and nobody knows that better than Iran."

Trump imposes tariffs on Iran trading partners

Trump announced Monday that countries doing business with Iran will face 25% tariffs from the United States. Trump announced the tariffs in a social media posting, saying they would be "effective immediately."

It was action against Iran for the protest crackdown from Trump, who believes exacting tariffs can be a useful tool in prodding friends and foes on the global stage to bend to his will.

Brazil, China, Russia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates are among economies that do business with Tehran.

Trump said Sunday that his administration was in talks to set up a meeting with Tehran, but cautioned that he may have to act first as reports of the death toll in Iran mount and the government continues to arrest protesters.

"I think they're tired of being beat up by the United States," Trump said. "Iran wants to negotiate."

Iran, through the country's parliamentary speaker, warned Sunday that the U.S. military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if Washington uses force to protect demonstrators.

More than 10,700 people also have been detained over the two weeks of protests, said the U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency, which has been accurate in previous unrest in recent years and gave the latest death toll early Tuesday. It relies on supporters in Iran cross-checking information. It said 512 of the dead were protesters and 134 were security force members.

With the internet down in Iran, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. The Associated Press has been unable to independently assess the toll. Iran's government hasn't offered overall casualty figures.

## Consumer prices likely stayed elevated in December as data recovers from shutdown

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation likely remained elevated last month as the cost of electricity, groceries, and clothing may have jumped and continued to pressure consumers' wallets.

The Labor Department is expected to report that consumer prices rose 2.6% in December compared with a year earlier, according to economists' estimates compiled by data provider FactSet. The yearly rate would be down from 2.7% in November. Monthly prices, however, are expected to rise 0.3% in December, faster than is consistent with the Federal Reserve's 2% inflation goal.

The figures are harder to predict this month, however, because the six-week government shutdown last fall suspended the collection of price data used to compile the inflation rate. Some economists expect the December figures will show a bigger jump in inflation as the data collection process gets back to normal.

Core prices, which exclude the volatile food and energy categories, are also expected to rise 0.3% in December from the previous month, and 2.7% from a year earlier. The yearly core figure would be an increase from 2.6% in November.

In November, annual inflation fell from 3% in September to 2.7%, in part because of quirks in November's data. (The government never calculated a yearly figure for October). Most prices were collected in the second half of November, after the government reopened, when holiday discounts kicked in, which may have biased November inflation lower.

And since rental prices weren't fully collected in October, the agency that prepares the inflation reports used placeholder estimates that may have biased prices lower, economists said.

Inflation has come down significantly from the four-decade peak of 9.1% that it reached in June 2022, but it has been stubbornly close to 3% since late 2023. The cost of necessities such as groceries is about 25% higher than it was before the pandemic, and other necessities such as rent and clothing have also gotten more expensive, fueling dissatisfaction with the economy that both President Donald Trump and former President Joe Biden have sought to address, though with limited success.

The Federal Reserve has struggled to balance its goal of fighting inflation by keeping borrowing costs high, while also supporting hiring by cutting interest rates when unemployment worsens. As long as inflation remains above its target of 2%, the Fed will likely be reluctant to cut rates much more.

The Fed reduced its key rate by a quarter-point in December, but Chair Jerome Powell, at a press conference explaining its decision, said the Fed would probably hold off on further cuts to see how the economy evolves.

The 19 members of the Fed's interest-rate setting committee have been sharply divided for months over whether to cut its rate further, or keep it at its current level of about 3.6% to combat inflation.

Trump, meanwhile, has harshly criticized the Fed for not cutting its key short-term rate more sharply, a move he has said would reduce mortgage rates and the government's borrowing costs for its huge debt pile. Yet the Fed doesn't directly control mortgage rates, which are set by financial markets.

In a move that cast a shadow over the ability of the Fed to fight inflation in the future, the Department of Justice served the central bank last Friday with subpoenas related to Powell's congressional testimony in June about a \$2.5 billion renovation of two Fed office buildings. Trump administration officials have suggested that Powell either lied about changes to the building or altered plans in ways that are inconsistent with those approved by planning commissions.

In a blunt response, Powell said Sunday those claims were "pretexts" for an effort by the White House to assert more control over the Fed.

"The threat of criminal charges is a consequence of the Federal Reserve setting interest rates based on our best assessment of what will serve the public, rather than following the preferences of the President," Powell said. "This is about whether the Fed will be able to continue to set interest rates based on evidence and economic conditions—or whether instead monetary policy will be directed by political pressure or intimidation."

## Tensions flare in Minnesota as protesters and federal agents repeatedly square off

By REBECCA SANTANA, MARK VANCLEAVE and STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Days of demonstrations against immigration agents left Minnesota tense on Tuesday, a day after federal authorities used tear gas to break up crowds of whistle-blowing activists and state and local leaders sued to fight the enforcement surge that led to the fatal shooting of a Minneapolis woman.

Confrontations between federal agents and protesters stretched throughout the day and across multiple cities on Monday. Agents fired tear gas in Minneapolis as a crowd gathered around immigration officers questioning a man, while to the northwest in St. Cloud hundreds of people protested outside a strip of Somali-run businesses after ICE officers arrived.

Later that night confrontations erupted between protesters and officers guarding the federal building being used as a base for the Twin Cities crackdown.

With the Department of Homeland Security pledging to send more than 2,000 immigration officers into Minnesota in what Immigration and Customs Enforcement has called its largest enforcement operation ever, the state, joined by Minneapolis and St. Paul, sued the Trump administration Monday to try to halt or limit the surge.

The suit filed says the Department of Homeland Security is violating the First Amendment and other constitutional protections. It accuses the Republican Trump administration of violating free speech rights by focusing on a progressive state that favors Democrats and welcomes immigrants.

"This is, in essence, a federal invasion of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, and it must stop," state Attorney General Keith Ellison said at a news conference.

Homeland Security says it has made more than 2,000 arrests in the state since December.

The days after Renee Good was shot in the head by an ICE officer while behind the wheel of her SUV have seen dozens of protests or vigils across the U.S. to honor the 37-year-old mother of three and to passionately criticize the Trump administration's tactics.

In response to Monday's lawsuit, Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin accused Minnesota officials of ignoring public safety.

"President Trump's job is to protect the American people and enforce the law — no matter who your mayor, governor, or state attorney general is," McLaughlin said.

The Trump administration has repeatedly defended the immigration agent who shot Good, saying she and her vehicle presented a threat. But that explanation has been widely panned by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and others based on videos of the confrontation.

The government also faces a new lawsuit over a similar immigration crackdown in Illinois. More than 4,300 people were arrested last year in "Operation Midway Blitz" as masked agents swept the Chicago area. The lawsuit by the city and state says the campaign had a chilling effect, making residents afraid to leave home.

The lawsuit seeks restrictions on certain tactics, among other remedies. McLaughlin called it "baseless."

Meanwhile, in Portland, Oregon, federal authorities filed charges against a Venezuelan national who was one of two people shot there by U.S. Border Patrol on Thursday. The U.S. Justice Department said the man used his pickup truck to strike a Border Patrol vehicle and escape the scene with a woman.

They were shot and eventually arrested. Their wounds were not life-threatening. The FBI said there was no video of the incident, unlike the Good shooting.

## Machado seeks Pope Leo's support for Venezuela's transition during Vatican meeting

By GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Leo XIV met with Venezuelan opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner María Corina Machado in a private audience at the Vatican on Monday, during which the Venezuelan leader asked

him to intercede for the release of hundreds of political prisoners held in the Latin American country.

The meeting, which hadn't been previously included in the list of Leo's planned appointments, was later listed by the Vatican in its daily bulletin, without adding details.

Machado is touring Europe and the United States after she reemerged in December after 11 months in hiding to accept her Nobel Peace Prize in Norway.

"Today I had the blessing and honor of being able to share with His Holiness and express our gratitude for his continued support of what is happening in our country," Machado said in a statement following the meeting.

"I also conveyed to him the strength of the Venezuelan people who remain steadfast and in prayer for the freedom of Venezuela, and I asked him to intercede for all Venezuelans who remain kidnapped and disappeared," she added.

Machado also held talks with Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, who was Nuncio in Venezuela from 2009 to 2013.

Pope Leo has called for Venezuela to remain an independent country after U.S. forces captured former President Nicolás Maduro in his compound in Caracas and took him to New York to face federal charges of drug-trafficking.

Leo had said he was following the developments in Venezuela with "deep concern," and urged the protection of human and civil rights in the Latin American country.

Venezuela's opposition, backed by consecutive Republican and Democratic administrations in the U.S., had vowed for years to immediately replace Maduro with one of their own and restore democracy to the oil-rich country. But U.S. President Donald Trump delivered them a heavy blow by allowing Maduro's vice president, Delcy Rodríguez, to assume control.

Meanwhile, most opposition leaders, including Machado, are in exile or prison.

After winning the 2025 Nobel Prize for Peace, Machado said she'd like to give it to or share with Trump.

Machado dedicated the prize to Trump, along with the people of Venezuela, shortly after it was announced. Trump has coveted and openly campaigned for winning the Nobel Prize himself since his return to office in January 2025.

The organization that oversees the Nobel Peace Prize — the Norwegian Nobel Institute — said, however, that once it's announced, the prize can't be revoked, transferred or shared with others.

"The decision is final and stands for all time," it said in a short statement last week.

## **Trump says Iran wants to negotiate as the death toll in protests rises to at least 646**

By JON GAMBRELL, JULIA NIKHINSON and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump said Iran wants to negotiate with Washington after his threat to strike the Islamic Republic over its crackdown on protesters that activists said had killed at least 646 people.

Iran had no direct reaction to Trump's comments, which came after the foreign minister of Oman — long an interlocutor between Washington and Tehran — traveled to Iran this weekend. It also remains unclear just what Iran could promise, particularly as Trump has set strict demands over its nuclear program and its ballistic missile arsenal, which Tehran insists is crucial for its national defense.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, speaking to foreign diplomats in Tehran, insisted "the situation has come under total control" in remarks that blamed Israel and the U.S. for the violence, without offering evidence.

"That's why the demonstrations turned violent and bloody to give an excuse to the American president to intervene," Araghchi said, in comments carried by Al Jazeera. The Qatar-funded network has been allowed to report live from inside Iran, despite the internet being shut off.

However, Araghchi said Iran was "open to diplomacy." Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said that a channel to the U.S. remained open, but talks needed to be "based on the acceptance of mutual

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interests and concerns, not a negotiation that is one-sided, unilateral and based on dictation.”

Meanwhile, pro-government demonstrators flooded the streets Monday in support of the theocracy, a show of force after days of protests directly challenging the rule of 86-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iranian state television aired chants from the crowd, which appeared to number in the tens of thousands, who shouted “Death to America!” and “Death to Israel!”

Others cried out, “Death to the enemies of God!” Iran’s attorney general has warned that anyone taking part in protests will be considered an “enemy of God,” a death-penalty charge.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Iran’s public rhetoric diverges from the private messaging the administration has received from Tehran in recent days.

“I think the president has an interest in exploring those messages,” Leavitt said. “However, with that said, the president has shown he’s unafraid to use military options if and when he deems necessary, and nobody knows that better than Iran.”

Trump acknowledges proposal for talks

Trump and his national security team have been weighing a range of potential responses against Iran, including cyberattacks and direct strikes by the U.S. or Israel, according to two people familiar with internal White House discussions who weren’t authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

“The military is looking at it, and we’re looking at some very strong options,” Trump told reporters on Air Force One on Sunday night. Asked about Iran’s threats of retaliation, he said, “If they do that, we will hit them at levels that they’ve never been hit before.”

Meanwhile, Trump announced Monday that countries doing business with Iran will face 25% tariffs from the United States. Trump announced the tariffs in a social media posting, saying they would be “effective immediately.”

It was action against Iran for the protest crackdown from Trump, who believes exacting tariffs can be a useful tool in prodding friends and foes on the global stage to bend to his will.

Brazil, China, Russia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates are among economies that do business with Tehran.

The White House declined to offer further comment about the president’s tariff announcement.

Trump said Sunday that his administration was in talks to set up a meeting with Tehran, but cautioned that he may have to act first as reports of the death toll in Iran mount and the government continues to arrest protesters.

“I think they’re tired of being beat up by the United States,” Trump said. “Iran wants to negotiate.”

Iran, through the country’s parliamentary speaker, warned Sunday that the U.S. military and Israel would be “legitimate targets” if Washington uses force to protect demonstrators.

More than 10,700 people also have been detained over the two weeks of protests, said the U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency, which has been accurate in previous unrest in recent years and gave the latest death toll early Tuesday. It relies on supporters in Iran crosschecking information. It said 512 of the dead were protesters and 134 were security force members.

With the internet down in Iran and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. The Associated Press has been unable to independently assess the toll. Iran’s government hasn’t offered overall casualty figures.

Those abroad fear the information blackout is emboldening hard-liners within Iran’s security services to launch a violent crackdown. Online videos purported to show more demonstrations Sunday night into Monday, with a Tehran official acknowledging them in state media.

At 2 p.m. Monday, Iranian state television showed images of demonstrators thronging Tehran toward Enghelab Square, or “Islamic Revolution” Square in the capital. It had been airing statements all morning from Iranian government, security and religious leaders to attend the demonstration.

It called the rally an “Iranian uprising against American-Zionist terrorism,” without addressing the underlying anger in the country over the nation’s ailing economy. State television aired images of such demonstrations around the country, trying to signal it had overcome the protests.

Fear pervades Iran's capital

In Tehran, a witness told the AP that the streets were empty at the sunset call to prayers each night. By the Isha, or nighttime prayer, the streets are deserted.

Part of that stems from the fear of getting caught in the crackdown. Police sent the public a text message that warned: "Given the presence of terrorist groups and armed individuals in some gatherings last night and their plans to cause death, and the firm decision to not tolerate any appeasement and to deal decisively with the rioters, families are strongly advised to take care of their youth and teenagers."

Another text, which claimed to come from the intelligence arm of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, also directly warned people not to take part in demonstrations.

The witness spoke on condition of anonymity due to the ongoing crackdown.

The demonstrations began Dec. 28 over the collapse of the Iranian rial currency, which trades at more than 1.4 million to \$1, as Iran's economy is squeezed by international sanctions in part levied over its nuclear program. The protests intensified and grew into calls directly challenging Iran's theocracy.

## **Pentagon is embracing Musk's Grok AI chatbot as it draws global outcry**

By KONSTANTIN TOROPIN and DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Monday that Elon Musk's artificial intelligence chatbot Grok will join Google's generative AI engine in operating inside the Pentagon network, as part of a broader push to feed as much of the military's data as possible into the developing technology.

"Very soon we will have the world's leading AI models on every unclassified and classified network throughout our department," Hegseth said in a speech at Musk's space flight company, SpaceX, in South Texas.

The announcement comes just days after Grok — which is embedded into X, the social media network owned by Musk — drew global outcry and scrutiny for generating highly sexualized deepfake images of people without their consent.

Malaysia and Indonesia have blocked Grok, while the U.K.'s independent online safety watchdog announced an investigation Monday. Grok has limited image generation and editing to paying users.

Hegseth said Grok will go live inside the Defense Department later this month and announced that he would "make all appropriate data" from the military's IT systems available for "AI exploitation." He also said data from intelligence databases would be fed into AI systems.

Hegseth's aggressive push to embrace the still-developing technology stands in contrast to the Biden administration, which, while pushing federal agencies to come up with policies and uses for AI, was also wary of misuse. Officials said rules were needed to ensure that the technology, which could be harnessed for mass surveillance, cyberattacks or even lethal autonomous devices, was being used responsibly.

The Biden administration enacted a framework in late 2024 that directed national security agencies to expand their use of the most advanced AI systems but prohibited certain uses, such as applications that would violate constitutionally protected civil rights or any system that would automate the deployment of nuclear weapons. It is unclear if those prohibitions are still in place under the Trump administration.

During his speech, Hegseth spoke of the need to streamline and speed up technological innovations within the military, saying, "We need innovation to come from anywhere and evolve with speed and purpose."

He noted that the Pentagon possesses "combat-proven operational data from two decades of military and intelligence operations."

"AI is only as good as the data that it receives, and we're going to make sure that it's there," Hegseth said.

The defense secretary said he wants AI systems within the Pentagon to be responsible, though he went on to say he was shrugging off any AI models "that won't allow you to fight wars."

Hegseth said his vision for military AI systems means that they operate "without ideological constraints that limit lawful military applications," before adding that the Pentagon's "AI will not be woke."

Musk developed and pitched Grok as an alternative to what he called "woke AI" interactions from rival

chatbots like Google's Gemini or OpenAI's ChatGPT. In July, Grok also caused controversy after it appeared to make antisemitic comments that praised Adolf Hitler and shared several antisemitic posts.

The Pentagon did not immediately respond to questions about the issues with Grok.

## **As Canada tries to reduce its dependence on the US, its leader will visit China to rebuild ties**

By KEN MORITSUGU and ROB GILLIES Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — A leader of Canada is visiting China this week for the first time in nearly a decade, a bid to rebuild the country's fractured relations with the world's second-largest economy — and reduce Canada's dependence on the United States.

The push by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who arrives Wednesday, is part of a major rethink as ties sour with the U.S. — the world's No. 1 economy and long the largest trading partner for Canada by far.

Carney aims to double Canada's non-American exports in the next decade in the face of U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs and the American leader's musing that Canada could become "the 51st state."

"At a time of global trade disruption, Canada is focused on building a more competitive, sustainable and independent economy," Carney said in a statement. "We're forging new partnerships around the world to transform our economy from one that has been reliant on a single trade partner."

Carney will meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday and other officials.

Canadian officials, in a briefing with reporters, said that it's an attempt re-energize a dormant strategic partnership and also noted that Washington's intervention in Venezuela is far reaching.

Canadian officials said that there will be progress on trade irritants with Beijing, but not a definitive elimination of some tariffs.

Two of Carney's lawmakers, meanwhile, said they are quitting a sponsored trip to Taiwan early to "avoid confusion" about Canada's China policy as Carney prepares to visit Beijing.

In a joint statement, Liberal lawmakers Helena Jaczek and Marie-France Lalonde said while they are returning to Canada based on "advice from the government," it does not change Canada's stance on Taiwan. China views self-governed Taiwan as its sovereign territory and has said it would take it by force if needed.

Michael Chong, the opposition Conservative foreign affairs critic, said the Liberal decision to quit the trip early is "nothing short of kowtowing to Beijing's authoritarianism."

Carney will be in China until Saturday, and then visit Qatar before attending the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, next week.

Trump's tariffs have pushed both Canada and China to look for opportunities to strengthen international cooperation, said Zhu Feng, the dean of the School of International Studies at China's Nanjing University.

"Carney's visit does reflect the new space for further development in China-Canadian relations under the current U.S. trade protectionism," he said. But he cautioned against overestimating the importance of the visit, noting that Canada remains a U.S. ally. The two North American nations also share a deep cultural heritage and a common geography.

### Pivoting toward China

Carney has been in office less than a year, succeeding Justin Trudeau, who was prime minister for nearly a decade. He's not the first new leader of a country to try to repair relations with China.

Australian Premier Anthony Albanese has reset ties since his Labor Party came to power in 2022. Relations had deteriorated under the previous conservative government, leading to Chinese trade restrictions on wine, beef, coal and other Australian exports.

U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has sought to repair ties with China since his Labour Party ousted the Conservatives in 2024. He is reportedly planning a visit to China, though the government has not confirmed that.

The two governments have differences, with Starmer raising the case of former Hong Kong media magnate Jimmy Lai, a British citizen whose conviction under a national security law has raised concerns

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about press freedom, in talks with Xi in late 2024 in Brazil.

Trump, who has said he will come to China in April, has indicated that he wants a smooth relationship with Beijing, though he also launched a tit-for-tat trade war, with tariffs rising to more than 100% before he backed down.

Bumpy relations

In Canada, Trump's threats have raised questions about the country's longstanding relationship with its much more powerful neighbor. Those close ties have also been the source of much of Canada's friction with China in recent years.

It was Canada's detention of a Chinese telecommunications executive at the request of the U.S. that started the deterioration of relations in late 2018. The U.S. wanted the Huawei Technologies Co. executive, Meng Wanzhou, to be extradited to face American charges.

China retaliated by arresting two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, on spying charges. While they were imprisoned, Meng was under house arrest in Vancouver, a Canadian city home to a sizable Chinese population. All three were released under a deal reached in 2021.

More recently, Canada followed the U.S. in imposing a 100% tariff on electric vehicles and a 25% tariff on steel and aluminum from China.

China, which is Canada's No. 2 trading partner after the U.S., has hit back with tariffs on Canadian exports including canola, seafood and pork. It has indicated it would remove some of the tariffs if Canada were to drop the 100% charge on EVs.

An editorial in China's state-run Global Times newspaper welcomed Carney's visit as a new starting point and called on Canada to lift "unreasonable tariff restrictions" and advance more pragmatic cooperation.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Monday that China looks forward to Carney's visit as an opportunity to "consolidate the momentum of improvement in China-Canada relations."

Canada-India ties

Carney met with Xi in late October in South Korea, where both were attending the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.

He has also tried to mend ties with India, where relations deteriorated in 2024 after the Trudeau government accused India of being involved in the 2023 killing of a Sikh activist in Canada. The fallout led to tit-for-tat expulsions of senior diplomats, disruption of visa services, reduced consular staffing and a freeze on trade talks.

A cautious thaw began last June. Since then, both sides have restored some consular services and resumed diplomatic contacts. In November, Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand said that the two countries would move quickly to advance a trade deal, noting the government's new foreign policy in response to Trump's trade war.

Carney is also expected to visit India later this year.

## DOJ investigation of Fed Chair Powell sparks backlash, support for Fed independence

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration's criminal investigation of Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell appeared on Monday to be emboldening defenders of the U.S. central bank, who pushed back against President Donald Trump's efforts to exert more control over the Fed.

The backlash reflected the overarching stakes in determining the balance of power within the federal government and the path of the U.S. economy at a time of uncertainty about inflation and a slowing job market. This has created a sense among some Republican lawmakers and leading economists that the Trump administration had overstepped the Fed's independence by sending subpoenas.

The criminal investigation — a first for a sitting Fed chair — sparked an unusually robust response from Powell and a full-throated defense from three former Fed chairs, a group of top economic officials and even Republican senators tasked with voting on Trump's eventual pick to replace Powell as Fed chair when

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his term expires in May.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that Trump did not direct his Justice Department to investigate Powell, who has proven to be a foil for Trump by insisting on setting the Fed's benchmark interest rates based on the data instead of the president's wishes.

"One thing for sure, the president's made it quite clear, is Jerome Powell is bad at his job," Leavitt said. "As for whether or not Jerome Powell is a criminal, that's an answer the Department of Justice is going to have to find out."

Critics see Trump as trying to control the Fed

The investigation demonstrates the lengths the Trump administration is willing to go to try to assert control over the Fed, an independent agency that the president believes should follow his claims that inflationary pressures have faded enough for drastic rate cuts to occur. Trump has repeatedly used investigations — which might or might not lead to an actual indictment — to attack his political rivals.

The risks go far beyond Washington infighting to whether people can find work or afford their groceries. If the Fed errs in setting rates, inflation could surge or job losses could mount. Trump maintains that an economic boom is occurring and rates should be cut to pump more money into the economy, while Powell has taken a more cautious approach in the wake of Trump's tariffs.

Several Republican senators have condemned the Department of Justice's subpoenas of the Fed, which Powell revealed Sunday and characterized as "pretexts" to pressure him to sharply cut interest rates. Powell also said the Justice Department has threatened criminal indictments over his June testimony to Congress about the cost and design elements of a \$2.5 billion building renovation that includes the Fed's headquarters.

"After speaking with Chair Powell this morning, it's clear the administration's investigation is nothing more than an attempt at coercion," said Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, on Monday.

Jeanine Pirro, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, said on social media that the Fed "ignored" her office's outreach to discuss the renovation cost overruns, "necessitating the use of legal process — which is not a threat."

"The word 'indictment' has come out of Mr. Powell's mouth, no one else's," Pirro posted on X, although the subpoenas and the White House's own statement about determining Powell's criminality would suggest the risk of an indictment.

A bipartisan group of former Fed chairs and top economists on Monday called the Trump administration's investigation "an unprecedented attempt to use prosecutorial attacks" to undermine the Fed's independence, stressing that central banks controlled by political leaders tend to produce higher inflation and lower growth.

"I think this is ham-handed, counter-productive, and going to set back the president's cause," said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard and former top adviser to President Barack Obama. The investigation could also unify the Fed's interest-rate setting committee in support of Powell, and means "the next Fed chair will be under more pressure to prove their independence."

The subpoenas apply to Powell's statements before a congressional committee about the renovation of Fed buildings, including its marble-clad headquarters in Washington. They come at an unusual moment when Trump was teasing the likelihood of announcing his nominee this month to succeed Powell as the Fed chair and could possibly be self-defeating for the nomination process.

While Powell's term as chair ends in four months, he has a separate term as a Fed governor until January 2028, meaning that he could remain on the board. If Powell stays on the board, Trump could be blocked from appointing an outside candidate of his choice to be the chair.

Some Senate Republicans express doubts

Powell quickly found a growing number of defenders among Republicans in the Senate, who will have the choice of whether to confirm Trump's planned pick for Fed chair.

Sen. Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican and member of the Senate Banking panel, said late Sunday that he would oppose any of the Trump administration's Fed nominees until the investigation is "resolved."

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"If there were any remaining doubt whether advisers within the Trump Administration are actively pushing to end the independence of the Federal Reserve, there should now be none," Tillis said.

Sen. Dave McCormick, R-Pa., said the Fed may have wasted public dollars with its renovation, but he said, "I do not think Chairman Powell is guilty of criminal activity."

Senate Majority Leader John Thune offered a brief but stern response Monday about the tariffs as he arrived at the U.S. Capitol, suggesting that the administration needed "serious" evidence of wrongdoing to take such a significant step.

"I haven't seen the case or whatever the allegations or charges are, but I would say they better, they better be real and they better be serious," said Thune, a Republican representing South Dakota.

Powell could stay on the Fed board, possibly thwarting Trump

If Powell stays on the board after his term as chair ends, the Trump administration would be deprived of the chance to fill another seat that would give the administration a majority on the seven-member board. That majority could then enact significant reforms at the Fed and even block the appointment of presidents at the Fed's 12 regional banks.

"They could do a lot of reorganizing and reforms" without having to pass new legislation, said Mark Spindel, chief investment officer at Potomac River Capital and author of a book on Fed independence. "That seat is very valuable."

Powell has declined at several press conferences to answer questions about his plans to stay or leave the board.

Scott Alvarez, former general counsel at the Fed, says the investigation is intended to intimidate Powell from staying on the board. The probe is occurring now "to say to Chair Powell, 'We'll use every mechanism that the administration has to make your life miserable unless you leave the Board in May,'" Alvarez said.

Asked on Monday by reporters if Powell planned to remain a Fed governor, Kevin Hassett, director of the White House National Economic Council and a leading candidate to become Fed chair, said he was unaware of Powell's plans.

"I've not talked to Jay about that," Hassett said.

A weaker Fed could mean a weaker economy

A bipartisan group of former Fed chairs and top economists said in their Monday letter that the administration's legal actions and the possible loss of Fed independence could hurt the broader economy.

"This is how monetary policy is made in emerging markets with weak institutions, with highly negative consequences for inflation and the functioning of their economies more broadly," the statement said.

The statement was signed by former Fed chairs Ben Bernanke, Janet Yellen, and Alan Greenspan, as well as former Treasury Secretaries Henry Paulson and Robert Rubin.

Still, Trump's pressure campaign had been building for some time, with him relentlessly criticizing and belittling Powell.

He even appeared to preview the shocking news of the subpoenas at a Dec. 29 news conference by saying he would bring a lawsuit against Powell over the renovation costs.

"He's just a very incompetent man," Trump said. "But we're going to probably bring a lawsuit against him."

## Minnesota and the Twin Cities sue the federal government to stop the immigration crackdown

By REBECCA SANTANA, MARK VANCLEAVE and STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minnesota and its two largest cities sued the Trump administration Monday to try to stop an immigration enforcement surge that led to the fatal shooting of a Minneapolis woman by a federal officer and evoked outrage and protests across the country.

The state, joined by Minneapolis and St. Paul, said the Department of Homeland Security is violating the First Amendment and other constitutional protections. The lawsuit seeks a temporary restraining order to halt the enforcement action or limit the operation.

"This is, in essence, a federal invasion of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, and it must stop," state Attorney

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General Keith Ellison said at a news conference. "These poorly trained, aggressive and armed agents of the federal state have terrorized Minnesota with widespread unlawful conduct."

Homeland Security is pledging to put more than 2,000 immigration officers into Minnesota and says it has made more than 2,000 arrests since December. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has called the surge its largest enforcement operation ever.

Tension brimmed again Monday, five days after Renee Good was shot in the head by an ICE officer while behind the wheel of her SUV. From a large school walkout to emotional visits to a flower-covered memorial for Good to agents firing tear gas to break up crowds, Minneapolis remained on edge in the aftermath of the shooting.

There have been dozens of protests or vigils across the U.S. in recent days to honor the 37-year-old mother of three and to passionately criticize the Trump administration's tactics.

Since the deployment in the Twin Cities, whistle-burst warnings by activists are commonly heard when immigration agents flood streets. Witnesses have regularly posted video of federal officers using tear gas to discourage the public from following them.

Feds say they're protecting the public

The Minnesota lawsuit accuses the Republican Trump administration of violating free speech rights by focusing on a progressive state that favors Democrats and welcomes immigrants.

"They're targeting us based on what we look and sound like. Our residents are scared. And as local officials, we have a responsibility to act," said St. Paul Mayor Kaohly Her, who was born in Laos.

In response, Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin accused Minnesota officials of ignoring public safety.

"President Trump's job is to protect the American people and enforce the law — no matter who your mayor, governor, or state attorney general is," McLaughlin said. "That's what the Trump administration is doing; we have the Constitution on our side on this, and we look forward to proving that in court."

The Trump administration has repeatedly defended the immigration agent who shot Good, saying she and her vehicle presented a threat. But that explanation has been widely panned by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and others based on videos of the confrontation.

The government also faces a new lawsuit over a similar immigration crackdown in Illinois. More than 4,300 people were arrested last year in "Operation Midway Blitz" as masked agents swept the Chicago area. The lawsuit by the city and state says the campaign had a chilling effect, making residents afraid to leave home.

The lawsuit seeks restrictions on certain tactics, among other remedies. McLaughlin called it "baseless."

Students walk out of school

Hundreds of students on Monday walked out of Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, where federal agents had deployed tear gas on students and staff last week. Adults wearing safety vests cleared traffic, and many parents who are Roosevelt alumni showed up in old school wear.

Marchers held signs that said, "ICE out" and "Welcome to Panem," a reference to the dystopian society from the "Hunger Games" book series.

Agents also fired tear gas to break up a crowd of people who showed up to see the aftermath of a car crash just a few blocks from where Good was killed. A crowd emerged to witness a man being questioned by agents who had rear-ended his car.

"I'm glad they didn't shoot me or something," Christian Molina told reporters.

Standing near his mangled fender, he wondered aloud: "Who's going to pay for my car?"

In St. Cloud, 65 miles (104 kilometers) northwest of Minneapolis, hundreds of people gathered outside a strip of Somali-run businesses when news spread that dozens of ICE officers were there.

Meanwhile, in Portland, Oregon, federal authorities filed charges against a Venezuelan national who was one of two people shot there by U.S. Border Patrol on Thursday. The U.S. Justice Department said the man used his pickup truck to strike a Border Patrol vehicle and escape the scene with a woman.

They were shot and eventually arrested. Their wounds were not life-threatening. The FBI said there was

no video of the incident, unlike the Good shooting.

## Trump holds off on military action against Iran's protest crackdown as he 'explores' Tehran messages

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has arrived at a delicate moment as he weighs whether to order a U.S. military response against the Iranian government as it continues a violent crackdown on protests that have left more than 600 dead and led to the arrests of thousands across the country.

The U.S. president has repeatedly threatened Tehran with military action if his administration found the Islamic Republic was using deadly force against antigovernment protesters. It's a red line that Trump has said he believes Iran is "starting to cross" and has left him and his national security team weighing "very strong options."

But the U.S. military — which Trump has warned Tehran is "locked and loaded" — appears, at least for the moment, to have been placed on standby mode as Trump ponders next steps, saying that Iranian officials want to have talks with the White House.

"What you're hearing publicly from the Iranian regime is quite different from the messages the administration is receiving privately, and I think the president has an interest in exploring those messages," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters Monday. "However, with that said, the president has shown he's unafraid to use military options if and when he deems necessary, and nobody knows that better than Iran."

Hours later, Trump announced on social media that he would slap 25% tariffs on countries doing business with Tehran "effective immediately" — his first action aimed at penalizing Iran for the protest crackdown, and his latest example of using tariffs as a tool to force friends and foes on the global stage to bend to his will.

China, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Brazil and Russia are among economies that do business with Tehran. The White House declined to offer further comment or details about the president's tariff announcement.

The White House has offered scant details on Iran's outreach for talks, but Leavitt confirmed that the president's special envoy Steve Witkoff will be a key player engaging Tehran.

Meanwhile, Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and key White House National Security Council officials began meeting Friday to develop a "suite of options," from a diplomatic approach to military strikes, to present to Trump in the coming days, according to a U.S. official familiar with the internal administration deliberations. The official was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Trump told reporters Sunday evening that a "meeting is being set up" with Iranian officials but cautioned that "we may have to act because of what's happening before the meeting."

"We're watching the situation very carefully," Trump said.

Can the protests be sustained?

Demonstrations in Iran continue, but analysts say it remains unclear just how long protesters will remain on the street.

An internet blackout imposed by Tehran makes it hard for protesters to understand just how widespread the demonstrations have become, said Vali Nasr, a State Department adviser during the early part of the Obama administration, and now professor of international affairs and Middle East studies at Johns Hopkins University.

"It makes it very difficult for news from one city or pictures from one city to incense or motivate action in another city," Nasr said. "The protests are leaderless, they're organization-less. They are actually genuine eruptions of popular anger. And without leadership and direction and organization, such protests, not just in Iran, everywhere in the world — it's very difficult for them to sustain themselves."

Meanwhile, Trump is dealing with a series of other foreign policy emergencies around the globe. It's been just over a week since the U.S. military launched a successful raid to arrest Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro and remove him from power. The U.S. continues to mass an unusually large number of troops in the Caribbean Sea.

Trump is also focused on trying to get Israel and Hamas onto the second phase of a peace deal in Gaza and broker an agreement between Russia and Ukraine to end the nearly four-year war in Eastern Europe.

But advocates urging Trump to take strong action against Iran say this moment offers an opportunity to further diminish the theocratic government that's ruled the country since the Islamic revolution in 1979.

The demonstrations are the biggest Iran has seen in years — protests spurred by the collapse of Iranian currency that have morphed into a larger test of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's repressive rule.

Iran, through the country's parliamentary speaker, has warned that the U.S. military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if Washington uses force to protect demonstrators.

Trump allies want to see US back protesters

Some of Trump's hawkish allies in Washington are calling on the president not to miss the opportunity to act decisively against a vulnerable Iranian government that they argue is reeling after last summer's 12-day war with Israel and battered by U.S. strikes in June on key Iranian nuclear sites.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said on social media Monday that the moment offers Trump the chance to show that he's serious about enforcing red lines. Graham alluded to former Democratic President Barack Obama in 2012 setting a red line on the use of chemical weapons by Syria's Bashar Assad against his own people — only not to follow through with U.S. military action after the then-Syrian leader crossed that line the following year.

"It is not enough to say we stand with the people of Iran," Graham said. "The only right answer here is that we act decisively to protect protesters in the street — and that we're not Obama — proving to them we will not tolerate their slaughter without action."

Former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich, another close Trump ally, said the "goal of every Western leader should be to destroy the Iranian dictatorship at this moment of its vulnerability."

"In a few weeks either the dictatorship will be gone or the Iranian people will have been defeated and suppressed and a campaign to find the ringleaders and kill them will have begun," Gingrich said in an X post. "There is no middle ground."

Indeed, Iranian authorities have managed to snuff out rounds of mass protests before, including the "Green Movement" following the disputed election in 2009 and the "woman, life, freedom" protests that broke out after 22-year-old Mahsa Amini died in custody of the state's morality police in 2022.

Trump and his national security team have already begun reviewing options for potential military action and he is expected to continue talks with his team this week.

Behnam Ben Taleblu, senior director of the Iran program at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a hawkish Washington think tank, said "there is a fast-diminishing value to official statements by the president promising to hold the regime accountable, but then staying on the sidelines."

Trump, Taleblu noted, has shown a desire to maintain "maximum flexibility rooted in unpredictability" as he deals with adversaries.

"But flexibility should not bleed into a policy of locking in or bailing out an anti-American regime which is on the ropes at home and has a bounty on the president's head abroad," he added.

## **Uvalde teacher who survived class shooting testifies he saw 'black shadow with a gun'**

By JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

A teacher who survived the 2022 shooting inside a Robb Elementary school classroom in Uvalde, Texas, told a jury Monday the attack began with a "black shadow" with a gun walking inside and that he prayed for the attack to be over after being shot along with his students.

Arnulfo Reyes' testimony came on the fifth day of the trial for Adrian Gonzales, a former Uvalde schools

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police officer who was among the first law enforcement responders to the scene. Gonzales has pleaded not guilty to 29 counts of child abandonment or endangerment as prosecutors allege he did nothing to stop the gunman in the first moments of the attack.

The gunman killed 19 students and two teachers. Reyes was shot on the arm and back and said he was taunted by 18-year-old gunman Salvador Ramos.

"I looked at my door and that's when I saw him ... a black shadow. The black shadow was holding a gun. I just saw the fire come out of the gun," Reyes testified. "He shot at me and hit me in my arm. That's when I fell to the ground."

"When I fell, he came around and he shot the kids," he said.

Reyes said Ramos turned back around and shot him in the back. He prayed "and I gave myself to the Lord ... and waited for everything to be over."

Reyes said the gunman at one point walked into the adjoining classroom, where he said he heard a student say, "Officer, we're in here," before he heard more shooting.

Reyes said Ramos also taunted him while he tried to pretend he was dead.

Reyes was a teacher in Room 111. None of the children in his classroom survived.

Just before Reyes testified, the court watched the surveillance video of Ramos entering the school and start shooting. The judge had warned the courtroom the images and sounds would be graphic.

Gonzales showed no emotion on his face as emergency calls to police and a woman can be heard screaming "get in your room!" He appeared to flinch when the first loud shots rang out in the hallway. He also covered his mouth with his left hand.

Gonzales was among the first of more than 370 federal, state and local officers to arrive at the school. It would take more than an hour for a tactical team to go into a classroom and kill the gunman.

The trial in Corpus Christi, Texas, is tightly focused on Gonzales' actions. Prosecutors allege he abandoned his active shooter training and did not try to engage or distract the gunman while he was still outside the school. They said Gonzales failed again minutes later when a group of officers went inside the school only to retreat when they came under heavy gunfire.

While much of the trial has been focused on events outside the school when the attack started, prosecutors are using the carnage inside the classroom as the ultimate result of what they said was Gonzales' failure to stop the gunman when he had a chance.

At one point, prosecutors showed the school portraits of each of the schoolchildren and asked Reyes to read their names and say whether they died or survived.

Reyes was not asked about Gonzales during questioning by prosecutors, and mentioned only encountering a Border Patrol officer when the shooting stopped.

At the start of their cross-examination, defense attorneys noted the doors to the outside of the school, as well as Reyes' classroom, were unlocked in violation of school policy. Reyes said he'd believed his classroom door was locked.

Reyes' testimony will continue Tuesday.

The opening days of the trial included dramatic replays of the initial emergency calls, testimony from teachers who huddled with terrified students, and the mother of one of the victims recounting how her daughter had asked to leave school early that day.

Jurors have also seen graphic photos from inside the school and classrooms. Prosecutors noted how students made 911 calls from inside the classroom with the gunman.

The trial is a rare case in which a police officer could be convicted of allegedly failing to act to stop a crime and protect lives.

Gonzales and former Uvalde schools Police Chief Pete Arredondo are the only two responding officers that day to face charges. Arredondo's trial has not yet been set.

## FBI says it has found no video of Border Patrol agent shooting 2 people in Oregon

By CLAIRE RUSH and GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The FBI said in a court document made public Monday that it had found no surveillance or other video of a Border Patrol agent shooting and wounding two people in a pickup truck during an immigration enforcement operation in Portland, Oregon, last week.

Agents told investigators that one of their colleagues opened fire Thursday after the driver put the truck in reverse and repeatedly slammed into an unoccupied car the agents had rented, smashing its headlights and knocking off its front bumper. The agents said they feared for their own safety and that of the public, the document said.

The FBI has interviewed four of the six agents on the scene, the document said. It did not identify the agent who fired the shots.

The shooting, which came one day after a federal agent shot and killed a driver in Minneapolis, prompted protests over federal agents' aggressive tactics during immigration enforcement operations. The Department of Homeland Security has said the two people in the truck entered the U.S. illegally and were affiliated with the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua.

None of the six agents was recording body camera footage, and investigators have uncovered no surveillance or other video footage of the shooting, FBI Special Agent Daniel Jeffreys wrote in an affidavit supporting aggravated assault and property damage charges against the driver, Luis David Nino-Moncada.

The truck drove away after the shooting, which occurred in the parking lot of a medical office building. Nino-Moncada called 911 after arriving at an apartment complex several minutes away. He was placed in FBI custody after being treated for a gunshot wound to the arm and abdomen.

During an initial appearance Monday afternoon in federal court in Portland, he wore a white sweatshirt and sweatpants and appeared to hold out his left arm gingerly at an angle. An interpreter translated the judge's comments for him. The judge ordered that he remain in detention and scheduled a preliminary hearing for Wednesday.

The agent's affidavit said that after being read his rights, Nino-Moncada "admitted to intentionally ramming the Border Patrol vehicle in an attempt to flee, and he stated that he knew they were immigration enforcement vehicles."

His passenger, Yorlenys Betzabeth Zambrano-Contreras, was hospitalized after being shot in the chest and on Monday was being held at a private immigration detention facility in Tacoma, Washington, according to an online detainee locator system maintained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. She faces a charge of illegal entry into the U.S., which federal prosecutors in Texas filed last week. The federal public defender's office for the Western District of Texas did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Nino-Moncada and Zambrano-Contreras are Venezuela nationals and entered the U.S. illegally in 2022 and 2023, respectively, the Department of Homeland Security said. It identified Nino-Moncada as an associate of Tren de Aragua and Zambrano-Contreras as involved in a prostitution ring run by the gang.

"Anyone who crosses the red line of assaulting law enforcement will be met with the full force of this Justice Department," Attorney General Pam Bondi said Monday in a news release announcing charges against Nino-Moncada. "This man — an illegal alien with ties to a foreign terrorist organization — should NEVER have been in our country to begin with, and we will ensure he NEVER walks free in America again."

Oregon Federal Public Defender Fidel Cassino-DuCloux, whose office represents Nino-Moncada, said in a statement last week that the shooting and the accusations against Nino-Moncada "follow a well-worn playbook that the government has developed to justify the dangerous and unprofessional conduct of its agents."

Portland Police Chief Bob Day confirmed last week that the pair had "some nexus" to the gang. Day said the two came to the attention of police during an investigation of a July shooting believed to have been carried out by gang members, but they were not identified as suspects.

Zambrano-Contreras was previously arrested for prostitution, Day said, and Nino-Moncada was present when a search warrant was served in that case.

## US lawmakers to visit Denmark as Trump continues to threaten Greenland

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation is headed to Copenhagen later this week in an attempt to show unity between the United States and Denmark as U.S. President Donald Trump continues to threaten to seize Greenland, a semiautonomous territory of the NATO ally.

Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., is leading the trip of at least nine members of Congress, including Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina. The group will be in Copenhagen on Friday and Saturday and will meet with high-level Danish and Greenlandic government officials and business leaders.

In an interview with the Associated Press on Monday, Coons said the delegation wants to send a message that “we understand the value of the partnership we have long had with them, and in no way seek to interfere in their internal discussions about the status of Greenland.”

Coons stressed that the United States and Denmark have long been allies, noting that the northern European nation came to the U.S.’s defense in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and have for years worked in tandem on other priorities.

“As long as we have been constructive and respectful allies, the Danes have been open arms with us on security and investment and the region,” Coons said, adding: “I think the only thing that has changed is the recent statements by the president and the extent to which it seems to have gone from casual to serious, and I just think it’s important for us to be heard as strongly supporting NATO and our alliance.”

The delegation considered traveling to Greenland on the trip, but ultimately could not due to logistical issues, according to a person familiar with the trip planning who was granted anonymity to discuss earlier private discussions.

Tensions have grown between Washington, Denmark and Greenland this month as Trump and his administration push the issue and the White House considers a range of options, including military force, to acquire the vast Arctic island. Trump reiterated his argument that the U.S. needs to “take Greenland,” otherwise Russia or China would, in comments aboard Air Force One on Sunday.

He said he’d rather “make a deal” for the territory, “but one way or the other, we’re going to have Greenland.” Danish and Greenlandic envoys are expected in Washington this week for talks with Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

China responded in kind on Monday, saying the United States should not use other countries as a “pretext” to pursue its interests in Greenland and said that China’s activities in the Arctic comply with international law.

Asked in Beijing about U.S. statements that it is necessary for Washington to take over Greenland to prevent China and Russia from taking control, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning replied that “China’s activities in the Arctic are aimed at promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development in the region and are in accordance with international law.” She didn’t elaborate on those activities.

“The rights and freedoms of all countries to conduct activities in the Arctic in accordance with the law should be fully respected,” Mao said, without mentioning Greenland directly. “The U.S. should not pursue its own interests by using other countries as a pretext.”

She said that “the Arctic concerns the overall interests of the international community.”

Coons said in addition to reinforcing the U.S.’s relationship with Denmark, he wants the trip to emphasize that “there is no imminent threat to Greenland from the Chinese and the Russians.”

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has warned that an American takeover of Greenland would mark the end of NATO. On Friday, Greenland Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen and the leaders of the four other parties in the territory’s parliament issued a joint statement reiterating that Greenland’s future must be decided by its people and emphasizing their “wish that the United States’ contempt for our country ends.”

Greenland’s leader also issued another statement on Monday, saying Greenland is part of the Kingdom of Denmark and part of NATO through the Realm.

“This means that our security and defense belong within NATO. This is a fundamental and firm line,” he said.

"We are a democratic society that makes our own decisions. And our actions are based on international law and the rule of law."

China in 2018 declared itself a "near-Arctic state" in an effort to gain more influence in the region. Beijing has also announced plans to build a "Polar Silk Road" as part of its global Belt and Road Initiative, which has created economic links with countries around the world.

## **Sen. Kelly sues the Pentagon over attempts to punish him, declaring it unconstitutional**

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly sued the Pentagon on Monday over attempts to punish him for his warnings about illegal orders, claiming the Trump administration trampled on his constitutional rights to free speech.

Kelly, a former U.S. Navy pilot who represents Arizona, is seeking to block his censure last week from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who said he censured Kelly over his participation in a video that called on troops to resist unlawful orders.

Hegseth said the Jan. 5 censure — by itself simply a formal letter with little practical consequence — was "a necessary process step" to proceedings that could result in a demotion from Kelly's retired rank of captain and subsequent reduction in retirement pay.

Kelly asked the federal court in Washington, D.C., to rule that the censure letter, the proceedings about his rank and any other punishments against him are "unlawful and unconstitutional."

"The First Amendment forbids the government and its officials from punishing disfavored expression or retaliating against protected speech," his lawsuit says. "That prohibition applies with particular force to legislators speaking on matters of public policy."

U.S. District Judge Leon, who was nominated to the bench by Republican President George W. Bush, scheduled a hearing on Thursday in Washington, D.C., for Kelly's request for a temporary restraining order.

The legal action of a sitting U.S. senator suing the defense secretary is rare, if not jarring, and the latest effort from members of Congress to push back against what they see as an out-of-control executive branch.

The censure stemmed from Kelly's participation in a video in November with five other Democratic lawmakers — all veterans of the armed services and intelligence community — in which they called on troops to uphold the Constitution and not to follow the Trump administration's military directives if they were unlawful.

The 90-second video was first posted on a social media account belonging to Sen. Elissa Slotkin. Reps. Jason Crow, Chris Deluzio, Maggie Goodlander and Chrissy Houlahan also appeared in the video.

Republican President Donald Trump accused the lawmakers of sedition "punishable by DEATH" in a social media post days later.

Kelly and the other lawmakers have not backed down from their video, which was released as the Pentagon began attacking suspected drug-smuggling boats in the waters near Venezuela. The attacks have now killed at least 115 people.

The Pentagon opened an investigation of Kelly in late November, citing a federal law that allows retired service members to be recalled to active duty on orders of the defense secretary for possible court-martial or other punishment.

Although all six lawmakers served in the military or the intelligence community, Hegseth said Kelly was the only one facing investigation because he is the only one who formally retired from the military and still falls under the Pentagon's jurisdiction.

Hegseth, the Defense Department, Navy Secretary John Phelan and the Navy are named as defendants in the lawsuit. The Pentagon said in a statement it was aware of the lawsuit, but "as a matter of policy, the Department does not comment on ongoing litigation."

Kelly said in a statement on Monday that he is "standing up for the rights of the very Americans who fought to defend our freedoms." He accused Hegseth of trying to suppress dissent by threatening military

veterans with depriving them of their rank and pay.

"That's not the way things work in the United States of America, and I won't stand for it," Kelly said.

## Cuba's president says no current talks with the US following Trump's threats

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ, DÁNICA COTO and MILEXSY DURÁN Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel said Monday that his administration is not in talks with the U.S. government, a day after President Donald Trump threatened the Caribbean island in the wake of the U.S. attack on Venezuela.

Díaz-Canel posted a flurry of brief statements on X after Trump suggested that Cuba "make a deal, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE." He did not say what kind of deal.

Díaz-Canel wrote that for "relations between the U.S. and Cuba to progress, they must be based on international law rather than hostility, threats, and economic coercion."

He added: "We have always been willing to hold a serious and responsible dialogue with the various US governments, including the current one, on the basis of sovereign equality, mutual respect, principles of International Law, and mutual benefit without interference in internal affairs and with full respect for our independence."

His statements were reposted by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez on X.

A key lifeline severed

On Sunday, Trump wrote that Cuba would no longer live off oil and money from Venezuela, which the U.S. attacked on Jan. 3 in a stunning operation that killed 32 Cuban officers and led to the arrest of President Nicolás Maduro.

Cuba was receiving an estimated 35,000 barrels a day from Venezuela before the U.S. attacked, along with some 5,500 barrels daily from Mexico and roughly 7,500 from Russia, according to Jorge Piñón of the Energy Institute at the University of Texas at Austin, who tracks the shipments.

On Monday, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum once again declined to provide data on current oil shipments or say whether such shipments would increase when Venezuelan supplies end. She insisted that the aid "has been ongoing for a long time; it's not new."

Sheinbaum said Mexico's fuel supply to Cuba is not a concern for her country because "there is enough oil" — even though production of state-owned oil company Petróleos Mexicanos is steadily declining. She reiterated that her government is willing to facilitate dialogue between the U.S. and Cuba if both agree.

Even with oil shipments from Venezuela, widespread blackouts have persisted across Cuba given fuel shortages and a crumbling electric grid. Experts worry a lack of petroleum would only deepen the island's multiple crises that stem from an economic paralysis during the COVID-19 pandemic and a radical increase in U.S. sanctions following the first Trump administration, which aim to force a change in Cuba's political model.

The communist government has said U.S. sanctions cost the country more than \$7.5 billion between March 2024 and February 2025, a staggering sum for an island whose tourism revenue reached some \$3 billion annually at its peak in the previous decade.

The crisis also has triggered a large wave of migration primarily to the United States, where Cubans enjoyed immigration privileges as exiles. Those privileges were curtailed before Trump closed U.S. borders.

'They didn't even bring Cuban coffee'

The situation between the U.S. and Cuba is "very sad and concerning," said Andy S. Gómez, retired dean of the School of International Studies and senior fellow in Cuban Studies at the University of Miami.

He said he sees Díaz-Canel's latest comments "as a way to try and buy a little bit of time for the inner circle to decide what steps it's going to take."

Gómez said he doesn't visualize Cuba reaching out to U.S. officials right now.

"They had every opportunity when President (Barack) Obama opened up U.S. diplomatic relations, and

yet they didn't even bring Cuban coffee to the table," Gómez said. "Of course, these are desperate times for Cuba."

Michael Galant, senior research and outreach associate at the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, D.C., said he believes Cuba might be willing to negotiate.

"Cuba has been interested in finding ways to ease sanctions," he said. "It's not that Cuba is uncooperative."

Galant said topics for discussion could include migration and security, adding that he believes Trump is not in a hurry.

"Trump is hoping to deepen the economic crisis on the island, and there are few costs to Trump to try and wait that out," he said. "I don't think it's likely that there will be any dramatic action in the coming days because there is no rush to come to the table."

Cuba's president stressed on X that "there are no talks with the U.S. government, except for technical contacts in the area of migration."

As tensions remained heightened, life went on as usual for many Cubans, although some were more concerned than others.

Oreidy Guzmán, a 32-year-old food delivery person, said he doesn't want anything bad to happen to Cubans, "but if something has to happen, the people deserve change."

Meanwhile, 37-year-old homemaker Meilyn Gómez said that while she doesn't believe the U.S. would invade Cuba, she was preparing for any possible outcome under Trump: "He'll find entertainment anywhere."

The current situation is dominating chatter among Cubans on the island and beyond.

"Cuban people talk and talk," said 57-year-old bartender Rubén Benítez, "but to be honest, eleven, eight or nine million will take to the streets to defend what little we have left."

## What to know about the warrants most immigration agents use to make arrests

By SAFIYAH RIDDLE and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

As the Trump administration intensifies immigration enforcement nationwide, a wave of high-profile arrests — many unfolding at private homes and businesses and captured on video — has pushed one legal question into the center of the national debate: When can federal immigration agents lawfully enter private property to make an arrest?

That question has taken on new urgency in cities like Minneapolis, where thousands of federal agents are operating on the streets amid protests, confrontations and a fatal shooting, sharpening scrutiny of the legal authority immigration officers rely on when they arrive at the front door.

At the heart of the debate is a legal distinction largely unfamiliar to the public but central to immigration enforcement.

Most immigration arrests are carried out under administrative warrants, internal documents issued by immigration authorities that authorize the arrest of a specific individual but do not permit officers to forcibly enter private homes or other non-public spaces without consent. Only criminal warrants signed by judges carry that authority. Legal experts say the administration's aggressive enforcement push, combined with public awareness of those limits, is increasingly turning door-knock encounters into flashpoints, fueling confrontations that are now playing out in cities across the country.

Here is what to know about the limitations on the warrants that authorize most immigration related arrests.

Immigration warrants typically don't authorize entry onto private property

All law enforcement operations — including those conducted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection — are governed by the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects all people in the country from unreasonable searches and seizures. That means law enforcement is required to have a warrant before searching one's private property or arresting someone, regardless of immigration status.

But not all warrants are the same. Typically, arrests carried out by Department of Homeland Security agencies are authorized by administrative warrants — sometimes known as immigration warrants — not

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judicial warrants.

Judicial warrants are issued by a court and signed by a magistrate or a state or federal judge. These warrants allow a relevant law enforcement agency to apprehend a specified individual in any context — regardless of whether the person is on public or on private property. In other words, law enforcement is legally allowed to enter and search a home or business to make the arrest without the consent of the property owner once a judge signs off on the arrest.

By contrast, the administrative warrants used in most immigration operations are sanctioned by an agency, officer or immigration judge, and don't allow law enforcement to forcibly enter private property to detain someone.

That means people can legally refuse federal immigration agents entry into private property if the agents only have an administrative warrant.

There are limited exceptions, some of which include if someone is in immediate danger, an officer is actively chasing a suspect or if someone is calling for help inside the residence. But those exceptions don't apply in routine immigration arrests, legal experts say.

John Sandweg, a former ICE acting director, said officers are trained on what circumstances legally justify forced entry. But as the scope of ICE's work has expanded, and more Border Patrol agents have begun conducting the work of ICE officers, there is a greater chance that agents will misapply the rules, he said.

"Your risks of all of these types of incidents increase dramatically when you take officers out of their normal operating environment and ask them to do things that they have not been trained to do, because it's not part of their core missions," Sandweg said.

### Mounting tensions in Minneapolis

The thorny legal distinction between judicial and administrative warrants came to the fore on Sunday when immigration law enforcement raided a private home to make an arrest in Minneapolis, after clashing with protesters who confronted the heavily armed agents. Documents reviewed by The Associated Press revealed that the agents only had an administrative warrant — meaning there was no judge that authorized the raid on private property.

When asked, DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin didn't provide a legal justification for the forced entry and arrest of the man, who is a Liberian national with a deportation order from 2023. She said his arrest was part of the administration's efforts to arrest "the worst of the worst" and added that he had that a criminal history including "robbery, drug possession with the intent to sell, possession of a deadly weapon, malicious destruction and theft."

McLaughlin didn't specify whether he was convicted of any of those crimes, or whether his arrest was related to any criminal activity.

Vice president of policy at the National Immigration Law Center, Heidi Altman, said she couldn't comment on that specific raid, but said that generally an officer entering a home without consent or permission could result in serious consequences.

"That is not just an illegal arrest. It's numerous illegal actions by the officer themselves that could open up liability, not just for being sued, but potential criminal actions under state law as well," she explained.

But in the current political climate, Altman said, it isn't clear if there are any realistic avenues for accountability since the federal government would be responsible for investigating such a breach.

"There are layers of federal laws and regulations and policies prohibiting this kind of behavior. But then the second layer is: Is the federal government going to impose consequences?" she said.

On top of that, immigrants have less recourse after an illegal arrest or search, since the illegally obtained evidence can still be used in immigration court. It's called the exclusionary rule, Altman explained, and the consequences that the officer may face would not undo the immediate consequences immigrants could face if they are quickly deported.

"As those legal challenges come and people are facing very, very quick detentions and deportations on the basis of these illegal arrests, there's very little recourse in actual immigration court proceedings that allows people to have a judge disregard evidence or the actual arrest, even if it was done in this very

violent, illegal manner," Altman said.

'Know-your-rights' campaigns

ICE has long relied on "knock and talks" to make apprehensions, informally requesting residents to leave a home without giving any indication they plan to make an immigration arrest. As outlined in a 2020 lawsuit in which a federal judge found the practice illegal, officers tell their targets that they need them to step outside to answer a few questions. In one case, they told a woman that they were probation officers looking for her brother.

In response, activists, lawyers and local governments have launched "know-your-rights" campaigns around the country, attempting to educate people on the legal nuances of the extremely convoluted legal framework that is supposed to govern immigration law enforcement.

Many groups have published fact sheets and infographics on social media, while others facilitate meetings that go over constitutional protections that immigrants have — regardless of legal status — in interactions with federal agents.

Often groups will instruct immigrants to request to see a warrant before opening the door if an immigration officer knocks. The trainings also typically emphasize that an immigrant can refuse to open the door if law enforcement only has an administrative warrant.

## **New video shows the minutes before immigration officer fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis**

By JESSE BEDAYN Associated Press

A new video shows more of what happened before a federal immigration officer shot and killed a woman during an enforcement operation in Minneapolis, adding context to a shooting that has sparked national debate on whether the officer acted in self-defense or recklessly.

The video, which is 3 1/2 minutes long and was filmed by a bystander, was posted Sunday by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on X. It shows federal officers and vehicles on a snowy street as a car horn blares on and off, with the sounds of whistles adding to the cacophony.

The camera swings to the left, showing a red SUV sitting perpendicular and blocking part of the road, the woman inside, Renee Good, pressing the horn repeatedly. After over a minute, Good pulled the SUV back slightly, unblocking part of the road and appears to wave at cars to pass. Two vehicles drive past her down the street.

Good's wife is seen outside the red SUV, but the video doesn't clearly show where she was in the proceeding minutes. Then, after a blare from sirens, a dark truck with a small flashing light pulls to a stop a few feet from Good's SUV. Two officers exit the truck and walk toward Good's car just before the video goes dark.

Bystander videos released last week, shot from multiple angles, show what happened next.

A video filmed by the officer who fired at Good shows one officer ask Good to get out of the car and another tries to open her door. The officer who is filming circles around to the front of the vehicle.

Good reverses briefly, which places the officer who is filming in front of the driver's side of the vehicle. Good then turns the steering wheel toward the passenger side as an officer says again, "get out of the car." Almost simultaneously, her wife, standing on the passenger side and trying to open the door, shouts, "drive, baby, drive!"

The SUV pulls forward, the video veers up toward the sky and gunshots are heard.

Other footage of the shooting shows the officer who fired holstering his gun, then a few seconds of silence before Good's SUV crashes into a parked car.

A woman who appears to be Good's wife runs toward the crash, as the officer who fired walks in the same direction. Bystanders begin screaming.

## FBI says arson suspect targeted Mississippi synagogue because it's a Jewish house of worship

By SOPHIE BATES, JEFF MARTIN and MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — A suspect in an arson fire at a synagogue that was bombed by the Ku Klux Klan decades ago admitted to targeting the historic institution because it's a Jewish house of worship and confessed what he had done to his father, who turned him in to authorities after observing burn marks on his son's ankles, hands and face, the FBI said Monday.

Stephen Pittman was charged with maliciously damaging or destroying a building by means of fire or an explosive. The 19-year-old suspect confessed to lighting a fire inside the building, which he referred to as "the synagogue of Satan," according to an FBI affidavit filed in U.S. District Court in Mississippi on Monday.

At a first appearance hearing Monday in federal court, a public defender was appointed for Pittman, who attended via video conference call from a hospital bed. Both of his hands were visibly bandaged. He told the judge that he was a high school graduate and had three semesters of college.

Prosecutors said he could face five to 20 years in prison if convicted. When the judge read him his rights, Pittman said, "Jesus Christ is Lord."

Pittman is scheduled to appear in court for a preliminary and detention hearing on Jan. 20.

Mike Scott, the public defender representing Pittman, did not immediately return The Associated Press' request for comment late Monday.

"This news puts a face and name to this tragedy, but does not change our resolve to proudly — even defiantly — continue Jewish life in Jackson in the face of hatred," the Beth Israel Congregation wrote in a statement.

Attorney General Pam Bondi said she has instructed prosecutors to seek "severe penalties," according to a statement provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi,

A crime captured on video

The fire ripped through the Beth Israel Congregation in Jackson shortly after 3 a.m. on Saturday. No congregants or firefighters were injured. Security camera video released Monday by the synagogue showed a masked and hooded man using a gas can to pour liquid on the floor and a couch in the building's lobby.

The weekend fire badly damaged the 165-year-old synagogue's library and administrative offices. Five Torahs — the sacred scrolls with the text of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible — located inside the sanctuary were being assessed for smoke damage. Two Torahs inside the library, where the most severe damage was done, were destroyed. One Torah that survived the Holocaust was behind glass and was not damaged in the fire, according to the congregation.

The suspect's father contacted the FBI and said his son had confessed to setting the building on fire. Pittman had texted his father a photo of the rear of the synagogue before the fire, with the message, "There's a furnace in the back." His father had pleaded with his son to return home, but "Pittman replied back by saying he was due for a homerun and 'I did my research,'" the affidavit said.

During an interview with investigators, Pittman said he had stopped at a gas station on his way to the synagogue to purchase the gas used in the fire. He also took the license plate off his vehicle at the gas station. He used an ax to break out a window of the synagogue, poured gas inside and used a torch lighter to start the fire, the FBI affidavit said.

The FBI later recovered a burned cellphone believed to be Pittman's and took possession of a hand torch that a congregant had found.

A congregation determined to rebuild

Yellow police tape on Monday blocked off the entrances to the synagogue building, which was surrounded by broken glass and soot. Bouquets of flowers were laid on the ground at the building's entrance — including one with a note that said, "I'm so very sorry."

The congregation's president, Zach Shemper, has vowed to rebuild the synagogue and said several churches had offered their spaces for worship during the rebuilding process. Shemper attended Pittman's court appearance Monday but didn't comment afterward.

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With just several hundred people in the community, it has never been particularly easy being Jewish in Mississippi's capital city, but members of Beth Israel have taken special pride in keeping their traditions alive in the heart of the Deep South.

Nearly every aspect of Jewish life in Jackson could be found under Beth Israel's roof. The midcentury modern building not only housed the congregation but also the Jewish Federation, a nonprofit provider of social services and philanthropy that is the hub of Jewish society in most U.S. cities. The building also is home to the Institute of Southern Jewish Life, which provides resources to Jewish communities in 13 southern states. A Holocaust memorial was outdoors behind the synagogue building.

Because Jewish children throughout the South have attended summer camp for decades in Utica, Mississippi, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) southwest of Jackson, many retain a fond connection to the state and its Jewish community.

"Jackson is the capital city, and that synagogue is the capital synagogue in Mississippi," said Rabbi Gary Zola, a historian of American Jewry who taught at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. "I would call it the flagship, though when we talk about places like New York and Los Angeles, it probably seems like Hicksville."

A rabbi who stood up to the KKK

Beth Israel as a congregation was founded in 1860 and acquired its first property, where it built Mississippi's first synagogue, after the Civil War. In 1967, the synagogue moved to its current location.

It was bombed by local KKK members not long after relocating, and then two months after that, the home of the synagogue's leader, Rabbi Perry Nussbaum, was bombed because of his outspoken opposition to segregation and racism.

At a time when opposition to racial segregation could be dangerous in the Deep South, many Beth Israel congregants hoped the rabbi would just stay quiet, but Nussbaum was unshakable in believing he was doing the right thing by supporting civil rights, Zola said.

"He had this strong, strong sense of justice," Zola said.

## Wall Street ticks to records after shaking off worries about Trump's feud with the Fed

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street ticked to more records Monday after bouncing back from losses taken because of worries about the worsening feud between the White House and the Federal Reserve, one that experts warn could lead to higher inflation in the future.

The S&P 500 tacked 0.2% onto its prior all-time high set on Friday. The Dow Jones Industrial Average recovered an early loss of nearly 500 points and added 86, or 0.2%, to its own record, while the Nasdaq composite gained 0.3%.

Some nervousness was still evident in the market, though, amid concern that the Fed may be on the path to less independence in setting interest rates to keep inflation under control. Prices for gold and other investments that tend to do well when investors are nervous rose, while the value of the U.S. dollar dipped against other currencies.

Walmart helped drive the U.S. stock market higher despite the worries. It climbed 3% after learning that its stock will join the widely followed Nasdaq 100 index. Google also said Sunday that it's expanding the shopping features in its AI chatbot by teaming up with Walmart and several other big retailers.

Google's parent company, Alphabet, rose 1% to bring its total market value above \$4 trillion following a torrid run aided by its artificial-intelligence offerings.

They helped offset losses for a slight majority of stocks within the S&P 500. Leading them all were credit card companies after President Donald Trump threatened moves that could eat into their profit.

Synchrony Financial fell 8.4%, Capital One Financial sank 6.4% and American Express dropped 4.3%. They weakened after Trump said he wanted to put a 10% cap on credit card interest rates for a year.

But it was a separate move involving Washington that grabbed the most attention across financial markets. Over the weekend, the Federal Reserve's chair said the U.S. Department of Justice subpoenaed the

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Fed and threatened a criminal indictment over his testimony about renovations at its headquarters.

Through an unusual video statement released on Sunday, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said his testimony and the renovations are "pretexts" for the threat of criminal charges, which he said is really "a consequence of the Federal Reserve setting interest rates based on our best assessment of what will serve the public, rather than following the preferences of the President."

The Fed has been locked in a feud with Trump, who has loudly called for lower interest rates to make borrowing cheaper for U.S. households and companies and give the economy a kickstart. The Fed did lower its main interest rate three times last year and indicated more cuts may arrive this year, but it's moved deliberately enough that Trump has nicknamed Powell "Too Late."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters Monday that Trump did not direct his Justice Department to investigate Powell.

The Fed has traditionally operated separately from the rest of Washington, making its decisions without having to bend to political whims. Such independence, the thinking goes, gives it the freedom to keep interest rates high when necessary to drive down high inflation, even if it slows the economy and frustrates politicians looking to please voters.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury briefly rose to 4.21%, up from 4.18% late Friday, amid concerns that a less independent Fed could lead to higher inflation over the longer term. But it later eased back to 4.18%.

The worries also hit the value of the U.S. dollar, which slipped 0.4% against the euro and 0.6% against the Swiss franc.

Analysts said financial markets shook off the concerns about the Fed's independence for several potential reasons. Traders could see "a limitation to the White House's success in getting its way," according to Thierry Wizman, a strategist at Macquarie Group, because Congress could deny confirmation of any nominees for the Fed from the White House.

"It is now the independence and credibility of the Department of Justice that are in question," Sen. Thom Tillis, a Republican from North Carolina, said on social media. "I will oppose the confirmation of any nominee for the Fed—including the upcoming Fed Chair vacancy—until this legal matter is fully resolved."

Trump has already criticized the Fed sharply, and he's trying at the moment to fire Fed Gov. Lisa Cook, but the Fed's rate-setting committee still seems to be acting independently.

Plus, this latest move could encourage Powell to stay on at the Fed as a governor until his term expires in 2028, even though his term as chair will end in May, said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

"With the political pressure on the Fed, he may choose to stay on as a governor out of spite," he said. "It would deprive President Trump of the ability to stack the board with another appointee."

On Wall Street, Abercrombie & Fitch dropped 17.7% after the retailer gave a forecasted range for profit in the final quarter of 2025 whose midpoint fell short of analysts' expectations. Its forecast for growth in revenue also fell shy of Wall Street's.

Other retailers that sell clothes in malls also struggled, including drops of 12.3% for Urban Outfitters and 3.5% for American Eagle Outfitters.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 10.99 points to 6,977.27. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 86.13 to 49,590.20, and the Nasdaq composite gained 62.56 to 23,733.90.

The price of gold rose 2.5% to a record settlement of \$4,614.70 per ounce

In stock markets abroad, indexes were mixed across Europe following a stronger showing in Asia. Stocks jumped 1.4% in Hong Kong and 1.1% in Shanghai for two of the world's bigger gains following reports that Chinese leaders were preparing more help for the economy.

## Thousands of nurses go on strike at several major New York City hospitals

By TED SHAFFREY, JENNIFER PELTZ and DAVID R. MARTIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Thousands of nurses in New York City went on strike Monday after negotiations through the weekend yielded no breakthroughs in disputes with three major hospital systems over staffing, benefits and other issues.

"Nurses on strike! ... Fair contract now!" nurses shouted on a picket line outside NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital's campus in Upper Manhattan. Others picketed at hospitals in the Mount Sinai and Montefiore systems, where a 2023 nursing strike fed off pandemic-era frustrations and led to a deal to boost staffing and pay.

"And now, it's how they're treating us: They don't want to give us a fair contract, and they don't want to give us safe staffing, and now they're trying to roll back on our benefits," emergency department nurse Tristan Castillo said Monday outside Mount Sinai West.

About 15,000 nurses are involved in the strike, according to their union, the New York State Nurses Association. The hospitals remained open, hiring droves of temporary nurses to try to fill the labor gap.

The strike involves private, nonprofit hospitals, not city-run ones. But the walkout, which the union casts as lifesaving essential workers fighting hospital executives who make millions of dollars a year, could be a significant early test of Mayor Zohran Mamdani's new administration.

The democratic socialist campaigned on a pro-worker platform and struck a similar note while visiting nurses on the NewYork-Presbyterian picket line Monday.

"These executives are not having difficulty making ends meet," said Mamdani, who extolled nurses' work and said they were seeking "dignity, respect and the fair pay and treatment that they deserve. They should settle for nothing less."

Some other Democratic city and state politicians also visited striking nurses, while New York Gov. Kathy Hochul sent state health officials to the hospitals to keep watch over patient care. She called in a statement for the sides to negotiate a deal that "recognizes the essential work nurses do."

The strike, which comes during a severe flu season, could potentially force the hospitals to transfer patients, cancel procedures or divert ambulances, though the medical centers insisted they were prepared and committed to meet patients' needs. The walkout could also put a strain on other city hospitals if patients avoid the medical centers hit by the strike.

The nurses' demands vary by hospital, but staffing levels are a top issue. The union says hospitals have given nurses unmanageable workloads.

Nurses also want better security measures in the workplace, citing incidents such as an episode last week when a man with a sharp object barricaded himself in a Brooklyn hospital room and was then killed by police.

The union also wants limitations on hospitals' use of artificial intelligence.

The hospitals say that they've improved staffing in recent years and that the union's demands overall are too costly.

Mount Sinai said the union was making "extreme economic demands." Montefiore spokesperson Joe Solmonese said the union was pressing "\$3.6 billion in reckless demands," including exorbitant raises.

The union didn't immediately respond to a question about its salary proposal and current wage levels. According to the hospitals, unionized registered nurses now average \$165,000 a year at Montefiore, \$162,000 at Mount Sinai, and \$163,000 at NewYork-Presbyterian's Columbia University Irving Medical Center; none of the numbers includes benefits.

Montefiore says the union's asks would raise the average to \$220,000 in three years. Mount Sinai says the average there would hit \$275,000.

After the nurses gave notice Jan. 2 of the looming strike, the hospitals vowed to "do whatever is necessary to minimize disruptions" and said they were prepared to deliver care no matter how long the strike lasts. Mount Sinai said in a statement Monday it had lined up 1,400 temporary nurses.

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New York-Presbyterian accused the union of staging a strike to “create disruption.”

“We’re ready to keep negotiating a fair and reasonable contract that reflects our respect for our nurses and the critical role they play, and also recognizes the challenging realities of today’s healthcare environment,” the hospital said.

Each medical center is negotiating with the union independently. Several other private hospitals in and near New York City reached deals in recent days to avert a possible strike.

The three-day strike in 2023 resulted in a deal raising pay 19% over three years at Mount Sinai and Montefiore. The pact also included staffing improvements, though the union and hospitals now disagree about how much progress has been made, or whether the hospitals are retreating from staffing guarantees.

The sides also dispute whether the hospitals are trying to reduce health benefits. Mount Sinai, for instance, says its proposals would cut costs without changing coverage.

## Bringing charges against the Fed: What we do (and don’t) know

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has dramatically escalated his confrontation with the Federal Reserve, his Justice Department investigating and threatening a criminal indictment of the independent central bank and serving it with subpoenas.

The dispute is ostensibly about Fed Chair Jerome Powell’s testimony to Congress in June over the cost of a massive renovation of Fed buildings. But in a statement Sunday, Powell, abandoning his previous attempt to ignore Trump’s relentless criticism, called the administration’s threat of criminal charges “pretexts” in the president’s campaign to seize control of U.S. interest rate policy from the Fed’s technocrats.

Trump has repeatedly criticized Powell and the Fed for not moving faster to cut rates. Economists warn that a politicized Fed that caves in to the president’s demands will damage its credibility as an inflation fighter and likely lead investors to demand higher rates before investing in U.S. Treasuries.

Here’s what to know about the dispute:

The threat of charges arises from a \$2.5 billion Fed renovation project

The \$2.5 billion renovation of two Fed buildings in Washington dates back to Trump’s first term and attracted little attention for years. But over the summer, the administration began to complain about cost overruns in the project — criticisms that coincided with Trump’s increasing pressure on the Fed to slash interest rates to stimulate the economy.

Taxpayers are not footing the bill for the Fed renovations directly. Unlike other government agencies, which receive taxpayer money appropriated by Congress, the central bank is self-financed, drawing on interest from its massive holdings of Treasury debt.

The Fed says its headquarters, known as the Marriner S. Eccles building, desperately needed an upgrade because its electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems, among others, are nearly obsolete; some date back to the building’s construction in the 1930s.

The Fed is removing asbestos, lead and other hazardous elements from the building and installing modern electrical and communications systems. The H-shaped building, named after a Fed chair from the 1930s and ’40s, is located near some of Washington’s highest-profile monuments. The central bank is also renovating a building next door that it acquired in 2018.

The Fed has said: “The construction project identified key architectural features to preserve the historic integrity of the buildings, such as stonework, including marble, façades, meeting rooms, and other spaces. Historic preservation work in the Eccles Building also includes elevators that are original to the building, and historic conference rooms.”

The costs of the Fed overhaul have ballooned

Originally budgeted at about \$1.9 billion, the project’s costs have swelled by \$600 million.

The Fed cites many reasons for the greater expense. Construction costs, including for materials and labor, rose sharply during the inflation spike of 2021 and 2022. The project required more asbestos removal than expected. And Washington’s local restrictions on building heights forced it to build underground,

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which is pricier.

Because of the rising costs, the Fed's board canceled planned renovations of a third building in 2024. The Fed says the renovations will reduce costs "over time" because it will be able to pack its 3,000 Washington-based employees into fewer buildings and pay less rent.

At a Senate Banking Committee hearing in June, Chairman Tim Scott, a South Carolina Republican, claimed that renovation included "rooftop terraces, custom elevators that open into VIP dining rooms, white marble finishes, and even a private art collection." In his testimony, Powell disputed those details, saying "there's no new marble. ... there are no special elevators."

In July, Trump visited the building site and, while standing next to Powell, overstated the cost of the renovation. Still, Trump downplayed concerns later that day, saying "they have to get it done ... Look, there's always Monday morning quarterbacks. I don't want to be that. I want to help them get it finished."

When asked if the overruns amounted to a firing offense, Trump said, "I don't want to put that in this category."

But at a December 29 news conference, Trump said his administration would "probably" sue Powell for "gross incompetence" on the cost of renovations, calling it the "highest price of construction per square foot in the history of the world."

The Supreme Court signaled last year that Trump can't fire Powell simply over disagreements about interest rates. But he could do so legally "for cause," such as misconduct or dereliction of duty.

The dispute seemed to have died down before flaring up again

The controversy over the renovations died down after the summer.

But Trump kept up his pressure on the Fed. In August, he said he was firing Fed governor Lisa Cook, an unprecedented step arising from allegations of mortgage fraud, which she has denied. Cook has sued to keep her job and courts have ruled she can remain in her seat while the case plays out. The Supreme Court will hear arguments in the case Jan. 21.

Trump has repeatedly used investigations — which might or might not lead to an actual indictment — to attack other political rivals, including New York Attorney General Letitia James and James Comey, the former FBI director.

Speaking briefly NBC News Sunday, Trump claimed that he knew nothing about the investigation into Powell. When asked if it is intended to pressure the Fed chair on rates, Trump said, "No. I wouldn't even think of doing it that way."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that Trump did not direct his Justice Department to investigate Powell.

The subpoenas come at an unusual moment when Trump was teasing the likelihood of announcing his nominee this month to succeed Powell as the Fed chair. While Powell's term as chair ends in May, he has a separate term as a Fed governor until January 2028.

Trump has been criticized for his own renovations

Trump has come under fire for his own decision to tear down the facade of the East Wing of the White House to put in a \$250 million ballroom.

The 90,000-square-foot ballroom will dwarf the main White House itself: The Executive Mansion occupies just 55,000 square feet. Trump says the ballroom will accommodate 999 people.

Like the Fed's project, Trump's ballroom won't cost taxpayers anything: It is being privately funded by "many generous Patriots, Great American Companies, and, yours truly," Trump has said on social media.

The president argues that the White House needs a large entertaining space. He has complained about the capacity of the East Room, which can hold 200 people and is currently the largest space in the White House. He also objects to the practice of past presidents hosting state dinners and other events in tents on the South Lawn.

## Malaysia and Indonesia become the first countries to block Musk's Grok over sexualized AI images

By EILEEN NG and EDNA TARIGAN Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia and Indonesia have become the first countries to block Grok, the artificial intelligence chatbot developed by Elon Musk's company xAI, as concerns grow among global authorities that it is being misused to generate sexually explicit and nonconsensual images.

There is growing scrutiny of generative AI tools that can produce realistic images, sound and text, and concern that existing safeguards are failing to prevent their abuse. The Grok chatbot, accessed through Musk's social media platform X, has been criticized for generating manipulated images, including depictions of women in bikinis or sexually explicit poses, as well as images involving children.

"The government sees nonconsensual sexual deepfakes as a serious violation of human rights, dignity and the safety of citizens in the digital space," Indonesian Communication and Digital Affairs Minister Meutya Hafid said in a statement.

Scrutiny of Grok is growing, including in the European Union, India, France and the United Kingdom, which said Monday it was moving to criminalize "nudification apps." Britain's media regulator also launched an investigation into whether Grok broke the law by allowing users to share sexualized images of children.

Last week, Grok limited image generation and editing to paying users following a global backlash over sexualized deepfakes of people, but critics say it didn't fully address the problem.

An emailed request for comment by The Associated Press to xAI resulted in an automated reply from the media support address which stated, "Legacy Media Lies." This was the same message received from a different address when asked for comment regarding the global backlash.

Asian action aimed at Grok

Regulators in the two Southeast Asian nations said existing controls weren't preventing the creation and spread of fake pornographic content, particularly involving women and minors. Indonesia's government temporarily blocked access to Grok on Saturday, followed by Malaysia on Sunday.

Initial findings showed Grok lacks effective safeguards to stop users from creating and distributing pornographic content based on real photos of Indonesian residents, Alexander Sabar, director-general of digital space supervision, said in a statement. He said such practices risk violating privacy and image rights when photos are manipulated or shared without consent.

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission noted "repeated misuse" of the tool to generate obscene, sexually explicit and nonconsensual manipulated images, including content involving women and minors.

The regulator said notices were issued this month to X Corp. and xAI demanding stronger safeguards.

"The restriction is imposed as a preventive and proportionate measure while legal and regulatory processes are ongoing," it said, adding that access will remain blocked until effective safeguards are put in place.

Investigation launched in U.K.

Launched in 2023, Grok is free to use on X. An image generator feature, Grok Imagine, was added last year and included a so-called spicy mode that can generate adult content.

The U.K.'s media regulator said it launched an investigation into whether Grok violated its duty to protect people from illegal content. The regulator, Ofcom, said Grok-generated images of children being sexualized or people being undressed may amount to pornography or child sexual abuse material.

Technology Secretary Liz Kendall called the AI-generated images "weapons of abuse" and said the center-left Labour government would target the source of the problem by making it a crime for companies to supply tools to create nude images without consent.

Kendall said X could face a possible Ofcom fine of up to 10% of its qualifying global revenue depending on the investigation's outcome and a possible court order blocking access to the site.

"They can choose to act sooner to ensure this abhorrent and illegal material cannot be shared on their platform," Kendall said in Parliament.

Musk over the weekend called the British government "fascist" and said it is trying stifle free speech.

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## Arizona strengthens hold on No. 1 in AP Top 25; Vanderbilt cracks top 10

By AARON BEARD AP Basketball Writer

Arizona tightened its hold on the top spot in The Associated Press Top 25 men's college basketball poll on Monday while Vanderbilt's unbeaten season has landed the Commodores in the top 10.

A week ago, Arizona led then-No. 2 Michigan by a single point for the top spot to barely avoid what would have been only the second-ever tie at No. 1 in the poll's 78-year history. But with Wisconsin handing the Wolverines their first loss, the Wildcats (16-0) became the easy choice at the top by earning 60 of 61 first-place votes in the latest poll.

Iowa State got the other first-place vote and moved up one spot to No. 2, followed by UConn. Michigan fell two spots to No. 4, though the metrics analysts still prefer Michigan. The Wolverines held the top spot in a 1-2 pairing with the Wildcats in analytics rankings by KenPom, Bart Torvik and Evan Miyakawa on Monday afternoon.

The top tier

No. 5 Purdue, No. 6 Duke and No. 7 Houston held their spots from last week, followed by the latest highlights for surprise unbeaten Nebraska and Vanderbilt.

Nebraska (16-0) spent a second straight week in the top 10 and continued its season-long climb by moving up two spots to No. 8, matching that program's all-time highest ranking set in February 1966. Gonzaga was ninth, followed by the Commodores to round out the top 10.

Vanderbilt (16-0) has not been in the top 10 since the 2011-12 preseason poll.

Rising

Virginia (14-2) continued its successful first run under Ryan Odom by making the week's biggest rise, jumping seven spots to No. 16 after home wins against California and Stanford in Atlantic Coast Conference play.

No. 13 Illinois and No. 14 North Carolina each climbed three spots, while a total of seven teams moved up from last week's position.

Falling

Alabama (11-5) had the week's biggest fall, tumbling five spots to No. 18 after a loss at Vanderbilt followed by a home stumble against Texas.

No. 21 Georgia and No. 24 Tennessee each slid three spots. In all, eight Top 25 teams dropped from last week's poll.

Welcome to the poll

Defending national champion Florida is back in the poll at No. 19, coming after the preseason No. 3-ranked team spent one week out of the rankings. The Gators joined three other new additions to the poll in No. 22 Clemson, No. 23 Utah State and No. 25 Seton Hall.

Clemson and Utah State are in the poll for the first time this season after each cracked the AP Top 25 last year. It is Seton Hall's first AP Top 25 appearance since it was No. 20 in January 2022.

Farewell (for now)

Kansas fell out of the poll for a second time this season. The Jayhawks were ranked No. 19 in the preseason and were unranked for one week in November, then fell out again from No. 22 after a weekend loss at West Virginia.

Iowa (No. 19), SMU (No. 24) and UCF (No. 25) were the other three teams to fall out of the poll.

Conference watch

The Southeastern Conference had a national-best six ranked teams, with five ranked 17th or lower. The Big 12, Big Ten and ACC each had five ranked teams, with the Big 12 and Big Ten each having all their teams inside the top 15.

The Big East was next with two ranked teams, following by one each for the West Coast and Mountain West conferences.

## What to know about the state gerrymandering battle kick-started by Trump

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

After a frenetic few months of congressional redistricting efforts, President Donald Trump's plan to re-shape voting districts for partisan advantage ahead of this year's midterm elections stands at an important juncture.

Will Republican- and Democratic-led states ramp up their remapping of U.S. House districts as new legislative sessions get underway? Or will the mid-decade redistricting frenzy fade away following Indiana's resounding rejection of Trump's pressure-packaged campaign?

"We're at a crossroads to see if the mid-decade redistricting movement gains more speed or was simply an attempt by Donald Trump to impact elections that in many states fizzled," said Jeffrey Wice, director of the Elections, Census and Redistricting Institute at New York Law School.

Virginia and Florida are two key states to watch. Democrats who lead Virginia and Republicans who lead Florida could try to swing multiple seats in their party's favor by an aggressive redistricting. Virginia's legislative session begins Wednesday. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis plans to call a special session in April on congressional redistricting.

What happens next in Democratic-led Illinois and Maryland and in Kansas' Republican-led Legislature also could affect the GOP's ability to maintain a narrow House majority in the face of political headwinds that typically favor the party out of power in midterm elections. Key lawmakers in all three of those states remain opposed to redistricting.

A gerrymandering wave hits a wall

Trump kick-started an unusual redistricting plan in July by calling on Texas Republicans to redraw their congressional map to create more favorable districts for the party — even though there was no new census data to base it upon. That triggered a mid-decade redistricting battle the likes of which has not been common since the late 1800s.

Texas, Missouri and North Carolina all approved new Republican-friendly House districts. Ohio, which had to redistrict because of its state constitution, used the opportunity to enact a more favorable House map for Republicans.

But Ohio's action on Oct. 31 marked a turning point. That same day, Virginia's Democratic-led legislature took a first step toward redistricting. Then in November, California voters approved new House districts helping Democrats, Kansas Republicans dropped plans for a special session on redistricting, and a Utah judge adopted a new House map that benefits Democrats.

Trump suffered a stunning setback Dec. 11, when Indiana's Republican-led Senate defeated a redistricting plan that could have helped the GOP win all nine of the state's U.S. House seats, up from their current seven.

The net result from the 2025 jockeying could be three additional seats for Republicans. But even that is in question, because legal challenges remain in some states, and there is no guarantee that parties will win the districts they redraw.

Virginia may be next up on redistricting

When the Virginia General Assembly begins its annual session, the agenda will include a proposed constitutional amendment allowing mid-decade redistricting in response to other states.

The amendment, which received first-round approval in the fall, would also need to pass a statewide vote before the new districts could be implemented. Quick action would be necessary to get all that accomplished in time for candidates to run in redrawn districts later this year.

Democrats, who currently hold six of the state's 11 U.S. House seats, have not unveiled what those new districts would look like. But some have talked of trying to gain as many as four additional seats.

Virginia Gov.-elect Abigail Spanberger has embraced the redistricting effort but has not committed to a particular plan.

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"I will look at any map that is kind of reasonable and keeping communities compact and together," Spanberger, a Democrat, told The Associated Press. "But ultimately, it's up to the people of Virginia to choose whether or not to move forward with the referendum."

Florida plans an April redistricting debate

Republicans currently hold 20 of Florida's 28 U.S. House seats. That advantage could grow if districts are reshaped during a special session.

Although Florida's regular legislative session starts Tuesday, DeSantis said he is waiting until April to call a special redistricting session to allow time for a possible U.S. Supreme Court ruling on a key provision of the federal Voting Rights Act. If the court rules in a Louisiana case that race cannot be the predominant factor in creating voting districts, it could open the way for several Republican-led states to redraw districts represented by Black or Hispanic lawmakers who are Democrats.

DeSantis said the high court's ruling could affect "at least one or two" Florida districts.

But any redistricting that aids Republicans could face a court challenge. A voter-approved Florida constitutional provision prohibits drawing district boundaries to favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent.

Resistance remains in several targeted states

Some Democrats seeking to counter Trump have urged lawmakers in Illinois and Maryland to redraw their already heavily Democratic districts to try to gain one additional seat in each state. But the plans appear to lack traction as legislative sessions begin this week in both states.

Illinois House Speaker Pro Tem Kam Buckner said "there is no active push" for congressional redistricting.

"There is no appetite to reopen something that will consume enormous time, energy and, frankly, political capital without a compelling justification," Buckner, a Democrat, told the AP.

Democratic Maryland Gov. Wes Moore has created a special commission to recommend a new congressional map. But Democratic Senate President Bill Ferguson remains opposed and insists that a majority of residents also do not want new districts.

In Kansas, some Republicans want to redraw U.S. House districts to try to gain an additional seat. But House Republicans have failed to gain the two-thirds support needed to override a likely veto by Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly.

House Speaker Dan Hawkins told reporters that he has no plans to hold a vote on congressional redistricting during the annual legislative session that starts Monday.

"I do not have the votes," Hawkins said.

## **Paramount's next target in hostile takeover bid of Warner Bros. is a board of its own making**

NEW YORK (AP) — Paramount Skydance is taking another step in its hostile takeover bid of Warner Bros. Discovery, saying Monday that it will name its own slate of directors before the next shareholder meeting of the Hollywood studio.

Paramount also filed a suit in Delaware Chancery Court seeking to compel Warner Bros. to disclose to shareholders how it values its bid and the competing offer from Netflix.

Warner Bros. is in the middle of a bidding war between Paramount and Netflix. Warner's leadership has repeatedly rebuffed overtures from Skydance-owned Paramount — and urged shareholders to back the sale of its streaming and studio business to Netflix for \$72 billion. Paramount, meanwhile, has made efforts to sweeten its \$77.9 billion hostile offer for the entire company.

Last week, Warner Bros. Discovery said its board determined Paramount's offer is not in the best interests of the company or its shareholders. It again recommended shareholders support the Netflix deal.

David Ellison, the chairman and CEO of Paramount Skydance, said Monday that it's committed to seeing through its tender offer. "We do not undertake any of these actions lightly," he said in a letter to shareholders of Warner Bros.

Warner Bros. has yet to schedule its annual meeting or a special meeting to consider the Netflix offer, and Paramount did not name any potential candidates for the board.

## 'Hamnet' and 'One Battle After Another' take top honors at Golden Globes

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

Paul Thomas Anderson's ragtag revolutionary saga "One Battle After Another" took top honors at Sunday's 83rd Golden Globes in the comedy category, while Chloé Zhao's Shakespeare drama "Hamnet" pulled off an upset over "Sinners" to win best film, drama.

"One Battle After Another" won best film, comedy, supporting female actor for Teyana Taylor and best director and best screenplay for Anderson. He became just the second filmmaker to sweep director, screenplay and film, as a producer, at the Globes. Only Oliver Stone, for "Born on the Fourth of July," managed the same feat.

In an awards ceremony that went almost entirely as expected, the night's final award was the most surprising. While "One Battle After Another" has been the clear front-runner this awards season, most have pegged Ryan Coogler's Jim Crow-era vampire thriller as its closest competition.

But "Hamnet," a speculative drama about William and Agnes Shakespeare based on Maggie O'Farrell's bestseller, won in the dramatic category shortly after its star, Jessie Buckley, won best female actor in a drama.

It was a banner night for Warner Bros., the studio behind "One Battle After Another" and "Sinners." Warner Bros. Discovery has agreed to be sold to Netflix in an \$83 billion deal. Paramount Skydance has appealed to shareholders with its own rival offer.

In his speech after winning best director, Anderson praised Warner co-chief Michael DeLuca.

"He said he wanted to run a studio one day and let filmmakers make whatever they want," said Anderson. "That's how you get 'Sinners.' That's how you get a 'Weapons.' That's how you get 'One Battle After Another.'"

The final awards brought to, or near, the stage a handful of the most talented filmmakers together in Anderson, Zhao and Coogler — plus Steven Spielberg, a producer of "Hamnet." Regardless of who won what, it was a heartening moment of solidarity between them, with a shared sense of purpose. Zhao fondly recalled being at Sundance Labs with Coogler when they were each starting out.

"As students, let's keep our hearts open and let's keep seeing each other and allowing each other to be seen," said Zhao, while Coogler smiled from the front row.

"Sinners" won for best score and cinematic and box-office achievement. The win for box office and cinematic achievement, over franchise films like "Avatar: Fire and Ash," was notable for Coogler's film, a movie that some reports labeled a qualified success on its release.

Yet "Sinners" ultimately grossed \$278 million domestically and \$368 million worldwide, making it the highest grossing original film in 15 years.

"I just want to thank the audience for showing up," said Coogler. "It's means the world."

Coming off years of scandal and subsequent rehabilitation, the Globes and host Nikki Glaser put on a star-studded ceremony that saw wins for the streaming sensation "KPop Demon Hunters" (best animated film, song), a meta triumph for Seth Rogen's "The Studio" and an inaugural award for podcasting that went to Amy Poehler's "Good Hang."

Many of the Oscar favorites won. Timothee Chalamet won his first Golden Globe, for "Marty Supreme," after four previous nominations. The 30-year-old is poised to win his first Oscar. Fellow nominees like Leonardo DiCaprio and George Clooney stood to applaud his win.

"My dad instilled in me a spirit of gratitude growing up: Always be grateful for what you have," said Chalamet. "It's allowed me to leave this ceremony in the past empty handed, my head held high, grateful just to be here. I'd be lying if I didn't say those moments didn't make this moment that much sweeter."

Glaser comes out swinging

The Globes, held at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, got underway with a pointedly political opening from host Nikki Glaser and an early award for the night's favorite, "One Battle After Another." Emceeding the show for the second straight year, Glaser kicked off the show with self-aware satire.

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"Yes, the Golden Globes, without a doubt the most important thing happening in the world right now," she said.

In a winning, rapid-fire opening monologue that landed some punch lines on the usual subjects — the age of Leonardo DiCaprio's dates, Kevin Hart's height — Glaser also dove right into some of her most topical material.

For the on-the-block Warner Bros., Glaser started the bidding at \$5. Referencing the Epstein files, she suggested best editing should go to the Justice Dept. The "most editing," however, she suggested deserved to go to Bari Weiss' new CBS News — a dig at the Paramount Skydance-owned network airing the Globes.

Globes mix glitz and gloom

Political tension and industrywide uncertainty were the prevailing moods heading into Sunday's awards. Hollywood is coming off a disappointing box-office year and now anxiously awaits the fate of one of its most storied studios, Warner Bros. Following the fatal shooting of Renee Good in Minneapolis by a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer, several attendees wore pins reading "Be Good."

The Globes, formerly presented by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, have no overlap or direct correlation with the Academy Awards. After being sold in 2023 to Todd Boehly's Eldridge Industries and Dick Clark Productions, a part of Penske Media, the Globes are voted on by around 400 people. The Oscars are voted on by more than 10,500 professionals.

But in the fluctuating undulations of awards season, a good speech at the Globes can boost an Oscar campaign. Winners Sunday included Rose Byrne ("If I Had Legs I'd Kick You") for best female actor in a comedy or musical, and Wagner Moura, the Brazilian star of "The Secret Agent," for best male actor in a drama. Kleber Mendonça Filho's period political thriller also won best international film.

"I think if trauma can be passed along generations, values can too," Moura said. "So this to the ones who are sticking with their values in difficult moments."

Other winners Sunday included the supporting actor front-runner, Stellan Skarsgård who won for the Norwegian family drama "Sentimental Value." It was the first major Hollywood movie award for the 74-year-old, a respected veteran actor who drew a standing ovation.

"I was not prepared for this because I, of course, thought I was too old," said Skarsgård.

'The Studio' and 'Adolescence' win

In the television awards, "The Pitt" took best drama series, while Noah Wyle won, too, brushing past his former "ER"-star Clooney on the way to the stage. Netflix's "Adolescence" won four awards: best limited series, and acting awards for Erin Doherty, Stephen Graham and 16-year-old Owen Cooper.

Other winners included Rhea Seehorn for "Pluribus" and Jean Smart for "Hacks."

But the most comically poignant award of the night went to "The Studio," the best comedy series winner. Seth Rogen's Hollywood satire memorably included an episode devoted to drama around a night at the Globes. (Sample line: "I remember when the red carpet of the Golden Globes actually stood for something.") Rogen also won best male actor in a comedy.

"This is so weird," Rogen said, chuckling. "We just pretended to do this. And now it's happening."

## Inside the Golden Globes: The reunions and moments the telecast didn't show

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — Emma Stone just seems more comfortable out of her seat than in it at awards shows.

At the Golden Globes Sunday, the "Bugonia" star held court with a rotating cast of companions, from Kirsten Dunst to Jennifer Lawrence — not in the main ballroom, but in a much smaller side room with a bar, a tea and coffee station and an ever-replenishing supply of decadent desserts, Nobu sushi, caviar cups and, perhaps most importantly, no television cameras.

Here's some more of what you didn't see on the Golden Globes broadcast.

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A "13 Going on 30" reunion

Before the show even started Jennifer Garner and Mark Ruffalo found one another near the bar and chatted for a while, not about plans for an impromptu "Thriller" dance, but about how Jay Penske, whose media empire includes Hollywood trade publications like "The Hollywood Reporter," "Variety" and "Deadline," also co-owns the Golden Globes. "Isn't that crazy," he said. Conversation then shifted to how he nearly missed his own category last year due to the security backup at the drop off area. He made it in, eventually, but just by a hair and had to take a seat in the aisle.

Moms, Band-Aids and dancing before the show

As the clock ticked down, Glen Powell escorted his mother into the ballroom, taking her arm to navigate the steps Alicia Silverstone just had to sidestep down. They spotted their table off to the side and Powell took a beat: "Want to hit the bar then?"

Silverstone was having her own issues though, and another mom soon came to the rescue: Mila Kunis was on a mission to deliver some Band-Aids to Silverstone, who thanked her profusely.

Elsewhere, Colman Domingo danced his way to his table. Teyana Taylor, flanked by security trying to rush her to her seat, snapped a selfie with a guest. Rose Byrne paused to hug Elle Fanning, while Universal chair Donna Langley spoke to Benicio Del Toro. And Kylie Jenner made her way in at the last minute, without Timothée Chalamet and with only minutes to showtime.

The awards get going, and some duck out of the room

Stone beelined to the side room after the first award, leading her "Bugonia" director Yorgos Lanthimos and costar Alicia Silverstone along with her. Stone and Lanthimos were deep in conversation, with brief interruptions requesting selfies.

Over at the coffee and tea station, Kirsten Dunst was halfway through pouring herself a cup of coffee when she paused and told husband Jesse Plemons "I don't want this, do you?" Her order instead was cranberry and some sparkling, which Plemons dutifully delivered to her throughout the night. Both were also excited to greet Wagner Moura.

After Stellan Skarsgård's win, Sean Penn made his way to the "Sentimental Value" table to give Renate Reinsve a big hug, while Megan Everett-Skarsgård, who had just gotten a very public boost from her husband, celebrated with Elle Fanning.

Seth Rogen, meanwhile, followed his first win of the evening with what looked like a very, very dirty martini.

The coolest bathroom crew

Ariana Grande led a glamorous train to the ladies' room, telling Jessie Buckley and Reinsve to "hold on to me!" The three made a brief stop to say hi to Tessa Thompson, and pose for a photo, before reaching their destination. In the line for the toilets, Grande sighed "phew we made it," holding up her voluminous gown as best she could. Still someone soon stepped on a part of it, apologizing profusely. Grande put her at ease immediately, though, insisting, "No, I'm the problem!"

Sushi, drinks and Emma Stone

Later in the show, Jennifer Lawrence made her way to the bar area where she hugged Jeremy Allen White before finding Stone, who put down her white wine and took her friend's face in her hands. They fluffed their hair when a photographer asked for a photo before they decided to take their own selfie as well.

Dunst spotted Lawrence nearby too, telling "The Testament of Ann Lee" filmmaker Mona Fastvold and Zoë Kravitz that she just wanted to say hi. Plemons soon arrived with three drinks to dole out. One was not for Lawrence, who joined the line to order her own drink.

In another part of the room, Gayle King, who snacked on a small bite of dessert, appeared to have procured a to-go box for the sushi and soon was next to the "KPop Demon Hunter" women picking some choice pieces.

Patrick Schwarzenegger took a good long look at the dessert table, before moving on, empty-handed to the sushi. No protein shakes here for the "White Lotus" star.

Small talk or dreaming up future collaborations?

Back inside the ballroom, the commercial breaks are a race to socialize. Everywhere you looked, there were interesting chats happening: Dwayne Johnson and Steven Spielberg, Macaulay Culkin and Parker

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Posey, Maya Rudolph and Selena Gomez, Johnson and Timothée Chalamet and Oscar Isaac and Ethan Hawke, to name a few.

Others stayed put in their seats as the night went on. Julia Roberts, George Clooney and Adam Sandler seemed content to hang at their very starry table. (Why get up when people can come to you instead?). Jessie Buckley let her "Hamnet" son, a tired-looking, Jacobi Jupe sit on her lap for a bit. And Eva Victor took a moment to reapply their lipstick before their category was up.

Burning questions for the after-parties

Were Marty Supreme (Chalamet) and The Smashing Machine (Johnson) talking about greatness? Was Sean Penn smoking inside the ballroom? What did Britt Lower whisper to Grande? And what did Grande then write on a napkin and pass to Lower? Why was Ethan Hawke's wife Ryan Hawke carrying a tote bag that said "Snoop's Survival Kit" and what was in it? And what did Stone say to the three Beverly Hills Police officers that made them laugh so much?

## Today in History: January 13

### Trump becomes first president to be impeached twice

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 13, the 13th day of 2026. There are 352 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Jan. 13, 2021, President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House over the violent Jan. 6 siege of the Capitol, becoming the only president twice impeached; 10 Republicans joined Democrats in voting to impeach Trump on a charge of "incitement of insurrection." (Trump would again be acquitted by the Senate in a vote after his term was over.)

Also on this date:

In 1733, James Oglethorpe and some 120 English colonists arrived at Charleston, South Carolina, while en route to settle in present-day Georgia.

In 1794, President George Washington approved a measure adding two stars and two stripes to the American flag, following the admission of Vermont and Kentucky to the Union. (The number of stripes was later reduced to the original 13.)

In 1941, a law took effect affirming that those born in Puerto Rico are granted U.S. birthright citizenship.

In 1979, singer Donny Hathaway died in a fall from a hotel window in New York. He was 34. Hathaway was known for his duets with Roberta Flack and the holiday song "This Christmas."

In 1982, an Air Florida Boeing 737 crashed into Washington, D.C.'s 14th Street Bridge and plunged into the Potomac River shortly after takeoff from Washington National Airport during a snowstorm, killing 78 people, including four motorists on the bridge; four passengers and a flight attendant survived.

In 1990, L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia became the nation's first elected Black governor as he took the oath of office in Richmond, the state's capital.

In 1992, Japan apologized for forcing tens of thousands of Korean women to serve as sex slaves for its soldiers during World War II, citing newly uncovered documents that showed the Japanese army had a role in abducting the so-called "comfort women."

In 2012, the Italian cruise ship Costa Concordia slammed into a reef and capsized in shallow water while maneuvering off the coast of Italy, killing 32 of the 4,200 people aboard.

Today's birthdays: Golf Hall of Famer Mark O'Meara is 69. Actor Julia Louis-Dreyfus is 65. Country singer Trace Adkins is 64. Actor Patrick Dempsey is 60. TV producer-writer Shonda Rhimes is 56. Actor Orlando Bloom is 49. Actor Liam Hemsworth is 36. Actor Natalia Dyer is 31. NHL center Connor McDavid is 29.