

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 1 of 80

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [3- Groton Legion Ad](#)
- [4- American Legion holds Convention](#)
- [6- Adult Mosquito Control](#)
- [7- Groton teams post strong night with wins over Watertown and Milbank](#)
- [9- Ida Hannon's Card Shower](#)
- [10- Anderson honored as South Dakota Assistant Track Coach of the Year](#)
- [11- Pro-Life Education in Schools Approved by Board of Ed Standards](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: States are changing fire codes to make housing cheaper. Some safety experts are worried.](#)
- [15- SD SearchLight: Legal protections for nearly 350,000 Haitians at risk as US Supreme Court nears ruling](#)
- [18- SD SearchLight: South Dakota Republican state senator charged with felony over false candidate forms](#)
- [20- SD SearchLight: Sides clash in court over legality of abortion-pill advertising in South Dakota](#)
- [22- SD SearchLight: Work, housing and staffing: How South Dakota's corrections chief aims to keep inmates from returning](#)
- [24- SD SearchLight: Bipartisan affordable housing bill heads to Trump's desk](#)
- [25- SD SearchLight: Trump administration in court win allowed to conduct nationwide fast-track deportations](#)
- [26- SD SearchLight: US Senate joins House in rebuke of Trump over his war in Iran](#)
- [28- Weather Pages](#)
- [33- Daily Devotional](#)
- [35- Subscription Form](#)
- [36- Lottery Number](#)
- [37- News from the Associated Press](#)

Wednesday, June 24

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, Catalina blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.

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

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

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JVT Practice, 6-9 p.m., Gym
Sr. Legion hosts Clark, 5:30 p.m.
Jr. Legion hosts Clark, 7 p.m.
U12 Baseball at Roslyn, DH, 5:30 p.m.
U10 Baseball at Britton, DH, 5:30 p.m. (R&B)
U10 Softball hosts Sisseton (Split), 6 p.m.
U10 Softball at Claremont (Split), 6:30 p.m.
U8 Softball at Claremont, 5:30 p.m. (W&G)

Thursday, June 25

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, green beans, fruit, garlic bread.

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library, 10 a.m.

JVT Practice, 6-7:30 p.m., Gym

U10 Baseball hosts Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m. (B&W)

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

U8 Baseball at Columbia, DH, 5:30 p.m. (Red)

U18 Softball at Redfield, 6 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 2 of 80

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.

Healthcare Fraud Sweep

The Justice Department has charged 455 defendants across 45 states and US territories in a \$6.5B healthcare fraud crackdown, which officials described as the largest coordinated enforcement action in its history and the second-largest amount ever charged in a single operation (behind last year's \$14.6B operation).

Authorities say the schemes targeted Medicare, Medicaid, and other healthcare programs through fraudulent billing, illegal kickbacks, opioid distribution, and telemedicine operations. Those charged include 90 licensed medical professionals, while 295 defendants are tied to over \$500M in false Medicaid claims. Investigators also seized more than \$127M in cash, vehicles, jewelry, and other assets tied to the alleged fraud.

The two-week crackdown comes amid the Trump administration's antifraud push, with expanded data-sharing efforts across agencies. Experts estimate healthcare fraud costs the US between \$100B and \$170B annually—roughly 3% to 15% of total healthcare spending.

'Green Boots' Recovery Mission

India's government is soliciting bids for a mission to retrieve the remains of "Green Boots," a climber who died 30 years ago on Mount Everest.

In 1996, climbers attempted the first Indian ascent of Everest from the northeast side in Tibet. (Climbing from Nepal's south side is more common, accounting for about 70% of climbs.) Near the summit, the group was hit by the blizzard chronicled in Jon Krakauer's "Into Thin Air." Eight people died, including three Indian climbers, of whom only one body has been found. Nicknamed for his lime-colored boots, the body remains on the trail, and DNA has confirmed he is Indian soldier Dorje Morup. India wants the retrieval completed by October, despite poor weather conditions.

About 200 bodies remain on Mount Everest. Efforts to retrieve them are dangerous, although some—including "Sleeping Beauty"—have been moved out of sight.

Airborne Ant Trap

Researchers have identified a new Australian spider that catapults its prey into the air with an acceleration roughly 15 times greater than that experienced by jet pilots, according to a study published this week.

A two-person team spent 10 nights in the rain forest recording the nocturnal species with high-speed and infrared cameras. The spider spends up to four hours spinning tension lines into a cone on a leaf, branch, or the forest floor. Researchers suspect it releases pheromones to lure green ants—the spider's only prey. When an ant bites the cone, the trap launches the insect nearly a foot into the air in a fraction of a second and into a primary web, where the spider feasts. The snare-like contraption is the first known web triggered by the prey rather than the predator and the first designed to target a single species.

While the spider has yet to be formally named, it's been coined the ballista spider, after an ancient Roman weapon used to launch stones.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 3 of 80

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Washington Wizards select BYU's AJ Dybantsa as No. 1 overall pick in the NBA draft.

Milwaukee Bucks trade two-time NBA MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo and Bobby Portis to Miami Heat for a squad of young players and draft picks.

Savannah Guthrie makes plea on the "Today" show following reports of a ransom note claiming her mother, Nancy Guthrie, died shortly after being abducted (More, w/video) | "Blair Witch Project" reboot set for Sept. 24, 2027.

Cristiano Ronaldo becomes oldest player to score twice in one World Cup match as Portugal beat Uzbekistan 5-0.

Canada hosts Switzerland at 3 pm ET with the Group B title on the line; Brazil faces Scotland at 6 pm ET.

Science & Technology

Meta debuts more affordable line of AI-powered smart glasses starting at \$299; one model is codesigned by Kylie Jenner and features her voice as an AI assistant.

Laughter is controlled by two distinct brain networks: one triggers spontaneous belly laughs and the other elicits conversational chuckles.

Severe pneumonia—the world's most common infectious cause of death—has three subtypes, partly explaining differences in patient outcomes; finding could inform more personalized treatments.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -1.4%, Dow -0.1%, Nasdaq -2.2%) amid memory chipmaker sell-off led by Micron (-13.2%) and Sandisk (-13.6%).

Oracle reveals it cut 21,000 jobs—roughly 13% of its global workforce—in the past 12 months, citing AI adoption.

For the first time since 2023, more Americans (53%) say they would rather buy a home than rent, per a new Bank of America report.

Politics & World Affairs

Senate votes 50-48 to adopt House resolution calling for President Donald Trump to end the war in Iran or secure approval from Congress; four Republicans join Democrats in the vote.

France records its hottest day on record amid European heat wave.

Eight people sentenced to prison after being convicted of July 2025 attack on ICE facility in Texas involving gunfight, fireworks; all eight were convicted of terrorism charges after prosecutors linked them to antifa.



A promotional poster for a live music performance. It features a photograph of a smiling woman with blonde hair wearing sunglasses. In the top left corner, there is a circular logo with a guitar neck and the text "LIVE MUSIC AT THE LEGION!". The name "LIZZY HOFER" is written in large, bold, white letters with a red flame graphic to the left. Below the name, it says "PLAYING FRIDAY JUNE 26" in green and pink. To the right, it indicates the time "9 P.M. TO 1 A.M." and the venue "GROTON AMERICAN LEGION". At the bottom, it says "GREAT MUSIC ★ COLD DRINKS ★ GOOD TIMES" and "EVERYONE WELCOME!" with decorative arrows.

LIVE MUSIC
AT THE LEGION!

LIZZY
HOFER

PLAYING
FRIDAY
JUNE 26

9 P.M. TO 1 A.M.
★
GROTON
AMERICAN LEGION

GREAT MUSIC ★ COLD DRINKS ★ GOOD TIMES
★ EVERYONE WELCOME! ★

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 4 of 80

American Legion holds Convention

The South Dakota American Legion 107th Department Annual Convention was held in Aberdeen last Friday thru Sunday.



US Senator Mike Rounds addresses the SD American Legion Convention.



Local Groton Fire District EMT Weston Dinger receives the SD American Legion Department EMT of the Year Award. Presenting the award L-R Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Public Safety Committee Chairman Larry Price.



Groton Post 39 Americanism Officer Bruce Babcock and Post Commander Doug Hamilton receive the Department Americanism Excellence Award. Presenting the award is Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Americanism Chairman Carol Howitz.



Groton Post 39's finance officer Brent Wienk receives the District 4 Legionnaire of the Year award.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 5 of 80



Groton Fire Captain Dale Ringgenberg receives the SD American Legion Firefighter of the Year Award. He also competed at the American Legion Midwest Region and he won the regional competition. Presenting the award L-R Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Public Safety Committee Chairman Larry Price.



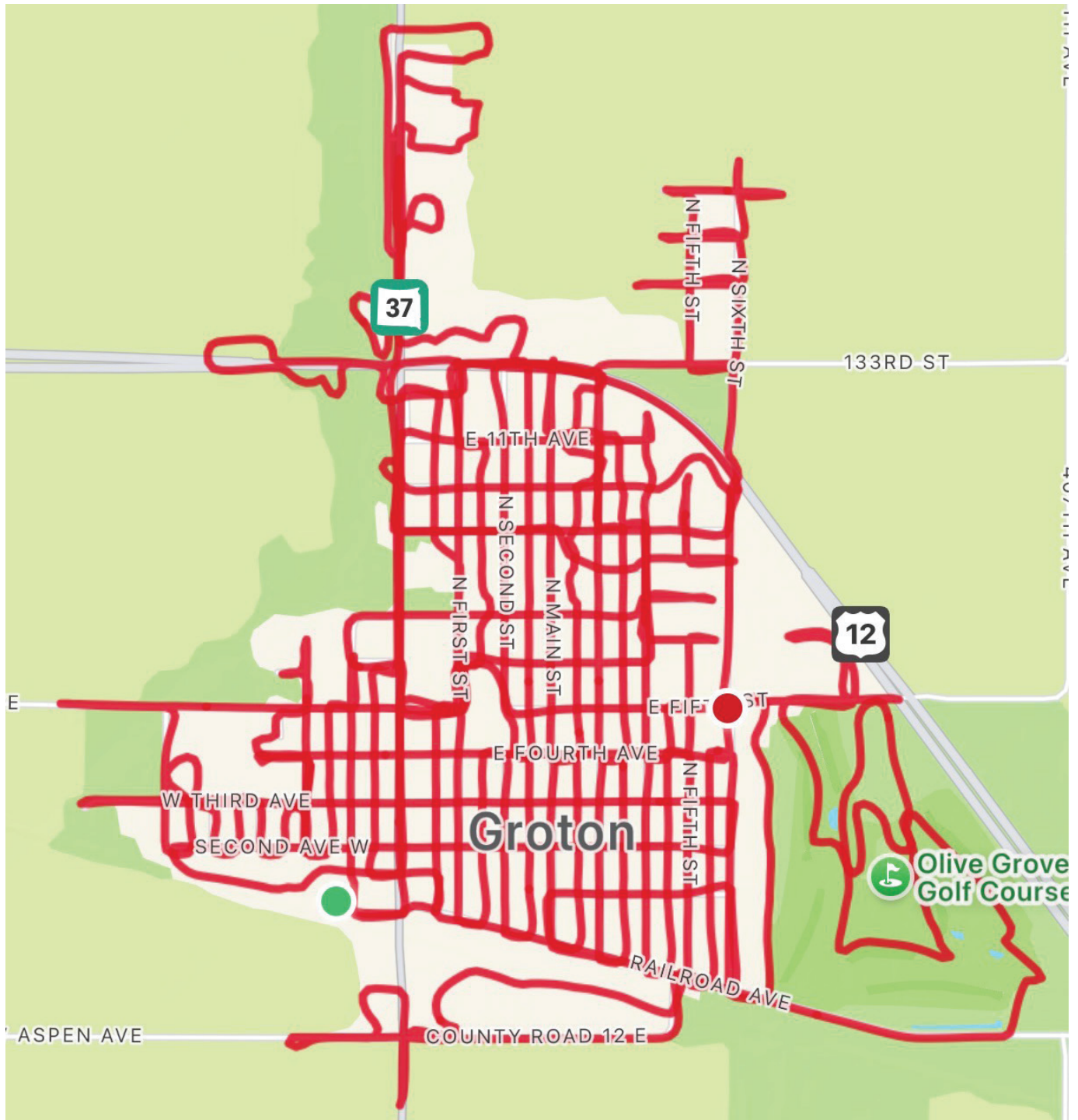
Groton's previous Post Commander Bruce Babcock receives the prestigious SD Department "Pride of the Prairie" Award of excellence for Groton's Post 39. Presenting the award is the previous Department Commander Kevin Hempel and current Department Commander Bill Peters.



Newly sworn in American Legion District 4 Commander Bruce Babcock and his wife Karyn pose with visiting American Legion National Commander Dan Wiley at the Legion/Auxiliary Joint Banquet.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 6 of 80



Adult Mosquito Control

The City of Groton conducted adult mosquito control Tuesday night. The temperature was started at 71 degrees and went down to 61 by midnight with the wind out of the northwest at 1-3 mph. 10.8 gallons of MasterLine Kontrol 4-4 was used. Travel time was 3 hours and 4 minutes with a distance of 36 miles. Total cost of the application was around \$560.

Groton teams post strong night with wins over Watertown and Milbank

Groton baseball teams enjoyed a successful Tuesday on the diamond, highlighted by a pair of 14U victories over Watertown and a varsity Legion doubleheader sweep of Milbank, while the Junior Legion squad battled hard but came up short in a pair of games against Britton.

The Groton Post 39 14U team opened its day in Watertown with a convincing 8-3 victory. Groton exploded for five runs in the first inning as Owen Tewksbury drove in a run with a single, Rylan Blackwood plated two with a groundout, and Gavin Hanten delivered a two-run triple. Groton added two more runs in the second on RBI singles by Knox Mulder and Hanten before tacking on another run in the third. Easton Larson earned the win on the mound, allowing just three hits and three runs, only one earned, over four innings while striking out four. Hanten finished 2-for-2 with three RBIs, while Groton drew 10 walks and stole 10 bases. Asher Zimmerman and Tewksbury each swiped multiple bases as Groton's aggressive baserunning kept constant pressure on Watertown.

The second game saw Groton complete the sweep with a 10-7 victory. Groton jumped out early, scoring twice in the first inning and adding three more runs in the second. A five-run fourth inning provided the cushion they would ultimately need. Trayce Schelle, Easton Larson, Kyson Kucker, and Tucker Leicht each drove in a run during the contest. Leicht and Larson collected two hits apiece, while Kucker stole two bases as Groton totaled seven steals. Bentley Ehresmann started on the mound and struck out five, while Graham Rose provided relief work to help secure the win. The 14U squad showed balance throughout the day, combining timely hitting, aggressive baserunning, and solid defense in earning the twin bill sweep.

The Groton Legion varsity squad also enjoyed a perfect day, defeating Milbank twice. In the opener, Groton rolled to a 16-6 victory after erupting for eight runs in the first inning. Carter Simon drove in three runs, while Alex Abeln and Nick Groeblichhoff each collected two hits. Gavin Englund earned the victory, working 4 1/3 innings and striking out four. TC Schuster added a double and later tossed 1 1/3 scoreless innings in relief as Groton pounded out nine hits and drew 11 walks.

The nightcap provided even more drama. Trailing 11-6 after Milbank scored seven runs in the fourth inning, Groton rallied with five runs in the bottom half of the frame to tie the game. The comeback was completed in walk-off fashion in the fifth when Lincoln Krause delivered the game-winning single for a 12-11 victory. Englund led Groton with two hits, while Schuster drove in two runs. Isaiah Scepaniak earned the complete-game win despite surrendering 11 runs, striking out six over five innings. Groton showed patience at the plate with seven walks and played error-free defense behind Scepaniak.

The Junior Legion team found success harder to come by in Britton. In the opener, Groton built a 6-0 lead through two innings before Britton erupted for eight runs in the third inning and went on to claim a 15-6 victory. Zach Fliehs led Groton offensively, going a perfect 3-for-3 with three RBIs. Jordan Schwan added two hits and stole two bases, while Noah Scepaniak also drove in a run. Despite collecting eight hits, Groton could not overcome Britton's patient approach at the plate as the hosts drew eight walks and stole six bases.

The nightcap was much closer, with Britton edging Groton 7-4. Groton briefly grabbed a 3-1 lead in the second inning behind RBIs from Scepaniak, Schwan, and K. Oswald. However, Britton answered with a five-run third inning to take control. Scepaniak, Xavior Ellenbecker, Braden Fliehs, and John Bisbee each recorded hits for Groton, while Schwan, Scepaniak, Oswald, and Wesley Borg each drove in a run. Britton's pitching staff limited Groton to four hits while striking out seven.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 8 of 80

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion 6 - 15 Britton

📍 Away 📅 Tuesday June 23, 2026

	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
GRTN	1	5	0	0	0	6	8	4
BRTT	0	4	8	3	X	15	9	1

BATTING

Groton Post 39...	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
J Schwan #11 (CF)	3	2	2	2	0	0
K Oswald #12 (C)	3	0	0	0	0	2
B Fliehs #19 (P)	2	0	0	0	0	1
Z Fliehs #23 (3B)	3	0	3	3	0	0
L Shilhan... #17 (1B)	3	0	1	0	0	0
W Borg #1 (SS)	3	1	1	0	0	1
J Bisbee #15 (2B)	3	1	0	0	0	1
X Ellenbe... #8 (LF)	1	1	0	0	1	1
N Scepani... #7 (RF)	2	1	1	1	0	0
Totals	23	6	8	6	1	6

2B: L Shilhanek, **TB:** N Scepaniak, W Borg, Z Fliehs 3, J Schwan 2, L Shilhanek 2, **HBP:** X Ellenbecker, B Fliehs, **SB:** J Schwan 2, **LOB:** 5

PITCHING

Groton Pos...	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
B Fliehs #19	2.2	5	9	8	7	3	0
J Bisbee #15	1.1	4	6	1	1	1	0
Totals	4.0	9	15	7	8	4	0

L: B Fliehs, **P-S:** J Bisbee 41-23, B Fliehs 86-44, **WP:** J Bisbee, **HBP:** J Bisbee, **BF:** J Bisbee 13, B Fliehs 20, **E:** Z Fliehs 4

Britton	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
W Richter #19 (SS)	4	3	1	1	0	0
M Burger #9 (RF)	3	1	2	2	1	1
C Chapin #10 (C)	4	1	1	1	0	2
D Redler #4 (P)	2	1	2	2	1	0
K Mills #11 (3B)	3	0	0	0	0	0
L Kilker #8 (2B)	3	1	1	0	0	0
C Grobe #5 (LF)	0	3	0	0	2	0
M Suther #30	2	1	1	0	1	1
N Folkman #67 (1B)	2	1	0	2	1	0
L Heer #6 (CF)	1	3	1	2	2	0
Totals	24	15	9	10	8	4

2B: D Redler, C Chapin, **3B:** W Richter, **TB:** M Burger 2, M Suther, D Redler 3, C Chapin 2, L Kilker, L Heer, W Richter 3, **CS:** M Suther, **HBP:** C Grobe, **SB:** M Burger 2, C Chapin, L Kilker, L Heer 2, **LOB:** 6

Britton	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
D Redler #4	5.0	8	6	3	1	6	0
Totals	5.0	8	6	3	1	6	0

W: D Redler, **P-S:** D Redler 89-59, **HBP:** D Redler 2, **BF:** D Redler 26, **E:** K Mills



for Ida Hannon's 90th Birthday

Ida will be turning 90 on July 7th! While a party isn't possible this year, we still want to make her day extra memorable. We'd like for her dearest friends and family (that's you!) to send her a card or gift this year. Include a message, old memories, photos, or simply birthday wishes.

Help us make her day one that she won't forget.

We will gather the cards and gifts for her to have on her big day.

please mail your card/gifts to:

Ida hannon (granddaughter
Michelle)

1208 appollo ave
Aberdeen SD, 57401
by July 11th

*thank you
for making this day extra special for my
grandma.*



Anderson honored as South Dakota Assistant Track Coach of the Year



Katie Anderson

A familiar name to Groton sports fans has received statewide recognition for her contributions to high school track and field.

Katie Anderson, a Groton native and graduate of Groton Area High School, was recently named the South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association's Area 3 Class AA Assistant Coach of the Year. Anderson serves as an assistant coach for the Aberdeen Central track and field program.

The South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association announced its annual Coach of the Year awards, recognizing outstanding head and assistant coaches from across the state. Anderson was among a select group of coaches honored for their dedication to student-athletes and the success of their programs.

Since joining the Aberdeen Central coaching staff, Anderson has helped guide the Golden Eagles to strong performances in one of the state's most competitive classes. Her work with athletes both on and off the track has earned the respect of fellow coaches throughout South Dakota.

Other area coaches receiving honors included Brian Tvedt of Deuel as Area 1 Class A Head Coach of the Year, Jackie Braun of Aberdeen Roncalli as Area 1 Class A Assistant Coach of the Year, Alli Jackson of Northwestern as Area 1 Class B Head Coach of the Year, and Brian Hogie of Ipswich as Area 1 Class B Assistant Coach of the Year.

The annual awards are voted on by members of the South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association and recognize coaches who have demonstrated excellence in developing athletes and advancing the sport throughout the state.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 11 of 80

Pro-Life Education in Schools Approved by Board of Ed Standards

PIERRE, S.D. – Yesterday, education on prenatal growth and development was unanimously approved for implementation in schools by the Board of Education Standards (BOES). HB 1313 was signed by Governor Rhoden this past legislative session and requires education in prenatal human growth and development.

“Human life is sacred, and our students deserve to learn what human life looks like even before a baby is born. I am proud that South Dakota continues to lead as the most pro-life state in America,” said Governor Larry Rhoden. “By educating our students on the dignity of human life, we will continue to protect the unborn for generations to come.”

“The South Dakota Board of Education Standards unanimously recommended two videos detailing human development from conception to birth,” said Steve Perkins, President of the South Dakota Board of Education Standards. “This ensures that our children will learn about the miracle of life and gain a firsthand understanding of how babies develop. I am grateful for Governor Rhoden and the Legislature for their leadership in advancing HB 1313.”

HB 1313 is one of three pro-life bills that were signed by Governor Rhoden this session. HB 1257 amends the definition of an abortion and HB 1274 allows the Attorney General to prosecute the shipment of pills for purposes of an unlawful abortion. HB 1274 is under review by a federal court, and the Governor and Attorney General are zealously fighting to protect that law.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

States are changing fire codes to make housing cheaper.

Some safety experts are worried.

Cutting stairwells, relaxing electrical wiring protections are among the code changes being debated.

BY: ROBBIE SEQUEIRA

States and cities are loosening building code requirements in an effort to lower construction costs and boost affordable housing.

Some of these changes include allowing low-rise apartment buildings to have just one stairway, reducing how often building codes are updated and rolling back specific electrical or fire safety standards.

But critics have raised safety concerns, noting that existing rules were shaped by past tragedies and aim to prevent future harm.

For example, having only one staircase could allow a developer to add another unit or expand the size of units, said Nicolle Aube, principal and founder of Civex, a planning and civil engineering consulting firm, and an American Planning Association board member.

"But then there's this flip side, that by removing these codes and protections, it carries this additional risk for the developer and the occupants of the building if the worst-case scenario happens," she said.

Many states are considering single-stairway apartment laws.

They generally take one of four approaches, said Alex Horowitz, housing policy director at The Pew Charitable Trusts: begin with a study, allow single-stairway buildings statewide, update the state building code while letting local governments opt out, or give localities authority to allow them. Pew has lobbied for and testified in favor of the changes.

Two national developments could make it easier for more states and cities to allow single-stairway buildings, Horowitz said.

The first are proposed updates by the International Code Council, the organization that develops the model codes many states use as the basis for their building rules. An update to its multifamily code, for example, would allow single-stairway buildings to add a fourth story.

Second, the bipartisan 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act moving through Congress would direct the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to develop model guidelines for residential buildings with a single stairway not exceeding six stories.

According to Pew, 19 states and Washington, D.C., introduced bills between 2022 and 2025 to study or allow single-stairway apartment buildings, and seven states passed them in 2025 alone.

This year, Idaho enacted a new law that allows local governments to permit certain apartment buildings to use one stairway — generally up to six stories without an occupiable roof, or five stories with one, along with limits on units per floor, sprinklers, stair width, and smoke and fire detection.

Colorado's law enacted last year requires certain municipalities to modify their building codes by Dec. 1, 2027, to allow five-story multifamily residential buildings to be served by a single exit. Texas' 2025 law lets municipalities authorize single-stairway apartment buildings up to six stories.

Colorado state Rep. Andrew Boesenecker, a Democrat who sponsored the new law, came to this issue because the state needed to find a way to make smaller multifamily projects more feasible. He said the policy can help on infill lots where a traditional two-stairway apartment building may not fit.

"Single stairway or smart stairway buildings are not only a very safe way to build multi-family housing,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 13 of 80

they also bring a product to market that's just not being offered," Boesenecker said.

Colorado is one 16 states without a statewide building code, making local implementation a major focus. Boesenecker said lawmakers had to look at "ways that you can make it feasible through local governments to adopt this standard into their building code."

He said the work to get the support of those skeptical of single-staircase legislation happened a year prior to the bill's passage, when lawmakers worked with fire chiefs, fire marshals and firefighters' unions for about a year to get them to a "neutral position" on the bill.

In Texas, Democratic state Sen. Nate Johnson said the law he sponsored will allow for architectural innovation as well as maximizing multi-family housing on odd-shaped and smaller lots.

Johnson said modernizing building codes does not come at the risk of safety.

"Who knows what policies once served well and now, after decades of technological advances and changes in land use, impede good design?" Johnson said. "We have regulations for a reason, and I'm not for throwing out what protects the public. Markets tend to easily meet the challenges of sound regulatory protections."

Lawmakers in Illinois, New York and Rhode Island considered single-stairway bills this year, but none passed before the legislatures adjourned for the year.

But moving in the opposite direction, Connecticut lawmakers this year repealed the single-stairway law they had passed in 2024, after objections from fire safety officials.

Beyond staircases, Horowitz, of Pew, said this year saw the first legislative sessions in which states have taken a look at elevators to reduce building costs. Washington state enacted a new elevator law this year that directs the state's Building Code Council to allow smaller apartment buildings, with at most six stories and 24 units, to use smaller and less expensive passenger elevators.

Maine removed some elevator-related requirements, including for certain smoke and draft equipment and for two-way emergency video communication systems inside elevators.

Research by the Center for Building in North America, a nonprofit research group that co-authored Pew's single-stairway report, found that installing elevators in the United States and Canada is at least three times as expensive as in Western Europe or East Asia. U.S. and Canadian installations start around \$150,000, compared with roughly \$50,000 in several high-income countries, the group found.

Is it safe?

Pew researchers found that modern four- to six-story single-stairway apartment buildings can be as safe as other residential buildings when they include fire-safety features such as sprinklers, smoke detectors, code-compliant drywall, self-closing doors and protected stairways.

Horowitz said Pew researchers counted every fire death in New York City and Seattle — two cities that have long allowed single-stairway apartment buildings — over 12 years.

In New York City, Pew identified 4,440 modern single-stairway buildings and found their fire-death rate was the same as other residential buildings — about five deaths per million occupant-years. Pew also found that the deaths it identified in modern single-stair buildings appeared to occur in the unit where the fire started, not because smoke or fire penetrated the single stairway.

"Modern apartment buildings are much, much, much safer than other housing. It is not even close," Horowitz said. "The data is clear and policymakers are following the data in this instance."

But Sean DeCrane, the director of fire fighter health and safety operational services for the International Association of Fire Fighters, said single-stairway proposals often fail to account for residents' potential slowness to evacuate during a fire, and how firefighters use the same stairwell to reach trapped occupants.

The IAFF cites as one example a Manhattan apartment fire on May 4 that killed three people and injured 14. The fire that trapped residents in a smoke-filled stairwell serving as the building's only means of escape. IAFF says the fire appeared to start on the first floor and spread upward through the stairwell.

"When we take over the stairwell, occupant egress effectively stops," DeCrane told Stateline. "So now you're requiring firefighters to physically remove occupants out of a burning building."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 14 of 80

During a fire, residents may not leave when an alarm first sounds, he said, especially in apartment buildings where false alarms or smoke alarms from a kitchen mishap are common. Some residents do not try to evacuate until they smell smoke or believe they are in danger.

"Just because they hear an alarm doesn't necessarily signify risk to them."

Aube, of the American Planning Association, said state lawmakers should learn from California's approach — which in 2023 directed the state fire marshal to study single-stair buildings — before lawmakers make building codes changes.

"There is a lot of technical information that lawmakers and the public need to learn before considering removing a code," she said.

The California Office of the State Fire Marshal released that report early this year. It said safeguards such as sprinkler and smoke detectors "do not fully substitute" for having two stairwells and notes that fire departments in the state nearly unanimously oppose single stairways. But it suggested a variety of measures that should be implemented if single-stairway buildings are allowed.

Electrical codes

In recent years, some states have changed parts of their fire and electrical codes, seeking to make a dent in the total cost of a project. Arizona last year barred counties from requiring fire sprinklers in accessory dwelling units.

Indiana this year barred state and local governments from requiring arc fault circuit interrupters, or AFCIs, in certain residential buildings and emergency responder communication systems in some larger structures. AFCIs prevent electrical fires by detecting arcing in damaged or loose wiring before it builds heat inside a wall.

The Indiana bill's lead sponsor, Republican state Rep. Doug Miller, said the state needed to "put a stake in the ground" to meet its need of roughly 50,000 homes, according to the Indiana Capital Chronicle. The Indiana Builders Association said local rules accounted for 24% of the cost for a new home.

This year, Iowa changed parts of the state electrical code, including AFCI and GFCI requirements. Ground fault circuit interrupters, or GFCIs, are designed to protect people from electric shock by shutting off power when they detect a fault in the current. Supporters said these changes can help keep electrical costs low for builders and consumers.

Iowa Democratic state Rep. Jeff Cooling, who is also an electrician, said the late-session legislation takes away some kitchen GFCI requirements, removes AFCI requirements and allows cheaper ceiling boxes in places where future homeowners may install heavy fixtures or ceiling fans. He opposed the bill.

Cooling said lawmakers often talk about code changes as a way to shave costs from new housing. But as an electrician, he said many of those requirements were adopted for a reason and usually after high-profile injuries, fires or deaths prompted necessary review and updates.

"None of these codes change just to change them," Cooling said. "They've changed because people have been seriously injured or killed."

Cooling said fellow electricians he spoke with estimated the Iowa changes would save about \$850 on an average new house. "That's a rounding error," he said.

And for Cooling, that amount of savings is too small to justify removing protections at the sake of human lives.

"It's not the world that we want to live in where we try to balance safety and what turns out to be low-cost savings," he said.

Waiting on new building codes

Building codes are usually updated every three years through a public process, while states and local governments retain authority to amend and enforce them.

A new law passed in Connecticut will stretch what is normally a three-year state building code update schedule into a six-year gap, pausing updates between 2024 and 2030 cycles. The state is expected to

produce a report due by Jan. 1, 2029, that will evaluate the effects of a six-year cycle for building code revisions.

Housing industry groups say Connecticut is not alone in extending or pausing the time between adopting building code changes. Last year, California froze most residential code changes through June 2031. North Carolina moved its residential code to a six-year review cycle in 2023.

The Connecticut proposal drew opposition from code officials and the International Code Council. Building officials and code organizations have warned that slowing adoption of new codes can also delay updates meant to respond to new risks.

Aube, the urban planner, said that code changes are not a silver bullet in the affordability puzzle. "There's not one answer," she said. "It's like making a cake, right? There's a whole bunch of different ingredients that go in."

Stateline reporter Robbie Sequeira can be reached at rsequeira@stateline.org.

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Robbie Sequeira is a staff writer covering housing and social services for Stateline.

Legal protections for nearly 350,000 Haitians at risk as US

Supreme Court nears ruling

BY: MEDILL NEWS SERVICE

By Kaitlin Bender-Thomas/Medill News Service

WASHINGTON — Even with a valid driver's license, Maryse Balthazar knows she lacks protection from what she dreads most: deportation back to Haiti.

Balthazar, a nursing assistant, often hesitates to leave her home in South Florida, worried that something as simple as a broken taillight could upend the life she's spent 16 years building in the United States.

"If you get stopped for a traffic violation, what's going to happen to you?" Balthazar said. "It's a fear that lives with me every day."

Balthazar is one of nearly 350,000 Haitians living in the U.S. with Temporary Protected Status, or TPS. The program allows people from countries facing armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary crises to live and work in the U.S. temporarily.

Her fear comes as the Supreme Court weighs whether the Trump administration can end TPS for Haitians, as well as Syrians. Although protections remain in place while the case is pending, a Haitian TPS holder in Florida was recently detained during a routine traffic stop and deported, before being allowed to return to the U.S.

What is TPS?

Balthazar came to the U.S. under TPS in 2010, when Haiti was first designated for the program following a devastating earthquake that killed more than 200,000 people and destroyed more than 100,000 homes, including her own.

Congress and President George H. W. Bush created TPS in 1990 to protect immigrants from being deported to unsafe countries. The designation grants temporary legal status and work authorization for up to 18 months and can be renewed if conditions do not improve. It does not provide a pathway to citizenship.

Since 2010, the Department of Homeland Security has repeatedly extended Haiti's TPS designation due to ongoing instability, including natural disasters, widespread gang violence and the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

The government had set Haitian TPS to end on Feb. 3, but on Feb. 2, U.S. District Judge Ana Reyes blocked the termination, finding it was unlawful and likely motivated in part by "racial animus."

The Trump administration has argued that TPS has become a "de facto asylum program" and that condi-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 16 of 80

tions in Haiti have improved enough to end the designation. It appealed the ruling to the Supreme Court in March, and the justices heard oral arguments on an emergency basis.

The court is expected to issue a ruling by the end of the term in late June or early July. The decision will determine whether the administration acted lawfully in its attempt to revoke TPS, including whether it consulted with the State Department when reviewing the country's conditions.

An uncertain future

Immigration attorneys and advocates say the uncertainty surrounding TPS and immigration enforcement has heightened fears within the Haitian community.

"Everyone is scared across the board," said Tremaine Hemans, founder and managing attorney of an immigration law firm in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. "But specifically our Haitian clients."

Balthazar said she no longer feels entirely safe here, either.

She said she used to fly to Massachusetts for months at a time to care for a patient. Now, she would refuse any nursing assistant job that required air travel, even if it paid \$50 an hour, because she fears encountering Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents at the airport.

"They handicap you, make you uncomfortable to live here, to be here," Balthazar said.

Violence and humanitarian instability continue to worsen throughout Haiti, said Brian Concannon, a human rights attorney and executive director of the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, a nonprofit focused on advancing human rights and justice in Haiti.

By U.N. estimates, armed gangs control approximately 90% of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and hunger and displacement have risen sharply in recent years.

"There's literally no metric by which you can say that conditions in Haiti are improving or are in any way safe," Concannon said.

In Ohio, troubling phone calls

For Rose-Thamar Joseph, a Haitian TPS holder and community advocate in Springfield, Ohio, that reality hits close to home.

Joseph came to the U.S. under TPS in 2021 after former President Joe Biden redesignated the program for Haiti. She said she speaks with her family back home almost every day, including her 12-year-old son. Calls rarely end without her hearing gunfire in the background.

She recalled her family sending photos of bullets that landed in their yard.

One night, Joseph said she stayed on the phone with them until the morning, unable to sleep because she was worried about their safety.

"It was a real, real challenging and stressful situation for me," Joseph said.

Sometimes the violence becomes so severe that her son cannot go to school. What worries her even more, she said, is when the country's poor network service prevents her from reaching her family at all.

Although Joseph has asylum status to fall back on if TPS ends, which would allow her to continue living and working in the U.S, she said many Haitian TPS holders don't have that option.

"It is so heartbreaking for me to see or to know that a lot of people will be out of work, will be laid off... because of TPS," Joseph said.

Consequences in the US for families, employers

Concannon at the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti said the Supreme Court's decision could have immediate consequences for TPS holders and their families.

Of the 350,000 Haitian TPS holders in the U.S., about 200,000 of them are already in the U.S. workforce, according to FWD.us, an immigration and criminal justice advocacy organization.

Many send money home to support relatives in Haiti because ongoing violence and economic instability have left many families struggling to get by.

"It's literally thousands of families that are being kept afloat by remittances from TPS holders," Concan-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 17 of 80

non said.

But the impact would also be felt by employers across the country.

Many Haitian immigrants work in critical industries throughout the United States. FWD.us estimates that about 15,000 work in agriculture, 13,000 serve as nursing assistants, and another 8,000 work as caregivers.

Todd Andrews, senior vice president for Asbury Communities, a retirement services organization with campuses in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, said immigrant workers play a critical role in caring for elderly adults.

Asbury employs about 2,800 workers and serves more than 4,000 residents across its senior living communities. At the organization's Gaithersburg, Maryland, campus alone, Andrews said employees represent more than 90 nationalities.

"These jobs are very important, they're very difficult, and they're very, very integral in the care management of the residents," Andrews said.

He added that providers already face staffing shortages and warned that losing TPS workers could create disruptions similar to those experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Employees that are employed today won't be there tomorrow," Andrews said. "So we'll have to figure out a way to provide that care."

Lawmakers remain divided over the program's future.

Sen. Rick Scott, R-Fla., declined to explicitly say during an interview at the Capitol whether he believes TPS for Haitians should continue. Instead, he noted that Florida is home to "a lot of wonderful Haitians" and said the broader immigration system needs reform.

"TPS was never a permanent program," Scott said. "What I'd rather do is focus on, okay, so how do we fix the program where people can come here that are fully vetted that want to add to our economy."

Sen. Raphael Warnock, D-Ga., said immigrant communities make significant contributions to the U.S. economy and criticized the Trump administration's efforts to end TPS for Haiti.

"How can you deny Haitians who are here Temporary Protected Status, while at the same time put Haiti under the travel ban?" Warnock said. "It doesn't make any sense."

Painful conversations

While lawmakers remain divided over the future of TPS, Balthazar said the uncertainty has forced painful conversations with her daughter, a U.S. citizen and college student, about what might happen if she is deported.

"That will affect her a lot," Balthazar said. "She will be more at ease, more relaxed, if mama is around because she knows that she can rely on me...but if I'm not around, she will have to take care of herself."

For now, Balthazar said she is focused on living in the present. She spends her time caring for elderly patients, running her small online hair care business, and being with her family.

Like many Haitians living under TPS, she said she still hopes for the day her country is stable enough to return.

"As Haitians, we all dream, we all are dreaming to go back because we love our country. We just don't have a system like here."

Medill News Service articles are reported and written by graduate student journalists in the Washington program of the Medill School at Northwestern University.

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South Dakota Republican state senator charged with felony over false candidate forms

Charges come on eve of state GOP convention, where party will pick candidates for statewide offices

BY: JOHN HULT

A South Dakota state senator was charged with two felonies Tuesday for allegedly trying to put candidates for county party leadership posts on the primary election ballot without those candidates' knowledge.

If convicted on both counts of offering a false or forged instrument for filing, 44-year-old Dell Rapids Republican Tom Pischke faces up to four years in prison.

The charges relate to alleged behavior that took place more than two months before the June 2 primary. Pischke was unopposed in the primary, and faces an independent candidate named Bryan Breitling, who'd previously served in the state legislature as a Republican, in the general election.

Pischke turned himself in on Tuesday morning. He was arrested, booked into the Minnehaha County Jail and released on his own recognizance before the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office sent a news release announcing that the charges had been filed.

He directed South Dakota Searchlight to his lawyer, Ryan Kolbeck, who said in a text that his client "is cooperating with the investigation but has no further comment at this time."

Pischke is the second state lawmaker charged with a felony this month. The first, Newell Republican Rep. Travis Ismay, was charged with felony damage to a roadway. Ismay's initial appearance is scheduled for July 10 at the Butte County Courthouse. Ismay also won his primary contest on June 2, and is running unopposed in November.

The charges filed against Pischke on Tuesday are linked to 16 fraudulent nominating forms for precinct committeeman and precinct committeewoman, according to a Minnehaha County Sheriff's office report in Pischke's criminal case file.

People who hold those positions have a vote at county party meetings and are entitled to be delegates at the state GOP convention, the 2026 version of which begins on Thursday in Rapid City.

As convention delegates, precinct committee members get to vote on the party's general election nominees for attorney general, secretary of state and other constitutional offices. They also get a vote in decisions made by their county's party.

Minnehaha County Auditor Leah Anderson told South Dakota Searchlight that none of the candidates tied to Pischke's case appeared on the June 2 primary ballot.

Phony nomination forms catch auditor's eye

The questionable nomination forms arrived on March 30, one day before the deadline to appear on the June 2 primary ballot.

While cross-checking the addresses listed on the forms, the court records say, one of Minnehaha County Auditor Leah Anderson's employees saw that the address of one purported candidate didn't match the address listed in their voter registration file. That spurred additional scrutiny for all 16 forms, the court records say, which Anderson noted had conspicuously similar handwriting.

Her employees reached out to each person listed as a potential candidate to ask if they had signed the form, and most of them "did not know what the form was for," the records say.

Anderson also compared signatures from 15 of the 16 purported candidates to other documents bearing their signatures, and "none of the signatures matched the suspected fraudulent forms."

A detective later spoke with each person for whom a form had been filed. Twelve said they had no idea their name had appeared on such a form. One said Pischke had asked them to run, but that they'd declined to do so.

Three others told the detective that they had wanted to run for the positions, and that Pischke had urged them to do so.

When approached by a detective, the court documents say, Pischke denied signing the forms. He said he

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 19 of 80

wouldn't expect his DNA or fingerprints to appear on them, the court documents say, and he consented to the collection of a DNA sample.

Shortly thereafter, detectives obtained video footage of a vehicle dropping something off at the Dell Rapids Post office. The video only showed the driver's hand and wasn't clear enough to show what was placed in the box, the court documents say, but it was clear enough to show three of the numbers on the vehicle's license plate and the vehicle's make, model and approximate year: a 2000-2005 Chevy Impala.

There's only one Chevy Impala in South Dakota of that vintage with a license plate number bearing the three characters seen in the video, and it's registered to Pischke.

The South Dakota Forensic Lab, meanwhile, analyzed the envelopes and found DNA from three people. The "major contributor" of DNA was "consistent" with Pischke.

No impact on convention

Pischke won't be at the state convention, according to Jim Eschenbaum, head of the state Republican Party.

Pischke sent Eschenbaum a text on Monday to say he couldn't make it, without disclosing details about why.

Eschenbaum told Searchlight on Tuesday that he'd heard rumors about possible fraud charges for Pischke, and that it was a "bummer" to learn that charges were filed.

The convention, Eschenbaum said, will proceed as planned, just without Pischke.

Korry Petterson, chairman of the Minnehaha County Republican Party, said he's been aware of the investigation for months and had also heard "rumors" that Pischke was involved.

Petterson had clashed with Pischke over the county party's direction, the chairman said, but "still, I don't even want to fathom that this is what happened."

Unless Pischke is convicted, Petterson said, there's little the county party could do to discipline him.

Attempt to influence balance of power

Petterson told South Dakota Searchlight a few weeks ago that whoever was behind the attempt to influence the county party's voting membership was likely trying to hamstring his ability to conduct party business.

Minnehaha County is South Dakota's most populous, and its county GOP's votes for party nominees at the state convention are weighted to reflect that population.

Eschenbaum said the incident with Pischke is part of "the Minnehaha County drama that never ends" in the Sioux Falls area over "who's in control of that county party."

"It's who's in control of that county party," Eschenbaum said. "That's what this was about."

There are three factions in the Minnehaha County GOP, Petterson said. The chairman described himself as part of a faction that aims to find middle ground between the party's more traditional wing and its populists – the category into which Petterson said Pischke falls.

Who's in control at any given time is in part a function of precinct committee members, who can be elected during primaries or be nominated and voted on at meetings of the county party.

The number of active precinct committee members fluctuates in any county, and not every position is filled. There are 145 now in Minnehaha County, and Pischke is one of them.

To hold a meeting with a voting quorum, Petterson needs 20% of voting members present. The more precinct committee members positions are filled, the more people he needs at a meeting to make decisions.

The difficulty of hitting the 20% attendance figure, Petterson said, could compound if those positions were filled by people unaware of their status as voting members.

Eleven of the 16 forms were submitted for unfilled positions, according to the Sheriff's office report attached to Pischke's criminal case file.

If the allegations against Pischke are proven, Petterson said, he hopes prosecutors push for the stiffest punishment possible to show that such behavior "will not be tolerated."

He said he hopes the party as a whole takes a broader message, regardless of the outcome of the criminal case.

"If anything, I think it will help people realize that the extremism has got to stop," Petterson said.

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

Sides clash in court over legality of abortion-pill advertising in South Dakota

Plaintiffs seek to stop new state law that they say infringes on free speech

BY: SETH TUPPER

RAPID CITY — A nonprofit organization argued Tuesday that the information it provides about abortion pills is protected as free speech even in a state that bans abortion, while the state of South Dakota equated the nonprofit's messaging with soliciting and facilitating illegal activity.

The opposing sides presented their arguments during a court hearing on the eve of the four-year anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling that overturned nationwide abortion rights.

The hearing was about New York-based Mayday Health's request for an order blocking a new South Dakota law from taking effect. The judge will issue a ruling later.

The new law prohibits the dispensing, distribution and advertising of abortion pills and other abortion-related items, and makes violations punishable by felony prosecutions and fines. Another South Dakota law that took effect four years ago bans abortion in all cases except when necessary to save the mother's life.

South Dakota's Republican governor signed the new law in March after the Republican-controlled Legislature passed it. The law is scheduled to take effect on July 1.

Jim Leach, the Rapid City-based lawyer representing Mayday, said the law unconstitutionally targets free speech about abortion that state officials don't like.

"The state absolutely hates our speech," he said in his opening statement.

A team of state lawyers at the hearing included Attorney General Marty Jackley, who is also the Republican nominee to run for U.S. House in the Nov. 3 general election.

Jackley said the type of speech Mayday practices on its website is not protected by the U.S. constitution.

"What the First Amendment doesn't do is protect an illegal drug transaction in South Dakota," he said.

Plaintiff's case

The clash between Mayday Health and the state predates Mayday's lawsuit. It began in December when Mayday posted advertising placards on gas-station pumps in South Dakota. The placards included the address of Mayday's website, which provides information about abortion pills and links to providers who send abortion pills in the mail.

Jackley sent Mayday a cease-and-desist letter, accusing Mayday of falsely advertising abortion as legal in South Dakota and making misleading statements about the safety of abortion pills. Dueling lawsuits arose and were settled in early March when Mayday agreed to remove the placards.

By that time, the Legislature was on its way to approving the new law. Mayday and a South Dakota woman, Nancy Turbak Berry, filed their lawsuit against that law last month in federal court.

Turbak Berry is a lawyer, a Democratic former legislator and an abortion-rights proponent from Watertown. The lawsuit's argument about free speech is partially built upon her purchase of a sweatshirt from Mayday's website. Text printed on the sweatshirt says, "They don't want you to know this: You can still get abortion pills in all 50 states" and "learn more at mayday.health."

Turbak Berry alleges the state could use the new law to label the shirt as abortion-pill advertising and prosecute her for wearing it. She alleged that would violate her free-speech rights.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 21 of 80

As Leach's first witness Tuesday, Turbak Berry explained why she got involved in the lawsuit.

"I was disgusted that the state was trying to keep information from South Dakota women about the fact that abortion pills are available," Turbak Berry said.

Leach's next witness was Leo Raisner, who lives in Brooklyn, New York, and works as executive director of Mayday Health. He testified that he co-founded Mayday Health in 2022 after seeing survey data indicating that many people in the United States are unaware that abortion pills are available. Raisner testified that Mayday provides information for people to use for themselves, and does not promote abortion or encourage anyone to have an abortion.

"What I really, really want women to have is reliable, trustworthy information about abortion pills," Raisner said on the witness stand.

State's witnesses

In the state's questioning of Turbak Berry, Raisner and the state's own witnesses, the state's lawyers attempted to show that Mayday's website goes beyond the mere dissemination of information.

The state's first witness was Kayla Klemann, an investigator for the Office of the Attorney General's Division of Consumer Protection. She testified that the Mayday website provided her with links to abortion pill providers after she input her age as 14, that the site never asked her where she lived or whether abortion was legal in her state, and that after she input 23 weeks and four days as the duration of her pregnancy, the site told her that pills were not her best abortion option but allowed her to go back and change her response.

Klemann testified that her interactions were with a chatbot on the Mayday website. Raisner testified that the chatbot was removed from the website on Sunday. That removal was a frequent point of contention during the hearing, with Leach contending the judge should only consider current conditions when deciding whether to issue a court order against the new law, and Jackley and the state arguing that the chatbot's past existence remains relevant to the case.

Klemann additionally testified that she found information from Mayday advising people to use mail-forwarding services to receive abortion pills — which Jackley described as part of a "scheme" to help people obtain illegal drugs. Raisner testified that the mail-forwarding information was removed from Mayday's site several years ago.

The testimony concluded with dueling South Dakota OB-GYN doctors, both of whom are retired.

Patti Giebink, who acknowledged she considers herself "pro-life," testified for the state that prescribing abortion pills — mifepristone and misoprostol — online without an in-person consultation is potentially dangerous, especially for patients who are alone and have conditions that might make them susceptible to complications. The state's attorneys attempted to show that Mayday misleads people about those potential safety risks.

Marvin Buehner, who acknowledged that he has won awards for his "pro-choice" advocacy, testified for Mayday and Turbak Berry that complications from abortion pills occur in "astoundingly small numbers" and that abortion pills are safe and effective.

In closing arguments, Leach said Mayday provides information vetted as accurate by experts and does not sell abortion pills. He said the state failed to prove that Mayday committed a crime, or engaged in commercial activity involving abortion pills, or provided misleading information.

Jackley said Mayday chooses the content and links on its website, that it describes abortion pill providers as trusted partners, and that it instructs users how to obtain abortion pills that are illegal in South Dakota. Jackley characterized Mayday's actions as conspiring, soliciting, and aiding and abetting the distribution of illegal drugs.

Mayday and Turbak Berry are initially seeking a temporary injunction that would prevent the state from enforcing the new law while the lawsuit proceeds. Judge Camela Theeler gave the parties until June 30 to file additional briefs, and until July 3 for responses to the briefs.

Although the new law takes effect July 1, Jackley told the judge he does not intend to initiate any en-

forcement actions against Mayday during the time between the hearing and the judge's ruling.

EDITOR'S NOTE: South Dakota Searchlight has engaged attorney Jim Leach, who represents the plaintiffs in the lawsuit, in a past unrelated legal matter.

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

Work, housing and staffing: How South Dakota's corrections chief aims to keep inmates from returning

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER

SIOUX FALLS – South Dakota's repeat offense rate for people who leave prison can return to the low point it saw a dozen years ago, the state's corrections secretary said Tuesday.

Nick Lamb, now six months into his role atop the Department of Corrections, laid out the agency's plan Tuesday at the Correctional Rehabilitation Task Force at its meeting in Sioux Falls. The plan includes work release programs, residential housing for inmates and a top-to-bottom restructuring of how the department operates.

Recidivism measures how many inmates return to prison within three years of their release. The figure for South Dakota stood at 50% in the most recent data, which was based on the performance of inmates released in 2021.

South Dakota's lowest recidivism rate in the last two decades was 39% in 2014.

"We'll get back there," Lamb said Tuesday.

Lamb told reporters after the meeting he wants "to start getting in the business of closing prisons" during his tenure.

"Our population is too high for our state," Lamb said. "We need to get our population down, but we've got to give the offenders the tools they need that they haven't always had."

Several recommendations presented on Tuesday, by Lamb and other criminal justice experts, will require more staff and funding.

State Rep. John Hughes, R-Sioux Falls, worries that the Legislature's budget-setting committee will balk at new spending.

"My concern is that we put all these elaborate proposals together, then when we get to appropriations we're going to hit the wall," Hughes said.

Inmates return to work release

Under Lamb's predecessor, Kellie Wasko, pay for inmate work performed outside the prison walls was increased to minimum wage. After that policy change, fewer communities and organizations contracted inmate workers for community service jobs.

Rep. Tim Reisch, R-Howard, said most of the roughly 250 minimum-security prisoners he oversaw during his tenure as corrections secretary participated in work release.

"They got up and they all had jobs. They were used to getting out of bed, going to work, getting in a habit of that," Reisch said.

When he toured the prison last year, fewer than 20 were working, he said.

Lamb has cut inmate wages below minimum wage since he started.

"We reached out to a lot of these communities, basically asking if they need help," Lamb said. "We lowered the wage, which upset some people, but we need them out working."

This summer, inmates will work at Sioux Falls parks and at its regional landfill, and they'll prepare the fairgrounds in Huron for the State Fairgrounds in August. They'll also help out during Riverboat Days in Yankton, and pitch in on tournament preparation for the National Field Archery Association.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 23 of 80

Statewide residential facilities planned

Lamb also wants to establish a residential corrections program. He shared a presentation showing how such a program operated in Iowa, where he served as deputy director of institutional operations for the Iowa Department of Corrections before his move to South Dakota.

In Iowa, most residential facilities were filled with people on probation, parole or work release. He envisions a similar program in South Dakota, with housing outside of traditional prison settings designed to help transition back into the community, but he hasn't finalized details or a timeline.

"We're going to try it," Lamb said. "I'll be honest, I haven't talked to the lieutenant governor or anybody else about it, but we need to try it. It works."

The program has been in Iowa for decades. Iowa's three-year recidivism rate peaked at 38.9% in 2019 and has since fallen to 32.8%, based on the latest data available.

"I'm not trying to throw you a sales pitch," Lamb said, but residential programming is "a good idea."

Lamb said he doesn't want to replace programs like the one run by the Sioux Falls-based nonprofit St. Francis House, but to add to it.

St. Francis House doesn't cap how long residents can stay and limits rent to \$250 a month. Lamb said a state-run program would include a time limit and higher rent.

A lack of "felon-friendly housing" is a major driver of recidivism, said Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken, who's leaving his position soon after two terms in office. The problem won't improve without government involvement, he added.

"If the state ever chooses to invest in St. Francis House programming, it's money well spent," TenHaken said.

Justice Center recommendations

The percentage of inmates who got rehabilitative programming increased from 27% to 44% between 2023 and 2025, according to a report presented Tuesday by the Council for State Governments Justice Center.

The national nonprofit was contracted to analyze the state's prison system and help guide the task force's work.

Despite the gains in programming, the group reported, 46% of inmates released in 2025 received none. Access was also limited by where inmates were held, due to space and staffing restrictions.

The justice center recommended several changes, including:

- Creating a rehabilitation and reentry division and hiring several new positions.

- Creating a centralized waitlist for programs.

- Streamlining the program catalog to reduce overlap and fill gaps.

- Sequencing programming to cover an inmate's entire stay, rather than stacking programs in the last few months of their sentence.

- Creating a dedicated parole violation program track.

Many of those recommendations hinge on hiring and retaining adequate staff — one of the department's most significant challenges, according to the group.

Sara Friedman, program director with the Justice Center, said her team consistently heard in interviews that the department tends to shift employees around when attempting new initiatives, rather than hiring. That creates gaps for inmates seeking programming.

Sometimes, for example, shifting staffing patterns will leave facilities without enough security staff to transport inmates to classrooms.

"Technically, you're fully staffed, but you're fully staffed so thinly that the moment one thing goes wrong, the waterfall effect is people are not getting their rehabilitative services," Friedman said.

Lamb told South Dakota Searchlight after the presentation that he wasn't surprised by the staffing recommendations. The department lacks adequate staff to backfill for sick or vacationing employees, he said, though he didn't say how many more employees would need to be hired to address the issue.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 24 of 80

The department is already working to create the new rehabilitation and reentry division and centralize its scheduling.

The task force plans to meet two more times before it'll finalize its recommendations for the Legislature ahead of the next session, which starts in January.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

Bipartisan affordable housing bill heads to Trump's desk

BY: JACOB FISCHLER

The U.S. House cleared a bipartisan housing policy overhaul Tuesday, aiming to lower the cost of home-ownership as members of both parties attempt to focus on affordability issues ahead of November's midterm elections.

The House passed the bill, 358-32, sending it to President Donald Trump's desk a day after the Senate's 85-5 vote. The White House has said the administration supports the measure and Trump's aides would advise he sign it.

The bill would reduce some regulatory hurdles, including environmental reviews, to home construction and expand the possible uses of federal housing funds. It includes a high-profile provision to ban private equity firms from buying single-family homes.

The bill would allow money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program to be used for construction of new affordable housing. It would also tie the amount some cities and states receive from the \$3.3 billion grant program to their rates of affordable housing construction.

Increasing worries over cost of living

The action from Congress this week reflects a bipartisan focus on affordability, as both parties have sought to address voters' increasing concerns with the cost of living that has been consistently rising since the start of the decade.

Margaret Spellings, the president and CEO of the Bipartisan Policy Center, said at a housing policy conference hosted by the Washington, D.C., think tank that the rising cost of housing was due to a lack of supply.

"During the past two decades, the U.S. has simply not built enough housing to meet demand," she said. "This supply-demand imbalance has led to soaring prices and rents in communities across the nation, with millions of households struggling to make their payments and unable to achieve the American dream of home ownership."

She added that the issue had animated policymakers at the national, state and local levels.

"Housing is now a top-tier issue here in Washington and in state capitols and city halls all across our country," she said.

Broad consensus

The measure includes provisions from earlier proposals in both chambers, reflecting a consensus not only between the two major parties but between the two chambers of Congress that often cannot agree on how to approach even broadly supported legislation.

Sen. Tim Scott, a South Carolina Republican who chairs the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, lauded the measure's broad appeal in a pre-recorded message to the BPC conference.

The bill was nonpartisan, reflecting "advocacy on behalf of common sense," he said.

"But it does take a bipartisan coalition who puts America first," he said. "Your work encouraging all of us to put the country first, to put first-time homebuyers first, has resulted in legislation passed through the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 25 of 80

Senate yet again, and this time is on a path straight to the president's desk."

The committee's ranking Democrat, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, called it a "BIG WIN to build more housing" in a post to social media Tuesday.

"I've worked on this bill for over a year," she wrote. "It's still possible to find bipartisan, common ground on legislation that actually helps the American people."

Conservatives revolt

Despite the bill's broad appeal, a bloc of House conservatives frustrated with the Senate's inability to pass a Trump-supported bill to require photo ID at polling places and other measures they say are important to secure elections, mounted a last-minute objection to the housing bill.

Florida Republican Rep. Anna Paulina Luna was the most vocal member of the opposition Tuesday, pledging to vote against other bills and House rules resolutions until the Senate passed the elections security measure, titled the SAVE America Act, whose proponents have noted would restrict noncitizen voting, which is already illegal and extremely rare.

"I will be voting no and oppose other bills AND rules until we fight for SAVE America Act," Luna wrote on social media Tuesday afternoon, well after the bill had been scheduled for a floor vote. "That means if House GOP leadership chooses today to move the SENATE HOUSING BILL under suspension (getting rid of our house rules) I will vote to shut the floor down. I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE."

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

Trump administration in court win allowed to conduct nationwide fast-track deportations

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — An appeals court Tuesday cleared the way for the Trump administration to use fast-track deportations within the interior of the country and not just at the Southern border, a key pillar in the president's mass deportation campaign.

The 2-1 decision from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia means the Department of Homeland Security can continue with an expanded use of expedited removal after lower courts blocked the policy over concerns that immigrants were not receiving due process.

Last year, the Trump administration expanded the use of expedited removal to apply to immigrants in the interior of the United States who cannot prove they have remained in the country for more than two years, greatly expanding the numbers of migrants affected. Previously the policy applied only to migrants at the Southern border, rather than those in the interior of the country.

Tuesday's ruling, by Judge Justin R. Walker, argued that Congress allowed the executive branch to decide when to apply an expedited removal policy to immigrants. President Donald Trump appointed Walker, along with Judge Neomi Rao, who also ruled in favor of the government.

They found in addition that the Trump administration's policy did not violate the due rights of immigrants. The judges vacated lower court decisions that blocked the Trump policy.

No immigration judge

The expanded policy allows the removal of some immigrants – sometimes within hours – without an appearance before an immigration judge, which is key to the Trump administration's mass deportation campaign.

Judge Robert L. Wilkins disagreed and said he would have kept the lower court's decision in place that

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 26 of 80

blocked the policy. Former President Barack Obama nominated Wilkins.

In a statement, James Percival, the Department of Homeland Security's general counsel, praised the appeals court ruling.

"For years, DHS has arbitrarily limited expedited removal to 14 days even though it applies to illegal aliens who entered the country illegally within the last two years," Percival said. "Today, the DC Circuit vindicated our decision to apply the law as written."

Due process questions

In December, the Department of Justice argued that due process is not guaranteed for immigrants in a fast-track deportation.

The immigrants' rights group that sued the Trump administration, Make the Road New York, contended that the expanded policy did not give adequate notice to immigrants and that immigration officials did not provide proper information to an immigrant who may or may not fall under the policy.

Walker wrote that a notice of removal was satisfactory and that an immigration official notifying a migrant if they fall under the policy would be akin to providing them with legal counsel.

"Make the Road's contrary reasoning would require immigration officers to provide what amounts to legal advice," Walker wrote. "If due process requires the government to inform individuals of the two-year continuous-presence rule, it presumably also requires informing them of every other basis for contesting expedited removal."

Wilkins, in his dissent, argued that immigration officials should inquire about how long an immigrant has been in the country before making a decision if expedited removal should be applied.

"A procedure that can result in persons being deported pursuant to the expedited removal statute without even being asked how long they have been in the country might satisfy due process for persons encountered at the border, but it is woefully inadequate for persons encountered in the interior of the country," Wilkins wrote.

Make the Road New York did not immediately respond to States Newsroom's request for comment.

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.

US Senate joins House in rebuke of Trump over his war in Iran

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — The Republican-led U.S. Senate served up a rare public check on President Donald Trump's agenda Tuesday when it voted to approve a House-passed War Powers Resolution to end hostilities in Iran.

Senate approval marked the first time both chambers have agreed in a rebuke of Trump over his war in Iran.

The concurrent resolution, which passed 50-48, does not require the president's signature and its enforceability has been a perennial topic of debate.

The Senate's approval occurred against the backdrop of the administration's peace deal negotiations with Iran, which have been criticized from both sides of the aisle.

Four Republicans joined Democrats in voting for the measure: Lisa Murkowski of Alaska; Rand Paul of Kentucky; Louisiana's Bill Cassidy, who recently lost his primary race after Trump endorsed an opponent; and Susan Collins, who's fighting a tough reelection campaign in Maine.

Democrat John Fetterman of Pennsylvania voted no. Paul and Fetterman have broken ranks with their parties on several previous Iran War Powers Resolution votes.

Republican Sens. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, who was recently hospitalized, and Dave McCormick of Pennsylvania did not vote. McCormick was with Trump on a trip to Pennsylvania.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 27 of 80

Debate over impact

Trump administration officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, argue that War Powers Resolutions are not constitutional.

The U.S. Supreme Court in 1983 ruled against the validity of congressional measures that do not require a president's signature.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Congress "stood up to Donald Trump and voted to end his costly, unnecessary, and devastating war with Iran."

"Let me be clear: for the first time, this resolution has passed both chambers of Congress and does not require the President's signature. The message from the only branch of government with the power to declare war is unmistakable: the Trump administration must withdraw U.S. forces from hostilities in Iran. The pressure on Republicans mounts," Schumer said in a statement following the vote.

Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y., who sponsored the original resolution that passed the House on June 3, said the measure is binding and the president "must cease all hostilities against Iran."

"Regardless of what President Trump says, this measure is binding under the War Powers Resolution, and I will explore all legal avenues to ensure the Executive complies with the will of Congress. Congress never authorized this failed war, and the president certainly has no authority to continue it indefinitely without our consent as the Constitution demands," Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, said in a statement.

The White House declined to comment on the vote.

Negotiations continue

Administration officials, who maintain hostilities ended in early April, are on a 60-day clock to hammer out a final agreement with Iran.

As part of a temporary memorandum of understanding in effect during talks, the administration lifted its naval blockade of Iranian ports and economic sanctions on Iranian oil, allowing the Islamic Republic to now sell on the global market.

The interim deal also charges Iran with demining the Strait of Hormuz and allowing tankers and cargo ships to travel unimpeded while Iran and Oman create a scheme for passage through the narrow shipping route where one-fifth of the world's petroleum traveled prior to the war.

Trump issued social media threats to Iran over the weekend as Iran's new Persian Gulf Strait Authority continued to impose certain requirements for ships to pass.

Thirteen American service members died in the war launched by the U.S. and Israel on Feb. 28, and over 400 have been injured, according to the Pentagon. Thousands of civilians across Iran and the Gulf region were killed during the fighting.

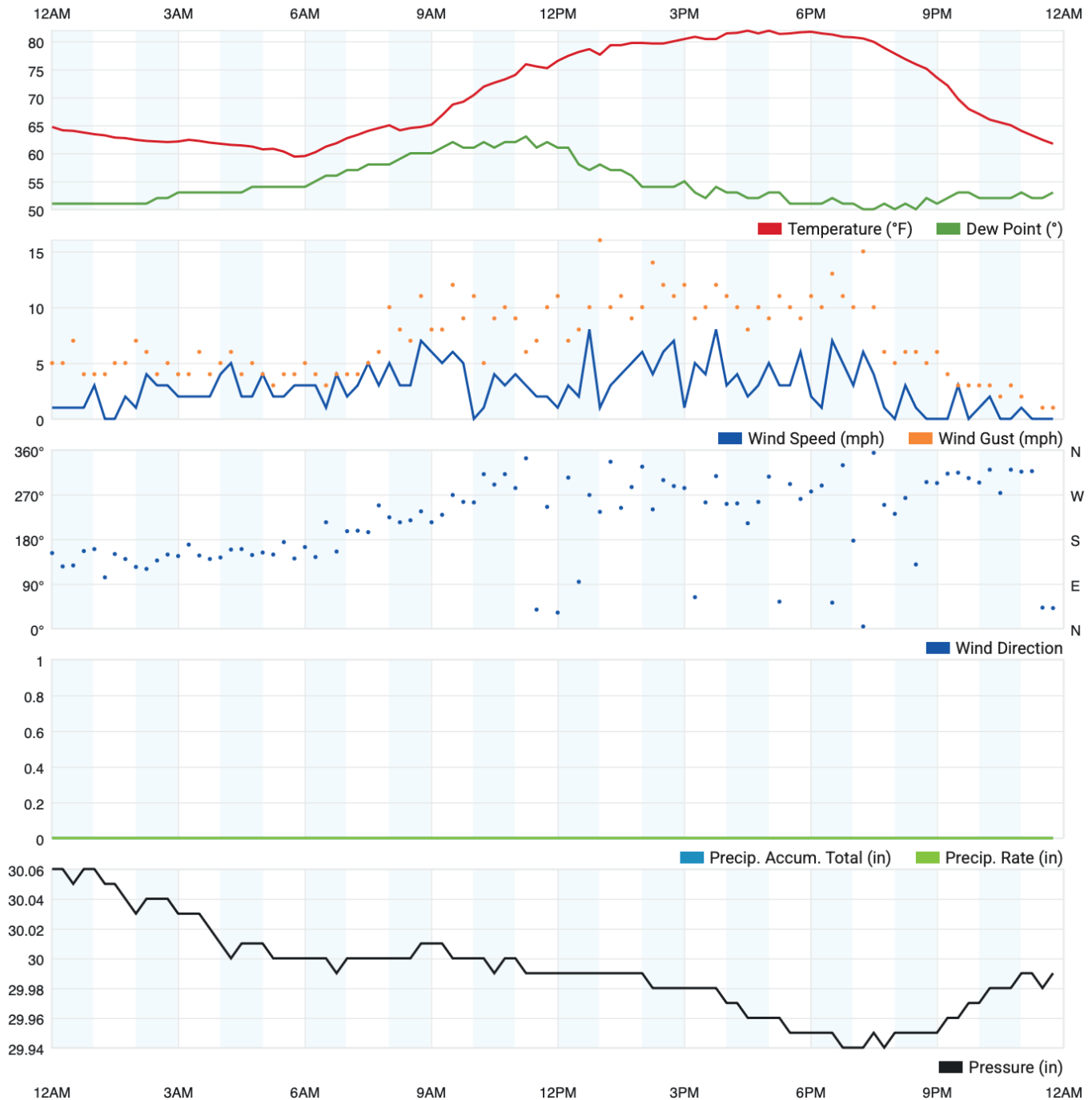
Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 28 of 80

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

June 23, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 29 of 80

Today



High: 75 °F

Mostly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 50 °F

Mostly Clear

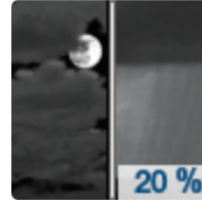
Thursday



High: 77 °F

Mostly Sunny

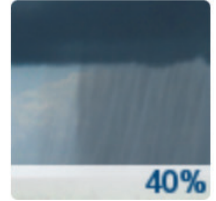
Thursday
Night



Low: 54 °F

Mostly Cloudy
then Slight
Chance
Showers

Friday



High: 77 °F

Chance
Showers

WARMING FORECAST...



Today



*Winds N to NW
gusting 20 to 30 mph*

Highs: 70s

Lows: 47-51°

Thursday



Highs: 70s

Lows: 52-55°

Friday



60% chance of Rain
of morning showers

*Winds SE gusting
20 to 35 mph*

Highs: 74-80°

Lows: 58-62°

Saturday



30-60% chance of
Showers and
Storms

*Winds SE gusting
35 to 45 mph*

Highs: 80s

Lows: 61-68°

Sunday



25% chance of
Showers and Storms

Winds S 25 to 35 mph

Highs: 85-93°

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/aberndeen

Warmer and breezier conditions are in store for the end of the week through the weekend. Highs in the 70s through Thursday will increase into the 80s to low 90s by Sunday. Expect mainly dry weather to continue through the day Thursday.

Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 30 of 80



Heating Up this Weekend

High temperatures in the 80s & 90s starting Saturday

Heat Risk: The likelihood that temperatures & humidity to cause negative health impacts (ie heat exhaustion or heat stroke)

Category	Risk of Heat-Related Impacts
Green 0	Little to no risk from expected heat.
Yellow 1	Minor - Primarily affects those who are extremely sensitive to heat and without cooling/hydration.
Orange 2	Moderate - Affects those who are sensitive to heat, especially those without cooling/hydration, and some health systems and industries.
Red 3	Major - Affects anyone without cooling/hydration as well as health systems and industries.
Magenta 4	Extreme - Rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with no overnight relief affecting anyone without cooling/hydration as well as health systems, industries, and infrastructure.

Maximum HeatRisk Forecast

	6/24 Wed	6/25 Thu	6/26 Fri	6/27 Sat	6/28 Sun	6/29 Mon	6/30 Tue
Aberdeen	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Britton	1	0	1	1	2	2	2
Chamberlain	1	0	1	1	2	2	1
Clark	1	0	1	1	2	2	1
Eagle Butte	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Eureka	0	1	1	1	2	2	1
Gettysburg	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
McIntosh	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Milbank	1	0	1	1	3	3	2
Miller	1	0	1	1	2	2	2
Mobridge	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Murdo	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Pierre	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Redfield	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Sisseton	0	0	1	1	2	2	2
Watertown	1	0	1	2	3	3	2
Webster	1	0	1	1	2	2	2
Wheaton	0	0	1	1	2	2	2



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

wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/heatrisk/

High temperatures will be in the 80s and 90s starting Saturday. Heat index values will increase into Moderate to Major values over portions of eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Moderate affects those who are sensitive to heat, especially those without cooling/hydration. Major affects anyone without cooling/hydration.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 31 of 80

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 82 °F at 4:57 PM

Low Temp: 59 °F at 5:53 AM

Wind: 17 mph at 12:55 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 108 in 1988

Record Low: 39 in 2017

Average High: 82

Average Low: 57

Average Precip in June.: 2.96

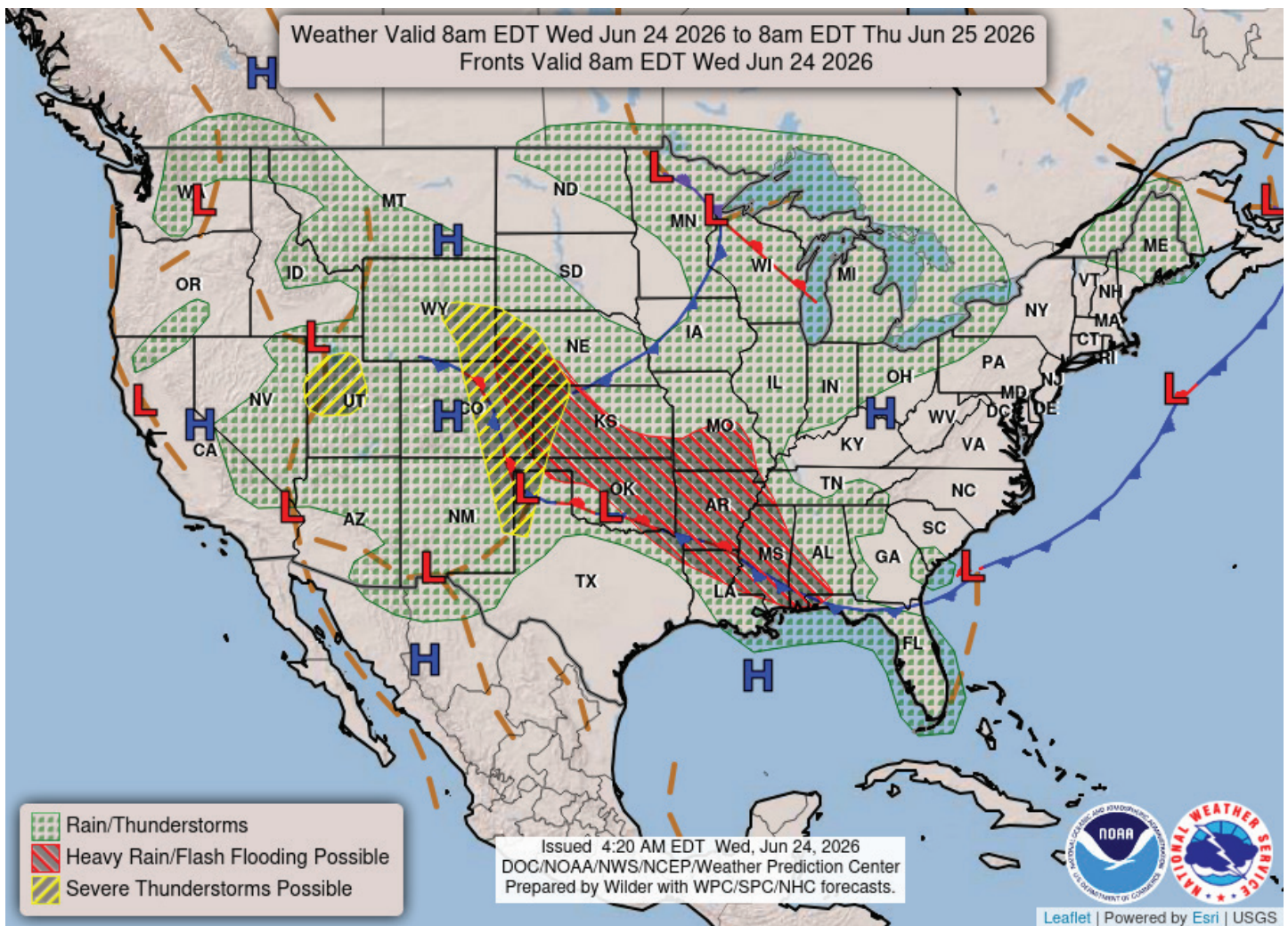
Precip to date in June.: 1.37

Average Precip to date: 10.21

Precip Year to Date: 8.13

Sunset Tonight: 9:24 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:44 am



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 32 of 80

Today in Weather History

June 24th, 1902: Powerful winds occurred over portions of Hand and Stanley to Turner and Lincoln Counties during the evening hours. Heavy losses occurred to barns and farm outbuildings, trees, and windmills. One person was killed, and several were injured. A peak wind gust of 67 mph was recorded in Pierre.

June 24th, 2003: An F4 tornado destroyed or heavily damaged all buildings, other structures, and vehicles in the small town of Manchester in Kingsbury County. The tornado stripped many homes to the foundation. Of the six residents, four were injured and transported to hospitals. The tornado damaged crops, trees, and power lines south of Manchester before reaching the town. The tornado also heavily damaged several farms north of Manchester, including two farms on which several buildings, including the houses, were destroyed. Throughout the path, the tornado was observed to have multiple vortices. The tornado was seen and videotaped by numerous storm chasers and researchers. Researchers also deployed weather sensors around the town of Manchester. One of these sensors recorded a 100-millibar pressure drop as the tornado passed.

1816 — The cold weather of early June finally gave way to several days of 90 degree heat in Massachusetts, including a reading of 99 degrees at Salem. (David Ludlum)

1924 — Six men at a rock quarry south of Winston-Salem, NC, sought shelter from a thunderstorm. The structure chosen contained a quantity of dynamite. Lightning struck a near-by tree causing the dynamite to explode. The men were killed instantly. (The Weather Channel)

1951 — Twelve inches of hail broke windows and roofs, and dented automobiles, causing more than fourteen million dollars damage. The storm plowed 200 miles from Kingman County KS into Missouri, with the Wichita area hardest hit. It was the most disastrous hailstorm of record for the state of Kansas. (David Ludlum)

1952 — Thunderstorms produced a swath of hail 60 miles long and 3.5 miles wide through parts of Hand, Beadle, Kingsbury, Miner and Jerauld counties in South Dakota. Poultry and livestock were killed, and many persons were injured. Hail ten inches in circumference was reported at Huron SD. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Thunderstorms spawned six tornadoes in eastern Colorado. Baseball size hail was reported near Yoder, CO, and thunderstorm winds gusting to 92 mph derailed a train near Pratt, KS. The town of Gould, OK, was soaked with nearly an inch and a half of rain in just ten minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Forty-three cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Valentine NE reported an all-time record high of 110 degrees, and highs of 102 degrees at Casper, WY, 103 degrees at Reno, NV, and 106 degrees at Winnemucca, NV, were records for the month of June. Highs of 98 degrees at Logan, UT, and 109 degrees at Rapid City, SD, equalled June records. Lightning killed twenty-one cows near Conway, SC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — Thunderstorms developing along a warm front produced severe weather from Colorado and New Mexico to Kansas and Nebraska. Thunderstorms spawned seven tornadoes, and produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Wood River, NE, and hail three inches in diameter at Wheeler, KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 33 of 80

 In Touch Ministries®

Daily Devotion

God Is With Us Always

In suffering, rely on the Lord for the strength to overcome.

Genesis 41:14-44: 14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."

16 Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."

17 So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the Nile;

18 and behold, seven cows, fat and sleek came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass.

19 "Lo, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such as I had never seen for ugliness in all the land of Egypt;

20 and the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows.

21 "Yet when they had devoured them, it could not be detected that they had devoured them, for they were just as ugly as before. Then I awoke.

22 "I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears, full and good, came up on a single stalk;

23 and lo, seven ears, withered, thin, and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them;

24 and the thin ears swallowed the seven good ears. Then I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

25 Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

26 "The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one and the same.

27 "The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven thin ears scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine.

28 "It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

29 "Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt;

30 and after them seven years of famine will come, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will ravage the land.

31 "So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it will be very severe.

32 "Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, it means that the matter is determined by God, and God will quickly bring it about.

33 "Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 "Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance.

35 "Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh's authority, and let them guard it.

36 "Let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land will not perish during the famine."

37 Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

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

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 34 of 80

38 Then Pharaoh said to his servants, ``Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?"

39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, ``Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are.

40 ``You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you."

41 Pharaoh said to Joseph, ``See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."

42 Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put the gold necklace around his neck.

43 He had him ride in his second chariot; and they proclaimed before him, ``Bow the knee!" And he set him over all the land of Egypt.

44 Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, `` Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

The Bible is relevant for every situation. Although the details of our circumstances are often very different from those of the men and women in Scripture, God's Word still applies.

Let's continue to look at Joseph. When Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph, he refused, saying he would not sin against God (Genesis 39:9). The young man's faith was strong, which helped him place loyalty to the Lord above all.

Second, the Lord's presence meant that Joseph prospered right where he was—as a slave and a prisoner. Those in charge recognized that God's favor was upon Joseph. So they gave him great responsibility and authority (Genesis 39:3-4; Genesis 39:21-22).

Third, during times of suffering, Joseph gained invaluable lessons that prepared him for the future. He learned the details of Egyptian culture, ways to handle responsibility, and the importance of keeping God first. An additional blessing was the opportunity to be a witness to the Lord's power (41:16).

By relying on the Lord as Joseph did, our faith will grow strong. When we give God His rightful place as Lord over our life, His presence will strengthen us to resist temptation. Then we too will be equipped to do kingdom work and ready to proclaim His greatness to those around us.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 35 of 80

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Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 36 of 80



WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.23.26

6 17 34 39 57 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 41 Mins 19 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.23.26

48 51 60 63 66 20

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$489,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 26 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.26

12 13 35 41 52 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$30,460,000

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 41 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.20.26

2 9 15 27 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$145,000

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 56 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.26

18 41 43 64 65 25

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 25 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.26

17 19 21 45 48 13

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$327,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 25 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

As Native American boarding schools project ends, survivors describe feeling honored and restored

By NANCY MARIE SPEARS/The Imprint The Imprint

Hundreds of Indigenous people have testified. They've sobbed, cursed and laughed in spite of it all. Many told stories about their time in boarding schools that they've kept inside for decades, finally able to begin recovering from childhood trauma.

An oral history project led by the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition is wrapping up in Tulsa, Oklahoma on Friday. To date, the nonprofit's historians have collected video testimony from more than 360 Indigenous survivors in 19 states — stories set to be preserved in the Library of Congress for years to come.

Iona Mad Plume, who is Blackfeet and grew up on her tribe's reservation in Montana, said she "can't emphasize enough" how healing her experience was. She testified in front of a video camera last month in Billings about her time in the Pierre Indian School in South Dakota, where she was sent at age 14.

Mad Plume, now 74, said since her interview she's been more grounded and has been able to let go of some of the haunting memories: a dusty blue Greyhound bus driving her away from her parents' red pickup truck. School staff beating her with a wooden dowel as she cowered on a bunk bed in her dorm room. Eating corn meal or cereal littered with weevil bugs.

"I got a lot out of that, pretty much a lot of closure," she said. "It was after almost a lifetime of carrying around questions and different things in my mind — so I don't have to carry that around anymore."

Another boarding school survivor who contributed to the project in Michigan in 2024 recounted a similar experience. Gene Bozicic, of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, attended the Catholic-run Holy Childhood School of Jesus in Harbor Springs, Michigan, beginning at age 11.

"As we further went along, I started to feel more confident in what I could do and what I have accomplished, almost like more pride to be Native," Bozicic, now 81, said about her video interview. "I hate to see it coming to an end, because they have given me my backbone back."

Survivors endured systemic abuse

The oral history project, which began in March 2024, is a collaboration between the Minnesota-based National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and the U.S. Department of the Interior. The intent is to document and share with the public the systemic abuse endured by boarding school survivors under the government's attempts at forced assimilation — policies that began in the 1800s and lasted for over a century.

Two years earlier, former Interior Secretary Deb Haaland — a Laguna Pueblo member and a descendant of boarding school survivors — led the historic Road to Healing listening tour with Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland, a citizen of the Bay Mills Indian Community.

Haaland's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative also included in-depth reports on the schools' multigenerational impacts. Nearly 1,000 Native children were buried at 65 different school sites, the federal government reported. Atrocities occurring within school walls ranged from physical and sexual abuse to failed attempts at cultural genocide, the report found.

In the more than two years since the boarding school coalition's oral history work began, the process of collecting these in-person testimonies in 19 states evolved, said Lacey Kinnart, the coalition's oral history program co-director.

Initially, the "quiet room" where survivors decompress with a fellow elder after their interview was optional. But staff soon changed that policy so entering the room was automatic, and added a second "quiet room." They also began matching survivors with a licensed clinical therapist who specializes in boarding school trauma and a licensed social worker.

"Our elders don't want to be a burden," said Kinnart, a citizen of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 38 of 80

Indians. "But they really do need that extra support."

Kinnart said staff also noticed survivors feeling nervous around the Indigenous photographer. That shyness showed in the photos. So they built in an extra half-hour into the schedule so each survivor could get to know the person who took their portraits.

Stories affect generations

The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the Department of the Interior are still assessing how to present the video interviews to the world. Survivors, however, will retain full ownership of their interviews and they alone decide whether their stories are made public.

The videos will be housed in a permanent oral history collection at the Library of Congress, and the project's end date is June 2027.

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition will continue other oral history projects independently. Staff said their next project will likely be more costly — potentially as much as \$13 million — compared to the \$6.2 million they received from Interior and the Mellon Foundation for the initial oral history project. And while the upcoming venture would take longer, it would be even more inclusive.

"We're just scratching the surface with these stories," said the coalition's Oral History Program Co-director Charlee Brissette, a citizen of the Sault Ste. Marie of Chippewa Indians. "We want to get a more robust picture of the boarding school experience because it does have that intergenerational effect."

Indigenous people excluded from this first iteration of the oral history project may get another opportunity in the coming years. It's an effort welcomed by survivors and descendants alike.

"I'd be interested in doing that, because the whole story needs to be taught," said Desiray Emerton, 56, a Seminole woman and a descendant of two generations of boarding school survivors.

Her relatives attended Goodland Academy and Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma. She said she's seen the generational impacts: Because of her boarding school experiences, Emerton's mother struggled to be affectionate toward her as a child. And her grandmother died long before the oral history project's existence.

"I know time's running out for those who did go through that personally," Emerton said, "but I always tell my kids I'm walking on the prayers of our ancestors, and I'm running out of time."

This story is published through the Global Indigenous Reporting Network at The Associated Press.

17 states and trade group sue California over plastics packaging law

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — A coalition of 17 states and a trade association representing U.S. wholesalers and distributors have sued California to block the enforcement of a stringent recycling law that aims to reduce plastic packaging waste.

The lawsuit, filed Monday in federal court, argues that California's recently finalized regulations that will gradually require companies to scale back single-use plastics and ensure all packaging is recycling or compostable should be struck down. The plaintiffs called the regulations "onerous mandates" that will cause steep price increases in everyday necessities that will be passed on, at least in part, to consumers.

"Once again, California is trying to enact a policy that negatively impacts the rest of the country. If California goes unchecked, consumers will be forced to pay more for basic necessities," Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers, who led the coalition, said in a news release.

The law, called the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act, was enacted in 2022.

"Virtually every product packaged or shipped in plastic containers, as well as a significant number of other types of packaging materials that merely incorporate plastics, fall into the Act's remarkable sweep," the lawsuit said.

The National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, which represents companies that import and distribute goods in California, also joined the lawsuit.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 39 of 80

"California is not entitled to pronounce nationwide policies," Eric Hoplin, the trade association's president and CEO, said in a statement. "Because the Act extends California's regulatory reach far beyond its borders and brings within its sweep conduct wholly unconnected to California, the Act violates principles of federalism, the horizontal separation of powers, and due process."

The lawsuit argues the law violates both the U.S. and California constitutions. It asks the court to declare California's law invalid and unenforceable, and halt its implementation.

The lawsuit names as defendants Zoe Heller, director of California's recycling agency known as CalRecycle, and the Circular Action Alliance, a nonprofit involved with implementing the law.

Melanie Turner, a spokesperson for CalRecycle, said in an emailed statement that the agency does not comment on pending litigation and that it remained focused on implementing the law.

The alliance said in a statement that it was aware of the lawsuit and closely monitoring developments while at the same time working to implement the law's "ambitious goals."

In a May news release announcing regulations under the law, state officials said the changes would fight plastics pollution while protecting the interests of taxpayers and local governments.

"California is shifting the responsibility of managing single-use plastic and packaging onto the producers. New packaging reforms lower waste costs for communities and decrease garbage and pollution across the state," Environmental Protection Secretary Yana Garcia said in a statement. "This approach pushes producers to innovate and design packaging that truly supports a circular economy."

Joining Nebraska in the lawsuit were 16 other states with Republican attorneys general: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.

Environmental groups also have sued over the law. A coalition that included the Natural Resources Defense Council recently filed a complaint over what it said in a news release were "weakened" final regulations for the "landmark" law.

World shares are mixed after a Big Tech sell-off

By CHAN HO-HIM AP Business Writers

HONG KONG (AP) — World shares were mixed Wednesday following a sell-off in big technology stocks from Asia to Wall Street.

U.S. stock futures were also trading mixed, as global investors monitor market movements including in Japan and South Korea, which have seen big gains in recent months on the global AI boom but both fell sharply on Tuesday.

In early European trading, Britain's FTSE 100 edged down 0.1% to 10,417.97. Germany's DAX fell 0.8% to 24,687.18, while France's CAC 40 was 0.2% higher at 8,355.36.

In Asia, South Korea's benchmark Kospi index was up 3.3% to 8,471.02, recovering from its 10% decline on Tuesday. Shares of memory chipmaker SK Hynix, one of the country's most valuable stocks, climbed 1%. Samsung Electronics jumped 9.8%, after Tuesday's 12.3% plummet.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.9% to 69,174.97 after falling 3.6% on Tuesday.

Taiwan's Taiex, which is also heavily influenced by tech shares, fell 2.2%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng was 0.3% higher at 23,412.18. The Shanghai Composite index was up 0.1% to 4,110.81. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 edged up 0.2% to 8,808.40.

The declines in Asian markets, including Japan's, followed Tuesday's 1.4% drop for Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index. The technology-heavy Nasdaq composite fell 2.2%, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average ended 0.1% lower.

Big Tech and semiconductor stocks fell in the U.S. On Tuesday, Micron Technology sank 13.2%, while Nvidia lost more than 4.1%.

The big falls in tech shares were an "illustration of rising volatility" in these stocks, said James Reilly, senior markets economist at Capital Economics. "This is particularly true in Korea where domestic retail buyers are taking on an increasing role," he said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 40 of 80

Oil prices fell early Wednesday, as more ships crossed the Strait of Hormuz while U.S.-Iran talks on a permanent end to the Iran war made progress.

"Price movements suggest the market expects a fairly rapid recovery in Persian Gulf oil supplies," ING commodities strategists Warren Patterson and Ewa Manthey said in a commentary.

Still, while vessel crossings in the strait increased in recent days, they remained well below prewar levels, they noted.

Brent crude, the international standard, fell 1.6% to \$75.57 a barrel. It has been trading below \$80 in recent days but is still elevated compared with the approximately \$70 per barrel in late February before the war began.

Benchmark U.S. crude was down 1.8% to \$71.92 a barrel.

In the U.S., investors are awaiting a report due Thursday of May's personal consumption expenditures price index, or PCE, which is the preferred inflation gauge by the Federal Reserve.

Some economists predict the Fed may hold key interest rate this year but is unlikely to raise rates. Bond yields have remained higher as inflation concerns grew amid global energy shocks.

In other dealings, the U.S. dollar was trading at 161.74 Japanese yen, up from 161.55 yen. The euro was trading at \$1.1347, down from \$1.1382.

UN nuclear agency boss says inspectors will visit Iran's nuclear sites under Iran-US interim deal

By MARI YAMAGUCHI and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The head of the U.N.'s nuclear agency signaled Wednesday that Iranian nuclear enrichment sites would be visited by his inspectors, a key component in the interim deal between the United States and Iran to reach an end to the war.

The comment by International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Mariano Grossi was the firmest yet from the United Nations agency, which is viewed as key in determining the status of Iran's nuclear stockpile.

Since Israel launched a 12-day war on Iran in 2025, the IAEA has been blocked by Tehran from visiting enrichment sites where the Islamic Republic is believed to store enough highly enriched uranium to potentially build as many as 10 nuclear weapons, should it choose to rush for the bomb. Iran long has maintained that its program is peaceful, though it is the only country in the world to have uranium enriched up to 60% purity without a weapons program.

The U.S. and Iran offered contradictory remarks Tuesday about whether those sites would be inspected. Grossi acknowledged the contradictions, calling it a "war of words" at the moment.

Grossi says inspections are 'going to happen'

"I can understand political statements, they are part of the reality, but the fundamental thing I would like to remind you and draw your attention to is that there has been a Memorandum of Understanding, signed by both presidents," he told journalists at a news conference at the tsunami-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

The accord "says explicitly that the nuclear activities that are going to be carried out with regards to the nuclear material facilities will be supervised by the IAEA — in all letters," he said.

Grossi added: "Obviously, to do that, we will have to inspect. Whether this happens the day after tomorrow or in one week or in 10 days, it's important, but not essential. This is going to happen."

Those inspections are key for the deal, which calls for Iran's stockpile of uranium to be "downblended" from highly enriched levels.

There was no immediate reaction from Iran. On Tuesday, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei told reporters in Tehran that U.N. inspectors were not scheduled to examine nuclear sites bombed by the U.S. last year, rejecting comments made a day before by U.S. Vice President JD Vance.

IAEA blocked from seeing bombed sites

The IAEA has been allowed to visit other nuclear sites in Iran since the 12-day war in 2025, such as the Bushehr nuclear power plant. But without accessing the enrichment sites, the IAEA says it is unable

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 41 of 80

to verify the status of Iran's stockpile or check the cascades of centrifuges used to enrich uranium. Both Iran and the IAEA say Tehran hasn't been enriching uranium, but nonproliferation experts worry that the Islamic Republic may be moving its stockpile to undeclared areas.

The U.S. and Iran agreed to a deal last week that calls for Tehran to dilute its stockpile of enriched uranium and waives U.S.-backed sanctions on Iranian oil, while giving each side 60 days to hammer out broader agreements.

But the uneasy ceasefire already has been tested by Iran saying it closed the strait again over fighting between Israel and the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah in Lebanon. Violence again broke out in Lebanon on Tuesday, but it did not escalate.

Technical-level talks between the U.S. and Iran are expected to resume early next week at the Bürgenstock resort in Switzerland, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. Pakistan has been a key mediator.

Marco Rubio is in the Middle East

Grossi's remarks came as U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in the Persian Gulf for a three-nation tour, beginning with a closed-door meeting and private working lunch in Abu Dhabi with Emirati President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the State Department said Wednesday.

Rubio is scheduled to travel next to Kuwait and then Bahrain for meetings with their leaders later Wednesday and Thursday.

Lebanese on the edge of Israel's occupation live with fear and rising tensions

By SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

JDEIDAT MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (AP) — Looking out from a friend's balcony, Milia el-Cheikh struggled to find her own home in the ruins of her now-deserted village, its entrances strung with barbed wire.

Her village of Dibbine is one of several Shiite-majority communities across southern Lebanon destroyed by Israeli forces battling the Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah. Israel has occupied vast areas and fighting has raged through declared ceasefires. The latest truce — part of the interim peace deal between the United States and Iran — appears to be holding.

El-Cheikh, one of the few Christians from Dibbine, found shelter in another village but regularly visits Jdeidat Marjayoun, a mostly Christian village next to her hometown, to have coffee with a friend from church. Before the war, it was a comforting ritual. Now it takes place against a backdrop of loss and fear.

"I don't know anything about my house," she said. "Nothing is more agonizing than not being able to get to your home."

Jdeidat Marjayoun is one of a string of towns and villages visited by The Associated Press on the blurry edge of the Israeli-occupied zone of southern Lebanon. The military has pushed out the mostly Shiite population, believing they harbor Hezbollah, and many towns have been demolished.

Residents of neighboring Christian, Sunni and Druze communities have been allowed to stay, but the conflict has transformed their lives. Their homes have been struck, road closures have isolated them from the rest of Lebanon, and nighttime raids by Israeli troops have terrified residents.

Israeli warnings against hosting Hezbollah fighters have effectively barred them from taking in displaced Shiites, driving a wedge between longtime neighbors and stoking political and sectarian tensions.

Lebanon is a linchpin for the Iran deal

The latest conflict began when Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel days after Israel and the U.S. launched their war on Iran on Feb. 28. Israel invaded Lebanon and has expanded its zone of control up to 12 kilometers (7 miles) deep in places.

As troops advanced, Israel warned people to leave large areas of southern Lebanon, and in April published a list of 53 towns and villages — mostly Shiite — where residents are barred from returning. On Thursday, it added eight more predominantly Shiite villages.

Israel says its troops will remain in southern Lebanon for self-defense. It says Hezbollah was deeply

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 42 of 80

entrenched and has released videos purporting to show tunnels and other military infrastructure in residential areas.

Iran says any wider truce must include Lebanon and that Israel must withdraw, while Hezbollah says it will resist occupation. Lebanon's government has also called on Israel to withdraw.

They live in the Israeli military's shadow

Mixed villages and towns on the edge of the security zone, spread over hills and valleys among orchards and olive groves, stand within sight of their devastated neighbors. Residents have vowed to stay.

The Shiite town of Khiam — now an empty white swath of flattened buildings controlled by Israel — can be seen from the Christian village of Qlayaa.

Qlayaa's residents are effectively barred from reaching their olive groves in the valley between. "Now another season is lost," said Hanna Daher, Qlayaa's mayor.

A priest in Qlayaa was killed by shelling as he inspected an earlier strike, and a father and his two children were killed in a drone strike while driving to Qlayaa. Israel says it only targets militants.

In Jdeidat Marjayoun, a house was bombed on suspicion that militants were using it. Rockets — believed to be from Hezbollah — damaged a church's dome. In other places, solar panels, power transmitters and water stations have been hit.

El-Cheikh fled Dibbine with her neighbors in early March after Israel warned people to leave. In late May, following weeks of fighting, Israeli forces raided Dibbine before withdrawing in early June.

As the fighting raged, el-Cheikh's friend, Lolitta Costantine, huddled with her husband in their home in Jdeidat Marjayoun, and at one point stayed with neighbors. Cracks caused by explosions run down the walls of her home. Windows were shattered and doors knocked loose. She keeps shrapnel as a reminder of the ordeal.

"We didn't know where the danger was coming from," Costantine said.

Tensions rise as the displaced are turned away

Shiites seeking shelter from the fighting have been turned away by those who fear Israeli strikes or eviction, aggravating tensions that have been mostly dormant since Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war.

When a Qlayaa resident hosted a friend from a Shiite village in his orchard, his house was bombed, said Daher, the mayor. Other residents have asked Shiites seeking refuge to leave.

"We told them, we don't want problems for you or for us," Daher said.

Israel has warned Jdeidat Marjayoun's municipality not to allow in people displaced from neighboring villages, saying it could put the town at risk or force it to be evacuated, the municipality said on social media.

"We were forced to ask some to leave the town," said the parish priest, Father Philip Habib Okla. "It caused many disagreements and tension," he added. "We are counting on faith to remain united."

The Israeli military said it has warned people in parts of southern Lebanon not to allow Hezbollah to use their villages. It said Hezbollah operates in civilian areas, endangering residents.

During Israel's 1982-2000 occupation of southern Lebanon, the area was a bastion of the South Lebanon Army, a mostly Christian militia working with the Israeli military. When Israel withdrew, some of them fled to Israel while others faced trial in Lebanon, where they were widely seen as collaborators.

Some residents worry they will be unfairly painted with that brush for staying in their homes. Few are willing to speak of the tensions openly, fearing retaliation by Israel or Hezbollah.

At a church visited by AP, a man shouted in exasperation that everyone had become suspicious of each other, even among Christians. He blamed Hezbollah for dragging Lebanon into the war, saying it had made a serious mistake.

'It is like the West Bank here'

Late one night in March, Israeli forces surrounded a building in the mostly Sunni village of Halta. They burst in and arrested Chadi Abdel-Al, who screamed "my heart" as he was being beaten and dragged into a van, according to his mother, Ayesha al-Qaderi, who lives in the same building.

In the commotion, a 15-year-old relative, Mohammad Abdel-Al, ran through the dark in his pajamas toward the house, his grandfather, Hatem, said. The Israeli soldiers shot him dead. A neighbor, who was out on his balcony, was wounded.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 43 of 80

The Israeli military said it had detained the commander of a local militant group.

In a separate incident, Israeli troops detained three farmers from Halta during a raid on a nearby village.

They are among at least eight people detained by Israeli troops since March, according to Lebanese media. The Israeli military says they were suspected of involvement in militant activities and plots against its troops.

"We still don't know why they kidnapped them. Maybe to instill fear in the village and to send a message that they see everyone," said Issa Abdel-Al, the community's leader.

"It has become like the West Bank here," he added, referring to the occupied Palestinian territory.

Al-Qaderi, who has heard nothing about her son since he was spirited away, said: "I just want to know his fate."

Ex-aides win primaries to replace retiring Democratic House members

By JONATHAN J. COOPER and GARY FIELDS Associated Press

BOWIE, Md. (AP) — U.S. Reps. Steny Hoyer and Jerrold Nadler, two of the top Democrats in Congress, are retiring when their terms expire in January, but they will continue to make their imprints on Washington.

The pair passed the torch Tuesday night to former aides who won the Democratic primaries to replace them on Capitol Hill, and because both districts are overwhelmingly blue, they are all but certain to win in November and get sworn in to replace their former bosses.

Hoyer and Nadler are the latest lawmakers to successfully anoint their successors after spending decades in Congress. Among 68 members of Congress not seeking reelection this year, at least five have endorsed former staffers to replace them and more than a dozen others have, to varying degrees, worked to smooth the path to Capitol Hill for their favored replacements.

The practice can be controversial, particularly when lawmakers try to strategically time their announcement to give favored insiders the upper hand.

But even at a time when voters give Congress a dismal approval rating, they're often receptive to the recommendation of their own representative.

That was the case for Natasha Greensword, 45, who backed Adrian Boafu in Maryland's Democratic primary on Tuesday in part because he was endorsed by Hoyer, who has represented the area since 1981.

"It was a plus," Greensword said. There was also a racial component that resonated for Greensword, a Jamaican immigrant. "It did help him to have a white man endorsing a Black candidate and saying he's got our backs," she said.

Support from a well-known member of Congress can lift a candidate's stature, which is particularly helpful if they're not well known and need to stand out in a crowded field. But it can also backfire, particularly in the anti-incumbent environment that influenced so many prominent Democrats' decision to step aside.

Norma James, 64, said she skipped over Boafu in Maryland's primary in part because of Hoyer's endorsement.

"If Steny was endorsing him, he's not the one you want," James said.

Retiring legislators can tip the scales

Many departing lawmakers prefer to keep their preferences to themselves when it comes time to hang it up. Others go to great lengths to arrange things how they want.

Most infamously, Democratic Rep. Jesus "Chuy" Garcia of Illinois earned a formal reprimand from a bipartisan majority of the House for a particularly aggressive strategy to keep his seat in friendly hands.

Garcia announced his retirement plans just after the deadline to file paperwork to run for the seat. By then, his chief of staff, Patty Garcia, was the only candidate who had submitted the needed paperwork. She went on to win the primary for the Chicago-area district with 100% of the vote.

The maneuvering by Chuy Garcia and Patty Garcia, who aren't related, drove a wedge between House Democrats. Chuy Garcia dismissed allegations he was being deceptive, saying he made a last-minute decision not to run because of health and family considerations.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 44 of 80

But Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, D-Wash., said Garcia's actions amounted to "election subversion" and introduced the resolution to reprimand him.

Meanwhile, Republican Sen. Steve Daines pulled a similar move in Montana. He quietly coordinated with former U.S. Attorney Kurt Alme, who filed paperwork to run for the office nearly simultaneously with Daines withdrawing from the race. It all went down minutes before the filing deadline. Alme faced no serious opposition for the party's nomination and won the primary with 76% of the vote.

Daines coordinated his surprise handoff with the White House, and President Donald Trump immediately backed Alme. The last-minute shuffle avoided a potentially damaging Republican primary and caught Democrats flat-footed.

Some lawmakers prefer more subtle endorsements

Other lawmakers have taken a lighter touch to try and sway the direction of their district after they're gone, and not always successfully.

Rep. Danny Davis, D-Ill., made clear that state Rep. La Shawn Ford was his preferred successor after nearly three decades in Congress, but that wasn't enough to clear the field for him. Ford eked out a narrow win in a crowded primary in March.

In California, Democratic Rep. Julia Brownley made a quick endorsement of Assembly member Jacqui Irwin. She still had a contested primary, but she comfortably won a spot in the general election.

Republican Rep. Ralph Norman had better luck in South Carolina. Nobody challenged his chosen successor, state Sen. Wes Climer, who ran unopposed for the party's nomination.

Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi didn't recruit a preferred replacement as San Francisco's representative in Congress, and she declined to weigh in on the contentious battle to replace her until the last minute. Days before the primary, she endorsed county Supervisor Connie Chan, helping her make it to the general election in November.

Hoyer and Nadler back former aides

Hoyer, 87, was the longtime No. 2 Democrat in House leadership. Nadler, 79, was the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee and is the dean of New York's congressional delegation after 34 years in Congress.

Both decided not to run for reelection this year in the face of a Democratic base hungry to push aside their party's aging leaders in Washington.

Hoyer backed his former campaign manager, Bofo, who is now a Maryland state delegate, in a crowded field of 24 candidates.

"Y'all, I gotta give a special thanks to my mentor, to my friend, Steny Hamilton Hoyer," Bofo said after winning the Democratic primary Tuesday night.

"Tonight, the Democratic voters of the 5th Congressional District decided that it's time to pass the torch to a new generation of leaders," he said. "And it's with great humility that I accept that responsibility."

Nadler endorsed state Assemblyman Micah Lasher, a longtime aide to New York Democrats including Nadler, in a feisty primary for the Manhattan House seat.

Lasher hailed his ex-boss in a victory speech, saying Nadler has been a political presence throughout his life.

"When I was born, I was already Assemblyman Nadler's constituent," Lasher said, adding that he later "watched as Congressman Nadler led fights long before they were convenient."

At least three other retiring lawmakers backed former aides to succeed them, including Chuy Garcia.

Republican Rep. Barry Loudermilk of Georgia endorsed his former chief of staff, Rob Adkerson, who lost the primary in a runoff. Rep. Ryan Zinke, R-Mont., endorsed his district director, Aaron Flint, within hours of announcing his decision not to run for reelection. Flint won a four-person primary earlier this month.

Judge bars immigration arrests at US courthouses in a setback for Trump

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

A judge on Tuesday barred the federal government from making arrests at immigration courts, ordering an end to a practice that took hold shortly after President Donald Trump took office last year.

The Trump administration's reversal of long-standing policy against arrests at immigration court resulted "not from merely unreasoned decision-making but a complete lack of decision-making," wrote U.S. District Judge Casey Pitts of San Francisco. Authorities failed to address the "chilling effect" of arrests on whether people attend court hearings.

"For 80 years, Congress has commanded federal agencies to think before they act," wrote Pitts, referring to the Administrative Procedure Act, a 1946 law that requires federal agencies to justify its actions. That law, he wrote, "does not require an agency to make the choice that a reviewing court might deem preferable. But it demands that an agency at least provide sound reasons for following its chosen course."

The ruling is the second setback for courthouse arrests since May when a federal judge in New York barred them at immigration courts. That order applied only in New York, while the latest decision invalidated the policy nationwide.

James Percival, the U.S. Homeland Security Department's general counsel, criticized the ruling as an exercise in judicial overreach.

"When a judge sentences a defendant, the defendant is taken into custody. If an alien is ordered removed by an immigration judge, the same should happen. A district judge ordering otherwise is naked judicial activism in service of an anti-American, open borders agenda," Percival wrote online.

After Trump took office, hearings across the country often ended with cases being dismissed by the government, setting the stage for plainclothes agents to make arrests in hallways in coordination with attorneys from the Department of Homeland Security.

Pitts, who was appointed by President Joe Biden, faulted the administration for carrying out the arrests and for holding people in nearby cells for longer than a prescribed 12-hour limit.

The Latest: Mamdani successfully backs three primary candidates as he reshapes New York politics

By The Associated Press undefined

The latest round of primary elections took place Tuesday in four states: Maryland, New York, South Carolina and Utah.

The midterm elections in November will determine control of both chambers of Congress and will also see the election of dozens of governors and other state and local offices. Before then, voters must choose nominees for each of these offices, making their picks in primary elections throughout the spring and summer in all 50 states.

New York: New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani is reshaping the city's congressional delegation through a series of successful endorsements in Democratic primaries in districts 10, 13 and 7.

Maryland: All eight of the state's congressional districts held contested primaries. In a state that typically leans left (only one district is led by a Republican), the primaries often determine the general election winners. Gov. Wes Moore secured the Democratic nomination for a second term.

South Carolina: State Attorney General Alan Wilson won the Republican nomination for governor after President Donald Trump, who initially endorsed Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette for the job, said on Friday that either contender would be a good pick.

Utah: Voters cast ballots to nominate congressional candidates using a new map that created a Democratic-friendly district in Salt Lake City. Ben McAdams, a former Utah congressman who has sought to shed his reputation as a moderate, won the Democratic primary in that redrawn district.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 46 of 80

Here's the latest:

Avila Chevalier says her victory vanquishes 'the politics of the past'

Darializa Avila Chevalier, the first-time candidate who ousted Rep. Adriano Espaillat in a Democratic primary, portrayed him as unresponsive to constituents' calls and out of touch with such key issues as housing affordability in the district in upper Manhattan and part of the Bronx.

"Today we make it clear — the politics of the past ends today," the democratic socialist said at her victory party, adding that "the era of taking a check and cashing a check and calling it representation is over."

"No longer will we accept a politics that throws scraps at us and acts as if we should be grateful for them," she said.

Mamdani's picks sweep New York City's congressional primaries

All three candidates backed by New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani won their primaries, knocking off incumbents Dan Goldman in New York's 10th District and Adriano Espaillat in the 13th District and winning the Democratic nomination for the open seat in the 7th District.

Opposing views over Israel were at the center of the clash between incumbents and their Mamdani-backed challengers. Brad Landers, who ran against Mamdani in the 2025 New York City Democratic mayoral primary, criticized AIPAC's support of Goldman and promised to sponsor legislation that would put restrictions on military aid to Israel.

McAdams supporter says his campaign gave her hope

Donna Gunn says it's "beautiful" to see former U.S. Rep. Ben McAdams win and to have an opportunity to send a fierce ally for LGBTQ+ rights back to Washington.

The longtime Special Olympics volunteer says she has been deterred from engaging in politics ever since Kamala Harris lost the 2024 presidential election. But McAdams' victory in the Democratic primary for Utah's 1st Congressional District has given her hope, Gunn says.

"We are so happy and so lucky to get Ben, who's going to stand up to that bully in the White House," she said.

Democratic US Rep. April McClain Delaney advances in Maryland primary to defend her seat

McClain Delaney won her Democratic primary, fending off competitors in what became one of the state's most expensive races.

Among her challengers was David Trone, the wealthy founder of Total Wine & More, who previously held the seat before stepping aside to make an unsuccessful Senate run in 2024. Trone lent some \$25 million of his own money to his campaign.

McClain Delaney represents the 6th District, which stretches from the westernmost part of the state to the Washington suburbs.

She loaned her campaign more than \$7 million.

Boafo gives a special thanks to Hoyer, his former boss

"Y'all, I gotta give a special thanks to my mentor, to my friend, Steny Hamilton Hoyer," Maryland state Del. Adrian Boafo said after winning the Democratic primary for Maryland's 5th District, which Hoyer has represented for decades.

"He's been our Danish knight in shining armor, our rock," Boafo said.

"Tonight, the Democratic voters of the 5th Congressional District decided that it's time to pass the torch to a new generation of leaders. And it's with great humility that I accept that responsibility."

Valdez says democratic socialist victories in New York send a message

Speaking to supporters in Brooklyn after her Democratic primary victory, Claire Valdez said they hadn't just won an election.

"We have declared that this movement is durable, that it is growing, and that it will not stop" until working people are not just offered a seat at the table, but "run the table."

Valdez said that back when she was bagging groceries for work, "I couldn't dream of running for office — I could barely dream of a day off."

Utah Democrat says progressives will keep organizing after defeat

State Sen. Nate Blouin says the progressive movement "still has a long way to go" after former U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 47 of 80

Rep. Ben McAdams prevailed in the Democratic primary for Utah's 1st Congressional District. McAdams was considered a more moderate candidate than Blouin and the other two Democrats in the race, former Meta and TikTok employee Liban Mohamed and tax attorney Michael Farrell.

"This isn't the end," Blouin said in a statement. "It's the beginning of a new era of organizing in Utah, one focused on progressive values that strengthen our communities instead of billionaire donors and special interests."

A spokesperson for Blouin declined to immediately answer when asked by text if the lawmaker will get behind McAdams' campaign.

Trump relishes in downfall of Democratic foes in New York primaries

The president delighted in the defeat of two of his Democratic foes in Tuesday's congressional primaries in New York.

He slammed Rep. Dan Goldman, a former federal prosecutor who served as lead counsel for Trump's first impeachment, after Goldman lost his primary for a seat in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

"Weak and pathetic Congressman Dan Goldman just lost, BIG! I guess people didn't like him illegally targeting President TRUMP," the president wrote on his social media platform. "In any event, this jerk is finally GONE!"

And he took aim at George Conway, who lost his bid to succeed outgoing Rep. Jerry Nadler in a crowded race in Manhattan, calling Conway a "Trump Deranged Loser at the highest level."

McAdams reminds supporters he voted to impeach Trump

Democratic primary winner Ben McAdams in Utah's 1st Congressional District outlined his previous work in Congress to expand healthcare, invest in public lands and secure protections for LGBTQ+ communities.

But McAdams told supporters that his defining vote was to impeach Donald Trump, which was met with loud applause.

"I would do it again," he said. "Character matters, courage matters and right now talk is cheap. Utahans deserve someone who has already shown the courage to stand up and speak with conviction when the pressure is real."

Mamdani speaks in Brooklyn

The mayor celebrated all three of the candidates he endorsed winning their primaries on Tuesday.

"A year ago, it was not the end of a political movement," he said. "It was the beginning!"

The crowd chanted "DSA! DSA!" after Mamdani took the stage, the initials for the Democratic Socialists of America.

"The old politics that got us to this crisis is not the politics that is going to get us out of this crisis," Mamdani said.

Defeated Democrat says party will unite behind McAdams in Utah

Candidate Michael Farrell says he's looking forward to working with Democratic primary winner Ben McAdams in Utah's 1st Congressional District.

Farrell, a tax attorney, added that he isn't worried about whether party members would rally behind McAdams following the highly competitive primary.

"Given the results, clearly folks are supportive of Ben pushing forward, so I don't see an issue with that," Farrell said.

Lasher hails the congressman — and ex-boss — he aims to succeed

After winning the Democratic nomination for retiring Rep. Jerry Nadler's seat in the heart of Manhattan, state Assemblymember Micah Lasher said Nadler has been a political presence throughout his life.

"When I was born, I was already Assemblyman Nadler's constituent," Lasher said, adding that he later "watched as Congressman Nadler led fights long before they were convenient."

Lasher, who has also worked for New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and former Mayor Mike Bloomberg, says he wants to "revamp and recharge the Democratic Party" and to "show that Democrats in Congress shave bold new ideas to improve the lives of struggling Americans and then deliver on them."

McAdams thanks supporters

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 48 of 80

Former U.S. Rep. Ben McAdams credited his supporters at his election party following what appeared to be a decisive victory in a crowded Democratic primary for Utah's 1st Congressional District.

"Thank you, Utah Democrats, thank you from the bottom of my heart," McAdams said. "Tonight this victory belongs to every volunteer who showed up on a hot June afternoon and knocked door after door."

He also asked for their continued support for the November general election: "You ran hard. You ran with conviction, and this party and this state are better for it. The energy and the passion your campaigns brought to this race is exactly what we need headed into November."

McAdams voters cheer his victory

Supporters of former U.S. Rep. Ben McAdams broke out in cheers as word of his victory spread at the Democrat's election watch party in Salt Lake City.

People moved toward a podium surrounded by orange, blue and white balloons, where McAdams was getting ready to speak.

He prevailed in a highly competitive Democratic primary for Utah's 1st Congressional District and enters the general election as the favorite in the newly drawn district.

Espaillet concedes New York's 13th District Democratic primary

"Tonight wasn't our night but I love you anyway," he told supporters.

The New York congressman was up against Avila Chevalier, backed by Mamdani.

"When I came to this nation as a young immigrant boy, I could have never imagined that I would be a member of Congress," Espaillet said. "That is the privilege of my life, to serve you the community, and I will continue to love and serve this community in the best way that I can."

Mamdani-backed community organizer Darializa Avila Chevalier defeats Rep. Adriano Espaillet

Avila Chevalier scored an upset in the Democratic primary for New York's 13th Congressional District.

The race pitted the community organizer backed by the city's democratic socialist mayor against a five-term congressman.

Espaillet was the first person who had been an undocumented immigrant elected to Congress.

Avila Chevalier is currently a doctoral student at the City University of New York. Her victory underscores the influence of Mayor Zohran Mamdani's political movement as he builds allies in Washington.

Trump-backed US Rep. Celeste Maloy wins GOP primary for redrawn House seat in Utah

Maloy defeated former state lawmaker Phil Lyman, who embraced false claims of fraud following the 2020 presidential election.

The district, spanning most of southern and eastern Utah, emerged last fall from a legal battle over the state's previous congressional map, dramatically altering its makeup. The shakeup left Maloy vulnerable to a primary challenge.

Under the new map, Democrats are expected to pick up one of Utah's four Republican-held House seats in the Salt Lake City area this fall.

Maloy will face off against Democratic nominee Kent Udell, an engineer, in the November general election. The GOP candidate is heavily favored to win in the deep-red district.

Alex Bores concedes in Democratic primary for Manhattan-based House seat after candidacy dominated by AI

The New York Assembly member lost the Democratic primary in the state's 12th Congressional District to Micah Lasher, who previously worked as an aide for the seat's current holder, Rep. Jerry Nadler.

"I didn't get in this race to make a point about AI," he said, but said "some of the most powerful people on the planet" lined up against him.

"They set out to make people afraid of them," Bores said. "Instead, they learned just how ready the people are to push back."

Anthony Constantino wins GOP primary for an upstate New York district after Trump endorsement

The brash, Trump-backed MAGA disciple who owns a custom sticker business in upstate New York defeated state Assembly Member Robert Smullen in the Republican primary to replace outgoing Rep. Elise Stefanik.

Constantino, who drew national attention after he put a massive "Vote For Trump" sign on the roof of his company's building, is expected to cruise to victory this fall in the heavily Republican district, which

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 49 of 80

stretches across most of New York's northern tip.

Smullen had heavy support from the state's Republican Party but it was not enough to overcome the president's still-strong hold over voters.

Stefanik late last year said she would not seek reelection to the House and that she was suspending her campaign for governor to spend more time with her family.

Goldman concedes to Lander in Democratic primary for New York's 10th District

US Rep. Dan Goldman said it was a privilege to serve in Washington, adding that there was a silver lining to his loss to Mamdani-backed Brad Lander.

"I can't wait to be a much more present father," he said. Goldman has five children.

Former US Rep. Ben McAdams wins Democratic primary for redrawn House district in Utah

Ben McAdams, a former Utah congressman who has sought to shed his reputation as a moderate, has won the Democratic primary in a redrawn U.S. House district that Democrats are strongly favored to win this fall.

McAdams defeated several candidates to his political left, including a state senator and a former employee of TikTok and Meta who had insisted McAdams is too conservative to represent a deep blue district.

The seat in the Salt Lake City area is among the few anticipated Democratic pickups following a national redistricting fight started by Trump to try to help Republicans maintain their majority in the U.S. House.

The 1st Congressional District race could be crucial for Democrats, who need to gain only a few House seats in November to take control of the narrowly divided chamber.

McAdams is strongly favored to defeat Republican Riley Owen, an intelligence officer in the Navy Reserve who was chosen during the state GOP's spring convention.

Republican Dan Cox will again face Democrat Wes Moore in Maryland governor's race

Cox beat a crowded field of competitors to clinch the Republican nomination.

The 51-year-old ultraconservative former member of the state House of Delegates unsuccessfully ran against Moore four years ago.

Cox has promoted Trump's lies about the 2020 election being stolen and organized buses to Washington for the "Stop the Steal" rally on Jan. 6, 2021.

He has pledged to slash taxes and beef up housing affordability programs if elected.

Nate Blouin not getting his hopes up in Utah House race

The Democratic state senator said just before polls closed that he was feeling calm, "because I think I know what's going to happen."

Blouin, a progressive Democrat, said he thinks the progressive vote will be divided, and former U.S. Rep. Ben McAdams, a moderate, will prevail.

Blouin had urged another progressive candidate, Liban Mohamed, to drop out of the Democratic primary for Utah's 1st Congressional District.

Polls have closed in Utah

In-person election day voting concluded in Utah at 8 p.m. local time, which is 10 p.m. EDT. Comparable past elections can offer clues about when to expect the first vote results and how long the vote count might take.

In the 2024 state primary, The Associated Press first reported results at 10:03 p.m. EDT, or three minutes after polls closed. The last vote update of the night was at 2:07 a.m. EDT with about 74% of total votes counted. The tally surpassed 90% of the vote counted by June 27 at 6:32 p.m. EDT, two days after election day.

Micah Lasher wins the Democratic nomination for a Manhattan-based US House seat

Lasher is running to replace his former boss Rep. Jerry Nadler.

Lasher has worked as an aide for a wide range of New York political figures like Nadler, Gov. Kathy Hochul and former Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

He won a bruising primary battle for one of the richest and most Democratic House seats in the country. The large field included Kennedy heir Jack Schlossberg and former GOP lawyer George Conway.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 50 of 80

Schlossberg calls for 'different people' in fight against corruption

Jack Schlossberg took the stage in Manhattan after polls closed in New York's Democratic primary for the 12th Congressional District.

The grandson of President John F. Kennedy was the first of the candidates in the race to speak, but neither conceded nor suggested he had won. Instead, he repeated his message of a need for the Democratic Party to put forward more vigorous candidates.

"No matter what, if we win tonight, or if we don't, we're still in the midst of a corruption crisis," he said. "We need to do things differently. We don't just need younger candidates. We need different people, people who are willing to speak plainly about the cost of living, about corruption and fearlessly about the Constitution."

Army veteran Cait Conley wins Democratic House primary in key New York swing district

Conley will face Republican Rep. Mike Lawler in the general election for New York's 17th District.

Lawler, a two-term congressman, is considered one of the nation's most vulnerable Republicans. Democrat Kamala Harris carried the Hudson Valley swing district in the last presidential race.

Conley earned the backing of national groups, including the American Federation of Teachers, VoteVets and the LGBTQ+ Victory Fund.

The 40-year-old Democrat topped a field that featured Beth Davidson, a county legislator who raised questions about Conley's ties to companies involved with Trump's immigration crackdown. Conley denied any connection to Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Conley emphasized her military background, having deployed six times as an Army officer to combat zones including Iraq and Afghanistan. She later served in the Biden administration as the director for counterterrorism on the National Security Council.

Maryland state Del. Adrian Bofo wins Democratic primary in race to succeed Rep. Steny Hoyer

In choosing Bofo over nearly two dozen competitors, voters in the 5th District opted for a continuation of Hoyer's pragmatic style of politics rather than a more progressive, antiestablishment approach promised by some other candidates.

Bofo, 32, is endorsed by Hoyer — his former boss — along with Gov. Wes Moore and other prominent Democrats. He also secured donations from tech firms and the cryptocurrency industry. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee's super PAC also spent more than \$1 million backing him.

Bofo worked as a field director and campaign manager for Hoyer before becoming a lobbyist and state delegate.

Mamdani-backed candidate Claire Valdez wins Democratic primary in New York's 7th District

New York state Assemblywoman Claire Valdez, a democratic socialist, defeated Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso with the backing of Mamdani and U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Both endorsed Valdez in hopes of giving the progressive left a greater foothold over the Democratic establishment in New York's congressional delegation.

The primary victory also leaves Valdez in strong position for November in the heavily Democratic district that covers parts of Brooklyn and Queens. It also marked a stinging setback for Reynoso, who had the endorsement of the district's retiring U.S. Rep. Nydia Velázquez.

Lots of voters in Salt Lake City despite wildfire smoke

Voters in the state's most populous city were turning out in large numbers even as smoke from wildfires burning across Utah turned the skies hazy and produced some of the worst air quality on the planet.

Some voters at the Salt Lake County Government Center said they had been waiting for close to an hour as polls got busier later in the day. Some walked briskly to their vehicles after casting ballots, while others pulled up to drop boxes to avoid the lines and hazy air.

Seven large fires were burning across Utah, including a blaze that started over the weekend in the dry, grassy foothills just outside Salt Lake City. It had the 12th-worst air quality of any city globally on Tuesday, according to IQAir's live ranking.

Trump heads to Capitol to speak with GOP senators who have grown increasingly frustrated with him

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, KEVIN FREKING and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is headed to Capitol Hill on Wednesday to meet with Republican senators who have grown increasingly frustrated with his efforts to divert their agenda.

Trump, who will attend a closed-door Senate GOP luncheon for the first time in more than a year, has pressured senators for months to focus on his proof-of-citizenship voting bill even though it doesn't have the votes to pass. At the same time, he has blocked them from confirming one of his own nominees, asked them to fund parts of his White House ballroom project despite opposition and forced them to defend his Iran war even as they question the strategy and endgame.

Trump has also helped whittle down his own support in the Senate after endorsing primary challengers to two GOP incumbents who were previously reliable votes for his agenda — Texas Sen. John Cornyn and Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy. Both men lost their primaries and have since become more critical of the president.

Still, senators said ahead of the meeting that they hope to focus on unity, not disagreements.

"If we're going to win the midterm elections, we need to get on the same page," Texas Sen. John Cornyn said Tuesday ahead of the meeting. "We're not on the same page now, and that I think is dangerous."

It was uncertain, though, if Trump's visit could smooth differences with the Republican majority — or if GOP senators who have been increasingly vocal about their frustration will voice their concerns directly.

Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina said a lot of his complaints with the administration have already been communicated. He said he hopes this meeting will be "conciliatory."

"That would be a big win for us tomorrow," Tillis said on Tuesday.

Trump pushes Thune on SAVE America Act

Adding to the tension is Trump's increasingly distant relationship with Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D. While Thune remains popular in his conference and cordial with the president, he has spent much of his time lately telling Trump what he doesn't want to hear.

Thune said Tuesday that while Trump and some in their conference want to see the voting bill pass, "it's just not realistic."

Trump has been pushing the Senate to eliminate the filibuster and pass the legislation, known as the SAVE America Act, which would create strict new requirements for voters to prove citizenship and show voter ID at the polls. He has also demanded that they add a ban on mail-in ballots to the bill as well as unrelated provisions to block sex reassignment surgeries on some minors and prevent people born as men from playing in women's sports.

"John is a leader and hopefully he can get the votes," Trump said Tuesday on a trip to Pennsylvania, putting new pressure on Thune.

Thune devoted weeks of floor time to the voting bill earlier this year and has said he supports it. But he has repeatedly said there aren't enough votes to scrap the filibuster that triggers a 60-vote threshold to pass most bills in the 53-47 Senate. And Democrats are uniformly opposed to the bill.

"Those are just hard realities," Thune said. "And I think people at some point have to come to grips with that."

Thune said he hopes the meeting is about "sitting down as a family" and figuring out their agenda in the remaining time before the election.

Some GOP senators back Trump on SAVE Act

Thune said he found out Trump was coming to the luncheon from Florida Sen. Rick Scott, who had extended the invitation without telling him — an unusual move that could signal some frustration within the ranks. Scott, a close Trump ally, leads the Senate Republican lunch every Wednesday.

Scott, who ran against Thune for leader two years ago, said Trump responded "on the spot" to his invitation and said he would come.

"He's going to be very positive," Scott said. "There's a lot that we can brag about that we've accomplished,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 52 of 80

and he wants to figure out how we can win November and continue to fulfill his agenda."

On Monday, Scott sent a letter to his Republican colleagues arguing that the Senate should be taking votes every week on some version of the SAVE America Act and other GOP priorities that Democrats oppose.

"We need to show voters that we are listening to them and will fight for their priorities whether any Democrats vote with us or not," Scott wrote.

Also needling Thune on the bill is Utah Sen. Mike Lee, a Republican who has amassed a large following on X with daily posts about how they should kill the filibuster and pass the bill. Several Republican senators, including Cornyn, confronted Lee at a closed-door lunch last week about his advocacy, which they said is dividing the party and creating unrealistic expectations.

Lee has also echoed Trump's claims that Republicans can't win elections unless the bill passes, despite the party's sweeping victories in 2024. Trump has continued to falsely claim that the 2020 election he lost was stolen.

"The push to pass the SAVE America Act is not a 'fantasy,'" Lee posted over the weekend. "It's a plan to avoid a nightmare — one that's coming soon unless we act."

Thune said Tuesday that it's Lee's prerogative to post on social media, but "at the end of the day, I have a different reality. And sometimes the alternative universe that is X doesn't reflect the facts on the ground."

Frustration over Iran, intelligence job could also be topics

Trump could be faced with questions about his announcement on social media last week that he was delaying Jay Clayton's nomination to become national intelligence director. Republican leaders had hoped to quickly confirm Clayton and circumvent Trump's unpopular interim pick Bill Pulte, who has no known experience in the field.

In the same social media post, Trump said he wouldn't sign a renewal of a key surveillance law unless Senate Republicans attach the SAVE America Act. That hardline approach has some support in the House, where a group of 25 Republicans has vowed to oppose all legislation until the voting bill moves forward.

Republicans could also use the luncheon to push Trump on the war in Iran and the agreement with Iran to end it. Most lawmakers still have not been briefed about the deal.

Sen. Mike Rounds, R-S.D., said there are a lot of questions about the Iran agreement, but added that Trump may not be able to talk publicly about the ongoing negotiations.

"We're there to listen" and to try and ensure that the rest of Trump's term is successful, Rounds said. But that means "we've got to come out with a united team."

NATO's Trump whisperer heads to the White House to soothe the president ahead of next month's summit

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte will check in face-to-face with President Donald Trump on Wednesday, visiting the volatile U.S. leader two weeks before the annual summit of the military alliance at a time when the Pentagon is reviewing the size of the U.S. military footprint in Europe.

Trump has long been critical of NATO, arguing the U.S. carries more than its fair share of military spending. But his grievances have been louder since the Iran war as he fumed over some member countries ignoring his call to help him restart oil trade through the shuttered Strait of Hormuz.

Trump has renewed his threats to leave the 77-year-old military alliance, raising the stakes ahead of the NATO leaders' summit in Turkey next month. But Rutte, who has become known as a Trump whisperer for his ability to charm the president, is expected to use Wednesday's White House meeting to try to appease him.

The visit comes after U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth last week lashed out at allies during a meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels. He announced a six-month Pentagon review of American forces in Europe.

Hegseth echoed some of Trump's critiques, faulting European allies for not letting the U.S. use bases in Europe to attack Iran. NATO allies were not consulted about the war before the U.S. launched it with

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 53 of 80

Israel on Feb. 28, and some have been openly critical of Trump's strategy.

Trump has claimed NATO allies were not there for the U.S. and suggested leaving the alliance, which was founded in 1949 to counter the Cold War threat posed to European security by the Soviet Union. At the heart of their treaty is a mutual defense agreement in which an attack on one is considered an attack on all. The only time it has been invoked was in 2001, to support the United States in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

The Pentagon's warning that it will reduce its military presence in Europe to focus on threats elsewhere was the latest upheaval for the 32-member alliance since Trump returned to office.

The Republican leader stunned European allies last year when he threatened to annex Greenland, a semiautonomous island that is part of ally Denmark.

A chief part of Rutte's mission these days is keeping the U.S. in NATO, and he's proven himself deft in the past at subduing Trump's frustrations.

Rutte frequently flatters the president, crediting him with getting NATO members to increase their defense spending. Trump last year pressured leaders to agree to invest 5% of their GDP annually on defense by 2035.

On Tuesday evening, Rutte appeared for an interview on Fox News Channel, of which Trump is known to be a dedicated viewer.

Rutte repeatedly praised Trump, emphasizing he is the leader of the NATO alliance and said of his efforts in Iran: "I'm completely behind him on this."

He said that Trump's frustrations over the use of bases in Europe involved a few "isolated cases."

The lengths to which Rutte is willing to praise Trump have at times raised eyebrows, such as when he referred to the president as "daddy" during the alliance's summit last year.

He then sent him a fawning text message that employed one of Trump's favorite flourishes, capitalizing random words. "Europe is going to pay in a BIG way, as they should, and it will be your win," Rutte said.

Trump shared the private message on social media for the world to see.

He did it again in January, blasting out another Rutte message that closed with: "Can't wait to see you. Yours, Mark."

Top Army general who was last US soldier to leave Afghanistan is suddenly leaving his post

By KONSTANTIN TOROPIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army's commander of its forces in Europe and Africa — who was famously the last American soldier to leave Afghanistan in 2021 — is unexpectedly stepping down from his post after just 18 months in the job, the Army confirmed late Tuesday.

Gen. Christopher Donahue, commanding general of U.S. Army Europe and Africa and commander of NATO's Allied Land Command, will relinquish his command on July 2, according to an Army statement provided to The Associated Press. He is the latest in a line of nearly two dozen top military leaders to either retire or depart their jobs early under the leadership of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who has undertaken an effort to thin the ranks of the military's top brass with the mantra "less generals, more GIs."

Donahue's deputy, Maj. Gen. Christopher Norrie, will perform his duties in the meantime, the statement added.

A West Point graduate and a career special operations commander, Donahue commanded Delta Force units in Iraq and Afghanistan before leading the 82nd Airborne division from July 2020 to March 2022.

It was during that period that he oversaw the security at Hamid Karzai International Airport during the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from the country in 2021. On Aug. 30, 2021, Donahue became the last U.S. soldier to depart the country after nearly 20 years of war sparked by the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The moment was documented in an iconic photo taken through night vision goggles that showed the general boarding the last C-17 cargo plane to depart the country.

Hegseth and President Donald Trump had made the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan — an opera-

tion that was set in motion by a treaty negotiated with the Taliban by the Trump administration in its first term — a regular political punching bag and the subject of a new Pentagon review.

Last May, Hegseth ordered the new examination of the withdrawal despite there having already been multiple reviews of the operation by the Pentagon, U.S. Central Command, the State Department and Congress, which have involved hundreds of interviews and studies of videos, photographs and other footage and data. It's unclear what specific new information the new review is seeking.

Donahue's leadership during the evacuation had nonetheless drawn bipartisan praise. Within the Army, he was widely seen as a top officer who could have led the service or been chosen to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

An Army official who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to talk about sensitive discussions told The Associated Press that Donahue's departure comes as the Army is discussing downgrading U.S. Army Europe and Africa from four-star to a three-star command.

This move would come amid ongoing criticism from Hegseth about European allies.

Last week, Hegseth told NATO allies he would be conducting a six-month Pentagon review of American forces in Europe that is "designed to ensure that NATO is moving fast and irreversibly toward Europe leading, stepping up to take primary responsibility for the defense of Europe."

"It's a review that some countries will fail and others will pass with flying colors," he added.

The Pentagon did not immediately comment on the news of Donahue's departure, which was first reported by The Atlantic.

All the world's a robot-staging ground for tech entrepreneurs building 'physical AI'

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Computer scientist Louis Castricato was in his eighth year studying large language models — the artificial intelligence technology behind chatbots like ChatGPT and Claude — when he started to feel like he was hitting a dead end.

"We basically have passed the point of doing real fundamental LLM research," Castricato said. "Now it's just applications."

The researcher quit his studies at Brown University and started a new company, called Overworld. Its ambition is in its name: AI that can understand and navigate a world, not just words.

There's still plenty of money to be made from AI chatbots — investors are counting on it as they commit trillions of dollars to leading developers like Anthropic and OpenAI. But a growing number of AI entrepreneurs are dedicating themselves to what they see as the next frontier: "world models" that teach AI systems, and sometimes robots, how to react in a physical environment.

They include some of the field's most prominent scientists, such as "Godmother of AI" Fei-Fei Li, who describes the concept of a world model as "one of the most important and most overloaded terms in AI today."

Scientists are applying AI in new dimensions with 'world models'

At the heart of world model research is the idea that AI can't be truly intelligent if it can only read a book. It also needs to read the room.

"Where language models learn the statistical structure of text, world models learn the statistical structure of space and time: how light falls on a surface, how a garden looks from an angle no camera has captured, how objects respond to force and follow the laws of physics," wrote Li, founder of the San Francisco startup World Labs, in an essay published this month.

Another proponent is AI pioneer Yann LeCun, who quit his job as Meta's chief AI scientist last year to start Paris-based Advanced Machine Intelligence Labs.

"World model is quickly becoming a buzzword," LeCun said on a recent "Unsupervised Learning" podcast. He said he views it as something that enables an AI agent "to predict the consequences of its own actions."

There are multiple ways of defining world models, often based on the technologies someone hopes to

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 55 of 80

build with it — be it robots or a more interactive video game.

Robots can't learn much from AI models trained on books

Training on all of humanity's books, news articles and visual media, as AI language models have done, has led to AI assistants that are changing the nature of office-based work and some creative fields. But some proponents see limitations in generative AI models that work by repeatedly predicting the next word or pixel to produce new dialogue, images or lines of code.

Chatbots can't pick up a coffee mug, notes Martin Hebert, dean of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University.

"There's all the geometry of the world, the dynamic of how I move my hand, the physical interaction of the contact with the cup," Hebert said. "This is much more complex than just predicting the next word in a sentence."

For scientists like Hebert, who has spent more than four decades researching robotics, the most useful application for world models is as a faster and cheaper path to "physical AI" — another tech industry buzzword.

"Some people may have different definitions, but physical and embodied AI are kind of the evolution of what we used to call robotics," Hebert said in an interview. Some of the AI advances that have made chatbots so useful can also be applied to building AI with a broad enough awareness of its environment to work like a robot's brain, he said.

"In your body and spinal cord you have a very general model of how to balance, how to walk around, and you can adapt to your knee hurting in the morning, so you now walk a little differently," he said. "You don't need to think about that. You have a general model somewhere in your nervous system and brain that allows your body to adapt very quickly."

Simulated worlds are drawing interest from investors

Smarter robots aren't the only end game for world models. Castricato started Overworld last year and the tiny Rhode Island-based startup is now building video game worlds where a scene, say, of a spooky forest, can adapt as a virtual character moves through it and interacts with the objects in it.

"There's no other world model where you can just walk through doors or where you can interact with a detailed environment like this," he said in an interview. "We optimize for interaction above anything else."

While the near-term applications aren't as readily apparent as AI coding tools, world model makers are attracting interest from venture capitalists like Steve Jang, co-founder and managing partner at Kindred Ventures.

The firm is investing in Overworld and other world model-focused companies, including Causal Labs, which is building AI models for weather prediction, and Extropic, which is building specialized computer chips suited to world models.

"I think that the future is many different types of models with many different philosophies and architectures," Jang said. "I don't think that it'll be one large, dense model to rule them all."

In her recent essay, Li sought to create a "taxonomy of world models" to help sort out the confusion about the competing visions.

"A video model that produces gorgeous but physically impossible flames, a language model improvising a playable game, and a physics engine that faithfully simulates combustion all go by the same name," she wrote.

She divided world models into three categories. The most commercially viable today are "renderers" that prioritize the visual fidelity of the virtual worlds they create but can't be trusted to teach robots much.

Then, there are "simulators" that create virtual training grounds that faithfully represent the physical structure of a world; and "planners" that try to predict what an AI agent or robot should do in an unstructured world.

"A robot that can plan is a robot that can work, and the entire industry is racing to be the one that gets there first," she wrote.

Shooting suspect scoped out library before returning with a shotgun and killing 2, police say

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press

The 18-year-old suspect in a shooting at a Northern California library did a walk-through of the building, then went to his vehicle, got a shotgun and fatally shot a man at the main door and another inside, law enforcement said Tuesday.

Chico Police Chief Billy Aldridge said gunshots and screams could be heard on a 911 call Monday evening from the Butte County Library's branch in Chico — a city of about 100,000 people about 150 miles (240 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco.

"From the first 911 call to having him in custody was less than four minutes," Aldridge said, praising officers for stemming the loss of life.

The suspect shot a man at the entrance of the library in the leg and then shot him in the head before firing multiple shots inside and shooting another man in the head, said Sid Patel, special agent in charge in the FBI's Sacramento office.

"Yesterday's violent attack was horrific," Patel said. "The full force of the FBI is assisting this investigation."

Details emerge on the victims and the arrest

Authorities identified the men who died as 46-year-old Jacob Hull, who his brother said went by the name Cody, and 74-year-old Robert Johnson.

The 7-year-old daughter of Hull's girlfriend fell during the shooting and was taken to the hospital with a minor injury, Benjamin Heneberry, Hull's brother, told The Associated Press.

The suspect fled out the back of the library as officers entered, but additional law enforcement personnel behind the building took the man into custody, Aldridge said during a news conference after the arrest.

Officers recovered a shotgun from the floor of the library and two other guns from the suspect's car. The weapons were registered to the suspect's family, the police chief said, without providing any other information.

Heneberry said his brother had just gotten to the library with his girlfriend's daughter and was sitting on a bench just outside when he was shot. He said his girlfriend's daughter is physically OK, but she saw everything.

"We're just devastated and shocked," he said, explaining that a fundraiser had been set up for Hull's girlfriend and her daughter. "Nobody would imagine that this would happen to their own brother."

Heneberry described his brother as a very smart, quiet and low-key man who loved 1990s hip-hop. He was a father figure to his girlfriend's daughter and was supporting them, Heneberry said.

Police surround the library

A video from the scene shows police patrol cars surrounding the one-story brick building and officers pointing their rifles. Another video shows a man face-down on the ground being handcuffed by a police officer who then picks him up and hands him to another officer who walks him away from the building.

Jeannie Lee Schroeder was on a city bus that stopped near the library when she noticed a lot of police. As officers carrying guns marched toward the street, the bus driver started driving away.

"I see a person in a light-colored shirt running toward the street, toward where the bus was at," Schroeder said. "And then there was an officer behind him, and another officer coming at the side of him, and that's when they tackled him down."

Police later determined the suspect acted alone and identified him as Bradley Scott Sayer of Chico. Sayer had recently graduated from Chico High School, Patel said.

He was booked into the Butte County Jail on suspicion of two counts of murder. There was no indication he had any prior relationship with or connection to the victims, police said.

Officials said Tuesday that Sayer's family has retained an attorney, but didn't release the lawyer's name. A search Tuesday of Butte County court records did not show Sayer's name.

Suspect demonstrated an affinity for Columbine shootings

At the time of the shooting, Sayer was wearing a white T-shirt inscribed with the words "natural selection,"

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 57 of 80

mimicking a T-shirt with the same slogan worn by Eric Harris, one of two shooters in the 1999 Columbine massacre in Colorado, Patel said.

"He had been a fan, and a fan for a long time" of the Columbine shootings on social media, Butte County District Attorney Michael Ramsey said.

Sayer is scheduled to be arraigned Thursday, he said.

Joseph Vasquez had English classes with Sayer at Chico High School. He said Sayer was liked and accepted by most of his peers, but he didn't seem to have close friends.

"He was very smart. He cared a lot about his grades," Vasquez said. "He was kind of talkative but very anti-social."

Vasquez said he and his friends were very surprised about the shooting.

Shooting leads to plans for library security

The shooting in Chico shocked the community in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and led authorities to say they will add security personnel at each library location.

"A library should be a place of joy," said Misty Wright, director of public libraries in Butte County. "Most of all it should be a place that feels safe. Yesterday that safety was shattered."

Wright said that before the shooting, the libraries were visited by "mobile patrols" and that she wasn't sure if they are armed.

All Butte County library branches were to be closed Tuesday, officials said.

There have been at least three fatal attacks at libraries in the last nine years.

A man in Tulsa, Oklahoma, was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to fatally shooting a man in a library and another man in a convenience store in 2023. In 2020, a suspect was sent to a mental health facility after he pleaded guilty to fatally stabbing a library security guard in Spring Valley, New York. A teenager who pleaded guilty to fatally shooting two public library employees in Clovis, New Mexico, in 2017 was also sentenced to life in prison.

Senate for first time approves a war powers resolution in a rebuke to Trump over Iran conflict

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate for the first time approved a war powers resolution Tuesday seeking to block U.S. military action against Iran, as lawmakers warily watch President Donald Trump's efforts to resolve a conflict that the administration launched on its own and now needs Congress to fund.

It was the 10th time the Senate has tried to stop the war, and the outcome, on a vote of 50-48, was a stunning turnaround from past efforts. While the resolution is largely symbolic, and does not carry the full force of law, it reflects the growing concerns from a number of Republican lawmakers in both the House and Senate over both the war and the deal Trump struck with Iran to end it. The House approved the resolution earlier this month.

Trump responded angrily Tuesday night on his Truth Social platform, calling the vote "poorly timed and meaningless" and saying it "provided aid and comfort" to Iran.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said, "Time after time, the vast majority of Senate Republicans sided with Trump and his war instead of the American people."

Schumer said Americans have paid the price for "Trump's historic blunder in Iran. It'll go down in the history books as one of the worst foreign policy forays America has ever made."

In the past, as many as four GOP senators have voted for the war powers resolutions, and they did so Tuesday — Republicans Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Susan Collins of Maine, Rand Paul of Kentucky and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana. One Democrat, Sen. John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, voted against.

Trump bashed the four Republicans as losers, saying, "These senators have made my job more difficult."

On this vote, the absence of two Republicans, including Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, who was admitted to the hospital recently for an undisclosed matter, left the GOP without a full majority to halt the effort. Sen. Dave McCormick, R-Pa., also missed the vote.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 58 of 80

The vote comes as the Pentagon is seeking \$80 billion from Congress mostly for the Iran war as it backfills munitions and stockpiles.

Trump to meet senators as Republicans balk at Iran deal

Trump himself is headed to the Capitol on Wednesday to meet with GOP senators after Vice President JD Vance was overseas working to negotiate with Iran to end its nuclear ambitions — which had been among the stated rationales for the war.

The president is not pleased with the Republicans who have been critical of the deal he struck with Iran, according to one GOP senator granted anonymity to discuss the private dynamics.

The terms of the Iran deal are spelled out in a memorandum of understanding that Trump signed last week, starting a 60-day clock for the sides to reach a broader agreement over ending Iran's nuclear program.

But Republicans have particularly objected to the \$300 billion fund to help Iran rebuild, which is far greater than the \$1.7 billion then-President Barack Obama refunded the country under his administration's 2015 Iran deal.

"I believe President Trump is getting very poor advice on Iran," Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said last week on his podcast after the deal was made public.

Democrats have repeatedly forced Iran votes

Over and again, Democrats have been forcing votes on the Iran war, almost since the U.S. and Israel launched missile strikes on Iran on Feb. 28.

Nearly each week they're in session, the Senate Democrats have put forward war powers resolutions, but they have failed to amass the majority needed for passage in the narrowly split chamber, where Trump's Republican Party holds the majority. Trump would almost certainly veto any measure that passed.

The House pushed its own version to passage earlier this month, with four Republicans joining all Democrats in approving the war powers resolution, over the objections of House Speaker Mike Johnson and the GOP leadership.

While the House- and Senate-passed resolution does not go to the president for his signature, passage stands as a powerful, if symbolic, statement from Congress and a rebuke of the administration's military actions.

Sen. Tim Kaine, the Democrat from Virginia who has led his party's efforts, said the pause in warfighting, as Trump's team works to shore up a fragile ceasefire, provides the perfect time for Congress to step back and assess "what should the next chapter be."

Hegseth seeks \$80 billion from Congress for the Iran war

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth is on Capitol Hill this week, seeking roughly \$80 billion in supplemental funding to shore up defense supplies in the aftermath of the Iran war, which is drawing scrutiny when many Americans are reeling from high gas prices and costs of living.

The Pentagon early on had estimated the war cost \$11.3 billion during its first week, and senators said experts put the overall price tag of Operation Epic Fury higher, at some \$100 billion.

The Defense Department's funding request is part of a broader beef-up of military money the White House wants as part of its budget request this year.

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said Tuesday, "We should not spend another dime of taxpayer dollars on Operation Epic Failure."

The Trump administration is seeking \$1.5 trillion in defense funding this year — a nearly 50% increase — including \$350 billion that it wants in a so-called budget reconciliation package. Johnson and GOP leaders are working to pass that package on their own, over the objections of Democrats, much the way they approved Trump's big tax cuts bill last year.

The 2025 tax cuts package also included a sizable increase for the military.

8 convicted in Texas immigration center shooting and protest are sentenced to decades in prison

By JAMIE STENGLE and PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — A former U.S. Marine reservist and seven others were sentenced Tuesday to decades in prison over a shooting last year that wounded a police officer during a demonstration at a Texas immigration detention center.

Prosecutors called the crime an act of terrorism and said the eight were linked to the leftist militant group antifa. The defendants' attorneys denied any antifa ties and family members expressed shock and anger over the stiff sentences.

Benjamin Song, the Marine reservist who was convicted of opening fire during the July 4 demonstration outside the Prairieland Detention Center near Dallas, was sentenced to 100 years in prison, the maximum punishment. The seven others sentenced in Fort Worth courtrooms received prison terms ranging from 30 to 70 years.

"I am livid," said Lydia Koza, whose wife, Autumn Hill, was sentenced to 50 years in prison. "The government wants to take her entire life away because she attended a protest. Nobody died."

U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor, one of two judges overseeing the proceedings, said what happened wasn't a protest but "an assault on democracy." All but one of the eight defendants sentenced Tuesday were convicted on terrorism charges.

"The need to deter this type of conduct is high," O'Connor said.

The case drew attention beyond Texas as critics warned it could have wide-reaching impact on protests and First Amendment free-speech rights. The Justice Department called it the first sentencing of "defendants affiliated with" antifa after President Donald Trump last fall signed an executive order designating it as a domestic terrorist organization.

Prosecutors link protesters to antifa

Trump issued the order even though there is no domestic equivalent to the State Department's list of foreign terror organizations. Antifa is not a single organization but rather an umbrella term for far-left militant groups that confront or resist neo-Nazis and white supremacists at demonstrations.

"The sentences handed down today make clear that Antifa terrorists who attack law enforcement and federal facilities will face swift and uncompromising justice," Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a statement.

Prosecutors told jurors during the trial that the group's actions — including bringing firearms, first aid kits and wearing body armor — were signals of nefarious intent.

Attorneys for the defendants have said there was no planned ambush and that protesters who brought firearms only did so for their own protection. They argued the gathering was planned as a late-night demonstration with fireworks to show support for immigrants being held at Prairieland before gunshots broke out.

Prosecutors have said Song had yelled, "get to the rifles" and opened fire, striking a police officer who had just pulled up to the center.

Some defendants say they weren't part of the planning

Phillip Hayes, Song's attorney, rejected characterizations that the protesters were extremists and said his client will appeal the 100-year sentence.

"This is a bunch of kids and young adults who really have a really big heart and really wanted their voice to be heard," Hayes said. "It was never intended that anybody get hurt. It was never intended that any shots would be fired."

Prosecutor Frank Gatto urged the judge to impose stiff penalties.

"People with that kind of extremist beliefs need extra time in prison," Gatto said. "They believe violence is justified."

Defendants and their family members pleaded for leniency.

Autumn Hill said the gathering "seemed more like a party to me than anything else" and that she and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 60 of 80

others who participated "didn't expect or want any violence or destruction of property to occur."

Hill's attorney, Cody Cofer, told the judge that there was no evidence she had a gun, nor that she believed in violence to achieve change. He said that after fireworks were set off, she was so conscientious that she made sure to pick up the trash left behind before leaving.

Chris Tolbert, defendant Savanna Batten's attorney, has said that his client didn't bring a firearm, spray paint or fireworks to the center, nor did she participate in the planning of the demonstration.

Hill and Batten both received 50-year sentences.

Another defendant, Daniel Sanchez Estrada, was not at Prairieland the night of the shooting or involved in the planning, his attorney Christopher Weinbel said. Sanchez Estrada, who is married to another of the defendants, was convicted only on charges of concealing documents.

Weinbel said his client just moved a box of his own belongings of artwork, poetry, journals and zines after the shooting. Nothing in the box was illegal, Weinbel said.

Sanchez Estrada was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Other defendants previously pleaded guilty to providing material support to terrorists rather than take their case to trial.

Last week, federal prosecutors charged 15 people with impeding the Trump administration's immigration crackdown in Minnesota. They claimed the demonstrators were members of antifa who conspired against the federal government to block arrests and deportations by setting up blockades around government buildings and throwing chunks of ice at federal vehicles, among other actions.

Troubled Reflecting Pool faces fresh scrutiny over vandalism claims and duck deaths

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The saga over the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool took a turn as President Donald Trump said Tuesday that six people have been arrested over recent damage. The president's troubled \$14-million-plus rehabilitation project has become a visceral flashpoint over law enforcement, aesthetics and environmental concerns ahead of the country's 250th anniversary celebrations.

In a social media post, Trump claimed without supporting evidence that there had been a "350-foot gash" in the paint as the administration faces a self-imposed deadline to fix the botched renovation before the nation's 250th anniversary celebration next week. He has also said, including again on Tuesday, that the federal government would release images to substantiate his claim.

Trump pledged to beautify the century-old Reflecting Pool ahead of the anniversary celebrations, draining its water and having the bottom painted a color he dubbed "American flag blue." But since the site was restored, its water has been plagued with algae bloom and pieces of the new coating appeared to be peeling off the bottom.

Trump, without evidence, has repeatedly blamed the peeling paint on vandalism.

"It was purposefully and criminally done, and somebody had to work very hard, probably in the dark of night, to create such a condition," Trump wrote Tuesday, adding that another seven people were cited for allegedly damaging the pool.

The U.S. Park Police and the Interior Department did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the arrests or Trump's claim of vandalism.

The Associated Press verified that one man was arrested after touching the already-peeling paint. He said he wanted to examine the new coating, touching a still-attached chunk briefly then letting go shortly after a park worker told him to.

A maintenance problem morphs into a law enforcement issue

National Guard members and Park Police have been patrolling the deck around the pool after Trump insisted over the weekend that vandals were responsible for damage to the liner, without providing evidence.

Crews were seen adding fencing near the area late Tuesday. An Interior spokeswoman said the Reflecting Pool "was always set to be fenced off ahead of the 4th of July," noting that one of the launch pads

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 61 of 80

for the fireworks is near the pool.

"With the increase in vandalism by leftist activists, the fencing is going up earlier than originally planned to ensure no more damage is done to this historic site," spokeswoman Katie Martin said in an email. She did not provide evidence of her claim about the political leanings of possible vandals.

Trump said Tuesday that the Interior Department will release images of alleged vandalism at the pool. Pressed by reporters after Air Force One landed in Pennsylvania for a visit to a trucking company, Trump said Interior is "going to share" photos and videos of the alleged vandalism, which remains unverified.

The president had said on Monday that the images existed and the federal government would provide them. No photos were made public as of Tuesday afternoon.

The arrests highlighted what's expected to be tightened security in the capital ahead of and during the 250th anniversary celebrations, which are set to draw large crowds to the National Mall and other tourist sites.

Trump also said Tuesday that "some of the water" will be drained from the pool "either immediately before or after the Fourth of July, to do the permanent repair."

It was unclear from his post what the scale, scope or cost of the permanent repair would be.

Atlantic Industrial Coatings, a contractor on the pool project, said it has identified some areas in the Reflecting Pool that require repairs. "These areas are a very small part of the massive 7-acre project, and do not indicate a failure of the liner," the company said in a statement. The company said it expected to make the repairs to the pool once it is drained, as part of the warranty.

Environmental group wades in after duckling found dead

Adding to the controversy swirling around the pool, an environmental group called on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to investigate after a Mallard duckling carcass was photographed floating in the algae-filled pool, and two other ducks were found dead nearby. The Center for Biological Diversity said Tuesday that the Wildlife Service must enforce the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which protects migratory birds.

"Wasting taxpayer money turning the reflecting pool into a giant duck death trap just in time for America's 250th birthday party is as Trump as it gets. Cruel, stupid and selfish," said Tara Zuardo, a senior campaigner at the Arizona-based group.

City Wildlife, a Washington-based rescue and rehabilitation non-profit that also conducts necropsies on birds found in the city, said they could not comment on the cause of the death of the duckling because its carcass "wasn't recovered for examination."

Renovation project plagued ahead of the 250 celebrations

Trump pitched the original improvements as intended to clean, beautify and reinforce an iconic site that he said had become dilapidated and dirty because of previous presidents' neglect. Algae has plagued the pool for a century, and Trump insisted that the newly installed "American flag blue" coating, which he selected himself, would turn the pool into a gleaming expanse along the National Mall.

Yet within weeks of Trump declaring the rehabilitation completed in time for Independence Day, the water was plagued by a vivid green algae bloom that clouded the pool's coating. A piece of liner, about 4 square feet, was observed on Friday, partially floating in the pool. The Associated Press saw additional pieces in the water on Monday.

Workers were seen in recent days pouring hydrogen peroxide into the pool in an attempt to kill the algae. Hydrogen peroxide can act as a paint remover.

Experts say the dark lining can add to algae growth by absorbing more sunlight than lighter surfaces. That raises the surrounding water temperature, allowing algae to thrive.

Savannah Guthrie says family remains 'in agony' over missing mom, begs the public for tips

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — "Today" show host Savannah Guthrie made an emotional appeal to viewers Tuesday to come forward with any information about her missing mother, a day after news organizations said a ransom note received months ago had indicated that she was dead.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 62 of 80

"We are in agony, and we cannot be at peace. ... We love our mom. We'll never stop looking for her," Guthrie said at the "Today" desk in New York, holding a tissue in her left hand.

Nancy Guthrie, 84, who lived alone, was reported missing from her Tucson-area home on Feb. 1. The FBI released video more than a week later from a camera outside her front door showing a masked stranger. Her blood was found on the porch, but the case remains unsolved.

Some media outlets had previously reported receiving ransom notes in the days after Guthrie's disappearance but had not disclosed the details while the investigation was at an early stage. Guthrie's family was aware of the notes.

Tucson TV station KOLD said Monday that it had received two notes, one demanding millions in Bitcoin in exchange for Guthrie's return and another that said she had died. Separately, CNN cited law enforcement sources in reporting on the contents of the notes.

CNN said a note indicated that those who kidnapped Guthrie did not mean to kill her but that she died shortly after her disappearance.

"I don't have any comment on this story. I'm not involved in our coverage," Savannah Guthrie said Tuesday, referring to NBC News. "But I can't pretend I'm not here. And since I am, I want to just take the opportunity to ask people — really to beg people — to come forward. Somebody knows something."

The Pima County Sheriff's Department referred questions about the ransom notes to the FBI, which declined to comment.

Tom Morrissey, a retired chief U.S. marshal in Arizona who isn't involved in the Guthrie investigation, said details of a ransom note might be publicly released in investigations if authorities think it might help to identify a suspect. But he said specifics, such as whether a victim has died, are often held back simply to protect the investigation because authorities aren't certain where their inquiry is headed.

"It's still an open investigation," Morrissey said. "These things can go into directions you wouldn't believe to be possible."

Bob Krygier, who retired as a lieutenant with the Pima County Sheriff's Department in January, said it goes against procedure and common sense for investigators to reveal that a missing person has died until a body has been found or several years have passed since the person disappeared.

"Once you start making statements from the law enforcement side that has speculation, you lose so much credibility," Krygier said.

Volunteers and search teams scoured the nearby desert terrain filled with cactuses, bushes and boulders in the weeks after Nancy Guthrie vanished. A group recently conducted a search near the Arizona-Mexico border but didn't report finding her.

Savannah Guthrie and her siblings occasionally appeared in social media videos earlier in the saga, urging the public to come forward with tips. She asked people to "raise your prayers with us" and acknowledged that her mother might be in heaven dancing "with our daddy."

France records its hottest day ever as Europe withers in early heat wave

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France recorded its hottest day ever Tuesday as an early heat wave gripped Europe, prompting the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre museum to restrict visiting hours and disrupting school and transportation schedules in multiple countries.

Punishing temperatures extended to the United Kingdom and Spain, where weather agencies issued red alerts — like France — about the risks of extreme heat for tens of millions of people.

The record of 29.8 C (85.6 F) for France's national thermal indicator — an average of temperatures measured at 30 weather stations — was only the latest in a series of never-before-registered highs heaped on Europe's largest country. The conditions were likely to persist at least until the weekend.

"Further record-breaking temperatures are expected, including some that could surpass all previous records, regardless of the time of year," the Meteo France weather service said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 63 of 80

France's previous hottest days were recorded during heat waves of August 2003 and July 2019, with an average temperature of 29.4 C (84.9 F).

Temperature records also tumbled at individual weather stations and on consecutive days in some towns as daytime highs climbed well above 40 C (104 F), Meteo France said.

In the French capital, Gin Dujardin said the heat forced him to halt his work fixing roofs, which in Paris often have galvanized zinc coverings.

"It's very, very hard because the zinc is very hot. The welds don't hold," he said. "It's Dubai temperatures. It's impossible."

France has recorded 40 fatalities from drowning in the past week as people seek relief in rivers and other bodies of water, despite authorities' warnings about unsupervised swimming. Most of the drownings involved young people, Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu said.

Meteo France said the heat wave has reached what it described as a "plateau of severity," with unrelenting heat, day and night. A growing number of regions will tip into the red again Wednesday as the heat spreads across more than half of the country, including the northernmost tip of France, the weather service said.

Human-caused climate change is tied to increasingly extreme weather, and U.N. climate agency projections say the next five years are likely to shatter more heat records.

The Louvre and the Eiffel Tower close early

In a country without widespread air conditioning, schools, public transportation and sporting events have been affected. In Paris, the Eiffel Tower closed in the afternoon instead of late at night, as it usually does. The Louvre museum said it would close two hours earlier than normal from Wednesday through Saturday.

"Although parts of its historic building are naturally resilient, the museum remains vulnerable and is not sufficiently adapted to climate change," Louvre officials said. "Heat buildup is greatest toward the end of the day and is further intensified by high visitor numbers."

This heat wave, coming early in the summer, has already been compared to the August 2003 heat wave that roasted France with the highest temperatures in over half a century. It caused an estimated 15,000 deaths, many of them among older people in apartments and retirement homes without air conditioning.

Europe is the world's fastest-warming continent, with temperatures increasing twice as fast as the global average since the 1980s, according to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service. Over the last four years, more than 200,000 people across Europe died from heat-related causes, and most of those deaths were preventable, the World Health Organization's Europe office said this month.

The above-average temperatures can cause heat exhaustion and life-threatening heat stroke.

Rail systems are strained by high temperatures

Hundreds of British schools planned to close or close early this week because of the heat, while many train services were reduced to avoid heat-related problems on the rail lines.

The Met Office, the U.K. weather agency, issued a heat warning for Wednesday and Thursday, with forecasts suggesting June's all-time daily temperature record could be broken.

Temperatures of around 37 degrees C (98.6 F) are expected in southern England, with up to 35 C (95 F) in southeast Wales. The peak of the heat wave is now forecast for Wednesday and Thursday, when highs could reach 39 C (102.2 F) in London or southern England.

Conditions are expected to ease by Friday, the Met Office said.

On Tuesday, multiple U.K. train operators, including the express train serving London Gatwick Airport, said they were canceling or reducing services. Railway operators urged people to travel only if "absolutely necessary" on Wednesday and Thursday.

Heat waves could become more frequent and longer

Further south, Spain faced a heat wave across parts of the Iberian Peninsula.

Spain's national weather service, Aemet, issued red alerts Tuesday for temperatures of 44 C (111 F) in southern Andalusia as well as warnings of thermometers hitting 40 C (104 F) in the normally temperate Cantabria and the Basque Country regions along the country's northern Atlantic coast.

Aemet meteorologist Rubén del Campo said Spain, which has experienced increasingly torrid summers,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 64 of 80

is only going to get hotter because of climate change as heat waves become more frequent, longer and occur outside the traditional window of July and August.

Of the dozen heat waves Aemet has recorded in June since it started tracking them in 1975, half have occurred since 2015, del Campo said.

Human-driven climate change is heating up the atmosphere, both above Spain and in the surrounding sea waters, he said.

Copernicus, the EU weather monitoring agency, found that in Europe and globally, 2024 was the hottest year on record, and the continent experienced its second-highest number of "heat stress" days.

Scientists warn that climate change is exacerbating the frequency and intensity of heat and dryness, especially in southeastern Europe, making the region more vulnerable to health impacts and wildfires.

US and Iran dispute whether Tehran has agreed to nuclear inspections

By MUNIR AHMED, DAVID RISING and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The U.S. and Iran were in dispute Tuesday over whether Tehran had agreed to allow U.N. inspections of its nuclear sites. As officials negotiated over how to permanently end the war in Iran, a separate plan emerged to break the shipping bottleneck through the Strait of Hormuz.

The disagreement over nuclear inspections came as Iran's president met with Pakistani mediators and technical teams from the U.S. and Iran continued talks in Switzerland.

A United Nations agency said Tuesday that a plan was underway to move stranded ships and their thousands of crew members through the strait — a vital passage for global energy supplies that Iran had blocked after the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Feb. 28.

Earlier in the day, a spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, Esmail Baghaei, told reporters in Tehran that U.N. inspectors were not scheduled to examine nuclear sites bombed by the U.S. last year, rejecting comments made a day before by U.S. Vice President JD Vance.

President Donald Trump told reporters Tuesday that if Iran had not agreed to inspections, he would cut off talks with Tehran immediately. But he added there was no rush for those inspections to begin.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has not responded to requests for comment over its possible role. It has been in and out of Iran since Israel's 12-day war in 2025, but has not been granted access to bombed enrichment sites targeted by the U.S.

Iran maintains that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, though it has highly enriched uranium that could be used to build atomic bombs, should it choose to do so, the IAEA has said.

The U.S. and Iran agreed to a deal last week that calls for Tehran to dilute its stockpile of enriched uranium, and waives U.S.-backed sanctions on the country while giving each side 60 days to hammer out broader agreements.

Plan to evacuate stranded seafarers through Strait of Hormuz

The plan to evacuate 11,000 crew members stranded on ships is being done in cooperation with Iran, Oman, all other coastal states in the region, the United States and the maritime industry, according to the secretary-general of the International Maritime Organization, Arsenio Dominguez.

"We have secured the necessary safety guarantees and have thoroughly verified the conditions for safe navigation to support these operations," he said in a statement.

The organization said moving the ships will be done gradually to avoid any risk of collision.

A shipping insurance executive cheered the development. "That can only be good news for all concerned," said Marcus Baker, global head of marine, cargo and logistics for Marsh in London.

But the uneasy ceasefire already has been tested by Iran saying it closed the strait again over fighting between Israel and the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah in Lebanon. Violence again broke out in Lebanon Tuesday.

The U.S. has said that negotiators have discussed "mechanisms" to ensure that the strait remains open. Ship traffic is increasing but questions remain about who controls the passageway.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 65 of 80

Data and analytics company Kpler confirmed 39 ships crossed through the strait Monday, after about 92 crossings between Friday and Sunday. Prior to the war, roughly 100 ships a day made the journey.

Two U.S. aircraft carriers were continuing to operate in the Middle East, the U.S. military's Central Command said.

Iran's president makes his first visit to Islamabad since the war started

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday discussed a range of issues, including regional peace and economic cooperation, according to a statement from the presidency in Islamabad.

It was the Iranian president's first visit since the U.S. and Israel launched war on Iran. He said during a news conference after their meeting that there was no mention of Iran's missile program in the memorandum of understanding signed between the U.S. and Iran.

"If it was not for Iran's missile capabilities, our country would have been plundered and destroyed," Pezeshkian said, vowing to "never compromise or negotiate our missile capabilities."

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif afterward said he will attend the Tehran funeral of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in the war's opening airstrikes.

Iran says negotiations focused on sanctions relief, nuclear issues and more

At the start of a 60-day window to reach a permanent deal to end the war, Iran and the U.S. agreed to create a "de-confliction cell" to address the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Iran said the talks in Switzerland led to the creation of negotiation groups focused on sanctions relief, nuclear issues, reconstruction, and monitoring, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. The report quoted Kazem Gharibabadi, a deputy foreign minister leading the talks there, as saying the countries also formed a way to discuss ships moving through Hormuz.

In southern Lebanon Tuesday, Israeli soldiers opened fire and killed two people. That followed two days of calm after a ceasefire brokered Saturday. Any renewal of heavy fighting could threaten the broader diplomatic talks, since Iran has demanded that a full truce in Lebanon be part of any comprehensive deal.

Israel occupies part of Lebanon and insists it must be able to attack militants launching attacks into northern Israel.

The Israeli military said troops fired at four Hezbollah members who were riding a bulldozer and a motorcycle and had entered a security zone and failed to stop despite warning shots. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported that the two men were killed next to a bulldozer clearing a road.

No Israeli airstrikes or shelling have been reported since Sunday and Hezbollah has not claimed any attacks in what has been the longest halt in the fighting since the latest Israel-Hezbollah war erupted in March.

Netanyahu raises new questions over fragile Lebanon ceasefire

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday that his military still has "full freedom of action" in Lebanon to thwart any threats.

Neither Israel nor Hezbollah is a signatory to the U.S.-Iran deal. Netanyahu has vowed to keep his forces in southern Lebanon until threats to Israel are eliminated. Hezbollah has refused to halt attacks unless Israel commits to withdrawing.

When asked about Netanyahu's comments, Trump said "we're going to take a look at it," adding that the situation would "get solved."

The main highway leading south from Beirut was jammed Tuesday with people displaced from southern Lebanon returning to their homes. Among them was Hawraa Nour El-Din, from the village of Khirbet Selm.

"We don't want the negotiations done by the government," she said. "We want Iran to negotiate on our behalf, and we are returning victorious, whether everyone likes it or not."

In Washington, the State Department said a new round of Israel-Lebanon talks began on Tuesday with both political and security issues on the agenda.

NCAA panel approves new eligibility rules giving Division I athletes 5 years to play 5 seasons

By ERIC OLSON AP Sports Writer

Eager to lessen the chaos of the transfer portal era and court fights with players trying to extend their careers, the NCAA approved a new eligibility model for Division I athletes on Tuesday that will allow five seasons of competition over a five-year period that begins with their full-time enrollment or the academic year following their 19th birthday, whichever occurs first.

The Division I Cabinet unanimously approved the change from the longstanding tenet of college sports that gave athletes five years to complete four seasons of competition with their eligibility clock starting at the time of enrollment, regardless of age.

The move will all but eliminate waivers or redshirt years for extended eligibility except for religious missions, maternity leave or active-duty military service. No longer will extensions be considered for athletes who are injured.

"While previous NCAA rules have served college sports well for a long time, we heard also loud and clear from NCAA members and student-athletes that eligibility rules should be easier to understand," NCAA President Charlie Baker said.

The NCAA believes the age-based model will make rules easier to administer and help make roster management more predictable for coaches.

"I think this new rule is one of the most sensible things the NCAA has ever done, and it will absolutely eliminate the type of eligibility litigation that's predominated lately," said attorney Tom Mars, who represented Ole Miss quarterback Trinidad Chambliss in his successful quest for an additional year of eligibility in a case that went to the Mississippi Supreme Court.

Mars added, "Let me put it in bottom-line language: There's no way somebody could file an eligibility case based on a medical waiver now with the new rule. Can't be done. You can file it, I guess, but it will be immediately dismissed."

The rules, which will become official when the Cabinet adjourns its meetings on Wednesday, are set to take effect this fall. Division I includes more than 350 schools, some 200,000 athletes and, with football and basketball leading the way, is by far the most lucrative of the three in the NCAA.

The five-in-five language also is included in Senate legislation intended to address numerous concerns across college sports and comes after a wave of lawsuits from athletes seeking to extend their college careers and ability to earn money through revenue sharing and name, image and likeness deals. Still to be seen is whether the new rules will withstand legal scrutiny alongside the existing challenges.

Heisman Trophy runner-up and Vanderbilt quarterback Diego Pavia remains the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit challenging an NCAA rule counting seasons spent at junior colleges against players' Division I eligibility time. That case is slated for trial in February.

"I wouldn't say that the rule change itself will slow lawsuits down," said Sam Ehrlich, a Boise State assistant professor of legal studies in business and management who tracks litigation against the NCAA.

Ehrlich said athletes very well could continue to petition courts for extended eligibility based on antitrust arguments, but appellate courts recently have delivered wins for the NCAA by overturning preliminary injunctions in several cases.

The new eligibility model will affect all athletes who enroll in 2027-28. Currently enrolled athletes with eligibility after the 2025-26 academic year, and those who are incoming freshmen this fall, can apply the age-based model or continue under previous eligibility rules. It would be advantageous this year for some incoming freshman hockey players to use the traditional model if they are coming from the junior ranks and are 20, as is common in the sport.

For schools with current athletes who may be eligible for hardship waivers or extensions of eligibility under current rules, the D-I Cabinet indicated the deadline to submit requests to the NCAA is July 31. After that date, waivers would no longer be available.

Ryan Downton, the attorney for Pavia in his case against the NCAA that won him a sixth year of eligibil-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 67 of 80

ity last season, said he was happy to see athletes allowed five seasons of competition. But he said it was likely that high school class of 2022 athletes who are now cut off from further competition will go to court.

"These athletes are still within their five-year eligibility window and spent their entire college careers competing against fifth- and sixth-year players due to the COVID waiver," Downton wrote in an email to The Associated Press. "We hope the courts will correct the unfairness of the NCAA's ruling and allow class of 2022 players to play their fifth season in 2026-27."

Ramogi Huma, executive director of the National College Players Association, wrote in a text to the AP that he had not seen the final language that was adopted but that the rule's "general structure that has been discussed is within reason."

"But it's important for athletes to have an opportunity to seek hardship waivers," he wrote.

New York Knicks revel in their NBA victory parade as joyous fans and celebs fill the streets

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE, JAKE OFFENHARTZ and STEPHEN WHYNO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Jalen Brunson held up the golden NBA championship trophy for a forest of outstretched hands to touch as fans celebrated the New York Knicks' first title in 53 years with a booming parade through Manhattan's skyscraper-flanked "Canyon of Heroes."

"Damn, New York, we really did it," Brunson, the finals MVP, said at a celebration at City Hall. "Somehow, someway, I knew we were going to find a way to get this done."

Moments later, Mayor Zohran Mamdani presented keys to the city to the Knicks' players, coaches, owners and staff. Wearing a team jersey under his suit jacket, Mamdani said he and other fans "waited because we knew deep down in our sick, suffering hearts" the Knicks would someday win.

Blue and orange confetti swirled through the air during the parade. Massive cheers of "Let's go, Knicks!" and "Knicks in five!" kept erupting.

And OG Anunoby, who scored the go-ahead basket in Game 4 of the finals on a tip-in with 1.2 seconds left, left his parade float to interact with fans, holding the NBA Cup in-season championship trophy in one hand and a bottle of Patron tequila in the other.

Director Spike Lee, perhaps the team's most iconic fan, was on a float with Brunson, savoring the moment. "I've never been to a parade — ever — and I'm glad it's this one," Lee said.

The MVP's mom, Sandra Brunson, wore a shirt with photos of Jalen and husband Rick, who played for the Knicks and is an assistant on coach Mike Brown's staff. She echoed her son's words, saying, "It was all worth it."

Karl-Anthony Towns hoisted the Eastern Conference championship trophy and a cigar on top of a parade bus while Mamdani danced. Later, Towns approached a group of kids with the NBA trophy to let them get their hands on it, bringing joyful screams.

Knicks fans turn out in force

Several blocks from the parade route, fans stood shoulder to shoulder — sometimes on each other's shoulders — or climbed traffic lights and sanitation trucks. Far away on the Brooklyn Bridge, people gathered just to hear the loudspeakers.

"I had to be here today," said Shareefa Wallace, 34, who got up at 3 a.m. to make her way from suburban Long Island. She grew up in the city going to Knicks games, and she sported the souvenir jersey of a legend from that era, Patrick Ewing.

Owner James Dolan thanked fans for waiting more than a half-century. Brown encouraged fans to keep their energy going "because this championship is about you guys."

'The New York vibe'

Nearby bars and delis filled with fans, some wishing they'd arrived at dawn. But many seemed at peace with only experiencing the parade from a distance.

"We just want to be with the New York energy and the New York vibe," said Jean Strong, who came to the parade from Harlem with his nephew and sister.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 68 of 80

Terrell Emerson, a chef who grew up in Queens, said he drove from Maryland with his daughter Madison — named in honor of the Knicks' home arena, Madison Square Garden.

Beaming, Madison held a handwritten sign announcing she'd skipped her fifth-grade graduation to be there.

Stars and Knicks legends

Knicks great Walt "Clyde" Frazier — a member of the '70s champion teams — led the parade in a stylish convertible, wearing his NBA title rings. Frazier had late teammates and coaches on his mind.

"They would be amazed at what has happened to the Knicks and how they've really captivated the city this year," Frazier said. "This has exceeded any expectations I ever thought that we'd have."

Timothée Chalamet, Ben Stiller, Jon Stewart, Mariska Hargitay, Tracy Morgan and other celebrities joined the party, while Knicks play-by-play announcer Mike Breen emceed the City Hall ceremony.

Alicia Keys performed her 2009 hit "Empire State of Mind" and a portion of the Billy Joel classic, "New York State of Mind."

A parade decades in the making

The mere fact that the parade is happening is historic in itself. Although the Knicks won the championship twice in the 1970s, the city didn't host a parade for them either time. Then-Mayor John Lindsay had cut down on ticker-tape extravaganzas for financial and other reasons. Instead, he held a 1970 reception at the mayoral mansion and a jam-packed ceremony in 1973 outside City Hall.

This time, the city went all out. A police officer could be seen holding a sign reading, "This is really happening."

And a massive security operation

Officials said 10,000 police officers were deployed to secure the event, which follows ebullient but sometimes chaotic street celebrations and some violence during the Knicks' title run, including a five-game final against San Antonio.

Police said 10 people in the area around the parade were arrested and three others were issued summonses, on charges ranging from disorderly conduct to felony assault. The Fire Department said it took 30 people to hospitals and treated 31 others at the scene for ailments that included heat-related emergencies, asthma and minor injuries.

Before the parade, a small group of people were crushed against a barrier near Fulton Street, a key subway hub, pinned between a swelling crowd and a group of police officers shoving the barrier.

Some 650 sanitation workers were assigned to clean up what could be tens of thousands of pounds (kilograms) of debris, if recent history is any guide.

Why does New York throw ticker-tape parades?

Ticker-tape parades derive their name from the narrow strips of paper used by telegraph-era "stock ticker" machines. New York brokerage firm workers tossed the paper from office windows during parades in the late 19th century, adding a swirling spectacle.

Over the years, especially up to the mid-1960s, the city rolled out ticker-tape parades for visiting foreign leaders, historic anniversaries and feats in aviation, war, sports, music, space travel and more.

The Knicks' parade was the 210th, coming after a bash for the WNBA's New York Liberty in 2024.

Federal officials plan to offload some warehouses purchased for immigrant detention

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH, RYAN FOLEY and REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is retreating from a plan to use warehouses to hold up to 10,000 people on a single site, jettisoning a key piece of former Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's \$38-billion plan to rapidly expand detention capacity this year.

The federal government, which was sued by Michigan and a Detroit suburb, informed a judge Monday that a warehouse purchased in Romulus will be sold. Plans also are unraveling in Social Circle, Georgia,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 69 of 80

and the El Paso suburb of Socorro, local officials said.

The three cities are among 11 where the federal government spent a combined \$1.074 billion on warehouses.

The New York Times first reported last week that federal immigration officials now plan to get rid of seven of the 11 warehouses — either giving them to other federal agencies or selling them outright.

DHS didn't confirm the reports but said in a statement that it is "moving swiftly to utilize EXISTING detention space with our state and county partners."

Pushback to warehouse purchases was immediate

"Wildly foolhardy" is how Claire Trickler-McNulty, a former ICE official under the Obama, Trump and Biden administrations described the plans to convert the buildings into immigrant detention.

One issue was that Noem's purchases were largely carried out of public view and angered communities that were caught by surprise. Some only learned about ICE's ambitions after the agency bought or leased space for detainees.

After Noem was fired, her replacement, Markwayne Mullin, quickly paused the purchase of new warehouses.

Objections came from Republicans and Democrats alike

Some were opposed on moral grounds to ICE's presence in their neighborhoods, while others questioned whether the facilities would be a drain on local resources, such as sewer and water systems.

Seven federal lawsuits were filed, and regulatory roadblocks created hassles elsewhere.

Meanwhile, questions about how much DHS paid for some warehouses triggered an internal audit. The agency shelled out double what the New Jersey warehouse was valued at in tax records and nearly five times more than the assessed value of the Social Circle warehouse.

Trickler-McNulty, the former ICE official, said ICE does have a few facilities that it owns that it inherited from its predecessor agency, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, but generally ICE has contracted out its detention needs.

"Facilities over 2,000 people just break down. It's very hard to run a very big facility, to keep it staffed, to keep all of it moving," she said.

Former head of plumbing business takes over for Noem

Mullin, who took over and expanded his family's plumbing business before representing Oklahoma in the U.S House and Senate, acknowledged there had been issues at his confirmation hearing.

He noted that most municipalities don't have the capacity in their infrastructure for waste and water.

Indeed the water issues were such a challenge that a federal lawsuit filed over the Salt Lake City warehouse, the costliest purchased at \$145.4 million, said ICE officials told the mayor that they might need to truck water and sewage from the facility as an "interim solution."

Plans begin to unravel

The New York Times story, which cited internal documents that the newspaper obtained, said the Salt Lake City warehouse is among those that federal immigration officials plans to hand off or sell. Also on the list is the Romulus warehouse, as well as one in New Jersey and two each in Georgia and Pennsylvania.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel said it would have been an "abomination" if the 249,000-square-foot Romulus warehouse was transformed into immigrant detention, as was planned when it was purchased for \$34.7 million,

"The ICE warehouse proposal was every bit as ill-conceived as it was cruel and unnecessary, and I am relieved that this chapter is coming to a close," Nessel, a Democrat, said.

Social Circle, Georgia, announced last week in a statement that it has received notification from U.S. Rep. Mike Collins, a Republican, that the Department of Homeland Security is no longer pursuing an ICE detention facility there.

Meanwhile, acting ICE Director David Venturella told officials in the El Paso area during a visit there earlier this month that the agency has changed its plans for three warehouses it purchased in nearby Socorro for \$122 million, said Rep. Veronica Escobar, who was present for the visit.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 70 of 80

Escobar, a Democrat who represents El Paso, said during a news conference that ICE no longer plans to detain up to 8,500 immigrants in the facilities as originally envisioned, and instead will convert the property into an ICE campus, she said. The site will include an unspecified smaller number of detainees but also ICE offices and training space, she said.

Frustrations persist as communities seek details

However, many of the communities remained frustrated, as they struggled to get information about possible sales.

In Pennsylvania, state and local officials said Tuesday that they hadn't received any new information from DHS about two warehouses bought earlier this year by the department. Both are being held up by the state's denial of permits over concerns that drinking water and sewer service are inadequate to handle thousands of inhabitants.

U.S. Rep. Dan Meuser, whose district includes both warehouses, said he met Friday with DHS personnel, but that the agency hadn't made a decision whether to use them as detention centers or sell them.

In Georgia, the city manager in Oakwood, said Tuesday he is talking to his state congressional delegation, trying to confirm rumors that a warehouse there will be sold. "I have not heard anything yet," B.R. White said.

Work appears to continue on other warehouses

In Maryland, where a judge extended a stoppage on transforming a sprawling warehouse into a processing facility for immigrants, ICE is currently collecting public comments about the environmental impacts of the facility. And an announcement earlier this month disclosed more details on plans for the facility, including six secure recreation yards.

Patrick Dattilio, the founder of Hagerstown Rapid Response, which formed in opposition to housing ICE detainees in the warehouse, said there has been little communication outside of the lawsuit. But he remains committed to keeping it from opening.

"It's a big warehouse," Dattilio said. "It's not meant for people."

Federal appeals court allows the Trump administration to resume expanded use of speedy deportations

By SUDHIN THANAWALA Associated Press

A federal appeals court on Tuesday allowed the Trump administration to resume carrying out speedy deportations of undocumented migrants throughout the United States, not just near the border.

A divided three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit threw out a lower court decision that temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's expanded use of expedited removal. The ruling was a big victory for the Republican administration, which views the expansion of so-called expedited removal as a key tool for carrying out its mass deportation policy.

Expedited removal — quick deportation without a chance to appear before a judge — has previously been applied to migrants arriving by sea or caught at or near the border shortly after crossing.

In January, Trump expanded its use to undocumented migrants all over the United States. Immigration agents began whisking migrants away from courthouses where they had gone for immigration proceedings and then removing them from the country within days.

"The Trump administration's push for fast-track deportations will subject people to an unfair and error-prone system," Anand Balakrishnan, senior staff attorney with the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, said in a statement.

Balakrishnan represented plaintiffs in arguments before the appellate panel and said its ruling "undermines the fundamental principle that people receive due process when the government seeks to deport them."

DC Circuit Judge Justin R. Walker, one of the judges on the panel, said the plaintiffs had not shown the expanded use of expedited removal violated due process rights. Immigrants received notice of removal proceedings and were given a chance to respond, he wrote in his opinion.

Walker and the second judge in the majority, Neomi Rao, were appointed by Trump. The third judge on

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 71 of 80

the panel was appointed by President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

Walker said there was no requirement that the administration inform immigrants that they can avoid expedited removal if they can show they have been in the United States for more than two years.

"The constitutional requirement is notice of the action the government is taking and the grounds for it, plus an opportunity to respond," he wrote, adding that the plaintiffs' "contrary reasoning would require immigration officers to provide what amounts to legal advice."

Walker and Rao vacated an order by U.S. District Judge Jia Cobb that put the expanded use of expedited removal on hold. Cobb, who was appointed by President Joe Biden, a Democrat, ruled in August that the administration had not developed procedures to ensure migrants were not wrongly deported under the expedited process.

The plaintiffs had put forward "substantial evidence" that the expedited removal process, on the contrary, carried a high risk of error when applied more broadly, Cobb said. The ruling cited examples of people who had lived in the U.S. for far longer than two years but were still ordered to be removed in expedited proceedings.

In his opinion, Walker acknowledged evidence of such errors, but said they resulted from "individual officers' failure to follow the law — not defects in the written directives under review or the procedures they incorporate."

The Trump administration has argued that its expansion of expedited removal includes protections to prevent arbitrary removal. In a court filing in October, Justice Department attorneys said Cobb's ruling was an "egregious error" that was depriving the administration of an "essential tool to combat the unprecedented surge of illegal immigration over the past few years" and efficiently deport potentially millions of people.

Trump heads to battleground Pennsylvania but keep focuses on himself ahead of midterm elections

By MIKE CATALINI and SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

MACUNGIE, Pa. (AP) — President Donald Trump visited a Mack Trucks facility in battleground Pennsylvania on Tuesday, attempting to shift attention to the U.S. economy in his first major public event outside the nation's capital since he signed an interim agreement to end the Iran war.

The trip to Macungie, in the Allentown suburbs, came as Trump works to put the conflict — and the higher gasoline prices it caused — in the rearview mirror as the November midterm elections draw closer.

Trump had a private tour of the facility, but his speech often felt more like a reelection rally from two years ago than an effort to promote his second-term accomplishments.

The president listed longstanding political grievances, and made only passing mentions of promoting Republicans ahead of Election Day — while spending more time bragging about the UFC fight he staged on the White House lawn in honor of his own 80th birthday than he did the economy.

At one point, Trump even called UFC fighters Bo Nickal and Anthony Cassar to the stage and mused about whether he could beat either one of them in a wrestling match if he were to "work out for the next couple of months."

It was Trump's fifth second-term visit to Pennsylvania, a state whose support in 2016 and 2024 helped him to win the White House. The truck factory is in a district where incumbent Republican Rep. Ryan Mackenzie faces Democratic challenger Bob Brooks in November.

"For more than 100 years, this legendary company has been making trucks right here in eastern Pennsylvania," Trump said, "building the heavy duty machinery that keeps our economy rolling, our factories moving, and our industries roaring all across the nation."

His visit coincided with rising prices that could color the verdict voters render on Trump's stewardship in the fall. About one-third of U.S. adults approved of Trump's approach to the economy, according to a June Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll. That's in line with last month for Trump on the issue.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 72 of 80

The Iran war, which began Feb. 28, has also been a politically difficult issue for the president. Most Americans continued to disapprove of his handling of Iran, according to the June AP-NORC poll, which was being fielded as Trump announced a tentative deal with Iran and concluded just before the interim agreement was signed last week. It found that 65% of U.S. adults disapprove of how the president is handling issues with Iran, unchanged from May.

Still, while most Democrats and independents view Trump's actions negatively, only about 3 in 10 Republicans are unhappy.

This is the kind of district that matters in November elections

Trump addressed a cheering crowd from a stage erected on the factory floor, flanked by two red, white and blue trucks and rows of workers in fluorescent safety vests under a large "American Workers First" banner.

It's the kind of district that may prove pivotal to Republicans holding narrow control of the House, where a loss could hobble the president's final two years in office.

Mackenzie, a freshman lawmaker, is looking to hold on to a district Democrats have targeted to flip. Brooks, president of the state firefighters' union, has support from Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro, who's also seeking reelection this year.

Trump urged the crowd to support Mackenzie, saying of his trip, "I'm not doing this for my health." But he devoted more energy to issues like the U.S.-Mexico border, opposing transgender rights and decrying "Marxist" judges, while also referencing his administration's efforts to lower prescription drug prices.

"We gotta win the midterms," Trump said, in one of the few references he made to the midterms. Later, however, he suggested it wasn't actually a "political season," perhaps because he himself won't be on the ballot in November.

On Iran, Trump suggested that the country would be smart and keep negotiating during the ceasefire. "Otherwise we'll have to finish the job, which will take about, maybe less than a week," he said.

An odd moment came when the president offered, "The ideology of the Muslims is slightly different than the ideology of the Catholics. We have the Catholics and the Muslims slightly different." He didn't elaborate.

Biden came to the same plant previously

Trump's predecessor, Democrat Joe Biden, visited the same Mack Trucks facility in 2021 to highlight regulations aimed at promoting manufacturing jobs. Manufacturing employment peaked in 1979 at nearly 19.6 million jobs. It trended downward after the 2001 recession and the 2007-09 Great Recession. The figure now stands at 12.6 million as of May, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In 2025, the truck facility got hit by market uncertainty, including sweeping tariffs that Trump's administration imposed, and about 170 people were laid off, according to Mack spokesperson Kimberly Pupillo. She added that by the end of last year, almost 150 people were recalled to work and anyone laid off last year was given the chance to return.

There are about 2,800 workers at Mack, Pupillo said.

At a pizzeria down the road from the truck facility, workers and diners said they'd heard about the president's visit and recalled Biden's trip to the plant.

George Carver, a retired elementary school principal, said he wasn't a fan of Trump's: "I'm looking for a president who'll clean up this mess," he said, meaning improve the economy and better handle the war in Iran and immigration.

"I'm looking for someone who's gonna tell the truth — that could be a Democrat or Republican," Carver said.

Trump's visit underscores Pennsylvania's status as a crucial swing state.

Trump made a trip to Mount Pocono in December to road test messages that he's addressing affordability; in July 2025, he was in Pittsburgh to tout tens of billions of dollars of recent energy and technology investments in the state; in June 2025, he was in West Mifflin to tell steelworkers he was doubling the tariff on steel imports to protect the industry; and in March 2025 he attended the NCAA wrestling championship in Philadelphia.

Denise Green, a retired software trainer, was among a handful of people protesting the visit outside a

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 73 of 80

McDonald's across the street from the plant.

Green said she was a former Republican who became a Democrat in 2007 because her original party backed policies where "all the money" was going to the rich.

Green said her key issue was Social Security funding, which she said she'll need but is worried could run out.

"It's outrageous," she said.

Sharp drops in Big Tech companies pull indexes mostly lower on Wall Street

By DAMIAN J. TROISE and ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writers

Wall Street gave up more of its recent gains Tuesday after a sell-off in big technology stocks spread from Asia back to the U.S. over worries about potentially higher interest rates by the end of the year.

The S&P fell 1.4%. The benchmark index is coming off 11 weekly gains out of the last 12, led largely by technology stocks. The Dow Jones Industrial Average, which is less influenced by tech stocks, gave up an early gain and closed just 0.1% lower. The Nasdaq composite fell 2.2%.

Markets throughout Asia fell. South Korea's Kospi index, a big winner in the AI boom, sank 10%. Stocks in Europe also fell.

The selling largely targeted companies that have seen their values surge amid the frenzy over artificial intelligence technology. Their pricey stock values give them more influence over the broader market's direction. On Tuesday, more stocks gained ground within the S&P 500 than fell, but tech companies overpowered gains elsewhere.

Micron Technology slumped 13.2% and Nvidia fell 4.1%. Samsung Electronics slumped 12.3% in South Korea.

SpaceX wavered in early trading then closed 1% higher. The space exploration and artificial intelligence company had a soaring market debut less than two weeks ago. The company plans to raise money through a bond offering, partly to fund AI development.

The growing likelihood of interest rate hikes later this year has helped deflate the massive run-up in AI-related stocks in recent days as traders worry that the higher rates could hamper economic growth.

Those Big Tech gains have been significant, sending major indexes on record-setting runs throughout 2026. Within the S&P 500, the tech sector alone is up 25.5% just over the last three months and 16.6% for the year. In Asia, South Korea's Kospi has nearly doubled so far in 2026, even after Tuesday's plunge.

Analysts have been warning that high-flying technology stocks could be due for a downturn.

"Viewed through this lens, a period of consolidation is reasonable, in our view, after such a sharp move higher," wrote Brock Weimer, investment strategy analyst at Edward Jones, in a research note.

Many technology companies have been spending heavily on AI technology. The potential for higher interest rates can stifle future spending and hurt prices for investments. The Federal Reserve has signaled that it could raise interest rates at least once before the end of the year. Wall Street sees an 85% chance that the central bank will raise its benchmark interest rate this year, according to data from CME Group. That's compared to 60% a week earlier.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury slipped to 4.50% from 4.51% late Monday. The yield on the 2-year Treasury fell to 4.20% from 4.24% late Monday. Bond yields remain high, though, amid worries about inflation.

Inflation has been heating up throughout the year. The impact from tariffs helped halt and reverse what had been an easing of inflation growth. The U.S. war with Iran quickly pushed energy prices higher, including gas prices. Higher energy costs have also made shipping more expensive for a wide range of goods, and that has been weighing on businesses and households. A report due Thursday with an inflation measure that is preferred by the Fed is expected to show that inflation rose to 4.1%, in May.

Oil prices have eased amid negotiations between the U.S. and Iran to end their war. The price for a barrel of U.S. crude for August delivery fell 0.9% to settle at \$73.21. The September delivery price for a

barrel of Brent crude, the international standard, fell 0.9% to settle at \$76.80. Prices are still above levels of roughly \$70 per barrel before the war began.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 107.33 points to 7,365.46, while the Nasdaq dropped 579.56 points to 25,587.04. The Dow lost 45.87 points to close at 51,666.84.

Supreme Court rules Rastafari man can't sue Louisiana prison officials who cut his dreadlocks

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Tuesday barred a former Louisiana inmate from suing prison officials who cut off his dreadlocks in violation of his Rastafari religious beliefs.

The justices condemned what happened to the former inmate, Damon Landor. But they ruled that a federal law designed to protect the religious rights of inmates does not permit lawsuits for money damages against individuals even when rights are violated.

The high court, in a 6-3 decision, agreed with lower courts that without exception had ruled that the law, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, can't be used to hold those who violate inmates' rights financially responsible.

The justices refused to apply the rationale from their decision in 2020 that allowed Muslim men to sue over their inclusion on the FBI's no-fly list under a sister statute, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The Justice Department, which argued against the plaintiffs in the no-fly list case in President Donald Trump's first Republican administration, had sided with Landor.

Nothing in the law dealing with prisoners' religious rights authorizes lawsuits against individual officers, Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote for the court.

In a dissent, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson wrote that state prison officials will have little incentive to abide by federal law. "It is not often that a real-life incident so clearly illustrates Congress's reasons for adopting legislation, or the Constitution's wisdom in enabling it," Jackson wrote in an opinion that was joined by her two liberal colleagues.

No one defended what happened to Landor during his five-month prison term in 2020. When he entered the prison system, he carried a copy of an appeals court ruling in another inmate's case holding that cutting religious prisoners' dreadlocks violated the federal law.

At his first two stops, officials respected his beliefs. But things changed when he got to the Raymond Laborde Correctional Center in Cottonport, about 80 miles (130 kilometers) northwest of Baton Rouge, for the final three weeks of his term.

A prison guard took the copy of the ruling Landor carried and tossed it in the trash, according to court records. Then the warden ordered guards to cut his dreadlocks. While two guards restrained him, a third shaved his head to the scalp, the records show.

Landor sued after his release, but lower courts dismissed the case. The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals lamented Landor's treatment but said the law doesn't allow him to hold prison officials liable for damages.

Louisiana wrote that "the state has amended its prison grooming policy to ensure that nothing like petitioner's alleged experience can occur."

The Rastafari faith is rooted in 1930s Jamaica, growing as a response by Black people to white colonial oppression. Its beliefs are a melding of Old Testament teachings and a desire to return to Africa. Its message was spread across the world in the 1970s by Jamaican music icons Bob Marley and Peter Tosh, two of the faith's most famous exponents.

A tale of two tours: PGA Tour approves two-tiered system in 2028 with expanded fields

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

CROMWELL, Conn. (AP) — Tiger Woods said the objective was to create the best version of the PGA Tour. The answer Tuesday was a major shakeup to its model that effectively creates two tours, expanding the field for the elite tier and cutting in half prize money for the secondary tier.

The new system is to start in 2028, and the Future Competition Committee that Woods leads still has work left on key details. Chief among them is which of the roughly 15 tournaments will be part of the "Championship Series," and the 20 events on the lesser "Challenger Series."

Other details involve bringing a form of match play to the postseason and creating a rotation of prestigious courses instead of going to East Lake in Atlanta every year.

"This work was never about any one player or person," Woods said in his first public appearance since his arrest on a DUI charges on March 27. "It was about bringing together different perspectives, having honest, hard conversations, and thinking boldly about what is best for the game that we all love."

The PGA Tour boards on Monday afternoon approved the recommendations. Woods jumped back into his role as chairman the last several weeks upon his return from seeking treatment out of the country since his arrest.

"It's great to see him back," PGA Tour CEO Brian Rolapp said. "Tiger has been involved throughout the process. He's contributed meaningfully. It's awesome to see him back and in great form."

Rolapp preached "scarcity, simplicity and parity" when he took over last summer, and those pillars have become more clear. The season will be shorter — approximately February through August with some scheduled weeks off — without taking away playing opportunities.

The \$20 million signature events for 72 players now will be part of the Championship Series and expanded to 120 players on average. Players are not required to play them all and those tournaments will not have sponsor invitations or an alternate list. There will be a 36-hole cut.

"When fans tune into the PGA Tour Championship Series, they know they will see the best players in the world competing head-to-head," Rolapp said. He said it was important to credibility not to have sponsor exemptions because sponsors in other sports don't determine who plays.

The Challenger Series will be a path for players to earn their way to the top level. Those fields will be about 144 players, and Rolapp said purses would be at least \$4 million. This year, all but three regular non-signature events had prize funds of at least \$9 million.

Except for about seven times during the season, the Championship and Challenger Series tournaments will be held the same week. Rolapp said on the occasion of a week off for the elite circuit, the Challenger Series event would be elevated.

Rory McIlroy last week referred to the secondary tier as a "glorified Korn Ferry event," referring to the tour's developmental circuit.

"I just think there's going to be certain events that might lose their status if a sponsor doesn't pony up \$30 million," McIlroy said.

Rolapp said he spoke to McIlroy on Tuesday — the Masters champion is skipping the Travelers Championship, the third signature event he has missed this year — and said the new model will serve the same player and offer a similar number of tournaments. Korn Ferry purses are \$1 million.

"We've just organized the same tour into a much more interesting and competitive system," Rolapp said. "If you look at the Challenger Series events, they'll be at venues you recognize. They'll be for healthy purses. They'll include a subset of the same 200 and change players that we have today. That is much different than what the Korn Ferry Tour is today."

Each tour will have a separate points standings and there is no plan for players to move up to the Championship Series during the season unless they were to win twice.

The Championship Series eligibility would be determined by the top 90 players from the previous year, the top 20 players from the Challenger Series and other exemption categories for tournament winners,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 76 of 80

injuries or career milestones.

Missing from the announcement was any mention of the FedEx Corp., the financial muscle behind the PGA Tour's postseason since it began in 2007. The most recent FedEx deal ends in 2027.

"Our hope is to create more value for FedEx and everybody else. We're in an existing contract, and we're going to honor that," Rolapp said.

As for the fall, the PGA Tour is moving toward a separate series of four to six tournaments in which top performers can earn their way back to the Championship Series. The tour said it still has plans for the Korn Ferry Tour, PGA Tour Americas and the PGA Tour University ranking system that creates places for top college players.

Finishing in August would give the elite players time to consider playing overseas, such as premier European tour events or the Australian Open. The PGA Tour recently became partners with Golf Australia without co-sanctioning the century-old event.

Andy Burnham prepares for a UK Labour leadership contest that may be a coronation

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Newly elected British lawmaker Andy Burnham met the man he hopes to replace, Prime Minister Keir Starmer, on Tuesday as he prepares for a leadership contest in which he may be the only contender.

Burnham is the strong front-runner to succeed Starmer, who announced Monday that he would step down within weeks after two years in office marred by missteps and judgment errors that eroded his standing with his party and the public.

Burnham, a former Cabinet minister who served since 2017 as mayor of Greater Manchester, won a special election last week for a seat in Parliament with the express aim of challenging Starmer for leadership of the Labour Party and the country.

Burnham's chances got a big boost on Monday when former Health Secretary Wes Streeting, who was considered his main rival, announced his support.

Starmer and Burnham met Tuesday for the first time since last week's special election. Neither side released details of what was discussed. Burnham was also meeting Labour lawmakers as he seeks to build momentum for his bid.

The U.K. parliamentary system allows governing parties to change leaders — and thus prime ministers — without the need for a national election. The next general election doesn't have to be held until 2029.

Nominations for the Labour leadership will open on July 9 and close a week later. If Burnham is the only contender, he could be prime minister by July 17. If there is a contest, the winner should be in place by the time Parliament returns from its summer break on Sept. 1.

Starmer told the weekly meeting of his Cabinet on Tuesday that he will try to make the transition to his successor as easy as possible. He told ministers that he wants an "orderly transition" and for whoever replaces him to succeed, his office said.

He is also keeping up a busy schedule, trying not to look like a lame duck during his final days in office. But while Starmer wants to carry on with business as usual, he's not allowed to make new major policy announcements or spending commitments during what remains of his time in office.

The European Union says a key U.K.-EU summit scheduled for July 22 will be postponed because of the uncertainty in Britain.

The British government is still expected to publish a long-awaited defense investment plan — which sparked the resignation of Defense Secretary John Healey on June 11 — before a NATO summit in Turkey on July 7 and 8 that Starmer is likely to attend.

Burnham's economic plans aren't yet known

Burnham was a popular mayor of Greater Manchester, overseeing a period of rapid regeneration for the city in northern England where the Industrial Revolution was forged. He has pledged to repeat his

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 77 of 80

signature brand of "Manchesterism" on a national scale.

Many Labour members hope Burnham's people skills and charisma can connect with the public more than the stolid, managerial Starmer could ever do.

But Burnham's policies in many areas are unknown and untested. Some Labour lawmakers want to see a party election contest where he would face public debate and scrutiny.

Burnham is expected to make a speech next week outlining some of his economic plans.

Former Armed Forces Minister Al Carns, who quit this month to protest what he saw as inadequate defense spending, said that "we need to have a clear and concise discussion about what this country wants to be."

He has suggested that he might run for the leadership, but told broadcaster ITV that "I'm not ready to make a decision on this in any way, shape or form."

Others have suggested Darren Jones, a senior Cabinet minister and Starmer ally, should run, though he has yet to comment.

Potential candidates need the support of at least 81 Labour lawmakers, a fifth of the parliamentary party, to run.

Many argue that a leadership contest will only focus attention on the party's internal divisions and extend a period of political uncertainty.

Starmer won a landslide but stumbled in office

Starmer resigned on Monday after a weekend considering his future, acknowledging that the Labour Party no longer thinks "I am best placed to lead us into the next general election."

He was the sixth prime minister in a decade to stand outside No. 10 Downing St. and announce a departure. It comes as Britain marks the 10th anniversary of its vote to leave the European Union, a decision that still roils the country's economy and politics.

After weeks of insisting that he would fight to keep his job, Starmer conceded to growing pressure to hand over to a new leader who can try and revive the government's flagging fortunes. He led Labour to a landslide election victory in July 2024, but his popularity and that of the party have plummeted since then.

Starmer has struggled to deliver promised economic growth, repair tattered public services and ease the cost of living. He has been hamstrung by repeated missteps, including his decision to appoint Peter Mandelson, a scandal-tarnished friend of Jeffrey Epstein, as U.K. ambassador to the United States.

Labour is losing liberal voters to the growing Green Party and facing a rising Reform UK, the Nigel Farage-led anti-immigration party that consistently leads in nationwide opinion polls.

From renter to owner, Sharpton locks in National Action Network's Harlem foothold for the long haul

By AARON MORRISON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Rev. Al Sharpton's staff and advisers stood around him just outside the doors of a cozy theater, where some of his most fervent supporters waited to greet him in the newly renovated headquarters of the National Action Network.

When doors flung open, Sharpton entered to a standing ovation that continued until he was perched behind a lectern, on a stage decorated with a floor-to-ceiling video screen.

The audience was not anticipating a call for justice. Instead, the rabble-rousing youth minister turned go-to national advocate was there to declare his organization was officially an owner, no longer a renter, in the historically Black Harlem neighborhood it has called home for more than two decades.

"I want to make something permanent," Sharpton said recently to the gathered crowd of NAN board members, local clergy and other allies. "When people see that you've bought a building, they say, 'Wait a minute, they're not going nowhere.'"

NAN's new permanent home is the former Faison Firehouse Theater on Hancock Place, near the intersection of 124th Street and Manhattan Avenue. George Faison, a Tony Award-winning choreographer known for his work in the original 1970s Broadway staging of "The Wiz," had bought the firehouse in 1999 and converted it into a community theater.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 78 of 80

When Faison had a choice between selling the former firehouse in the rapidly gentrifying neighborhood to a large developer or selling it to NAN, he chose the latter, according to Sharpton.

"I'm 71 years old — if I was just trying to do it as an Al Sharpton personal fan club, I could just keep renting," Sharpton told The Associated Press during an interview in his new private office, with large windows overlooking central Harlem.

"I'm buying it to show I want this to be an institution. I want it to last beyond me."

Although the renovation is structurally complete and its rooms are functional, Sharpton said he expects his weekly Saturday rallies to resume in the new headquarters this summer.

From renting to owning

Founded in 1991, NAN began meeting at P.S. 175, a Manhattan elementary school, during the tenure of the late David Dinkins, New York City's first Black mayor. Next, NAN rented a space at 125th Street and Madison Avenue. In 2006, Sharpton moved NAN into a rented space at 145th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard, where it operated until January.

NAN's headquarters had been named the "House of Justice" by his late mentor, the Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr.

Often organizing from his Harlem headquarters, Sharpton became known staging direct-action protests on behalf of Black men killed, brutalized or persecuted by police in New York City: Abner Louima, Amadou Diallo, the exonerated men formerly known as the Central Park Five, and Eric Garner, among others.

"Harlem means home," Sharpton told the AP.

The new NAN headquarters now carries the name "House of Justice Rev. Jesse Jackson's Workshop," following the multimillion dollar purchase and renovation of its five floors. Sharpton said he will invite artists to hold salons, poetry readings and jazz nights, as a callback to the Black cultural and intellectual movement of the Harlem Renaissance.

Looking out at his supporters during the invite-only reception for the new space, Sharpton reflected not just on the NAN's past, but on the current cultural and political environment.

"We are in trouble," he said in reference to redistricting fights set off by a recent Supreme Court decision on the Voting Rights Act and the rolling back of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

"We don't have, in my opinion, the luxury of not nailing down and working together," Sharpton said.

Building on decades of local and national activism

Over the years, the NAN headquarters has become a "can't skip" campaign stop for Democratic candidates seeking everything from the presidency and Congress to state and local offices. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the House of Justice is typically standing room only for the dignitaries who show up.

After the death of his childhood hero James Brown in 2006, the horse drawn carriage carrying the Godfather of Soul's golden casket stopped outside NAN's 145th Street headquarters.

The organization's weekly Saturday rallies have also been a venue for families grieving loss through police violence, or for celebrities to speak out and unfairness in the entertainment industry.

Ashley Sharpton, the youngest of the reverend's two daughters, grew up around the House of Justice. She and her older sister, Dominique Sharpton-Bright, were there on the day the late pop icon Michael Jackson visited and spoke at the invitation of their dad.

"The magic was palpable," Ashley recalled.

Now, as founder and director of NAN's youth initiatives, Ashley feels deeper stake in the organization's future.

"It's time for us to step in and take ownership, literally, of what is needed to maintain the legacy, and to continue the fight," she told the AP.

Supreme Court OKs Exxon Mobil lawsuit over Cuban property seized by Fidel Castro's government

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled that Exxon Mobil can sue Cuban state-owned companies in American courts over property on the island nation that was seized after Fidel Castro

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 79 of 80

took power.

The 6-3 decision was the second in as many months in favor of U.S. owners of Cuban property that was confiscated by the Communist government more than 65 years ago.

The outcome in the two cases could be an additional lever for the Trump administration to exert pressure on Cuba, which is already being squeezed by a U.S. oil embargo.

At issue was whether the 1996 law known as Helms-Burton removes the shield from lawsuits in U.S. courts that typically cover foreign countries and state-owned businesses. The justices reversed a lower-court ruling that found that the Cuban state-owned companies are immune from lawsuits in U.S. courts.

Exxon Mobil is seeking compensation for the confiscation of assets owned by subsidiaries of Standard Oil, Exxon Mobil's predecessor, including more than 100 service stations and an oil refinery.

Last month, the court ruled in another case involving confiscated property in Cuba, reviving claims by the U.S. company that operated docks in Havana against four cruise lines that brought tourists to Cuba during the brief thaw in relations during the Obama administration. That case turned on the same section of Helms-Burton allowing lawsuits over seized property.

Congress passed the law in response to the 1996 downing of civilian planes flown by Miami-based exiles.

Title III of the law allows Americans to sue almost any company that engages in commercial activity or benefits from property confiscated by Cuba's government.

Before the first Trump administration, every president had suspended the provision because of objections from U.S. allies doing business in Cuba and the effect on future negotiated settlements between the U.S. and Cuba.

But Trump lifted the suspension in 2019, and Exxon Mobil filed its lawsuit the same day.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote for the conservative majority that it "would make little sense" if the law allowed the president to decide whether suits can proceed against Cuban interests while also protecting them.

Justice Elena Kagan wrote in a dissent for the three liberals that the 1996 law simply contains no provision eliminating the sovereign immunity shield.

The U.S. Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, an arm of the Justice Department, said in 1969 that the value of Exxon Mobil's property in Cuba is \$71.6 million, plus 6% annual interest beginning in 1960. That would be worth more than \$1 billion today, Kavanaugh wrote.

In addition, the commission found that nearly 6,000 individuals and businesses held claims worth \$1.9 billion, before adding in interest or damages.

Today in History: June 24, Sally Ride completes historic space shuttle mission

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, June 24, the 175th day of 2026. There are 190 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 24, 1983, the space shuttle Challenger — carrying America's first woman in space, Sally Ride — coasted to a safe landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Also on this date:

In 1509, Henry VIII was crowned king of England; his wife, Catherine of Aragon, was crowned queen consort.

In 1812, French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte's Grande Armee began crossing the Niemen River, embarking on a campaign to invade Russia. (Napoleon's forces would enter Moscow in early September, but failing to decisively defeat the Russians, would retreat with staggering losses to disease and desertion as winter set in.)

In 1939, the Southeast Asian country of Siam changed its name to Thailand. (It reverted to Siam in 1945, then became Thailand once again in 1949.)

In 1948, Communist forces cut off all land and water routes between West Germany and West Berlin,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 019 ~ 80 of 80

prompting the Western allies to organize the Berlin Airlift.

In 1957, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Roth v. United States*, ruled 6-3 that obscene materials were not protected by the First Amendment.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon concluded a summit with the visiting leader of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, who hailed the talks in an address on American television.

In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, strengthened its 30-year ban on officially sponsored worship in public schools, prohibiting prayer as a part of graduation ceremonies.

In 2010, in the first round of the Wimbledon Championships, American John Isner won the longest professional tennis match in history, defeating Nicolas Mahut of France 6-4, 3-6, 6-7, 7-6, 70-68; the match was played over the course of three days and lasted a total of 11 hours, 5 minutes.

In 2015, a federal judge formally sentenced Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev to death for the 2013 terror attacks. (A federal appeals court later threw out the sentence; the Supreme Court reinstated it.)

In 2018, women in Saudi Arabia were allowed behind the wheel for the first time as the world's last remaining ban on female drivers was formally lifted.

In 2021, a 12-story condominium building collapsed in Surfside, Florida, killing 98 people.

In 2022, in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 to remove constitutional protections for abortion that had been in place since 1973's *Roe v. Wade*.

Today's Birthdays: Author Anita Desai is 89. Cinematographer Vittorio Storaro is 86. Actor Michele Lee is 84. Actor-director Georg Stanford Brown is 83. Musician Mick Fleetwood is 79. Actor Peter Weller is 79. Golf Hall of Famer Juli Inkster is 66. Actor Iain Glen is 65. Musician Curt Smith (Tears for Fears) is 65. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum is 64. Singer Hope Sandoval (Mazzy Star) is 60. Actor Sherry Stringfield ("ER") is 59. Actor-producer Mindy Kaling is 47. Actor Minka Kelly is 46. Singer Solange Knowles is 40. Soccer player Lionel Messi is 39. Actor Beanie Feldstein is 33. Actor Harris Dickinson is 30. Actor Liana Ramirez is 28. Actor Coy Stewart is 28.