

# Groton Daily Independent

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**The city council meeting scheduled for last night was postponed to next Tuesday due to lack of quorum.**

**Wednesday, June 3**

Senior Menu: Hot beef combo, mashed potatoes with gravy, carrots, fruit.

Groton Chamber meeting, noon, City Hall

**Groton Daily Independent**

**PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445**

**Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460**

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Dear God,



Please protect  
us from the  
threat of

**STORMS**  
today.

Keep us safe,  
our homes  
secure, and our  
loved ones  
protected.  
May Your  
peace surround  
us and Your  
angels watch  
over us.

Amen.



Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.  
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

JVT Practice, 6-9 p.m., Arena

Jr. Legion at Northville, 4:30 p.m.

**Postponed to June 10:** U12 Baseball at Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m., North Complex

**Postponed to June 10:** U10 Baseball at Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m. (B&W), North Complex

**Postponed to July 14:** U8 Baseball at Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m. (Blue), North Complex

U12 Softball hosts Aberdeen, DH, 6 p.m. (B&G)

U10 Softball hosts Aberdeen, DH, 6 p.m. (B&G)

U8 Softball Scrimmage, 6 p.m.

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# 1440

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

## New Acting Spy Chief

President Donald Trump yesterday named Bill Pulte as acting director of national intelligence. He will replace Tulsi Gabbard, who steps down June 30 to care for her husband following his cancer diagnosis.

Pulte currently leads the Federal Housing Finance Agency, which oversees mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. He is the grandson of William Pulte, founder of one of America's largest homebuilding companies. The 38-year-old first gained public attention through philanthropic giveaways on social media before Trump appointed him to lead the FHFA last year. Pulte will continue serving in his housing role while acting as the nation's intelligence chief, responsible for coordinating the work of 18 agencies, including the FBI and CIA.

Critics have raised concerns about Pulte's lack of experience in national security. As acting director, he can serve for up to 210 days without Senate confirmation. The director of national intelligence was created after the Sept. 11 attacks to improve coordination across the intelligence community—an idea first proposed in 1955.

## Exploding Immune Cells

Researchers have discovered an immune cell in planarian flatworms that explodes when triggered, releasing toxic chemicals that kill nearby cells. Unlike immune cells produced in bone marrow, these cells—named “ruptoblasts”—are specialized gland cells.

Planarian flatworms are small, aquatic worms with exceptional regenerative capabilities. When cut, the worms can regenerate multiple bodies in a matter of weeks. The hormone activin plays a role in protecting flatworms from foreign tissue during this process. When activin is released, calcium accumulates along the immune cell's cytoskeleton, causing it to rupture within two minutes. As many as 70 nearby cells are killed in the blast, called ruptosis.

Researchers say the newly discovered cells were capable of destroying E. coli bacteria as well as human and mouse cells in a localized blast without causing lingering toxicity. The discovery could help researchers find new treatments for bacterial infections and tumors.

## Ancient Paris Unearthed

Archaeologists excavating the forecourt of Notre Dame Cathedral have uncovered artifacts dating back roughly 2,000 years to Roman-era Paris. The dig is part of a city project to redesign the plaza in front of the cathedral following a 2019 fire.

Roughly 20 centuries of history are layered within about 13 feet beneath the site. Work on the cathedral began in 1163, and the site was surrounded by tightly packed medieval homes and narrow lanes. Many of the discoveries come from Lutetia, the ancient settlement that later became Paris. Finds include a fourth-century coin bearing the image of Constantine, the Roman emperor who ruled in the early 300s CE, and fragments of medieval pottery bearing symbols that researchers have yet to identify.

The city plans to add 160 trees, improve walkways, and expand shaded areas to better handle millions of visitors while preserving views of the cathedral's facade.



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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 2026 Stanley Cup Final tips off with Vegas Golden Knights winning Game 1.

San Antonio Spurs face New York Knicks in Game 1 of NBA Finals tonight at 8:30 pm ET, ABC.

Peabo Bryson, two-time Grammy Award-winning R&B singer best known as voice behind Disney film duets "Beauty and the Beast" and "A Whole New World," dies at age 75.

All 48 teams for the FIFA World Cup submit their 26-player rosters; see the full list of players.

## Science & Technology

President Donald Trump signs executive order on AI, requesting leading companies submit their advanced models for voluntary government review 30 days before public release.

Researchers discover key genetic mechanism helping embryos ensure limbs form correctly.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close up (S&P 500 +0.1%, Dow +0.5%, Nasdaq +0.0%).

Alphabet to raise \$80B from stock sales to fund AI infrastructure, with Berkshire Hathaway investing \$10B; Alphabet, Microsoft, Meta, and Amazon expected to spend over \$700B total on AI expenses.

US job openings rise to 7.6 million in April, the highest since May 2024.

## Politics & World Affairs

Steve Hilton (R, 26%) and Xavier Becerra (D, 25%) lead in tight primary race for California governor as of this writing; see results.

Incumbent Karen Bass (D, 36%) leads Los Angeles mayoral race, with Spencer Pratt (R, 29%) in second place as of this writing; see results.

Trump administration to scrap \$1.8B anti-weaponization fund.

WhiteHouse Correspondents' Association dinner rescheduled for July 24 after a gunman's attack disrupted the annual event in April.

Russian strike kills at least 22 people in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, wounds more than 130 others in the deadliest offensive in months as peace talks remain stalled.

★ GROTON ★

# TRANSIT

## FUNDRAISER



Join us for an evening of great food,  
good company, and community support!

 <b>WHEN:</b> Thursday, June 11, 2026	 <b>TIME:</b> 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	 <b>WHERE:</b> Groton Community Center
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 Groton Community Center— 109 N 3rd Street  
One block East of Groton Transit

★ LET US DO THE COOKING FOR YOU! ★

 BURGERS	 BRATS	 BEANS	 WATERMELON	 CHIPS
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— AND THE FAMOUS MINI DONUTS! —

★ FOOD ★ FUN ★ DOOR PRIZES ★

## FREE WILL DONATION

Please join us & Help support Groton Transit!



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## Groton Legion and 14U squads split twin bills Tuesday

The Groton Legion Post 39 senior team earned a pair of dramatic victories Tuesday, sweeping Sisseton in a doubleheader, while Groton's 14U squad split a pair of games against Britton.

In the senior Legion opener, runs were at a premium as Groton edged Sisseton 1-0 behind a dominant pitching performance from Gavin Englund. Englund tossed a complete-game one-hitter, striking out seven and walking four over seven innings.

The game's lone run came in the bottom of the fifth inning when Carter Simon blasted a solo home run to left field. Simon finished 2-for-3 at the plate and drove in the only run of the contest.

Groton managed four hits in the game and turned a double play behind Englund, who recorded all 21 outs in securing the shutout victory.

The nightcap proved much more eventful.

Trailing 5-0 after three innings, Groton rallied with a six-run fifth inning to seize control before ultimately winning in walk-off fashion, 8-7.

Jordan Schwan was the offensive catalyst, collecting four hits in four at-bats, including a triple and the game-winning double in the bottom of the seventh inning that scored the winning run.

Sisseton jumped out quickly, scoring twice in the first inning, another run in the second, and two more in the third to build a 5-0 advantage. Groton answered in the fifth when Carter Simon singled home a run, Jarrett Erdmann delivered a bases-clearing triple to plate three runs, and Lincoln Krause added a two-run double.

Erdmann finished with three RBIs, while Simon added two hits. Groton totaled 11 hits and worked six walks in the victory.

Karsten Fliehs earned the win in relief, throwing three scoreless innings without allowing a hit. Nick Groeblichhoff also contributed a scoreless inning of relief work.

The 14U squad split its doubleheader at Britton.

In the opener, Groton fell 4-1 despite solid defense and a double play. Easton L. took the loss after allowing four runs, just one earned, over 3 1/3 innings. Keegan K. drove in Groton's lone run and finished with one of the team's two hits.

Groton bounced back in impressive fashion in the second game, rolling to a 14-3 victory.

After taking an early lead in the first inning, Groton exploded for five runs in the second to break the game open. Asher Z. delivered the biggest hit of the inning with a two-run single.

Trayce S. and Hank H. each collected two hits, while Trayce and Asher drove in two runs apiece. Groton showed patience at the plate throughout the contest, drawing 11 walks. Carter B. and Owen T. each reached base three times via walks.

Hank H. started on the mound and struck out four, while Keegan K. was dominant in relief, tossing 1□ scoreless innings with four strikeouts and no hits allowed.

The senior Legion team was scheduled to host Redfield on Saturday, while the 14U squad was set to welcome Milbank in its next contest.



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## Groton Area Fourth Quarter Honor Roll

### Seniors

4.0 GPA: Nathan Unzen, Natalia Warrington, Karsten Fliehs, Carly Gilbert, Jerica Locke, Talli Wright, Jaedyn Penning, Mia Crank, Rylee Dunker, Ryder Johnson, Raelee Lilly, Drake Peterson, Cali Tollifson, Keegen Tracy

3.99-3.50: Hannah Sandness, Gage Sippel, Olivia Stiegelmeier, Breslyn Jeschke, Garrett Schultz, London Bahr, Becker Bosma, Paisley Mitchell, Logan Warrington, Lincoln Krause, Gentry Pigors, Gavin Pigors, Gavin Englund, Aiden Meyers, Karter Moody, Charlie Frost, Benjamin Hoeft, Jarrett Erdmann, Keegan Harry, Lucas Carda, Nicholas Groeblichhoff, Jayden Schwan

3.49-3.00: Tristin McGannon, Jacob Teksbury, De Eh Tha Say, Emma Davies, Cambia Bonn

### Juniors

4.0 GPA: Carlee Johnson, Liby Althoff, Teagan Hanten, Kira Clocksene, Emerlee Jones, Ashlynn Warrington, Brody Lord, Hailey Pauli, Claire Schuelke, Kella Tracy, Taryn Traphagen, Colt Williamson

3.99-3.50: McKenna Tietz, Gain Kroll, Leah Jones, Avery Crank, Halee Harder, Addison Hoffman Wipf,

3.49-3.00: Walker Zoellner, Zander Harry, Hayden Zoellner, Blake Lord, Brenna Imrie

### Sophomores

4.0 GPA: Mya Feser, Makenna Krause

3.99-3.50: Sydney Locke, Thomas Schuster, Jace Johnson, Chesney Weber, Elizabeth Cole, Kyleigh Kroll, Gracie Pearson, Ryder Schelle, Eason Weber, Addison Hoeft, Rylen Ekern, Kinsley Rowen, Layne Johnson, Ethan Kroll

3.49-3.00: Brysen Sandness, John Bisbee, Braeden Fliehs, Brayden Barrera, Jeremiah Muller, Audrey Davis

### Freshmen

4.0 GPA: Neely Althoff, Wesley Borg, Abby Fjeldheim, Zachary Fliehs, Tevan Hanson, Asher Johnson, Brooklyn Spainer, Novalea Warrington

3.99-3.50: Aspen Beto, Madison Herrick, Logan Olson, Lincoln Shilhanek, Jose Fernando Nava Remigio, Jordan Schwan, Tenley Frost,

3.49-3.00: Kolton Antonsen, Raquel Tracy, Connor Kroll, Arianna Dinger, Sydney Holmes, Adeline Kotzer, Samuel Crank

### Eighth Graders

4.0 GPA: Hudson Eichler, Amelia Ewalt, Sophia Fliehs, Gavin Hanten, Liam Johnson, Jameson Penning

3.99-3.50: Axel Abeln, Andi Gauer, Liam Lord, Ryder Schwan, Trey Tietz, Gavin Younger, Keegan Kucker, Trayce Schelle, Kyson Kucker, Asher Zimmerman, Wyatt Morehouse, Elias Heilman, Jace Hofer, Haden Harder

3.49-3.00: Dawson Feist, Kamryn McKane, Rowan Patterson, Ilyanna Dallaire, Kinleigh Furman, Major Dolan, Dacy Kampa, Peyton Padfield

### Seventh Graders

4.0 GPA: Gracie Borg, Lillian Davis, Brynlee Dunker, Libby Johnson, Zoe Olson, Victoria Schuster, Rylee Stoltenburg, Ayce Warrington

3.99-3.50: Amara El Salahy, Hank Hill, Rylee Hofer, Kendyll Kroll, Easton Larson, Addison Steffes, Taylynn Traphagen, Ambrielle Feist, Hadley Heilman, Andi Iverson, Maycee Moody, Kinley Sandness, Brinley Guthmiller, Bella Barrera, Mya Moody, Drew Fjeldheim, Parker Zoellner, Knox Mulder, Charli Jacobsen, Mason Locke, Grady Rowen

3.49-3.00: Ivan Schwan, Keith, Preston Hinkelman, Graham Rose

### Sixth Graders

4.0 GPA: Arthur Eichler, Brody Zimmerman

3.99-3.50: Willow Cowan, Hayden Hubbard, Devan Locke, Lennox Locke, Kacie McComsey, Blakely Stiegelmeier, Jernie Weig, Tigh Fliehs, Ryan Hanson, Boston Kurth, Taylor Fliehs, Calvin Locken, Gideon Rix, Shealee Gilchrist, Rowan Hanson, Avery Huber, Titan Johnson, Elise Pharis, Kayson Hofer, Taylor Thompson, Micah Krause, Hudson McGannon

3.49-3.00: Deylon Johnson, Jack Schuelke, Rosalyn Block, Terrence Feist, Harley Furman, Simon Simunek, Adam Fliehs, Kaelee Morehouse, Adaline Jangula Avery Roettele

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## GOVERNOR

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 685 / 686 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 686



LARRY RHODEN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 25%	34,379
JON HANSEN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 21%	28,390
DUSTY JOHNSON Republican	<div><div></div></div> 23%	31,925
TOBY DOEDEN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 31%	41,791

TOTAL VOTES **136,485**

## UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 685 / 686 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 686



MARTY JACKLEY Republican	<div><div></div></div> 79%	103,290
JAMES BIALOTA Republican	<div><div></div></div> 21%	27,140

TOTAL VOTES **130,430**

## UNITED STATES SENATOR

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 685 / 686 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 686



JUSTIN MCNEAL Republican	<div><div></div></div> 24%	32,412
MIKE ROUNDS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 76%	101,471

TOTAL VOTES **133,883**

## SHERIFF - BROWN

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT

✓ ROBERT L. WEINMEISTER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 48%	2,829
DAN KAISER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 33%	1,928
LINN KAMIN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 5%	267
DAVE LUNZMAN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 14%	821

TOTAL VOTES **5,845**

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## DELEGATES TO STATE CONVENTION - BROWN



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT



CHARLENE CORNELIUS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 21%	2,119
✓ ASHTON DENNERT Republican	<div><div></div></div> 30%	3,023
✓ WAYNE BIERMAN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 26%	2,602
✓ MARYANN BIERMAN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 23%	2,282

TOTAL VOTES

10,026

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-02



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT



✓ STEVEN LUST Republican	<div><div></div></div> 62%	724
ALLAN NOVSTRUP Republican	<div><div></div></div> 38%	436

TOTAL VOTES

1,160

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-03



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT



DANIEL RICHARDT Republican	<div><div></div></div> 36%	204
✓ TALMAGE EKANGER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 64%	356

TOTAL VOTES

560

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-05



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT



LARRY INCHES Republican	<div><div></div></div> 32%	79
✓ JAMES WASHNOK Republican	<div><div></div></div> 68%	169

TOTAL VOTES

248



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## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-08



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

MICHAEL KULM Republican	<div><div></div></div> 44%	182
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✓ LOGAN MANHART Republican	<div><div></div></div> 56%	232
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TOTAL VOTES 414

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-09



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

✓ KALEB WEIS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 61%	91
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DANA BRESKE Republican	<div><div></div></div> 39%	58
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TOTAL VOTES 149

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-12



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

✓ LOWELL HARMS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 68%	201
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JESSE ZAK Republican	<div><div></div></div> 32%	93
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TOTAL VOTES 294

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEWOMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-03 (POSSIBLE RECOUNT)



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

EMILY RICHARDT Republican	<div><div></div></div> 49%	240
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✓ LAURA J. SAUNDERS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 51%	246
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TOTAL VOTES 486

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEWOMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-05



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

✓ KATHERINE WASHNOK Republican	<div><div></div></div> 72%	188
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JAN INCHES Republican	<div><div></div></div> 28%	72
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TOTAL VOTES 260

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## PRECINCT COMMITTEEWOMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-09

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

✓ KAYLA WEIS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 51%	70
JENNY BLADOW Republican	<div><div></div></div> 49%	66

TOTAL VOTES 136

## PRECINCT COMMITTEEWOMAN - BROWN - PRECINCT-10

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

VOTE CENTERS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

✓ BRENDA DREYER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 51%	100
ANNE MILLER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 49%	96

TOTAL VOTES 196

## STATE REPRESENTATIVE - DISTRICT 01

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 43 / 43 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 43

EXPORT 

LOGAN MANHART Republican	<div><div></div></div> 22%	1,398
KEITH MILLER Republican	<div><div></div></div> 22%	1,355
✓ DANIEL KJOS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 27%	1,664
✓ NICK FOSNESS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 30%	1,855

TOTAL VOTES 6,272

## STATE SENATOR - DISTRICT 03

☐ FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT 

CARL PERRY Republican	<div><div></div></div> 37%	1,443
✓ KATHERINE "KATIE" WASHNOK Republican	<div><div></div></div> 63%	2,508

TOTAL VOTES 3,951

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## STATE REPRESENTATIVE - DISTRICT 03



FOLLOW THIS CONTEST

PRECINCTS FULLY: 12 / 12 | PARTIALLY: 0 / 12

EXPORT

KALEB WEIS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 16%	1,095
AL NOVSTRUP Republican	<div><div></div></div> 23%	1,598
✓ TIMOTHY HANIGAN Republican	<div><div></div></div> 29%	1,980
✓ SPENCER SOMMERS Republican	<div><div></div></div> 32%	2,217
TOTAL VOTES		6,890

## BROWN (VOTE CENTER)

(view results)



6,234 Ballots Cast  
12,873 Registered Voters



12 out of 12  
Precincts Reporting

EXPORT

VOTE CENTER

Vote Center	Ballots Cast	Registered Voters
Courthouse Community Room	1,207	12,873
Warner Community Center	175	12,873
Stratford Community Center	52	12,873
Groton Community Center	325	12,873
Hecla Community Center	88	12,873
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center	876	12,873
Claremont City Hall	46	12,873
Columbia Legion	92	12,873
Westport Town Hall	87	12,873
Frederick Community Center	83	12,873
AmericInn Event Center	988	12,873
Absentee Precinct	2,215	12,873

## STATEWIDE VOTER TURNOUT



685 out of 686  
Precincts Reporting

Party Ballot Style	Ballots Cast	Registered Voters
Republican	138,677	321,573
Democratic	1,529	8,969
Non-Political Ballot	31,523	166,504
TOTALS	171,729	497,046




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## State Girls Golf Meet



**Carlee Johnson and Claire Schuelke are participating in the state golf meet in Sioux Falls. Johnson finished tied at 30 and Schuelke finished at 68th place.** (Courtesy Photo)

	68	<a href="#">Claire Schuelke</a> <i>Groton Area</i>	+69	101	108	209															
Tue, June 2 <i>Two Rivers Golf Club (FRONT - Ladies)</i>																					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Tue, June 2 - Claire Schuelke	6	11	5	7	6	7	4	3	5	54	8	8	5	5	5	5	6	5	7	54	108
Mon, June 1 <i>Two Rivers Golf Club (MIDDLE - Ladies)</i>																					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Mon, June 1 - Claire Schuelke	6	7	7	7	7	4	4	5	8	55	6	6	4	5	4	5	6	4	6	46	101
<div><div></div> Starting Hole</div> <div><div></div> Eagle or Better</div> <div><div></div> Birdie</div> <div><div></div> Par</div> <div><div></div> Bogey</div> <div><div></div> Double Bogey or Worse</div>																					

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

☆	T30	<a href="#">Carlee Johnson</a> <i>Groton Area</i>										+29	87					82					169				
Tue, June 2 <i>Two Rivers Golf Club (FRONT - Ladies)</i>																											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total					
Tue, June 2 - Carlee Johnson		4	6	4	5	3	5	3	4	7	41	7	5	3	4	5	4	4	4	5	41	82					
Mon, June 1 <i>Two Rivers Golf Club (MIDDLE - Ladies)</i>																											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total					
Mon, June 1 - Carlee Johnson		4	6	6	5	5	4	4	5	5	44	6	5	3	5	5	4	6	3	6	43	87					
<div><div></div> Starting Hole</div> <div><div></div> Eagle or Better</div> <div><div></div> Birdie</div> <div><div></div> Par</div> <div><div></div> Bogey</div> <div><div></div> Double Bogey or Worse</div>																											

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



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Doeden and Rhoden advance to runoff in Republican governor primary, Johnson falls to third**

**BY: SETH TUPPER**

Political newcomer Toby Doeden finished first Tuesday in South Dakota's Republican governor primary but failed to reach 35%, setting up a runoff with Gov. Larry Rhoden while U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson — who led in several early polls — fell to third and out of the running.

With all but one of the state's 686 precincts reported by about 3 a.m. Wednesday, Doeden led with 31% of the votes, followed by Rhoden, 25%, Johnson, 23%, and state House Speaker Jon Hansen, 21%. All the votes are from registered Republicans, whose primary races are off-limits to independents and voters from other parties. The one unreported precinct was in Oglala Lakota County.

State law requires a runoff eight weeks later, on July 28, if nobody reaches 35% in a primary with three or more candidates for governor.

Doeden, a vehicle dealership owner who's been involved in other business and rental properties, said "the career politicians told me what we collectively have done across this state was impossible."

"They said no outsider in South Dakota can break through three career, 20-year politicians," Doeden said. "Well, guess what? You and I, we are doing it."

Rhoden spoke of the challenge ahead.

"I kind of feel like that proverbial groundhog who came up and saw my shadow, and now there's going to be eight more weeks of campaigning," Rhoden said. "But that's the price we're going to have to pay. We are going to hit the ground running next week, assuming that those numbers hold, and we believe they will."

Johnson had expressed confidence late Tuesday evening that he would make up ground and qualify for the runoff as the final returns came in, but that didn't happen.

"This is still a great state," Johnson said. "We are still falling behind in some key areas. We still need to go build a better South Dakota, and I'm not turning away from that obligation just because I'm not the governor."

Johnson's loss means he'll be out of a job in January when his current term in the U.S. House ends. He opted to run for governor rather than seek another House term.

Prior to Tuesday, no governor primary race had gone to a runoff since the passage of the runoff law in 1985. In previous instances when a candidate failed to receive 35% in a crowded field, the nominee was decided by delegates at a state party convention.

The candidate who ultimately wins the Republican nomination for governor will advance to the Nov. 3 general election to face Dan Ahlers, who was uncontested for the Democratic nomination.

### **Noem's resignation ignites race**

Former Gov. Kristi Noem opened the door for a Republican primary race when she resigned in January 2025 to accept a job in President Donald Trump's administration.

Noem's departure elevated Rhoden from lieutenant governor to serve the remainder of Noem's second term, which ends in January. During his time as governor, Rhoden has worked with legislators to sign several major bills into law.

Those include laws capturing revenue from sales tax increases to reduce homeowner property taxes, a

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law banning the use of a legal procedure known as eminent domain to gain land access for carbon capture pipelines, and a law funding construction of a \$650 million replacement for the oldest parts of the state's 145-year-old penitentiary.

Rhoden built his campaign on those and other achievements.

"Good policy makes good politics," he said while launching his campaign in November.

At Rhoden's watch party Tuesday night in Rapid City, Jim Hunt, of Faith, who has known Rhoden since high school, said his support for the governor is grounded in character.

"If it's something that he doesn't believe in, he'll tell you why, because he's honest and his integrity is number one," Hunt said.

But Rhoden's status as governor couldn't prevent Johnson from entering the race last June as the presumptive frontrunner. Johnson had the highest profile due to his four terms in the U.S. House, his previous service on the state Public Utilities Commission, and his 20-plus years of involvement in statewide politics.

That long resume was an important factor for 55-year-old Republican voter Dan Harrell.

"I'm looking for experience, and so for me, the one who's going to have the most experience for our state is going to be Dusty," Harrell said in an interview with South Dakota Searchlight at a Sioux Falls polling place. "Just because he's been representing us for longer than the other ones have."

Johnson also began with more than \$6 million in campaign funds he'd built up over prior election cycles.

"Ladies and gentlemen, President Trump talks about this as the golden age of America," Johnson said in a campaign announcement speech last year. "South Dakota needs an energy and optimism to meet that moment."

## **The Trump effect**

Johnson's opponents cited several examples from his congressional career to label him as insufficiently supportive of the Republican president.

Johnson was one of 13 House Republicans who voted with Democrats when they blocked Trump's declaration of an emergency on the southern U.S. border in 2019. Johnson said at the time that he supported funding for border wall construction. But he opposed expanding presidential power at the expense of Congress, which he said would result from allowing the president to pay for the wall with money budgeted for other purposes.

Johnson also voted for the certification of the 2020 presidential election and the creation of an independent, bipartisan commission to investigate the rioters who attempted to stop the certification. The effort to create that commission failed, and Johnson voted against creating the Democratic-led House Select Committee that ultimately conducted the investigation. But he supported Rep. Liz Cheney when other Republicans stripped her of a House leadership position in retaliation for service on the committee.

Rhoden's campaign published a website referencing those votes and describing them as indicative of "the real Dusty Johnson" — someone who's "not with Trump." A political action committee affiliated with Doeden sent a text message to Republican voters saying "if you hate President Trump and all that he stands for, Dusty Johnson is the candidate for you."

Doeden, who spent at least \$4 million of his own money in the race, tried to position himself as the most pro-Trump candidate. He often mentioned Trump in his initial advertisements — although not as much in the waning weeks of the campaign, as Trump's national approval rating fell below 40%.

## **Candidate platforms**

Doeden also ran on a promise to phase out property taxes, although opponents criticized Doeden's plan as vague. He said the state would have enough money to eliminate property taxes after he reduces state spending, grows the economy and eliminates waste, inefficiencies and redundancies in state government.

Republican voter Brian O'Connor, of Rapid City, liked Doeden's message and outsider status.

"I just think we need somebody different, and I've seen those other people too much, and he's probably the one that is the least political right now," O'Connor said in an interview at his polling place with South



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Dakota Searchlight.

Johnson largely ignored the critiques of his own record. His campaign was a mix of promises to strengthen schools, the economy and public safety, and criticism of tax laws approved by Rhoden and Hansen.

Rhoden signed three bills into law during this year's legislative session that allow for higher sales taxes. Two of them devote the extra revenue — from a scheduled statewide sales tax increase in one instance, and a new, optional county sales tax in the other — toward reducing homeowner property taxes. Hansen supported those bills but not the third one, which creates an optional sales tax that cities can impose temporarily to pay for special projects.

Ads from Johnson and political action committees supporting him criticized Hansen and Rhoden for the sales tax increases, without mentioning the homeowner property tax reductions.

Hansen ran on a platform of "faith, family and freedom," seeking to capitalize on his standing as co-chair of the anti-abortion Life Defense Fund, which led the successful fight against an abortion-rights ballot question two years ago. Another major facet of Hansen's campaign was his criticism of the state's approach to economic development, calling the use of state funds to give tax breaks and other incentives to large companies "a breeding ground of corruption."

Total spending by all four campaigns in the race surpassed \$10 million, according to campaign finance reports filed two weeks before the election, plus more than \$1 million spent by political action committees. Final figures won't be known until the next reporting deadline in October.

Statewide voter turnout for the primary election was 35%, according to the Secretary of State's office. Turnout among Republicans was 43%.

*South Dakota Searchlight's Joshua Haiar, Makenzie Huber and Meghan O'Brien contributed to this report.*

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

## Many state legislative races pending, several in line for recount as former lawmakers seek return

**Some victors in 2024 shake-up fend off former competitors, others fall**

**BY: JOHN HULT**

The makeup of the Legislature was up in the air as of 1:00 the morning after South Dakota's primary election.

Ten Republican state lawmakers ousted in 2024 are angling to get their seats back in 2026. Results were mixed for the nine who had primaries on Tuesday, with results still coming in for several races and others set for possible recounts.

Shawn Bordeaux of Rosebud won the state's only Democratic primary, beating Troy "Luke" Lunderman for a chance to return to the state Senate.

Bordeaux will face Chamberlain Republican Rebecca Reimer in November's general election. Reimer, who was term-limited in the state House of Representatives, beat Lower Brule Sen. Tamara Grove in Tuesday's primary.

In Watertown's District 5, Rep. Josephine Garcia fell in a state Senate primary to incumbent Sen. Glen Vilhauer. Garcia beat Byron Callies in the 2024 primary to earn her seat in the House of Representatives, but opted to challenge Vilhauer for his Senate seat instead of seeking reelection to the House.

Callies, Vilhauer and Garcia are all from Watertown.

Vilhauer won with 59% of the vote. His was one of the first state legislative victories of the night reported on the Secretary of State's website.

Vilhauer won handily, but he said he wasn't necessarily expecting to as polls opened on Tuesday.

"I knew it was going to be a battle going in," Vilhauer said. "She worked hard on her side, and I didn't know what to expect."

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Callies was among the first to call Vilhauer to congratulate him, around 9:30 p.m.

"I'm happy, because Glen's a solid legislator," said Callies, who's angling to win his seat back in the general election.

Garcia did not return a call seeking comment.

In District 21, Sen. Mykala Voita of Bonesteel beat former Sen. Erin Tobin of Winner in a rematch of their 2024 contest, which Voita won by a few dozen votes that year. This time around, Voita bested Tobin by 1,002 votes.

In response to a request for comment, Voita sent a text reading "Glory to God!"

Tobin did not return a call from South Dakota Searchlight about her race after it was called, but said earlier in the evening she would be "at peace" with the results regardless of what they might be.

Another rematch saw Yanktonites Lauren Nelson and Jean Hunhoff battling for District 18's state Senate seat. Nelson was a newcomer in 2024 when she beat Hunhoff, who'd spent decades in the Capitol between stints in the House and Senate. On Tuesday, Nelson held off Hunhoff, winning by 243 votes.

## Other notable races

District 4 Rep. Dylan Jordan of Clear Lake, first elected in 2024, finished fourth in a five-way race. As of 1 a.m. Wednesday, he trailed Ryan Kohl of Milbank and former Rep. Fred Deutsch of Florence, in first and second place, respectively. A recount is possible in that race, with 59 votes separating the top two vote-getters while Rep. Kent Roe, of Hayti, came in third place, with 72 fewer votes than Deutsch.

District 4 has two possible recounts. In the other, Bryant's Stephanie Sauder beat Clear Lake's Tim Begalka by 105 votes in the unofficial tally from the Secretary of State.

District 1 Rep. Logan Manhart of Aberdeen, elected in the 2024 primary, fell to Rep. Nick Fosness, a hospital administrator appointed by Gov. Larry Rhoden in 2025, and newcomer Daniel Kjos.

Another recount was possible as of Wednesday at 1 a.m., in the District 16 race for House of Representatives. Rep. John Shubeck of Beresford trailed Lisa Bogue of Beresford by 245 votes in unofficial results. Jason VanDenTop of Canton was in third place, trailing Shubeck by 68 votes.

Vote totals incomplete

Sen. John Carley of Piedmont, who won his first term in 2024, trailed William Meirose of Sturgis by 166 votes as of 1 a.m. Wednesday.

Former Rep. Tyler Tordsen led Rep. Tony Kayser by two votes in the District 14 primary, with results still coming in. The Sioux Falls men are vying for second place and a spot on the November general election ballot alongside Rep. Taylor Rehfeldt of Sioux Falls, who led by more than 600 votes early Wednesday.

District 28 Sen. Sam Marty of Prairie City was in a close race with former legislator Ryan Maher of Isabel.

Former Rep. Gary Cammack of Union Center, who lost his seat in 2024, and Gary Deering of Hereford, led Reps. Terri Jorgenson of Piedmont and Kathy Rice of Blackhawk in the District 29 race.

In District 30, Hot Springs Sen. Amber Hulse led former Sen. Julie Frye-Mueller of Rapid City by more than 1,300 votes.

Former Sen. David Johnson of Rapid City led Sen. Curt Voight of Rapid City in a rematch of their 2024 race for District 33 Senate in early results.

Rep. Heather Baxter of Rapid City has signaled her intention to challenge sitting Secretary of State Monae Johnson for the Republican nomination to that constitutional office at the state's Republican Party convention this summer. In early results, Baxter trailed former Rapid City Rep. Becky Drury and Rep. Mike Derby in the District 34 primary.

Early results in the District 35 primary put Sen. Greg Blanc, elected in 2024, in a close race with fellow Rapid City resident Nicole Mitzel.

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

## **South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley wins bid for Republican US House nomination**

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF**

Partial Tuesday night election returns showed South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley headed for victory in the race for the Republican Party's U.S. House nomination.

His opponent, James Bialota, of Piedmont, did not mount a prominent campaign.

With 109 of 686 precincts across the state fully reporting at 8:43 p.m., Jackley had 81% support, and Bialota had 19%. The Associated Press called the race for Jackley at 8:19 p.m. Central.

All the votes came from registered Republicans, whose primaries are closed to independents and voters from other parties.

The 55-year-old Jackley, of Pierre, began his career in public service as U.S. attorney for South Dakota from 2006 to 2009. He was the state's attorney general from 2009 to 2019, ran unsuccessfully against Kristi Noem for the Republican nomination for governor in 2018, and won election as attorney general again in 2022.

Jackley entered the race for the state's only seat in the U.S. House last year after Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson announced his campaign for governor.

In the Nov. 3 general election, Jackley will face Nikki Gronli, a former state director of rural development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Gronli was unopposed for the Democratic nomination.

Jackley's U.S. House candidacy creates an opening for attorney general that will be filled in the general election. Party nominees for that office are not chosen by voters, but rather by delegates to state party conventions later this month.

## **US Sen. Mike Rounds of South Dakota fends off Republican primary challenger**

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF**

Partial Tuesday night election returns showed U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota, on a path to win his party's nomination to seek reelection.

The 71-year-old Rounds, of Fort Pierre, is finishing his second six-year term in the Senate after previously serving eight years as governor.

His opponent, Rapid City businessman Justin McNeal, did not mount a prominent campaign.

With 69 of 686 precincts across the state fully reporting at about 8:30 p.m. Central, returns showed Rounds with 77% support and McNeal with 23%. The Associated Press called the race for Rounds at 8:17 p.m. Central.

All of the votes came from registered Republicans, whose primaries are closed to independents and voters from other parties.

Rounds faces two opponents in the Nov. 3 general election: Julian Beaudion, a businessman and former Highway Patrol trooper from Sioux Falls who was unopposed for the Democratic nomination, and Brian Bengs, an Air Force veteran and former college professor who switched to independent after running unsuccessfully four years ago as the Democratic nominee against Republican U.S. Sen. John Thune.



## **'The least bad option': South Dakotans explain their primary election voting decisions**

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF**

South Dakota Searchlight reporters visited polling places Tuesday to talk with voters about the primary election.

Here's a sampling of those interviews.

Samantha Stobbe, 41, Republican, Sioux Falls

Stobbe was an independent for years, but registered Republican to vote in primaries. Stobbe said she tried to dig into candidates' views, but "everyone is so general and vague in the answers they give."

"That's frustrating for me as a voter," said Stobbe, who brought her young daughter along to her polling place, the Military Heritage Alliance.

She ultimately opted for Jon Hansen in the Republican primary for governor. His focus on traditional family values was a selling point for her, and one that's become more salient since she started her own family.

"As a parent, I've kind of changed my political desires," Stobbe said.

For Sioux Falls mayor, Stobbe voted for a state lawmaker whose votes in Pierre often ran counter to Hansen's during legislative sessions: Jamie Smith.

The 2022 Democratic nominee for governor opted to run for mayor instead of seeking another term in the Legislature. Stobbe was convinced to vote for Smith in the mayor's race after Smith's appearance at a forum at Southeast Technical Institute.

"He gave the most transparent and heartfelt answers," Stobbe said.

Jeremy Mercier, 33, Republican, Sioux Falls

Mercier is a three-time Donald Trump voter, but Toby Doeden's Trumpian messages fell flat for Mercier in the Republican governor primary.

"He's trying to ride on the coattails of Trump's success," Mercier said, adding that Trump's actions in his second go-round as president have been a disappointment.

Mercier cited the Iran war, the lack of an economic turnaround and concerns about redactions from the information released by the Trump administration about the disgraced late financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Mercier said he feels the president pulled away from his transparency promise about releasing files related to Epstein.

Johnson was "the least bad option," for governor, Mercier said, in part because he thinks the congressman has done a decent job focusing on core issues in an elected body Mercier now sees as too beholden to Trump to protect the national interest.

Dan Harrell, 55, Republican, Sioux Falls

Harrell said while there's not a presidential election on the ballot, this election was "almost as important, especially for our state, because it's got the governorship."

"I'm looking for experience, and so for me, the one who's going to have the most experience for our state is going to be Dusty," Harrell said, referring to Dusty Johnson. "Just because he's been representing us for longer than the other ones have."

Elizabeth Lewis, 57, Republican, Sioux Falls

Lewis said she voted for Dusty Johnson for the Republican Party's nomination for governor because he's the "most moderate" among the Republican candidates, even though she wasn't impressed with his time in Congress.

"Extremes tend to have unintended consequences," she said. "He's still the best choice for governor."

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Douglas Kooiman, 78, Republican, Sioux Falls

Kooiman said he voted with "conservative values, because there are too many radicals all over."

Jon Hansen was the best choice among the four Republican governor candidates, Kooiman said.

"Dusty is too much of a D.C. politician. It's time for him to go back to the private sector," Kooiman said. "As for Doeden, I listened to him talk and all I heard was 'I, I, I.' It didn't appeal to me."

On Marty Jackley's campaign for the Republican U.S. House nomination, Kooiman said, "I've seen what he's done as attorney general. He goes after law breakers."

On incumbent Mike Rounds' campaign for the Republican U.S. Senate nomination, Kooiman said, "I'm satisfied with his job."

The newly mandated combination of local elections this year with the primary or general election is "a lot to keep up with all at the same time," Kooiman said.

Laura Giles, 53, Republican, Sioux Falls

Giles and her family moved to Sioux Falls in 2019. She voted for Jon Hansen for governor, she said, to maintain conservative values in local and state elections.

"I like what he stands for. He's a family man, Christian, and his voting record speaks for itself," Giles said.

On legislative races, Giles said she left one spot blank because she was unfamiliar with the candidates. She did the same for city council.

"If I don't know them, I'd rather not vote," Giles said.

She said combining local and state races in the primary was convenient but overwhelming.

"It's too much," Giles said. "It's a lot of research to do."

Mark Johnson, 72, Republican, Sioux Falls

"I'm tired of the shell game in Pierre," Johnson said, referring to decisions to cut property taxes while increasing sales taxes, approved by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Larry Rhoden.

Johnson voted for Dusty Johnson for the Republican nomination for governor.

"He makes the most sense. He's fighting for us in D.C.," Johnson said. "He's future-minded, whereas everyone else seems like they're in it for themselves."

Johnson said he voted for Marty Jackley because of his track record as state attorney general.

"Now there's a guy who fights for you," Johnson said.

Ann Buesing, 44, Republican, Sioux Falls

"I feel like this election is as big and as important as November," Buesing said.

Buesing voted for Hansen for governor. He's a fresh face compared to Rhoden and Johnson, she said, but isn't untested like Doeden.

"When I read through their stances, I just liked his overall take on where he wants to take South Dakota," Buesing said of Hansen.

Buesing said she voted for Justin McNeal for the Republican U.S. Senate nomination and James Bialota for U.S. House.

"I think we can use a fresh look and perspective," Buesing said.

Brian O'Connor, 57, Republican, Rapid City

O'Connor said he voted for Doeden in the Republican governor primary.

"I just think we need somebody different, and I've seen those other people too much, and he's probably the one that is the least political right now."

Abram Naber, 42, Republican, Rapid City

Naber voted for Doeden for governor, who has pledged to phase out property taxes.

"I want the state to go in a new direction," Naber said. "I think property taxes are a heinous injustice

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and should be abolished.”

Naber added that Doeden is “an outsider.”

“I think we need fresh meat, fresh blood in the Governor’s Office,” Naber said.

Mallory Wipf, 36, Democrat, Rapid City

“I just think it’s important to vote every time you have the opportunity to, whether it’s as simple as a city or school board election or national election,” Wipf said. “I just try to always exercise my right to vote.”

*Searchlight reporters John Hult, Joshua Haiar, Makenzie Huber and Meghan O’Brien contributed to this report.*

## Trump to withdraw \$1.8B ‘anti-weaponization’ fund, Thune says

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT AND ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has scrapped plans to use nearly \$1.8 billion in taxpayer dollars to pay people who believe they were wrongly prosecuted by the Justice Department — a proposal that halted work on legislation to fund immigration and deportation activities.

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche testified Tuesday before a House committee the DOJ will no longer move forward with those plans shortly after Senate Majority Leader John Thune, a South Dakota Republican, said the administration had reversed course.

That decision could clear the way for the Senate to debate a roughly \$70 billion package meant to fund immigration and deportation for the rest of President Donald Trump’s term.

“I think his statements are going to be very definitive, very clear and create the certainty that I hope all of our members, and House members need as well, in order for us to proceed on the reconciliation bill,” Thune said, referring to Blanche. “But I’m not guaranteeing that happens yet.”

Blanche confirmed Thune’s statements when he testified before a House Appropriations subcommittee in the afternoon.

“We’re not moving forward with the fund, period,” Blanche said when pressed by the subcommittee’s top Democrat, Rep. Grace Meng of New York.

“You and Associate Attorney General Woodward signed earlier documents regarding the settlement and this fund, would both of you now sign and release documents reversing the DOJ position on the fund?” Meng asked.

“We’re not moving forward with the fund. I’m not sure what that means to sign documents reversing. There’s nothing to reverse,” Blanche replied.

The DOJ posted on social media this week that it plans to abide by a temporary court ruling that blocked distribution of the funds, but Republican lawmakers said that wasn’t enough to end the impasse it created.

The Justice Department announced the creation of the fund last month as part of a legal settlement between Trump and the IRS over leaked copies of his returns during Trump’s first term. The settlement included provisions that precluded future IRS investigations into Trump and his family.

### Senate Republicans weigh in

Thune said GOP senators had a “quite robust conversation” during a closed-door lunch about the DOJ fund and whether to move forward with their immigration and deportation package.

North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven said after that meeting it’s up to GOP leaders to determine whether there are enough votes to move forward with the immigration package.

“I think the next step is for our whip team to find out where everybody’s at based on the administration’s indication that they’re not going to move forward with the fund,” Hoeven said.

Louisiana Sen. John Kennedy said there is a “chance” that Republicans could begin a marathon amendment voting session on the immigration bill as soon as Wednesday, if Blanche’s testimony alleviates concerns created by the DOJ fund.

Montana Sen. Steve Daines, however, said he believes it’s “unlikely” that process begins this week.

North Carolina Republican Sen. Thom Tillis said earlier in the day, before the lunch, that he wouldn’t

accept taxpayer dollars going toward people who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6.

"To provide restitution to somebody who assaulted a police officer and pled guilty to it. I mean, man, I've seen some crazy stuff before, but that's right up there with crazy," he said.

Utah Republican Sen. John Curtis said he needs to know "if it's dead or nearly dead."

Oklahoma Republican Sen. James Lankford said he wants clarification from the White House about the settlement fund in light of the court's ruling.

He added that Republicans are waiting to see if "the court case set aside both the settlement fund and the audits."

"We need clarification for what it is and isn't, because the White House already said 'we agree, we don't like it, but we agree with the courts,'" Lankford said. "What does that mean?"

### **Amendment to ban fund**

Democrats have also criticized Trump and those in his administration over the fund, vowing to block it in law.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said during an afternoon press conference that promises from Trump and administration officials are "worthless."

"Trump sued his own government, had his own Justice Department settle the case and is now trying to use taxpayer dollars to pay off his MAGA allies, billionaire buddies and cop-beating insurrectionists," Schumer said.

"And let's be clear, Trump has not killed this slush fund," he added. "He has not revoked the special tax immunity he gave himself and his family. He has not ended the corruption. He hit a temporary roadblock. That's it."

Schumer said the first amendment he would offer during debate on Republicans' immigration and deportation bill would "ban Trump's slush fund permanently and revoke his family's free rein to commit tax fraud forever."

*Ashley Murray contributed to this report.*

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

*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.*

## **Dems spotlight anti-weaponization fund as US Senate GOP struggles to pass immigration bill**

**BY: ASHLEY MURRAY**

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senate Democrats, police officers who defended the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6 insurrection and their legal advocates spoke out Tuesday against the Trump administration's proposed \$1.776 billion "anti-weaponization" fund.

The press conference, organized by liberal litigation organizations Public Citizen and Common Cause, occurred as Senate Democrats applied pressure to their Republican counterparts struggling to pass an immigration budget reconciliation bill with only a handful of votes to spare.

Democrats plan to introduce multiple amendments proposing guardrails on the fund if and when Senate Republicans bring to the floor the \$72 billion immigration package that President Donald Trump said he wanted on his desk by June 1.

"The notion that we are going to come up with a fund to provide some sort of a relief for the Capitol Hill cop beaters is outrageous to me, to think the Republican Party would even consider it," Sen. Dick Durbin, the top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said.

"That's why we're making every effort to make sure that there is a record vote against this slush fund,"



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Durbin, of Illinois, said as former U.S. Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn, who is running for the Democratic nomination for a U.S. House seat in Maryland, stood behind him.

Dunn along with former Washington Metropolitan Police Officer Daniel Hodges, who also attended the press conference, are suing the Trump administration over the fund. Dunn and Hodges both deployed to the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and Hodges described in the complaint how he thought he was going to die as rioters assaulted him.

"Beat police, support Donald Trump, get paid," Dunn said. "Cause an insurrection, get paid. I believe that this is Donald Trump putting his mob on a retainer."

Trump pardoned nearly all defendants charged with attacking the Capitol that day, and commuted the prison sentences of more than a dozen involved in planning the attack.

Trump repeatedly characterized those involved in the riot as "patriots" during his 2024 presidential campaign, and accused the Biden administration of weaponizing the Department of Justice.

Acting U.S. Attorney General Todd Blanche has said the fund is not targeted toward Jan. 6 attack defendants, and that anyone of any political affiliation can "be heard and seek redress."

## IRS settlement

The Department of Justice announced the \$1.776 billion fund on May 18 as a condition of Trump dropping his \$10 billion lawsuit against the IRS over the leak of his tax returns in 2019.

A day later, the DOJ issued another order declaring Trump and his family would be forever immune from government inquiries, including tax audits, as part of Trump's voluntary dismissal of the suit.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, a Rhode Island Democrat, said the DOJ is facing "real pressure now, and indeed the Trumpsters are starting to say they might have to abandon their cop beaters slush fund."

Whitehouse, another senior Judiciary Committee member, also slammed the DOJ order to indefinitely absolve Trump family members from any future tax audits.

"Even if they get rid of the crooked cop beaters slush fund, even if they get rid of the crooked Trump family tax amnesty, that still leaves one very interesting thing, and that is the question of whether the crooked Trumpsters committed a fraud on the court," Whitehouse said.

U.S. District Judge Kathleen Williams of the Southern District of Florida reopened Trump's IRS case on May 29 following a filing from 35 former federal judges who argued the DOJ "deceived" the court by not sharing with the judge details of the "anti-weaponization" fund.

The government has until June 12 to respond.

## Fund future unclear

The Department of Justice said Monday in a social media post the administration would comply with a separate temporary court order to pause the fund, but would not answer States Newsroom Tuesday about reports that the department planned to scrap the fund altogether in the face of intense scrutiny, even from Republicans.

Skye Perryman, president and CEO of Democracy Forward, said during the event that the organization is seeking further details from the DOJ.

"We are in the position of trusting but verifying, and so have demanded that DOJ send us a response today asking them to confirm that they have taken a number of steps to comply with that order," Perryman said. "We have also asked them to confirm what the status of the fund is, since they seem to be leaking that they are somehow abandoning the fund."

Democracy Forward is representing multiple plaintiffs in a lawsuit challenging the nearly \$1.8 billion fund, including a former DOJ Jan. 6 prosecutor who was fired and a university professor who was charged with a felony then acquitted by a jury for involvement in protesting a 2025 immigration raid.

U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema in the Eastern District of Virginia on May 29 ordered the Department of Justice, the Treasury Department and other high-ranking administration officials from taking any additional actions to create the fund or make payments from it.

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

## States face tight timeline as feds unveil new Medicaid work requirement rules

BY: ANNA CLAIRE VOLLERS

The federal government released new guidance this week on how states should roll out the Medicaid work requirements that will affect healthcare coverage for millions of Americans.

The new interim rule, issued by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, is intended to give states more details on how they're supposed to verify the work status for about 20 million adults enrolled in Medicaid, the publicly funded health insurance program for people with low incomes.

The new details come as states are staring down the January 1, 2027, deadline to put the new work requirements in place, and have requested more clarity from the feds on how they're supposed to implement them.

"States are being asked to carry out a complicated federal mandate without clear rules, without enough time, and with the risk that eligible people lose health care because of paperwork problems and system failures," Oregon Democratic Gov. Tina Kotek said last week in a statement.

Kotek led a six-state coalition of Democratic governors in asking the Trump administration last week to slow the rollout of the new work requirements, calling the timeline unworkable.

Congress built the new work requirements into last year's so-called One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Under the measure, states that have expanded Medicaid eligibility to more adults under the Affordable Care Act — 40 states plus the District of Columbia and another two that have partially expanded — will have to require those adults to prove they're working, going to school or serving their communities for at least 80 hours a month to receive Medicaid.

The rules released this week are intended to clarify key parts of the new law, including exemptions for people who are considered "medically frail," how to reach out to Medicaid beneficiaries, and methods for verifying Medicaid eligibility.

"This rule helps Americans build skills and independence through work, education, job training, or community service, creating new opportunities for themselves and their families," said Dr. Mehmet Oz, director for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, in a statement announcing the new guidance.

But critics of work requirements point to evidence that it kicks people off Medicaid who are otherwise entitled to it without meaningfully increasing the share of adults who are working.

For example, Arkansas tried instituting work requirements for Medicaid recipients during Trump's first term in 2018. By the time a federal judge halted the policy less than a year later, 18,000 adults had already lost coverage and reported problems paying off medical debt, delaying healthcare and delaying medications due to cost. Studies later found that Arkansas' work requirements didn't increase employment. And data shows that most adults on Medicaid under age 65 are already working.

Supporters say the new requirements are flexible. They say the feds have created a broad category of "medically frail" people who are exempt from the work requirements, and they're permitting states to allow people to self-attest that they're exempt one time before documentation is required.

The new work requirements will apply to about 20 million people who are eligible for Medicaid through expansion, according to estimates from health research organization KFF. These expansion enrollees make up about 30% of all Medicaid enrollees.

A recent analysis from the Urban Institute projects that 3-7 million people could lose coverage because of the new work requirements.

*Stateline reporter Anna Claire Vollers can be reached at [avollers@stateline.org](mailto:avollers@stateline.org).*

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

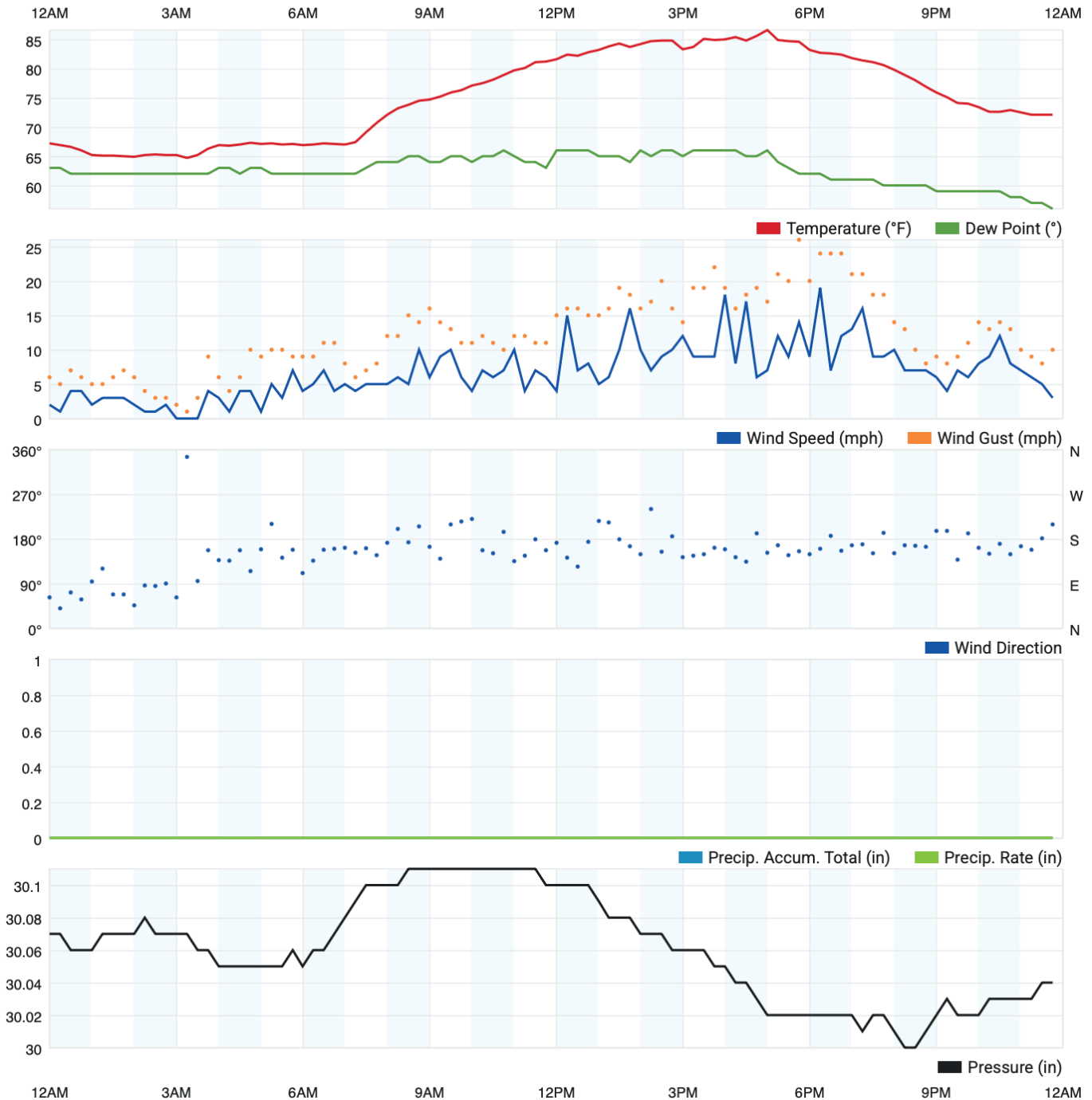
*Anna Claire Vollers covers health care for Stateline. She is based in Huntsville, Alabama.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

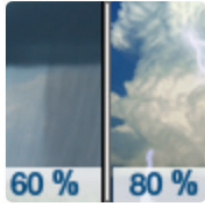
June 2, 2026



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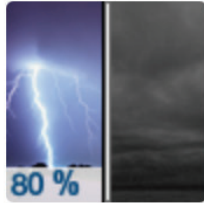
## Wednesday



High: 81 °F

Showers  
Likely then  
Severe  
Thunderstorms

## Wednesday Night



Low: 55 °F

Severe  
Thunderstorms  
then Cloudy

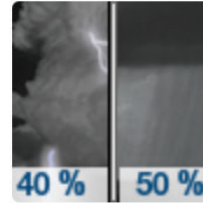
## Thursday



High: 81 °F

Partly Sunny  
then Slight  
Chance  
T-storms

## Thursday Night



Low: 54 °F

Chance  
T-storms then  
Chance  
Showers

## Friday



High: 80 °F

Chance  
Showers then  
Chance  
T-storms



## June 3rd Severe Weather Risk Overview

June 3, 2026  
3:18 AM

This Afternoon and Evening

### Timing/Location

The severe threat will be **this afternoon and evening** as storms develop along a cold front in **central SD** and move east through the afternoon and evening.

### Primary Threats for the **YELLOW** areas

#### Tornado Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High

#### Max Hail Size

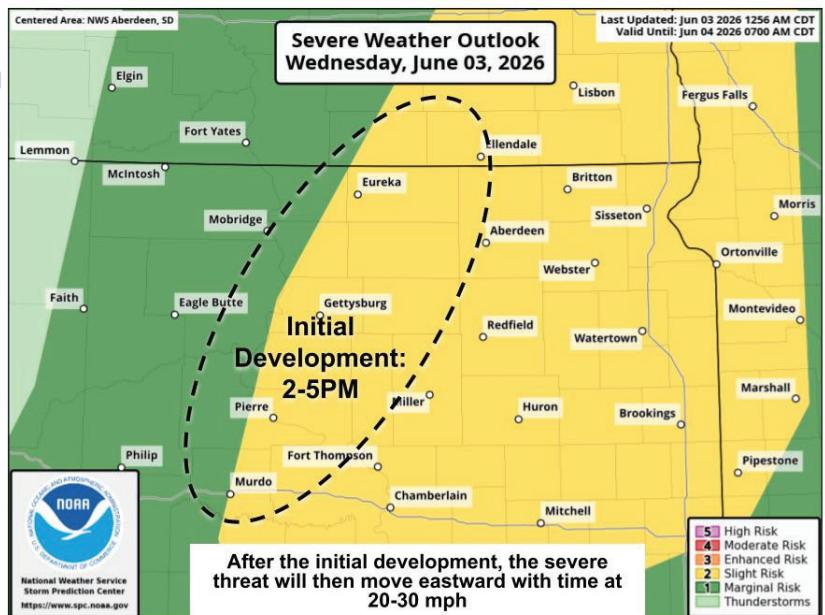
Dimes **Quarters** **Golf Ball** Baseball

#### Max Wind Speed

< 60 mph **60-70 mph** 70-80 mph > 80mph

#### Heavy Rain/Flooding Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

There is a Slight (level 2 out of 5) risk for severe storms over portions of central and eastern SD from mid afternoon through this evening. The storms are expected to develop around/between the Missouri and James Rivers between 2 and 5pm, then move eastward across the rest of eastern SD and into western MN during the evening. The primary threats for these storms will be wind gusts of 60-70 mph and large hail 1-2" in diameter. A tornado or two is also possible. With the heavy rain associated with these thunderstorms, localized flash flooding is also possible, especially for locations that have received rain over the last several days.



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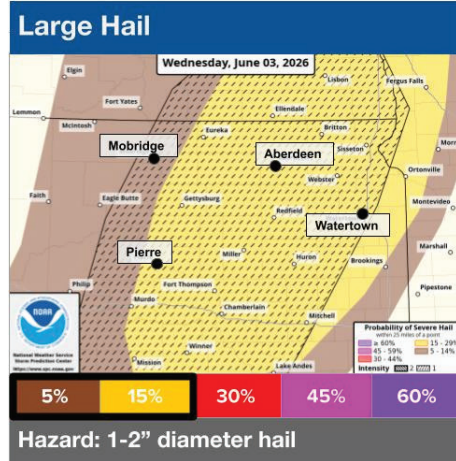
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## Today's (June 3rd) Severe Weather Hazards

June 3, 2026  
3:18 AM CDT

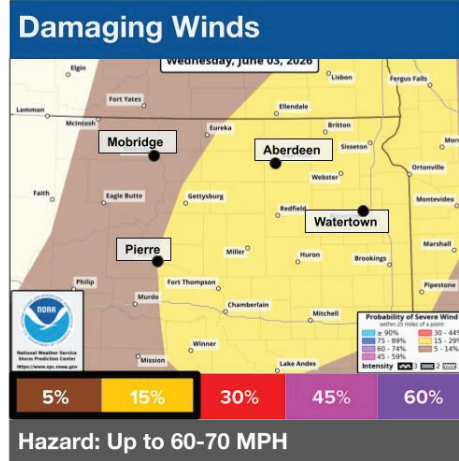
Probabilities of Each Severe Weather Element



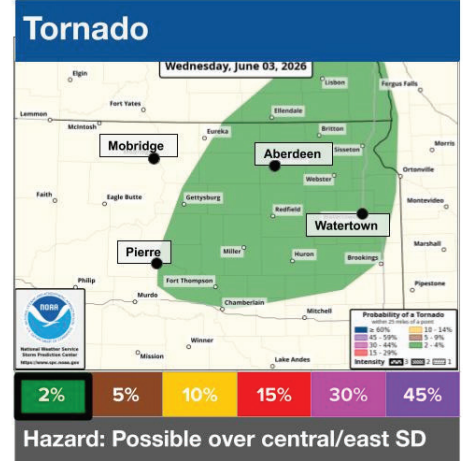
**Potential Impacts:** Damage to vehicles, homes, property.

**Intensity:** 2 Largest Hail >3.5"

**Levels:** 1 Largest Hail >2"



**Potential Impacts:** Tree damage possible, power line damage possible, minor shingle damage possible, outdoor furniture and loose objects blown around.



**Potential Impacts:** Property damage or destruction.

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

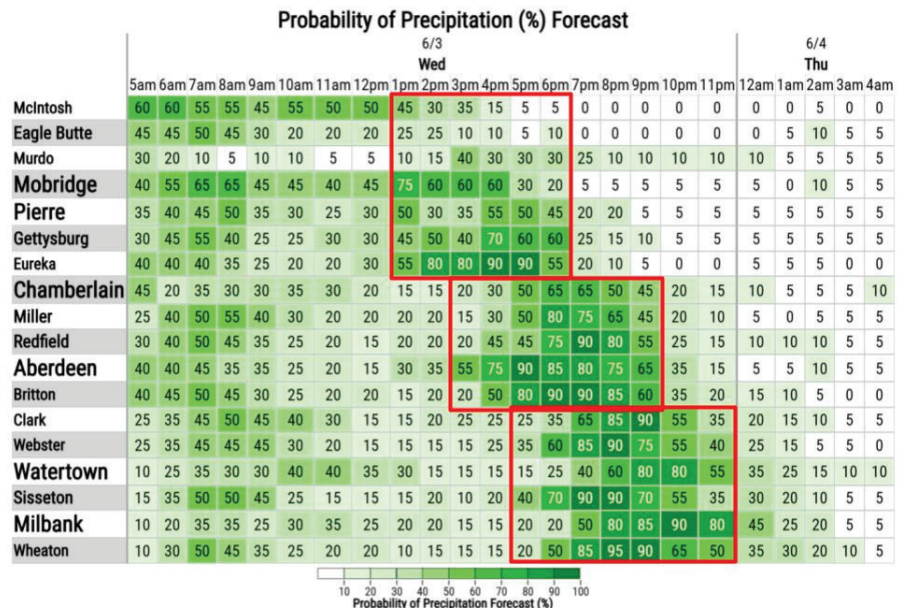
National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD



## Storm Timing Today (June 3rd)

June 3, 2026  
3:18 AM CDT

- Lingered showers and a few thunderstorms are possible this morning.
- The primary threat for severe thunderstorms will be this afternoon (initial development between 2-5pm) from the Missouri River to the James River.
- The storms will move eastward with time through the evening before exiting the area around midnight.
- Timing of highest risk for severe storms is highlighted in the red boxes.



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD



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## THREAT ASSESSMENT

### HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

2

WHAT THIS MEANS:  
Scattered Severe Storms  
Possible

**Mid Afternoon Into  
The Evening**

### PRIMARY THREATS



LARGE HAIL of  
1-2" in diameter

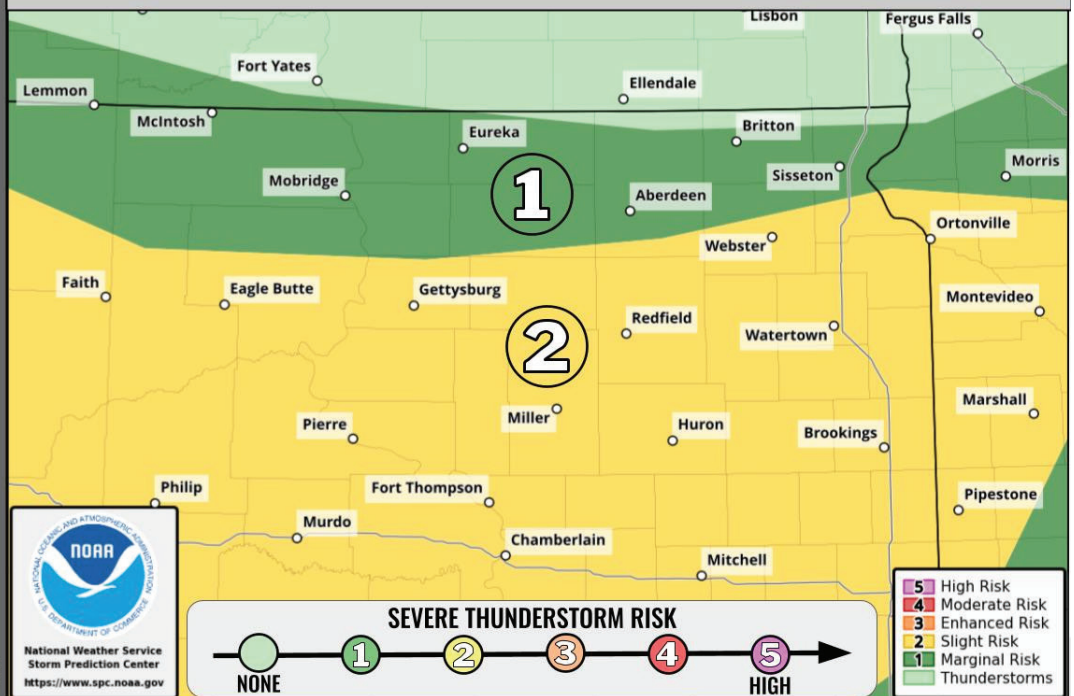


DAMAGING  
WIND GUSTS  
of 60-70 mph

NWS  
Aberdeen, SD



## Marginal to Slight Risk For Severe Storms Thursday, June 4th



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 87 °F at 4:55 PM**

**Low Temp: 65 °F at 3:17 AM**

**Wind: 27 mph at 5:40 PM**

**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

Record High: 100 in 1933

Record Low: 34 in 1964

Average High: 77

Average Low: 52

Average Precip in June.: 0.32

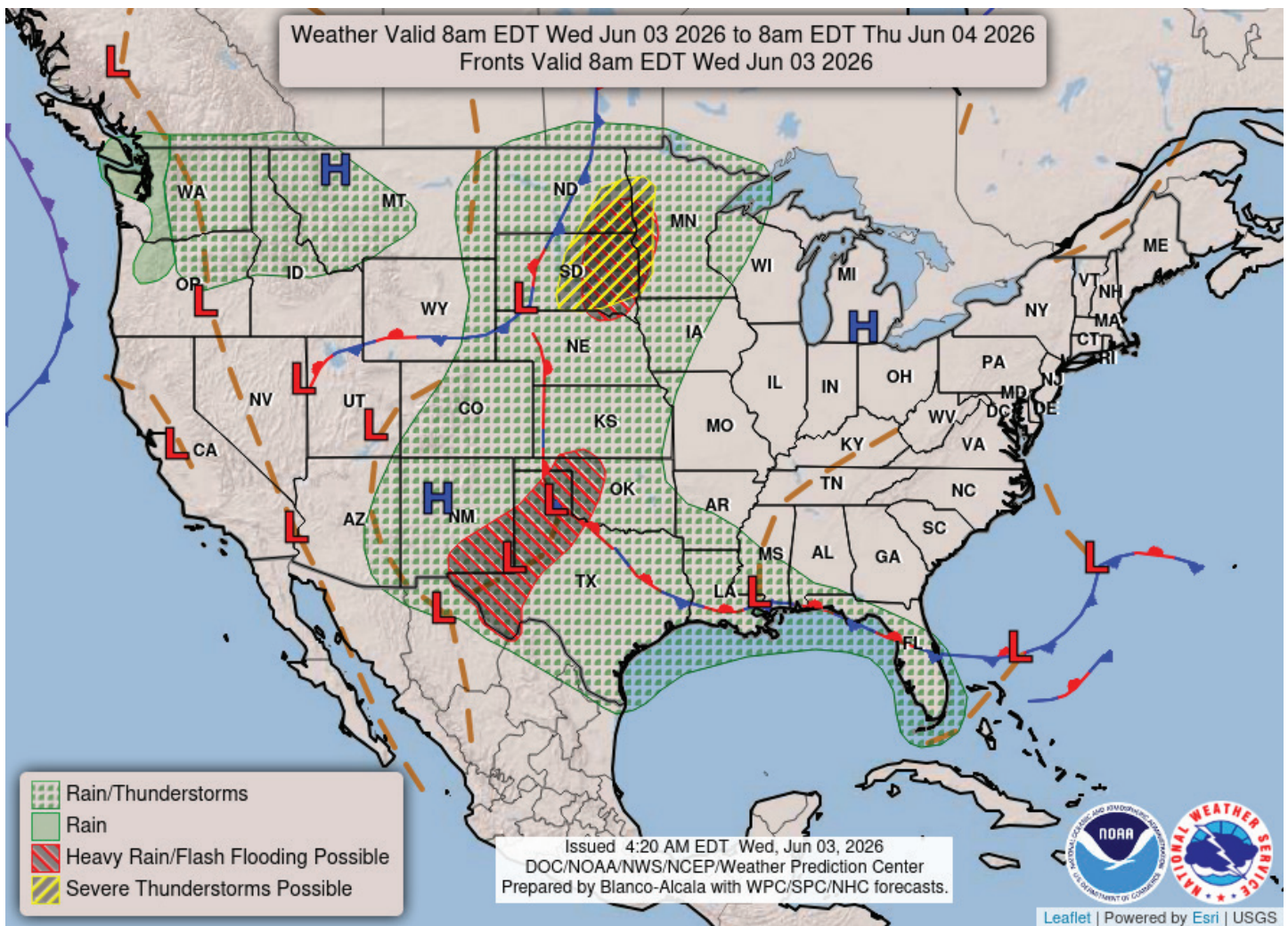
Precip to date in June.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 7.57

Precip Year to Date: 6.36

Sunset Tonight: 9:15 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45 am



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## Today in Weather History

June 3, 1898: A violent windstorm passed over Aberdeen between 1 AM and 2 AM. Damage was confined to awnings, roofs of buildings, and plate glass windows.

June 3, 1933: This estimated F2 tornado moved ENE from 6 miles southwest of Wilmot, passing 3 miles south of town and dissipating at Big Stone Lake. A child was killed in a barn. Roof, barn, and church debris was scattered for miles, and over a dozen farms were heavily damaged. This tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 15 miles.

June 3, 1975: Severe thunderstorms erupted across central sections of South Dakota. During the evening hours, the storms stretched from the southern border to the North Dakota state line and were packing high winds and large hail. In several areas, including Mobridge, hail as large as baseballs did damage to crops, homes, and vehicles and in some regions piled up to two feet deep. Strong thunderstorm winds also uprooted trees and damaged numerous farm buildings. Multiple funnels and small tornadoes were observed, including three in Charles Mix County.

June 3, 1997: Heavy rains of 2 to 4 inches through the early morning hours resulted in the flooding of some roads, fields, and creeks across parts of Jones and Lyman counties. In particular, the KOA campgrounds near Presho were heavily flooded. The KOA office and home had three and a half feet of water in them. Also, several homes near or in Presho received water and were heavily damaged. The Medicine and Stoney Butte creeks set record highs.

1921 — A cloudburst near Pikes Peak CO killed 120 people. Pueblo CO was flooded by a twenty-five foot crest of the Arkansas River, killing 70 persons. Fourteen inches of rain was reported at Boggs Flat, where a hard surface road through nearly level country was washed out to a depth of seven feet. (The Weather Channel)

1959 — Thunderstorms in northwestern Kansas produced up to eighteen inches of hail near Salden during the early evening. Crops were completely destroyed, and total damage from the storm was about half a million dollars. Hail fell for a record eighty-five minutes. The temperature dropped from near 80 degrees prior to the storm to 38 degrees at the height of the storm. (David Ludlum)

1987 — Six days of flooding in South Texas culminated with five to six inch rains from Bexar County to Bandera County, and five to nine inches rains in Gonzalez and Wilson Counties. Total crop damage was estimated at 500 million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Early morning thunderstorms in southern Texas produced wind gusts to 86 mph at Port Isabel, and wind gusts to 83 mph at South Padre Island. Unseasonably hot weather prevailed from the Southern Plateau Region to the Northern High Plains. Fourteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Thunderstorms developing over the Southern Plains Region during the afternoon hours produced severe weather into the night. Thunderstorms spawned eleven tornadoes, and there were 169 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 80 mph at Newcastle, OK, and Wilson, OK. Softball size hail was reported at Monahans, Childress and Groesbeck TX. Monahans TX reported six million dollars damage. Five inches of rain deluged Geronimo OK. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



## Overcoming Inadequacy

**We all feel inadequate at times, but triumph is possible when we focus on Christ.**

2 Corinthians 2:14-17: 14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;

16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?

17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

At some point, we all face feelings of inadequacy. In today's passage, Paul asks a question that expresses this common struggle: "Who is adequate for these things?" (v. 16). Even this great apostle understood what it means to feel insufficient.

Have you ever sensed God calling you to serve Him in a way that pushed you outside your comfort zone? Perhaps you hesitated because you didn't feel qualified. If so, you may have missed an opportunity to see the Lord work powerfully through your weakness.

Feeling inadequate isn't sin—it's being honest about our limitations. However, using inadequacy as an excuse to avoid obedience is another matter.

When the Lord challenges you beyond your abilities, you face a choice: Will you focus on Christ and move forward in faith, or focus on yourself and withdraw in defeat?

God would never ask you to do something without empowering you to accomplish it. He doesn't require perfection—just obedience. Each step of faithfulness is a victory, and you'll discover what the psalmist knew: "Come and see the works of God, who is awesome in His deeds" (Psalm 66:5).

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



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Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.02.26

16 33 41 50 52 1

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$1,000,000/year**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 51 Mins 19 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.02.26

15 26 43 48 60 12

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$368,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 36 Mins 19 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.01.26

10 37 40 46 47 5

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$28,270,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 51 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.30.26

4 6 7 22 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$113,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 6 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.01.26

2 7 35 44 57 25

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 35 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.01.26

2 42 47 57 58 14

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$194,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 35 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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

### Takeaways from Tuesday's primaries as Democrats try to make Iowa inroads and defend California

By STEVEN SLOAN and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The contours of a premier U.S. Senate race took shape Tuesday night in Iowa, while President Donald Trump's endorsement streak ran into a roadblock there.

Democrats chose a nominee for a U.S. House race in New Jersey that could decide control of the chamber. But much of the focus is on California, home to Hollywood but not a governor's race packing much star power.

Here are takeaways from primary elections in California, Iowa, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico and South Dakota.

Iowa Democrats rally behind former Paralympian in marquee Senate race

Democrats stunned by how Trump has remade American politics have spent the past decade debating which type of candidate is best positioned to energize voters and win elections, not moral victories.

Iowa marked the latest stop in this sometimes agonizing conversation.

The party's establishment supported Josh Turek, a state representative who presented a compelling personal biography that included competing for the U.S. in four Paralympics. State Sen. Zach Wahls, meanwhile, offered himself as a more disruptive player, refusing to back Chuck Schumer as Democratic leader if he were elected.

Democratic voters united behind Turek, who will face Republican Ashley Hinson in the fall.

At this point, many of the party's most fractious races are behind them. But Turek's win could be closely watched in Michigan, where one of the last major Democratic primaries will unfold on Aug. 4. Rep. Haley Stevens is emerging as the establishment candidate there vying against state Sen. Mallory McMorrow and progressive Abdul El-Sayed.

Both races are important for Democrats increasingly bullish about retaking the Senate majority in November. To get there, they must protect their Michigan seat while looking for pickup opportunities in places like Iowa.

The results in the fall could have longer-term implications as Democrats look to rebuild their standing in the Midwest, which swung to Trump in 2024.

Trump's endorsement streak faces setback in Iowa

In just the past month, the power of Trump's endorsement helped end the political careers of two senators — John Cornyn of Texas and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana — and Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky.

But the president was unable to lift Rep. Randy Feenstra to victory in Iowa's Republican primary for governor. Trump jumped in with his backing last week but Feenstra narrowly lost to Zach Lahn.

The development is a rare setback for Trump, who basks in his ability to sway the vote among Republicans with his endorsement. And it sets up what Democrats see as one of their best opportunities to pick up a governorship this year.

Democrats nominated Rob Sand, who ran unopposed in the primary. A native of Decorah, Iowa, he has the rural roots that have become rare among Democrats. Perhaps most importantly, he's a proven winner in a Republican-leaning state, having been elected twice as auditor.

Lahn was not well known in Iowa politics when he launched his campaign in November, but he built support among conservatives. He championed policies including a total ban on abortion and keeping liberal ideology out of public school classrooms.

Lahn criticized Feenstra for not showing up to debate his primary opponents and spending limited time on the campaign trail. He was endorsed by former U.S. Rep. Steve King, who Feenstra unseated in the 2020 Republican congressional primary.

California's dramatic race for governor drags on

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The California governor's race has been especially dramatic this year.

With Gov. Gavin Newsom barred from seeking a third term, about 60 names were on the ballot to succeed him. None of them were the state's most prominent names, including former Vice President Kamala Harris and Sen. Alex Padilla. One of the bold-faced names that did come forward, former Rep. Eric Swalwell, withdrew after being accused of sexual assault, which he denied.

For Californians dizzied by the twists, it will take a bit longer to have clarity on their choices for governor.

Under the state's primary system, all candidates appear on a single ballot and the top two finishers advance to the November general election, regardless of party.

In the final days of the campaign, much of the attention focused on Democrats Xavier Becerra, the former congressman and state attorney general who was also health secretary under President Joe Biden, and Tom Steyer, a billionaire known for his climate activism. Republican Steve Hilton campaigned with Trump's endorsement.

The three were leading in early returns after polls closed.

If Becerra were to advance to one of the two slots on the fall ballot, he presents a natural choice for voters more comfortable with a traditional candidate. Steyer and Hilton have both presented themselves as significant change agents.

Governed by establishment-oriented Democrats for two decades, the results will indicate the level of change that's being sought in a state that's confronting serious challenges ranging from affordability to crime. And it will signal whether the \$200 million Steyer put into the race from his own money turned out to be a good investment.

Independents emerge in red-state Senate races

If Democrats hope to compete in red-state Senate contests this fall, they may have to abandon their party's nominees and rally around independents.

That's one of the takeaways after voters on Tuesday finalized general election matchups in Montana and South Dakota, where little-known Democrats earned their party's nominations. In both states, however, higher-profile independent candidates also qualified for the general election ballot.

It's much the same in Idaho and Nebraska, which held Senate primaries last month. Democratic leaders in Nebraska are openly endorsing independent Dan Osborne over their party's nominee, who has promised to drop out to make it easier for Osborne to win.

In Montana, independent Senate candidate Seth Bodnar, the former University of Montana president, looks like the strongest opponent to Republican Kurt Alme — on paper, at least. Bodnar raised more money than all of the five Democratic primary candidates combined. He's even significantly outraised Trump-backed Alme.

In South Dakota, three-term incumbent Republican Mike Rounds cruised to his party's nomination Tuesday. He'll face Democrat Julian Beaudion, a former highway patrol trooper and small business owner, on the November ballot. But it's a former Democrat now running as an independent, military veteran Brian Bengs, who some Democrats believe may be the tougher challenger.

The Democrats shift toward independents reflects the party's toxic brand in Republican strongholds.

Absent congressman gets a Democratic challenger

One of the most closely watched U.S. House races is set.

Democrats nominated Rebecca Bennett to take on incumbent Republican Rep. Tom Kean Jr. in New Jersey's 7th congressional district.

The district, which stretches from the New York City suburbs to the Pennsylvania border, is critical for Republicans as they defend a narrow majority in Congress. The race was always going to be one of the most competitive on a map that has been increasingly gerrymandered to protect both parties. But it's under particularly close scrutiny because of Kean's extended and unexplained medical absence.

He's missed more than 100 votes since casting his last one on March 5.

Bennett, a former Navy pilot, was among the Democrats in the primary who made the absence and the lack of clarity surrounding it an issue, arguing Kean wasn't around to protect money for a new rail tunnel connecting New Jersey and New York City. That line of attack will likely only grow heading into the

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general election.

Trump reiterated his endorsement of Kean on Monday. And the congressman released a statement Tuesday saying he is "focused on my recovery" and would return to "in person work within a matter of weeks."

New Mexico could make history in governor's race

The stage is set for Deb Haaland to make history this fall after the former U.S. interior secretary secured the Democratic nomination for governor in New Mexico.

Haaland, who served under Biden for four years, was the first Native American to serve as a presidential cabinet secretary. And this fall, the citizen of Laguna Pueblo could become the first Native American woman elected governor of any U.S. state.

She defeated Albuquerque-based District Attorney Sam Bregman, the father of Chicago Cubs All-Star Alex Bregman, in a Democratic primary campaign that emphasized her ancestral roots in addition to lowering costs and her governing experience.

Haaland will face Republican Greggory Hull in the general election.

## World shares are mixed as Tokyo's Nikkei 225 follows Wall Street to an all-time high

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

European shares opened lower after a mixed day of trading in Asia, where Japan's Nikkei 225 index topped 68,000 for the first time on Wednesday.

Oil prices rose more than \$2 a barrel.

Buying of technology shares linked to the boom in artificial intelligence has been driving rallies worldwide.

But in early trading, Germany's DAX lost 0.8% to 24,930.74 and the CAC 40 in Paris fell 0.4% to 8,173.51. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.3% to 10,340.00.

The future for the S&P 500 was down 0.1% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.2%.

During Asia's day, Japan's Nikkei 225 gained 2.5% to 68,402.13. Shares in computer chip equipment maker Tokyo Electron gained 13.4%, while those for chip testing equipment maker Advantest gained 5.1%.

In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng lost 1.6% to 25,633.21, while the Shanghai Composite index added 0.2% to 4,083.97.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 advanced 0.7% to 8,785.70.

Taiwan's Taiex gained 2%, while in India, the Sensex lost 0.9%.

Markets in South Korea were closed for a holiday.

On Tuesday, winners of the artificial-intelligence boom kept driving higher, pushing U.S. stocks to more records.

"One thing that stands out in today's market is how little investors seem willing to pay for protection despite a world overflowing with potential shocks," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

The S&P 500 rose 0.1% to 7,609.78 after drifting between small gains and losses through the day. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.4% to 51,307.79, and the Nasdaq composite edged up by less than 0.1% to 27,093.90. All three set all-time highs.

A report said that U.S. employers were advertising many more jobs at the end of April than economists expected, a potential signal of continued health for the U.S. labor market.

Hewlett Packard Enterprise's stock soared 19.5% after it reported a profit for the latest quarter that blew past analysts' expectations. It credited demand from customers building their artificial-intelligence capabilities.

Marvell Technology leaped 32.5% for its best day since its stock began trading in 2000 after Nvidia's CEO, Jensen Huang, suggested at a conference in Taiwan that Marvell could be "the next trillion-dollar company." The last company to enter the expanding club of behemoths was Micron Technology, which is likewise riding the AI wave. Nvidia, which slipped 0.7%, has seen its total value top \$5 trillion.

Generac climbed 5.7% after saying it signed a deal to provide backup power generators to an unnamed

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"leading hyperscale data center operator."

Analysts have been saying the broad U.S. stock market may be set for a slowdown following an unrelenting streak of nine straight winning weeks for the S&P 500, its longest since 2023.

The rally has been largely due to strong profit reports from U.S. companies, and to hopes that the United States and Iran will reach a deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. That would allow oil to flow freely again from the Persian Gulf and hopefully lower its price.

In the oil market, prices have resumed climbing. Brent crude oil, the international standard, climbed \$2.63 to \$98.63 per barrel early Wednesday.

U.S. benchmark crude oil advanced \$2.79 to \$96.55 per barrel.

After briefly trading as high as 160.44 yen, the U.S. dollar slipped to 159.86 yen from 159.92 late Tuesday. The euro fell to \$1.1631 from \$1.1632.

## **Ukrainian drones set fire to a St. Petersburg oil terminal ahead of Putin visit**

By The Associated Press undefined

Ukrainian long-range drones struck an oil terminal in St. Petersburg and set it ablaze, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday, as the Russian city hosted an annual international economic forum promoted by President Vladimir Putin.

The drones flew more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) to hit the terminal, Zelenskyy said on social media. Clouds of black smoke rose over the city's port after the attack.

Russian authorities said only that the Ukrainian drone strike targeted the city's infrastructure, without providing further details. The airport of St. Petersburg briefly suspended flights overnight because of the attack. Authorities also cut off mobile internet services.

Putin is set to speak Friday at the economic forum in St. Petersburg that the Kremlin views as a prestige event, although major Western investors and officials have stayed away since Russia invaded Ukraine more than four years ago. Saudi Arabia is a special guest country this year and is due to send a large business delegation.

The strikes are an embarrassment for Putin, weeks after he had to prune back an annual Victory Day parade in Moscow due to fears of Ukrainian drone attacks.

The strikes came a day after Russian forces launched a massive drone and missile attack on Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, killing at least 22 civilians and wounding 138, as Moscow followed through with its threat of escalating its regular barrages.

With the front line changing little as swarms of drones hinder battlefield movement, both sides have sought an edge by increasingly launching long-range strikes. The war that followed Russia's invasion of its neighbor has now stretched into its fifth year, with no end in sight.

Ukraine's attacks are aimed at diminishing Russia's oil production, which is a key source of funding for Moscow, and disrupting weapon production.

Ukraine has repeatedly targeted oil facilities at the port of St. Petersburg and nearby ports.

Ukrainian drone attacks overnight also hit the Kronstadt naval base, an old base for Russia's Baltic Fleet, and a manufacturing plant involved in weapon production in Russia's Tambov region, 600 kilometers (370 miles) from Ukraine, Zelenskyy said.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 354 Ukrainian drones overnight.

In the Russia-controlled part of Ukraine's Donetsk region, a Ukrainian strike hit a bus that was traveling from Moscow to Crimea, killing seven and injuring 11, according to the Kremlin-appointed head of Donetsk, Denis Pushilin.

In the Smolensk region, two firefighters were killed by a Ukrainian drone attack, according to the regional governor, Vasily Anokhin. He said two other firefighters and a local resident were injured.

Meanwhile, Russia fired 198 long-range drones at Ukraine last night, according to Ukraine's air force, with air defenses neutralizing 189.



Authorities in Ukraine's northern Sumy region said that over the previous 24 hours one civilian was killed and 15 more were injured, including three children, by Russian strikes.

In the southern Kherson, Russian overnight shelling and drone strikes killed an 86-year-old woman and wounded five other people, according to regional authorities.

## Australian judges weigh Indigenous activist's bid to prosecute King Charles for genocide

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Three Australian appeals court judges reserved their decision Wednesday on whether an activist can prosecute Britain's King Charles III for alleged genocide of Australia's Indigenous people.

Uncle Robbie Thorpe, 68, turned to the Supreme Court of Appeal in Victoria state after two lower courts rejected his bid to launch a private prosecution against the king in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court. Indigenous Australians use the titles uncle and aunt as marks of respect for community elders.

His case alleges the monarch, who is also Australia's head of state, the Australian government and its institutions were perpetuating a genocide of Indigenous people by maintaining systemic disadvantages on multiple socioeconomic levels, making them the most underprivileged minority in the country.

Indigenous Australians account for 4% of the population. They die younger than other Australians, suffer worse health problems, and are more likely to be imprisoned and unemployed than other groups, according to official statistics.

Thorpe told The Associated Press if he exhausts his legal options in Australia, he would take the offense under the Genocide Convention to the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands.

"It's clear that they're unwilling, unable, reluctant to deal with these international legal issues like genocide," Thorpe told the AP before the hearing, referring to the Australian judiciary.

He later told the judges Indigenous people were dying because their disadvantage in Australia was compounding.

"The Crown is responsible for all this mess," Thorpe said. "Australia's got away with genocide of Aboriginal people since they arrived here."

The British colonized Australia in 1788 and violently seized Indigenous people's land without a treaty.

"They totally failed to prevent (genocide). That's the crime here. They failed to prevent genocide knowingly and they failed to punish anyone for it," he added.

The British punished Indigenous people for speaking their language and for practicing their cultures in a bid to make them Christian and Western. Generations of children were taken from Indigenous families in now-discredited assimilation policies.

Thorpe wore a traditional possum-skin coat in court and carried a feather from an Australian wedge-tailed eagle, an Indigenous totem.

He requested to be addressed in court as Uncle Robbie or by his tribal name Djuran Bunjileenee.

Justice Karin Emerton, the court's presiding judge, referred to him as Uncle Robbie.

The king was identified in court documents as Charles Philip Arthur George Windsor.

Thorpe is attempting to charge the king under Indigenous law that has existed for more than 65,000 years, state common law and federal criminal law, court documents show.

In dismissing Thorpe's appeal last year, a judge ruled that a magistrate was not allowed to consider Indigenous law and genocide was not an offense under common law.

The federal attorney-general would have to sign off on any genocide prosecution under federal law, the judge ruled.

Following a two-hour hearing on Wednesday, Emerton said the three judges would deliver their verdict at a later date.

If Thorpe loses, his final option would be Australia's High Court before attempting to have the king

prosecuted in The Hague.

## **US says it plans extra tariffs of 10% or more for most trading partners after forced labor probe**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is proposing that tariffs of 10% or more be imposed on products from dozens of major trading partners following a probe into imports of goods allegedly made with forced labor.

The report released early Wednesday by the U.S. Trade Representative said Canada, Mexico, Taiwan and the United Kingdom and some other countries and territories would face 10% additional tariffs for allegedly failing to enforce a forced labor import ban.

A 12.5% additional tariff would be imposed on China, Japan, India, South Korea, Brazil and Switzerland and dozens of other countries.

"The failure of our most important trading partners to address the importation of goods made with forced labor is unacceptable. This creates a dynamic where American workers are forced to compete globally on an unlevel playing field," USTR Ambassador Jamieson Greer said in a statement.

He added that "each of our trading partners must do more to ensure that trade does not perversely encourage and entrench forced labor globally."

The USTR said failure to prevent such imports is "unreasonable and burdens or restricts U.S. commerce."

This latest barrage of tariffs is likely to unsettle key trading partners that have been hit by waves of tariffs since President Donald Trump returned to office early last year.

Just two weeks ago, the European Union approved a tariff deal with the United States to cap tariffs on most EU exports at 15% following intense debates among the EU's 27 nations and threats by European lawmakers to block the agreement.

Trump recently returned from a visit to China, where he and its leader Xi Jinping discussed expanding market access for American businesses in China and increasing Chinese investment into U.S. industries. The two leaders agreed to set up separate boards of trade and investment — though few details were provided.

A Chinese government spokesperson denied the forced labor allegation and called for resolving economic issues through dialogue, saying a trade war doesn't serve anyone's interests.

"There is no such thing as forced labor in China, and we oppose using it as an excuse to engage in political manipulation," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said in Beijing.

The new tariffs would not take effect immediately. They are subject to public comment and review. Public hearings on the proposed duties are due to begin on July 7.

The investigation into alleged failure to prevent imports of goods allegedly made by forced labor was conducted under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. The strategy would enable Trump to skirt limits on his tariffs imposed by the Supreme Court.

It found that 60 countries investigated had failed to enforce a prohibition on the importation of goods produced with forced labor.

The report defined forced labor as "work or service exacted from a person under the menace of any penalty for its nonperformance and for which the worker does not offer himself voluntarily."

It cited an estimate by the UN's International Labor Organization that as of 2021, 27.6 million people were engaged in forced labor.

Rice imported from Myanmar, tobacco from Malawi, beef from Brazil, and cotton and polysilicon from China were among the many products it said are prone to involving forced labor.

The U.S. has long said imports of goods that include material from China's far-western Xinjiang are at risk of using forced labor. Beijing denies allegations of forced labor in the Muslim majority region.

The Supreme Court ruled in February that Trump had overstepped his authority by using a different law — the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) of 1977 — to impose sweeping tariffs on U.S. trading partners.

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The Trump administration has said it would appeal a federal judge's order making all companies that paid the duties on those earlier tariffs eligible for refunds.

Earlier this week, the administration separately proposed 25% tariffs on imports from Brazil, charging that the world's 10th-biggest economy engages in trade practices that are "unreasonable" and that "burden or restrict U.S. commerce."

The USTR said its investigation showed Brazil had lax anti-corruption enforcement and unfair tariffs of its own, among other things.

In its nearly 100-page report on forced labor, the USTR said that even if a country enforces a ban on forced labor domestically, importing goods made with forced labor violates the rules of fair trade.

It said some key items would be exempt from the additional tariffs or subject to lower tariffs, including certain textiles, tomatoes, bananas, coffee and some metals.

## After decades of rising support, same-sex marriage acceptance may be stalling, Gallup poll shows

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX Associated Press

Acceptance of same-sex marriage and relationships in the U.S. has flattened after more than two decades of steadily increasing support, with an ongoing decline among Republicans, according to a new Gallup poll.

About 65% of U.S. adults believe same-sex marriage should be legal, down slightly from 71% in 2022 and 2023.

Most of the change is due to dropping acceptance among Republicans. In the new survey, which was conducted in May, only 37% of Republicans say same-sex marriage should be legally valid, while 35% say gay and lesbian relations are "morally acceptable."

The views of Democrats and independents are largely stable in the findings released Wednesday, with most in both groups saying same-sex marriage should be legal and that gay or lesbian relations are moral.

The widening partisan divide is also reflected in policy around LGBTQ+ issues across the U.S., particularly regarding transgender people, and a rising push in some states to ban same-sex marriage.

Recent shifts have been subtle and partisan

The downtick in support for same-sex marriage, while slight, is still striking because of how dramatically American views on the issue have shifted over the past few decades.

According to Gallup's trend data, only 27% of U.S. adults supported legal same-sex marriage in 1996. Since then, support for same-sex marriage rose steadily until a few years ago, when it peaked with around 7 in 10 U.S. adults saying same-sex marriage should be legal.

Opinion about the morality of same-sex relationships followed the same pattern. About 4 in 10 U.S. adults said same-sex relations were morally acceptable in 2001. That increased nearly 30 percentage points over the next two decades.

Over the past few years, Gallup's data has shown signs of a shift in the other direction. In addition to the slight decline on same-sex marriage, the new poll also found that 62% of U.S. adults view gay and lesbian relations as morally acceptable, down from 71% in 2022.

Same-sex marriage remains recognized nationwide

Same-sex marriage has been recognized nationally since a 2015 Supreme Court ruling. That case capped a 12-year run in which court rulings and state laws recognized it in most states.

By last year, there were more than 800,000 married same-sex couples, according to data compiled by the Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles School of Law.

The pushback has never stopped, though. A call to overturn the 2015 reached the Supreme Court last year, invoking the words of Justice Clarence Thomas, who has called for undoing it. The court turned away the appeal without comment.

Last year, the Southern Baptist Convention overwhelmingly called for reversing the ruling that led to nationwide marriage recognition and imposing a ban.

Lawmakers in at least 11 states introduced legislation for their current or most recent sessions calling

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on a ban on same-sex marriage, according to an Associated Press analysis of bills compiled by the legislation tracking service Plural. Most didn't pick up momentum. But the Tennessee House passed a measure to allow private citizens and organizations not to recognize the unions; Idaho's House passed a resolution calling on the Supreme Court to undo the 2015 decision.

A similar number of states have had measures aimed at protecting same-sex marriage introduced recently. Acceptance of transgender people is also down

In a sign that views of LGBTQ+ issues may be shifting more broadly, the new Gallup poll found that about 4 in 10 Americans view changing one's gender as morally acceptable, down from nearly half in 2021.

The rights of transgender people have been a hot-button political issue this decade.

Most Republican-controlled states have adopted laws in the last five years to bar gender-affirming medical treatments for transgender minors, restrict which school bathrooms transgender people may use and bar transgender girls and women from some sports competitions.

Trump has signed executive orders seeking some of the same policies on a federal level.

This week, one of those policies suffered a blow when a court ruled that the military illegally banned transgender troops.

## **California governor's primary pitted experience against promises of change**

By SOPHIE AUSTIN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California's crowded primary for governor remained unresolved early Wednesday after three leading candidates tested voters' appetites for an experienced politician or promises of sweeping change.

Though votes were still being counted, Democrats Xavier Becerra and Tom Steyer and Republican Steve Hilton started looking to November, laying out their visions for leading the nation's most populous state and one of the world's largest economies.

Only two will advance to the general election, however, and The Associated Press has not yet called the primary for any candidate. The state has a history of substantial vote updates after Election Day that can sometimes shift the outcome of elections as late-arriving mail and drop-off votes are counted. Hilton and Becerra were leading so far, with Steyer running slightly further back.

"Change is coming to California, and it's long overdue," Hilton told supporters after polls closed, reflecting his campaign message that the state needs a dramatic reset after more than 15 years of Democratic rule.

Steyer also campaigned on change, though through a vastly different lens. A former hedge fund manager turned climate activist, he pledged to raise taxes on corporations and the ultrawealthy like himself. He declared Tuesday that he would prevail over monied interests that strived to defeat him.

Becerra, meanwhile, pitched himself as the steady hand who can lead the state against intrusions from the Trump administration, touting his decades in public service in Congress, as state attorney general and as federal health secretary. Speaking to supporters, he said voters came around to his message after he initially was counted out.

"The underdog stayed in the fight," Becerra said to applause.

California puts all candidates on a single primary ballot regardless of party, and the top two finishers advance to the November general election. About 60 candidates were on the ballot, most of them largely unknown to the state's roughly 23 million voters.

Affordability at the center of campaign

The through line of the race was how to tackle the state's notoriously high cost of living.

Drivers were paying \$6.08 per gallon at the pump as of the end of May, \$1.65 higher than the national average, according to AAA. Meanwhile the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office has estimated that the typical home is about \$775,000, more than double the national average. And Californians pay the second-highest residential electricity rates behind Hawaii, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Steyer blamed the state's challenges in part on corporations that he said are ripping off Californians. He



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supports eliminating private health insurance in favor of a government-run system and pledged to break up major utilities and take on fossil fuel companies. Utility Pacific Gas & Electric was among the businesses spending money to defeat him.

"We should have a system based on fairness, not asking for fairness," Steyer said Tuesday, adding that his campaign "scared the hell out of the corporate interests who are used to getting their own way."

Hilton said he would make Californians' first \$100,000 free of income tax, increase oil production and freeze in-state tuition at public colleges and to try to make the state more affordable. He also pledged to slash regulations and to "revive" the state's economic prowess by reversing Democratic policies that make things more expensive.

That message resonated with voters like Republican Rosamaria Cerezo, a 57-year-old substitute teacher voted for Hilton.

"Both my husband and I have two jobs each just to make ends meet," she said.

Candidates expressed optimism about state's future

Despite the state's challenges, the candidates delivered upbeat messages about its potential. They pledged to ensure government works to serve all of its roughly 39 million residents.

"I ran for the job because I know how important California is as a shining light to the world," Becerra told supporters.

He argued that his years of political experience prepared him to lead, and he highlighted his tenure as attorney general, when he filed more than 120 legal actions during Trump's first term, as evidence that he can protect Californians' interests.

Democrat Tamara Alton, a 65-year-old marriage and family therapist, was voting for Becerra because of his experience.

"I'm going to go with him because I want somebody that knows what they're doing," Alton said.

Becerra also referenced his background as the son of two Mexican immigrants. In a state where nearly a third of voters identify as Hispanic or Latino, he would be the first Latino governor in more than a century.

California, he said, "regularly makes the improbable seem inevitable."

Steyer vastly outspent rivals

Steyer ran the most expensive primary campaign in the country, dumping more than \$215 million of his own money into it including a massive amount on advertising. That's likely just a preview of what he would spend should he advance to the general election.

His spending prompted some of his rivals to accuse him of trying to buy the election.

But some Democratic voters said they chose Steyer despite uneasiness with his wealth because of his focus on tackling climate change.

Jude Mayer, 24, said she was not thrilled about voting for a billionaire but Steyer "is talking about the environment in the way that I want to hear about it."

## Scott Pelley fired from '60 Minutes,' deepening turmoil at CBS News

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press

CBS News fired longtime "60 Minutes" correspondent Scott Pelley on Tuesday, a day after he reportedly said Editor-in-Chief Bari Weiss was "murdering the show" and accused its new producer of having "slender qualifications" for the job.

The move deepened the turmoil at the nation's most influential TV news program, days after a leadership overhaul.

Pelley, 68, criticized management Monday during a fiery staff meeting with Nick Bilton, the program's new executive producer installed by Weiss last week, according to a detailed report on the Status website.

In a termination notice obtained Tuesday night by The Associated Press, Bilton, a technology journalist and filmmaker with no traditional broadcast news experience, accused Pelley of carrying out an "ambush"



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against him.

"Yesterday, you hijacked my first meeting with staff to disparage me, my qualifications, and my intentions with remarkable incivility and contempt," the letter states.

Pelley said in a statement that "60 Minutes" has lost its DNA under new management. He accused them of asking him to "inject falsehoods and bias" into his work, without sharing specific details.

Pelley is accused of a 'performative display of hostility'

Status, which said it had a recording of the Monday meeting, reported that Pelley had said Weiss was brought in to kill the news outlet, "and she's doing exactly that." Weiss was not present for the meeting.

Pelley reportedly grilled Bilton about the firings last week of Bilton's predecessor, Tanya Simon, and correspondents Sharyn Alfonsi and Cecilia Vega.

Alfonsi had criticized Weiss last year for postponing a segment about deportees sent to the notorious CECOT prison in El Salvador as part of President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

Pelley said in his statement that those colleagues "stood for fairness against the forces of political bias." He also accused CEO David Ellison of casting aside the show's reputation "apparently to curry a moment of favor with the Trump administration." Ellison, an ally of the Republican president, has owned CBS since 2025, when its parent company, Paramount, merged with Skydance Media.

In the dismissal letter Tuesday, Bilton said Pelley's "performative display of hostility" demonstrated that he has "no interest in contributing to the future success of the show."

An uneasy stretch for CBS News

Since Weiss took over the network's news operation last October, it has traveled a bumpy road.

Pelley's termination came just five days after Weiss, who has become a polarizing figure in the media world since taking the reins, told staff in a memo that it was time for a "new approach" at the top-rated newsmagazine.

In the memo, Weiss and CBS News president Tom Cibrowski said their goal for "60 Minutes" was "building a show that thrives in the 21st century." That could include extending the show beyond a 60-minute broadcast, they said.

"60 Minutes" first aired in 1968 and is the longest-running prime-time show in TV history. Its investigative journalism and probing interviews, sometimes with unwilling subjects, have given it the reputation of uncompromising journalism — precisely the trait that Pelley said he feared was under assault.

Pelley started working for CBS in 1989. He was its chief White House Correspondent from 1997 to 1999, during Bill Clinton's presidency, and anchored "CBS Evening News" from 2011 to 2017. He has won 51 Emmy Awards, according to his CBS bio.

## Police locked in negotiations with man in Bakersfield holding hostages

By HALLIE GOLDEN and JULIE WATSON Associated Press

Police were locked in negotiations Tuesday night with a man holding hostages inside a building that houses a Chase bank branch and school district office in the Southern California city of Bakersfield, officials said.

Officers responding to a call of a bomb threat arrived at the scene around 1 p.m. at the Chase Bank building in downtown Bakersfield, and discovered a man had barricaded himself inside "with several community members," the Bakersfield Police Department said in a statement.

Through negotiations, two of the hostages were released and the rest are in "good health," city police Sgt. Eric Celedon said.

"We have every single resource at our disposal out here to bring this to the safest resolution possible," he said.

Nearby buildings were evacuated, including city hall and the police headquarters, and some roads were temporarily closed, according to officials. Officers established a perimeter around the building and nearby businesses, authorities said.

Celedon warned the public to stay out of the area, explaining that this is still a very active situation.

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A spokesperson for JPMorgan Chase said its branch is on the ground floor of the building and is currently empty. The company is working with authorities.

The department's crisis negotiation team was in contact with the suspect by telephone.

About a dozen police cars were on scene along with one tactical vehicle and multiple emergency responders, and FBI agents were on the scene.

Jacob Davidson, a livestreamer known as Dad's Gone Live, was a block from the bank at his family's tattoo shop when he started getting calls from his subscribers alerting him to the bomb threat.

"I went into the bank's parking garage and watched the cops enter the back of the bank. This is the biggest police presence I've ever seen in this town," Davidson said. "Now I'm watching them set up the trauma tents with the green, red and yellow tags, and black tags too, along with a command center about a block away."

By Tuesday night, his livestream captured through a window in the building a woman rocking back and forth before crouching further down below the window. Later, two hands could be seen waving.

Law enforcement agencies often protectively set up trauma tents — which are color-coded to help sort people based on the severity of injuries — just in case they become needed during an emergency situation.

Bakersfield Mayor Karen Goh said she is closely monitoring the situation.

"The best way the public can help at this time is by avoiding the area and allowing law enforcement officers, negotiators, and other trained professionals the space and opportunity to safely carry out their duties," she said in a statement.

## Iran fires missiles and US strikes Iran facility after reports of faltering peace talks

By JON GAMBRELL, SAMY MAGDY and NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The U.S. military said Tuesday that Iran fired missiles at Kuwait and Bahrain that failed or were shot down, and that the U.S. launched strikes on an Iranian facility in response.

Iran fired missiles toward Kuwait and Bahrain, but failed to hit their targets, the U.S. said. The two fired at Kuwait fell apart en route, while U.S. and Bahraini forces intercepted the missiles aimed at Bahrain.

U.S. Central Command said it responded with strikes on an Iranian military ground control station on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it had targeted the headquarters of the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet in Bahrain and another country in its attack, without naming Kuwait. It said it launched its attack in response to the U.S. firing a missile into the engine room of another oil tanker trying to reach Iran despite the U.S. blockade.

"We had previously warned that in case of aggression, the response would be different and more severe, and we acted accordingly," the Guard said in its statement.

Central Command also said it "downed multiple drones" launched by Iran targeting American forces in Kuwait.

The attacks happened after Iran stopped communicating with mediators about extending a ceasefire in the war with the U.S. and Israel, according to reports Tuesday from two semiofficial Iranian news agencies. President Donald Trump disputed the claim and said talks were continuing.

The reports by the Fars and Tasnim news agencies, both believed to be close to the Guard, came as tensions flared in Israel's separate-but-related fight against the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah in Lebanon.

A regional official involved in the mediation, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the talks, told The Associated Press that Iran had not communicated at all on Tuesday after saying that a ceasefire needed to be enforced in Lebanon for negotiations to continue.

Trump says talks 'going on continuously'

Trump called reports of a cessation in talks "false and erroneous."

"The conversations between us have been going on continuously, including four days ago, three days

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ago, two days ago, one day ago and today," Trump said in a social media post. "Where they lead, one never knows, but as I told Iran, 'It's time, one way or another, for you to make a Deal.'"

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio did not address the reported cutoff in communications as he testified at a congressional hearing in Washington. Instead, he sounded an optimistic note about the nuclear dimension of the negotiations, while cautioning that there's no guarantee of reaching "a deal that's acceptable."

Iran has been trying to increase pressure on Trump over negotiations on the Iran war ceasefire and loosening the Islamic Republic's chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz and the oil, gas and other commodities that normally pass through it. Trump then could potentially push Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to halt or slow the advance of his forces, which have moved deeper into Lebanon than at any time in over a quarter of a century.

The conflicts have increasingly become conjoined, as Iran insists that any potential truce in the war there must also quell the fighting in Lebanon.

Israel and the U.S. maintain the fighting in Lebanon is separate from the Iran war talks.

Inflation takes an economic toll on Iran

Meanwhile, year-on-year inflation in Iran reached a level in May unseen since World War II, underlining the economic pain average Iranians are facing. While the U.S. is eager to ease the Islamic Republic's grip on the strait — through which a fifth of all traded oil and natural gas passed in peacetime — Iran faces economic challenges as its oil-backed economy remains under a U.S. naval blockade.

Economic pressure touched off nationwide protests in Iran in 2017 into 2018, when rising food prices sparked demonstrations that killed over 20 people and saw hundreds arrested. The next year, an increase in government-subsidized gasoline prices caused protests that saw over 300 people reportedly killed.

Then came the protests over the collapsing value of Iran's currency, the rial, at the start of this year. They were the most intense demonstrations to shake the Islamic Republic since its 1979 revolution and the chaotic years that followed. Iran's theocracy met January's protests with a crackdown on demonstrators in January that killed over 7,000 people, according to activists' estimates.

Now, even as hard-liners hold gun-handling workshops and organize marriages under the shadow of a ballistic missile to bolster spirits, experts note there could be new demonstrations if people find themselves priced out of feeding their families.

"I have no doubt that if Trump leaves (Iran without a formal peace deal) ... most probably, we will see something like January by the end of summer because of the economic and social situations," analyst Mohsen Jalilvand said in a video published by Iran's Fararu news website.

Iran faces skyrocketing inflation

Iran's Central Bank said the consumer price index, which measures a basket of goods and services, reached 77.2% in May compared with the year before. The rate is 8.5% higher than in April, the bank added. Inflation in daily and general needs — like medicine, taxi fares, tobacco and communication fees — rose 113.8% from the year before.

A private economic think tank in Iran, the Bamdad Institute of Economic Studies, described the current figures as "an unprecedented rate since World War II." Iran's Central Bank did not acknowledge the significance of the figures.

The previous record came in 1942. During the war, the British and Soviets invaded Iran and took over its railway, disrupting food supplies. The lack of food, worsened by a poor harvest, sparked hyperinflation and a famine. Hunger and a typhus outbreak killed many.

Airstrikes this year have greatly damaged Iran's businesses and its oil industry. Meanwhile, the U.S. blockade has been targeting Iranian crude oil shipments trying to reach the international market, a key source of hard revenue. Tax revenues have been depressed by businesses struggling even after the fighting paused.

The rial, which traded at 32,000 to \$1 in 2015, now trades at over 1.7 million to \$1.

"We will definitely have higher prices," Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian warned in May. "We are fighting, and we must accept this hardship."

Tehran-based economist Saeed Leilaz, speaking to the AP, warned that annual inflation in Iran could reach 80%.

"Iran's society cannot tolerate above 25%" annual inflation, he said.

## **Tomas Hertl's late goal lifts Golden Knights past Hurricanes 5-4 to open Stanley Cup Final**

By AARON BEARD AP Sports Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — It took just one shot and 25 seconds worth of game action for the Vegas Golden Knights to find themselves in a hole in the Stanley Cup Final.

And by midway through the opening period, they were down two goals against a fast-skating Carolina Hurricanes team riding the energy from a buzzing home crowd.

No matter. And no panic. Not with these tested Golden Knights.

Tomas Hertl took a backhand pass from Colton Sissons and beat Frederik Andersen from the slot with 3:24 left in the third period, lifting the Golden Knights past the Carolina Hurricanes 5-4 in Tuesday night's opener of the Stanley Cup Final.

"I've said it all through the playoffs: it's a find-a-way league," Vegas coach John Tortorella said. "We found a way tonight."

Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Thursday in Raleigh, with Vegas already having taken home ice away from the Hurricanes as it chases a second Cup title in four seasons.

"Momentum swings happen quickly," Tortorella said. "We want to keep the momentum on our side, so there's no question we're looking to get two."

Hertl's finish off Sissons' feed from the right faceoff circle broke a 4-4 tie and pushed the Golden Knights ahead in an entertaining, back-and-forth start on the sport's biggest stage. It marked Vegas' seventh straight win of the playoffs, starting with the last two games of the six-game second-round series against Anaheim and then the shocking four-game sweep of the Presidents' Trophy-winning Colorado Avalanche.

That series included Vegas erasing a 3-0 deficit to take Game 3, and now the Golden Knights have followed by rallying from another multigoal deficit — this time 2-0 in the opening period — against the team that finished second only to the Avs in the regular season.

"It was a terrible start," said center William Karlsson, who capped a run of three straight goals that pushed Vegas to a 3-2 second-period lead. "Just like it was against Colorado, a lot of time left. We always believe."

Things changed after Tortorella gathered his team around the bench during a TV timeout after the Hurricanes had sprinted out to their lead, coming as Vegas had a slow start out of its six-day break while waiting for Carolina to close out Montreal in a five-game Eastern Conference Final.

"Just stick with the program, on our game plan, and not get impatient," said defenseman Brayden McNabb, who had three assists. "They pressure a lot and we want to keep the puck going north, and limit east-west plays."

Shea Theodore, Ivan Barbashev and Brett Howden also scored for Vegas, with Howden's postseason-leading 11th score giving the Golden Knights a 4-3 lead just 1:21 into the third period. Carter Hart finished with 23 saves, including a key stop on Seth Jarvis only seconds before Hertl's winner.

Nikolaj Ehlers scored twice for the Hurricanes, the first coming 25 seconds into the game when he got loose on a rush and blasted one past Hart from the left side on the game's first shot. He followed with a breakaway that gave Carolina a 2-0 lead and sent a charged home crowd into an eruption in the team's first Stanley Cup Final game in two decades.

Jordan Staal and Shayne Gostisbehere each scored tying goals after Vegas had pushed to a lead, with Gostisbehere skating in clean on the left side to blast one past Hart at 11:19 of the third period and tie it once more at 4-all. Andersen finished with 18 saves.

"I thought they played just a little bit better than us," Staal said. "They executed their game plan and aggressive on their forecheck and played in our end, and they buried their chances when they had them."

The Hurricanes went 12-1 through three rounds to get back to the Stanley Cup Final for the first time since now-coach Rod Brind'Amour captained them to the title in 2006. It also comes amid an eight-year



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playoff streak that has included at least one series win every time as a regular postseason contender.

Carolina swept through Ottawa and Philadelphia before taking the last four games of a five-game win against Montreal to punch through an Eastern Conference Final roadblock. That made the Hurricanes the first team since 1983 to reach the Stanley Cup Final with one loss, and the first since the NHL went to best-of-seven series in all four rounds in 1987.

Meanwhile, Vegas had been getting stronger with every playoff round, winning for 19 of 24 games going back to the unexpected late-season firing of Bruce Cassidy and replace him with Tortorella. That included the shocking result against the Avalanche, who managed just seven goals in four games.

Defense had been the standout feature for both teams, in fact, with Carolina having allowed two or fewer goals in 12 of 13 playoff games. But that wasn't the case in Tuesday's fast-paced series opener, with both teams capitalizing on their chances in an entertaining back-and-forth game before Hertl got Vegas the lead for good.

"This is a totally different team, and that may be part of it too," Brind'Amour said when asked about comparisons to the 6-2 loss to the Canadiens in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference Final. "We've got to get up to speed on how this game and this series is going to go. I think we certainly got a taste of that now."

## Trump administration is scrapping \$1.8B fund meant to compensate president's allies, Blanche says

By ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is scrapping plans for a \$1.8 billion fund that would have compensated allies of the Republican president, the Justice Department's top official said Tuesday in retreating from a program that faced a fierce political backlash that had threatened to stall key elements of the White House agenda.

"We are not moving forward with the fund, period," Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said in response to questions at a House hearing on the Justice Department budget.

"Not moving forward ever?" asked Rep. Grace Meng, a New York Democrat.

"Correct," Blanche answered.

The blunt declaration marked an extraordinary, and rare, Trump administration turnabout in the face of mounting political opposition to a fund that officials said was meant to compensate people who believe they have been improperly targeted by the criminal justice system. Since the establishment of the fund two weeks ago, it's been paused by a judge and lambasted by Democrats and Republicans alike who said they were troubled by a lack of oversight and the potential for payouts to participants in the violent Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol.

The fund drew concerns even from Republicans

The furor especially complicated matters in the Senate, where Republicans defiantly left town nearly two weeks ago without passing legislation to fund President Donald Trump's immigration enforcement agencies after Democrats said they would offer amendments to scrap or scale back the compensation fund.

Furious, Senate Republicans jettisoned White House security money from the bill and made clear they would not pass the legislation at all unless the administration made major changes to the plan. They had sought reassurances from Blanche before moving forward.

The \$1.776 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" was established last month to resolve Trump's lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service over the leak of his tax returns. The Justice Department had said it was an appropriate measure to correct what officials have insisted was the weaponization of federal law enforcement during the Biden administration, when Trump faced criminal charges and several of his allies were investigated and prosecuted.

The administration had said that anyone who felt unfairly persecuted could apply for compensation regardless of political affiliation, but Blanche's refusal to publicly foreclose the possibility that people convicted of crimes of violence in the Jan. 6 riot could get payouts alarmed lawmakers. A five-member

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commission was to have been responsible for deciding on the payouts, though no commissioners had yet been named and the criteria for eligibility remained unclear.

Blanche made clear Tuesday that he stood behind the rationale for the fund even as he was abandoning its implementation, saying: "This Department of Justice, unfortunately, was weaponized against many, many Americans, and we're trying every day to fix it. And we've made a lot of progress, but we have a lot more to do."

Merrick Garland, the attorney general under President Joe Biden, has denied allegations of politicization and said his decisions followed the facts, the evidence and the law. The Justice Department under his leadership investigated prominent Democrats too, most notably by appointing a special counsel to investigate Biden's handling of classified information and another special counsel who brought tax and gun charges against Biden's son Hunter.

As part of the same deal to resolve the tax lawsuit, the IRS agreed to drop any pending probes of Trump over whether he's paid his fair share of taxes. Pressed over whether it was also abandoning that part of the deal, Blanche said "nothing has changed with that," and said the administration was only backing away from plans to create the \$1.8 billion fund.

The administration had earlier hinted at a retreat

Signs of the retreat surfaced Monday when a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press that the Republican president was reconsidering whether to move forward with the fund. The Justice Department said separately it would comply with a Virginia court temporarily blocking the fund, effectively agreeing to pause the plan for at least several weeks.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune said Monday that he hoped the White House would move to drop the fund, telling reporters, "I do think the best way to handle it is if the administration decides to shut it down themselves."

The hearing Tuesday before a House Appropriations subcommittee was scheduled for discussion of the Justice Department's budget, but lawmakers quickly focused their questioning on the fund.

"This administration has engaged in what are perhaps the most brazen acts of flagrant corruption I've ever seen," Rep. Rosa DeLauro, a Democrat from Connecticut, said before Blanche announced the abandonment of the fund. "And you are at the center of many of them, Mr. Blanche."

She called the fund "a corrupt payout scheme for the president and his political allies. It is shameful."

Courts reacted coolly to the fund

The Justice Department's efforts to move forward with the fund were also facing headwinds in the courts after several lawsuits filed by Trump critics, including a fired Jan. 6 prosecutor and two police officers who helped defend the Capitol.

On Friday, a federal judge in Virginia halted the fund's formation and any potential payouts for at least two weeks and scheduled a June 12 hearing for arguments on whether to extend her order. Separately, the judge in Florida overseeing Trump's lawsuit against the IRS ordered the president's attorneys to respond to "grievous allegations" by settlement critics that Trump abandoned his claims to avoid the court's scrutiny of an illegal deal.

Skye Perryman, president and CEO of Democracy Forward — which brought one of the lawsuits — said of Blanche's comments Tuesday, "If you can say it on TV, you should say it in court."

## Massive Russian attack kills 22 people across Ukraine, officials say, as Moscow escalates fighting

By SAMYA KULLAB and VASILISA STEPANENKO Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia launched hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles against Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities overnight, killing at least 22 civilians and wounding 138 others, authorities said Tuesday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has escalated Moscow's aerial campaign in recent weeks in an apparent bid to take advantage of Ukraine's shortage of U.S.-made air defense systems and persuade an increasingly pessimistic audience at home that Moscow is prevailing in the 4-year-old war.

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Emergency rescue crews digging through the wreckage of apartment buildings pulled out the bodies of a 3-year-old child as well as those of a woman and her 8-year-old son in the central Ukrainian city of Dnipro, officials said.

The attack stretched past dawn, with explosions reverberating across cities. Officials said 16 people were killed in Dnipro and six in Kyiv.

Residents of the capital have been on edge for days after Russia warned last week that a massive aerial attack was coming and told foreign diplomats to leave. None appeared to heed the call and no embassies immediately reported damage Tuesday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed for more U.S. and European support, describing the massive overnight attack as "an explicit statement by Russia: If Ukraine is not protected from ballistic missiles and other missile strikes, those strikes will continue."

Putin has stepped up his aerial campaign against Ukraine, with Russian forces recently launching another of their powerful hypersonic Oreshnik ballistic missiles. Ukraine's shortage of air defense systems, in part because of depleted U.S. stocks from the Iran war, has left civilians especially vulnerable to ballistic missiles, even as Kyiv's defenses stop most of Moscow's drones.

A mother and daughter shelter in a bathtub

At least 81 people were wounded in the capital, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration. Iryna Salikova, 37, spent the night lying in a bathtub for protection with her 3-year-old daughter, as blasts reverberated across the city.

"Our window was broken. A cobblestone flew into the children's room," Salikova said, although they weren't hurt. "Thank God we're alive. Today we're alive, today we're lucky."

Russia unleashed 73 missiles and 656 drones across Ukraine, according to the country's air force, with the main targets including Kyiv, Dnipro and the eastern cities of Poltava, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia. Ukrainian air defenses destroyed or suppressed 40 missiles and 602 drones.

Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov proclaimed Wednesday would be a day of mourning for the dead in his city. That announcement came 20 minutes before Filatov said another drone had struck a residential building there about 2:40 p.m.

Putin seeks to change the narrative of the war

Putin is keen to generate some positive news from the conflict that began with Russia's February 2022 invasion of its neighbor and hasn't gone according to plan.

Western officials and analysts say Ukrainian drones are pinning down Russian troops on the front line, choking Russian supply lines in occupied regions of Ukraine and disrupting oil facilities deep inside Russia that provide vital revenue for Moscow. That has made the war, which Moscow refers to as a "special military operation," more visible to Russians and increased pressure on Putin.

U.S.-led peace efforts have fizzled out as the sides made no progress on key differences and after the war in Iran grabbed Washington's attention. Zelenskyy accepted an unconditional ceasefire demanded by U.S. President Donald Trump but Putin refused.

Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement that Tuesday's bombardment struck military-industrial facilities in the Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, Khmelnytskyi and Sumy regions.

Ukraine said residential, energy and civilian infrastructure was hit but did not confirm or comment on damage to any military-related sites.

Putin signaled that Russia won't let up its attacks. He said Tuesday that Ukraine's May 22 drone attack on a college dormitory in Starobilsk in the Russia-controlled Luhansk region of Ukraine that killed 21 had given the war "a whole new dimension."

Ukraine said the attack in Starobilsk hit a Russian drone pilot training center.

Man hurled from Kyiv apartment by blast

Hits of 30 ballistic missiles, three cruise missiles and 33 drones were recorded in at least 38 locations across Ukraine, according to regional authorities. Debris from destroyed drones fell on 15 locations, the air force said.

Damage was recorded to residential buildings and other civilian infrastructure in eight districts of Kyiv.

Olena Dniprovskaya, 65, and her husband Yevhen, 64, were wounded in their apartment in Kyiv's Podilskyi district.

"I went out into the corridor with the phone, and before I understood what happened, everything fell on my head, the glass, and the door blew off," said Dniprovskaya, dried blood streaked across her face and a bandage on her chin. "I ran out into the front door and started calling my husband from the room, but he was also blown out by the blast wave."

"Now I have nowhere to live, the apartment is completely destroyed, no doors, no windows, no balcony. You can step straight from the room out onto the street," she said.

In Kharkiv, at least 19 people were wounded in residential areas in the past two days — including 11 on Tuesday.

## Trump's Education Department is backing away from addressing civil rights for Black students

By ANNIE MA AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For generations, the federal government enforced civil rights laws with an eye toward remedying historic, systemic discrimination against Black people and other people of color. The Justice Department pressed schools to desegregate. The Education Department worked to promote equal opportunity and held schools accountable for racial bias.

But under the Trump administration, efforts to address deep-rooted inequities for students of color are being cast as discriminatory against white students. Programs that have long withstood legal scrutiny are now quick to be deemed "illegal DEI" — diversity, equity and inclusion — by the White House. Schools that do not comply have faced threats to their funding, and in some cases, lost federal grants.

Civil rights attorneys describe the administration's actions as a complete inversion of legal history.

"It's literally flipping the purpose of civil rights law on its head, not just harming Black students and students of color, but entire school communities," said Michael Pillera, director of educational equity issues at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. "It's unmoored from the actual history of our country and untethered to the reality of life in this country."

The U.S. government has opened investigations or joined litigation over a wide range of efforts to address racial inequality. The Justice Department is investigating programs to increase the number of teachers of color in Rhode Island and Iowa. And grants to districts to train teachers or recruit school mental health workers have been discontinued for mentions of diversity in recruitment.

In a statement, the Education Department said programs receiving federal funding must follow the law, which prohibits discrimination based on race.

"Serving student needs and following the law are not irreconcilable mandates. Advocates and educators have no reason to stress if they abide by the law," said Amelia Joy, a department spokesperson.

The Trump administration investigated Chicago Public Schools and withheld more than \$20 million when the district refused to end its Black Student Success Program, which aims to increase access to advanced coursework for Black students and reduce overly harsh discipline.

Complaints against programs to address inequities find new traction

A similar effort to close racial achievement gaps in Los Angeles is under the same pressure.

Los Angeles Unified School District created the Black Student Achievement Plan after an outpouring of student activism following the 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. It supports schools with extra teachers, counselors and curriculum in Black history.

Initially, the district chose schools partially based on the number of Black students enrolled. In 2023, Defending Education, a Virginia-based conservative group, filed a complaint to the Education Department, alleging discrimination against non-Black students. The district said it would no longer consider Black enrollment and instead focus solely on metrics like high absenteeism and low test scores, emphasizing that all students could take part.

After the changes, the Education Department in 2024 said it saw no evidence of a violation. But when



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Defending Education filed its complaint again this year, the department's Office for Civil Rights launched an investigation.

Sarah Parshall Perry, senior legal fellow at Defending Education, said it refiled the complaint after district leaders were recorded saying the program had not materially changed, despite the new criteria.

"Our goal is not to make LA Unified a target, but rather to make sure that when people say that they are eliminating racially discriminatory aspects of programs, that they're actually making good on their word," Perry said.

In a written statement, LAUSD said its programs are aligned with state and federal laws and are open to all students.

Makeda Walker-Deen, a junior at Dorsey High School, said the program has supported her in several ways through high school.

A program counselor directed her toward college preparation programs, which made it possible for her to visit the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford, colleges where she is thinking of applying. Psychologists and social workers she connected with have helped her navigate pressure and anxiety.

"I think that the things a lot of critics are saying are so unreasonable," she said. "They're saying that a program that's meant to help Black students, other students of color, is discriminatory. We've been discriminated against in school systems basically our entire lives."

LAUSD has seen signs of impact. In recent state testing, Black students in the district outperformed the average Black student in California.

"When you provide teachers and school personnel with knowledge and skills to help your lowest performing students, everyone wins," said Tyrone Howard, an education professor at UCLA who consulted on BSAP.

Organizers worry pressures on the program will slow efforts to address inequities for Black students.

"Where is the uproar about the failings of the public education system for Black children?" said Christian Flagg, director of youth organizing at Community Coalition, which lobbied for the creation of BSAP. "We have had this student group at the bottom for so long, these massive gaps for so long. But when we do something to try to address it, there's a problem."

The Justice Department targets a separate LA program

The pivot in the federal government's approach to civil rights in schools has taken several forms under President Donald Trump.

The Justice Department has released school districts from court-ordered desegregation plans dating back to the Civil Rights Movement, describing them as outdated and burdensome. And the Education Department has stripped funding from some districts that used it to create magnet schools intended to be more diverse.

In correspondence discouraging districts' diversity programs, the Trump administration has repeatedly cited a broad interpretation of the Supreme Court's ruling on affirmative action, which prevented colleges and universities from directly considering race in admissions.

While that ruling pertained only to admissions, the administration last winter notified schools that any differential consideration based on race was unconstitutional. A federal court struck down that guidance last year, but advocates say schools may still preemptively end equity programs to avoid drawing federal scrutiny.

In Los Angeles, the Justice Department has sought to end another racial equity effort.

In the 1970s, courts ordered the district to address the harms of its segregated schools. The case led to a short-lived period where Black students and white students were bused to different schools. The more lasting programs included the district's magnet schools, and a special designation for "Predominantly Hispanic, Black, Asian or Other Non-Anglo" schools.

Known as PHBAO, the program offers smaller class sizes and additional parent-teacher conferences when 70% of the students zoned for that school are students of color. The vast majority of district schools qualify.

In January, the conservative 1776 Project Foundation filed a lawsuit challenging the designation, describing it as "a program of overt discrimination against a new minority: White students." The next month, the Justice Department filed its own complaint and asked to join the lawsuit.

"LAUSD's desegregation program has outlived its usefulness to the point of being unconstitutional," an assistant U.S. attorney said in a news release.

Decades of inequity show that's not true, said attorney Mark Rosenbaum, who years ago represented kids of color in L.A.'s desegregation case.

"The opponents of desegregation always said, 'Drop desegregation, and we will put resources into these schools,'" Rosenbaum said. "You know, we are still waiting for that to happen."

## **The case of a UK teen who died from a stab wound while handcuffed by police stirs debate**

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The fatal stabbing last year in Britain of a teenager who was handcuffed by police while his killer stood nearby erupted into a debate on Tuesday about policing, race and knife crime.

The killing of 18-year-old Henry Nowak in December drew renewed attention after the killer was sentenced to life with a minimum of 21 years in prison on Monday, and following the release of a video showing police dismissing Nowak when he said that he had been stabbed.

The killer, Vickrum Digwa, 23, who is Sikh, had reported to police that he was the victim of a racist attack by Nowak, who was white.

Officers who arrived at the scene on a residential street in the southern England coastal city of Southampton appeared to take him at his word. But the court determined that Digwa had lied about being the victim of racism.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he was sickened by the video and said there were questions to be answered about how "accusations of racism informed the decision-making in this case."

On Tuesday night, hundreds protested the arrest outside a Southampton police station, with some protesters shouting, "I can't breathe."

A large group then walked to an area near where Nowak was killed and clashed with riot police, who retreated as they were pelted with chairs, rocks and flares.

Victim complained he couldn't breathe as police handcuffed him

In the video, Nowak is seen lying on his back, telling police he had been stabbed as they grabbed his wrists and tried to make him sit up. He repeatedly said he couldn't breathe.

"You've been stabbed? Whereabouts?" an officer said in the video. "Don't think you have, mate."

After the sentencing hearing, the victim's father, Mark Nowak, said the case was not about racism or religion, and that he wanted his son's death to lead to safer streets and not to be used to create "further division, hatred or tension."

But Nigel Farage, leader of the anti-immigration Reform UK party, said on Tuesday that it was an example of so-called two-tier policing — a popular far-right talking point that suggests ethnic minorities are better treated than white people.

Farage urged people to respond to the incident with "pure cold rage," and called for an end to "anti-white prejudice" and the promotion of the idea "that white lives matter just as much as Black lives."

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood rejected that there are different policing standards for different communities and urged members of Parliament not to "allow this murder to turn communities against one another."

Mahmood said that she understood people's horror over the video of the tragic death, adding that the government is trying to sharply reduce knife crime.

Police watchdog investigates response by officers

Mahmood called for calm as the Independent Office for Police Conduct investigates the conduct of the officers from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary. She said online rumors had led to death threats against an officer who wasn't involved in the arrest.

"Misinformation and inflammatory commentary is making a dreadful situation even worse," she said. "We must all together condemn it."

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In 2024, a stabbing rampage killed three girls and wounded 10 people at a dance class in northern England, leading to nearly a week of widespread rioting after people incorrectly identified the teen suspect on social media as a Muslim asylum seeker. The violent clashes with police were mostly aimed at migrants and Muslims.

The parents of the British-born attacker in that case were Christians from Rwanda. Investigators have not been able to pin down his motivation but have ruled out terrorism. Police found documents on his devices about subjects that included Nazi Germany, the Rwandan genocide and car bombs.

In the case of Nowak, a first-year student at the University of Southampton who had been out with friends, police officers walked up to the scene of what had been reported as an assault. Nowak could be seen on a driveway and was being held up by someone who said he had a mouthful of blood.

Digwa was standing nearby and told officers he had also been injured, pointing to his eyelid that he said was swollen. He claimed that Nowak had knocked off his turban and pulled his hair.

After Nowak was handcuffed, officers lay him on his side and searched for stab wounds. He appeared to have lost consciousness when one of the officers said he was being arrested for assault and read him his rights.

When officers discovered his injuries, they uncuffed him and started CPR, police said.

Judge disputes racism claim

Digwa was convicted of murder in Southampton Crown Court. Judge William Mousley told Digwa that he didn't believe Nowak said anything racist to him.

"You are the only person to make that claim and it is completely at odds with his previous character," he said.

In the United Kingdom, where gun ownership is strictly regulated, knives are often used in violent crimes and are also subject to restrictions. In general, people are not allowed to carry bladed weapons except for pocketknives whose cutting edge is no longer than 3 inches (7.62 centimeters).

But Sikhs are allowed to carry ceremonial knives, known as kirpans, for religious reasons.

The judge said Digwa had a small kirpan but also had an 8-inch (21-centimeter) sheathed Sikh dagger that was used as the weapon to kill Nowak.

Mousley said that the religious association of the knives had endangered other Sikhs.

"Your actions have stirred up racial tension in Southampton and across the country which have made many Sikhs worried about their own safety even though they have done absolutely nothing wrong," the judge told Digwa.

Police apologized to Nowak's family and said that the lies told by Digwa had misled officers.

"It is devastating the officers did not believe Henry when he said he'd been stabbed and couldn't breathe," Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones said. "The details of the police response raises serious concerns about police impartiality, fairness and judgment."

Digwa's mother, Kiran Kaur, 53, was convicted of assisting an offender after trying to hide the murder weapon. She will be sentenced on July 17.

## There are supposed to be ceasefires across the Middle East, but the fighting is worsening

By SAM METZ Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Ceasefires have been announced, often to great fanfare, in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran. So why is there still so much fighting?

In just the last few weeks, Israeli forces have captured more territory in Gaza and killed two top Hamas militants there, as well as more than a dozen other people. In Lebanon, Israeli troops captured a Crusader fortress over the weekend in their deepest incursion in 26 years, as Hezbollah kept up rocket fire into northern Israel.

The fighting in Lebanon showed no sign of letting up on Tuesday, after U.S. President Donald Trump

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said both sides had agreed — again — to de-escalate.

The United States and Iran have traded fire, most recently on Tuesday, as they try to reach a more lasting truce. Iran has maintained its chokehold over the Strait of Hormuz, perpetuating a global fuel crisis, while the U.S. has tried to cement its naval blockade on Iranian ports.

None of the warring parties have officially exited the ceasefires, but the term is rapidly losing its meaning. Israel strikes Gaza and troops advance

Trump held up the October ceasefire in Gaza as a major foreign policy accomplishment that could lead to Mideast peace. But while it ended two years of full-scale hostilities and brought about the release of all remaining hostages taken in Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, no further progress has been made.

Hamas has yet to disarm, and Israeli troops have advanced rather than withdrawn. An international stabilization force has yet to materialize, a new Palestinian administration is still in limbo, and reconstruction of the largely flattened territory has yet to begin.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians remain in squalid tent camps, living with the stench of sewage and rodent infestations, and in fear of Israeli strikes.

The U.S. and Israel blame Hamas, saying its refusal to disarm has held up the process. Hamas accuses Israel of repeatedly violating the ceasefire, including through regular strikes that have killed at least 932 Palestinians, including women and children, since it took effect, according to local health officials.

In both Gaza and Lebanon, Israel says it maintains the right to strike in response to perceived threats or attempts by suspected militants to cross sometimes blurry front lines — which are shifting as troops seize more territory.

Israel now controls some 60% of Gaza, compared to around half when the ceasefire was signed, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently said it planned to take 70%. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio told lawmakers Tuesday that Netanyahu's statement doesn't reflect Washington's plan for ending the conflict.

Fighting rages in southern Lebanon

A Lebanon ceasefire reached in April has had little impact on the fighting between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah, particularly in southern Lebanon, where they have continued trading fire as Israel expands its occupation of Lebanese territory.

Over the weekend, Israeli troops raised their flag over Beaufort castle, marking their deepest incursion into southern Lebanon since the end of the 1982-2000 occupation. Hezbollah responded with even deeper rocket attacks into northern Israel.

Israel had continued carrying out strikes after an earlier ceasefire in 2024. Hezbollah had held its fire until the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, setting off the wider war. Hezbollah did not officially agree to the April ceasefire but said it would abide by it if Israel ceased its attacks and withdrew from Lebanon.

Israel says it will keep fighting until the threat of rocket and drone attacks on its northern communities has been eliminated, either by its own actions or by the Lebanese government disarming Hezbollah. That has appeared even less likely as the fighting has escalated, despite continuing Israeli-Lebanese negotiations.

Iran has meanwhile demanded a ceasefire in Lebanon as part of any truce with the United States.

US and Iran trade fire as they try to reach a deal

A wider ceasefire reached in early April between the U.S., Iran and Israel was intended to end the regional war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway whose closure caused oil prices to spike, inflicting economic pain far beyond the region.

Iran initially announced the reopening the strait after the ceasefire was reached, but moved to close it again after the U.S. imposed its naval blockade. Trump is demanding that Iran reopen the strait and make major concessions on its disputed nuclear program, while Iran wants a lasting end to the war, a lifting of the blockade and sanctions relief.

The two sides appeared close to a deal last week but did not reach one. Trump has repeatedly threatened to resume the war if Iran doesn't give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, while Iranian officials have said they won't discuss nuclear issues until a more durable truce is reached.



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The two sides have repeatedly traded fire in the strait, with the U.S. acting to eliminate what it says are threats to commercial shipping or its own forces, and Iran retaliating with missile and drone attacks on Gulf countries hosting American forces.

The U.S. bombed military sites in Iran on Monday and Tuesday after Tehran shot down an American drone over the weekend. Iran said in response it targeted American soldiers in Kuwait and Bahrain with missiles, which the U.S. says it shot down.

In a statement posted on X, U.S. Central Command said it "will continue to protect our forces from Iranian aggression while supporting the ongoing ceasefire."

## Republicans consider next steps after scrapping of \$1.8 billion fund for Trump allies

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, KEVIN FREKING and SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republicans were evaluating Tuesday whether the Trump administration's scrapping of a \$1.8 billion fund meant to compensate the president's allies eased their concerns enough to move forward with votes this week on separate legislation funding immigration enforcement.

Democrats were relishing the chance to put Republican senators on the record about the settlement fund for those who claim to have been politically prosecuted. They were promising scores of votes on the issue when the immigration bill is considered.

"Democrats won't settle for half measures," said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York. "We're going to kill the slush fund permanently and we are going to bury it and bury it deep."

GOP senators has also revolted against the settlement fund before leaving for a Memorial Day recess two weeks ago. They returned to Washington this week saying they wanted more information from the administration about the future of the fund, which could potentially go to Trump supporters who beat police and attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

The Justice Department said Monday it would comply with a court order pausing implementation of the fund. And then acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said in testimony Tuesday that it was being dropped altogether.

"We are not moving forward with the fund, period," Blanche said.

Immigration bill caught in settlement uproar

Caught in the middle is legislation that would fund Trump's immigration enforcement agencies for three years. Republicans abruptly left town May 21 without passing it after Democrats said they would offer amendments to scrap the fund or scale it back, forcing Republicans to go on the record for or against it and endangering the money for Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol.

Returning to Washington on Monday evening, Senate Majority Leader John Thune said he wasn't sure if the immigration spending bill would move this week. "To be determined," he told reporters.

He offered little more clarity after Blanche's assurances.

"It's still a work in progress," he told reporters.

Republican senators leaving a lunch meeting Tuesday also said it was still unclear if it would move.

"We'll just have to wait and see," Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., told reporters. If senators are satisfied with Blanche's testimony, "we'll probably proceed quickly," he said.

Standoff comes after surprise announcement

The extraordinary standoff comes after Trump announced the fund with no heads up to lawmakers as part of a settlement to resolve his lawsuit against the IRS over the leak of his tax returns. When word of the settlement broke, the Senate was already navigating tricky passage of the immigration legislation with an added \$1 billion in White House security costs — including for Trump's ballroom project.

Furious, Senate Republicans jettisoned the White House security money from the bill and made clear they would not pass the legislation at all unless the White House made major changes to the settlement.

"I do think the best way to handle it is if the administration decides to shut it down themselves," Thune told reporters Monday, referring to the fund.

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The Justice Department said it would comply with a ruling Friday from U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema, who temporarily halted the fund for two weeks. The judge scheduled a June 12 hearing for arguments on whether to extend her order.

Republicans issue rare ultimatum to DOJ

The outrage over the fund came to a head last month at a closed-door meeting between senators and Blanche that Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas described on a recent episode of his podcast as "one of the roughest meetings I've seen in my entire time in the Senate."

GOP senators had been discussing several ways that they could curb the fund, including limiting who can receive payouts, changing the makeup of the commission in charge of settlement decisions, adding some sort of judicial review for applicants or scrapping the fund altogether.

Also complicating matters is Trump's campaign-year push to defeat GOP lawmakers whom he sees as disloyal, including some of Thune's most reliable Republican votes in the narrow 53-47 Senate.

Sens. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana and John Cornyn of Texas both lost reelection bids in May after Trump endorsed their primary opponents, and it's unclear how supportive they'll be of the president's agenda going forward.

## **Trump signs an executive order that invites vetting of top AI models for national security risks**

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on oversight of artificial intelligence Tuesday, less than two weeks after postponing a White House ceremony over his concerns that a similar policy could dull America's technological edge.

The order establishes a framework for the federal government to vet the national security risks of the most advanced AI systems for up to a month before their public release. Participation by AI developers would be voluntary, the order says.

"Advanced AI capabilities make our Nation stronger, but also introduce new national security considerations that require coordinated action across executive departments and agencies," the order says.

It was not immediately clear to what extent the order differed from the one Trump declined to sign on May 21.

The order says the government would have only 30 days to review an AI system, a shorter time frame than some in the industry were expecting. A longer time period might have been seen as too burdensome for a fast-moving and highly competitive industry.

Trump canceled an Oval Office event with tech industry executives last month because he did not like what he saw in the earlier version of the order's text. "We're leading China, we're leading everybody, and I don't want to do anything that's going to get in the way of that lead," Trump told reporters at the time.

That directive was characterized as a voluntary collaboration with participating U.S.-based tech companies, including Anthropic, OpenAI and Google, which are sometimes described as "frontier labs" because they are building the most advanced AI systems. Several companies had been planning to have executives present at the May 21 signing event. Trump ended up signing it without any ceremony.

The White House said in a social media post Tuesday that the executive order "creates a process for frontier labs to voluntarily share cutting-edge cyber models in order to secure critical infrastructure and strengthen the government's own cyber defenses. We are NOT conducting oversight of all new models, as that level of government overreach would have chilling effects on free speech and innovation."

Juan Londoño, a policy analyst at the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute, said the order is imperfect but "a step in the right direction to prepare the nation for the release of advanced AI systems."

He applauded the White House's characterization of the process as voluntary but said he was concerned about the vagueness of how the government, led by the director of the National Security Agency, will decide which AI models qualify for scrutiny, and how it will decide which "trusted partners" get early access to them.

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Londóño said in an interview that giving so much discretion to the NSA director was a “dangerous precedent” that could enable the government to “weaponize” the policy against companies it is clashing with, like Anthropic.

Plans for a new AI cybersecurity directive followed Anthropic’s April announcement of its most advanced AI model, called Claude Mythos, in the middle of the company’s legal fight with the Trump administration over a contract dispute with the Pentagon.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and outgoing Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell soon after convened an urgent meeting with Wall Street CEOs, warning them about the risks posed by Mythos’ apparent ability to find cybersecurity vulnerabilities in the world’s software. Anthropic has limited access to Mythos to only a small group of trusted partners, such as big tech companies and banks, though it said Tuesday it has expanded that group by another 150 organizations.

Anthropic called Trump’s new order “an important step in strengthening America’s leadership in AI” and said it looks forward to collaborating with the White House to support its implementation.

Its chief rival, ChatGPT maker OpenAI, also described the policy as an important step, as did Google.

“As AI capabilities continue to advance, we believe effective safety frameworks should continue to be developed through democratic institutions, informed by technical expertise and broad stakeholder input, to promote accountability and public trust,” said a statement from Chris Lehane, OpenAI’s chief global affairs officer.

Democratic Sen. Mark Warner, vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, also welcomed Trump’s policy but criticized the administration for having “belatedly discovered the need to redo something it hastily dismantled in its first year.”

Trump repealed many of former President Joe Biden’s guardrails for AI just hours after returning to the White House last year.

## Andreeva and Kostyuk set up Russia-Ukraine clash in French Open semis. Mensik ends Fonseca’s run

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Marta Kostyuk, the best player on clay this season and a vocal supporter of Ukraine amid the war with Russia, will play her first major semifinal at the French Open against a Russian.

Kostyuk won an intense all-Ukraine quarterfinal against Elina Svitolina 6-3, 2-6, 6-2 on Tuesday. That set up Kostyuk against Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva, who thumped Romanian veteran Sorana Cirstea 6-0, 6-3.

In men’s play, 20-year-old Jakub Mensik ended the run of Brazil’s Joao Fonseca with a 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (3) victory.

“It was one of my best performances so far,” Mensik said.

The 19-year-old Fonseca beat 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic in five sets in the third round and then eliminated two-time runner-up Casper Ruud in the fourth round.

Mensik collapsed to the clay with cramps upon edging Mariano Navone in a fifth-set tiebreaker in the second round and also needed five sets to advance in the fourth round against Andrey Rublev.

For a place in Sunday’s final, Mensik will face second-seeded Alexander Zverev, the 2024 runner-up, who beat rising Spanish player Rafael Jodar 7-6 (3), 6-1, 6-3.

Kostyuk leads Andreeva 2-0 on the tour; the second win in the Madrid final a month ago. Kostyuk didn’t shake hands at the net, following protocol for Ukrainians with opponents from Russia and its ally Belarus since the war started four years ago.

“We had a very difficult night again in Ukraine, especially in Kyiv, so many people dead,” Kostyuk said. “I want to give this match to Ukrainian people and to their resilience. Slava Ukraini! (Glory to Ukraine!)”

Russia launched hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles against Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities overnight, killing at least 18 civilians and wounding more than 100 others, authorities said Tuesday.

“I texted my family if they were OK. This is pretty much all I can do,” Kostyuk said. “The biggest thing

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I can do is sit here and talk about it so more people can find out about it so they don't get used to this terrible life."

Svitolina said friends in Ukraine told her about the attacks just hours before the match.

"Just very sad that we all have to really put up with this heaviness and pain every single day, and scared moments not knowing what's going to bring the next day," Svitolina said.

She will leave Roland Garros to look after the daughter she has with French tennis player Gael Monfils, but will be cheering on Kostyuk.

"Hopefully she can get the title," Svitolina said. "It's going to be massive for Ukraine."

No. 7-seeded Svitolina got off to a slow start but worked her way back, matching No. 15 Kostyuk's power from the baseline. Kostyuk was better on the important points in the decider and improved her impressive 2026 record on clay to 17-0.

She's the first Ukrainian woman to reach the semifinals at Roland Garros in the Open era since 1968. Svitolina has reached the semis at the other three Grand Slams but failed for the sixth time to win a French Open quarterfinal.

Andreeva will appear in her second French Open semifinal, two years after the first. She was asked about the challenges of playing a Ukrainian in wartime.

"Well, for me it doesn't matter who I play," Andreeva said. "I really try to play against the ball that is coming at me. Usually it doesn't matter to me who I'm playing against, so I'm trying to really focus on the game and on the game plan."

Asked whether she found it frustrating to hear Russian opponents avoiding the issue, Kostyuk said she wished "there was some more clear stance on what's going on."

"Especially when your country is killing other people," she added. "I don't know how you can sleep at night peacefully when you know that this is going on, and you have nothing to say about it."

After a week of hot weather, rain arrived in Paris and play started and finished under the closed roof of Court Philippe-Chatrier. Competing in the quarterfinals for the first time in 17 years, Cirstea struggled to find her rhythm against her 19-year-old rival.

The 36-year-old veteran, playing the final season of her career, immediately dropped her serve. She didn't hold serve or win a game until the first game of the second set. Andreeva's deep, accurate groundstrokes and charges to the net took a toll on 18th-seeded Cirstea, whose attempt to come back was shortlived.

"I felt like it was one of my best matches so far this tournament," Andreeva said. "Super happy to be back in semis."

## Jalen Brunson is playing for an NBA championship and maybe for the title of best Knick ever

By BRIAN MAHONEY AP Basketball Writer

Jalen Brunson might be playing for something more than a championship in these NBA Finals.

A victory would put him in the conversation as the greatest New York Knick ever, and at the same time earn New York sports immortality status.

After just four years, he is all over the record book for a Knicks franchise that has been around for all 80 NBA seasons. He is already third on its career list in playoff points. The Knicks have advanced in the postseason every year since Brunson arrived in 2022, after winning one series in the two decades before.

Now they are in the NBA Finals for the first time since 1999, with a shot to win their first title since 1973.

Patrick Ewing, Walt Frazier and Willis Reed — in some order — are widely regarded as the top players in franchise history. If Brunson can lead the Knicks to the title now, there's an argument he could be the best of them all.

"Well, right now a lot of people say he's the greatest Knick ever because of getting them to the finals and obviously if he wins a championship," Frazier said. "So I don't think he's the greatest Knick ever — I always say it's Willis, and Willis said it's Patrick, and Patrick says it's Patrick. So he would definitely be on Mount Rushmore. We'll put him up there if he can bring this title."



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Brunson is averaging 26.9 points in the postseason, slightly up from his 26 per game in the regular season. The Eastern Conference finals MVP is making history just by reaching the finals, as he and his father, Rick, a Knicks assistant who played for them in 1999 when Jalen was just shy of 3 years old, will become the first father-son duo to play in the finals for the same franchise.

None of this was expected when Brunson signed in New York. This wasn't Victor Wembanyama arriving in San Antonio from France as the No. 1 pick in the draft as a 7-foot-4 giant whose array of skills made it easy to forecast that he could become one of the greats of the game.

Brunson stands just 6-2 and doesn't appear to be blessed with explosive speed. That's how a two-time NCAA champion and college player of the year at Villanova ended up as just a second-round pick in 2018. He landed in Dallas at the same time as Luka Dončić, and seeing how easy the Slovenian sensation made the game look had Brunson wondering about his own abilities.

"It made me kind of question myself to see how hard I actually had to work to be in the position I wanted to be," he said.

He was largely a backup in his four seasons in Dallas before the Knicks spent more than \$100 million to pry him away. It's probably the best decision they ever made — and with what Brunson has done in New York at that low cost for a now perennial All-Star, one of the best free agent moves any team ever has.

The Knicks have just two NBA titles, and the wait for a third has lasted so many generations that Brunson would easily join New York sports icons such as Joe Namath, Derek Jeter or Reggie Jackson, still celebrated around the five boroughs long after their championships, if he can win just one now.

Get it and the second-team All-NBA pick would be confirmed as a superstar. Of course, the opposite could happen. If Brunson struggles against the Spurs' good defensive guards and the Knicks lose, there will be critics quick to say they need more because Brunson just isn't quite a 1-A.

"I mean, I don't really care what people say, so at the end of the day I'm not going to base my judgment or evaluation of him as a player off people that never played the game and just never been in that situation," teammate and close friend Josh Hart said. "So I know he doesn't really care about it, I don't really care about it. At the end of the day those quote-unquote people are irrelevant."

Around New York, it's clear the respect Brunson commands. Mets slugger Juan Soto hit a home run and performed the hand gesture Brunson uses to celebrate a 3-pointer. Jets coach Aaron Glenn said the impact the captain has on the club is evident.

"I mean, you can tell that the leadership, the fight, everybody follows that, and it's easy to follow that," Glenn said. "He's a guy, and I continue to say this, that leadership really comes down to one word and that's 'influence.' You really see the influence that he has, and it's not always verbal. It's a lot of just what he does and how he operates."

Brunson doesn't seem to seek the spotlight and will never ooze coolness like Frazier, the stylish "Clyde" known for his colorful suits. But a title puts him in the same club, and membership has long-lasting benefits.

"I can't walk the street, it's like I'm in a parade. Anywhere I go people are like, 'Oh, there he is, there's Clyde! There's Clyde!'" Frazier said. "So if these guys win another title — man, I can't spend money now in New York. I'll never have to spend money again in this city."

"And that's what I want to show the players. Hey man, I've been doing this for 50 years. Fifty years just for winning two titles! So you guys can have it if you just win one title."

## Rubio is optimistic on eventual Iran nuclear talks despite congressional skepticism

By FARNOUSH AMIRI, MATTHEW LEE and BEN FINLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday that he is optimistic about the potential for a resumption in nuclear talks with Iran despite a shaky ceasefire in the war that is looking increasingly in doubt.

Rubio defended the Trump administration's approach to Iran and other global hotspots in back-to-back hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a House Appropriations subcommittee. He

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was briefly disrupted by protesters at each session.

In his first public testimony since the Iran war began at the end of February, Rubio said the Iranians have agreed to negotiate on nuclear points that they had not been willing to address in the past but would not offer an assessment on what those talks might produce.

"They have agreed to negotiate aspects of their nuclear program that just a month ago, just a year ago, they were refusing to even mention," Rubio told the Senate. He noted, however, that there was no guarantee "it will lead to a deal that's acceptable" and that negotiations have been made difficult by the instability of Iran's leadership.

Rubio's optimism ran counter to pessimistic reports from two semiofficial Iranian news agencies that Iran has stopped communicating with mediators after Israel threatened to bomb Beirut as it fights the Hezbollah militant group. President Donald Trump disputed that Iran has cut off communication with mediators, calling the Iranian reports "false and erroneous."

Democrats criticize Trump administration's approach to Iran, and Rubio defends it

Rubio's wide-ranging testimony was met with fierce objections from Democrats, including tough questions about the status of U.S. foreign assistance to respond to diseases such as the Ebola outbreak in Africa. Rubio insisted the dismantlement of the U.S. Agency for International Development had not affected Washington's ability to assist with global humanitarian responses.

Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., blasted Rubio and Trump for foreign aid cuts and overseas intervention. Van Hollen specifically took aim at the U.S. and Israeli decision to strike Iran, accusing the Republican president of entering the war on behalf of Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "said he's been waiting 40 years to do this," Van Hollen said. "It turns out he finally found a president who was both stupid and reckless enough to join him. Let's face it, Mr. Secretary, the Trump foreign policy has become a dumpster fire."

Rubio's testimony, which took place as Israel and Lebanon began a new round of political talks at the State Department, did not provide definitive answers on any of the main questions of the day.

He said Iran is not guaranteed a massive payout for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the crucial waterway for global oil shipments, and would have to commit to further concessions on its nuclear program to get significant sanctions relief.

"The more they give, the more they would get," he said, later adding, "They're not going to get it as a signing bonus."

Rubio also said there are indications that Iran's new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, is taking a bigger part in the discussions despite not being seen publicly since the war began.

"I think there are indications out there that he is increasingly engaging at some level, although all of his communications have been in writing and through intermediaries," he said.

Democratic senator says drugs being on boats isn't a targeting criterion for US strikes

Rubio dismissed questions about the legality of Pentagon strikes against dozens of alleged drug-smuggling vessels in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean, which have killed more than 200 people since early September.

Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia said the military's targeting criteria for those strikes do not include drugs being present on the boat. He called it "odd" but said he could not share much more because the criteria are classified.

Rubio pushed back, saying on every strike a legal officer makes a determination on whether it is legal. He also said the U.S. military has "walked away from strikes" multiple times because they did not meet the targeting criteria.

The Trump administration says the U.S. is at war with drug cartels, while many Democrats have questioned the legality and effectiveness of the strikes.

The Republican former senator faces another pair of hearings Wednesday, also about the State Department's annual budget request, though questions again are expected to focus on top foreign policy issues.

Rubio wades into Taiwan arms sales opposed by China

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Rubio acknowledged that the Trump administration is holding up a potential \$14 billion arms sale to Taiwan but said it remained under consideration and would not be canceled. He noted that the U.S. sold arms to Taiwan in December worth \$11 billion.

He said the deal is not under review because of pressure from China, although he said the Chinese bring up the issue in discussions with the United States. Trump has described it as a great negotiating chip.

"They are constantly talking about Taiwan arms sales, but that in no way is what is holding up our decision-making or the White House's decision-making," Rubio said. "It is something the president will have to decide on the timing of when and how that is executed on."

On another issue involving China, Rubio said Iran has Chinese military equipment from its previous relationship but noted that the U.S. has seen no indication that anything provided has "changed the dynamic in the battlefield."

However, the State Department last month imposed sanctions on three China-based entities for providing satellite imagery that enabled Iran's military strikes against U.S. forces in the Middle East.

Protesters chant at Rubio about Cuba

Rubio, the son of Cuban immigrants, also was questioned about the Trump administration's escalatory behavior toward Cuba, as Trump has hinted that the small island country could be the next U.S. target after operations in Iran are wrapped up.

He faced chants from protesters who urged him to "stop killing Cubans" when he entered the Senate briefing room. The protesters were quickly pulled from the room. Their chants also included "Let Cuba live!"

Rubio defended the administration's approach and said it would remain focused on changing the Cuban government's policies.

"I really don't believe this system is capable of reform unless new people take over or a new mindset takes hold," he said.

Despite a series of meetings between U.S. and Cuban officials, Trump and Rubio have renewed threats against the island's government, which take on greater weight after the administration announced criminal charges against former President Raúl Castro.

Over his congressional career and now as America's top diplomat, Rubio has maintained that Cuba is a national security threat because of its ties to U.S. adversaries and that Trump is intent on addressing it.

## **Trump taps housing regulator Pulte to be acting director of national intelligence**

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has tapped Bill Pulte, head of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, to serve as acting director of national intelligence — elevating a real estate scion with no clear national security credentials to a key post as the U.S. remains at war with Iran.

Trump made the surprise announcement Tuesday on social media that Pulte would be replacing Tulsi Gabbard, the former Hawaii congresswoman who had served as the director of national intelligence. Trump said Pulte will keep his other positions even as he fills in for Gabbard, who resigned last month after revealing her husband's cancer diagnosis.

The Republican president cited Pulte's work at the FHFA and his role as chair of the mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac as indicating that his real estate work would overlap with the skills needed to coordinate 18 federal agencies tasked with aspects of foreign and domestic security.

"William has deep experience managing the most sensitive matters in America, the safety and soundness of the Markets," Trump posted on Truth Social.

Trump's choice to elevate Pulte, who would also continue in his post at FHFA, shows how the president is putting a greater priority on loyalty to him, even as the Iran war has damaged Trump politically going into November's midterm elections and raised concerns about the quality of advice that aides are giving to a president who has rewarded flattery.

It's unclear what national security expertise Pulte brings to bear as the U.S. faces conflict in the Middle

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East, helps Ukraine defend itself against Russia's assault and manages the emergence of artificial intelligence as a military tool. But Pulte, who's 38 years old, has been a frequent guest on Air Force One as Trump has traveled to Mar-a-Lago, his home and club in Palm Beach, Florida.

On one such flight, the housing finance director stood in a doorway as Trump discussed with reporters the ballroom he's building at the White House and handed Trump a series of renderings of the project that the president held up.

Questions about Pulte's experience

Several Senate Republicans reacted skeptically to Pulte's appointment, questioning whether the housing finance director has the experience necessary to oversee the intelligence agency.

"We don't need a weaponized DNI. We need professionals there," said Senate Majority Leader John Thune, a Republican from South Dakota. "I'm trying to get more information about the current state of their thinking about that position. And, again, if he's somebody they want in that position permanently, he's got, as you all know, a lengthy road ahead of him."

Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton, who leads the Senate Intelligence Committee, said in response to questions about Pulte's national security credentials: "I have no observations on the matter."

Republican Sens. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, Bill Cassidy of Louisiana and John Cornyn of Texas, all of whom are leaving the chamber after this year's elections, joined the chorus of wariness against Pulte.

"Doesn't seem qualified," Cassidy said.

"I don't see any evidence of qualifications for that job," said Cornyn, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

"When we looked at his background for the current confirmation, I thought most of his experience was in the building industry," Tillis said. "I didn't know he had any national security experience."

Democrats noted that Pulte's major qualification appeared to be his enthusiasm for fulfilling Trump's requests.

"The concern is not only that Mr. Pulte lacks the 'extensive national security experience' required by statute for the job, which was created after intelligence failures led to the deaths of thousands of Americans on 9/11," said Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., in a statement. "It is that he appears to have been selected precisely because the White House believes he will provide the narrative it wants, not the intelligence we need."

Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., said Pulte has been "abusing his authority" as the federal housing finance director and Trump is now "rewarding his lackey — who has no national security experience — with a perch atop our nation's intelligence community. What could go wrong?"

Robert Weissman, co-president of Public Citizen, the liberal consumer rights advocacy group, warned that Pulte was "Trump's hatchet man" who would use the government against those Americans who object to the president's actions.

"Placing Pulte in this post would position him to use the nation's massive surveillance apparatus and police capacity to harass, intimidate and threaten the many, many people that Trump considers his enemies," Weissman said.

Pulte's attacks on Trump foes

As the grandson of the founder of PulteGroup, one of the country's largest homebuilders, Pulte has cut a combative streak on social media and used his post at the FHFA to attack perceived opponents of the Trump administration.

His time overseeing mortgage finance has been linked with criminal referrals over allegations of mortgage fraud by public officials Trump sought to punish, including New York Attorney General Letitia James, a Democrat; Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif.; and Lisa Cook, a board member of the Federal Reserve, who was nominated by a Democratic president, Joe Biden.

The prosecution against James was dismissed in November after a judge concluded that the prosecutor who filed the charges was illegally appointed. Other referrals made by Pulte, including against Schiff and Cook, have not yielded any criminal charges. Lawyers for both have denied any claims of wrongdoing. But Trump did try to use the possibility of mortgage fraud as grounds for removing Cook from the Fed.



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Cook's lawyer accused Pulte of pursuing mortgage fraud on a partisan basis, focusing on Democrats and refusing to pursue similar allegations against Republicans.

Pulte told reporters at the White House several months ago that he had also made criminal referrals regarding at least one Republican official, but he declined to provide the name.

He has famously gone after then-Fed Chair Jerome Powell for not cutting the central bank's benchmark interest rates as aggressively as the president wanted. He has also been linked to ideas such as the 50-year mortgage and efforts to lower mortgage rates through the purchase of home loan debt that have not paid off as promised, as mortgage rates began to climb after the Iran war started at the end of February.

Pulte has a reputation for cultivating enemies. In a legal feud pursued by Pulte that involved his family namesake's homebuilding company, he accused his grandfather's widow of insider trading. He was believed to be the driving force behind a website trashing an aunt as a "fake Christian." And he publicly blasted another relative as "a fat slob," "weirdo" and "grifter," according to court records.

Politico reported in September that Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent threatened to punch Pulte in the face. The showdown occurred at a private dinner, and the treasury secretary claimed that he had heard Pulte had been badmouthing him to Trump.

Still, he had fans inside the White House elsewhere.

"Bill Pulte is a terrific guy, very careful person, very much in the details of things, trusted by the president, and a really, really close friend to everybody in the White House," Kevin Hassett, the director of the National Economic Council at the White House, told reporters on Tuesday. "He'll do a great job."

If formally nominated, Pulte would need to be confirmed by the Senate to hold the position full-time.

In his first term, Trump at various points had acting officials leading the Justice and Defense departments and in top posts at Homeland Security and the Interior.

## The show will go on: White House correspondents' dinner rescheduled for July, with Trump attending

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — And now, Take Two: The White House Correspondents' Association dinner has been rescheduled — with President Donald Trump apparently in attendance.

The dinner, cut short in April by a gunman who prosecutors say was trying to assassinate Trump, will now take place on July 24. It will be a more intimate gathering with "significantly enhanced safety measures and new access procedures," said Weijia Jiang, president of the White House Correspondents' Association.

Jiang did not say where the dinner would be held. But Trump, on his Truth Social platform, revealed it would be at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue — former site of the Trump International Hotel.

The president said he'd been invited to return and speak, and had accepted the invitation. He called the rescheduling "a sign of Strength and Fortitude."

"This announcement is a very good thing in that we cannot allow Lunatics to change our way of life, or even its scheduling," Trump wrote.

He added he hadn't decided on whether to give his originally intended speech, in which he was widely expected to attack the press. "I don't know whether or not I will give the same rather nasty statements, at least as it concerns certain people, but we will soon find out," he wrote. "In any event, it will be a 'HOT' ticket!"

Rescheduling decision took time

Jiang, in her announcement, noted that "rescheduling was not automatic," and had involved much consideration and input from board members.

She emphasized the dinner's stated purpose: "a celebration of a free press and the vital role of journalism in our democracy for over a century."

"We will not allow an act of violence to have the last word, especially during a year when we are reflecting on the 250th anniversary of America and everything we stand for," Jiang said.

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It was not clear how large the rescheduled dinner would be, or whether it would be a full-scale dinner at all. Jiang made reference to a "more intimate gathering" than the original event, attended by close to 3,000 people at the Washington Hilton, but did not give details, saying they'd be shared directly with attendees.

Her remarks were in line with recent speculation that a rescheduled event would have to be pared down, a nod to financial as well as security concerns.

Concern expressed for wounded officer

Jiang also made note of the Secret Service officer who was shot in April and has been recovering. "Our thoughts remain with the officer who was injured and with everyone who experienced that evening," she said. "We are indebted to the US Secret Service, law enforcement and the hotel staff whose swift response protected our guests and our staff."

Though Jiang always insisted the dinner should be rescheduled, not everyone felt the same way.

Some critics said they felt it would be a good idea to scuttle the whole event permanently — not only for security reasons, but for what they saw as an unseemly enterprise of journalists hobnobbing in formal wear with the subjects of their reporting.

"It undermines the public faith in how the press does its work, and it makes it look like we are pals with the people we cover," Kelly McBride, an ethics expert at the Poynter Institute, a journalism think tank, said in May.

## **Israel kills 11 in Lebanon, a day after Trump said Israel and Hezbollah will de-escalate**

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB, BASSEM MROUE, and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Israeli drone strikes on southern Lebanon on Tuesday killed 11 people, including a man along with his son and daughter, the state-run news agency said, a day after U.S. President Donald Trump said Israel and the militant group Hezbollah agreed to dial back fighting.

Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran, launched dozens of projectiles and drones toward Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon and Israeli cities and towns in recent days as Israel's airstrikes killed dozens, including women and children, in Lebanon. Hezbollah did not carry out any attacks on Israel after Trump's announcement.

The ongoing hostilities — despite Trump's announcement and a nominal ceasefire that began in April — are deepening displacement for Lebanon's conflict-weary population. They also are a significant sticking point in negotiations to extend a ceasefire in the U.S.-Israeli war in Iran, as the Islamic Republic wants any such deal to end fighting in Lebanon, too.

Two semiofficial Iranian news agencies reported Tuesday that the country cut off communication with mediators facilitating the ceasefire talks.

Another round of talks between Israel and Lebanon began Tuesday in Washington, where Lebanese negotiators will seek a full ceasefire that will prevent future attacks. The talks began in April and were the first in more than three decades between the countries, which have no formal diplomatic relations. Hezbollah has rejected direct talks, counting on pressure from Iran.

The planned talks come days after Israeli ground troops made their deepest incursion into Lebanon in 26 years and Israel then threatened to strike Beirut's southern suburbs, causing panic in the Lebanese capital as thousands fled.

Israel says it will keep attacking if Hezbollah does

Trump said Monday he'd spoken with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and had communicated with Hezbollah through mediators, and that no troops would be "going to Beirut." But the intensity of attacks between Israel and Hezbollah continued.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said Tuesday that Israel previously refrained from attacking Beirut out of deference to negotiations between the U.S. and Iran. But he said Netanyahu informed Trump in a phone call late Monday that Israel will attack Beirut's southern suburbs if Hezbollah continues targeting northern Israel, echoing comments from the prime minister the previous day.

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Lebanon's top political authorities insist that the talks must continue, despite Beirut's struggles in stopping the strikes, and the mounting pressure from over 1 million displaced people living in difficult conditions.

"Negotiations is the least costly option on Lebanon and the Lebanese people," Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said. "It is the shortest road to the occupation and allow our people in the south to return to the cities and villages."

An Israeli drone strike hit a car on the road linking the southern town of Marjayoun with the city of Nabatiyeh, killing James Karam, a dentist from the nearby Christian town of Qlayaa, along with his daughter and son, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported Tuesday.

The Lebanese army said two soldiers were lightly wounded when another drone targeted them on a road outside the city.

Drone strikes killed two Syrians working at a plant nursery in the village of Jibchit and two people in the nearby village of Toul, the news agency reported. A third strike hit a car near the village of Harouf, killing one person.

Two other airstrikes on southern Lebanon killed three people, according to NNA.

The Israeli military said it wasn't aware of any Israeli strikes in the area where Karam and his family members were killed.

NNA also reported that an Israeli airstrike in the southern village of Marwaniyeh on Monday killed six people from the Abdullah family. Hassan and his wife Hanan were killed alongside four children Ali, Ibrahim, Leen and Julia. A third son survived but is undergoing treatment.

Hezbollah said Tuesday its fighters fired anti-tank missiles on Israeli troops who were pushing into the southern village of Hadatha, about 7 kilometers (4 miles) from the Israeli border.

Sirens sounded in several areas in northern Israel, its military said in a statement. It added that "a suspicious aerial target" was identified in the area where Israeli soldiers are operating in southern Lebanon, but that no injuries were reported.

More than 3,400 people have been killed in Lebanon

The latest round of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah has killed 3,468 people in Lebanon and displaced more than 1 million people. According to Netanyahu's office, at least 27 Israeli soldiers and a defense contractor have been killed in or near southern Lebanon. Two civilians have also been killed in northern Israel.

Israel's military said late Monday that a soldier was killed in southern Lebanon. It added that seven more soldiers were wounded in the incident, three of them severely.

Hezbollah's use of hard-to-detect fiber-optic drones has been deadly for the Israeli military, which is struggling to respond.

## **Africa is the deadliest place in the world to have a baby, while its population booms**

By CAITLIN KELLY Associated Press

BIRAO, Central African Republic (AP) — The agony began for Maude Ahmad Fadala shortly after sunset. Her baby was coming. She was in a refugee camp, weakened by typhoid. There were no camp facilities for what was about to happen, and she had no money to travel. She struggled to her feet and started walking.

She stopped every few minutes, gripped by pain from contractions, then could go no farther.

"I gave birth in the street," she said. "There was no doctor, no midwife, and no one holding my hand."

—  
This is part of a series on maternal mortality in sub-Saharan Africa, which has the world's fastest-growing population and accounts for 70% of global maternal deaths. Around 180,000 pregnancy deaths are recorded every year across the continent, along with the deaths of about 1 million newborns.

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Nearly two-thirds of maternal deaths worldwide occur in countries affected by conflict or “fragility,” the World Health Organization said this year. For women like Fadala, fleeing Sudan’s war to countries like Central African Republic, the danger doesn’t stop at the border.

Displacement can mean missed prenatal appointments, dangerous journeys and weakened health systems, often in remote settings.

Women in Central African Republic are 40 times more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than in the United States, the United Nations has said. For every 100,000 births in the country, one of the world’s poorest, 829 women die.

‘Risk of maternal death is going to increase’

Years of internal conflict have made Central African Republic and its health system fragile. Despite its vast reserves of gold, health services are scarce outside major cities. One in three people live on less than \$2 a day.

The government, aware of its maternal mortality problem, announced a plan in 2024 to increase spending for resources such as skilled birth attendants. Officials did not respond to questions about how it’s working.

Now, sweeping cuts in humanitarian aid funding by top donor the United States and other countries have made it even harder for women to find care.

In the remote town of Birao near the Sudan border, where Fadala shelters, four local midwives who had been supported by the U.N. Population Fund lost their jobs last year as the Trump administration cut every U.S. funding agreement with the U.N. sexual and reproductive health agency.

Opposite Fadala’s tent is a former UNFPA-funded “safe space” providing transport for pregnant women to the district hospital. It was one of four such spaces in Birao serving nearly 50,000 women. Those have closed without U.S. funding, along with two U.S.-backed health facilities.

Now, “some women run the risk of dying in pregnancy situations that are not medically managed,” said UNFPA program officer Marie Justine Mamba Ibingui.

UNFPA’s budget in Central African Republic has been halved in the past two years to \$6.5 million, country director Victor Rakoto said. UNFPA was the only provider of reproductive health products in Birao.

“The risk of maternal death is going to increase if there is no solution,” Rakoto said.

Conflict-affected settings like Birao account for six in 10 maternal deaths globally, according to the U.N.

‘Giving birth here is exhausting’

The district hospital, which Fadala had tried to reach, is a few kilometers (over a mile) away over dirt roads.

On a recent day, birthing assistant Delphine Zanabe moved between patients as dozens of women waited, sitting thigh-to-thigh on hard benches in the sweltering heat. Some had walked for hours to reach the hospital. Others had risked their pregnancy with motorbike journeys over rough ground.

From the border, adjoining a part of Sudan held by paramilitary forces fighting the Sudanese military, it’s a 65-kilometer (40-mile) journey to the refugee camp.

“They only come when they are about to give birth,” Zanabe said. “It’s a struggle and it’s either the baby or the mother who suffers.” According to WHO guidelines, pregnant women should attend at least eight prenatal consultations.

For refugees, living in survival mode in unfamiliar surroundings compounds the challenges of poverty and lack of education. Zanabe said those factors often put women at risk for pregnancy and childbirth complications.

In the maternity ward, eight beds were in a room so small they almost touched. They serve a population of about 70,000 people, along with 22,000 Sudanese refugees.

Doctors said 12 staffers have lost their jobs as a result of aid cuts. The majority were from the maternity department.

Amna Adam Hessen had arrived the day before, burning with fever from malaria. Her unborn child was found to be in a breech position, a discovery made late because she had missed prenatal appointments. Brought by motorbike from the refugee camp, she bled heavily during labor and lost her baby.



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The next day, her mother, Salet, fanned her in the suffocating heat.

"Giving birth here is exhausting," she said, describing the long and difficult night.

Amna writhed with fever on the bare foam mattress and cried out, "Mama, mama."

Zanabe is worried about future cuts in humanitarian assistance affecting mothers.

Over 40% of births in Central African Republic already occur away from medical facilities, the United Nations has estimated — a traditional approach that risks otherwise preventable complications.

'I abandoned them like that'

Clara Abessendé was one of the four midwives who lost their jobs.

She had watched as the number of women arriving daily at the hospital tripled after Sudan's war began in early 2023, and as staffers ran out of supplies like antibiotics and malaria treatments.

"As a result, there were more cases of infant and maternal deaths," she said.

Abessendé said she feels heavy with the guilt of having to leave her job.

"The children born in my hands .. I abandoned them like that," she said.

Katidje Idrisse Tahire is one of the women she's no longer there to help.

Tahire walked slowly through the refugee camp to fetch water, one child on her back and two others at her side. She was late in her ninth month, preparing to have another.

She said she fled Sudan four months ago on foot. At the border, armed men robbed her of everything. Her husband hasn't been seen since they fled Darfur.

"My whole body aches," she said. "I am very tired and unwell."

She has no money and doesn't know if care will be available when her baby comes.

## Police investigate Iowa man suspected of killing 6 of his relatives and then himself

MUSCATINE, Iowa (AP) — Authorities in Iowa are investigating the fatal shootings of six people who they believe were killed by a relative who took his own life when confronted by police Monday.

Four people were found fatally shot when police were called Monday to a home in Muscatine, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southeast of Cedar Rapids, Muscatine Police Chief Anthony Kies said during a news conference.

Officers later found the suspect, 52-year-old Ryan Willis McFarland, of Muscatine, on a trail in the city, Kies said.

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

"While talking to Ryan Willis McFarland, he took his own life," the police chief said.

Two other men who also are believed to be relatives of McFarland were later found fatally shot elsewhere in the city, according to Kies. One man was found in his home and the other was discovered dead inside a business, he said.

Authorities have yet to release the names of the victims and any details about them.

"Today I simply do not have the words, this act of evil and what it has done to our community," Kies said.

The city's police department is continuing to investigate the shootings, working to process the crime scenes and conduct interviews. Police have asked anyone with information to contact its major crimes unit.

Kies confirmed that McFarland had a criminal record, but wouldn't share any details.

## Takeaways from AP-KFF investigation into allegations of medical neglect by detainees in ICE custody

By RAE ELLEN BICHELL, CLAIRE GALOFARO, MAIA ROSENFELD, RENUKA RAYASAM, AARON KESSLER and BYRON TAU Associated Press and KFF Health News

An investigation by KFF Health News and The Associated Press has found that hundreds of detainees across at least 33 states allege immigration detention facilities are failing to provide adequate medical care.

Detainees allege they didn't receive medications on time — or at all — for conditions including high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, epilepsy, Parkinson's and HIV. Requests for help went unanswered for weeks. Blood sugars rose. Infections festered. Cancers remained untreated. Detainees collapsed and had seizures.

U.S. jails and immigration detention centers have long struggled to meet the medical needs of the people in their charge. But the system is sagging under an influx of detentions since President Donald Trump returned to office: More than 75,000 immigrants were being detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement as of mid-January, up from around 40,000 a year earlier.

KFF Health News and AP asked the Department of Homeland Security to respond to the findings six days before publication but it did not provide comment. DHS acting chief medical officer, Sean Conley, previously said "it is both policy and longstanding practice for aliens to receive timely and appropriate medical care from the moment they enter ICE custody" and that the department recruits healthcare professionals to maintain high standards. "This is better, more responsive healthcare than many aliens have ever received in their entire lives," he has said.

Individual facilities and private prison companies contracting with DHS that responded to requests for comment on this story said they follow ICE standards and detainees receive adequate medical care when it is required. Some said they were unfamiliar with the allegations outlined in court documents; others blamed the detainees themselves for lapses in their medical care.

KFF Health News and AP analyzed thousands of court cases filed since Trump's second inauguration that use a legal route known as habeas corpus to argue people are being held illegally by ICE. The records offer a rare window into how those detained say — often under penalty of perjury — ICE is handling their medical needs. Reporters also interviewed more than 50 detainees, family members and lawyers.

The investigation revealed that medical neglect is alleged across the sprawling detention system, including in offices not designed to house people, county jails and quickly staged sites with nicknames such as "Alligator Alcatraz."

The full story can be read here. Here are the takeaways:

Sick people remain detained

Previously, detainees with serious medical needs would likely have been released on humanitarian parole, in part to avoid the cost of their care, Vermont attorney Andrew Pelcher said.

Now, under "mandatory detention," people are staying locked up with serious — and expensive — conditions.

A Romanian citizen underwent several heart surgeries, including an emergency triple bypass in April 2025, before he was arrested in July. As part of his recovery, the 52-year-old was required to take 16 daily medications. While detained by ICE in Baltimore, his court filings allege, he went two days without any medication before officials moved him to a facility in New Jersey.

The AP and KFF Health News are not naming anyone identified in court documents without their consent.

He was hospitalized three times with chest pains, in part because the detention center did not provide all his medications despite "countless requests," medical records and court documents say. Hospital discharge papers cited by his lawyer show he received only eight of the 16 medications after his second release from the hospital.

Several weeks later in August, he had a stroke while on a video call with his daughter, according to court filings. "He was struggling to breathe, and was pointing at his chest where he was again experiencing pain, and suddenly stopped speaking." His daughter screamed for help through the video monitor, according to

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his petition. "Eventually an officer came in to assist him and cut the feed."

The man lost his ability to speak for four days, the document says. He was returned to detention, where he remained until a federal judge ordered his release in November.

Desperate families try to help from afar

Detainees receiving inadequate healthcare have little recourse. The Department of Homeland Security last year gutted the Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman. In early May, they shut the office entirely arguing that Congress didn't fund it.

Ombudsman staffers used to help facilitate medical care or investigate complaints of neglect, according to Matt Boles, an immigration attorney in Georgia. Now, he said, there's no one to call.

Meanwhile, detainees' families said they feel helpless, making desperate calls to facilities, the government and their legislators while watching their loved ones deteriorate.

Riya Khan saw her mother get sicker at the California City Detention Facility, which is owned by CoreCivic, a private prison company. When she visited a week after her mother arrived at the facility in the Mojave Desert, Riya said, the 64-year-old woman was shaking as she stumbled into her seat. Her breathing was labored.

Masuma Khan came to the U.S. from Bangladesh in 1997. Like 70% of those in detention, Khan has no criminal history. She was detained in October when she showed up for her regular ICE check-in.

For the month she was detained, according to her daughter, she only intermittently received her medications for conditions including high blood pressure, hypothyroidism and prediabetes.

CoreCivic treats chronic conditions in line with applicable medical standards, spokesperson Brian Todd said. "Nothing matters more to CoreCivic than the health, safety and well-being of the people in our care," Todd said.

Khan said she got her asthma medication for the first time two days before she was released and her eye drops for glaucoma never arrived. Staffers told Khan she needed to buy some of her medications from the commissary but it didn't stock them, her daughter said.

'Brazen indifference to really obvious problems'

Dora Schiro, who worked for ICE and now serves as a special adviser to the American Bar Association, said case law requires the government to treat people in immigration detention with the same care it affords those in traditional jails awaiting trial. But administrators are granted discretion and medical care standards vary.

Detainees are frequently moved across the country, often without warning, interrupting treatment. A woman from El Salvador said she missed a week of HIV medication when she was transferred from Colorado to a county jail in Wyoming.

A Russian man wrote that, while detained in Texas, he saw a gastroenterologist about his painful gallstones and scheduled an appointment with a surgeon. "Unfortunately, I never got to see him, due to my being moved around various detention centers."

Advocates say that even obvious disabilities, like legal blindness, are ignored.

A detainee who lost one eye and had severe glaucoma in the other required twice-daily drops to maintain what vision remained. But, he said, some days the drops never came.

He wrote that his vision was quickly deteriorating, and he was scared he'd lose it entirely and never be able to see his infant son again.

## **AP exclusive: Under Notre Dame cathedral, a 'dig of the century' unearths 1,700 years of history**

By THOMAS ADAMSON and JEFFREY SCHAEFFER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Wilting in the summer sun, a line of tourists waits to climb Notre Dame cathedral and meet its gargoyles.

Four meters (13 feet) beneath them, a team of archaeologists is digging the other way — straight down and back in time, to Roman Paris 2,000 years ago.

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In 2019, fire brought Notre Dame's spire crashing down as the world watched. The cathedral was rebuilt and reopened in late 2024, and now Paris wants to soften the hot, bare square in front of it with trees and shade.

But in a city this old, the soil cannot be turned until what lies beneath it is excavated, in case it is damaged during works.

So a slice of Notre Dame's forecourt has become an excavation site — an open pit ringed by barriers and crossed by a wooden walkway, a few steps from the line-up.

A modern Da Vinci Code

French media have dubbed it the "dig of the century."

"It's a rare opportunity for us to work on something that's tangibly going to make a difference to the history of Paris," Lucie Altenburg, a conservator with the Paris archaeology unit, told The Associated Press.

Among the hundreds of objects already found: a fourth-century coin stamped with the face of the Emperor Constantine, and shards of medieval pottery painted on the inside with marks no expert has yet deciphered — like a modern Da Vinci Code.

"It makes Notre Dame feel alive again," said Emily Carter, 34, a tourist from Manchester waiting in line with her two children. "You come to see the cathedral, then realize there's another city under your feet. That's almost more moving."

The first traces appear 50 centimeters (20 inches) down; 4 meters (13 feet) lower, the team is still pulling up the past. Some days they fill 15 crates — from ground that has lain untouched for decades.

Ancient cities have archaeologists monitoring digs

This is the bargain in every old city: The past is not in a museum down the street — it is under the street.

Cities rise. Each age builds on the rubble of the last, and the ground climbs with it; in Rome, it has risen about 9 meters (30 feet) since the empire fell in the fifth century AD.

When Athens built its metro for the 2004 Olympics, it set off the largest excavation in Greek history and turned up tens of thousands of objects, now shown in the stations themselves. Paris is no different.

It all comes from the island in the Seine, the Ile de la Cite, where Paris began.

Centuries later, Notre Dame rose on the same ground.

At the cathedral's birth in 1163, the entire square was packed with medieval houses, split by a single street, said Camille Colonna, the archaeologist leading the dig.

Digging down, her team has reached their cellars — and therefore also the time in history they represent.

Below them lie Merovingian and Carolingian grain pits, from the sixth to the 10th centuries; below those, darker and deeper still, a dense Roman quarter from the fourth and fifth centuries.

Twenty centuries are stacked in 4 meters (13 feet) of earth — or about the height of two-and-a-half Napoleon Bonapartes standing on top of one another.

"Here you can see the layers — medieval Paris, Roman Paris, maybe even before that," said Yasmine Benali, 22, an archaeology student watching from behind the barriers. "It makes the city feel less like a postcard and more like something still being discovered."

Coins, ceramics and mysterious markings

The richest finds here come from the foulest place: the deep pits beneath the medieval houses, old latrines that doubled as rubbish dumps.

Out of them the team keeps lifting whole jugs and cups — thrown away centuries ago, yet still intact — among the broken plates and animal bones.

It's "rare to find complete ceramics," said Valentine Breloux, an archaeologist with the unit.

Here the soft waste cushioned them, and centuries later they miraculously came up whole.

Then some other objects came that confounded experts. As conservators cleaned what looked like ordinary medieval pottery, they found faint reddish writing painted on the inside — the same mysterious markings on shard after shard.

What they mean has yet to be deciphered.

Of everything she has cleaned from Notre Dame, Breloux said, these are the most "astonishing."

Coins can help date the layers



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The coins came up as black discs, eaten by rust. But under an X-ray, a face returned: it was Constantine, the Roman emperor who ruled in the early 300s AD.

Such objects also "can be invaluable in giving us the date of the (underground) layer," Altenburg said.

The Roman finds are the ones the archaeologists value most — the deepest, oldest and least understood. In Roman times, the town was called Lutetia, and its center lay across the river, on the Left Bank.

As the Roman empire collapsed, people pulled back to the Ile de la Cite, where Notre Dame would later rise, and fortified the island with walls of stone taken from earlier buildings.

Colonna's team found some proof: a Roman doorstep found in the dig, taken from a much bigger building, carried over, turned upside down, and laid in a road as paving.

Paris houses thousands of finds in an archaeology center

Every find leaves the pit and travels north, to the city's archaeology center — what Colonna calls "a huge archaeological store," a treasure house of Paris.

For archaeologists, the cathedral dig is a rare treat. In France, like elsewhere, they work only where building work is about to begin — a bit like how industrial quarry workers end up unearthing dinosaur remains.

"This only happens because the city of Paris decided it wanted to beautify the area," Altenburg said.

The new square should be mostly finished by 2028: a kind of woodland clearing, with 160 new trees and a thin film of water sliding over the stone to cool it in summer — part of how Paris is bracing for ever hotter summers induced by global warming.

The tourists who now wait in the bare sun beneath the gargoyles will, in a few summers, line up in the shade.

The old underground parking lot will reopen as a visitor center looking onto the Seine.

Until then, the Notre Dame team wants to go deeper still — past the Romans, toward whoever came before them, the Gauls who gave the city its first name.

"The hope is that we are able to go back in time even further than we've ever been before," Altenburg said.

## From festering infections to untreated cancer, ICE detainees across the US describe medical neglect

By RAE ELLEN BICHELL, CLAIRE GALOFARO, MAIA ROSENFELD, RENUKA RAYASAM, AARON KESSLER and BYRON TAU Associated Press and KFF Health News

An Albanian man's pain grew so unbearable, he said, he pulled out his own tooth as he languished for months in a New Mexico immigration detention center. A Honduran mother of two said she was hospitalized for a heart problem after she was denied blood pressure medications while held in Florida. A Venezuelan man said his leg grew purple and swollen from flesh-eating bacteria when staffers at a Vermont facility did not bring him to a scheduled doctor's appointment.

Hundreds of detainees across at least 33 states allege in federal lawsuits that immigration detention facilities are failing to provide adequate medical care, an investigation by KFF Health News and The Associated Press found. Detainees say they didn't get medications on time — or at all — for conditions including high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, epilepsy, Parkinson's and HIV. Requests for help went unanswered for weeks. Blood sugars rose. Infections festered. Cancers remained untreated. Detainees collapsed and had seizures.

U.S. jails and immigration detention centers have long struggled to meet the medical needs of the people in their charge. But the system is sagging under an influx of detentions since President Donald Trump returned to office: More than 75,000 immigrants were being detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement as of mid-January, up from around 40,000 a year earlier.

KFF Health News and AP analyzed thousands of court cases filed since Trump's second inauguration that use a legal route known as habeas corpus to argue people are being held illegally by ICE. The records offer a rare window into how those detained say — often under penalty of perjury — ICE is handling their medical needs. Reporters also interviewed more than 50 detainees, family members and lawyers.

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The investigation revealed that medical neglect is alleged across the sprawling detention system, including in offices not designed to house people, county jails and quickly staged sites with nicknames such as "Alligator Alcatraz."

ICE custody is deadlier than it has been in two decades, researchers wrote in JAMA in April. The Department of Homeland Security reported 51 people had died in detention since the start of Trump's second administration, with suicides spiking to an unprecedented number.

KFF Health News and AP asked DHS to respond to the findings six days before publication but it did not provide comment. The department's acting chief medical officer, Sean Conley, previously said "it is both policy and longstanding practice for aliens to receive timely and appropriate medical care from the moment they enter ICE custody" and that DHS recruits healthcare professionals to maintain high standards. "This is better, more responsive healthcare than many aliens have ever received in their entire lives," he said.

Individual facilities and private prison companies contracting with DHS that responded to requests for comment said they follow ICE standards and that detainees receive medical care when it is required. Some said they were unfamiliar with the allegations outlined in court documents; others blamed the detainees themselves for lapses in their medical care.

"I have never seen such disregard or medical neglect like this anywhere," Vardan Gukasian, a political dissident and former paramedic who spent years behind bars in Armenia, wrote in a court declaration in March to contest his detention in Henderson, Nevada, as it stretched to 13 months despite his health problems.

Madeleine Skains, a spokesperson for the city of Henderson, said medical care is always available at the facility and that the court had not ordered changes to his care.

Last June, as Gukasian experienced the symptoms of uncontrolled high blood pressure — dizziness, a nosebleed and a headache — his cellmate banged on their door for help.

"When it did not arrive, the rest of the block banged on their doors," he wrote. Gukasian was hospitalized that day.

**'Brazen indifference to really obvious problems'**

The administration's mass deportation effort has swept up hundreds of thousands of people during routine immigration check-ins, at traffic stops, at their homes and in hospitals.

About 70% of detainees have no criminal conviction. Their immigration proceedings are civil, not criminal.

"I couldn't understand why they treated me so harshly," said a father of six in Georgia. He said he was injured while shackled in custody when the vehicle transporting him to an Atlanta facility jolted, throwing him out of his seat and into a metal armrest. His wound became infected with E. coli, he said, because he had to sleep on a dirty concrete floor amid leaking toilets.

Like other detainees interviewed, he spoke on the condition of anonymity; they said they fear for their safety, for the safety of their families or that speaking out would jeopardize their immigration cases. The AP and KFF Health News are not naming anyone identified in court documents without their consent.

Staffers at Stewart Detention Center in rural Lumpkin, Georgia, didn't adequately respond to that man's request for medical help, court records say, until he passed out and was taken to a hospital about an hour away. There, he said, a doctor told him he'd narrowly escaped amputation of his left leg. Medical staff found no records of a case matching this description, according to Brian Todd, a spokesperson for CoreCivic, a private prison company, which runs the facility.

The 48-year-old, who moved to the U.S. from Guatemala more than two decades ago, was released in October and is now a legal permanent resident. But he is unsure if he'll be able to return to his job in construction because he said he can no longer lift heavy things due to his injury.

Some detainees or their lawyers said even basic care was denied: gauze to protect an open foot wound, prenatal care for a high-risk pregnancy, a pillow to ease the pain of sleeping with advanced stomach cancer, sanitary pads for postpartum bleeding.

"I would like to believe the government has the best interest of those it holds in detention for whatever period of time," Judge Benita Pearson, a federal judge in Ohio, said during a hearing in October concerning a 70-year-old who alleged the government lost her glasses during her arrest. "If one is unable to see

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due to the loss of glasses when detained, that should be fixed.”

Dora Schriro, who worked for ICE and now serves as a special adviser to the American Bar Association, said case law requires the government to treat people in immigration detention with the same care it affords those in traditional jails awaiting trial. But administrators are granted discretion and medical care standards vary.

Detainees are frequently moved across the country, often without warning, interrupting treatment. A woman from El Salvador said she missed a week of HIV medication when she was transferred from Colorado to a county jail in Wyoming.

A Russian man wrote that he saw a gastroenterologist about his painful gallstones while detained in Texas and scheduled an appointment with a surgeon. “Unfortunately, I never got to see him, due to my being moved around various detention centers.”

Advocates say even obvious disabilities, like legal blindness, are ignored.

A detainee who lost one eye and had severe glaucoma in the other required twice-daily drops to maintain what vision remained. But, he said, some days the drops never came.

“Now, I can only see a little bit straight in front. It now often looks like I’m seeing through gauze,” the man wrote in a court declaration. “This makes me very afraid that one of these times I am going to open my eyes and not be able to see anything at all.”

He wrote that he was scared he wouldn’t be able to see his infant son grow up.

“It’s just sort of brazen indifference to really obvious problems, things you would have thought absurd a decade ago — like the fact that you can’t see,” the man’s attorney, Brian Hoffman, said. “Before, you could attempt to work with folks on the government side and maybe shame them into doing the right thing. Now, it’s sort of like anything you want done you have to go to court and sue over.”

Even court orders aren’t always enough. One California judge ordered the government to take a man showing signs of prostate cancer to a specialist for diagnosis and treatment. Records show they did not take him.

Lawyers representing ICE told the judge that officials missed the appointment because of an “internal scheduling error.” CoreCivic, which runs that facility, said it was unable to comment on active litigation.

A surge in cases

When immigrants file habeas corpus petitions, they exercise a right to challenge unlawful imprisonment that dates back to medieval times.

More than 40,000 such petitions have been filed during Trump’s second term, fueled by decisions last year to deny bond to many people held on immigration charges. Judges are split on whether that’s legal; the question appears headed to the Supreme Court.

Many habeas claims have been successful, but judges typically cite reasons unrelated to the medical neglect described in the petitions, such as being held too long before being deported.

The more than 300 medical neglect claims found in this investigation represent a fraction of the problem. The details of habeas corpus cases are often hidden due to a federal rule barring the public from viewing such documents online. KFF Health News and AP obtained some documents directly and received records on 4,400 cases from Habeas Dockets, a project of the nonprofit Immigration Justice Transparency Initiative. But tens of thousands more remain largely inaccessible.

Some judges have written that the habeas process is not how to raise allegations of medical neglect and have declined to release detainees over those claims. Not every detainee who believes they experienced medical neglect files a habeas petition or cites their medical issues if they do.

Jose-Antonio Segismundo’s petition made no mention of being unable to see an oncologist for the cancer in his abdomen while detained for more than seven months at the Florida detention facility known as Alligator Alcatraz and Folkston D Ray ICE Processing Center in Georgia. Medical records in his court filings show he was arrested about five weeks before his scheduled appointment with a cancer specialist.

His wife, Maria Jose Gonzalez, said he didn’t receive any treatment even though she sent his medical records and explained his condition to officials at Folkston. When his stomach pain erupted, often suddenly and intensely, she said, they gave him Tylenol.

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Geo Group, which runs Folkston, follows ICE standards and provides healthcare and access to off-site medical specialists when needed, spokesperson Christopher Ferreira said.

This spring, Segismundo, 48, was deported to Mexico, a country he left nearly 30 years ago, Gonzalez said. Now, she said, he will have to restart his search for care in the Oaxacan village where he grew up.

Watching loved ones deteriorate

Detainees receiving inadequate healthcare have little recourse. DHS last year gutted the Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman. In early May, it shut the office entirely, citing a lack of funding from Congress.

Previously, ombudsman staffers could facilitate medical care or investigate complaints of neglect, according to Matt Boles, an immigration attorney in Georgia. Now, he said, there's no one to call.

Meanwhile, detainees' families said they feel helpless, making desperate calls to facilities, the government and their legislators while watching their loved ones deteriorate.

Riya Khan saw her mother get sicker at the California City Detention Facility, which is owned by CoreCivic. When she visited a week after her mother arrived at the facility in the Mojave Desert, Riya said, the 64-year-old woman stumbled into her seat. She was shaking and her breathing was labored.

Masuma Khan came to the U.S. from Bangladesh in 1997. She has no criminal history, her records say, and was detained in October when she showed up for her regular ICE check-in.

For the month she was detained, according to her daughter, she only intermittently received her medications for conditions including high blood pressure, hypothyroidism and prediabetes.

CoreCivic treats chronic conditions in line with applicable medical standards, Todd said.

"Nothing matters more to CoreCivic than the health, safety and well-being of the people in our care," Todd said.

Khan said she got her asthma medication for the first time two days before she was released and her eye drops for glaucoma never arrived. Staffers told Khan she needed to buy some of her medications from the commissary but it didn't stock them, her daughter said.

Before ICE detained Masuma Khan, she made friends with everyone, her daughter said. She had worked for years at Lucky Boy, an iconic Pasadena fast-food restaurant, and in her free time fed birds and left out fruit for bees that visited her apartment's balcony.

Now she's too scared to go outside. She still must regularly check in with ICE, and she's terrified each time.

A stroke on a video call

Previously, detainees with serious medical needs would likely have been released on humanitarian parole, in part to avoid the cost of their care, Vermont attorney Andrew Pelcher said.

In fiscal year 2023 — before the detained population soared — ICE spent more than \$390 million on healthcare for detained noncitizens, according to its most recent annual report to Congress. At a conference in May, then acting director Todd Lyons said ICE has spent "almost half a billion dollars" on detainee healthcare this year.

Now, under "mandatory detention," attorneys say people are staying locked up with serious — and expensive — conditions.

A Romanian citizen underwent several heart surgeries, including an emergency triple bypass in April 2025, before he was arrested in July. As part of his recovery, the 52-year-old was required to take 16 daily medications. While at an ICE field office in Baltimore, his court filings allege, he went two days without any medication before officials moved him to a facility in New Jersey.

He was hospitalized three times while detained, complaining of chest pains — in part, medical records and court documents say because, despite "countless requests," the detention center did not provide all his medications. Hospital discharge papers cited by his lawyer show he received only eight of the 16 medications after his second release from the hospital.

"Can you please talk to the ICE facility to make sure they give him his medications?" his treatment providers wrote in medical records included in his court filings. "He was admitted last week for chest pain and today he was readmitted again for chest pain secondary to non compliance for medications."



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Several weeks later in August, he had a stroke while on a video call with his daughter, according to court filings. "He was struggling to breathe, and was pointing at his chest where he was again experiencing pain, and suddenly stopped speaking." His daughter screamed for help through the video monitor, according to his petition. "Eventually an officer came in to assist him and cut the feed."

The man lost his ability to speak for four days, the document says. He was returned to detention, where he remained until a federal judge ordered his release in November.

Families of ICE detainees are left with impossible choices

Cassandra Amador waits for the phone to ring every morning, desperate to ask her husband the question that's woken her up every night for months: "Did you get your medicine?"

Her husband, Pedro Javier Amador Gutierrez, 36, has high blood pressure and depends on the state-run facility in Florida nicknamed "Deportation Depot" to administer the prescriptions that have kept him alive for years. Many mornings, he tells his wife he did not get them.

When she talks to him, she said, he sounds weaker and more scared every day, not like the upbeat man who would take her kids out for ice cream.

"You can hear in his voice how he feels," she said.

Now, she said, he's considering returning to Cuba, which he fled because of political persecution, out of fear that he will die in detention without his medicines. Amador and her children would go with him, she said, even though she was born in New Jersey, has never been to Cuba and doesn't speak much Spanish.

He has already collapsed twice at the Baker Correctional Institution in Sanderson, Florida, his wife said. She's terrified that the next time, he won't get up.

## EU strikes migration deal for more deportations and detention centers abroad

By SAM McNEIL Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union has moved forward with a vast overhaul of its migration policy, aiming to ramp up deportations and ink controversial deals to build detention centers abroad. Rights groups have criticized it, comparing the new regulations to the Trump administration's aggressive immigration policies.

By green-lighting controversial "return hubs" outside the 27-nation EU, the regulation represents the EU's hardest line on migration so far and has drawn sharp criticism from opponents who warn it will endanger migrants and undermine human rights from Spain to Romania.

"The new regulation will speed up the return process and increase returns of persons who have no legal right to stay in the EU," said Nicholas Ioannides, deputy migration minister for Cyprus, which holds the rotating presidency of the 27-nation bloc.

The deal was struck between the EU's three main institutions — the European Commission, the European Council and European Parliament — during a so-called "trilogue" Monday evening.

"Europe cannot afford another period of standstill," said Dutch lawmaker Malik Azmani, who shepherded the regulation through the European Parliament.

"There is an urgent need for an effective return policy with higher return rates," he said, adding that only 28% of rejected asylum seekers return to their country of origin, with the majority staying put in the EU. "This situation is deeply concerning. It undermines public confidence in our common migration policies."

Critics compared the regulation to the immigration policies of the Trump administration, which has struck a series of secretive agreements with nations around the world to deport thousands of people to countries that are not their own. The United Kingdom also planned to deport migrants to Rwanda, but the plan was bogged down in legal red tape and was dropped when a new government came to power in July 2024.

Several EU governments are already in talks with third countries

"Across the Atlantic, we see the violence and fear created by ICE's brutal immigration enforcement," said Silvia Carter, spokesperson for the Brussels-based Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, referring to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "Europe should be learning from the

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harms of that model, not building its own version of it."

Law enforcement officers across the bloc no longer need warrants from judges to raid private residences or public institutions like hospitals, she said. "The regulation is going to create a draconian detention and deportation machine."

The provisional agreement will now head to the EU lawmakers and governments, where approval will likely be swift.

"These new rules will ensure swifter, simpler, and more effective procedures across the European Union for returning non-EU nationals who have no right to stay, in full respect of international law and fundamental rights," said Henna Virkkunen, EU commissioner for technology.

EU member nations will soon be able to set up bilateral deals with countries outside the bloc to build deportation centers. At least five EU nations — Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark and Greece — are already in talks with third countries, mostly in Africa, to host "return hubs" on the model of Italy's detention deal with Albania.

"We are delivering the member states tools in their hands to make those agreements and arrangements with third countries," Azmani said.

Mélissa Camara, a lawmaker from the French Green party, said the deal was "a historic setback" for human rights in the bloc.

"The legalization of return hubs outside the European Union, the green light for the detention of minors, home visits inspired by ICE practices: the legal arsenal serving a xenophobic ideology is now complete," she said.

EU migration policy has steadily shifted to the right

The EU has continually tightened migration policies after right-wing parties secured the majority of votes in some countries in the 2024 elections to the European Parliament. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, from the center-right European People's Party coalition, has said that the new measures will prevent a repeat of the 2015 crisis caused by Syria's civil war, when about 1 million people arrived to seek asylum.

Fueled by people fleeing conflict and poverty across Africa and the Middle East, the 2015 refugee crisis and successive years of irregular migration to Europe drove a rightward shift in the bloc's politics not unlike the anti-immigrant sentiment that buoyed a "red wave" in the 2024 election in the United States.

After successfully campaigning on tougher migration policies, the winners of that election, the European People's Party, the largest political group in the EU, began negotiating migration reform with centrist and left parties only to eventually sidestep them by allying instead with the far right, said Carter, the asylum rights activist. "There was quite an unprecedented shift in the European Parliament."

Advocacy groups warned the regulation would cut deep into the protections granted by the EU fundamental charter on human rights and expose people to risks outside the bloc.

"This deal will give governments much broader powers to detain and deport people," said Marta Weller, a spokesperson for the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian organization. "It looks set to normalize immigration raids, expand the use of detention in prison-like facilities outside EU territory that are essentially legal black holes, and increase the risk of people being deported to countries where they could face persecution, torture or worse."

## **Today in History: June 3, the Zoot Suit Riots begin in Los Angeles**

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, June 3, the 154th day of 2026. There are 211 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 3, 1943, an altercation between U.S. Navy sailors and young Mexican Americans on the streets of Los Angeles led to several days of clashes known as the Zoot Suit Riots as white mobs attacked Mexican Americans across the city, injuring more than 150 people.

Also on this date:

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In 1844, the last confirmed specimens of the great auk, a flightless bird, were killed on Eldey island, near Iceland.

In 1888, the poem "Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Lawrence Thayer was first published in the San Francisco Daily Examiner.

In 1935, the French liner SS Normandie set a record on its maiden voyage, arriving in New York after crossing the Atlantic in just four days.

In 1937, Edward, The Duke of Windsor, who had abdicated the British throne, married American socialite Wallis Simpson in a private ceremony in Monts, France.

In 1965, during the Gemini 4, spaceflight, astronaut Edward H. White became the first American to "walk" in space.

In 1989, Chinese army troops entered Beijing's Tiananmen Square to begin a crackdown on student-led pro-democracy demonstrations, crushing their movement.

In 2016, former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali, whose athletic feats and activism placed him among the most revered athletes of all time, died in Scottsdale, Arizona, at age 74.

In 2017, elite rock climber Alex Honnold became the first to climb solo to the top of the massive granite wall known as El Capitan in Yosemite National Park without ropes or safety gear.

In 2017, a terror attack began when a van barreled into pedestrians on London Bridge as attackers killed six people in a series of vehicle and knife attacks before police shot them dead.

Today's Birthdays: Former Cuban President Raúl Castro is 95. Basketball Hall of Famer Billy Cunningham is 83. Golf Hall of Famer Hale Irwin is 81. Singer Suzi Quatro is 76. Singer Deniece Williams is 76. Former first lady Jill Biden is 75. Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Peter Vidmar is 65. Musician Kerry King (Slayer) is 62. Tennis player Rafael Nadal is 40. Singer Beabadoobee is 26. Actor Louis Partridge is 23.