

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 1 of 67

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [3- Transit Fundraiser Ad](#)
- [4- Ball teams beat Watertown](#)
- [6- School Board Meeting](#)
- [7- EarthTalk: Misinformation](#)
- [8- Pentagon revises policy after LDS lawmakers object to classification change](#)
- [9- City Council Agenda](#)
- [10- Brown County Commission Agenda](#)
- [11- SD SearchLight: Statewide partisan stakes surface in nonpartisan Sioux Falls mayor race](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: Unlike most primaries, runoff won't be a choice between like-minded candidates](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Farm animal welfare rules might be rolled back by Congress](#)
- [15- SD SearchLight: Trump administration swiftly moves ahead on plans to restrict voting by mail in the states](#)
- [17- SD SearchLight: Trump administration \\$100,000 visa fee for highly skilled foreign workers struck down](#)
- [18- Weather Pages](#)
- [23- Daily Devotional](#)
- [24- Subscription Form](#)
- [25- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [26- News from the Associated Press](#)

Tuesday, June 9

Senior Menu: Chicken alfredo, broccoli, fruit, breadstick.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Groton VB GMS Camp, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Arena/Gym

U14 Legion at Aberdeen Smitty's, 5:30 p.m.

Sr. Legion at Webster, 5:30 p.m.

Jr. Legion at Selby, 6 p.m.

U12 Baseball hosts Britton, DH, 5:30 p.m.

U8 Baseball host Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m. (Red)

U14 Softball at Hub City, 6 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

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

© 2026 Groton Daily Independent



Wednesday, June 10

Senior Menu: French dip sandwich, vegetable pasta salad, fruit.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Groton VB GMS Camp, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Arena/Gym

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

U8 Baseball at Britton, DH, 5:30 p.m. (Red and Blue)

U12 Softball hosts Britton, DH, 6:30 p.m., (G&W)

U10 Softball hosts Britton, DH, 5:30 p.m., (G&W)

U8 Softball hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m., (G&W)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 2 of 67

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.

Siri Gets a Makeover

Apple yesterday unveiled an AI-powered Siri that company executives say can draw on message history, photos, the web, and more to answer open-ended questions and complete tasks, like brainstorming recipes, updating a calendar, and drafting texts.

The announcement comes nearly two years after Apple promised a highly anticipated Siri revamp. The tech giant last month agreed to pay \$250M to settle a class-action lawsuit alleging it misled millions of customers about the digital assistant's AI capabilities. Experts say the version presented yesterday will likely bring Apple closer to competing with chatbots such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini. It was developed in collaboration with Google, allowing Apple to focus on user experience rather than building underlying AI models.

The new Siri will be widely available in the US this fall as a free software update.

Citizenship Revocations

The Justice Department announced yesterday that it will work to strip citizenship from 17 naturalized US citizens, the largest cohort to date. The announcement comes weeks after the DOJ named a dozen other cases.

Federal law allows denaturalization if individuals lied on their immigration forms, including by failing to disclose crimes. While most denaturalization cases are successful, the process is legally complex and can stall in federal courts. From 1990 to 2017, the DOJ worked to denaturalize an average of 11 US citizens per year. That pace has since increased to roughly 15 per year.

The latest batch of cases—among hundreds the DOJ intends to pursue—includes people from countries including Haiti, Mexico, the Philippines, and the former Yugoslavia. Five were accused of child sexual abuse crimes, including a former Catholic priest from Colombia. Others were accused of money laundering, fraud, and crimes related to using false identities. If denaturalized, the individuals may face prison time or deportation.

Sleep Without Sleep

For the first time, researchers have identified a way to trigger some of sleep's memory-restoring effects in awake mice, according to a study released yesterday. The finding suggests the brain may not need to be fully asleep to perform some of its overnight maintenance.

Non-REM sleep, which accounts for roughly 80% of an adult human's slumber, helps the brain consolidate memories by strengthening key neural connections and weakening less useful ones. In the study, researchers used light pulses to switch targeted neurons on and off in the sleep-deprived mice's brains for 30-minute intervals, recreating the firing pattern observed during sleep. Treated mice performed memory tasks similarly to well-rested mice, indicating the specific pattern of neural activity matters more than unconsciousness.

In nature, dolphins can shut down one half of their brain at a time, allowing them to keep swimming and surface for air. Migratory birds also appear to do something similar in flight.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

San Antonio Spurs win Game 3 of the NBA Finals, cutting the New York Knicks' series lead to 2-1 ahead of Game 4 tomorrow.

Two celebrity row seats at last night's game sold at auction for \$1M.

Judge rules Texas Tech quarterback Brendan Sorsby can play college football while he fights an NCAA suspension over sports gambling; Sorsby admitted to placing at least 40 bets while at Indiana University.

Netflix shares first look at "Scooby-Doo" live-action series, now filming and scheduled to premiere next year.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 3 of 67

Science & Technology

Novel CRISPR technique selectively destroys cancer cells carrying a mutation found in nearly half of all cases and up to 90% of the most difficult-to-treat cases.

Astronomers detect the earliest known flicker from a supermassive black hole, dating to roughly 850 million years after the Big Bang.

Meet Sagittarius A*, the supermassive black hole at the center of our galaxy.

Energy-efficient 3D camera inspired by how jumping spiders judge distance before they leap could power smarter wearables, robots, and drones.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 +0.3%, Dow -0.2%, Nasdaq +0.9%).

OpenAI confidentially files for initial public offering, a week after rival Anthropic's filing; OpenAI is valued at more than \$850B.

Convicted FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried files formal request for presidential pardon; the 34-year-old is serving 25 years in federal prison for stealing \$8B from his customers.

US-based Ingredion Inc. to acquire UK-based Tate & Lyle Plc in deal valued at roughly \$3.6B.

Tate & Lyle introduced sugar cubes to the UK in the late 1800s.

Politics & World Affairs

Magnitude 7.8 earthquake in the Philippines kills at least 35 people, injures more than 200 others, collapses buildings, and sparks a 3-foot tsunami.

Trial begins for man accused of starting last year's Palisades Fire; Jonathan Rinderknecht allegedly started a blaze on Jan. 1, 2025, that spread undetected in root systems and reemerged days later, killing 12 people.

Chinese President Xi Jinping pledges to deepen ties with North Korea in his first foreign trip of the year and first visit to North Korea in seven years.

North Korea's economy is on the up-and-up amid arms sales to Russia.

★ GROTON ★

TRANSIT

FUNDRAISER



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

 WHEN: Thursday, June 11, 2026	 TIME: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	 WHERE: Groton Community Center
--	---	--

 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
--	--	--	---	--

AND THE FAMOUS MINI DONUTS! 

★ FOOD ★ FUN ★ DOOR PRIZES ★

FREE WILL DONATION

Please join us & Help support Groton Transit!



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 4 of 67

Groton squads sweep Watertown in four-game home stand



Mason Locke pitching in the first U14 game Monday evening. (Photo courtesy Tara Hill)

Groton Post 39 enjoyed a perfect night at the ballpark Monday, with the 14U squad earning a pair of victories over Watertown and the Junior Legion team adding two more wins to complete a four-game sweep.

The 14U team opened the evening by rallying for a 6-4 victory before pulling away for an 11-1 win in the nightcap.

In the opener, Watertown jumped out early, scoring once in the first inning and extending its lead to 3-1 in the third behind RBI hits from Parker H. and Kaiser L. Groton battled back in the bottom of the third, tying the game at 3-3 thanks in part to a bases-loaded walk by Hank Hill.

Post 39 took its first lead in the fourth when Hudson Eichler drew a walk that forced home the go-ahead run. Watertown answered to knot the score at 4-4 in the fifth on Trey D.'s RBI single, but Groton responded immediately.

Trayce Schelle drew a bases-loaded walk and Mason Locke followed with an RBI single to center field in the bottom of the fifth to put Groton back on top for good.

Kyson Kucker earned the win, allowing four runs on five hits over five innings while striking out four and walking five. Keegan Kucker recorded the save.

Knox Mulder and Hill each collected two hits for Groton, while Locke drove in a run. Owen

Tewksbury drew two walks as Groton showed patience at the plate, finishing with eight walks.

The 14U squad also wreaked havoc on the bases with 13 stolen bases. Mulder, Asher Zimmerman and Kyson Kucker each swiped multiple bags. Groton also turned a double play and played error-free defense. Bentley Ehresmann led the team with six defensive chances.

The offense carried over into the second game as Groton rolled to an 11-1 victory.

After Watertown stole home for the game's first run, Groton answered with three runs in the bottom of the first. Trayce Schelle doubled home a run and two more scored on a wild pitch.

The game broke open in the second inning when Groton plated six runs. Keegan Kucker singled home a run, Zimmerman drew a bases-loaded walk, Bentley Ehresmann delivered a two-run single, Schelle brought home another run on a groundout and Hill added an RBI single.

Mason Locke picked up the win, allowing just one unearned run on four hits over four innings while striking out four without issuing a walk.

Groton pounded out 10 hits in the victory. Schelle drove in three runs, while Easton Larson, Ehresmann and Hill each had two hits.

Post 39 again dominated the basepaths with 13 steals. Carter Boerger, Keegan Kucker, Zimmerman, Larson, Ehresmann and Hill all recorded multiple stolen bases. Groton also turned another double play.

The Junior Legion squad matched the younger team's success by completing its own sweep of Watertown. In the first Junior Legion contest, Groton held off a late rally for a 12-10 victory in a game that featured

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 5 of 67



Easton Larson going in for a run in the U14 game. (Photo courtesy Tara Hill)

22 combined runs.

Groton built an early cushion by scoring four times in the first inning. Watertown errors helped the cause before Zach Fliehs and Wesley Borg each drove in runs with groundouts.

A Borg RBI single and a passed ball added to the lead in the third inning before Watertown surged ahead with a five-run fifth.

Post 39 answered in the sixth, scoring five runs on five hits to reclaim the lead. The biggest hit came from T.C. Schuster, whose two-run single highlighted the rally and put Groton ahead for good.

John Bisbee earned the win after allowing nine runs, only two earned, over 4 2/3 innings while striking out three. Lincoln Shilhanek closed the door to earn the

save.

Kason Oswald led Groton with two hits, while Schuster, Zach Fliehs and Borg each drove in two runs.

The Junior Legion nightcap was a more controlled affair as Groton secured a 5-2 victory.

The breakthrough came in the fourth inning. Braden Fliehs singled to center to score a run, Oswald added an RBI groundout and Zach Fliehs lined a run-scoring single down the right field line.

Alex Abeln turned in a dominant performance on the mound, tossing five shutout innings while allowing four hits. He struck out eight and walked four to earn the win. Zach Fliehs collected the save.

Groton totaled 11 hits in the contest. Zach Fliehs finished 2-for-4 with two RBIs, while Fliehs, Schuster and Borg each recorded two hits. Defensively, Post 39 committed no errors, with Oswald handling 10 chances in the field.

Groton School Board Advances Facilities Planning Process

By Elizabeth Varin

The Groton Area School Board took steps Monday to advance the district's facilities master plan, looking at funding options and preparing for a bond vote.

Board members approved a contract with Co-Op Architects for pre-bond services that will help guide the district through the next phases of planning. The services include facilitating public meetings, developing project budgets, refining phasing concepts and creating both interior and exterior renderings of the proposed facilities master plan.

During discussion, board members expressed a desire to continue exploring options for moving forward with a bond election while obtaining more detailed information about how a potential project could be phased over time. The board also discussed financing options, including the possibility of dividing project costs between a bond issuance and capital outlay certificates.

Board Vice President Nick Strom said he hopes the community sees that something has to be done. If the district can lock in lower prices right away, it might be a good way to approach the discussion with voters.

Board President Grant Rix said he would prefer to fund the master plan all through a bond, but that may not be possible. He added he is concerned that capital outlay funding gets tied up paying for capital outlay certificates, it could be a problem if something comes down the line that needs to be fixed.

The pre-bond planning process is expected to provide additional information that will help the board evaluate project scope, costs and timelines before making final decisions about a bond proposal.

Board members expressed the need to be transparent about project funding options.

In other action, the board made a handful of hires for the coming school year.

The board approved hiring Tanya Dargatz as middle school math teacher and Sam Markley as middle school/high school social science teacher.

Dargatz has taught at Holgate Middle School in Aberdeen. She received her bachelor's degree in elementary education and master's degree in teaching and learning from Northern State University.

Markley graduated from the University of Sioux Falls with a secondary education degree. He was a student teacher in Sioux Falls before being asked to become a long-term substitute. He was also named South Dakota assistant debate coach of the year after helping lead Washington High School's debate team.

The board also approved hiring Shaun Wanner as junior high football coach for the 2026 season, hiring Kelly Oswald as yearbook advisor for the 2026-2027 school year, hiring Trinity Smith and Aubray Miller as cheer coaches for the 2026-2027 school year and hiring Aaron Tvinnereim as maintenance director beginning July 15.

The board issued coaching/advisor agreements for the 2026-2027 school year as well for the following individuals.

- Matt Baumgartner as head girls soccer coach
- Amanda Bisbee as head girls softball coach
- Chris Ehresmann as junior high wrestling coach
- Seth Erickson as assistant football coach
- Joni Groebelinghoff as co-Destination Imagination coordinator
- Chelsea Hanson as head volleyball coach
- Matt Locke as head girls basketball coach
- Brenda Madsen as senior class advisor
- Julie Milbrandt as co-Destination Imagination coordinator
- Ryan Olson as head boys soccer coach
- Sarah Schuster as junior high volleyball coach
- Trent Traphagen as assistant girls basketball coach
- Darin Zoellner as head wrestling coach
- Troy Zoellner as assistant wrestling coach

The district still has vacancies to fill before the upcoming school year. Those positions include a special education teacher, ag education teacher/FFA advisor, food service position and junior high football coach assistant.

The board also approved publishing a draft budget for the 2026-2027 school year. The board will hold a hearing at its next meeting Monday, July 13. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m., with a budget hearing scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

EARTHTALK

Spotting Social Media Misinformation On Climate Change by Rachel Berliner

Dear EarthTalk: How can I spot social media misinformation regarding climate change and what can I do to combat it?

—Maurice Maloney, Providence, RI

Climate misinformation is a term that refers to false or deceiving claims about climate change, sustainability, or climate solutions. Disinformation spreads rapidly and creates tension around environ-

mental issues. Misinformation also “fuels political extremism and puts lives at risk,” according to COP30 Special Envoy for Information Integrity Frederico Assis.

Researchers at Texas A&M University and Ripple Research, a non-profit advisory firm, found that misinformation is typically centered around two narratives, claiming either environmental research is invalid or solutions are not viable. “One of the most powerful [types of disinformation] is saying that it’s too late,” says UN Verified Champion Maria Clara Moraes. These false claims are hindering advancements towards climate change solutions and sustainability initiatives, as recognized in November 2025 at COP30, the United Nation’s 30th Climate Change Conference. “There is a broad recognition that disinformation can affect and compromise every part of the COP process,” says Assis, “diplomatic negotiations, the action agenda, or mobilization and summits. All out efforts will be at risk if we fail to tackle disinformation properly, which stems from denialism.”

Communities and organizations around the globe are working together to fight the spread of misinformation. For example, COP30 hosted twelve nations who created a program against misinformation and signed the first Declaration on Information Integrity on Climate Change. Brazil’s Secretary of Digital Policies João Brant says the goal is to “create a wave of truth”. Brazil was one of the many initiators of the Declaration. The initiative’s global fund has generated support from around 100 countries who have submitted about 450 proposals, according to UN News.

In addition to global action, individual decisions can weaken the influence of misinformation. If a post or article lacks a credible source, employs strong emotional appeals, presents logical fallacies, or includes cherry-picked data, conduct more research to determine the statement’s credibility. Readers can use fact-checking websites such as Science Feedback and FactCheck to help assess a source’s reliability. If a reader chooses to respond to or comment directly on the misinformation, they must act diligently to not inadvertently magnify the false claim on a social media algorithm. For example, when responding to misinformation, do not repeat the false claim itself. Experts say anyone commenting on a misinformation post or article should address it with a “truth sandwich”: start by relaying the truth, address the false claim without repeating it, and then end the comment with a truthful statement. Commenters should also include credible sources and scientific studies when responding. Additionally, many social media algorithms allow users to report posts that include false claims. Readers can work together to stop misinformation by staying alert online, acting diligently, and responding to false claims in an effective way.



We can all get better at detecting misinformation about climate change. Credit: Pexels.com.

Pentagon revises policy after LDS lawmakers object to classification change

The U.S. Department of Defense has revised a newly released religious-affiliation policy after strong objections from members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and several Utah lawmakers who argued the policy unfairly singled out their faith.

The controversy began when the Pentagon announced it was reducing the number of religious categories used by military chaplains and personnel records from more than 200 designations to just 31. While the LDS faith remained on the list, it was not grouped under the "Christian" category, even though numerous other denominations were.

The omission sparked an immediate response from Utah's congressional delegation, including Sen. Mike Lee and Sen. John Curtis, both members of the LDS Church. Lee called on Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth to reverse the decision, arguing that the federal government should not be deciding theological questions or excluding one faith tradition from a broader Christian designation.

By Monday, the Pentagon revised the list. Defense officials said the original document contained "redundant and unnecessary labeling" and emphasized that the department's role is not to settle theological debates but to ensure service members' religious beliefs are respected. The updated version removed the "Christian" descriptor rather than continuing the previous classification system.

The dispute highlighted a long-running debate among some Christian groups over whether the beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints fit traditional definitions of Christianity. Church members point to their belief in Jesus Christ as central to their faith, while some evangelical denominations have historically disagreed because of differences in doctrine.

The issue also exposed tensions within the broader conservative religious coalition. While many Republican lawmakers generally support the Trump administration and its Defense Department leadership, several publicly criticized the classification change before the Pentagon announced its revision.

Following the revision, Lee said he was pleased with the administration's response, and Pentagon officials indicated the matter had been corrected.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 9 of 67

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

June 9, 2026 – 7:00pm
City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY
CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
3. Allow Area IV Senior Nutrition to Use Kitchen and Portion of Southwest Room at Community Center
4. Approval of Shirley Larson First Addition Plat
5. Approval of WW Rentals LLC Lot 1 Plat
6. City Map Agreement – IMEG
7. Department Reports
8. Airport Discussion and Update on Hangar Leases
9. Surplus 2007 Ford F55 4x4 Bucket Truck
10. Install Eastbound Stop Sign at Intersection of West 3rd Avenue and State Street
11. Policy Regarding Late Payments and Postmarks
12. Minutes
13. Bills
14. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
15. Adjournment

Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 10 of 67



BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026, 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS

COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
 - ❖ *Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes or at Boards Discretion. Presentations will be limited to 3 minutes*
4. Richmond Dam Update
5. Public Hearing for Richmond Lake Association Temporary Alcohol Permit for Special Event
6. Acknowledge the Richmond Lake Association changing locations for Fireworks Permit on July 3, 2026
7. Approve to Surplus Printers from Fair Office
8. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2026
 - b. Approval of Primary Election Canvass of June 5, 2026
 - c. Claims/Payroll
 - d. HR Report
 - e. Landfill Tonnage Report for May 2026
 - f. Travel Request
 - g. Lease Agreements
9. Other Business
10. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
11. Adjourn

You can join the Brown County Commission Meeting via **your computer, tablet, or smartphone** at <https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

You can also dial in using your phone. United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3311](tel:+18722403311) - Access Code: **601-168-909** #

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at [Commission Meetings | Brown County](#)

BROWN COUNTY BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA POST ELECTION AUDIT WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2026, 5:00 P.M. COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS COURTHOUSE ANNEX – 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

POST ELECTION AUDIT HELD JUNE 10, 2026 AT 5:00PM



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Statewide partisan stakes surface in nonpartisan Sioux Falls mayor race

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR

SIoux FALLS — The race for mayor of South Dakota's most populous city is officially nonpartisan, but some Democrats and Republicans are treating the June 23 runoff as a contest with political ramifications beyond the city.

Christine Erickson, a former city council member and Republican former state lawmaker, and Democratic state Sen. Jamie Smith were the first- and second-place finishers, respectively, in the five-way race on June 2.

State party leaders are watching the runoff closely.

South Dakota Republican Party Chairman Jim Eschenbaum said the party's executive board discussed the race and decided to endorse and back Erickson.

"If that's the Democrats' attempt to gain a foothold in the state of South Dakota, by electing a mayor of the largest city, I guess they can attempt to," Eschenbaum said. "But the Republican Party is going to back the Republican in that race, even though it's a nonpartisan election. We're still going to back the Republican principles and ideals."

Not all Republicans agree. Republican state Rep. Greg Jamison, one of the losing candidates in the mayoral race, has since endorsed Smith. He said their friendship runs deeper than partisan politics.

"It's more important than that," Jamison said. "I've gotten to know him very well."

For Democrats, Smith's candidacy offers a rare chance to win a major executive office in a state dominated by Republicans.

Dan Ahlers was the state Democratic Party's executive director when he announced his campaign for governor earlier this year. He told South Dakota Searchlight recently it would mean "a lot" to have Sioux Falls led by a Democrat. He said a Smith victory would bring more balance to South Dakota politics and create an opportunity to show that Democrats can work across party lines and deliver results for everyone.

"So, I think having a person like that, with that kind of experience, is also incredibly important," Ahlers said of Smith.

No Democrat has held a statewide office in South Dakota since Tim Johnson left the U.S. Senate in January 2015 after not seeking reelection. Sioux Falls' last Democratic mayor was Mike Huether, who left office in 2018 after he announced in 2016 that he was switching his affiliation to independent.

Philosophical differences surface

During a debate on Monday hosted by the Downtown Sioux Falls Rotary Club, Smith said he supports exploring a "tri-share" childcare model, in which the cost of care is shared among families, employers and a public entity or other funding source. He said the goal would be to reduce costs for families and help more people stay in the workforce.

"We have to find the funding to do that," Smith said.

Erickson said she does not believe government should be "the end-all, be-all for everyone." She said there are things she is open to trying, such as removing "red tape" to start a daycare.

"We just can't have government be everybody's everything," Erickson said.

Regarding data centers, Smith said he supports a moratorium on large "hyperscale" projects within Sioux Falls city limits, citing concerns about potential effects on electricity rates and water availability.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 12 of 67

Erickson said she would evaluate projects on a case-by-case basis, and that keeping data in the United States is important for national security.

Other comments made individually by Erickson and Smith also revealed the candidates' political philosophies.

Smith said he had the "luxury" in the Legislature of "voting his conscience," and contrasted that with lawmakers "across the aisle," a reference to Republicans.

"They oftentimes get told how to vote on certain things," Smith said.

When asked to describe how they would manage a crisis, Erickson pointed to her time on the Sioux Falls City Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, and said she advocated to keep businesses open and prioritize "personal freedom."

The runoff will decide who succeeds Mayor Paul TenHaken, a Republican who's prevented by term limits from seeking a third consecutive term.

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

COMMENTARY

Unlike most primaries, runoff won't be a choice between like-minded candidates

Doeden and Rhoden bring contrasting approaches to government

Dana Hess

by DANA HESS

No matter your political affiliation, it has to be acknowledged that Aberdeen businessman Toby Doeden has accomplished something incredible. Without ever having held elected office or ever having run a political campaign, he bested an incumbent governor and benched a congressman.

The as-yet unofficial results of the Republican primary have Doeden winning with 31% of the vote followed by Gov. Larry Rhoden with 25%, U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson with 23% and state Speaker of the House Jon Hansen with 21%. Since none of the candidates got 35% of the vote, Doeden and Rhoden (sounds like a vaudeville team) will meet in a runoff election on July 28.

Doeden went to great lengths to cast himself in the image of President Donald Trump — a self-made millionaire who cares about the little guy. He nurtured an image of himself as an outsider who won't be afraid to shake things up in state government. During the campaign, Doeden was known to say early and often that the voters' choice was between him and career politicians.

Well, he beat the politicians to finish first in the primary. But the fact of the election results is that Republicans who turned out for the primary overwhelmingly chose the politicians. Added together, Rhoden, Johnson and Hansen accumulated 69% of the vote.

That's 69% of Republican voters choosing to get behind politicians with track records known for making our government systems work. That's 69% of voters who didn't choose the candidate who's promising to blow up the system.

Where Johnson and Hansen (sounds like another vaudeville team) choose to direct their supporters could be a key to the outcome of the runoff election. Some voters may have already taken offense at Doeden's assertion that the reason he got into politics was to retire Dusty Johnson.

In most political primaries, voters are forced to choose between like-minded candidates. That won't be the case in the runoff election for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. Doeden, without a legislative track record, is running on ideas. Depending on which speech he's giving, Doeden wants to either eliminate or phase out property taxes. His plan for doing that is as vague as it is opaque. Even without any details, Doeden's notion for getting rid of property taxes is catnip to those voters who have seen their

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 13 of 67

tax bills skyrocket.

In contrast, Rhoden can point to years of public service in the Legislature, as Kristi Noem's lieutenant governor and his short tenure as governor. As governor he managed to overcome dissension and lay the groundwork for a new prison, and he formulated a plan for lowering property taxes. Granted, his plan has some detractors since using sales taxes to lower property taxes means that people who don't pay property taxes will get to pay more at the cash register. Still, it was Rhoden who made progress on property tax relief where others failed.

Now both candidates prepare their messages for an eight-week campaign. If you listen closely you can hear printing presses revving up to produce new mailers. Cameras are rolling somewhere, churning out new political commercials. After a protracted primary campaign — Hansen announced his intention to run in April of 2025 and Doeden followed the next month — get ready for an intense two months.

In those two months, both candidates will have the opportunity to make their case to Republican voters. Those voters will have a clear choice. One candidate wants to blow up the system. The other is known for his accomplishments within that system.

It turns out that Doeden was right after all. The choice voters have to make on July 28 is between an outsider and an established politician.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

Farm animal welfare rules might be rolled back by Congress

Federal lawmakers might block states from regulating the raising of livestock

BY: KEVIN HARDY

Congress is looking to roll back state animal welfare laws as it wrangles over reauthorization of the federal farm bill.

The farm bill, which Congress generally reworks every five years, includes money and federal rules for food assistance programs, farm subsidies, and other ag-related programs.

A pending version of the legislation includes the Save Our Bacon Act, which would block states from regulating the raising of livestock. The measure takes direct aim at California's Proposition 12, which requires farms to meet specific standards providing animals freedom of movement, cage-free confinement and minimum floor space.

A key component of California's law effectively bans hog sow farms from using gestation crates — pens so small that mother pigs can't even turn around. Currently, at least 15 states ban battery cages for egg-laying hens, gestation crates for sows or veal crates for calves.

California's law includes protections for egg-laying hens, but the current farm bill proposal that Congress is considering specifically excludes them.

The California law also bars retailers from selling meats raised in other states that don't meet the state's standards. Opponents say that provision places a heavy burden on producers across the country who must meet different standards for different markets.

"This legislation will stop out-of-touch activists — who don't know the first thing about farming — from dictating how Iowa farmers do their job," U.S. Rep. Ashley Hinson, an Iowa Republican, said when introducing the Save Our Bacon Act last year.

But supporters of the California law say consumers increasingly demand higher animal welfare standards. They note that farmers outside of California are free to ignore the law — if they choose not to sell into the nation's most populous state.

A spokesperson for the California Department of Food and Agriculture, which enforces Proposition 12 regulations, said the agency could not comment on pending legislation.

California Assemblywoman Esmeralda Soria, the Democratic chair of the agriculture committee, said voters "spoke clearly" when more than 62% approved the 2018 ballot measure.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 14 of 67

"Taking Prop 12 away now, would create long term uncertainty and disruption to California meat and egg production," Soria said in a statement. "We can do better for California agriculture, and for the millions of people who rely on stable and affordable food systems."

Following an unsuccessful legal challenge to Proposition 12 by pork producers, lawmakers and ag interests have been pushing for years for federal action to block similar laws. While a similar anti-Proposition 12 measure was introduced in 2023 farm bill negotiations, the effort has gained some momentum after receiving bipartisan support in the U.S. House of Representatives, which approved the farm bill legislation by a 224-200 vote in late April. It's now the subject of Senate negotiations.

The yearslong debate over agricultural regulations has inflamed tensions between states and the feds over who should regulate various sectors of the economy, mirroring ongoing debates about artificial intelligence and online prediction markets.

An issue of state autonomy

Most of the focus has centered on California, which has the world's fourth largest economy. But opponents say the congressional proposal could upend hundreds of state laws and regulations.

An analysis by Harvard Law School's Animal Law and Policy Clinic concluded that the Save Our Bacon Act could affect more than 600 state agricultural regulations, including seafood labeling requirements, food safety regulations and state restrictions aimed at preventing the spread of pests and diseases, such as the New World screwworm.

"Congress would be overturning the results of democratic elections and devaluing animal welfare investments made by livestock producers across the country," researchers wrote, noting it would take years for regulators and courts to sort out implementation of the legal change, creating years of uncertainty for regulators, consumers and producers.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller said he doesn't agree with California's mandates but said he would "defend to my dying day California's right to self-determination."

In an interview, Miller said Proposition 12 has driven up the price of eggs and pork. But he said the Constitution's 10th Amendment clearly endows states with such power by reserving for the states those powers not delegated to the federal government.

"It is what it is," he said. "I'm ready to move on and accept Prop 12."

Miller, who recently lost the Republican primary for reelection, said producers who have poured millions into revamping their operations to ensure more space for animals would be "up a creek without a paddle" if the law is blocked by Congress.

"They spent all that money for nothing if that happens," he said.

Proponents say consumers are already demanding higher standards.

"No one is mandated to sell in California, and I think that's a really important piece of this. This is all market driven, and so there are other options," said Alicia Prygoski, strategic legislative affairs manager for the Animal Legal Defense Fund, a nonprofit advocating for animal protections.

Prygoski characterized Proposition 12 as a "common sense, reasonable measure" that allows animals the freedom to move and exhibit natural behaviors. She rejected arguments that such animal welfare laws create a burdensome patchwork of regulations for farmers, noting that states already have a variety of ag rules regarding animal imports, noxious weed transportation and zoonotic diseases.

'We care a lot about our animals'

Trish Cook, who raises about 40,000 pigs per year on her family's Iowa farm, said large-scale swine operations like hers rely on scientific guidance from groups such as the American Veterinary Medical Association and American Association of Swine Veterinarians.

Cook is a board member of the Iowa Pork Producers and the National Pork Producers Council, the latter of which unsuccessfully sued to block California's Proposition 12. In 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision upheld California's rules.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 15 of 67

In April, the organization and the American Farm Bureau Federation wrote to congressional leaders arguing that Proposition 12 has created uncertainty across rural America, especially on small and medium-size farms that can't afford to retrofit barns. The letter was signed by nearly 400 agricultural groups.

The issue is particularly relevant in Iowa, by far the nation's largest pork producer with nearly one-third of American hogs raised there.

Cook said most pig farmers she knows are not producing Proposition 12-compliant pork because California's demand is being met. But, she said, Congress must protect farmers before more states pass different rules and regulations.

"I do still feel like it's really important that we get a fix for things like Prop 12, because this is just the beginning," she said.

Cook said consumers across the country should have access to her pork products without following "arbitrary" rules created by state ballot measures. As an example, she cited the California requirement that each sow have access to 24 square feet of usable floor space. That footage allows the sow to turn around completely within its pen.

"If you didn't enjoy raising pigs, you wouldn't be in the business," she said. "So we care a lot about our animals, we care about taking care of them, having them in the best facilities, and being comfortable with the climate that we provide them."

Some producers, though, say they are troubled by the confinement systems commonly used in industrial agriculture.

"Keeping a 500-pound gestating sow in a metal crate where she can't ever turn around for the vast majority of her adult life is simply not good animal husbandry," said Alicia LaPorte, senior director of communications and impact at Niman Ranch, a national network of hundreds of farms producing what they call humanely raised meat.

Although Niman's 500 hog farms have always been crate free, LaPorte said they have spent time and money ensuring compliance with California's Proposition 12. She said the proposed legislation in Congress would pull the rug out from under family farmers who played by the rules and made huge investments to comply.

"They are actively devaluing these investments, disrupting stable markets and putting forward-thinking family farms at financial risk," she said.

By moving away from confinement to more humane practices like group housing, LaPorte said producers can see increased profitability through improved sow health, lower stress and higher conception rates. And growing demand for such products pushed laws like Proposition 12 in the first place.

"The consumer drove the change," she said, "and policy secured the marketplace."

Stateline reporter Kevin Hardy can be reached at khardy@stateline.org.

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

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

Trump administration swiftly moves ahead on plans to restrict voting by mail in the states

BY: JONATHAN SHORMAN

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will allow states to access federal citizenship data by June 30 and plans to monitor the flow of mail ballots for signs of voter fraud, according to a court document.

Amid a series of lawsuits, President Donald Trump's administration is now moving to carry out a March 31 executive order restricting voting by mail ahead of the November midterm elections.

Democrats and voting rights advocates oppose the directive as unconstitutional election meddling by Trump and have sued to stop him. The president, who has long attacked mail ballots but votes by mail

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 16 of 67

himself, says the additional rules will fight noncitizen voting, a rare phenomenon.

"No president has the authority to unilaterally rewrite election rules or dictate how states administer their elections," Marcia Johnson, chief of activation and justice at the League of Women Voters, said in a statement last week. The League of Women Voters filed one of at least five lawsuits challenging the order.

Potential disruptions

The order could carry major consequences for the midterm elections. Any new restrictions on mail ballots would risk disrupting how tens of millions of voters cast their ballots. About 30% of voters cast mail ballots in 2024, according to data gathered by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

But despite several legal challenges, the order remains in effect.

A federal judge in Washington, D.C., in late May ruled against a request by Democratic groups to pause the order, finding that it was too soon to weigh in because federal officials hadn't taken enough action yet. A second judge in Massachusetts held a hearing last week, but didn't immediately issue a decision.

"The Trump Administration will continue fighting for the safety and security of American elections," White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson said in a statement shortly after the D.C. judge's decision.

One portion of the order demands the postmaster general enact new restrictions on mailed ballots and not transmit ballots from states that refuse to provide the names of absentee voters. The U.S. Postal Service, despite its status as an independent corporation, has put forward a proposal in line with the order to require states to submit lists of voters before mailing ballots.

Now, Homeland Security is responding to another part of the order that requires the creation of lists of voting-age citizens in every state, which the Trump administration calls "state citizenship lists." State election officials would receive the lists, which they could compare to their voter rolls in a search for non-citizen voters.

Homeland Security's plans for the citizenship lists came into focus on June 5, when the U.S. Department of Justice filed a notice in federal court that briefly outlines the administration's plans. The notice describes a two-part effort by Homeland Security and its subsidiary agency, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, to comply with the order.

First, Homeland Security will implement a "State Voter Roll Verification" that allows state election officials to submit their voter rolls to the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements, or SAVE, system.

SAVE is a powerful computer program that checks names against citizenship information held in a variety of government databases. It can flag registered voters as possible noncitizens, but faces criticism for incorrect identifications.

For the past year, states have already had the option to upload their voter rolls into SAVE. Some Republican-led states, such as Indiana, Texas and Wyoming, have used the system, while Democratic states have declined. It's unclear how the State Voter Roll Verification would be different, if at all, from states' current SAVE access.

Homeland Security and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services didn't respond to questions from States Newsroom.

Second, the Justice Department notice says Homeland Security will set up a registry for state election officials to securely access "citizenship-related data" from USCIS, the Social Security Administration and the State Department.

According to the notice, the "underlying data would remain in each agency's respective system." No other details were provided.

The notice also outlines Homeland Security's intention to use the lists of voters that states provide to the Postal Service for investigations. It says DHS wants to "integrate" data on those voters "to monitor mail-in and absentee ballot flows, identify anomalies that may suggest voter fraud or misuse, and generate authorized investigative leads."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 17 of 67

California elections

The notice comes as Trump renews his attacks on mail-in voting. Last week he alleged, without evidence, voter fraud in California, which held primary elections last week. California relies heavily on mail ballots and often counts votes at a slow pace — meaning final results sometimes don't match election night vote totals.

"Do you know why they're doing that? Because they're cheating on the election," Trump said in an interview on NBC's "Meet the Press."

While the executive order already faces a slew of lawsuits, the NAACP on June 3 filed a motion in federal court seeking to specifically block the Postal Service's proposed regulations of mail ballots. The NAACP alleges the regulations violate a 2021 settlement agreement that requires timely delivery of election mail to all voters.

The Postal Service has until Thursday to respond.

The American Postal Workers Union in a statement on June 5 denounced the executive order, saying the Postal Service serves all Americans. It is "not a tool for politicians" to pick which Americans receive which benefits, the union said.

"The Executive Order is an unconstitutional attack on the millions of Americans who vote by mail," the union said, "and another front in an ongoing assault on voting rights in the United States of America."

Jonathan Shorman covers democracy for States Newsroom. Based in Kansas City, his coverage area includes elections and voting rights, fights over state and federal power, civil liberties and more. An alumnus of the University of Kansas, he previously covered politics for The Kansas City Star.

Trump administration \$100,000 visa fee for highly skilled foreign workers struck down

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — A federal judge in Massachusetts Monday struck down the Trump administration's efforts to require a \$100,000 visa fee for highly skilled immigrant workers, finding the policy is an unlawful tax.

Judge Leo T. Sorokin found the hefty fee placed on the H-1B visa by President Donald Trump exceeded his authority by creating a tax, something that falls under Congress' authority.

"The President has no authority to levy a tax unless such a power is delegated by Congress through statute," Sorokin, who was nominated by former President Barack Obama, wrote. "For these reasons, the Court finds that the Policy imposes a tax on H-1B petitions without the requisite delegation by Congress."

The H-1B program allows a U.S. employer to hire a noncitizen worker in a specialty occupation for a maximum of six years, ranging from the technology industry to healthcare workers. At a minimum, visa applicants have to hold a bachelor's degree.

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said in a statement to States Newsroom that the agency disagrees "with this blatant judicial activism dismantling President Trump's historic efforts for immigration reform."

"The recent changes to the H-1B visa program, including the increased fee, are intended to address concerns about program integrity and the impact on the U.S. workforce," the spokesperson said. "The policy aims to ensure that employers prioritize hiring U.S. workers, particularly in high-skilled fields. The Trump Administration remains committed to safeguarding opportunities for American workers and maintaining the integrity of employment-based visa programs."

The suit was brought by 20 states: California, Massachusetts, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington state and Wisconsin.

In September the Department of Homeland Security issued a proclamation requiring employers to pay a \$100,000 fee for a noncitizen to enter the U.S. under a H-1B visa.

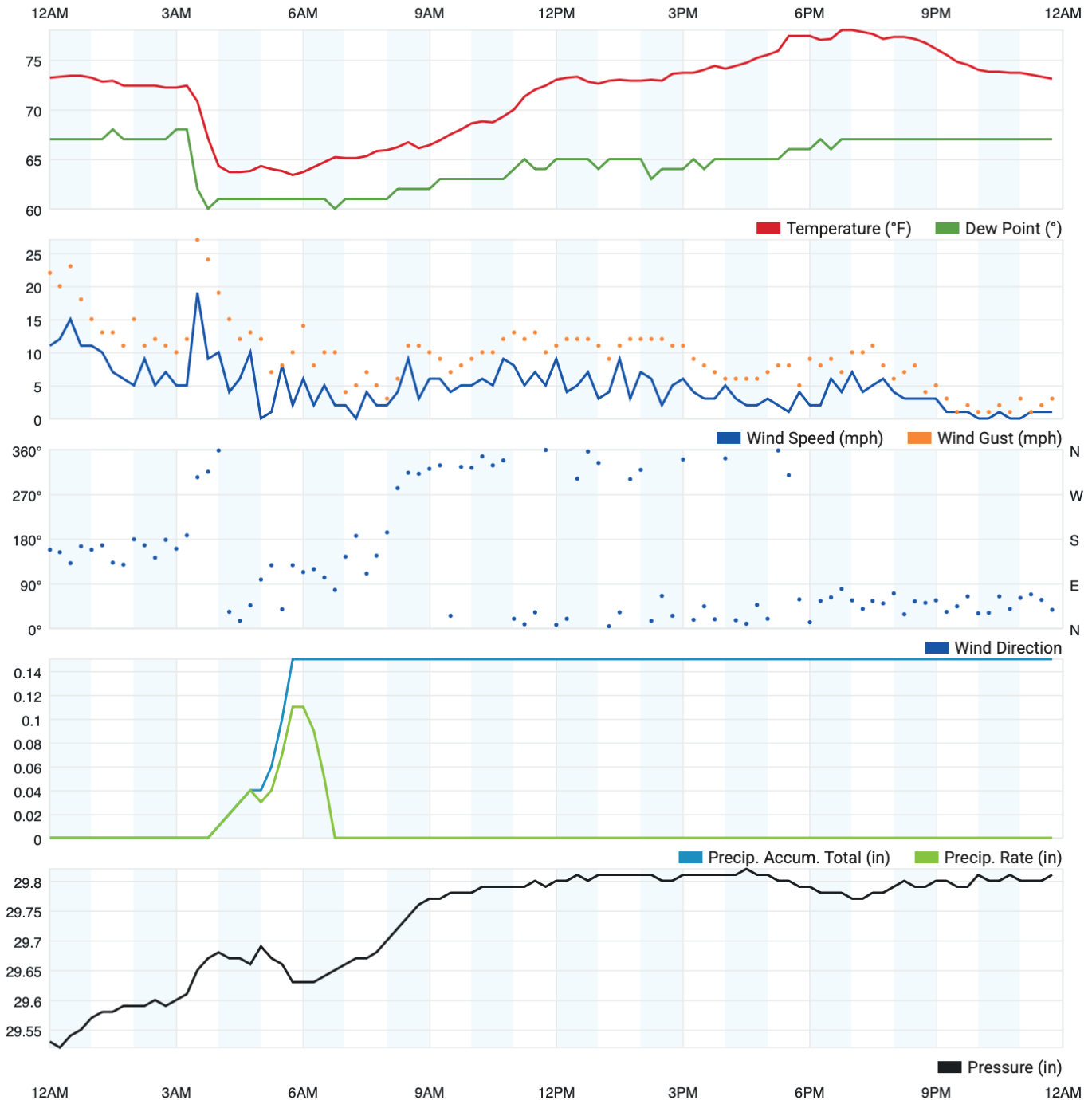
Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 18 of 67

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

June 8, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 19 of 67

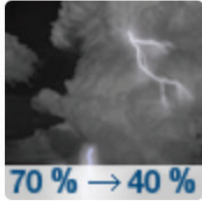
Today



High: 95 °F

Partly Sunny
then Sunny
and Breezy

Tonight



Low: 63 °F

Severe
Thunderstorms
and Breezy
then Severe
Thunderstorms

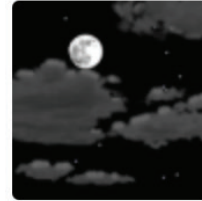
Wednesday



High: 81 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms and
Breezy

Wednesday
Night



Low: 54 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Thursday



High: 74 °F

Breezy.
Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms

THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

3

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Numerous-Scattered Severe
Storms Possible

**Tue Afternoon Through
Early Wed Morning**

PRIMARY THREATS



LARGE HAIL
of 2+'' in
diameter

DAMAGING
WIND GUSTS
of 70+ mph

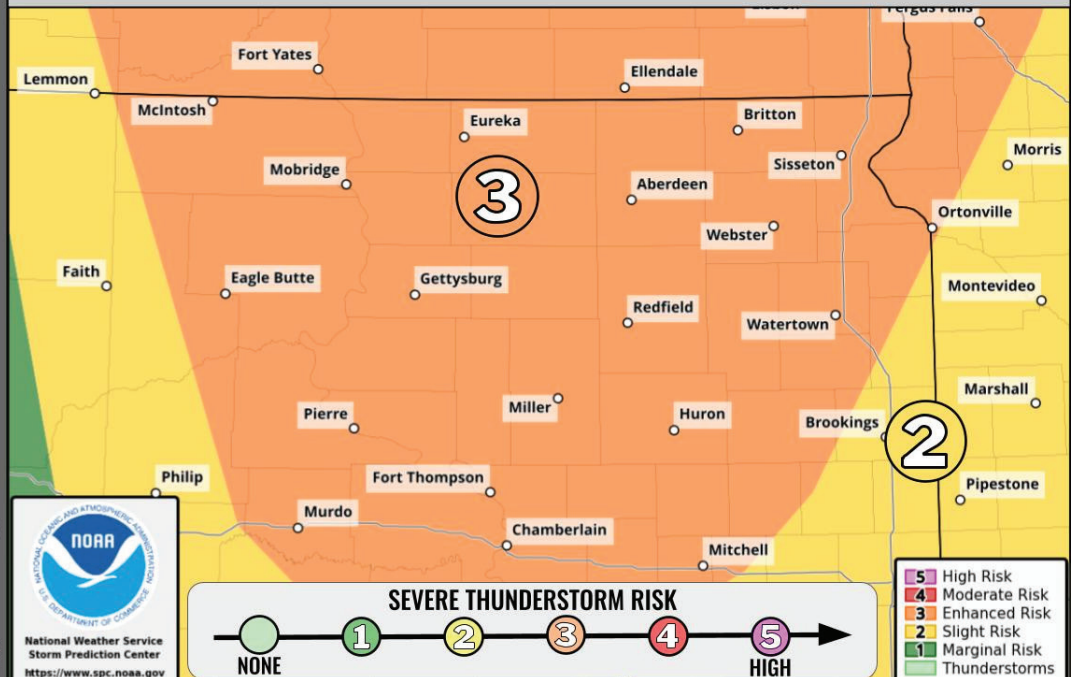
TORNADO(ES)
POSSIBLE

NWS
Aberdeen, SD



National Weather Service
Storm Prediction Center
<https://www.spc.noaa.gov>

Enhanced Risk For Severe Storms Tuesday



Showers and thunderstorms are possible again this afternoon and evening along and ahead of a cold front mainly along and east of the Sisseton Hills. Some of these storms could become severe. The main threats would be large hail up to an inch in diameter and wind gusts up to 60 mph.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 20 of 67



Severe Weather Threats - Tornado

June 8, 2026
3:38 PM CDT

Tornado Threat Highlights:

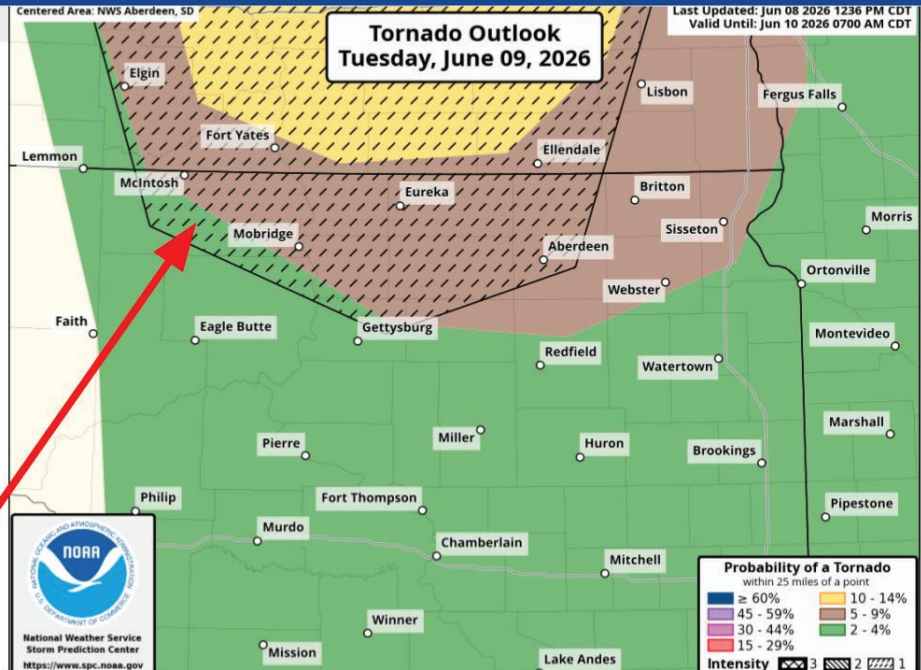
Tornadoes will be most likely along the ND/SD border with max expected strength of EF2.

Cities At Greatest Risk

McIntosh, Mobridge, Eureka, Aberdeen

Intensity Levels:

-  3 Max Expected EF4+
-  2 Max Expected EF3+
-  1 Max Expected EF2+



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD



Severe Weather Threats - High Winds

June 8, 2026
3:39 PM CDT

Wind Threat Highlights:

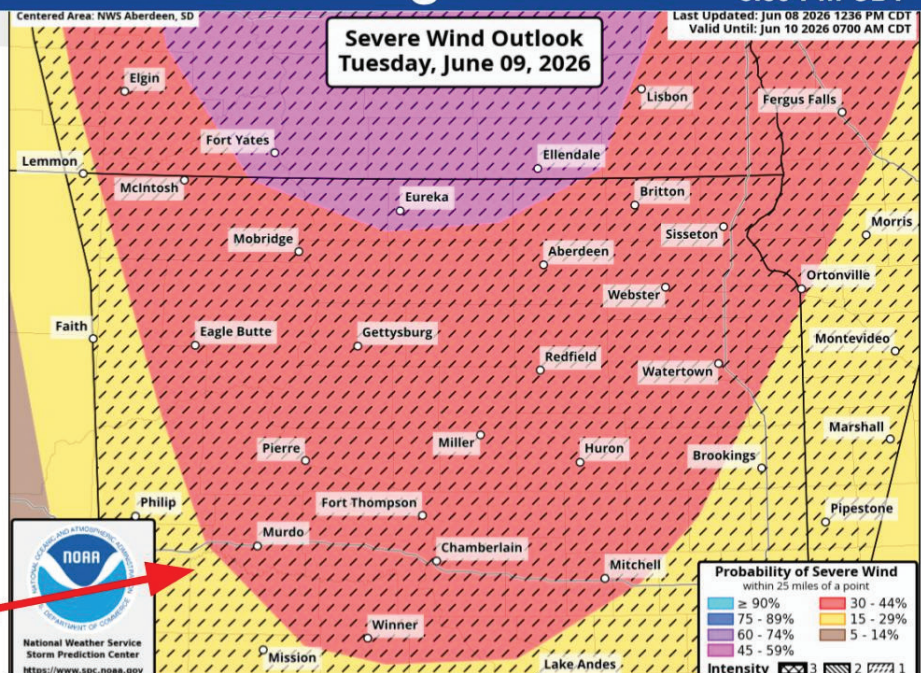
Wind gusts of 70+ mph will be the main threat, especially after initial storm development and going into the evening to overnight hours.

Cities At Greatest Risk:

Eureka, McIntosh, Mobridge, Aberdeen, Britton, Sisseton, Eagle Butte, Gettysburg, Webster, Redfield, Pierre, Miller, Watertown, Murdo, Fort Thompson, Chamberlain

Intensity Levels:

-  3 High-end ongoing derecho
-  2 Bow echo/derecho possible
-  1 Peak gusts 74 mph+



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 21 of 67

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 78 °F at 7:00 PM

Low Temp: 63 °F at 5:42 AM

Wind: 27 mph at 3:28 AM

Precip: 0.15

Today's Info

Record High: 100 in 2016

Record Low: 33 in 1915

Average High: 79

Average Low: 54

Average Precip in June.: 1.02

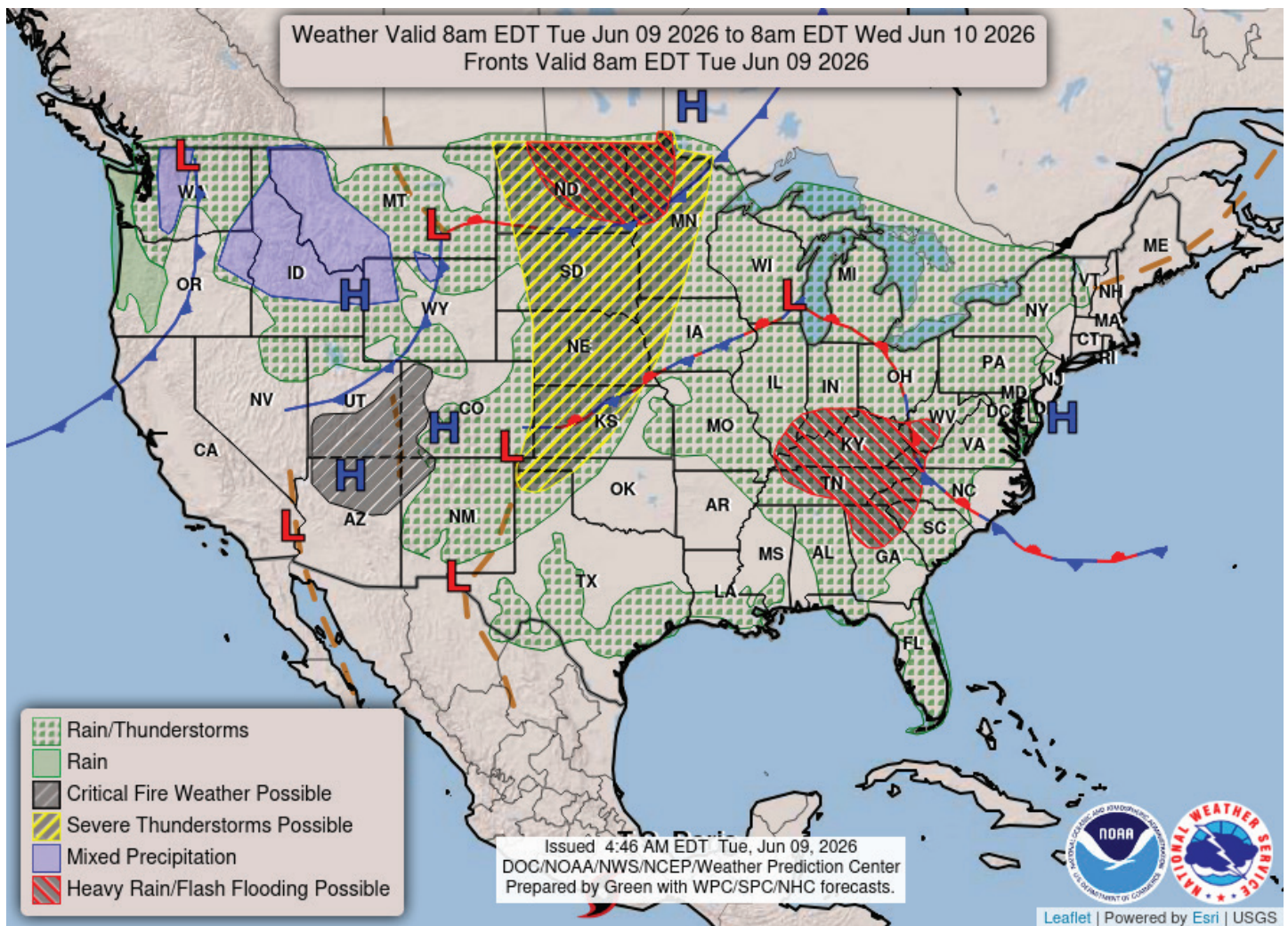
Precip to date in June.: 0.71

Average Precip to date: 8.27

Precip Year to Date: 7.07

Sunset Tonight: 9:19 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:43 am



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 22 of 67

Today in Weather History

June 9th, 1957: Southwest of Faulkton, one of four funnel clouds finally touched down and cut an unusual path to the northeast. The estimated F3 tornado reduced one home to "matchsticks and tidbits."

June 9th, 1968: A brief F2 tornado moved northeast from 6 miles northeast of Britton, destroying barns and uprooting trees on three farms. The tornado picked up two cars and tossed them into a ditch. One person in a vehicle was hospitalized. Damage was estimated at \$150,000 to property and another \$80,000 to crops.

June 9th, 1972: A steady flow of warm, moist air near the surface fed storms and anchored them against the Black Hills for six to eight hours. A flash flood killed 238 people in the Rapid City area after as much as fifteen inches of rain had fallen over the eastern Black Hills.

1953 — A tornado hit the town of Worcester MA killing ninety persons. The northeastern states usually remain free of destructive tornadoes, however in this case a low pressure system, responsible for producing severe thunderstorms in Michigan and Ohio the previous day, brought severe weather to New Hampshire and central Massachusetts. The tornado, up to a mile in width at times, tracked 46 miles through Worcester County. It mangled steel towers built to withstand winds of 375 mph. Debris from the tornado fell in the Boston area, and adjacent Atlantic Ocea. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1972 — A cloudburst along the eastern slopes of the Black Hills of South Dakota produced as much as 14 inches of rain resulting in the Rapid City flash flood disaster. The rains, which fell in about four hours time, caused the Canyon Lake Dam to collapse. A wall of water swept through the city drowning 237 persons, and causing more than 100 million dollars property damage. (David Ludlum)

1987 — Lightning struck Tire Mountain near Denver CO, destroying two million tires out of a huge pile of six million tires. Thunderstorms spawned three tornadoes around Denver, and a man was killed at Conifer CO when strong thunderstorm winds lifted up a porch and dropped it on him. A thunderstorm near Compton MD produced two inch hail, and high winds which destroyed twenty barns and ten houses injuring five persons. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Thunderstorms produced severe weather from North Carolina to the Central Gulf Coast Region. Hail in North Carolina caused more than five million dollars damage to property, and more than sixty million dollars damage to crops. Hail three and a half inches in diameter was reported at New Bern NC. Thunderstorms in the Central High Plains produced eighteen inches of hail at Fountain CO. The temperature at Del Rio TX soared to an all-time record high of 112 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — Severe weather abated for a date, however, showers and thunderstorms continued to drench the eastern U.S. with torrential rains. Milton, FL, was deluged with 15.47 inches in 24 hours. Record heat and prolonged drought in south central Texas left salt deposits on power lines and insulators near the coast, and when nighttime dew caused arcing, the city of Brownsville was plunged into darkness. (The National Weather Summary)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 23 of 67



Daily Devotion

Living Out Our Faith

When sharing our faith, authenticity matters more than eloquence.

1 Peter 1:6-9: 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

True faith is based upon Scripture and embraces its eternal principles. Genuine belief trusts that God is who He says He is and will do everything He has promised. But faith isn't meant to stay hidden—it's to be lived out where others can see it.

How can we share our faith with those around us? Words matter, certainly. We can verbally explain what we believe and why. But our actions often speak even louder. A godly lifestyle often influences people for Christ more effectively than words alone ever could.

Consistency through trials demonstrates the reality of our faith. When difficulties come, the way we respond tells others whether we truly trust God. As we persevere visibly through hardship, what we're sharing is more valuable than gold or silver.

Prayer is another powerful way to influence others. When we bring someone before the throne of the Almighty, we're doing eternal work in those quiet moments. And we're learning for ourselves that God is faithful—even when circumstances look impossible (Hebrews 4:16).

Consider different ways you can live out your faith. And ask God for the wisdom to know where and how to share the good news of Jesus.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 24 of 67

The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.2% Sales Tax

- ☐ Black & White.....\$52.00/year
- ☐ Colored\$80.00/year
- ☐ Colored\$49.00/6 months
- ☐ E-Weekly*\$35.00/year

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- ☐ 1 Month\$16.00
- ☐ 3 Months.....\$28.00
- ☐ 6 Months.....\$38.00
- ☐ 9 Months.....\$52.00
- ☐ 12 Months\$60.00

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul

Pay with Venmo: @paperpaul Phone Number to Confirm: 7460

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 25 of 67



WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.08.26

20 25 40 50 55 1

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 16 Mins 25 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.05.26

13 30 50 52 66 2

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$392,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 1 Mins 25 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.08.26

4 23 25 30 47 4

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$29,190,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 16 Mins 25 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.06.26

5 9 13 14 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$124,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 31 Mins 25 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.08.26

1 16 20 21 49 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.08.26

3 24 34 43 49 20

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$238,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 26 of 67

News from the **AP** Associated Press

At least 2 Iranian military members killed in Israeli attack on Iran

By JON GAMBRELL and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iranian state television on Tuesday reported that at least two members of an air defense unit were killed in the Israeli attacks that rocked the country the day before.

The report represented the first time Iran acknowledged fatalities from the attacks, which have put the Mideast on edge and represented the biggest blow yet to the straining ceasefire in the Iran war.

Iranian state TV identified the men as Bahman Hosseini and Ali Reza Abiri, without offering a rank for them. It said they would be buried in a city outside of Tehran, suggesting they had been posted near the capital.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A U.S. Army helicopter crashed near the Strait of Hormuz, but President Donald Trump said the two crew members aboard were not injured in the incident near the strategic waterway that Iran has effectively closed during the war.

What caused the crash remained unclear Tuesday morning in the Middle East, which was still reeling after Iran and Israel exchanged fire the previous day in the biggest blow yet to the straining ceasefire in the Iran war. Iranian state media, relying on foreign reporting, acknowledged the crash without elaborating.

Since the U.S. and Israel began striking Iran on Feb. 28, the war has shaken the global economy, driven up energy prices around the world and made many basics, including food, more expensive. Officials have been unable to turn the April ceasefire into a deal to permanently end the conflict, particularly as Israel intensifies and expands its military campaign in Lebanon against the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah.

Trump, speaking to journalists at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York after watching the NBA Finals on Monday night, acknowledged the crash.

"The pilots are fine. Yeah," Trump said. "Nobody injured. We are going to issue a report tomorrow. But the pilots are fine."

The New York Times first reported that a U.S. Army Apache attack helicopter went down near the strait in unclear circumstances. The U.S. military's Central Command and the Defense Department did not immediately respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press.

Apache helicopters have been a key asset for the American military as it enforces a blockade on Iranian crude oil shipments and tankers, seeking to pressure Tehran into reaching a deal. The helicopters also have been used by the United Arab Emirates to shoot down Iranian drones during the Iran war.

Trump insists an Iran deal is coming

Trump also expressed renewed optimism over negotiations with Iran.

"We have a good chance" of signing a deal in "two or three days," Trump said. But he didn't provide any details on why there was reason for new optimism. Trump has repeatedly predicted that a deal is near over the two months since the U.S. and Iran agreed to an initial ceasefire.

"We're very close to having a very, very good, strong, powerful deal," the president said. "If we go and bomb — which we could do very easily if we want, and we spend another two or three weeks bombing — they'll have nothing left whatsoever. But you won't have the strait open for months."

He added: "If we do the bombing, you know, a lot of people are going to be killed. Who wants to do that? I don't."

Mediators, led predominantly by Pakistan, have been trying for weeks to get a deal across the line. However, both Iran and the U.S. have taken hard-line positions.

The U.S. wants to see Iran give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which is believed still to be entombed in the country after American airstrikes in the 12-day war in 2025. But Iran is refusing that and demanding relief from sanctions. It also wants the release of frozen assets even before a final agreement is in place, something rejected by Trump.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 27 of 67

Before Trump's comments on negotiations, Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said Monday that Trump's remarks so far on a possible deal "contradicted the agreed-upon sections, showing that (the U.S. is) neither seeking a ceasefire nor dialogue."

The continued fighting between Israel and Hezbollah remains a major Iranian priority as well. Lebanon's army chief, Gen. Rodolphe Haykal, traveled to Pakistan on Tuesday. There, he met Pakistan's army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, who has been a key figure in the Iran-U.S. talks.

Israel issues warning for Tyre, Lebanon

Meanwhile Tuesday, the Israeli military issued an evacuation warning for Lebanon's southern port city of Tyre, including the Christian quarter, which has so far been spared in the destructive airstrikes on the port city.

Last week, Israel warned the Christian neighborhoods in Tyre that it believed Hezbollah members were among them. Many Lebanese Shiite Muslims fled to those areas as Israeli strikes hammered the Mediterranean coastal area over the past two weeks.

After last week's warning, the Lebanese army deployed to the Christian district of Tyre in an effort to prevent Israeli attacks there and to show that Hezbollah has no armed presence in the area. But Avichay Adraee, the Israeli military's Arabic-language spokesperson, posted on X on Monday that the Israeli military "will have to act against their terrorist activities in the neighborhood soon."

Progressive Nithya Raman advances to November runoff against Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Progressive city council member Nithya Raman has advanced to a November runoff against Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, setting up an unexpected matchup between two Democrats and former political allies to run the struggling city of nearly 4 million.

The outcome means Spencer Pratt, a Republican and former reality television personality from "The Hills," is out of the running. His candidacy had drawn national attention because of his celebrity and willingness to challenge liberal governance in a city dominated by Democrats, but the buzz did not translate into enough votes to make the runoff.

Raman made a last-minute entry into the race, after she had endorsed Bass for reelection. She was elected to the council with the support of the Democratic Socialists of America, and the election will test whether voters in the heavily Democratic city want to move further to the political left to address long-running problems of homelessness, buckled streets and sidewalks and climbing rent and home prices.

The race also has historical markers. Bass is the first Black woman to hold the post, and Raman could be the first South Asian woman in the job.

"If you're as frustrated by the broken status quo as I am, I hope you'll join our movement to build a city that works for everyone," Raman said in a statement. "For too long, City Hall has prioritized giving political advantage to powerful interests that fund elections. Meanwhile, working people pay the price in higher rents, depleted services and a city that has stopped working for them."

"A campaign against Nithya Raman, who allows encampments near schools and cuts the police force, is one Mayor Bass looks forward to winning," said Bass campaign strategist Douglas Herman.

Raman gained votes on Pratt in every vote update since Election Day as Los Angeles continued to process additional mail ballots and release results. Raman moved past Pratt and into second place on Sunday and extended her lead over Pratt on Monday to nearly 22,000 votes.

The mayoral matchup sets the field in one of the state's two marquee races. In the other, the California governor's race, Democrat Xavier Becerra has advanced to the general election but it's not yet clear if he will face Republican Steve Hilton or fellow Democrat Tom Steyer. Hilton has more votes than Steyer, but Steyer cut into his lead by nearly a third in Monday's vote updates.

The mayoral race was technically nonpartisan, so the candidates appeared on the ballot without party identification next to their names.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 28 of 67

The election was not a vote of confidence in Bass, who according to incomplete returns received under 35% of the vote, a vulnerable position for an incumbent.

Bass represents the Democratic establishment as the incumbent mayor, and she's backed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, former Vice President Kamala Harris and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, along with influential labor unions. She served in the state Legislature and Congress before becoming mayor in 2022 and was under consideration to be former President Joe Biden's running mate in 2020.

Raman — in her first run for citywide office — has promised to speed up housing construction, bring back entertainment industry jobs and improve services in a city known for dirty streets, gridlock and homeless encampments that are commonplace in many neighborhoods.

"What we are doing right now is just not working," Raman says. "LA's primary strategy for homelessness has been to move encampments from one block to another, from your block to your neighbor's block and back again. ... It's political theater."

California's vote count takes a long time

It took nearly a week to determine who would face Bass in November due to California's notoriously slow vote-counting process. Ballots are mailed to every eligible voter and they are counted if they are postmarked by Election Day and arrive at an election office within seven days.

Los Angeles, like other counties in California, processes and counts mail ballots in roughly the order they are received, so the last ones returned are the last ones counted.

On Tuesday night after polls closed, Los Angeles released results from mail ballots that had been returned early and already processed as well as votes cast that day. Those votes put Bass in the lead with Pratt running in second and Raman behind in third. Since then, the county has been processing and releasing results from mail ballots that arrived later.

Election data shows that large numbers of Democrats held onto their mail ballots and returned them in the race's final days, which helps explain why Bass and Raman have been doing better than Pratt in the votes counted since primary day.

Raman's political positions have shifted

Born in India, Raman moved to the United States as a child and earned degrees from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she studied urban planning.

She has opposed efforts to prohibit homeless people from setting up tents within 500 feet (152 meters) of schools and daycare centers. However, she appears to have softened her opposition to no-camping zones, which were intended to curb the spread of encampments and clear streets. She voted against dozens of them on the council but later said she would not block them if elected mayor.

Raman's positions on policing in the city have also changed.

She once talked of a department that would be much smaller and posted "defund the police" on social media in 2020. She did not support the mayor's 2023 police contract, which she said was too expensive for the financially strapped city.

More recently, she said the Los Angeles Police Department should remain at its current size, about 8,600, down from about 10,000 in 2020. The police union has taunted her in ads, calling her "Flip Floppin' Raman."

In diverse Los Angeles, mayors are elected by building coalitions, ethnically and geographically. And to surpass 50% of the vote and win, Raman will need to find more supporters.

"I don't think it's impossible, but she is going to have to expand beyond her ideological base," said Democratic consultant Bill Carrick, who sees Bass as vulnerable.

"The people who didn't vote for Nithya weren't voting against her, they were voting for somebody else. Karen (Bass) had a good number of people who were voting against her," Carrick added.

Though Raman and Pratt are political opposites, both have attracted voters who aren't happy with the city's status quo.

Tanika Vickers, who works for a housing nonprofit in Los Angeles, said that she felt like she was part of a group of people who work and pay taxes but have been "forgotten." She said she was frustrated with the way tax dollars were being spent, especially "throwing" more money toward homelessness without results.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 29 of 67

She said she voted Raman for mayor because she was most qualified to execute her plans and fulfill what the city needs.

"I think that we are all looking for change," she said.

32,000 people displaced by the Philippine earthquake that killed at least 37

BY JIM GOMEZ and JOEAL CALUPITAN Associated Press

GENERAL SANTOS, Philippines (AP) — Rescuers searched ruined buildings in the southern Philippines on Tuesday to ensure no one was still trapped a day after one of the strongest earthquakes to hit the country in a half-century killed at least 37 people and displaced more than 32,000.

Only four people were considered missing on official records in the southern provinces near where the 7.8 magnitude quake struck Monday morning, but the Office of Civil Defense acknowledged several collapsed and heavily damaged buildings must be thoroughly inspected for possible survivors or casualties.

The earthquake centered off Mindanao, the second most populous Philippine island, injured nearly 500 people and displaced more than 32,000, most of whom fled to emergency shelters.

Many people who left their homes feared a tsunami. Waves up to 1.4-meters (4.6-feet) above tide level were measured in the Philippines, but the only tsunami damage reported was to six shanties on stilts in a coastal village. Smaller waves washed ashore in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan.

Landslides and building collapses caused several deaths

The earthquake left a trail of destruction, including in General Santos, a lively coastal city of more than 700,000 people known as the country's tuna capital, where at least 13 people were killed in collapsed buildings and due to falling debris.

At least 18 died in Sarangani province, mostly in a landslide that buried houses in the mountainside town of Glan, according to Rafaelito Alejandro of the Office of Civil Defense.

The other deaths were reported in the southern provinces of South Cotabato and Davao Occidental, and on Balut Island, disaster response officials said.

About 2,500 houses and 117 government buildings and facilities were damaged in several provinces, according to an initial government damage assessment. The international airport in General Santos remained shut for a second day, forcing the cancellation of 63 domestic flights except for those on humanitarian missions.

About 6,000 public school buildings in quake-hit provinces must be assessed before classes can resume. The quake struck on the first day of classes nationwide after a two-month summer break, and many who sustained injuries were young students who had gathered with excitement for morning flag-raising ceremonies.

Authorities have warned that buildings that sustained cracks could collapse due to aftershocks, some of them dangerously powerful.

"We cannot force the immediate reopening of schools because we have to ensure the integrity of the buildings," Alejandro said.

It was the strongest Philippine quake since 1976

Monday's earthquake was centered at sea at a depth of 33 kilometers (20 miles), about 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Maasin town in Sarangani province.

It was set off by movement in the Cotabato Trench and was the strongest since the same undersea depression triggered an 8.1-magnitude quake that whipped up tsunami waves on Aug. 17, 1976, said Teresito Bacolcol, the director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

About 8,000 people died from that quake and tsunami waves of up to 8 to 10 meters (26 to 33 feet) that engulfed several towns and provinces, Bacolcol said.

The Philippine seismological institute was scheduled to commemorate the anniversary of the 1976 quake and tsunami in August by installing markers to remind vulnerable towns and cities of the need for constant vigilance, Bacolcol told The Associated Press.

A 1990 earthquake that also had a magnitude of 7.8 left more than 1,000 people dead, injured thousands and caused extensive damages in northern provinces and cities.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. deployed top defense-mitigation officials from Manila to help oversee search and rescue, the distribution of tens of thousands of food packs and construction materials to quake victims and assess damage to bridges, roads and other infrastructure.

The United States, a treaty ally of the Philippines, said it was coordinating with Manila and was ready to support Philippine response efforts. France, Japan and New Zealand also expressed support.

The Philippines is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

The archipelago is also battered by about 20 typhoons and tropical storms each year, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Congo's Ebola outbreak rises to 100 deaths out of 550 cases as conflict slows response

By CHINEDU ASADU and JUSTIN KABUMBA undefined

BUNIA, Congo (AP) — At least 100 people have died from Ebola less than a month after authorities declared an outbreak of the disease in eastern Congo, authorities said, a grim toll as officials intensify efforts to slow the disease discovered weeks late.

Attacks on health workers from angry residents, skepticism among some locals and armed conflict in hot spots continue to challenge efforts to stop the outbreak declared on May 15, which has been caused by a severe form of Ebola disease.

Out of the 550 cases of the disease confirmed as of Sunday, there have been 101 deaths and 19 recoveries, according to the latest situation report late Monday. The outbreak is concentrated in Congo's eastern province of Ituri, which accounts for more than 90% of the cases. Cases have also been recorded in the North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, and has spread across the border to Uganda.

The number of cases in Congo is believed to be higher because the outbreak was confirmed weeks late and the contact tracing coverage rate, which has improved in recent days, is still at 64%.

The latest Ebola disease outbreak is caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus, which does not have an approved vaccine or treatment unlike the "Zaire virus," another name for the Ebola virus, responsible for most of Congo's past 16 outbreaks of the disease.

The rapid increase in the number of cases is in part due to the scale up of diagnostic capacities, enabling testing of the backlog of previously collected samples, authorities said.

Capital of Ituri province disrupted by outbreak

Health measures put in place to limit the spread of Ebola have disrupted daily life in Bunia, the bustling capital of Ituri province.

"The authorities have asked us not to carry two customers on the same motorbike anymore. We are now only allowed to carry one customer per motorbike," motorcyclist Justin Abekani said.

There is still widespread skepticism and disregard for health protocols in some parts of the province. Survivors of Congo's 2018 Ebola outbreak, the second-biggest in history, have warned that a repeat of past mistakes could lead to a high number of preventable deaths.

Front line health workers, with little pay or rest, have been attacked multiple times by angry residents and have not been able to reach some communities due conflict involving armed rebel groups.

Eastern Congo has for years seen attacks by dozens of separate rebel and militant groups, some of them with links to foreign countries or to the extremist Islamic State group.

Conflict and movement complicate disease tracing

Conflict is "constraining access for the response, disrupting surveillance and response activities, and increasing the risk of undetected transmission," the World Health Organization said Monday. "Such incidents underline the challenges of the context and the importance of working closely with local leaders

and communities," WHO added.

Nearly a million people have been displaced by conflict in Ituri, according to the U.N. humanitarian office, making contact tracing difficult as people flee attacks or move frequently in the vast province with dense forests, poor roads and remote villages that can take days to reach.

Tracing also is difficult among the thousands of artisanal miners who regularly move between remote sites in the mineral-rich region.

WHO currently assesses the risk of spread for the rest of Africa and at the global level as low.

"(Ebola) patients can recover if they get the medical support they need," WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Monday during a visit to Uganda.

Survivors share experiences and lessons from Congo's 2018 Ebola outbreak

By SEBASTIEN KITSA MUSAYI Associated Press

BENI, Congo (AP) — The memories come flooding back whenever Vianney Kambale Kombi hears the word Ebola.

He remembers the pain and fear in his community in the eastern Congo city of Beni during the 2018-2020 Ebola outbreak, history's second-biggest with more than 3,400 reported cases and over 2,200 deaths. It was stopped with the aid of vaccines.

Kombi also remembers the broad skepticism over the disease, attacks on health workers and inaction from patients that he blames for the speed in which the disease spread.

"We thought it was witchcraft," said Kombi. "The community had not accepted that this disease existed and it had not accepted that we could recover from it."

In Beni, a bustling commercial hub near the borders with Uganda and Rwanda, some fear that a repeat of mistakes made during Congo's past outbreaks and the lack of an approved vaccine this time around might make the response to the latest outbreak more challenging.

A total of 550 cases of the disease were confirmed as of Sunday in the current outbreak caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus, which can cause Ebola disease, including 101 deaths and 19 recoveries.

Suspicious of a conspiracy

Kombi recalled how he contracted the virus after being exposed to others who had it. He said they had little information about the disease at the time, and that while many thought it was witchcraft, others described it as a "Western conspiracy for funding reasons."

"The community had not accepted that we could recover from this disease, that's why reintegrating into the community at first was a bit difficult," he said.

"When a pandemic hits here in Congo, we initially think it's a political issue," said Bienfait Wanzire, who also recovered after contracting Ebola during the 2018 outbreak.

"At first, we thought it was a spiritual illness," he said. "Then because there were election campaigns, we believed it was political."

Doctor recalls losing his uncle and colleagues

Dr. Babah Mutuza Lusungu, a physician at "Dieu Est Grand" Medical Center in Beni, remembered losing his uncle and two colleagues even as he tried to convince people the outbreak was real.

"There was very strong resistance," said Lusungu. "And so there was a climate of mistrust that took place between the population, the authorities, the partners too, right, and the health workers."

Youths at the time were not directly involved in response efforts, he said, urging local authorities to work more closely with youth leaders to enlighten people about the disease.

"If we wait until they have so many declared cases to start making an effective response, we will have totally missed the target," he said.

Vaccines saved his family

Esperance Masinda, who was working for the U.N. children's agency in Beni during the 2018 outbreak, said it was particularly difficult caring for children who had lost their parents to Ebola.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 32 of 67

She contracted the disease while looking after her husband who was working as a medical doctor. Although they both later recovered, the vaccine that helped save them distanced them from family and neighbors.

"When we were in the community, we were told that you're not going to make it even five years, you're going to die with that medication that you took there," Masinda said.

"And today, when they see us, these people no longer stigmatize us," she said. "We are all humans, even though we have been victims of Ebola, all of us are humans."

China's exports jump 19.4% in May from a year earlier, boosted by demand for autos and tech goods

By CHAN HO-HIM AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — China's exports picked up pace in May, rising 19.4% from a year earlier, its customs agency said Tuesday, as technology-related shipments remained robust despite impacts from the Iran war.

The stronger than expected performance was an improvement from April's 14.1% year-on-year increase.

Imports in May jumped 27.4%, also at a faster pace compared with April's 25.3% year-on-year expansion.

Exports to the U.S. in May surged more than 35% from the year before — the strongest pace since early 2021 — after an 11% increase in April.

China's shipments to the U.S. had fallen sharply for most of the months since U.S. President Donald Trump returned to the White House last year, as shipments to regions like Southeast Asia and Europe surged.

The strength in exports has been supported by shipments of autos and technology and artificial intelligence-related products such as semiconductors and computing equipment.

Exports are a "shock-absorber" for China, helping its economy weather a spike in global energy prices that have driven inflation worldwide, said Wei Li, Head of Multi-Asset Investments at BNP Paribas Securities (China).

The global AI boom and a rising worldwide shift to green technology are also helping.

"Ships, chips, autos, and batteries continue to find strong demand amid the global tech boom, and higher prices along the tech supply chain have helped support the value growth for trade," said Lynn Song, chief economist for Greater China at Dutch bank ING.

By product categories, overall exports of semiconductors in May more than doubled year-on-year by value while autos were up almost 40%. China's biggest electric vehicle maker BYD said it sold more than 160,600 vehicles abroad in May, up 80% from a year earlier.

Advanced semiconductors and EV shipments are likely to help power China's export growth for the rest of this year, Li of BNP Paribas said.

Trump's visit to Beijing in May and his meetings there with Chinese President Xi Jinping in mid-May have raised hopes for improved relations between the world's two largest economies after the two leaders agreed to set up boards of trade and investment.

But analysts said the recent year-on-year improvement in Chinese exports to the U.S. probably has more to do with base effect, after Trump's sweeping "Liberation Day" tariffs that came into effect in April 2025 caused a sharp drop in China's shipments.

Chinese leaders have set a 4.5% to 5% annual economic growth target for 2026, slightly below the "around 5%" goal for 2025, and the slowest expansion goal since 1991. ING's Song said a strong start to the year should help China stay on track to meet its full-year growth target.

Pope Leo will tap into the Sagrada Familia's allure while honoring Catalonia's holy mountain

By JOSEPH WILSON Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Pope Leo XIV will bridge 1,000 years of church history Wednesday, visiting a medieval monastery on a mountaintop that local Catholics consider sacred and then celebrating Mass at Barcelona's famous Sagrada Familia Basilica.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 33 of 67

Montserrat, a healthy drive from the city followed by a steep ascent, is dear to many of the Catalan people in northeastern Spain. Annually, 2 million people travel to the complex that includes an 11th-century Benedictine abbey as well as a 16th-century basilica. Its Black Madonna statue, which studies show originally was white but turned dark by centuries of smoke and incense before being painted black, is widely revered.

But for many Catholics watching from afar — and especially non-Catholics — the highlight of the Chicago-born pope's seven-day trip to Spain will be his evening Mass at the Sagrada Familia — the Basilica of the Holy Family — commemorating the centennial of the death of its architect, Antoni Gaudí. Leo will speak almost exclusively Spanish on the trip, with some comments in Catalan.

The visit illustrates his balancing act of upholding centuries-old religious traditions in a country where faith is waning while reaching a global audience from a basilica that is more a magnet for tourists than believers. Yet the two sites share a connection even some locals don't know.

A pulpit for the world

The Sagrada Familia fuses the universal language of nature — trees, birds, reptiles, cornucopias of fruit — with scenes from Christ's life. Beyond that unique aesthetic, its allure stems from allowing visitors to bear witness to a great church's ongoing construction.

That began 144 years ago, with the first cornerstone laid in 1882 during the pontificate of Leo's namesake, Pope Leo XIII.

Its claim to "the new" is what sets Gaudí's masterpiece apart from Europe's other cathedrals and why it has captivated millions. Leo's Mass is an opportunity to link him with this breathtaking place of worship.

"Its stones and stained glass speak of the possibility of conjuring up 2,000 years of Christian history from a modern and even postmodern view," Ferran Sáez, professor of humanities at Barcelona's University of Ramón Llull, told The Associated Press. "It is a building that expresses very complex ideas while coming across as comprehensible for anyone who is receptive, whether they are Christian or not."

The Sagrada Familia is an international sensation, featuring on virtually any self-respecting globetrotter's bucket list. Foreigners account for 90% of its visitors, whose entrance fees fund its construction, and more Americans visit than Spaniards, according to the basilica.

While there aren't statistics on visitors' average age, it is hugely popular among adolescents and twentysomethings. That's in stark contrast to the graying parishioners at most Spanish churches at a moment the Catholic Church strives to engage with and remain relevant to youth.

The basilica's latest superlative — world's tallest church, with its recently raised Tower of Jesus Christ — has made it an even greater beacon.

Catalans see Montserrat as a spiritual home

The Sagrada Familia is a global pulpit, but it's set in a country where Christianity is receding. Spain underwent a religious crisis in the late 20th century during its return to democracy. Just over half of Spaniards polled by the state opinion agency in 2024 self-identified as Catholics, but only about 1 in 5 called themselves practicing Catholics.

And Catalonia is one of Spain's most secular provinces, Sáez said.

Catalonia's Catholics are reserved in their practice, without flamboyant Easter Week processions like those in Seville and other Spanish cities.

The force of their faith rests in its holy places: the Sagrada Familia, the Poblet monastery and the Romanesque churches dotting the foothills of the Pyrenees. And, above all, in Montserrat, where pilgrims arrive by bus, cable car, cog railway and strenuous trails.

"It is home to our most beloved representation of Mary, the Black Madonna," Catalan theologian Francesc Torralba told AP. "Many Catalans pray to her and feel close to her in times of need. Montserrat is a key to our culture, as well as our efforts to maintain our language and our traditions."

While Montserrat is the region's religious epicenter, its faith is "culturally expressed in its artistic creations" like the Sagrada Familia, he added.

Throngs of tourists

And it's that unbridled and unique artistry that draws so many visitors. Many Barcelona residents feel the Sagrada Familia's fame has driven some of overtourism's worst ills. Tour buses flood the area with

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 34 of 67

day-trippers from cruise ships, and streets facing the church are full of fast food restaurants and souvenir shops. Protesters who squirted tourists with water guns last year were planning to reach the Sagrada Familia until police stopped them.

"Where there are two people (tourists and locals), there can be friction, and that happens in the best marriages," the Sagrada Familia's rector, the Rev. Josep Turull, told AP. "So we try, just like with a marriage, for these small crises to be growing pains, and that's why we try to not just welcome pilgrims and tourists but also make sure that our parishioners feel that this is their basilica."

Leo could bring even more tourists. Pope Benedict XVI's consecration to make it an operating basilica in 2010 boosted visits from about 3 million a year to nearly 5 million in 2025, according to Xavier Martínez, the CEO of the Sagrada Familia's construction project.

"I believe that on June 10 we will experience something similar to what we saw in 2010," Martínez said. "At that time, the world discovered the interior of the Sagrada Familia. Now the world will discover the towers of the Sagrada Familia."

Tour guide and historian Mònica Santín has seen the Sagrada Familia's stunning power for believers and nonbelievers alike; some even weep upon crossing the church's threshold. As personally fulfilling as it is to help tourists achieve these life-changing moments, she is concerned Leo's Mass could drive tourism to levels that are unsustainable for the community.

The sacred sites share a connection

Santín has reserved her spot to see Leo in person, but it won't be at the basilica. She will instead make the journey to the Montserrat monastery.

Santín's grandmother made the same pilgrimage, walking barefoot to a mountainside cave where legend has it shepherds discovered the Black Madonna statue and prayed for protection for her husband during the Spanish Civil War. Today, Santín wears the ring her grandmother gave her.

"I don't know how it doesn't fall apart," Santín said, gently touching her ring, with its profile of the Virgin of Montserrat, the patron saint of Catalonia, barely visible after so many years.

And she notes that Montserrat and the Sagrada Familia have a shared, but little-known, connection.

A young Gaudí apprenticed with an architect building the mountaintop chapel for the Virgin of Montserrat, according to Santín, who is researching her doctoral thesis on the architect at Barcelona's ISCREB theology school. That same architect was originally hired to build the Sagrada Familia, but material costs made his neo-Gothic proposal inviable and the commission went to Gaudí. As part of his radical design, he introduced elements of the mountain.

Even the basilica's sandcastle-like towers resemble the spirelike rock formations that every Catalan can identify as jutting from Montserrat.

"Montserrat is our holy mountain," Santín said. "The Sagrada Familia is like a Montserrat in the middle of the city."

Donald Trump booed by the crowd during the anthem prior to Game 3 of the NBA Finals

By STEPHEN WHYNO and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump was booed loudly by fans inside Madison Square Garden when he was shown on video screens during the national anthem as he became the first sitting president to attend an NBA Finals game.

Chants of "U-S-A! U-S-A!" echoed through the arena as Avery Wilson sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," but they gave way to boos moments later as Trump was displayed on the jumbo screens giving a military salute. The jeers ended when the U.S. flag followed him on the screens, and fans cheered when New York Knicks players were shown. Mentions of the San Antonio Spurs also elicited vociferous boos.

The president was unfazed. "It was, I think, mostly cheers," he told reporters after the game before boarding Air Force One to return to Washington. "It was loud, and it was very enthusiastic."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 35 of 67

Trump watched Game 3 from Knicks owner James Dolan's suite, along with granddaughter Kai, personal adviser Boris Epshteyn and Cabinet secretaries Lee Zeldin, Sean Duffy and Doug Burgum. He sat next to Dolan for the first quarter and spent part of the second talking to NBA Commissioner Adam Silver and Republican gubernatorial hopeful Bruce Blakeman.

Trump's Marine One helicopter flew from his home in New Jersey and landed near Wall Street before his motorcade made its way up through Manhattan and to the arena roughly an hour before tipoff. He encountered a handful of people making rude gestures, and outside the area, one group held signs saying "Trump must go."

He settled into Dolan's suite shortly afterward.

During the afternoon before Trump's arrival, the New York Police Department and the U.S. Secret Service set up a large perimeter surrounding Madison Square Garden. Fans lined up to get inside the arena more than four hours before tipoff, in a scene more closely resembling New Year's Eve in Times Square than the usual leadup to a basketball game.

They were required to provide a ticket or pass to get past various checkpoints, along with going through a Transportation Security Administration-style magnetometer. Secret Service personnel and police were positioned at every corner and in large numbers. Daily commuters, tourists visiting Manhattan and fans were all confounded at various times as they tried to maneuver the security.

New Yorkers forced to adjust

After traveling from his home in Florida for the game, Knicks fan Greg Weldon said the main inconvenience faced so far has been the lack of information.

"We've asked so many cops, secret service, guys with machine guns, what to do, where should we go," he said. "Nobody knows."

Knicks coach Mike Brown and Spurs counterpart Mitch Johnson downplayed any concept of being inconvenienced by the closures and enhanced security because of Trump.

"There's a lot going on, and I'd much rather be a part of it than not," Johnson said.

With security stepped up, a watch party outside was canceled, and ticket-holders were not allowed to bring bags inside the Garden. Fans had gathered near the arena to watch games during this playoff run, during which the Knicks have won 13 games in a row to reach the final for the first time since 1999 and move two victories from their first NBA title since 1973.

"We are looking forward to bringing back watch parties for Game 4," Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said at a news conference Monday. "But I think New Yorkers are used to presidents coming to town, and they understand that that generally means lockdowns of areas and that's what you're going to see tonight at the Garden."

The Knicks' streak was broken Monday night, with the Spurs winning 115-111. Game 4 will be played Wednesday night at the Garden.

Incidents heighten attention to Trump's security

This is the latest major sporting event Trump has attended during his time as president, and the security measures have created major hassles for fans.

Thousands of fans missed the start of last year's U.S. Open men's singles final between Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner because of lengthy security lines. Even though the U.S. Tennis Association pushed back the start of the match by a half-hour, many fans still couldn't get in because added measures meant that they had to go through screening not only when they arrived at the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center but again in front of the steps into Arthur Ashe Stadium, where Trump watched from a suite.

Federal law enforcement officials have been reexamining Trump's security in light of three incidents in the past two years: a shooting at a 2024 rally in Butler, Pennsylvania; the discovery of a man armed with a rifle as Trump played golf in West Palm Beach, Florida, later that year; and the recent shooting at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner.

Asked Sunday his thoughts on Trump attending, Knicks center Mitchell Robinson said: "Cool, I guess. We can still get out there and play (no matter) who's here and who's not."

Mayor Zohran Mamdani and other dignitaries were also at the game, as were Yankees Hall of Famer

Derek Jeter and two-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback Eli Manning of the Giants.

It was already hard enough for Knicks fans to get inside Madison Square Garden because of astronomical ticket prices. The get-in price for a ticket is higher than the average cost of monthly rent in New York, surging over \$5,000.

The best seats were listed for tens of thousands of dollars. Mamdani said he bought his ticket, which he said was standing-room-only, for about \$1,000 directly from Madison Square Garden.

The difficulty of seeing the game in-person has prompted fans to crowd bars, streets and watch parties all over the city. The watch party near the Garden has become a major event all through the playoffs, but with Trump attending, that event was moved a few blocks away outside the security perimeter, at Bryant Park.

"We improvise," said Knicks guard Jose Alvarado, who is a New York native. "We're New Yorkers. We're going to find a way to watch a game, and that's what we're doing."

Sweden set to ban mobile phones in schools, joining trend of shelving screens for students

By JAMES BROOKS Associated Press

MALMÖ, Sweden (AP) — Long championed as a leader in adopting digital technology, Sweden is set to ban mobile phones in schools beginning in the fall for the next academic year as part of a broad, international reversal on the use of screens in classrooms.

Since 2023, the Scandinavian country's center-right coalition government has pursued a policy prioritizing more reading time and less screen time, particularly among preschool students, by favoring books and other traditional learning tools.

Lawmaker Joar Forsell, chairperson of the Swedish parliament's education committee, said officials have seen a decline in the general ability to read and write in Sweden, especially among younger students.

"We're rolling the screens back because we believe that books and more traditional ways of learning are better for kids," Forsell said.

Sweden's plans are part of a broader shift and a digital reckoning against smartphones in schools internationally after countries outfitted their campuses with laptops, tablets and learning apps for their students. Classrooms have become saturated with screens and a growing number of parents, teachers and school districts say it is time to scale back.

In the Nordics, Denmark looks set to implement a similar ban to Sweden, and a law restricting use of mobile devices in schools in Finland came into effect last August. Other countries from Spain to South Korea have taken a variety of steps that range from a ban of mobile phones in classrooms to limits on screen-based homework.

The Los Angeles Unified School District, the second-largest school district in the U.S., has said it will ban screens until second grade, require daily caps for screen time per grade, ban YouTube and require an audit of all education technology contracts.

Backing away from screens

Tech-savvy Sweden, which is home to music streamer Spotify and telecoms giant Ericsson, has one of the most digitally advanced education systems in the world. But the mobile ban aims to foster learning environments with fewer distractions by building on restrictions on phones already independently implemented by many schools in the nation of over 10 million.

Alongside the ban, the government this year set aside 555 million Swedish krona (\$59 million) as part of a new grant for purchasing textbooks and teachers' guides.

The back-to-books policy was triggered by falling reading levels. In the 2022 Program for International Student Assessment, the latest study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 24.3% of Swedish ninth graders did not reach a basic level of reading comprehension. That figure is only slightly better than the European Union average of 26.2%.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 37 of 67

Magnus Haake, an associate professor of cognitive science at Lund University in southern Sweden, said learning with physical materials engages the motor sensory part of kids' brains and "boosts the whole system."

Sweden also is taking steps outside of school: Its public health agency has provided advice to parents about being better role models on use of screens, like having the same "screen-free zones" at home as their kids do.

Removing mobile phones removes distractions

At the Malmö Borgarskola high school in southern Sweden, mobiles are already banned during classes. Students place their handsets in a box — nicknamed a "Mobile Hotel" — and pick them up at the end of class.

"When you have a phone, there's always something to look at," student Melina Sallahi, 17, said. "It's less of a distraction."

Classmate Vasilije Stjepanovic, also 17, said apps like games or social media are "more fun than learning," adding that students can learn better by taking away the phones.

At the same time, every student is given a laptop computer. But Deputy Headmaster Patrik Sander said students are now discouraged from using them in class, unless teachers say so.

"Nowadays, we see the push going in the other direction," Sander said. "We have pushed back, learning that writing with your hands and a pencil helps you remember."

Starting last summer, Swedish children under 2 years old could use only nondigital materials such as books, and preschoolers in general face no requirement to use digital learning tools. A new curriculum to prioritize book-based learning is expected in 2028.

Divisions over digital reckoning in classrooms

Not everyone in the Nordic nation supports the shift away from digital learning.

Trade association Swedish Edtech Industry said in a report that 90% of all future jobs are expected to require digital skills. A lack of this knowledge could cause a skills shortage among young Swedes, a lack of innovation in the public sector and even increased unemployment, the report warned.

Peter Carlsson, CEO of Malmö-based startup Imvi Labs, which uses virtual reality headsets to train brain-eye coordination in children and adults, said not all screens disrupt learning and some software is "critical" to help children with learning or reading difficulties.

"By having good tools, the teaching can become more efficient," he said.

But at Malmö Borgarskola, there is little concern over learning digital skills. One morning in May, students clutched textbooks and discussed Russian history as they prepared for end-of-year exams.

"Everyone uses digital devices during their free time, so I don't think that's something that should be taught in school," student Melina Sallahi said. "It's nothing I'm worried about."

Classmate Aslan Özhan Kilicasan added, "We learn much more easily when we use books."

6.1 magnitude earthquake near Cuba shakes buildings in Havana and Florida

HAVANA (AP) — A 6.1 magnitude earthquake struck near western Cuba on Monday afternoon, shaking buildings in Havana and Florida as far north as Orlando. No injuries or damage was reported.

The quake struck at a depth of 26 kilometers (16 miles) in waters just west of the capital, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Flavia Pupo, a manager at the Pinar del Rio hotel in western Cuba, described how the building shook and caused some fear. "Everyone here is OK," she said by telephone. "The people on the street are a little bit scared."

Shaking was reported around southwestern Florida, the National Weather Service in Miami said in a tweet. A flood of social media posts indicated people felt shaking even north of Orlando.

Maria Moncayo, who works at a law office in downtown Fort Lauderdale, said she had been quietly working at her desk when she started to feel a vibrating sensation. She compared it to someone doing

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 38 of 67

construction in another part of the building, and it lasted about a minute or so.

"I have a little pendant dangling in my desk, and it was moving," Moncayo said. "That's why I realized that it's actually not me or my chair or anything."

Moncayo said she had experienced several earthquakes while living in Ecuador, including a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that left hundreds dead in 2016. But she hadn't experienced one since moving to Florida seven years ago.

"Since I moved here, it kind of left my mind, but when I felt my desk moving, I thought it was going to be like Ecuador," Moncayo said. "It kind of gave me flashbacks, but then I realized that it's not bad, it's just a little one."

Miami-Dade County officials said they were evacuating several buildings as a precaution, including the county's main government office building, a 28-story high rise in downtown Miami.

Service for two elevated commuter trains that run through downtown was also suspended temporarily.

William Barnhart, a geophysicist with the U.S. Geological Survey, described Monday's earthquake as extremely rare. It's the largest earthquake ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico with modern instruments, which date to the 1950s.

"It's one of only five or six earthquakes of magnitude 5 or greater that we're aware of in the entire Gulf."

No tsunami was created by this earthquake. Barnhart pointed out that the destructive ocean waves created by earthquakes and other underwater disturbances are more common in the Pacific Ocean, but they can occur in the Atlantic. Western Cuba might experience some strong aftershocks, but they're unlikely to be felt in Florida, Barnhart said.

"There's always a very, very small chance that this could be followed by a larger earthquake and people would feel that," Barnhart said. "But in Florida, people shouldn't expect to feel very much shaking, if any shaking at all, from any aftershocks that happen."

The Oriente fault zone is just off Cuba's southeast coast and has unleashed damaging earthquakes in recent centuries, including a 7.7 magnitude quake in January 2020 in open waters that caused damage in Cuba and the Cayman Islands.

What to watch in Tuesday's primaries as Graham Platner tries to clinch Senate nomination in Maine

By STEVE PEOPLES and JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Voters across Maine, Nevada, South Carolina and North Dakota head to the polls Tuesday for another day of primary elections in America, but much of the political world will be focused on Maine's high-stakes U.S. Senate contest.

The results are not in question. Neither Republican incumbent Sen. Susan Collins nor Democratic challenger Graham Platner faces serious opposition for their party's nomination. And yet Tuesday marks an especially significant moment for Platner, the embattled veteran and oyster farmer, who is fighting to rebuild his credibility in a campaign rocked by controversy.

Elsewhere, President Donald Trump's clout within his party will be tested anew in states like South Carolina and Nevada, where he's endorsed his favored candidates. Democrats hope to build momentum in Nevada in their broader push to reclaim key governor's seats.

Powerful family ties will also be in the spotlight in Maine and South Carolina, where candidates with political pedigrees are running for office.

Here's what we're watching Tuesday.

Platner faces a big moment

Platner sits at the very center of the Democratic Party's quest to reclaim the Senate majority this fall. So Democrats need him to take a significant step forward Tuesday, with the eyes of the nation watching, in the urgent task of rebuilding his credibility.

It was barely a week ago when revelations surfaced that Platner had engaged in sexually explicit mes-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 39 of 67

sages with multiple women while married. Allies wondered if more baggage would emerge, and then The New York Times reported new allegations about his behavior during previous relationships.

There is no doubt that Platner will win his party's Senate nomination Tuesday. His most serious opponent, Maine Gov. Janet Mills, suspended her campaign in April after it became clear Platner was in a commanding position. That said, Mills is still technically on the ballot and some advocates have suggested voting for her as a way to protest Platner.

More important, perhaps, will be Platner's public remarks Tuesday night. Friends and foes alike will be paying close attention to how he addresses the evolving questions about his past and whether he can refocus the race on Collins.

Maine race will test Democrats' standards

It's not just Platner who will be tested Tuesday — the Democratic Party itself will face new scrutiny about its standards in the Trump era.

So far, Platner's biggest national supporters have remained firmly behind him. Sen. Bernie Sanders, one of his earliest backers, reiterated his support for the Maine Democrat on Saturday, a day after Rep. Ro Khanna appeared alongside Platner at a campaign event.

The public show of support reflects how much Democratic politics have changed over the last decade.

At the height of the #MeToo movement, Democrats argued they held their candidates to a higher standard than Republicans, particularly as Trump faced a series of sexual misconduct allegations. Back in 2017, Democratic leaders pressured Sen. Al Franken to resign in the wake of allegations of inappropriate touching and kissing.

The reaction to Platner has been markedly different. Even after allegations surfaced that he locked a woman in a room, among other accusations of inappropriate behavior, most Democrats have declined to abandon him.

"I think President Trump set a new standard," Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., told ABC's "This Week" on Sunday.

Expect Democratic leaders to face a new round of difficult questions about their own standards after Tuesday's primary.

Trump looks to shake off embarrassment

Just a week ago, Trump's pick for Iowa governor was defeated in a rare rebuke from his own party. Trump hopes to move past the political embarrassment during a fresh test of his political clout in South Carolina and Nevada.

The biggest may come in South Carolina, where Trump has endorsed Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette in a five-person Republican gubernatorial primary. There are a number of other high-profile candidates in the race, including Reps. Nancy Mace and Ralph Norman, who may prove formidable. State Attorney General Alan Wilson and millionaire Rom Reddy are also running.

Trump will also keep a close eye on whether one of his closest allies in Congress, Sen. Lindsey Graham, is forced into a runoff for the first time ever. Graham faces appliance business owner Mark Lynch, who Trump has said "would be a DISASTER for the Republican Party" if elected.

Candidates must earn a majority of the vote to avoid a June 23 runoff.

Meanwhile, in Nevada's 2nd congressional district, Trump-backed candidate retired Lt. Col. David Flipppo is facing former state Sen. James Settelmeyer. Republican Rep. Mark Amodei, who announced his retirement from the seat, has endorsed Settelmeyer, as has the state's governor, Republican Gov. Joe Lombardo.

Democrats eye a key governor's seat

Democrats will select a nominee for Nevada's governor race, where they have a real opportunity to flip control of the swing state this fall. Republican incumbent Gov. Joe Lombardo is considered one of the most vulnerable governors in the country.

The race is a window into the broader political landscape this fall as Democrats go on the offensive in several states Trump won in 2024.

The Democrats vying to challenge Lombardo include state Attorney General Aaron Ford, who has the backing of the Democratic congressional delegation and former Vice President Kamala Harris. He would be

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 40 of 67

the first Black man elected governor of Nevada. He's facing Democrat Alexis Hill, a county commissioner in northern Nevada who campaigned as a candidate willing to shake things up.

Democrats are also fighting to win Republican-held governors' seats in states like Georgia, Ohio and Iowa.

Republicans, of course, have several pickup opportunities of their own, despite the challenging political environment for their party. They include Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Can they keep it in the family?

The power of political family ties will be tested in at least two states where candidates with last names you'll likely recognize are on the ballot.

In Maine, Democrats Angus King III and Hannah Pingree are competing for their party's nomination for governor. King is the businessman son of U.S. Sen. Angus King. Pingree, a former speaker of the state House, is the daughter of U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree, who has represented the state's 1st congressional district since 2009.

There's a member of an even bigger political dynasty on Maine's ballot, too. Republican candidate for governor Jonathan Bush, a 57-year-old businessman, is the nephew of former President George H.W. Bush — and yes, that also makes him the cousin of former President George W. Bush. Despite the family ties, Jonathan Bush is casting himself as the outsider in the race and focusing heavily on his local business experience.

And don't forget about South Carolina, where Republican Attorney General Alan Wilson is running for governor. While he has established his own resume as the state's top law enforcement official, Wilson also happens to be the son of U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, who has served South Carolina in the House of Representatives for a quarter century.

South Carolina: redistricting dies and Clyburn's political future survives

Just weeks ago, longtime Rep. James Clyburn, the dean of South Carolina Democrats, appeared to be facing the greatest threat to his political future.

Republican lawmakers, backed by Trump, considered a congressional map that would have significantly altered Clyburn's majority-Black district and made it harder for him to hold onto the seat for an 18th term. But the Republican-led state Senate rejected the effort, leaving his district largely intact.

Clyburn is heavily favored in Tuesday's Democratic primary against a little-known challenger. As South Carolina's lone Democratic House member, he's one of the party's most influential figures, with many Democrats expecting him to play a significant role in the lead-up to the 2028 presidential race.

As US Customs refines its tariff refund system, who gets in to apply is under dispute

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency official is set to testify in federal court Tuesday about the U.S. government's plans for refunding billions of dollars that importers paid before the Supreme Court ruled that President Donald Trump illegally imposed certain tariffs on goods from most other countries.

Court of International Trade Judge Richard Eaton said he wanted to hear details that would help him decide whether to order the government to speed up and expand its system for issuing tariff refunds. The Justice Department subsequently appealed an earlier order by Eaton to make all businesses that paid the now-defunct import taxes eligible for refunds plus interest.

The Justice Department argued in a court document that only companies that were parties in any of the more than 2,500 lawsuits that challenged the tariffs were legally entitled to seek refunds.

With the dispute now in the hands of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, Tuesday's hearing may provide more clarity about the next phase of the refund process.

First phase of tariff refunds is still ongoing

Eaton ordered Customs and Border Protection in March to create a system by which "all importers of record" could apply for their share of the \$166 billion CBP estimated it had collected before the Supreme

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 41 of 67

Court struck down the global tariffs.

The agency launched the online system April 20, saying it would first review applications from importers whose tax bills had not been finalized.

Claims for refunds totaling \$89.6 billion had been accepted for processing as of June 1, according to CBP, and the agency reported last month that it had so far directed the Treasury Department to issue \$20.6 billion in refunds.

The pace and scope of the process became a contentious matter, however, when Eaton directed CBP Commissioner Rodney Scott to appear in court to discuss the agency's timeline for complying with the judge's "universal" order. The Justice Department objected and asked if one of Scott's deputies could attend the hearing instead.

When Eaton insisted on hearing directly from the head of the agency, Justice Department lawyers appealed both that mandate and the judge's broader ruling on refund eligibility. On Thursday, the Federal Circuit agreed to temporarily suspend the requirement for Scott to testify.

Eaton agreed to hear from Susan Thomas, the agency's executive assistant commissioner for trade.

Who gets access to the next phase of tariff refunds

The hearing is expected to focus on CBP's capability and willingness to open the refund process to companies with tariff payments that date back the farthest.

So far, the agency has limited applications to businesses that either did not have their tax bills finalized by the time the Supreme Court struck down Trump's "reciprocal" tariffs in late February or whose bills had been settled within the preceding 80 days.

In a court declaration ahead of the hearing, Thomas said CBP was developing a way to handle refunds involving older shipments but would not process cases beyond the 80-day window while Eaton's order requiring for all duty payers was on appeal.

"Should the court's order become final and require reliquidation of entries of all importers, CBP intends to fully comply with the court's final decision as expeditiously as possible," she wrote.

At issue is the agency's detailed and deadline-driven process for reviewing and clearing customs declarations on new imports.

When foreign goods enter the U.S., importers or customs brokers acting on their behalf estimate the amount of tariffs owed and make a deposit toward the final bill. CBP then has 314 days — and up to four years, if necessary — to review the declared goods, determine the actual amount owed, and either require more or less than the deposit.

The taxed merchandise then is pronounced "liquidated." Importers have 180 days to protest CBP's determination. Goods typically can't be reassessed after that point.

Eaton has said he is holding Tuesday's hearing "to ascertain if it is the government's policy to return all of the unlawfully collected duties either by complying with the court's order, or by some other means."

Lawyers for the five companies behind the lawsuit that produced the judge's order said it would be unconstitutional for them to pay less tariffs than other companies that also paid the invalidated duties, which the Supreme Court held Trump improperly imposed by citing an emergency powers law to usurp Congress' taxmaking authority.

The companies have asked Eaton to certify their case as a class action on behalf of "potentially tens of thousands of identically situated importers."

Meghann Supino, a partner at the law firm Ice Miller, said she thinks CBP will continue to build out the technology needed to refund all tariffs, but "whether they open it up to non-litigants and importers that do not have orders for their own sake is going to continue to be an issue with the appeal."

A flesh-eating cattle parasite spreads beyond Texas as new screwworm cases are found

By JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

Three more cases of the New World screwworm have been confirmed, including one outside the main cluster in Texas, demonstrating the difficulty of stopping a resurgent pest that could devastate the nation's cattle industry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced Monday.

The screwworm is actually a fly larva that eats living flesh instead of dead material. The flies lay their eggs in open wounds of animals like cattle, but wildlife, pets and occasionally even humans can be infested. The government has a program to breed sterile male flies and drop swarms of them from planes to mate with wild females, which kept screwworm contained at the southern end of Panama for decades.

So far, there are five confirmed cases: three calves and a goat in Texas and a dog from neighboring Lea County, New Mexico. The small dog, which the USDA initially reported as a Texas case, lives in New Mexico and was reclassified as the first in that state.

The dog had not traveled to Mexico or Texas, so authorities were investigating around the property where the pet lived. If they find infected flies, animal inspections in the area will increase, New Mexico State Veterinarian Samantha Holeck said during a virtual news conference Monday.

Screwworm cases continue to climb

The first two screwworm cases were discovered last week in calves a few miles apart in south Texas. A case was announced Monday in a calf in La Salle County, southwest of San Antonio, and in a goat in Gillespie County, west of Austin.

In each case, officials have set up a 12-mile (20-kilometer) quarantine zone to try to slow the parasite's advance.

Along with cattle and other warm-blooded livestock, scientists worry screwworms could devastate the millions of wild white-tailed deer in Texas.

Scientists expect new cases could pop up in the coming days and weeks, but it doesn't mean screwworm is spreading rapidly, said Edward Burgess, a University of Florida entomologist who studies the fly.

"When that first case is seen, everyone is being vigilant and their eyes are on it more intensely," Burgess said. "And when you are looking for something, you are more likely to see it."

A race to stop the screwworm now moves to Texas

Screwworm gets its name from the maggots' habit of burrowing — or screwing — into a wound, according to the USDA. The pest eats the flesh of the animal, further opening wounds and increasing the risk of deadly bacterial infections. Animals can die within a few weeks if not treated. There are a dozen government-approved medications to treat livestock.

The agency and the U.S. cattle industry have been racing to prevent an outbreak since screwworm was detected in Mexico late in 2024. The USDA has been dropping sterile flies in south Texas since February and is working to both increase sterile fly production in plants outside the U.S. and build a \$750 million fly factory in Texas.

So far, screwworm's reappearance hasn't greatly affected beef prices, which are already near record levels because there are fewer cows in the United States. Although the parasite attacks live cattle, it does not infest meat or fruit.

Canada temporarily stopped importing cattle, horses or other livestock from Texas on Friday. The parasites prefer humid areas where temperatures are at least 77 F (25 C), making them more of a summer problem up north.

Fighting screwworms with sterile male flies

Burgess said the long-term solution — breeding sterile male flies — is months away. Since wild female flies mate just once, if that encounter is with a sterile male, outbreaks can eventually be halted as the flies die out.

The goal is to have enough sterile flies to stop the pests from returning in 2027 after the winter kills off most of them, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins said at a news conference at the U.S. Livestock Insects

Research Laboratory in Kerrville, Texas.

Scientists are also working on ways to sterilize only male flies to make the program even more effective.

Texas officials encouraged ranchers to keep a close eye on their herds and local wildlife. There's now a 24-hour screwworm hotline and a website and map for reported cases.

"This is a highly treatable condition if you act on it immediately," Republican Gov. Greg Abbott said.

However, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller — who lost the recent Republican primary to a candidate backed by Abbott — said the federal response will take too long and risks crippling the cattle industry.

Instead, he says a poison bait could eliminate the screwworm problem in a few months, even if the USDA and other experts say the bait hasn't been proven effective and could poison other flies, animals and even humans.

"What the hell is a good fly?" Miller said in an interview.

OpenAI files confidential SEC paperwork for IPO, opening the door to a Wall Street debut

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

ChatGPT maker OpenAI filed preliminary paperwork that would open the door to it becoming a publicly traded company, the third in a powerhouse trio of artificial intelligence companies racing to Wall Street debuts.

The San Francisco-based company said Monday it has filed confidential paperwork with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

"We expect it to leak so we're just announcing it," the company said in a statement. "We have not decided on timing yet; it may be a while because there are things we want to do that are likely easier as a private company. But it's a complicated set of tradeoffs and this gives us the option to go public sooner if that ends up being best."

OpenAI's move follows its rival Anthropic's June 1 disclosure that it is also moving toward an initial public offering of shares. Both are now following Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX, which has started an IPO roadshow pitching itself as an AI-focused space company.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman first publicly floated the possibility of an IPO last fall, describing it as the "most likely path" for the company given its size and the need for vast amounts of capital to advance its technology.

OpenAI began in 2015 as a nonprofit dedicated to developing AI for the common good and is now a company valued at \$852 billion.

The filing comes at a "precarious moment" for OpenAI as it appears to be losing ChatGPT's strong early leads with consumers and businesses to Google and Anthropic, said Emarketer analyst Nate Elliott.

"But OpenAI doesn't have a lot of other places to look for the enormous capital required to support its costs," Elliott said.

Paving the way for going public was OpenAI's decision last year to reorganize its business structure and convert itself into a public benefit corporation even as it remains technically under the control of a nonprofit.

OpenAI cleared another obstacle last month with its victory against Musk in a federal jury trial. Musk, an OpenAI co-founder and early donor, had sued the company seeking to oust Altman from its leadership and unravel its conversion to a for-profit business. A judge dismissed the case after the jury found Musk filed his lawsuit too late.

OpenAI has not yet publicly disclosed how much money it is making or when it plans to turn a profit. Much like Anthropic and SpaceX, the company has been losing more money than it makes because of the huge costs of building out the venture. OpenAI faces fierce competition from Anthropic, maker of the increasingly popular chatbot Claude, and Google's AI assistant Gemini.

In an April interview, OpenAI's chief financial officer Sarah Friar declined to give a timeline for a potential IPO but said the company was already "acting with the good hygiene of a public company," such as by measuring its revenue in the way a publicly traded firm would have to report earnings to the SEC.

"I want us to be ready," she told The Associated Press. "I think it's good to be able to tap the public

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 44 of 67

markets. They're much bigger than the private markets."

She said OpenAI's current valuation would make it one of the 15 biggest companies in the S&P 500.

She also said there is a "credentializing moment of being a public company."

"At that point, people are checking your balance sheet, the SEC is governing you and so on," she said.

In a separate statement Monday published around the same time as the announcement of the confidential filing, Altman outlined a broad vision for OpenAI including three big goals: building an automated AI researcher, accelerating economic growth and giving "everyone on Earth a personal AGI," which stands for artificial general intelligence or a form of AI that surpasses humans at many tasks.

Altman said OpenAI started out in AI research and moved into commercial product development but is now moving into its third phase involving a "broad distribution of power" as the economy reshapes around AI technology.

He said OpenAI is "working to ensure the gains are widely shared. Everyone should have an opportunity for a meaningful share in the prosperity AI creates."

The remarks follow Altman's visit last week with Sen. Bernie Sanders, who is pushing a plan for the public to take a 50% ownership stake in AI companies such as OpenAI, as well as comments from President Donald Trump embracing giving the public a stake in AI's growth.

In a California Chinese enclave, a mayor's guilty plea stokes fears of Beijing's influence

By JAIMIE DING Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In 2024, voters in the Southern California city of Arcadia elected the first all-Asian city council in the city's history.

Now, one of those politicians has pleaded guilty to being an illegal agent of the Chinese government. Former Arcadia Mayor Eileen Wang's plea, entered in federal court Friday, continues a saga that some residents of the area worry could bring unfair scrutiny on the broader Chinese and Asian American community.

Arcadia has gone under rapid demographic change in the last two decades as immigrants from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong flocked to the San Gabriel Valley east of Los Angeles. After Wang's case was made public May 11, the news made national headlines and filled the unassuming suburban city with anger, disappointment and murmurs of quiet concern. On social media, fears about spies and Chinese Communist Party influence abounded.

"We cannot allow this moment to become an excuse for people to paint entire communities with one brush or weaponize ethnicity for political gain," acting Mayor Paul Cheng said in a statement.

Shock in heavily Chinese community

Wang agreed in April to plead guilty to doing the bidding of Chinese officials by sharing articles favorable of Beijing on a news website she ran, without notifying the U.S. government as required by law.

The 56-year-old was elected in November 2022 to a five-person City Council, from which the mayor is selected on a rotating basis. She was born in Chengdu, China, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1995.

The San Gabriel Valley is home to the largest concentration of residents of Chinese and Taiwanese descent in the United States. Beginning in the 1970s, real estate developers marketed the region as "Chinese Beverly Hills" to woo affluent immigrants. As the population grew, it became a haven for newer immigrants who could go about life without needing English, access business opportunities, and avoid putting their children through China's intensely competitive education system. Arcadia's population of about 53,000 is majority Asian, like many other cities in the region.

Ted Tseng, 52, arrived in Arcadia from Taiwan nearly 40 years ago with his parents, who emigrated because they feared potential conflict between Taiwan and China.

Tseng was concerned Wang's indictment would deepen animosity against Asian Americans and discredit their contributions to the region. Fears of anti-Asian racism, though hate crimes are down since the COVID-19 pandemic, still linger.

"I'm just worried our image has been damaged," Tseng said.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 45 of 67

Feds crack down on Chinese espionage

The U.S. Department of Justice has escalated efforts in recent years to combat Chinese espionage. In April, a man accused of running a secret Chinese spy outpost in Manhattan's Chinatown neighborhood was convicted of acting as an illegal foreign agent.

Wang has suggested that she was misled by her former fiancé, Yaoning "Mike" Sun, who pleaded guilty to the same charge last year and is now serving a four-year prison sentence. Sun was the treasurer for Wang's 2022 election campaign.

A statement shared by Wang's lawyers references her "trust and love for apparently the wrong person who ultimately led her astray."

April Verlato, a former City Council member who served with Wang, said Wang and Sun lived together, and Sun accompanied Wang wherever she went.

Verlato said Wang should have stepped down as soon as she came under investigation.

"She was being selfish, getting sworn in as mayor and not resigning when she knew she was going to be pleading guilty to something," Verlato said.

Gene Sun, a long-time lawyer in Arcadia, agreed.

"I don't understand how she could have continued being a City Council member," he said.

Beijing seeks influence overseas

It is not surprising that the Chinese government would attempt to exert political influence in the region, especially given the increased political tension and economic rivalry between China and the U.S. in recent years, said Wei Li, a professor of Asian Pacific American Studies at Arizona State University.

"A lot of countries, if they have the will and if they have the means, will try to influence their diaspora," Li said.

According to his federal criminal complaint, Sun was in contact with John Chen, who also pleaded guilty to being an illegal agent of the Chinese government, regarding local politicians that Beijing could influence. In reports to Chinese officials, Sun and Chen called Wang a "New Political Star" and bragged about her contacts with mainstream U.S. politicians.

They also wrote of combatting "anti-China forces" such as Taiwan independence and the Falun Gong, an exiled anti-communist spiritual movement.

In a January 2023 message from Chen to Wang referenced in Sun's criminal complaint, Chen said: "You are doing a good job, I hope you can continue the good work, make Chinese people proud."

Some fear political repercussions for Asian Americans

Not only was the news of her guilty plea like a "slap in the face," the reaction from some community members has also been painful, said Cheng, the acting mayor.

Some residents at a May 19 City Council meeting blamed remaining council members for enabling Wang and called for their resignations.

"I've been called more names, been told to go back to China although that's not where I'm from," said Cheng, who came to the U.S. from Taiwan at age 2.

For many Arcadia residents and workers, life was as usual the day after the news broke. Many smiled apologetically when asked about the issue, saying they don't pay attention to politics.

Aliza Mo, who emigrated from China six years ago for her children's education, said she first thought the headlines must be exaggerated.

"A lot of people wondered if it was discrimination," she said.

When she learned what Wang pleaded guilty to, she changed her mind.

"I think it would be improper for anyone to be doing something like that," she said.

Judge clears QB Brendan Sorsby to play for Texas Tech despite NCAA ban for gambling

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Sports Writer

A Texas judge granted Texas Tech quarterback Brendan Sorsby a temporary injunction that clears the way for him to play this fall despite being declared ineligible by the NCAA for wagering on college sports, including bets made on his own team while he was at Indiana.

The decision sent shock waves across college sports since bans for gambling are a bedrock rule of the NCAA and many professional sports.

The NCAA said it strongly disagrees with the ruling and "is deeply concerned about the damaging, far-reaching and broadly destabilizing ramifications of this outcome — which undermines and corrupts the integrity of sports." The NCAA said it would appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Seventh District of Texas in Amarillo.

Sorsby, whose school said he has a gambling problem that he is addressing through treatment, will miss the Red Raiders' first two games next season under a judge-approved penalty that had been proposed by his attorneys. The NCAA, which usually handles such punishments, was not involved.

The ruling by Judge Ken Curry prevents the NCAA from being able to block the transfer QB's eligibility for what will be his final college season with a team among the favorites to win the Big 12 Conference and return to the College Football Playoff for a second consecutive season.

Big 12 Commissioner Brett Yormark said the ramifications of the ruling "could have broad impacts across college athletics, creating great concern amongst our membership." He called a meeting this week of his league's athletic directors and executive board, and been in touch with NCAA President Charlie Baker.

Texas Tech opens the season on Sept. 5 at home against Abilene Christian. The Red Raiders then play Oregon State before their Big 12 opener at home on Sept. 18 against Houston.

"I'm very grateful for the endless support I have received throughout this entire process," Sorsby posted on social media. "I am also grateful for the chance to rejoin my teammates. This opportunity comes with the responsibility to remain focused on my personal growth, the ability to learn from this experience, and to be able to use my situation to help others going forward."

The judge's ruling

Curry held a two-hour hearing last week in the 99th District Court in Lubbock County, where Texas Tech is located. In his decision, he wrote that he agreed Sorsby would suffer "a probable, imminent and irreparable injury" if he cannot practice or play for the Red Raiders.

The injunction comes with conditions that Sorsby must continue counseling for his gambling and to participate in peer support through Gamblers Anonymous or a similar group. He also must continue treatment to address "the underlying anxiety that served as the primary driver of (his) gambling behavior."

Texas Tech athletic director Kirby Hocutt said a comprehensive support structure, including clinical care, monitoring and compliance checks, will remain fully in place for Sorsby during his time at the school.

"As we have said before, we do not believe that the circumstances of Brendan's case warranted permanent ineligibility," Hocutt said. "As he returns to our football program, we remain committed to supporting Brendan's recovery and ensuring his compliance with the court's order."

Kansas State athletic director Gene Taylor told Yahoo Sports he was disappointed by the ruling.

"It is absolutely devastating for him to be able to play when every other sport, no matter the level, deems an athlete ineligible or they are punished severely for betting on their team," he told the outlet.

Nebraska athletic director Troy Dannen confirmed to The Associated Press that his coaches have been told to not schedule Texas Tech in any sport, as first reported by Yahoo Sports. Georgia also will not schedule Texas Tech in any sport, according to multiple media outlets.

"This may be one of those seminal moments we've all been waiting for," Dannen said in a text to the AP.

A significant setback against the NCAA

NCAA attorney Taylor Askew had said during the hearing that allowing Sorsby to play another college season would provide "reputable harm" to the governing body.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 47 of 67

"Saying the NCAA is now the first league in America that allows you, without punishment, to bet on its own contests, that's a reputable harm to the NCAA," Askew told the court. "This would be the first league in America that does that. ... We should not say for the first time serial gambling is OK."

Court records show that Sorsby has acknowledged making thousands of impermissible bets totaling at least \$90,000 during his time at Indiana, Cincinnati and Texas Tech. That included 40 bets on Indiana while he was a freshman there in 2022, though none on any of the games he played in with the Hoosiers.

While some guidelines for penalties related to gambling have changed in recent years, NCAA rules still call for a permanent loss of eligibility for any player who wagered on his own team.

Sorsby was at Indiana for two seasons before the past two at Cincinnati.

The Texas native transferred in January to Texas Tech for a reported multimillion-dollar deal. The Red Raiders brought him in to be the starting quarterback when trying to defend their first Big 12 title and return to the CFP.

What led to the NCAA investigation

According to court filings, on March 11 the NCAA received a tip about Sorsby's gambling activity from an online sportsbook, which had been informed by law enforcement. Texas Tech was notified April 14 that an investigation was underway by the NCAA.

Jeffrey Kessler, the attorney who negotiated the \$2.8 billion House settlement against the NCAA and now represents Sorsby, told the court that the 22-year-old quarterback has a diagnosed addiction and anxiety-driven compulsion. Sorsby recently completed a monthlong stay in a residential treatment program in Arizona that he entered after the start of the NCAA's investigation.

According to a clinician who treated Sorsby, Kessler said, not allowing the quarterback to play would hurt his mental health and hamper his recovery.

The NCAA in its statement Monday said it is "committed to supporting student-athlete mental health but must continue to aggressively defend against actions that defraud college athletics and threaten competitive integrity, such as betting on one's own sport."

The lawsuit and NCAA appeals

The injunction came in Sorsby's lawsuit filed May 18 against the NCAA seeking the restoration of his eligibility. That case was initially assigned to District Judge Phillip Hays, a Lubbock native and Texas Tech graduate who later recused himself. Curry is a retired judge from Tarrant County, nearly 300 miles away.

Since the filing of that lawsuit, the NCAA has twice denied Texas Tech's petition to restore the quarterback's eligibility.

When the school on May 26 revealed the first denial and its intent to appeal, university president Lawrence Schovanec wrote in a letter to the Texas Tech community that the school felt "the NCAA's ruling should be reversed or modified."

That comment illustrates the difficult landscape for the NCAA, which has lost multiple court cases challenging rules that were put in place by the very schools that make up its membership. Many focus on eligibility, with athletes contending they should be allowed to play and continue to earn money that was made available under the House ruling.

The NCAA is on the verge of approving a new eligibility model following meetings among stakeholders and even President Donald Trump. The NCAA continues to also seek limited antitrust protections from Congress in hopes of eliminating or at least smoothing the state-by-state rulings that have thrown the industry into chaos.

"There is no better example of why targeted intervention from Congress is necessary," Baker said on social media after the ruling. "When you have schools and deep-pocketed supporters willing to look the other way on the glaring integrity threat of betting on your own team — and judges whose rulings effectively strip away our ability to stop them — only Congress can equip the NCAA to apply this common sense rule to everyone fairly and consistently. The Protect College Sports Act would empower the NCAA to enforce rules including the gambling restrictions — it's needed now more than ever."

Republican senators warn surveillance program may lapse after Trump intel pick backlash

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI, MARY CLARE JALONICK and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans are warning the White House that a critical surveillance authority is likely to lapse this week amid bipartisan backlash over President Donald Trump's pick to temporarily lead the nation's intelligence community.

Sen. Tom Cotton, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, sounded the alarm in a letter over the weekend after a failed procedural vote to extend the program.

The senators urged Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who also acts as the president's National Security Advisor, to prepare "for a potential significant gap in foreign intelligence collection" if the authority expires. Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, set to lapse June 12, allows agencies including the CIA, National Security Agency and FBI to collect communications from foreign targets overseas without a warrant.

In a response obtained by The Associated Press, Rubio replied to the senators that he understands the "political challenges" but said he is "deeply disappointed" that Democrats are opposing the legislation.

"Allowing Section 702 to expire would have dire impacts on our ability to keep the nation secure," Rubio wrote.

Efforts to secure a long-term extension of the program already faced hurdles because of bipartisan concerns that the program can incidentally collect Americans' communications. Privacy advocates and some lawmakers have been pushing to create a new warrant requirement before those communications can be searched.

Senate leaders from both parties appeared to be nearing bipartisan agreement on a long-term extension, but the effort collapsed after Trump selected federal housing finance regulator Bill Pulte to serve as acting director of national intelligence.

Democrats and several Republicans registered their opposition to Trump's selection of Pulte, arguing the federal housing finance regulator lacks the experience needed to oversee the nation's 18 intelligence agencies and has used his current position to investigate some of the president's perceived political rivals.

"Why the president would throw this live hand grenade of Bill Pulte in 10 days before this is due to expire, I'm not sure," Sen. Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said on ABC's "This Week."

Pulte pick upends bipartisan deal

Even as they say it is critical, Democrats have said they won't have the votes to renew the surveillance authority unless Pulte's appointment is withdrawn. Republican leaders tried to start the process last week, but seven Republicans joined nearly all Democrats in blocking a long-term extension.

"The White House bears the responsibility to fix this," Warner said. "They have the power to do it. They can do it today. Let's see what happens."

Trump has said that Pulte won't be his permanent pick, but has not announced a nominee to be confirmed by the Senate.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune said Monday that there are "conversations" around the White House nominating a permanent pick for the job before the surveillance authority expires. But he said he wasn't sure what they would decide to do.

"We have a deadline ahead of us. We need Democrat votes," Thune said. "The naming of Pulte to that position, although the timing arguably wasn't the best, I still don't think it ought to derail something that's this important."

Thune has also expressed concern over Pulte's pick, saying the nation's top intelligence post should not be "weaponized" and that the job should be filled by "professionals." Cotton, who rarely strays from supporting Trump and is a leading advocate for the surveillance authority, declined to endorse Pulte last week, saying only that he had "no observations on the matter."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 49 of 67

"He's not qualified for the long-term position," Republican Sen. James Lankford, another member of the Intelligence Committee, told "Fox News Sunday." "That's been clear on this. He has no national security background."

Both Republican and Democratic senators skeptical of Pulte pointed to his record at the Federal Housing Finance Agency. In the role, he's 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.

"Clearly to get to good-faith negotiations the effort to elevate Bill Pulte as the acting director of national intelligence should be reversed. Immediately," House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said.

A key surveillance tool

The current reauthorization debate is hardly the first time that lawmakers have grappled with the fate of the surveillance program, particularly after a flurry of revelations about government misuse of the vast trove of intelligence it collects.

The topic in recent years has scrambled predictable partisan alliances, with Democratic critics of the Trump administration uniting with skeptics of government power on the right in voicing concerns about Section 702's renewal.

In 2024, for instance, those divisions nearly caused the program to lapse. The Senate barely missed its midnight deadline that year before approving by a 60-34 margin legislation to reauthorize Section 702 that was subsequently signed by then-President Joe Biden.

In a post on X, acting Attorney General Todd Blanche urged Democrats "to come back to the table with their Republican counterparts."

The authority is "one of our nation's key tools for finding and stopping foreign terrorists," Blanche said.

Cotton and Grassley said they believed Democratic leaders would not support another short-term extension of the surveillance authority and urged Rubio to prepare contingency plans. They said Trump should consider an executive order to prevent a disruption in intelligence collection.

Democrats and Republicans have said they were close on a bipartisan deal on a long-term extension and could still move quickly should a change occur before Friday. Still, the bill would likely need to go through the House — and the two chambers so far have disagreed on a separate issue regarding central banking digital currency.

Republicans are already warning of the consequences if Congress fails to act.

"If it goes dark, then it would be a calamitous situation for the country," House Speaker Mike Johnson said.

ICC chief prosecutor suspended pending decision by oversight body on sexual misconduct allegations

By MOLLY QUELL Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — In an unprecedented move, the embattled chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court was suspended from his duties late Monday, after the court's oversight body referred British barrister Karim Khan for disciplinary proceedings.

The 56-year-old is facing allegations of sexual misconduct with a female aide, in a scandal that has dragged on for more than two years. He has steadfastly denied any wrongdoing.

A final decision on Khan's fate is now up to the Assembly of States Parties, the body that oversees the ICC, which will hold a special session to decide if Khan can remain in his job at the global court.

The Bureau of the Assembly of States parties — the executive committee of the court's oversight body — said in a statement that it based its decision "on the report of an investigation undertaken by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the underlying evidence, the advice of an ad hoc Panel of judicial experts, and written submissions."

It added that Khan's suspension pending the assembly meeting "is not an indication of the final outcome."

The U.N. investigation found evidence that Khan had "nonconsensual sexual contact with (the aide) in his office, at his private residence, and whilst on mission," according to a copy of its report seen by The

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 50 of 67

Associated Press. However, a three-judge panel selected by the executive committee for a legal assessment of the findings found that the investigation was not conclusive enough.

When contacted for comment, Khan's legal team said a statement would be issued Tuesday.

Khan had already temporarily stepped down in May 2025 pending the outcome of the investigation. The process is unprecedented for the ICC, and the Assembly of States Parties has had to repeatedly create new rules to accommodate the situation.

The allegations against Khan were first reported to the court's independent watchdog more than two years ago. An AP investigation revealed that Khan was alleged to have seen the woman working in another ICC department and moved her into his office. She later became a regular presence on official trips, according to whistleblower documents.

On one foreign trip, Khan allegedly asked her to rest with him on a hotel bed and then "sexually touched her," the documents said. Other alleged nonconsensual behavior cited in the documents included locking the door of his office and sticking his hand in her pocket. He also allegedly asked her several times to accompany him on a vacation.

Only the Assembly of States Parties has the authority to remove Khan from office, a move that would require a majority in a secret ballot of its 125 member states. Sixty-three countries would need to support a measure to remove him.

No date was immediately set for the session, but the assembly said it would be convened as soon as possible.

Pope meets with 6 clergy abuse survivors in Spain, hopes to improve response

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Pope Leo XIV met Monday with six survivors of clergy sexual abuse in Madrid and vowed to consider their suggestions for how the Catholic Church can improve its response to the crisis, the Vatican said.

The meeting, which followed in the tradition of popes meeting with abuse survivors during their foreign trips, lasted about an hour and took place at the Vatican embassy in Madrid, the Vatican said in a statement.

Spain's Catholic hierarchy has only recently begun reckoning with its legacy of abuse and cover-up after long dismissing the severity of the scandal that came to light thanks to reporting by the newspaper El País.

In 2023, the Spanish government's ombudsman delivered a damning 800-page report estimating there were hundreds of thousands of possible victims in Spain over decades — based on a survey of 8,000 people. The report also examined 487 known cases.

Spain's bishops rejected the estimate, saying its own investigation had uncovered 728 sexual abusers within the church since 1945.

During Monday's meeting, the survivors told the pope their stories and recommendations for how the church should better respond, the Vatican said. Victims in Spain and elsewhere have long complained that the church's response to the scandal was often retraumatizing, with victims often accused of only seeking money or to harm the church.

"The pope listened with affection and attention, assured them of his closeness — and that of the entire church community — and pledged his commitment to ensuring that the suggestions received serve as a foundation for further efforts, so that the church may truly be a safe and spiritually healthy place where wounds find comfort and healing," said a statement from Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni.

The encounter marked the first known time Leo had met with victims while on a foreign visit, but it by no means was his first time hearing first-hand from survivors.

As a bishop in Chiclayo, Peru, the former Robert Prevost was in charge of listening to victims as the point of reference for the Peruvian bishops conference. In that capacity, he became intimately aware of the abusive practices in the powerful Peruvian group, Sodalitium Christianae Vitae, which Pope Francis formally suppressed last year.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 51 of 67

As pope, Leo has insisted on the need to listen to victims but he has also demanded that the rights of accused priests be upheld.

In his recent encyclical, he said the journey for justice for victims included "just reparation" and he included not only victims of sexual abuse but also spiritual, economic, institutional and power-based abuse, as well as abuses of conscience.

Ahead of the expected meeting with Leo, several groups representing survivors that were not included said they were left in the dark about the encounter, and held a small protest outside the Vatican's embassy in Madrid.

"Our associations are pleased that a group of victims from the reparation plan can be heard by the pope, but they do not represent all the victims, and deep down they are being used by the church, by the bishops conference, to clean up the image of a Spanish church that has never been able to live up to its victims," said Juan Cuatrecasas, a spokesperson for the Robbed Childhood association.

Leo addresses abuse to bishops and parliament

Before the meeting, Leo told Spanish bishops that they must offer reparations to survivors and that the entire church community should have an "ever more determined commitment to prevention and a culture of care."

"Faced with this scourge, the ecclesial community is called to respond with listening, truth, justice, reparation," Leo said. "Every wounded person must be able to find sincere listening, welcome, protection and real paths to healing."

Amid public outrage over the abuse crisis, Spain launched a reparations system earlier this year for clerical abuse cases too old to be prosecuted that requires the participation of the Catholic Church and the Spanish government.

Other countries and churches have set up reparations mechanisms to compensate survivors and provide therapy, but the Spanish one is unusual in that it gives the government a strong role in the process and the final say in payouts.

The system, which is not legally binding, has drawn praise and some skepticism from advocacy groups and survivors. It gives people a year to apply.

Leo reaffirms church's right to confessional secrecy

Leo also reaffirmed the right of the Catholic Church to maintain secrecy involving the sacrament of confession, amid efforts in Europe and elsewhere to force Catholic priests to report abuse that they learn about during the one-to-one conversations.

Independent investigations into clergy abuse around the world have identified the seal of confession as a major impediment to exposing and preventing abuse, and called for it to be abolished. The investigations have documented how abusers used the confessional to solicit sex from minors and then relied on the seal of confession to keep it secret.

In his speech to the Spanish parliament Monday, Leo framed the right of the church to keep priest-penitent conversations confidential as a matter of freedom of religion.

"To protect it legally, as is done in a similar way in some professions, means preserving a sacred space of inner freedom, where the believer can open his or her soul to God without fear of external pressures," he said.

A 7.8 magnitude quake in the Philippines kills at least 35, collapses buildings and sparks tsunami

By JIM GOMEZ and JOEAL CALUPITAN Associated Press

DAVAO, Philippines (AP) — An offshore earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 hit the southern Philippines on Monday, killing at least 35 people, injuring more than 200 others mostly in ruined buildings and sending a 1-meter (3-foot) tsunami into nearby coasts.

Several mostly low-rise buildings collapsed or sustained heavy damages in the hard-hit city of General Santos. Tsunami damage was reported in at least one southern coastal village. Smaller waves were mea-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 52 of 67

sured in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan.

The quake also triggered a landslide in Glan, a municipality in the province of Sarangani, that killed 13 villagers, Rene Punzalan, a provincial disaster-mitigation official, told the DZBB radio network. Four other villagers died in Sarangani, he said.

The major earthquake was the strongest to hit the Philippines this year, Teresito Bacolcol, the director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said. He warned people to seek advice before returning to damaged buildings and houses, which could collapse due to aftershocks.

The United States, a treaty ally of the Philippines, said it was coordinating with Manila and was ready to support Philippine response efforts. France, Japan and New Zealand also expressed support.

"Our pickup truck suddenly jerked and I thought we had a flat tire," Rod Sosmeña, a regional director of the Office of Civil Defense, told The Associated Press from General Santos, where he was traveling when the quake struck at 7:37 a.m.

"The shaking was very strong and people dashed out of houses into the streets," Sosmeña said.

Epicenter in sea off Mindanao

More than 100 students in uniforms and a dozen teachers had gathered for a flag-raising ceremony in a coconut tree-ringed grade school compound in the rural town of Malita in Davao Occidental province when the ground shook, turning the first day of school after a two-month summer break into chaos.

"Their excitement on the first day of school turned to trauma," school principal Rosavel Cachuela told the AP.

Some of the young students screamed in panic and wept but most remained seated and still, preventing any injuries, Cachuela said, adding that a motorcycle was damaged when a shed crumbled to the ground.

At least four people remained missing in General Santos, a port city of more than 700,000 people and a regional hub for the tuna export industry. Search and rescue teams worked to find people who may have been trapped in a supermarket, a warehouse, a grade school, and other small buildings that either collapsed or were severely damaged, officials said.

The international airport in General Santos was temporarily shut due to the earthquake and 17 domestic flights were canceled, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines said.

The quake was centered at sea off Mindanao, the second most populous island in the Philippine archipelago. According to Bacolcol, the quake occurred at a depth of 33 kilometers (20 miles), about 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Maasim town in Sarangani province.

Assessing damage and casualties

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered the cancellation of classes and directed disaster-response agencies to immediately get to work in quake-hit provinces, saying "the national government is moving and we will not leave Mindanao behind."

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said the threat of a tsunami largely passed about five hours after the quake. Philippine officials also lifted a tsunami warning by mid-afternoon. Six shanties on stilts were damaged in a coastal village in Zamboanga del Sur province due to the quake and taller waves, officials said.

Aside from the landslide in Sarangani, most of the other deaths were caused by collapsing buildings and falling debris, including in a damaged mosque, in the southern provinces of South Cotabato and Davao Occidental, and on Balut Island, according to Sosmeña and another disaster-mitigation official, Ednar Dayanghirang.

The DZRH radio network in Manila reported that a four-story commercial building where its provincial station was located partly collapsed and staffers dashed to the ground floor without injuries.

Tsunami waves near 3 feet measured

Waves of 1 meter (3 feet) were monitored in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and Sarangani. A 1.4-meter (4.6-foot) wave hit at one time in Kiamba town, Bacolcol said.

The quake was also felt in Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo island. Sabah is just a boat ride away from southern Philippines. An 83-centimeter (2.7-foot) tsunami was measured by a gauge off Indonesia's Sulawesi island, and the PTWC said 30-centimeter (1-foot) waves were measured in Palau.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 53 of 67

Waves up to 20 centimeters (7.8 inches) were detected on the remote Japanese island of Chichijima and the central Japanese town of Kushimoto, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The Philippines is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

The archipelago is also battered by about 20 typhoons and tropical storms each year, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Wall Street holds steadier as AI stocks recover some of their sell-off

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street held steadier Monday and recovered some of its sell-off from last week, as stocks swept up in the artificial-intelligence boom bounced back. Oil prices, meanwhile, rose following fighting between Israel and Iran, but they pared their biggest gains.

The S&P 500 added 0.3%, coming off a drop of 2.6% from Friday that was its worst since October. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dipped 80 points, or 0.2%, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 0.9%.

Some of the best performers were companies that sell computer chips, memory and other products fueling the AI boom. They had plunged Friday amid worries that their prices had shot too high due to AI euphoria. Such worries dragged South Korea's Kospi index down 8.3% early Monday, pummeling tech stocks there like Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix.

But prices recovered as trading moved westward through Europe to New York. Micron Technology rose 9.9% after sliding 13.3% Friday for the largest loss in the S&P 500. That resumed a run where its stock has more than tripled so far in 2026.

Marvell Technology climbed 9.6% in its first trading after S&P Dow Jones Indices said the semiconductor company's stock has grown enough to join its widely followed S&P 500 index. Marvell's stock has also more than tripled so far this year, aided by a 32.5% surge in one day last week. That was its best day since it began trading in 2000, and it came after Nvidia's CEO, Jensen Huang, suggested at a conference in Taiwan that Marvell could be "the next trillion-dollar company."

That such a comment could add billions of dollars to a company's value in an instant suggests to critics that AI stocks are running too hot. Chip and memory companies are indeed reaping big growth in revenue and profit because of the AI boom, but their stock prices have been soaring at astounding speeds. A widely followed index of semiconductor stocks surged nearly 85% for the year so far through Thursday, for example.

Now, the question is whether Friday's drop was the start of a downturn or just a pause that helps shake out excessive optimism.

Michael Wilson, a strategist at Morgan Stanley, is relatively optimistic. "Markets rarely move in a straight line at the pace seen since the March lows," he wrote in a report. "In our view, a correction was inevitable and ultimately healthy if this bull market is going to extend into year-end" and pull the S&P 500 to his baseline target of 8,000. That would be an 8.3% rise from Friday's close.

Corning climbed 5.6% after Amazon announced a multibillion dollar deal where Corning will produce optical fiber, cable and other products for its data centers across the country.

That helped offset a 0.9% dip for Campbell's, which reported a stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected but also a worse decline in revenue. The company's stock is also set to drop out of the S&P 500 index when Marvell Technology's stock joins it.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 21.99 points to 7,405.73. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dipped 80.77 to 50,786.01, and the Nasdaq composite gained 220.23 to 25,929.66.

In the oil market, prices jumped after Israel and Iran launched strikes against each other, threatening to drag the region back into full-scale war. The price for a barrel of Brent crude oil, the international standard, briefly topped \$98 overnight.

But it later regressed after Israel and Iran appeared to back away from further strikes. Brent's price

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 54 of 67

settled at \$94.25 per barrel, up 1.2% from Friday.

High oil prices caused by the war with Iran have already sent inflation higher, which increases not only bills for households but also yields in the bond market. High yields worldwide recently have threatened to slow economies and undercut prices for stocks and all kinds of other investments.

On Monday, Treasury yields ticked a bit higher following their jump on Friday. The yield on the 10-year Treasury edged up to 4.56% from 4.55%.

In stock markets abroad, indexes edged lower Europe following sharp losses in Asia.

Japan's Nikkei 225 dropped 3.8%, while stocks fell 1.7% in Shanghai and 1.2% in Hong Kong.

Netanyahu and Trump are at odds over the war they started together

By JULIA FRANKEL and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's latest strikes on Lebanon and Iran have made clear that U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who started the war in lockstep, want different things.

Trump had publicly warned Israel not to strike Beirut in its war with Iran-backed Hezbollah militants. When it did, on Sunday, Iran responded by firing ballistic missiles at Israel for the first time since the April ceasefire. Israel then struck Iran, with which Trump has been engaged in weeks of high-stakes negotiations.

The fighting has since died down, but the differences between the two leaders are likely to persist.

That's because Trump, whose party faces elections later this year, wants to wind down an unpopular war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz to ease gas prices. Iran says a full ceasefire in Lebanon is key to any deal.

Netanyahu, who also faces elections this year, is under pressure to stop Hezbollah's attacks and prove that he is winning the war with Iran and its allies. He also needs to manage relations with Israel's most important ally without appearing to kowtow to it.

Political considerations push in opposite directions

When the United States and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, the allies appeared shoulder to shoulder.

Netanyahu said the goal was to degrade the Islamic Republic's military, eradicate its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and topple its government. Trump announced the death of Iran's supreme leader in the opening barrage and urged Iranians to "take back" their country.

But it soon became clear that while Trump was seeking a quick win — like the one he secured in Venezuela — Netanyahu wanted to vanquish Iran and its allies, even if it required an extended conflict.

As Iran withstood weeks of heavy strikes and kept the Strait of Hormuz closed, Americans and Israelis grew increasingly frustrated — but for different reasons.

In the U.S., the price of gas and other goods soared as even some erstwhile supporters accused Trump of breaking a campaign promise and plunging the U.S. into another Mideast quagmire. He has pushed back against those critics as rising anger threatens Republicans in November's congressional elections.

In Israel, anger grew over Netanyahu's failure to secure a lasting victory in the wars sparked by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, which happened on his watch. More than two years on, Hamas still rules part of Gaza, Hezbollah still fires rockets and Iran's government and nuclear program remain intact, despite heavy losses.

Israel's bombardment of Lebanon strains relations

The collision course runs through Lebanon, where fighting still rages between Israel and Hezbollah despite ceasefire announcements.

Iran wants Lebanon included in any wider regional truce, a demand Trump seems to have accepted in order to get a deal. Iran has threatened to attack Israel again if it keeps striking Lebanon.

Israel is determined to keep the theaters separate and continue its campaign in Lebanon, where it has occupied large swaths of the south, until the threat from Hezbollah has been eliminated.

The tensions spilled into the open last week, when Trump acknowledged holding a tense call with Netanyahu about Lebanon. He admitted to using expletives and calling the Israeli leader "crazy," saying he'd grown frustrated that Israel's war on Hezbollah threatened the Iran talks.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 55 of 67

In a series of interviews, Trump made clear that he was not happy about Israel's Sunday strike in Beirut, which came without warning and hit a residential building, killing two people and wounding 20, according to Lebanese authorities.

He then urged restraint from Israel after Iran launched its first barrage of missiles later that day. "I call all the shots," not Netanyahu, Trump told the Financial Times.

Hours later, Israel bombed Iran.

Officials downplay differences

Trump had initially urged restraint in order to calm markets and keep negotiations from falling apart, according to a person familiar with the U.S.-Israel deliberations who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive conversations.

Israeli officials made the counterargument that the U.S. would not tolerate attacks without a swift response. The person added that it was also understood by both sides that not responding to the Iranian strikes would put Netanyahu in a difficult position politically.

Netanyahu has downplayed any perceived differences.

After the latest strikes, he told reporters in Hebrew that "Israel has a full right to self-defense, and we are exercising it to the extent necessary."

"I say this to you, just as I say this, with appreciation and respect, in my good conversations with my friend, President Trump," he added.

It's unclear if there will be lasting damage

It's not the first time that Trump has been publicly at odds with Netanyahu about a military operation.

In March, less than three weeks into the conflict, Trump was riled by Netanyahu's decision to attack a critical Iranian gas field, which prompted Iran to retaliate against energy infrastructure in the Gulf.

"I told him, 'Don't do that,'" Trump said at the time. "We get along great. It's coordinated, but on occasion he'll do something."

While Trump publicly disagreed with the decision, two people familiar with the matter who were not authorized to comment publicly said the U.S. was made aware of Israel's plans ahead of the attack.

It's unclear whether the latest dispute will cause lasting damage.

"It's not so uncommon for the U.S.-Israel relationship to have these kinds of tensions. What's so different right now is how publicly it's playing out," said Michael Singh, managing director at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

He noted that Trump has had similar public spats with other heads of state, including close allies.

Eytan Gilboa, an expert on U.S.-Israel relations at Israel's Bar-Ilan and Reichman universities, said he doubted the rift seriously threatened the alliance. He said Netanyahu had been careful not to push things too far.

"If there was a big threat, like if Israel were to continue the war in Iran and drag the U.S. into it, that would have been a different situation," he said. "But that is not happening."

He noted, though, that there are still "basic disagreements between Netanyahu and Trump on Iran, Lebanon and Gaza" that remain unanswered.

Israel and Iran appear to pause strikes after trading fire for the first time since April ceasefire

By JON GAMBRELL and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Israel and Iran appeared to back away from further strikes Monday, hours after they traded fire for the first time since the U.S. agreed to a ceasefire with Tehran two months ago. Both countries warned that they were ready to launch retaliatory attacks if provoked.

The renewed hostilities raised concerns that the Middle East could plunge back into a full-scale war.

Since the U.S. and Israel began striking Iran on Feb. 28, the war has shaken the global economy, driven up energy prices around the world and made many basics, including food, more expensive. Officials have been unable to turn the April ceasefire into a deal to permanently end the conflict.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 56 of 67

The new attacks prompted U.S. President Donald Trump to call for an immediate stop to fighting between Israel and Iran.

Soon after, the Iranian military's joint command issued a statement that said it was halting offensive strikes. The statement said further "aggression and hostile acts" by Israel and its supporters, including in southern Lebanon, would be met with "much more severe and crushing measures than before."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, speaking in a videotaped statement, implied that the current round of fighting was over. But he also warned that if Iran "makes the mistake and returns to attacking us, we will respond with force."

Netanyahu said Israel is continuing to operate in Lebanon against the Iranian-backed militant group Hezbollah, and that Israel "has full right to self-defense, and we will exercise it to the full extent necessary."

Meanwhile, the Lebanese Health Ministry said an Israeli airstrike on the village of Zefta killed seven people Monday, including a Syrian child. Eight people were wounded. Another strike on the coastal city of Tyre killed five and wounded eight, some of them members of the Lebanese Red Cross, the ministry said.

Both countries lift restrictions

Both countries lifted restrictions they had imposed as safety precautions. The Israeli military said most schools in Israel that closed Monday would reopen. Iran's official Mizan news agency reported that the Islamic Republic had lifted airspace restrictions affecting civilian flights.

During the truce, Iran has maintained its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz — a crucial passage for the world's oil and natural gas whose closure was the primary reason global fuel prices skyrocketed. Israel has continued to strike Hezbollah, Iran's ally in Lebanon, and pushed deeper into that country.

The U.S. military continues to impose a blockade on Iranian ports. U.S. Central Command said its forces on Monday fired on and disabled a Palau-flagged oil tanker, the M/T Marivex, in the Gulf of Oman after the ship attempted to breach the blockade.

Officials in India said the tanker's crew of 24 Indian sailors were all reported safe after a fire broke out on the vessel. It was the seventh commercial vessel the U.S. military has disabled to enforce its blockade, which began in mid-April.

Diplomats race to save the ceasefire

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed concern Monday over the surge in violence. In a post on X, Sharif urged all parties to "exercise restraint and give peace a little more chance."

Two regional officials said Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Qatar had all urged the Trump administration to pressure Israel to halt strikes on Iran and Beirut.

Those countries also pushed for Iran to stop attacking Israel, the officials said. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations said Monday that Iran and the U.S. are still working to negotiate a peace deal. After speaking at a U.N. Security Council meeting, Amir Saeid Irvani told The Associated Press he was hopeful that "very soon" the two sides would reach "a conclusion."

Explosions sound in Tehran and central Israel

Iran launched waves of attacks on Israel on Monday, and Israel launched strikes on central and western Iran.

Iranian state media reported at least 15 people were wounded after explosions sounded in Tehran and other cities. There were no immediate reports of fatalities.

The semiofficial Fars and Mehr news agencies said Israeli strikes hit a petrochemical factory in the city of Mahshahr. They did not elaborate on any damage. The Israeli military confirmed the strike on the plant, saying it targeted sites that produce materials for ballistic missiles. Israel said it also targeted truck-based missile launchers.

Israel said its strikes were in response to an Iranian missile attack. Tehran warned Sunday that it would retaliate after Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs without warning. When Israel struck back, Iran fired again.

Explosions could be heard in central Israel as air defenses sought to intercept incoming Iranian fire. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it had targeted two military bases in Israel.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 57 of 67

Iran blamed the United States for the escalation.

"No one believes that the Israeli regime would take any action without coordination with the United States," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei told journalists in Tehran.

Tensions appear to grow between Trump and Netanyahu

Trump and Netanyahu launched the war in a closely coordinated attack, with Israeli officials proudly boasting of unprecedented "shoulder to shoulder" cooperation.

The conflict reached 100 days on Monday, and the two leaders have moved in opposite directions, with tensions sometimes spilling out into the open.

Netanyahu appears to have openly defied Trump with the strike Sunday in Beirut and subsequent attacks in Iran. Trump has voiced his displeasure with Israel, including belittling Netanyahu by declaring to the Financial Times that "I call all the shots."

Their differences appear to be rooted in each leader's domestic considerations. Netanyahu faces elections this fall and is under public pressure to strike back against ongoing Hezbollah attacks on northern Israel. He also is wary of appearing too subservient to Trump.

The U.S. president also faces elections — for Congress in November — and is eager to end a war that has jolted the global economy and raised prices for consumers.

The Houthis claimed an attack on Israel

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels claimed an attack on Israel on Monday and said Israel-affiliated vessels would again be a target in the Red Sea, putting the waterway in danger along with the Gulf of Aden and the narrow Bab el-Mandeb Strait connecting them. The statement from Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree was broadcast on the Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel.

The Houthis made a similar threat during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip and launched attacks that killed at least nine mariners and sank four ships. They often targeted vessels with tangential or no ties to Israel.

The assaults upended shipping in the Red Sea, through which about \$1 trillion of goods passed each year before the war.

Apple unveils an upgraded Siri voice assistant with new AI features at its annual conference

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP) — Apple on Monday unveiled new artificial intelligence advances including upgrades to its Siri assistant, emphasizing a focus on privacy and day-to-day use as the iPhone maker tries to catch up to rivals when it comes to AI.

Siri AI, which was introduced at the start of Apple's annual World Wide Developers Conference, has been highly anticipated by users and developers. While Siri was launched in 2011, it fell behind other voice assistants and was derided even by Apple fans.

It is the last WWDC featuring CEO Tim Cook before he turns his post over to John Ternus in September. Cook received an extended standing ovation and told the audience he is "deeply grateful to have been on this journey with you" and said "the energy around Apple platforms has never been stronger."

The conference, which drew developers from some 65 countries to Apple's Silicon Valley headquarters, focuses on software, in contrast to the fall unveiling of the latest iPhones.

Apple steps up its AI game

Apple has sought to distinguish itself from its peers by stressing a privacy-centered approach and integrating AI across its devices and apps. There was no mention of AI superintelligence or companion chatbots. Rather, Apple sought to demonstrate how its AI tools can make life easier.

Apple software chief Craig Federighi took some swipes at AI companies — without naming them — that seem to be "pursuing AI for the sake of AI" without clear regard for the people it is supposed to serve. At Apple, he said, "we believe that truly helpful AI should be centered around you and your needs," which

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 58 of 67

means integrating AI into the products people use every day, with a focus on privacy.

The conference unveiled updates to Apple Intelligence, which was first announced in 2024. It now uses Google's Gemini AI model to help power its features and processes users' requests and interactions on their own device and privately on the cloud, making them inaccessible to anyone else.

At the center of it is the new Siri, which Apple said is now a "much more capable assistant" that can help users find what they need and get things done across various Apple devices. For instance, it can create a menu and gather recipes from the web or from your own text messages for a World Cup viewing party and invite friends from a group chat. Siri mode on your camera, meanwhile, can tell you what you are looking at and give you relevant information, such as the nutritional details of a plate of food.

Siri's visual intelligence also works with images on your screen. For example, it can tell you whether a backpack you are thinking of getting will work as a carry-on for a flight or whether a pair of bulky hiking boots will fit inside it.

Apple also announced improvements to its popular AI photo editing tools, including spatial reframing that lets you adjust how a photo is framed after it was taken — as if you had moved the camera to a better position while you were snapping the picture.

A standalone Siri AI app will launch later this year, though Apple said it will not initially be available in Europe and it won't be available in China while the company works out regulatory issues.

Tim Cook's last WWDC

Cook announced his retirement in April, ending a 15-year run that saw the company's market value soar by more than \$4 trillion during an iPhone-fueled era of prosperity. Ternus has been with Apple for the past quarter century, including the past five years overseeing the engineering underlying the iPhone, iPad and Mac — a role that made him a prime candidate to succeed Cook.

Ternus did not take the main stage during Monday's event.

The transition to a new CEO comes at a pivotal time for Apple. Artificial intelligence has unleashed the most upheaval within the industry since Jobs unveiled the first iPhone in 2007. Apple has gotten off to a rough start in AI after stumbling in its efforts to deliver new features built on the technology, as promised nearly two years ago.

Cook called his time at Apple "the honor of a lifetime."

"I truly believe the best is still ahead."

War in the Middle East is flaring again. Here's how each side sees the stakes

By SAM METZ Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — The tenuous ceasefire in the Middle East has held up, sometimes barely, despite being shaken by repeated flare-ups over the past two months. But it is now coming the closest yet to blowing apart and sending the region back into full-scale war — and the detonator is Lebanon.

Israeli strikes against Hezbollah militants in Beirut over the weekend brought retaliation from their key sponsor, Iran, which launched its first attacks against Israel since the ceasefire was reached April 7. Israel responded with strikes on targets throughout Iran, while Iran's proxies in Yemen and Iraq threatened to widen the war. The U.S. and other mediators rushed to prevent the fighting from spiraling out of control.

Even if quiet is reimposed, the dynamics that led to the burst of violence are still in place.

Israel and the U.S. remain locked in a standoff with Iran and Hezbollah to shape the future regional order, with each side convinced it is acting from a position of strength. U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, both facing key elections, have diverging interests.

Here's how each side views the risks, rewards and path forward:

Israel

Israel is heading into its first national elections since Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel that triggered the region's wars. Netanyahu is under pressure to project strength after repeatedly vowing to destroy

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 59 of 67

Hezbollah. Despite repeated wars and rounds of fighting, Israel has not been able to definitively end Hezbollah fire into northern Israel.

Netanyahu is also wary of appearing subservient to Trump, amid criticism in Israel that deference to the U.S. is preventing the country from reaching its war goals. Trump has pushed Netanyahu not to allow fighting in Lebanon to derail U.S. efforts to broker regionwide peace, and told the Financial Times that he, not Netanyahu, is the one to “call the shots.”

So even as Israel has entered direct negotiations with Lebanon’s government and reached several cease-fire agreements with it over the past weeks, Netanyahu has pressed ahead with operations in southern Lebanon, seizing a large part of the territory and pushing further north of Lebanon’s Litani River. It has continued raids in the south it says target Hezbollah’s rocket and drone arsenals.

Netanyahu wanted a show of power after Hezbollah targeted northern Israel with rocket fire on Sunday — a step Israeli officials have warned would trigger Israeli strikes on Beirut.

Hezbollah

Hezbollah has rejected the ceasefires agreed to by Israel and the Lebanese government and said it will not cease fighting so long as Israel continues its strikes and its forces remain in southern Lebanon. The militant group has continued attacks on Israeli troops in southern Lebanon as well as volleys into northern Israel.

Iran largely left Hezbollah to fend for itself during much of an earlier 2024 war. After that war, Hezbollah stopped its missile fire into Israel — though Israel continued regular strikes on what it called Hezbollah targets in Lebanon. But when Israel joined the U.S. in attacking Iran on Feb. 28, Hezbollah launched strikes on northern Israel in support of its ally.

Iran’s retaliation against Israel over the Beirut strikes signaled its willingness to risk renewed war in the region for the sake of its interests in Lebanon and its most important regional ally.

Hezbollah is coming under increasing pressure as Israeli troops push north of the Litani, edging closer to the city of Nabatiyeh, a regional hub where Hezbollah enjoys wide support. The group also faces increased friction with the Lebanese government, where the prime minister and president have denounced Hezbollah for renewing fighting with Israel.

Hezbollah has been resisting surrendering its weapons, something Lebanese leaders have pledged will happen. The group has said it would only discuss giving up its arsenal as part of a larger governmental “defense strategy,” perhaps one that would see Hezbollah incorporated into the Lebanese military.

Iran

Iran’s lashing out at Israel for the sake of Hezbollah carries major risks. If full-scale war erupts again, Iran would face new damage to its economy as well as attacks on its military and senior leadership.

But Iran’s leaders have sought to project confidence that the Islamic Republic and its economy can withstand the blow. They have repeatedly risked the ceasefire falling apart over the past two months as they have stuck to a tough line in negotiations with the U.S.

Iran is betting that its mass disruption of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz gives it strength to resist the United States and Israel imposing their objectives in negotiations — and that Trump’s reluctance to dive back into war will ensure the U.S. restrains Israel.

Iran has insisted that Lebanon be part of any regional resolution, and it wants to prevent a pattern where Israel can strike targets in Lebanon and Iran without facing a response.

The United States

The United States and Israel coordinated the strikes on Iran that kicked off the war. But public disagreements between Trump and Netanyahu have lately spilled into view.

The war is shaping up as a risk for Trump’s Republican Party, with midterm elections in November. Trump has said the elections — and worries about the economy — don’t factor into his decisions about the war. But his party and advisers likely are wary of the potential damage with voters from a raging conflict that drives up the price of gas and other goods. The president also does not want to be seen by voters as having dragged the United States into another costly Middle East quagmire.

Much like in Lebanon, the U.S. and Israel are increasingly striking a different tone on Iran.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 60 of 67

In negotiations, the U.S. has had as its top priorities a resolution of Iran's nuclear program and the free passage of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Israel, long concerned about Iran's nuclear program, also sees a historic opportunity to degrade Iran's ballistic missile arsenal and its support for armed groups across the region.

Despite all the talks, there is little sign of Iran being prepared to make concessions on its enriched material and the future of its nuclear program.

Gulf states

Gulf Arab states are eager to end the conflict as quickly as possible. Before the April ceasefire halted most of the fighting, Iranian airstrikes damaged infrastructure across the region. Airports, desalination plants, aluminum smelters and oil facilities were all targeted.

A return to wider war would expose those targets to more attacks. An Iranian drone strike on Kuwait's airport last week was a reminder of the threat.

At the same time, Iran's hold on the Strait of Hormuz has hit oil and gas exports for those Gulf nations that rely on sending tankers through the chokepoint between the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea.

U.S.-aligned Gulf states have long hosted American naval, air and military bases because they see the partnership as protection against Iran. Yet when war broke out, they still found themselves vulnerable to attacks, testing their faith in an alliance that was supposed to guarantee security.

The Gulf states have little to gain from a longer war and much to lose if instability becomes the region's new normal.

Gordon S. Wood, eminent scholar of the American Revolution, dies at 92 after being hit by a car

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Gordon S. Wood, the eminent and prolific scholar who forged a highly influential and sharply debated narrative of the country's early years of independence through such prize-winning works as "The Creation of the American Republic" and "The Radicalism of the American Revolution," has died. He was 92.

Wood, a professor emeritus at Brown University, died Sunday after being struck by a car in a supermarket parking lot in East Providence, Rhode Island, according to police.

Author of dozens of books and essays, Wood never gained the mass audience of historians like David McCullough and Doris Kearns Goodwin, but his findings became standard references for discussions about the formation of the U.S. and the legacy of the revolution that continue as the country approaches its 250th anniversary. Many peers regarded the white-haired, mild-looking Wood as the embodiment of the learned, traditional historian, guided by facts rather than ideology.

In 2011, President Barack Obama presented him a National Humanities Medal "for scholarship that provides insight into the founding of the nation and the drafting of the U.S. Constitution."

In recent years, younger academics increasingly alleged that Wood was too well-established, the epitome of the old-school historian who minimized the lives of slaves, women and Indigenous people. John L. Brooke, a history professor at Ohio State University, would fault him for "a distinct avoidance of interpretative paradox and complexity," even as he cited Wood's "scale and scholarly enterprise."

In an email to The Associated Press, filmmaker Ken Burns praised Wood as a "teacher of generations of students and other historians."

Woody Holton, an author and historian who clashed at times with Wood, told the AP that he admired his "willingness to encourage even a younger scholar like me who viewed the American revolutionary era very differently from him."

"The tragic accident that killed him is especially heartbreaking in denying him, by less than a month, the chance to celebrate the country's 250th birthday," added Holton, a history professor at the University of South Carolina.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 61 of 67

His success was immediate and lasting. His first book, "The Creation of the American Republic," won the Bancroft Prize in 1970 and lived on with generations of students who embraced and contended with Wood's findings that the Constitution was unintentionally subversive, a document devised by elites that led to "the destruction of the very social world they had sought to maintain."

His "The Radicalism of the American Revolution" won the Pulitzer in 1993 and the epic "Empire of Liberty" was a finalist in 2009.

Silver screen moment

Wood's name also was familiar to moviegoers through the Academy Award-winning "Good Will Hunting," released in 1997. The lead character, a pugnacious, self-taught genius played by Matt Damon, taunts a Harvard undergraduate: "You're gonna be in here regurgitating Gordon Wood, talking about, you know, the pre-revolutionary utopia and the capital-forming effects of military mobilization." (Ideas, Wood would point out, that he did not endorse).

A few years earlier, Wood received an unexpected and uncomfortable compliment from then-House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who listed "The Radicalism of the American Revolution" as an essential work of history. Wood would remember how the Georgia Republican's blessing was a "kiss of death" among his many liberal peers and perceived as an affirmation of conservative policies.

Regarding himself as neither radical nor reactionary, Wood claimed a middle ground between conventional "great man" narratives and the more egalitarian scholarship that emerged in the 1960s.

He acknowledged that historians had overlooked the contributions of women and minority groups, but worried that "headline political events" were being ignored entirely. He disputed Progressive era historian Charles Beard's influential portrait of the U.S. Constitution as a cynical triumph for the rich, but didn't regard the founders as infallible sages above looking after their own interests.

"I don't think our history should be seen as a moral tale, either good or bad," he once wrote. "I think historians should try to understand where we came from as honestly as we can, without trying to say this was a great celebration or that this was a disaster. I don't think either of those extremes is true of our history."

Battles with the past

Wood did welcome scholarly breakthroughs, notably Annette Gordon-Reed's "persuasive contextual case" that the enslaved Sally Hemings bore some of Thomas Jefferson's children. In "Empire of Liberty," which covered the years 1789 to 1815, he included lengthy passages on slavery and called it a cancer "eating away at the message of liberty and equality."

At other times, Wood angrily resisted new approaches. He was a prominent critic of The New York Times' Pulitzer Prize winning 1619 Project and its contention — later amended — that maintaining slavery was a key motivation for the American Revolution. He alleged that the project encouraged a sense "victimhood" and feeling "aggrieved," even as he acknowledged he hadn't read most of it. He would counter that the founders, including such plantation owners as Jefferson and James Madison, believed — mistakenly — that slavery would die a natural death and the revolution itself energized the American abolitionist movement.

"We all want justice, but not at the expense of truth," he wrote in 2019, adding, in a widely disputed statement, "I don't know of any colonist who said that they wanted independence in order to preserve their slaves."

In "Radicalism" and other books, Wood rejected conservative and liberal theories that the American Revolution did not immediately lead to any substantial new freedoms and was essentially a political event — a mere "mental shift" — that otherwise reinforced the status quo.

The new country's early years, Wood stated, were a time of transformation and democratization in everything from how people dressed to the way they greeted each other in the streets. The shifts were so profound that even the revolution's leaders didn't expect or want them.

"One class did not overthrow another; the poor did not supplant the rich," Wood wrote. "But social relationships, the way people were connected one to another — were changed and decisively so. By the early years of the 19th century the Revolution had created a society fundamentally different from the colonial society of the 18th century. It was in fact a new society unlike any that had existed anywhere in the world."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 62 of 67

Fellow historian and Pulitzer winner David Hackett Fischer would later write that Wood's scholarship "altered the way historians thought about their field."

Wood's other books included "Revolutionary Characters" and "The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin" and his essays and reviews appeared frequently in The New York Review of Books, The New Republic and other publications. Wood also appeared in Burns' PBS documentary about the American Revolution, consulted on Burns' film about Jefferson and chaired an advisory panel for the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Wood married Louise Goss in 1956. They had three children, two of whom became history professors.

Gordon Wood was a self-described "simple hedgehog" who stuck to writing about the revolution, which he regarded as "the most important event in American history, bar none." He was unhappy that students attending college knew far more about the Civil War, noting that it was impossible to understand any U.S. conflict without understanding the country's birth.

"We Americans have such a thin and meager sense of history that we cannot get too much of it," he once wrote.

High school boredom, college passion

Wood was born into history: His hometown, Concord, Massachusetts, had been the residence of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Louisa May Alcott among others. But his passion for the subject he later mastered did not arise until college. Wood found his high school history education unbearable, suffering through classes in which the teacher simply read from a textbook.

Wood did admire his Latin instructor, who encouraged him to attend Tufts University, from which he graduated summa cum laude. He received a master's and Ph.D. from Harvard University and studied under a celebrated Revolutionary War historian Bernard Bailyn, whose documentation of the intellectual forces behind independence in his landmark "The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution" Wood would build upon in "The Creation of the American Republic."

In his introduction to "The Idea of America," published in 2011, Wood looked back on his own work and the evolution of scholarship in his lifetime. He noted the many errors of the country's founders but warned against scolding historical figures because of mistakes which seem obvious now, what he and others call "Presentism."

"The drama, indeed the tragedy of history, comes from our understanding of the tension that existed between the conscious wills and intentions of the participants in the past and the underlying conditions that constrained their actions and shaped their future," he wrote.

"If the study of history teaches anything, it teaches us the limitations of life. It ought to produce prudence and humility."

Pope's historic speech to Spain's parliament demands respect for migrants and gets 7-minute ovation

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spanish lawmakers gave Pope Leo XIV a standing ovation on Monday after he called for respect for migrants' rights and international law in a historic address to parliament that signaled a new level of acceptance of the Catholic Church in the overwhelmingly secular country.

In the first-ever papal address to Spanish lawmakers, the American pope said a "moral renewal" was necessary in legislatures and public life to ensure respect for the inherent dignity of all people, including migrants, the unborn and the most vulnerable.

"The moral greatness of a nation is manifested, above all, in its capacity to accompany, protect and love those lives that are most fragile," Leo said.

Speeches by popes to foreign legislatures are rare, since they can imply recognition of a religious leader by lawmakers. Pope Francis addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress in 2015, and Pope Benedict XVI addressed his native German Bundestag in 2011.

That Leo was invited to speak to Las Cortes Generales showed a level of acceptance for the Catholic

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 63 of 67

Church in a political setting that might have been unthinkable even a few years ago. The Catholic Church was a pillar of Gen. Francisco Franco's dictatorship, enjoying broad control and influence over Spanish society, but that waned after democracy took root in the 1970s.

While many Spaniards still identify as Catholic, religious observance has dropped sharply amid secularizing trends seen in other once-staunchly Christian countries.

And yet lawmakers gave Leo a 7-minute standing ovation with chants of "Viva el Papa!" — "Long live the pope!"

Leo's weeklong visit to Spain — the first since Benedict visited in 2011 — has drawn large crowds, with an estimated 1.5 million people turning out for Mass on Sunday in a downtown plaza and 600,000 young people for a prayer vigil.

Pope calls for peace as Israel and Iran trade strikes

Leo's speech came Monday as Israel and Iran traded fire, threatening to drag the Middle East back into a full-scale regional war. The pope repeated his demand for dialogue, "diplomatic courage" and the "the obligation of states to resolve their disputes through the peaceful means offered by international law."

He also lamented that European defense budgets were being built up as countries confront the threat posed by Russia following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the Trump administration's threats to reduce financial and military support for the continent.

"It is therefore a cause for concern that, in various parts of the world — and in Europe as well — rearmament is once again being presented as an almost inevitable response to the fragility of the international situation," Leo said.

He repeated his demand for "rigorous ethical oversight" of automated weapons systems created by artificial intelligence "so that decisions regarding life and death are never left to automated systems nor removed from the moral responsibility of the human person."

Pope urges dignity, acceptance and integration for migrants

Spain's Socialist-led government has bucked a trend in Europe and the United States by defending immigration on economic and humanitarian grounds, launching a legalization push earlier this year for hundreds of thousands of immigrants without authorization. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has highlighted the benefits to the economy with an aging workforce and low birth rate.

Leo called for strengthened international efforts to prevent the smuggling of migrants and create conditions where they can choose to stay home.

For those who flee conflict, poverty and climate change, he called for welcome and integration. Pope Francis made the plight of refugees reaching Europe a hallmark of his papacy, and Leo has insisted especially on the dignity of migrants in his native United States amid the Trump administration's crackdown.

"This gives rise to a twofold demand for social justice: to offer safe and legal pathways, a respectful welcome and real opportunities for integration; and, at the same time, to promote the right to remain in one's own land, working to ensure that no one has to leave their home due to a lack of peace, security or decent living conditions, including economic inequalities and the effects of the climate crisis," Leo said.

Leo references the Spanish conquest and the slave trade

Leo cited the 16th century Spanish intellectual tradition, known as the School of Salamanca, that gave rise to concepts of international law and inherent human rights after Spain's colonial conquests of the Americas.

He praised the theologians involved in the movement who "understood that reason could not be invoked to legitimize whatever force or self-interest that seemed convenient" and that there were "moral limits of power."

"It must be acknowledged that society and the church herself did not always live up to these insights found in their own Christian tradition," Leo said.

It was a reference to the Catholic Church's own role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonial conquest, and recalled Leo's recent apology for the role the Holy See played in legitimizing slavery.

Pope visits at a delicate political moment

Leo's visit comes at a delicate time for Sánchez.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 64 of 67

Sánchez's Socialist Party has been hammered by corruption scandals, though none have directly implicated him. Probes have touched some of Sánchez's closest confidants, as well as his wife and brother.

As they play out in the courts, Spain is increasingly frayed by political polarization. Sánchez's minority government has been unable to pass legislation, including a budget for the past three years.

Leo, in an apparent reference to polarization, warned that "political pluralism should not degenerate into the constant disparagement of one's adversary."

Spain's progressive leader, who is an atheist, and the pope have converged on major issues including opposing the war in Iran. Both have been outspoken critics of the Trump administration.

Last month, after visiting Leo in the Vatican, Sánchez called the pope's voice "a moral compass in the fight against injustice."

Traditionally, the Catholic Church in Spain has been closer to the conservative Popular Party than the Socialist Party, which championed social issues including same-sex marriage and abortion rights.

However, by placing issues of justice at the center of their public discourse, Pope Francis and now Leo have narrowed the gap between the Vatican and progressive governments, said Rafael Ruiz Andrés, a sociology professor at Complutense University of Madrid who specializes in religious dynamics.

Fewer Americans say democracy is central to country's identity, AP-NORC poll finds

By GARY FIELDS, LINLEY SANDERS and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the U.S. prepares for an extravagant celebration of its founding principles, fewer Americans see their country as exceptional, a new poll finds.

The survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research highlights many Americans' feeling of unease over the future of its representative government — particularly among young people. It presents a jarring contrast as communities around the country commemorate the nation's 250th anniversary.

Only about one-quarter of Americans say the U.S. stands above all other countries in the world, the new poll found, while 44% say it's one of the greatest countries in the world, along with some others. About 3 in 10 say there are better countries than the U.S., an increase from 19% in an AP-NORC poll conducted in June 2016.

Americans remain divided about whether diversity is an essential feature of the U.S.'s identity, and agreement about other aspects of the country's underlying character appears to be eroding, the survey found. Americans are less likely to see a democratically elected government as "extremely" or "very" important to the United States' identity as a nation than they were just a few years ago. About two-thirds of U.S. adults now say a democratically elected government is highly important to the U.S.'s identity as a nation, down from 80% in 2021.

"It's not that the democracy part is not working," said Derricka Wall, 24, of Chickasaw, Alabama. "It's the people that are actually being put in office that is the problem."

Wall believes politicians have damaged America's governing system, which was designed to ensure representation and guard against government misuse.

America, she said, "is not what it used to be. I feel like our founding fathers would be kind of disappointed with how it is now."

Rising belief that democracy is not essential to American identity

Young adults are much less likely than older Americans to believe the U.S. is special, compared with other nations, the poll found.

About 4 in 10, 44%, of U.S. adults under 30 say there are other countries better than the U.S., compared with 22% of U.S. adults ages 60 and older.

Fewer, too, see democracy as a key element of the U.S.'s identity. Only about half of Americans under 30 believe this, compared with 81% of those 60 and older.

Wall said the people who established the government with co-equal branches thought they were erecting safeguards to keep any one person or group from attaining too much power. But she believes they didn't

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 65 of 67

foresee how easily those guardrails would crumble if the people in the system stopped enforcing them. "I feel like they would actually roll out of their graves," she said. "I feel they would be very disappointed in us."

The belief that politics isn't working for everyday people extends beyond the youngest generations. Kent Stage, 62 and a retired senior enlisted man in the Army, is a registered Republican in Indiana. He does not think the current political system addresses the country's problems. He'd like to see term limits on politicians and more working-class people serving.

"I'll trust the ambulance-chasing lawyer and a shady used car salesman before I trust the politician," he said.

Stage, who is also a former Marine, believes public servants make self-serving choices for their families "while mine and yours still got to hit the old grindstone."

Many feel it's harder to get ahead in the US

The survey also finds widespread cynicism about America as the land of opportunity. About half of U.S. adults, 51%, say the American Dream — the idea that if you work hard, you'll get ahead — once held true but does not anymore. About one-third say it "still holds true" while 15% say it never held true.

Jack Hermanson, a 27-year-old software developer in Denver, said his belief in the American Dream changed when he saw his engineer husband struggle to find a job. "That really shattered my impression that if you work hard, you get what you deserve," Hermanson said.

Only 22% of Americans under 30 say the American Dream still holds true, compared with 46% of Americans ages 60 and older.

Angela Toombs, 31, works at a senior living facility in Atlanta where her clients talk about how easy it was to buy a house while working their first regular jobs in their 20s and are incredulous about the obstacles facing Toombs' generation. Toombs recently gave up her own apartment to rent a room in order to save money.

Skepticism about the American Dream is more widespread among Democrats and independents, compared with Republicans. Most Republicans, 57%, say the American Dream still holds true, compared with about one-quarter of independents and 17% of Democrats.

Republicans are also much likelier than Democrats to see the U.S. as exceptional. About half of Republicans say the U.S. stands above all other countries in the world, compared with only 7% of Democrats.

Quintin Sharpe, 28, lives in a resort town on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin. A financial planner who is Republican, he said the American Dream remains accessible and he is proud of the country. "It's been a great experiment."

"The opportunity is there for those who want to work for it," he said. Sharpe believes the country is "a meritocracy, and the best ideas, the best work ethic, those with the best succeed regardless of race, skin color, any of those factors."

He and his wife will celebrate the country's 250th anniversary watching the fireworks over the lake.

Divides on whether diversity is essential to US

Just over half of U.S. adults — 56% — say a shared American culture and set of values are "extremely" or "very" important to the country's identity, down from 65% in 2017. Younger Americans are less likely than older ones to say a singular set of values is important to U.S. identity.

But Americans remain sharply divided on the centrality of welcoming diverse perspectives: About half of adults, 51%, say the ability of people to come from other places in the world to escape violence or find economic opportunities is "extremely" or "very" important to American identity, while 55% say this about the mixing of cultures and values from around the world.

Only about 4 in 10 Republicans see the mixing of cultures and values from around the world as central to the country's identity, compared with 76% of Democrats.

Rose Nunez, 70, of San Antonio, was a small business owner but now is a caregiver for family members. Nunez, who tends to vote for Democrats, said there is an unease and tension that are just beneath the surface, especially focused on Hispanics. She said some people have started carrying their papers showing their immigration status in case they are challenged.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 66 of 67

"It is hard to celebrate when the feelings towards immigrants and communities of color are so strong," she said of the upcoming America 250 celebrations.

She said even citizens are questioned now. If it gets to a point where being naturalized is challenged, "guess what, my mom would be leaving. She's been living in this country since she was maybe four years old. She's 93."

Tropical Storm Boris forms off Mexico's southern Pacific coast and brings flooding threat

MIAMI (AP) — Tropical Storm Boris formed Monday and was expected to bring heavy rain, flooding and possible mudslides to parts of southern Mexico's Pacific coast, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

Boris was located about 85 miles (135 kilometers) southeast of Acapulco and 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Punta Maldonado, according to the Miami-based weather center. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) and was moving northeast at 2 mph (3 kph).

Boris was expected to turn to the north, bringing rainfall of 4 to 10 inches (10 to 25 centimeters) to coastal areas of the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca through Monday night. The storm was forecast to make landfall along the coast of Guerrero by Monday evening, the center said.

"This rainfall may produce life-threatening flooding and mudslides, especially in areas of steep terrain," the center said.

A tropical storm warning was in effect from Laguna de Chacahua in Oaxaca to Tecpan de Galeana in Guerrero, with tropical storm conditions expected in the area within 24 hours.

Boris was forecast to weaken once the center reaches the coast and dissipate inland by Tuesday. The storm isn't expected to impact Mexico's three World Cup host cities.

Boris is the second named storm of the Pacific hurricane season, which started May 15. Tropical Storm Amanda formed June 3 far out to sea, posing no threat to land.

The Atlantic hurricane season began June 1, but no cyclones have formed in that basin yet this year.

Today in History: June 9 Secretariat wins Triple Crown in record time

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, June 9, the 160th day of 2026. There are 205 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 9, 1973, Secretariat won the Belmont Stakes by 31 lengths, winning horse racing's Triple Crown and setting a still-standing record by running the 1 1/2-mile dirt course in 2 minutes, 24 seconds.

Also on this date:

In 1732, James Oglethorpe received a charter from Britain's King George II to establish the colony of Georgia.

In 1954, during the Senate Army-McCarthy hearings, Army special counsel Joseph N. Welch berated Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, a Republican from Wisconsin, asking: "Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

In 1972, heavy rains triggered record flooding in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The resulting disaster left at least 238 people dead and more than 1,300 homes destroyed.

In 1978, leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints struck down a policy of excluding Black men from the Mormon priesthood that had been in place for more than 125 years.

In 1986, the Rogers Commission released its report on the space shuttle Challenger disaster, criticizing NASA and rocket builder Morton Thiokol for management problems leading to the explosion that claimed the lives of seven astronauts.

In 2013, Edward Snowden, a former CIA employee and National Security Agency contractor, revealed in a video interview from Hong Kong published by The Guardian that he was the source of a leaked trove of sensitive intelligence material. Snowden was charged with espionage and fled to residency in Russia.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 09, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 004 ~ 67 of 67

In 2013, Rafael Nadal became the first man to win eight titles at the same Grand Slam tennis tournament after beating fellow Spaniard David Ferrer in the French Open final. (Nadal would finish his career with 14 French Open titles.)

In 2020, a funeral service and burial were held in Houston, Texas, for George Floyd, the Black man whose death spurred widespread protests over police brutality and racial prejudice. The service came little more than two weeks after Floyd was pinned down for more than eight minutes under the knee of a white Minneapolis police officer during an arrest.

Today's Birthdays: Sportscaster Dick Vitale is 87. Film composer James Newton Howard is 75. Author Patricia Cornwell is 70. Actor Michael J. Fox is 65. Writer-filmmaker Aaron Sorkin is 65. Actor Johnny Depp is 63. Actor Gloria Reuben is 62. Actor Michaela Conlin is 48. Actor Natalie Portman is 45. Musician Anoushka Shankar is 45. Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Laurie Hernandez is 26. Dancer and choreographer Kaeli Ware is 26.