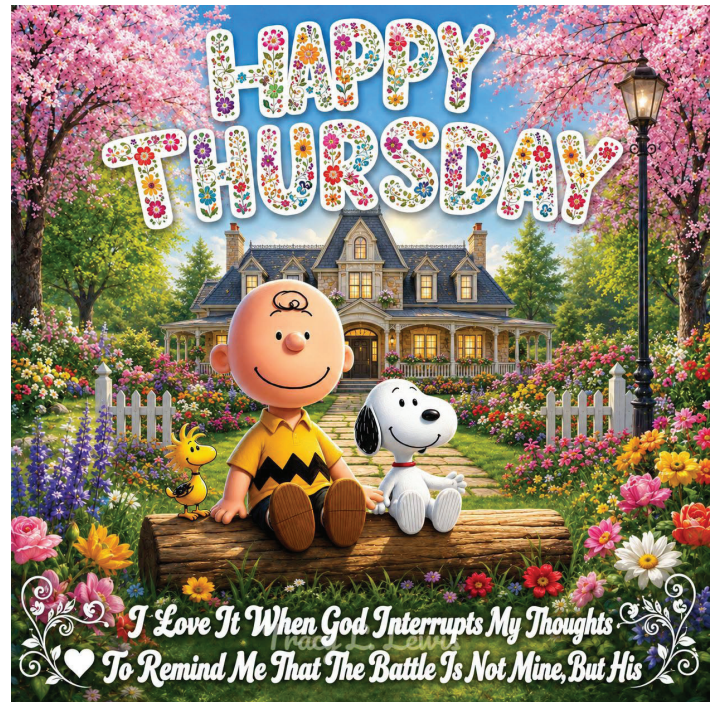


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Thursday, July 9

Senior Meal: BBQ pulled pork with mac 'n cheese, cucumber salad, fruit, whole wheat bread.
Story Time, 10 a.m., Wage Memorial Library
Lions Club Meeting, 6 p.m., 104 N Main
Groton Legion at Rotary Tourney in Clark
U10 Baseball (B&W) hosts Ipswich, 5:30 p.m. (DH)
Tiger Skills Workouts, 7:30 a.m., Arena

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PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

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

Friday, July 10

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combo, mashed potatoes with gravy, carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.
Groton Legion at Rotary Tournament in Clark
Groton 14U Legion hosts Aberdeen Smitty's, 5:30 p.m. (DH)
U10 Baseball (W&R) hosts Sisseton, 5:30 p.m., (DH)
Olive Grove: Men's 4 Man Hdcp 1 PM

Saturday, July 11

Northern Plains Softball U10 Softball Tournament in Aberdeen.
Northern Plains Softball U12 Softball Tournament in Aberdeen.

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1440

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

Iran Ceasefire Collapses

The US carried out a new wave of airstrikes against Iran hours after President Donald Trump said the ceasefire with Iran was "over."

The US accuses Iran of attacking three commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz earlier this week, after requiring all vessels passing through the strait to use an approved route. In response, the US says it struck Iran's air defense system and over 60 small boats used by its paramilitary. The US also revoked a waiver allowing the sale of Iranian oil on the international market. The standoff surrounds Iran's ongoing promises to charge fees on ships passing through the strait, potentially in exchange for guaranteeing their safe passage.

The latest flare-up comes as Iran plans to bury former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei today, capping a nearly weeklong funeral procession.

Cellular Intelligence

Human intelligence largely depends on the processing power of individual brain cells, according to a study out this week. The finding challenges the assumption that humans' superior cognitive abilities (compared with other mammals, like rats) stem primarily from having more brain cells and the vast connections between them.

Researchers tasked an artificial intelligence model with learning and reproducing the functions of individual neurons from humans and rats. The experiment revealed that a single human neuron can independently perform tasks, such as distinguishing between images of dogs and cats—abilities previously thought to require the collective activity of several neurons. The researchers believe that a human neuron's unique electrical properties and dense, treelike branches—which collect incoming information—may enhance its computational capacity.

Experts say this more granular understanding of human neurons could inspire the development of more complex AI models, which are already modeled after the human brain.

Maine Campaign Collapses

Graham Platner—the Democratic candidate for Maine's Senate race—announced yesterday he will suspend his campaign. The revelation came ahead of a July 13 deadline, and days after a Politico story revealed an allegation of rape by a woman he once dated.

In his 11-minute video announcement, Platner again denied the allegations against him. Nonetheless, many influential leaders had rescinded their endorsements, chief among them Rep. Ro Khanna (D, CA-17) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT). The announcement ends Platner's bid to unseat Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) with an antiwar, economically populist agenda; his campaign claimed to have generated the largest volunteer base in the state's history. Still, it was beset by scandals, including the revelation of a Nazi-linked tattoo and a physical assault allegation.

Maine is considered a must-win state for Democrats seeking to take control of the Senate. The state's Democratic Party has until July 27 to announce his replacement.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"The Pitt" dominates Emmy nominations with 25 nods; "Hacks" breaks record for most comedy series nods in a single year (More, w/full list) | Rob Reiner receives posthumous nod for "The Bear," plus more surprises and snubs.

Justin Bieber will join Shakira, BTS, and Madonna for the first-ever World Cup final halftime show just outside New York City on July 19.

Wimbledon women's singles semifinals begin today at 8:30 am ET, with American Coco Gauff vying for a spot in Saturday's final; men's singles semifinals are set for tomorrow.

The World Cup quarterfinals begin today at 3 pm ET, with France taking on Morocco. 1440 is partnering with Men in Blazers to deliver daily, in-depth coverage through the final whistle. Sign up here to follow the final thrilling stages.

Science & Technology

OpenAI releases most capable AI model yet—GPT-5.6—to the public weeks after the Trump administration delayed the rollout over cybersecurity concerns; the government has approved today's release following additional testing.

World Health Organization projects new cancer cases will nearly double to 35 million by 2050, calls for urgent action to address global healthcare inequities.

Teardrop-based device can measure dopamine levels, potentially offering a noninvasive approach for monitoring Parkinson's disease and other neurological conditions.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 -0.3%, Dow -1.1%, Nasdaq +0.2%) as the US carries out further strikes on Iran.

Federal Reserve officials split on pace of future interest rate cuts, Fed's June meeting minutes show.

Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin aims to secure \$10B at a \$130B valuation in the 25-year-old rocket company's first private capital raise.

Jobs with "AI" in the title have tripled since 2022, now making up one in 12 listings on Indeed's job board, per new data.

Politics & World Affairs

ICE agent fatally shoots a Mexican citizen, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, earlier this week during a traffic stop in Houston; ICE alleges Araujo was living in the US illegally, evaded arrest, and rammed the agent's vehicle; critics call for an independent investigation.

President Donald Trump clears Ukraine to manufacture the US' Patriot air defense missiles after meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the NATO summit.

German palliative care doctor is sentenced for murdering 15 patients, ages 25 to 94, using a cocktail of sedatives.

GROTON 1912 ★ HISTORICAL JAIL

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**SUNDAY,
JULY 12,**

★
10 A.M. TO 3 P.M.
★



★ *Come see the
newly restored jail* ★

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Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion splits doubleheader with Smittys Post 24

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion bounced back from a difficult opening game to earn a split of its Wednesday doubleheader against Smittys Post 24, dropping the opener 13-2 before rallying for a 14-9 victory in the nightcap.

Smittys controlled the first game from the start, scoring once in the opening inning on a wild pitch before adding two runs in the second on RBI singles by Jamison and Mason to build a 3-0 advantage.

The visitors broke the game open with five runs in the third inning, capitalizing on an error along with a two-run single by Jordan, an RBI walk by Jamison and a sacrifice fly from Mason. Smittys added another five-run inning in the fifth, taking advantage of more Groton miscues while Jamison added an RBI single to help seal the 13-2 victory.

Alex Abeln started on the mound for Groton, allowing three runs, only one earned, on two hits over two innings while striking out two. Jamison earned the win for Smittys after giving up four hits and two runs, one earned, over five innings with two strikeouts.

Braden Fliehs, T.C. Schuster, Zach Fliehs and Xavior Ellenbecker each had a hit for Groton. Braden Fliehs drove in one run, and the defense turned a double play.

Jamison, Easton and Jordan each collected two hits for Smittys, while Jamison and Mason drove in three runs apiece. Smittys also took advantage of six walks and seven stolen bases in the win.

Groton responded in impressive fashion in the second game after falling behind 4-0 in the top of the first inning. Smittys grabbed the early lead on Porter's two-run double, an error and an RBI double by Easton.

Post 39 answered immediately with six runs in the bottom of the first to take the lead for good. The biggest hit came from Xavior Ellenbecker, whose two-out single drove in three runs.

Groton put the game away with an eight-run third inning. John Bisbee drew a bases-loaded walk, Lincoln Shilhanek added an RBI single, Ellenbecker worked another RBI walk and a passed ball plated another run. Alex Abeln brought home a run on a fielder's choice before Braden Fliehs and T.C. Schuster each delivered RBI singles. Ryder Schelle capped the inning with another run-scoring fielder's choice as Groton built a commanding lead.

Kason Oswald earned the victory, pitching five innings while allowing nine runs, five earned, on eight hits with one strikeout.

Ellenbecker drove in three runs from the No. 9 spot in the lineup despite recording just one hit. Braden Fliehs and Lincoln Shilhanek each finished with two hits, and Groton again turned a double play defensively.

Smittys was led offensively by Isiah, who went 3-for-3, while Donny, Porter and Easton each drove in two runs. Smittys also turned a double play in the nightcap.



Kason Oswald was the winning pitcher in the second game against the Smitty's. (Photo

by Bruce Babcock)

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Groton U18 Softball Takes Second at NPS Tournament

Groton's U18 softball team defeated Redfield Trash Fire at the NPS U18 Softball Tournament held Wednesday in Redfield. In the championship game, Hub City Fastpitch defeated Groton.

Back row, left to right: Libby Cole, Emerlee Jones, Rylie Rose, Kyleigh Kroll, Tori Schuster, Neely Althoff, and Coach Amanda Bisbee

Front row, left to right: Tenley Frost, Ari Dinger, Rylen Ekern, Abby Fjeldheim, Kaedy Bonn, Makenna Krause, Andi Iverson, and Kinsley Rowen. (Courtesy Photo Karen Rose)



Rylie Rose playing second base at the NSP U18 Softball Tournament. (Courtesy Photo Karen Rose)

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Life is messy,
wear an apron ♥

“Taste and see that the Lord is good.”

Psalm 34:8

❖ Ladies Luncheon ❖

Bethesda Lutheran Church, Bristol

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

By Bethesda Women of the ELCA



Silent Auction opens at 10:30



Guest Speaker: Tiffany Hoeft, Bristol
Graduate and owner of “Minds Matter”



Luncheon at Noon

TICKETS
\$15.00

Deadline to purchase
tickets is Friday, July 10



Kay Espeland 605-492-3507



Jane Goehring 605-290-1420



Or contact any WELCA member





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Petition to clarify South Dakota proof of citizenship law shot down over technicality

State law restricts who can request rule changes, Board of Elections member learns
BY MAKENZIE HUBER

Under state law, any “interested person” can petition state boards to change administrative rules.

But South Dakota citizens and organizations don’t qualify as “persons” under that chapter of state law. The existence of that limitation surprised some members of the state Board of Elections on Wednesday during a meeting called for the express purpose of voting to advance or defeat a rules package the body spent two hours pondering last week.

The League of Women Voters leaned on what it believed to be its right to petition state board earlier this month when it offered the board a series of rule changes the group argued were necessary to standardize the administration of a new state law that requires first-time voter registrants to provide proof of U.S. citizenship.

The board dismissed the petition in a 5-2 vote on Wednesday after one of the board members told the group that the advocacy nonprofit lacks the legal standing to ask for the changes.

Last minute check of statutes calls petitioners’ status into question

The definition of a “person” able to petition a state board for a rule change only includes political subdivisions or agencies of the state, board member and retired Rapid City attorney Scott McGregor said.

McGregor did not attend the initial board meeting last week when the petition was presented, but he reviewed the matter over the weekend, he told South Dakota Searchlight after the meeting. With a 40-year career “making legal arguments based on statutory interpretations,” McGregor also reviewed relevant laws regarding the petition process.

McGregor said he wanted to see if “interested person” had a broad enough definition to include organizations such as the League of Women Voters.

“Person’ in various contexts has an awful lot of definitions,” McGregor said. “It depends on the section of the law you’re dealing with and the level of government you’re dealing with.”

McGregor spoke with the Secretary of State’s Office and its legal counsel earlier this week to confirm his interpretation. Deputy Secretary Tom Deadrick told McGregor that other agencies have accepted rule petitions from individuals.

“Even if other agencies have done it,” McGregor told Searchlight, “that doesn’t change the law.”

McGregor told board members he was “shocked” by the limitations.

“That may be an oversight, but that’s all that’s in there,” McGregor said during the meeting.

Board member Kent Alberty said he was “disappointed” that the law’s restrictions on petitioners wasn’t shared with board members earlier. Alberty, during last week’s meeting, said that he saw a need for at least some standardization in procedures in the administration of the citizenship requirement.

Alberty voted against the dismissal on Wednesday, as did Dewey County Auditor Jamalia Franzen.

McGregor told South Dakota Searchlight that the law should be reviewed legislatively.

“There is a certain unfairness to it,” McGregor said.

Rule changes, responses

Acceptable documents for proving one’s citizenship under the new law in question on Wednesday include a birth certificate, passport, driver’s license, non-driver’s identification card or tribal identification

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card, or "any other type of acceptable documentation" under federal law. Photocopies of most of those documents are acceptable, but registrants using state- or tribally issued identification cards must have the physical cards with them.

If a voter does not provide necessary documentation, they are registered as federal-only voters and cannot participate in local or state elections.

The League of Women Voters proposals included:

Allowing photocopies of identification cards, such as tribal IDs and driver's licenses, to be used as proof of citizenship.

Recognizing tribal identification cards from any federally recognized tribe, rather than just the nine tribes in South Dakota.

Allowing voters designated as federal-only an opportunity to cast provisional ballots for local elections while appealing their eligibility.

Adding specific language to the state's voter registration form to explain that not offering a physical South Dakota address would cause them to be designated as federal-only voters.

Adding language to notifications confirming a voter's registration clearly saying if the registrant is a federal-only voter, as well as language explaining how to remedy the situation.

South Dakota Secretary of State Monae Johnson was ill during last week's board meeting, at which the group took testimony from supporters of each rule. No one from her office was on hand to rebut the supporters, but her staff did file written responses in opposition.

On Wednesday, Johnson told the board that the new law, as written, does not allow photocopies of driver's licenses, only the original card. She added that while no formal appeal process exists for voters registered as federal-only, they can remedy their status by resubmitting their registration with proper documentation.

"The League of Women Voters and other concerned organizations could look at amending the current law in the 2027 legislative session, if that is their wish," Johnson said.

Johnson will not be seeking re-election for secretary of state in November. She lost the Republican nomination at last month's state party convention to state Rep. Heather Baxter, who supported the bill that created the new law during the legislative session and will oversee its administration if elected. Baxter will face Democratic nominee Terrence Davis in the general election.

Baxter submitted public comment ahead of Wednesday's meeting and compared the proposed changes to presenting a photocopy of identification to get through security at the airport or purchase alcohol. The state Department of Public Safety does not accept photocopies of identification documents, Baxter said.

"So why allow the League to make such changes to what law already clearly states as well as other state departments?!" Baxter wrote.

Amy Scott-Stoltz, president of the League of Women Voters of South Dakota, said the organization is "disappointed" in the board's decision and "reviewing our options" regarding advancing its proposals and challenging the board's dismissal.

The group's petition was meant to make sure the new law is "uniformly implemented across the state and that voters and county auditors alike would have clear guidance about their obligations under the law in advance of the November election," Scott-Stoltz said.

"We intend to continue our work in South Dakota to ensure that every American citizen can access the ballot box," Scott-Stoltz said.

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.

South Dakota board approves \$2.4M tax rebate to assist defense contractor's Clear Lake expansion

BY JOSHUA HAIAR

A South Dakota economic development board approved a \$2.4 million sales tax rebate Wednesday for a weapons manufacturer's expansion in Clear Lake.

The approval comes as state leaders are pushing to expand defense contractor presence in the state.

The South Dakota Board of Economic Development approved AMTEC Corp's Reinvestment Payment Program application for the \$2,434,648 rebate, to be paid as the company spends money in the state to facilitate its expansion. The payment is capped at 75% of the actual state sales and use tax paid on eligible project costs, with eligible costs not to exceed \$113.6 million.

The state program allows companies to earn a rebate for upgrading equipment or constructing a new building in South Dakota. The program is limited to building projects over \$20 million or equipment upgrades worth more than \$2 million. Companies must meet certain expectations linked to jobs created, wages paid and the size of their physical footprint to qualify for the rebate.

The company recently announced plans to build a new medium-caliber ammunition production and test facility at the existing Tech Ord campus in Clear Lake, which is a division of AMTEC Corp. The project was described by National Presto Industries, of which AMTEC is a subsidiary, as a \$90 million investment intended to meet U.S. Department of Defense ammunition needs.

"The investment further strengthens South Dakota's growing role in supporting national defense and advanced manufacturing while reinforcing the Tech Ord campus as a strategic location for future Defense Industrial Base expansion," a June 15 press release reads.

Tech Ord produces detonating and explosive components and materials. The company says its Clear Lake campus spans 640 acres and includes manufacturing, engineering and support operations, storage bunkers and hazardous-waste treatment infrastructure.

Gov. Larry Rhoden touted the Tech Ord expansion as part of South Dakota's push to grow its national security industry in a June 19 column.

"They have over six decades of success strengthening our nation's defense, and they continue to thrive here in South Dakota," Rhoden wrote. "When their parent company was looking for a place to expand, they chose our state."

In April, Rhoden announced a \$6 million grant to start the South Dakota Defense Institute and a new Rapid City collaboration space intended to connect businesses, schools and government partners with federal defense agencies and contracting opportunities.

Tech Ord said media inquiries regarding the state funding must go through AMTEC's Wisconsin office. That office declined to comment or put Searchlight in contact with their media relations staff.

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

South Dakota confirms 11th measles case of 2026 in Edmunds County child

BY MAKENZIE HUBER

South Dakota Department of Health officials have confirmed the state's 11th measles case of 2026.

The case involves a child younger than 18 in Edmunds County, department spokeswoman Tia Kafka said. The patient was unvaccinated or their vaccination status is unknown, and the source of exposure is unknown.

The department notified medical providers last week to be alert for measles symptoms in Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, McPherson, Potter, Spink and Walworth counties.

The department did not issue a press release about the case because the patient was not known to

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have visited public locations while infectious, Kafka said.

The last cases reported before Thursday were in May, according to the department's measles dashboard. So far this year, six measles cases have been confirmed in Grant County, one in Brown and three in Brookings. This is the first case in Edmunds County.

Two of the patients who contracted measles in May were hospitalized. They've since recovered, Kafka said. Ten of the 11 cases involved patients who were unvaccinated or unaware of their vaccination status. Seven of the cases have been among children. Six were exposed through international travel, four have an unknown source, and one was linked to close contact with a known source.

"The measles vaccine (MMR) offers the best protection against measles infection," Kafka said.

Measles symptoms appear in two stages. Early symptoms can include a runny nose, cough, slight fever and red eyes sensitive to light. Between the third and seventh days, a patient's temperature can reach 103 to 105 degrees, and a red blotchy rash typically develops on the face before spreading to the entire body.

People who are not immune or vaccinated, or who are unsure of their status, should contact their medical provider, the department said.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there have been 2,170 confirmed measles cases nationwide in 2026 across 41 states as of July 2. Those states include all of South Dakota's surrounding states except Iowa.

There were 2,267 confirmed cases across the U.S. in all of 2025, according to the CDC.

Measles was considered fully eradicated in the U.S. in 2000. Falling measles vaccination rates in recent years have contributed to its return. Several areas of the U.S. now have vaccination rates below the 95% threshold needed to prevent outbreaks.

The kindergarten measles vaccination rate in South Dakota has tumbled from 97% to 90% in the past 10 years. Health officials blame disinformation about vaccine safety, which has contributed to a rise in parents claiming religious exemptions to avoid otherwise mandatory school immunizations.

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.

COMMENTARY

Bad ads, lots of spending and the candidate who got off easy: post-primary observations

by Dana Hess

The outcome of June's Republican gubernatorial primary raised plenty of questions and provided few answers. When the dust settled, Aberdeen businessman Toby Doeden and Gov. Larry Rhoden were heading for a July 28 runoff and U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson and state Speaker of the House Jon Hansen were looking for work.

Among the questions raised by the outcome:

How does an early frontrunner end up finishing in third place?

How does a man with no political experience finish ahead of an incumbent governor and a sitting congressman?

What was it about this year's race that caused the state's Republican Party to have its first-ever runoff election for a statewide office?

These are compelling questions. The best I can do is some post-primary observations:

Johnson should sue his advertising advisers

The commercials featuring Johnson's sons had a dated sitcom feel that was out of place in the current political climate. They were as superficial as a boy band and had all the sophistication of a school play.

The creator of the commercials obviously didn't consider that some of us don't relish getting political

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advice from teenagers. The steady diet of Johnson's sons constantly proclaiming "Hey, our dad is great!" got to be wearing.

Part of Johnson's message was too good

When the Johnson siblings weren't shilling for their father, the congressman's commercials were busy attacking the property tax relief plans touted by Rhoden and Hansen. Whenever he had the opportunity, Johnson noted that their property tax relief plan was really a sales tax increase. This was unique in the shady history of political advertising in that Johnson's message happened to be true.

Some voters may have thanked Johnson for pointing that out by voting for him. However, it looks like voters concerned about that issue were loyal to Doeden because of his promise to eliminate property taxes entirely.

It's a bad time to be from Washington, D.C.

An astute student of politics, in an interview with South Dakota Searchlight, Johnson noted all of his congressional colleagues who were defeated recently when seeking higher office. The few times that Johnson wandered away from the Trump party line caused his candidacy to suffer the effects of attack ads.

In contrast, Doeden was able to wrap himself in all things Trump, having never had to cast a legislative vote.

In the ad war, Doeden got off easy

In a South Dakota Searchlight podcast, long-time political observer Pat Powers noted that the other three candidates did not go after Doeden with the vigor with which they went after each other. Powers ascribed this tactic to the notion that Doeden was the preferred runoff opponent for the other three candidates.

That makes sense because each could see a runoff against Doeden as a matchup offering a clear choice between a seasoned political veteran with a legislative track record and a newcomer with big ideas about how to shake things up in Pierre.

A similar scenario played out in 1994 in a Republican primary featuring former Gov. Bill Janklow and Lt. Gov. Walter Dale Miller. Janklow ran on a platform of drastically cutting state government while Miller promised a continuation of the policies of the late Gov. George Mickelson.

In the primary, Republican voters in Hughes and Stanley counties, with their concentration of state employees, went for Miller over Janklow better than two to one. After winning the governor's office for a record third time, Janklow was fond of reminding his constituents in Pierre and Fort Pierre about his poor local showing in the primary.

A similar scenario played out in the recently completed primary in Hughes and Stanley counties with Doeden finishing third in both counties behind Rhoden and Johnson.

Money for politics, but not for policy

Republican gubernatorial candidates spent more than \$10 million through mid-May. There's sure to have been more spent up to the election in June and another bundle likely to be dropped prior to the runoff election July 28.

The irony here is that the candidates spent so much money to be elected governor of a state that is so poor. This year, Gov. Larry Rhoden, while knowing that he wanted to keep his job, had to present a budget that didn't include funding increases for healthcare, education or state employee salaries. That leads to the competing images of Rhoden pleading poverty during his budget address while dumping more than \$1 million into his election campaign.

Doeden was a far bigger spender during the campaign, racking up bills in the neighborhood of \$4 million. No matter who wins the runoff election, the next governor of South Dakota will at some point, probably in his December budget address, have to tell the Legislature that there is not enough money for all the state's priorities.

Imagine what a state like South Dakota could do with an extra \$10 million. Imagine that kind of money pumped into healthcare, schools or state employee salaries. Yet for all the millions that have been pumped into election advertising, all we'll be left with is a governor who will be forced to tell us there just isn't enough money to go around.

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

Trump faces looming deadline to sign popular bipartisan housing package

BY JACOB FISCHLER

President Donald Trump is running out of time to decide what to do with a bipartisan bill meant to lower housing costs by making it easier to build.

If Trump does not sign the measure, it would become law at 12:01 a.m. Saturday under a provision of the Constitution that gives the president 10 days, excluding Sundays, to sign or veto a bill. Trump has said he would not sign the bill to pressure the U.S. Senate to pass an unrelated election security measure he considers a higher priority.

The constitutional provision does not apply if Congress is adjourned, resulting in what is called a pocket veto, but the current July Fourth recess does not count as an adjournment, experts agree.

"This would be considered a recess so the bill will become law without signature 10 days after presentment," Jason Roberts, a political scientist at the University of North Carolina, wrote in an email to States Newsroom.

The White House has not publicly communicated its legal position and spokespeople did not return a message seeking comment Wednesday.

Trump has vetoed only two other bills passed by the GOP-controlled Congress during his second term. Both were noncontroversial and targeted to local projects in Florida and Colorado.

'A huge problem'

Groups representing a vast array of housing interests, from low-income renters to bankers, have endorsed the wide-ranging legislation that packages together numerous bills affecting every corner of the industry.

"Housing affordability is a huge problem for almost everybody," Alys Cohen, the director of federal housing advocacy at the National Consumer Law Center, said in an interview. "And so there's broad consensus that Congress needs to do something about that, period. So, as a result, they have a lot of different stakeholders coming together to really get something done."

The bill, called the 21st Century Road to Housing Act, generally seeks to lower housing costs by expanding the supply, while also adjusting loan programs backed by the federal government.

Estimates of the number of housing units needed to meet demand vary, but it is "probably" near 4 million units, Kristen Klurfield, an associate director for housing policy at the Washington, D.C.-based Bipartisan Policy Center, said.

The package includes an assortment of smaller bills to update regulations on manufactured homes, loosen requirements for home construction and adjust a rural loan program to help lower income people qualify for and keep mortgages. The wide scope of the bill gives every segment of the policy space a reason to support it.

"In general it modernizes federal programs," Klurfield said. "It incentivizes pro-housing policies locally, streamlines regulations that have been hindering housing production and really expands options for affordable housing financing. And so we think that the bill tackles the problem from these several angles, and that's really what it's going to take to chart a path forward."

Trump quiet

As the package was gaining momentum in Congress last month, White House staff said Trump supported it. After it passed both chambers of Congress with broad bipartisan votes, he was set to sign it at a high-profile ceremony at the Capitol.

But the president changed course and canceled the signing ceremony at the last minute in a protest of Congress' failure to pass an election security measure, the SAVE America Act, he considers a top priority.

Since the Senate passed the housing measure, 85-5, and the House cleared it, 358-32, in June, Trump

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has disparaged the bill as “a big yawn” and “unimportant” compared to the election bill.

That bill would introduce a series of restrictions on voting, especially vote-by-mail, and would require voters to provide photo ID to cast ballots. Critics say it raises new barriers to voting while attempting to limit noncitizen voting, which is exceedingly rare. The GOP-controlled House has passed a version of the SAVE America Act, but it does not have the 60 votes needed to advance in the Senate.

Trump has not commented on the bill in several days and spent Wednesday attending a NATO conference in Turkey.

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.

Obamacare premiums likely to surge again next year

BY NADA HASSANEIN

Health insurance premiums are likely to grow more expensive next year for those who buy Marketplace plans, after increases this year.

Affordable Care Act Marketplace insurers are proposing a median premium increase of 14% for 2027, which would be a double-digit hike for the second year in a row, according to a new analysis of preliminary rate filings.

Insurers must submit their requested premium changes to state regulators by July 15, per Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services deadlines. Rates should be finalized later this summer.

Released Wednesday by the Peterson Center on Healthcare and healthcare research group KFF, the analysis looked at proposed rate changes among 77 Marketplace insurers across 16 states and Washington, D.C., that have made proposed rates publicly available. Those are Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont and Washington state.

The majority of insurers across those states are proposing a median ACA Marketplace premium increase between 10% and 20%, while 20 insurers are requesting premium increases of more than 20%. None included in the analysis proposed a decrease in premiums.

Along with the expiration of enhanced premium subsidies, insurers are also citing rising healthcare costs and changes in federal regulations as reasons behind the increases.

At the end of last year, enhanced premium tax credits expired, leading to more out-of-pocket costs for some people enrolled in Marketplace plans. Premiums increased especially for those with incomes at 400% or more of the federal poverty level — or roughly \$63,000 for a single person — who completely lost subsidies. That caused many healthier enrollees to leave the Marketplace, leaving behind enrollees who are more expensive to cover, according to KFF.

While the proposed increases are lower than last year’s median nationwide proposed rate change of 18% — the finalized change was 20% — it’s the second-highest requested change since 2018, according to the report.

ACA Marketplace enrollments have seen a steep drop, with 2.6 million fewer Americans on the rolls in February compared with the same time last year, The Associated Press reported.

Stateline reporter Nada Hassanein can be reached at nhassanein@stateline.org.

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

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

To promote more housing, cities and states target parking minimums

BY ROBBIE SEQUEIRA

In 1923, the city of Columbus, Ohio, enacted the first known off-street parking requirement for new apartment buildings.

The city's rules got stricter over time. In 1954, a Columbus apartment building with 100 one-bedroom units had to have at least 100 parking spaces; by 2022, the minimum was 150. For a 2,500-square-foot restaurant, the mandate grew from nine parking spaces to 34.

But in recent years, housing shortages have prompted Columbus and other cities and states to scale back or even eliminate minimum parking requirements. The need to provide parking makes projects more expensive, raising costs for developers that they often pass on to residents. In some cases, the rules prevent projects from ever being built.

Since 2019, at least 14 states have enacted 34 laws reducing or eliminating parking minimums, according to the Parking Reform Network, a coalition of groups that opposes minimums. Since 2017, 116 cities, including Baltimore, Buffalo, Denver, Hartford, Minneapolis and San Francisco, have removed all parking minimums citywide.

Catie Gould, a senior researcher at the Sightline Institute, an environmental think tank that is part of the Parking Reform Network, said the idea of repealing parking mandates used to be confined to urban planners' policy debates. Now it's become mainstream, she said, as the need for more affordable housing has risen to the top of the national agenda.

"I don't think parking reform would be happening if we weren't having a housing crisis," Gould said, adding that many parking minimums aren't based on any rational formula or proof of demand.

"We know people still drive, and if you drive, you need parking, and nobody's arguing about that," she said. "The question is who decides how much parking you should need."

In some cities, residents have pushed back against the changes, arguing that eliminating on-site parking lots merely creates more congestion and crowding on public streets. Opponents also have questioned whether developers will simply pocket the savings, rather than make units more affordable. And they note that older people and those with disabilities will have the hardest time coping with an absence of off-street parking.

But the growing movement has unified some groups, such as developers and environmentalists, who are typically at odds.

"From the developer's side, parking is the big thing that has to be solved early on to determine feasibility of a project," said Matthew Fitzsimmons, an architect and project manager at the architectural firm HCM Design who has been involved in building more than 11,000 residential units, including a project in Baltimore.

Eliminating or reducing parking minimums, Fitzsimmons said, allows developers to use land and money that would have been devoted to "very expensive structured parking" for better amenities or design features for a project.

For Ryan Carter, policy director for Catawba Riverkeeper, which is dedicated to preserving and protecting the Catawba-Watauga River Basin in North and South Carolina, fewer parking lots means less water pollution: Carter noted that even one inch of rain on a single acre of impervious parking surface can generate 27,000 gallons of storm runoff into the river basin.

California goes first

In the fall of 2022, California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the first statewide ban on parking minimums. The law, which went into effect at the beginning of 2023, prohibits city and county officials from imposing parking requirements for housing developments or businesses within a half mile of a transit station.

California, which consistently ranks among the worst states for affordable housing, has followed up with additional measures, including a law reducing parking requirements in areas zoned for residential

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development and a law restricting local governments from increasing minimum parking requirements for renovations and additions to single-family homes.

The state also has instituted a cap on parking requirements for multifamily housing developments and approved a measure allowing developers to use shared parking spaces to meet parking minimum requirements.

Oregon has also taken sweeping action, enacting a law in 2023 that prohibits or restricts parking minimums in 48 cities and three counties located in the state's eight metropolitan regions with populations of at least 50,000.

In the past three years, states including Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Maine, New Hampshire and Washington also have enacted laws that restrict or prohibit parking minimums, with many of them focusing on developments near mass transit hubs.

In April, Virginia Democratic Gov. Abigail Spanberger signed legislation that prohibits localities from imposing parking minimums within a half mile of mass transit stations. And just this week, North Carolina Democratic Gov. Josh Stein signed a measure that eliminates minimum parking mandates in most of the counties in his state.

"This bill gives North Carolina another tool in the toolbox to build more homes and make housing more affordable," Stein said in a news release. "This change will lower rents for people."

Local authority

Some local leaders have bristled at state efforts to limit local zoning authority.

Betsy Gara, executive director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns, testified against the legislation in her state, arguing that "municipalities are in the best position to determine whether eliminating or modifying minimum parking requirements will pose any public safety or other issues in their community."

In written testimony, Gara noted that on areas without sufficient off-street parking, vehicles may be parked haphazardly on the street, potentially blocking emergency vehicles and snow plows and limiting access to fire hydrants and loading docks.

But Virginia Democratic Del. Irene Shin, the sponsor of the legislation in her state, said the shortage of affordable housing has become so acute that state lawmakers had to act.

Shin said that in her hometown of Herndon in Fairfax County, parking minimums requiring multifamily buildings to provide 1.5 parking spaces for each one-bedroom unit and two for larger units have inhibited much-needed residential development.

Forty-five percent of renter households in Fairfax County spend more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities, meaning they are "cost-burdened" under federal housing standards.

"We've come to a point where the state is much more interested in stepping in to increase housing because the localities on their own just haven't been doing enough," Shin said.

Gould of the Sightline Institute acknowledged that the elimination of parking minimums will place additional burdens on cities, which will have to manage curbside parking for residents and businesses with strategies such as residential parking permits, parking meters and loading zones.

She pointed to her own Portland, Oregon, neighborhood, where a 12-story subsidized affordable housing building is under construction near the city's light rail. She supports the project, but worries that the city has not done enough to proactively manage street parking before the new residents arrive.

"Many cities and towns aren't really prepared for that scenario," she said.

This story was updated to correct the spelling of Betsy Gara's name. Stateline reporter Robbie Sequeira can be reached rsequeira@stateline.org.

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

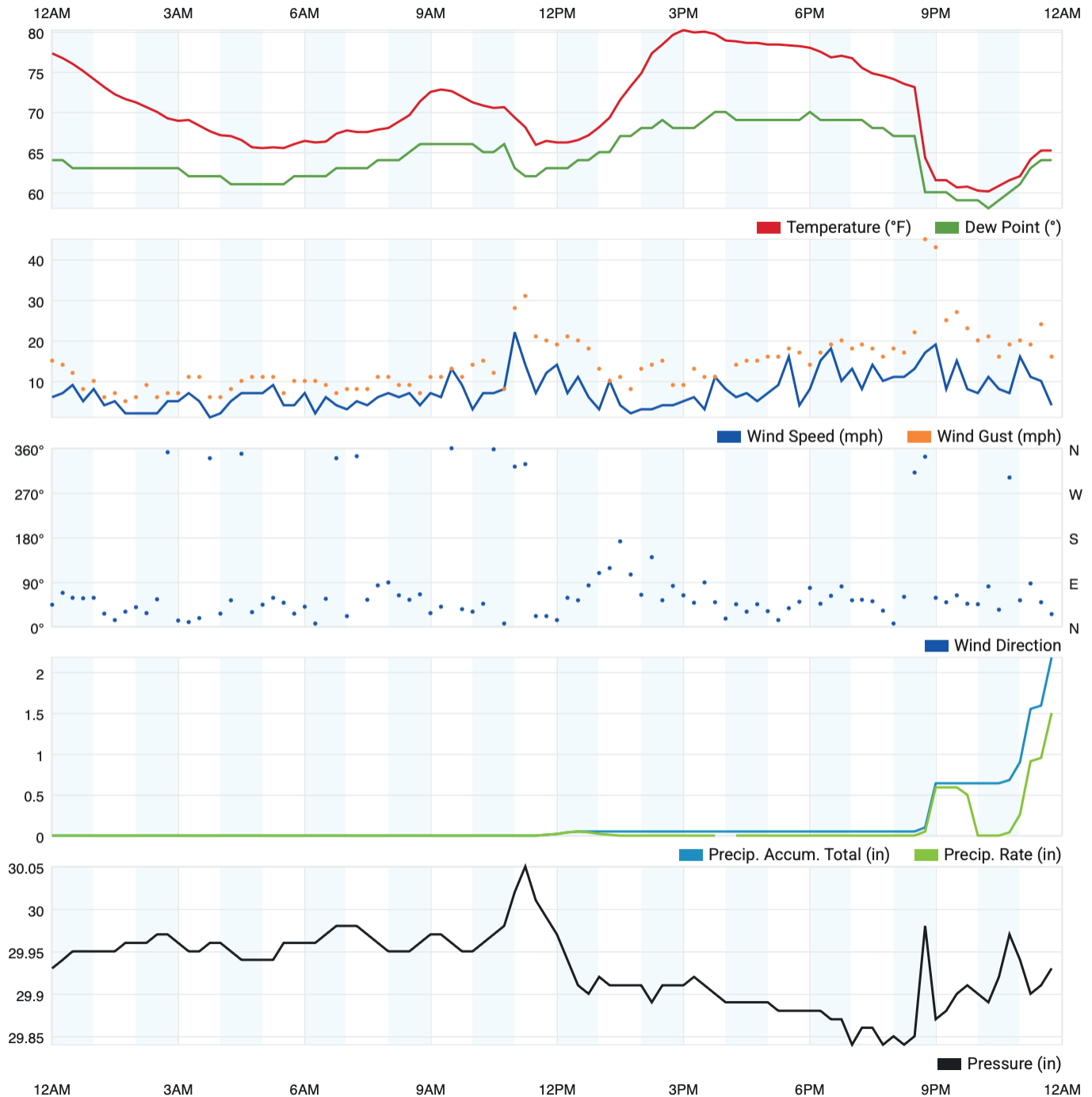
Robbie Sequeira is a staff writer covering housing and social services for Stateline.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

July 7, 2026



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Wednesday



High: 78 °F

Decreasing
Clouds

Wednesday
Night



Low: 57 °F

Partly Cloudy

Thursday



High: 84 °F

Sunny

Thursday
Night



Low: 62 °F

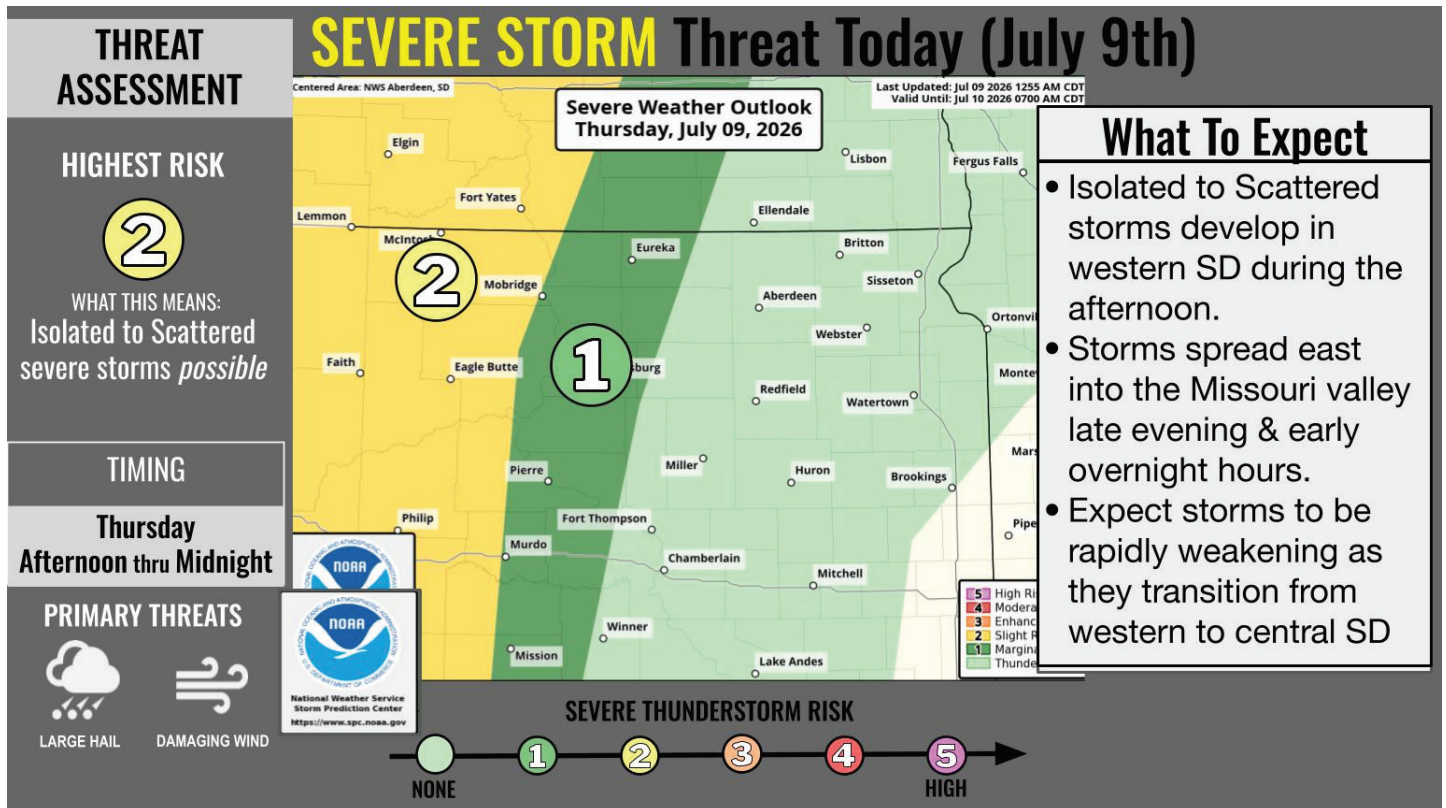
Mostly Clear

Friday



High: 91 °F

Hot



There is a severe weather risk for large hail and strong winds mainly throughout the Missouri River valley region and West River today. As storms get farther east the threat diminishes rapidly.

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Heat For The Weekend Into Next Week

July 9, 2026
2:05 AM CDT

- **Temperatures: Highs** near normal through Friday, increasing Saturday and peaking Sunday-Tuesday at 10 to 20 degrees above normal, then moderating slightly for the middle of next week. **Lows** slightly above normal... 60s to low 70s.
- **Humidity (Dewpoints):** Nothing too extreme, with dew points in the 60s for the most part. May touch 70 degrees over northeast SD/western MN for the weekend and early next week.
- **Heat Index Values:** Topping out Sunday through Tuesday 95-105F.

Heat Risk Categories on the increase. Multiple days of Major to Extreme HeatRisk [Sunday through Wednesday](#) could lead to serious health problems and heat-related illnesses!

Maximum HeatRisk Forecast

	7/9	7/10	7/11	7/12	7/13	7/14	7/15
	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Aberdeen	1	2	3	3	4	4	3
Miller	1	1	2	3	3	3	2
Mobridge	1	2	3	3	4	4	3
Murdo	1	1	2	2	3	3	3
Ortonville	1	1	2	3	3	3	2
Pierre	1	1	2	3	4	4	3
Sisseton	1	1	2	3	3	3	2
Watertown	1	2	2	3	4	4	3

Little to no risk from expected heat.

Minor - Primarily affects those who are extremely sensitive to heat and without cooling/hydration.

Moderate - Affects those who are sensitive to heat, especially those without cooling/hydration, and some health systems and industries.

Major - Affects anyone without cooling/hydration as well as health systems and industries.

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.



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A heat dome is headed into the region for the weekend and next week, leading to above normal temperatures and a lot of sunshine. The time is now to take precautions for those who are sensitive to extreme heat and humidity.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 77 °F at 6:29 PM

Low Temp: 62 °F at 8:26 AM

Wind: 20 mph at 12:24 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 115 in 1936

Record Low: 42 in 1981

Average High: 85

Average Low: 60

Average Precip in July.: 1.05

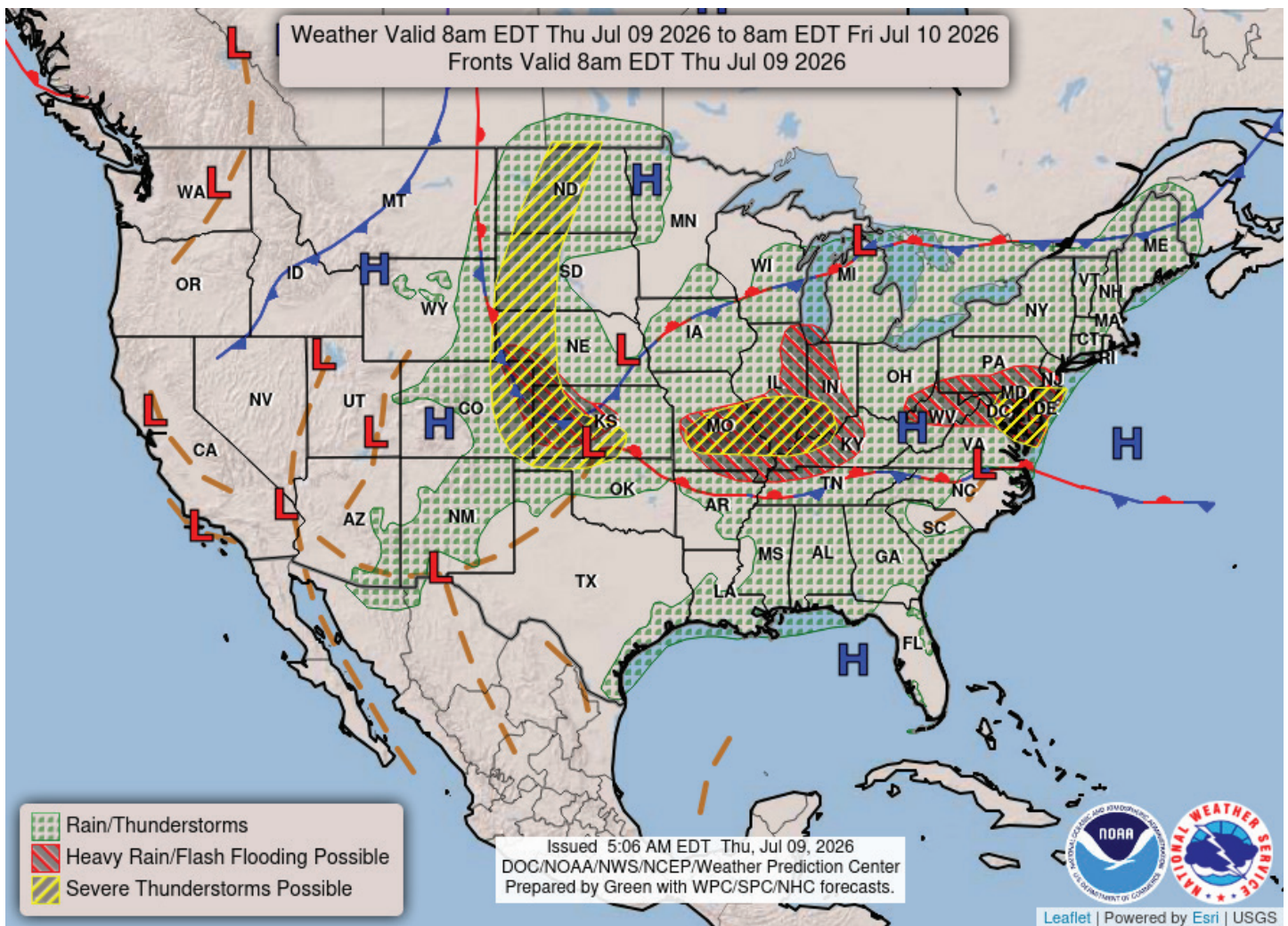
Precip to date in July.: 4.39

Average Precip to date: 12.06

Precip Year to Date: 13.86

Sunset Tonight: 9:21 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:53 am



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Today in Weather History

July 9, 1938: A deadly, estimated F4 tornado moved ESE across the eastern edge of Andover to the north of Bristol. Seventeen buildings were destroyed at Andover, and at least one home was completely swept away. Seven homes and a church also suffered damage. One person was killed at the western edge of Andover, and a couple died in a house at the southern side of town. About two hours later, another estimated F4 tornado moved ENE from 2 miles northeast of White, South Dakota in Brookings County to Hendricks, Minnesota. Only one person was injured from this storm.

July 9, 1972: Wind gusts up to 89 mph caused considerable damage in the Pierre and Oahe Dam area. A drive-in movie screen was destroyed. A camper trailer was turned over pinning seven members of a family inside. Five of them were hospitalized. Numerous trees were uprooted at the Oahe Dam campground. A tourist information building was caved in. Hail broke out car windows on ten vehicles.

July 9, 2009: Severe storms developed over Fall River County and moved eastward across southwestern and south central South Dakota. The thunderstorms produced large hail and strong wind gusts. Two tornadoes were observed in Todd County, and two tornadoes touched down in southern Tripp County. A small EF-1 tornado tracked across Dog Ear Township from 311th Avenue to near the intersection of 289th Street and 312th Avenue, on a little over a one-mile track. The storm blew down large cottonwood trees.

July 9, 2013: A pair of severe storms moved across northeastern South Dakota during the evening hours of the 9th. These storms caused extensive damage to crops, mainly west of Frederick in Brown County where beans and corn fields were destroyed. As the storms moved from Barnard, through Columbia, and into the Groton area, the hail increased to baseball size. There was also some structural damage to siding along with broken windows.

1860 — A hot blast of air in the middle of a sweltering summer pushed the mercury up to 115 degrees at Fort Scott and Lawrence, KS. (David Ludlum)

1882 — Ice formed on the streets of Cheyenne, WY, during a rare summer freeze. (David Ludlum)

1936 — The temperature hit an all-time record high of 106 degrees at the Central Park Observatory in New York City, a record which lasted until LaGuardia Airport hit 107 degrees on July 3rd in 1966. (The Weather Channel)

1968 — Columbus, MS received 15.68 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a record for the state. (The Weather Channel)

1979: Hurricane Bob was born in the Gulf of America, becoming the first Atlantic Hurricane to be given a male name.

1987 — Thunderstorms produced severe weather in Michigan. A tornado near Munising, MI, destroyed part of a commercial dog kennel, and one of the missing dogs was later found unharmed in a tree top half a mile away. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Twenty-three cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Alpena, MI, and Buffalo, NY, suffered through their sixth straight day of record heat. The percentage of total area in the country in the grips of severe to extreme drought reached 43 percent, the fourth highest total of record. The record of 61 percent occurred during the summer of 1934. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Morning thunderstorms produced very heavy rain in southern Lower Michigan and northern Indiana. Up to 5.6 inches of rain was reported in Berrien County, MI. Sioux Falls SD reported a record high of 108 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1997: Torrential rains in the Carpathian Mountains caused severe flooding in the Czech Republic, Poland, and German. In all, 104 people died as a result of the deluge. In the aftermath, authorities from each country blamed the others for the extent of the disaster.

2007: The Argentine capital experiences its first major snowfall since June 22, 1918, as wet snow spreads a thin white mantle over the area. The storm hits on Argentina's Independence Day holiday thus adding to a festive air. Thousands of Argentines cheer the event, throwing snowballs in the streets. Local radio stations dust off an old tango song inspired by the 1918 snowfall: What a night!



God's Presence in Times of Trouble

God meets us in heartache and grief, transforming pain into purpose.

Psalms 32:1-7: 1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!

2 How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!

3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, ``I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.

7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.

Some of the most precious verses in the Bible were penned when their writers were experiencing strife, grief, turmoil, or heartache. From an earthly perspective, we can't always distinguish between what's trouble and what's a blessing—at times trouble results in some of God's most wonderful blessings in our life.

David was able to write Psalm 32, not because he'd calmly sat on a hilltop somewhere, watching sheep and playing his harp. Rather, he could express those profound truths after undergoing both great heartache and God's forgiveness. The joy David found in the Lord was sweeter because he had tasted bitterness.

The heavenly Father doesn't always rescue us swiftly from trouble. Sometimes He allows us to walk through difficulty longer than we'd prefer, and we wonder, Lord, don't You see what I'm going through? He does see. He knows when we're at our wits' end, when we're hurt, and when we're broken. So why does He allow these hard seasons to continue?

Often it's because He's working in ways we can't yet see. Don't forget that the Lord is always present in our times of trouble (Psalms 46:1-3, Psalm 46:7). The question we should ask ourselves is, Am I willing to trust Him and learn what He wants to teach me through this situation?

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.08.26

16 18 43 48 50 1

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

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 5 Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.07.26

2 31 35 36 63 12

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$604,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 50 Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.08.26

17 26 31 32 37 1

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$32,860,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 5 Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.08.26

7 11 18 31 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$177,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 20 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.08.26

6 27 33 44 69 23

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 49 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.08.26

12 29 37 43 55 18

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$457,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 49 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Adam Vinatieri will celebrate on the field in Indianapolis again as Colts' Ring of Honor member

By MICHAEL MAROT AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Adam Vinatieri, the NFL's career scoring leader who was also widely considered the best clutch kicker in league history, will have one more celebration on the Indianapolis Colts' home turf this season when he's inducted into the team's Ring of Honor.

Team officials announced Wednesday that Vinatieri would be honored during the Colts' game against the Tennessee Titans on Oct. 18, a little more than two months after his induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.

Vinatieri will become the Colts' 21st Ring of Honor honoree five years after he officially retired.

He'll join a group that includes former teammates and fellow Hall of Famers Peyton Manning, Marvin Harrison and Dwight Freeney, as well as Robert Mathis, Jeff Saturday and Reggie Wayne. Tony Dungy, the Hall of Fame coach for whom Vinatieri played; Hall of Fame executive Bill Polian, who signed Vinatieri as a free agent before the 2006 season; and late team owner Jim Irsay are also in the Colts' ring.

The four-time Super Bowl champion shocked many when he left New England as the franchise's career scoring leader after 10 seasons and wound up with longtime rival Indianapolis. But Vinatieri was far from finished and went on to break the Colts' career scoring mark, too.

Though Vinatieri's stats tell one tale: He finished his career with 2,673 points and as the league's all-time leader in field goals made (599), field goal attempts (715), consecutive field goals made (44) and 100-plus point seasons (21). But it was his penchant for making kicks in the toughest conditions and most crucial moments that stuck with him.

His 45-yard field goal into swirling winds amid snowy conditions for New England in a January 2002 AFC divisional round game tied it and sent the Patriots into overtime against the then-Oakland Raiders. He then kicked a 23-yarder to start New England's trek to coach Bill Belichick's first Super Bowl.

Two weeks later, Vinatieri did it again by making a 43-yarder in the waning seconds to give the Patriots their first Super Bowl title with a 20-17 victory over the then-St. Louis Rams in much more ideal conditions.

Vinatieri 41-yarder with 4 seconds left broke a 29-29 tie with the Carolina Panthers for New England's second Super Bowl title two years later.

Vinatieri continued to excel in Indy, where he first played inside a dome stadium and later a retractable roof stadium.

In January 2007, the South Dakota State alum made five field goals in a divisional round game that featured no touchdowns at Baltimore. The 15-6 victory set up an AFC title game rematch between the Colts and Patriots, this time in Indy with Vinatieri on the opposite sideline from Tom Brady and his ex-teammates. Vinatieri's playoff run continued as the Colts reached their first Super Bowl since the franchise moved to Indianapolis.

Vinatieri made three more field goals and captured yet another ring while finishing that postseason with 49 points and 14 field goals, both one-season playoff records, while becoming the first player to make three or more field goals in four consecutive postseason games.

Vinatieri ranks second all-time in NFL victories (242), regular-season wins (221) and postseason wins (21) and is one of five players who appeared in a game at age 46. He's the only player in league history to make 250 or more field goals and scored 1,000 points for two teams.

The three-time All-Pro also was a three-time Pro Bowl selection and a member of the NFL's 100th Anniversary All-Time Team.

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Ebola death toll in Congo reaches 600, as new cases suspected in previously unaffected province

By JEAN-YVES KAMALE Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — New suspected cases of Ebola have been reported in parts of Congo that were previously unaffected, the government said, as the death toll in the country's latest Ebola outbreak reached 600.

The Congolese government's latest report, published late Wednesday, said two new cases were suspected in Kisangani in the Tshopo province, where cases had not been previously recorded. The total number of confirmed cases across the country has now reached 1,759.

According to the report, one of the two suspected cases was linked to the Nia-Nia health zone in Ituri province, where the first cases were reported, while the other case "has no apparent geographical connection to known outbreaks." Authorities were investigating.

The Congolese authorities declared a fresh Ebola outbreak on May 15, after the disease had been transmitted for weeks without official detection, according to the World Health Organization. The latest outbreak is caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus, which has no approved vaccine or treatment.

Last week, clinical trials for treatment began after researchers launched a highly anticipated study in the hope of fighting the virus.

Efforts to contain the virus have also been hampered by a funding gap, attacks on health centers, and an ongoing conflict in eastern Congo, the epicenter of the outbreak.

Bonnie Tyler, who topped the charts with epic 'Total Eclipse of the Heart,' has died at 75

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

LONDON (AP) — Bonnie Tyler, the gravelly voiced, Grammy-nominated Welsh pop star best known for singing the chart-topping power ballad "Total Eclipse of the Heart" in 1983 and seeing new generations succumb to its bombastic charms during solar and lunar eclipses, has died. She was 75.

Tyler died "unexpectedly" in a hospital in Portugal where she was being treated for an illness, her family said Thursday in a statement on her website. She was hospitalized in May in Faro, where she had a home, for emergency intestinal surgery and was later placed in an induced coma.

"Bonnie's family and team are heartbroken to announce that Bonnie unexpectedly passed away last night in hospital in Portugal as a result of the illness that she was being treated for, her family said.

Tyler earned three Grammy nods, represented Britain at the Eurovision Song Contest 2013 — where she came in 19th — and was awarded an MBE for her services to music by Queen Elizabeth II in 2023, all largely thanks to "Total Eclipse of the Heart," which has had more than 1 billion streams, boosted by real eclipses in 2017 and 2024.

The song spent four weeks at No. 1, the video has surpassed 1 billion views and when Stereogum reevaluated it in 2020, the music outlet declared it an "extinction-level event rendered in musical form."

"It's pop music as heart-pounding, chest-thumping, blood-gargling, heavens-falling passion explosion. It's sheer spectacle. It's fireworks and lasers and lightning and thunder. It soars and swoops and barrel-rolls," the site said.

The song has never really gone away, covered by the English singer Nicki French in 1995 and the band Westlife in 2006. Cate Blanchett sang it while hitting Billy Bob Thornton with her car in 2001's "Bandits," it appeared at a wedding scene in 2003's "Old School" and One Direction sang it in 2010 on a U.K. version of "The X Factor."

Early life

Tyler was born — as Gaynor Hopkins — a coal miner's daughter in public housing with an outside toilet in Skewen, Wales, about seven miles outside Swansea. She grew up with three sisters and two brothers.

She adored the Beatles and her first album was "A Hard Day's Night." The first song she bought was

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"Hippy Hippy Shake" by the Swinging Blue Jeans at 13 and watched "Top of the Pops" religiously, according to her memoir, "Straight From the Heart."

She would record "Top of the Pops" on a reel-to-reel two-track recorder and write down the lyrics of songs she loved. Her favorites were songs by Janis Joplin, Nina Simone, Tina Turner, Wilson Pickett and Otis Redding.

"I used to sing them into my hairbrush for hours and hours, and that's how it all started for me. I fell in love with singing just from doing that. Looking back, even then my voice had a husky tone to it, but I didn't think much of it. I thought everyone's voices were different from each other's," she wrote.

In 1976 she had to have surgery to remove nodules on her throat, leaving her with that trademark vocal sound. Changing her name to Sherene Davis, she was fronting a soul band when she was discovered by talent scout Roger Bell, who brought her to London for demo sessions. Then she waited for a label until RCA said it was interested.

Under her new RCA-sanctioned name Bonnie Tyler, her debut album "The World Starts Tonight" in 1977 contained her first chart hit, "Lost in France," and she was nominated for a breakthrough artists award at the Brits Awards. She then had a No. 3 hit in 1978 with "It's a Heartache," but soon drifted. She then signed with Sony and saw Meat Loaf perform "Bat Out of Hell" on the BBC. Impressed, she requested to work with Meat Loaf songwriter and producer Jim Steinman.

'Total Eclipse of the Heart'

Steinman introduced her to his song "Total Eclipse of the Heart," which would become the debut single for her fifth studio album, "Faster Than the Speed of Night." He borrowed one of the song's lyrics — "Turn around, bright eyes" — from his 1969 musical "The Dream Engine" written as a student at Massachusetts' Amherst College. He told her the song was from a prospective musical version of "Nosferatu."

"Jim liked to put down a basic rhythm track, do nine takes of the song, choose the best one and then put the kitchen sink on there, like Phil Spector used to," Tyler told The Guardian in 2023. "He gave me a cassette to listen to in my hotel and we both preferred take two."

Featuring E Street Band members Roy Bittan on piano and Max Weinberg on drums, "Total Eclipse" is a rumination on lost love: "Once upon a time there was light in my life/But now there's only love in the dark," she sings.

The video, a staple of early-days MTV, was shot in a frightening gothic former asylum in Surrey, where the guard dogs apparently wouldn't set foot in the rooms downstairs where they used to give people electric shock treatment. The visuals included slow-motion tossed doves, candles, dancing ninjas, dancing greasers, Tyler in frighteningly big shoulder pads, fencers, gymnasts, wind machines and shirtless boys wearing swim goggles being doused with water.

"Faster Than the Speed of Night" earned a Grammy nomination for best rock vocal performance — losing to Pat Benatar's "Love Is a Battlefield" — and Tyler got another nod for "Total Eclipse of the Heart" in the best pop vocal performance category, losing to Irene Cara's "Flashdance — What a Feeling."

After the 'Eclipse'

Tyler never reached such dizzying heights again but stayed current with such movie soundtrack singles as "Holding Out For a Hero" — from 1984's "Footloose" — and "Here She Comes" from "Metropolis" also in 1984.

Her 2019 disc "Between the Earth and the Stars" featured duets with Rod Stewart, Cliff Richard and Status Quo's Francis Rossi, and she ended that year performing a Vatican Christmas concert before Pope Francis.

In 2013, she switched gears to make a country-flavored record in Nashville, "Rocks and Honey," which included the Vince Gill duet "What You Need From Me" and a little ballad called "Believe in Me," written by American songwriter Desmond Child and British songwriters Lauren Christy and Christopher Braide. "Believe in Me" was picked to represent the United Kingdom at that year's Eurovision Song Contest in Sweden.

"It was an absolutely wonderful atmosphere there," she told the San Francisco Examiner in 2023. "I was being interviewed every 15, 20 minutes, and when I walked out onstage behind the British flag, I thought the roof was going to come off! It was awesome, just awesome!"

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In 2017, she joined Joe Jonas' band DNCE for a performance on the cruise ship Oasis of the Seas as part of a "Total Eclipse Cruise." When the moon passed in front of the sun, they played "Total Eclipse of the Heart."

Tyler was married to property developer and former Olympic judo competitor Robert Sullivan.

US and Iran exchange intensifying fire across the Gulf, threatening the interim deal to end war

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United States launched new airstrikes against Iran early Thursday, and Tehran responded by targeting Gulf countries in an exchange of fire that threatened an interim deal intended to help end the war in the Middle East.

Back-and-forth attacks, including a day earlier, have repeatedly threatened the ceasefire, but Thursday's appeared bigger all around, with sirens sounding at least three times in Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters, and missiles targeting Kuwait and Qatar.

The strikes came hours after U.S. President Donald Trump said recent Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz signaled the end of a fragile ceasefire and threatened to escalate the conflict if they didn't stop. That raised concerns that the region could tip back into a war that would engulf several countries and could halt energy shipments through the strait that are crucial for the global economy.

In Iran, the two days of American airstrikes have killed at least 14 people and wounded another 78, Iran's Health Ministry said Thursday — most of those reportedly members of the armed forces.

In Kuwait, the military said falling debris wounded one person as it shot down three ballistic missiles, a cruise missile and 10 drones. Bahrain said it shot down incoming fire, without elaborating. There was no immediate word of damage in Qatar.

US strikes hit more targets

The U.S. military's Central Command said it hit some 90 targets across Iran, releasing black-and-white footage of what appeared to be strikes on an airport runway and missile launchers.

The U.S. said the strikes were intended to "further degrade" Iran's ability "to threaten freedom of navigation" in the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed before the war began with U.S. and Israeli attacks on Feb. 28.

Attacks on ships — and the threat of them — virtually halted traffic in the waterway during the conflict, causing the price of oil to skyrocket and raising prices on many basic goods, including food, far beyond the region.

Iranian state media reported explosions in several locations, including Bushehr, home to Iran's nuclear power plant complex, and southern port cities.

In Iran's southwestern Khuzestan province, at least three people were killed Thursday, state media reported. In Iranshahr, authorities said a strike killed a firefighter at an airport. Those fatalities followed the deaths of at least nine members of Iran's armed forces in Wednesday's strikes, according to state media. It wasn't clear when the other death happened and who was killed.

For the first time since April, U.S. strikes also appeared to target Iranian bridges. State media reported a strike on a railway bridge in Iran's northeastern Golestan province, and the Revolutionary Guard said two bridges were attacked on the route to Mashhad, where officials plan to bury the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Thursday.

Trump warns that 'it will get much worse' if attacks on shipping happen again

After leaving a NATO summit in Turkey, Trump posted several videos on his social media site of what he said were explosions in Iran and issued another warning to the Islamic Republic.

"This is in retribution for yesterday's bombing of ships by Iran. If it happens again, it will get much worse!" Trump wrote.

Trump said earlier in the day that the latest back-and-forth fighting would not result in "long-term" military action.

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"Anything that happens is going to happen very fast," Trump said.

Trump also renewed his past threats to hit Iran's civilian infrastructure, including electric and desalination plants, and to seize Kharg Island, through which some 90% of Iranian oil exports pass.

The exchange of fire began after Iran attacked three tankers in the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday.

The new attacks, despite the ceasefire, could reflect a divide among Iran's leadership. Hard-liners want to ensure lasting control over the waterway, which is a globally important conduit for fuel shipments and has become a critical lever in confronting the West. Pragmatists want a permanent peace deal to lift international sanctions and provide desperately needed economic relief.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, a key negotiator in talks seeking a permanent end to the war, was defiant in a post on X on Thursday morning: "America still hasn't learned that bullying and breaking promises are no longer cost-free. Let me put it plainly: If you strike, you'll get hit."

Strikes raise fears that war could resume

Trump fueled concerns that the war could restart by saying Wednesday that the interim agreement to pause the fighting was "over." He added that he would allow negotiations to continue, though he cast doubt on the outcome.

"They can talk, but I think they're wasting their time," he said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi, also a top negotiator, retorted on X that Trump's remarks "are not a sign of power but an admission of the failure" of U.S. policy toward Iran.

Negotiations to reach a final deal were due to start after the funeral for Khamenei, who was killed in the war's first moments. The funeral, which ends Thursday, was supposed to be a period of lower tensions.

The talks are meant to focus on the toughest matters, including fully reopening the strait and rolling back Tehran's disputed nuclear program.

Ukrainian drones batter Russian oil facilities and set more oil tankers ablaze

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian drones on Thursday hit more Russian oil facilities and set two oil tankers ablaze in the Sea of Azov, a day after U.S. President Donald Trump pledged to grant Ukraine a license to manufacture the Patriot air defense systems.

Ukraine's strikes on oil refineries and other infrastructure across Russia has triggered a widespread fuel crisis with gasoline shortages and fuel rationing reported in multiple regions and drivers waiting for hours to fill their tanks.

The acting governor of Russia's western Tver region, Vitaly Korolyov, said a Ukrainian drone strike triggered a fire at an oil depot in the city of Tver.

In the southern region of Stavropol, Gov. Vladimir Vladimirov said oil reservoirs has been set ablaze by Ukrainian drones in Vyazniki. He said the authorities ordered the evacuation of residents of several apartment buildings near the facility as the fire expanded.

In the Sea of Azov, Ukrainian drones set two oil tankers ablaze, according to Rostov Gov. Yuri Slusar, who said that one of the ships was still burning and the crews were evacuated. The attack was the latest in a series of strikes on oil tankers in the area in recent days, part of Ukraine efforts to cut fuel supplies to Russia-occupied Crimea.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that in addition to strikes on oil facilities in Stavropol and Tver, Ukrainian defense forces also hit a reserve fuel storage facility about 800 kilometers (500 miles) from the front line, and an oil-pumping station in Ufa nearly 1,500 kilometers (930 miles) from Ukraine's border. He said they also struck an oil-loading terminal in the Rostov region about 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the front line, but it was not clear if that was the same strike described by Slusar.

Zelenskyy described the strikes as part of Kyiv's campaign of "long-range sanctions" carried out in response to Russian attacks and Moscow's refusal to end the war. "We have long proposed that Russia end this war,

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and every day of delay should bring the feeling of war to where it all began — to Russia,” Zelenskyy said. Russia’s Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 73 Ukrainian drones from late Wednesday until early Thursday.

Ukraine’s Air Force said that Russia fired 94 long-range strike drones and two ballistic missiles at Ukraine last night. While 72 drones were jammed or intercepted, 19 drones and both missiles inflicted damages at 13 locations, it said.

During Wednesday’s meeting with Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Turkey, Trump said the U.S. will give Ukraine a license to make Patriot air defense systems to counter missile attacks from Russia in their more than four-year war, a huge coup for Kyiv which has long requested the technology.

The tone of their meeting was a markedly different from an earlier, acrimonious encounter at the White House in February 2025 when Trump berated Zelenskyy. On Wednesday, he praised the Ukrainian leader’s willingness to reach a deal to ending the war, saying he has “done an amazing job” and “been very effective.”

‘The Pitt’ leads with 25 Emmy nominations and ‘Hacks’ breaks record for comedies with 24

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — “The Pitt” led all nominees with 25 in a dominant sophomore season, while “Hacks” got a graduation party with a record-setting 24 to lead all comedies in its final season as Emmy nominations were announced Wednesday.

The totals give HBO Max the top spot for both drama and comedy, with “Hacks” breaking the record for most nominations for a comedy series held jointly by “The Studio” last year and “The Bear” in 2024. HBO Max led all outlets with 122 overall nominations and has three shows up for both best drama and best comedy series.

The nominees announced for 118 Primetime Emmy categories included the late Rob Reiner for his guest acting on “The Bear,” Bad Bunny for his Super Bowl halftime show, and newlywed Taylor Swift for “The Eras Tour - The Final Show” concert special.

‘Hacks’ gets a special send-off and ‘The Pitt’ grows up

Emmy voters love a departing show, and have loved the tension-between-comedy-generations “Hacks” since its first season, allowing it to run up the numbers as a fifth-year senior. Star Jean Smart has won best actress in a comedy for all four previous seasons, and it would be stunning if she didn’t claim a fifth.

Her sidekick throughout the series Hannah Einbinder, who last year broke through and won supporting actress in a comedy in her fourth nomination, got a fifth. Her castmate, the show’s co-creator Paul W. Downs, got three nominations, for acting, writing and producing.

The day-in-the-life emergency room series “The Pitt” was a rookie upstart last year with big wins including best drama series, best actor for Noah Wyle and best supporting actress for Katherine LaNasa.

Already a beloved veteran show, it owned this year’s acting categories. Wyle was nominated again for best actor (along with nods for his directing and producing) as was LaNasa. Taylor Dearden, Fiona Dourif and Sepideh Moafi also got nominations, with “The Pitt” taking four of the seven supporting actress spots and three supporting actor slots.

In an era when major Emmy contenders — like 2025’s top drama nominee “Severance” — take years off between seasons, “The Pitt” came right back for another round. And its claim on the acting categories was helped by the between-seasons absence of “The White Lotus,” and its elite ensembles.

A solid showing for Apple TV

Two new shows from Apple TV, the one-woman-against-the-hivemind drama “Pluribus” and the horror comedy “Widow’s Bay,” both scored big in their first seasons.

“Pluribus,” from “Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul” creator Vince Gilligan, got 18 nods. They included best actress in a drama for its only lead cast member Rhea Seahorn, considered the favorite to win.

“Widow’s Bay” got 19, including best actor for star Matthew Rhys, who was also nominated as a producer and for his acting in the limited series “The Beast in Me.”

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Two other Apple TV shows are also up for best comedy, "Margo's Got Money Troubles," whose stars Elle Fanning and Michelle Pfeiffer got acting nominations, and "Shrinking."

The "Shrinking" nominations included best supporting actor in a comedy for Harrison Ford. The force could be with Ford, with many prognosticators saying this will be the year the Hollywood legend finally wins an EGOT-tier award. His castmate Jason Segel is up for lead actor.

Big day for Bateman, Short and Brunson

Many close observers also think this will be the year the perennially nominated Martin Short wins best actor in a comedy for "Only Murders in the Building." He was nominated for three trophies, including nods for his producing of "Only Murders in the Building" and hosting "The Match Game." A Netflix documentary about him, "Marty, Life is Short," also got two nominations.

Jason Bateman got four nominations, for his performing and producing on both "Black Rabbit" and "DTF St. Louis."

ABC's "Abbott Elementary" remained a rare bright spot for the traditional broadcast networks that have been marginalized in top categories by cable and streaming shows. Creator, star and two-time Emmy winner Quinta Brunson was nominated for three more, and the show got seven.

Reiner, Swift, Bunny and Fox are among the notable nominees

The vast range of Emmy categories brings unexpected stars and beloved figures into the mix.

Rob Reiner, who was killed along with wife Michele Singer Reiner in December, has a chance at his third Emmy. He was nominated for guest actor for "The Bear," about 50 years after winning two for his acting on "All in the Family."

Five-time Emmy winner Michael J. Fox, also got a nomination in the same category for playing a patient with Parkinson's disease, which the actor was diagnosed with in the 1990s, on "Shrinking."

The Super Bowl halftime show is nearly always nominated, but this year's featuring Bad Bunny on NBC went above and beyond with nine nominations.

Swift's "Eras Tour" concert special got five nominations days after her marriage to Travis Kelce, one of them for the singing superstar herself as producer. She has one previous Emmy, for interactive media in 2015, to go with her 14 Grammys.

And after a year of targeting from the Trump administration for late-night hosts and their shows, the now-off-the-air "Late Show With Stephen Colbert" got nine nominations and "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" got six.

'Beef' and 'Euphoria' are back in the mix

Netflix's "Beef" was tops in the limited or anthology series categories with 16 nominations. "Beef" had a dominant first season in 2023, and the anthology's all-new grudge holders, Carey Mulligan, Oscar Isaac and Charles Melton, all got nominations.

"Euphoria" made its Emmys return after a long absence and got seven nominations. Zendaya, who won best actress in a drama for the first two seasons in 2020 and 2022, got a nod for the recently aired third season.

Liza Colón-Zayas and Jeff Hiller announced the nominees at the Television Academy in Los Angeles. The 78th Primetime Emmy Awards, airing on NBC, will be held Sept. 14. Mariska Hargitay, the longtime star of NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," will host and is a double nominee for directing and producing the documentary "My Mom Jayne."

New attacks raise questions about what comes next in the Iran war

By WILL WEISSERT, FARNOUSH AMIRI and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump says he believes the ceasefire with Iran is over. He says he's not sure he wants a deal anymore and says the U.S. should "finish the job." But he also insists that continued attacks do not mean a return to war or long-term action.

The confusion and uncertainty in Trump's mixed messaging and his approval of back-to-back military strikes leave major questions about what comes next in the conflict, just weeks after difficult diplomacy

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to reach even an initial deal between the longtime adversaries.

The whipsawing rhetoric could be a strategy to increase the pressure on Tehran to stop attacking ships transporting oil and natural gas in the Strait of Hormuz and bend to U.S. demands on its nuclear program — something Trump has tried before.

Whether it is a negotiation tactic or a signal of an escalation in fighting, mediators are scrambling to save the interim deal and the actions risk further inflaming tensions — which could spell problems for Republicans in November's midterm elections if gas prices stay high.

Trump warned Wednesday that a new round of U.S. attacks was coming, even as he attempted to shrug off suggestions of a return to full-scale war. Hours later, the military announced it was carrying out new attacks on Iran that were meant to "further degrade their ability to threaten freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz."

"Anything that happens is going to happen very fast," Trump said earlier. "We're not looking for a long time."

Officials rush to save the ceasefire

A regional intelligence official involved in the mediation efforts said the conflict had reached a critical stage as mutual mistrust rises. But high-level communications are ongoing around-the-clock to salvage the ceasefire, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the delicate behind-the-scenes negotiations.

The foreign ministers of Pakistan and Qatar, as well as Egypt's intelligence chief, are leading the efforts, while Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan — whose country hosted the NATO summit that wrapped Wednesday — and leaders from Saudi Arabia are also involved, the official said.

The U.S. is upset about ships being attacked in the Strait of Hormuz and accuses Iran of slow-playing discussions on curtailing its nuclear program, the official said. Nuclear talks were a major next step to try to turn the interim deal announced last month into a lasting end to the war.

Tehran, meanwhile, says Washington is the one violating the agreement regarding the strait and failing to ensure that a ceasefire in Lebanon, including an Israeli withdrawal, is being implemented, the official said.

Michael Eisenstadt, a former U.S. military analyst who now directs the Military and Security Studies Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said that "we're still in negotiating mode, no matter what the president says."

"This is part of negotiating, and declaring that the MOU is over is part of the negotiation as well," Eisenstadt said, referring to the memorandum of understanding that the ceasefire was built on.

Trump, though, has been explicit in public comments, saying he's lost interest in preserving the ceasefire: "I think it's over."

"We can play games, but I'm not sure I want to make a deal," he said during the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey, adding that the U.S. military might "just finish the job."

Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, Iran's lead negotiator, said the Trump administration had repeatedly violated the terms of the initial pact, forcing the country to respond appropriately.

"The era of bullying and extortion is over. It leads nowhere. We don't fold," Qalibaf posted on X.

Trump says 'we'll probably hit them hard again'

Pakistan, which helped broker the ceasefire, said renewed conflict is in "no one's interest" and urged both sides to uphold their commitments.

"There is no alternative to continued engagement, dialogue and diplomacy to achieve shared goal of peace in the region," its Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Trump, nonetheless, dismissed Tehran's leaders, calling them "scum" and "sick people." Just last month, Trump said Iran's leadership was "very rational" and "nice to deal with," while also calling the country's leaders "smart people."

Speaking at an event in Milwaukee on Wednesday, Vice President JD Vance, who led U.S. efforts to reach the initial deal with Tehran, said Iran was "well behaved for about a week." He added that lately the country had begun attacking the strait and said, "If they shoot at ships, we're going to knock the hell out of them."

Could this be another negotiating tactic?

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Before the U.S. and Iran reached their first, two-week ceasefire in April, Trump intensified his threats, pledging that American forces would bomb Iranian bridges, roads and power plants. He even posted online, "A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again."

He repeated dire threats before the tentative, 60-day deal to end the war was reached last month.

Trump likes to seek ways to negotiate from a position of strength, and he could be looking for more leverage with new strikes. But being unequivocal about the end of the ceasefire also could free up Iran militarily — which could again roil oil prices and financial markets.

Ali Vaez, Iran director at the International Crisis Group, argued that escalating threats may be a riskier maneuver this time around, given the domestic and international stakes for the U.S.

"It certainly looks like an effort to turn up the military heat without yet closing the diplomatic door. But coercive bargaining is a dangerous game: at some point, a pressure campaign can acquire a momentum of its own and become the war it was ostensibly meant to avoid," Vaez said.

He added, however, that Iran still has every reason to return to the table because it desperately needs the economic relief that was promised under the interim deal.

Trump also has sent mixed signals about the fallout.

He long insisted that rising gas prices for Americans didn't factor into his calculations on Iran — only to say that part of the reason he agreed to the interim deal was to avoid an "economic catastrophe." He has since touted the falling price of oil after the deal was reached.

Upcoming elections could scramble Trump's political calculus

The president again resumed his past threats to strike Iran's civilian infrastructure, possibly including electric plants and desalinization plants, and to seize the oil-production hub of Kharg Island.

"We may take over Kharg Island," he said. "There's not a thing they could do about it."

Still, the midterm elections — when Republicans hope to retain control of the House and Senate — are now less than four months away. Oil prices rising again amid greater uncertainty about the war means Americans will likely continue to see higher prices at the pump.

The president tried to downplay such concerns, saying, "Any time we hit them, it goes up a little bit — \$2." In fact, U.S. oil futures jumped far higher and may keep climbing — even as Trump acknowledged, "As oil goes, so goes everything else."

"If we hit Iran, oil goes up a little bit," he said, arguing that it was worth it to bar Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. "It's all right."

Nominations open in the contest to be UK leader, with Andy Burnham likely the only candidate

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Nominations open Thursday in a Labour Party election to replace Keir Starmer as Britain's prime minister, a contest in which there is expected to be just one candidate.

Former Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham will be collecting signatures from Labour lawmakers, and needs at least 80 to run — a target he's likely to well exceed.

Other potential contenders have all ruled themselves out. Former Defense Minister Al Carns, who had been pondering a run, confirmed late Wednesday that he will not challenge Burnham.

"I'd hoped a leadership contest would give us the opportunity for a proper debate," Carns said in a statement. "But months of internal Labour politics isn't what the country needs right now. We've got to get on with the job. Andy Burnham's earned this and he's got my full backing."

Nominations remain open until July 16. Burnham is highly likely to be announced as the new Labour leader the following day, and to become prime minister after a meeting with King Charles III on July 20.

Starmer announced last month that he would resign as soon as his center-left party chose a successor. He was elected in a landslide in July 2024, but quit after two years in office marred by missteps and judgment errors that eroded his standing with his party and the public.

Burnham spent almost a decade running Manchester in northwest England before returning to Parliament by winning a special election last month. He's promising sweeping change, vowing to reverse almost two decades of low growth since the 2008 financial crisis through an approach dubbed "Manchesterism" — harnessing private and public money to invest in areas like transport, housing and infrastructure.

But he will face many of the same political and economic challenges as Starmer, including a sluggish economy, tattered public services and a cost-of-living squeeze.

He also promised continuity in foreign policy, writing in The Times of London that the government's "commitment to NATO and the U.K.'s nuclear deterrent will remain absolute." He said Britain will remain a firm ally of the United States and a strong supporter of Ukraine.

Prosecutors plan to play redacted statements from roommate of defendant in Charlie Kirk's killing

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

PROVO, Utah (AP) — Utah prosecutors plan to play audio clips in open court Thursday of law enforcement officials interviewing the roommate of the man accused of killing conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

Defense attorneys fought against the public release of the statements from Tyler Robinson's roommate and romantic partner, Lance Twiggs. They said prosecutors would characterize the statements as a confession, undermining Robinson's right to a fair trial if the statements are broadcast by the media.

Robinson is charged with aggravated murder and has not entered a plea. He turned himself in a day after the fatal shooting of Kirk, a close ally of President Donald Trump credited with helping galvanize the youth vote for Trump in the 2024 election.

Prosecutors allege Robinson confessed in a note left for Twiggs that read: "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it." Robinson also allegedly sent a text to Twiggs saying he targeted Kirk because he "had enough of his hatred."

Twiggs spoke to authorities on Sept. 12 — two days after Kirk was assassinated while speaking to a crowd of thousands at Utah Valley University — and again on April 20. He was given immunity for the statements, meaning what Twiggs said cannot be used against him in a potential criminal case.

State District Judge Tony Graf will decide at the conclusion of this week's preliminary hearing if prosecutors have enough evidence to bring Robinson to trial.

Robinson's attorneys have not commented on his guilt or innocence but have sought to get the death penalty taken off the table, so far unsuccessfully.

Attorneys for Kirk's family and the media had urged the judge to make Twiggs' statements and other evidence public.

"To not be transparent, to not be open and let the world see what happened will create doubt and distrust in the judicial system," Kirk family lawyer Jeffrey Neiman told Graf.

Investigators say Robinson went to a rooftop near where Kirk was speaking and shot him once through the neck as the activist was taking questions from a crowd of several thousand people. Kirk was declared dead after being taken to a hospital.

Investigators found the suspected murder weapon — a bolt-action rifle with one spent round — wrapped in a towel in a wooded area near where Kirk was shot.

Robinson's lawyers earlier this week questioned the reliability of DNA testing used to link the defendant to the towel and gun.

A member of Tyler Robinson's defense team interrogated a DNA analyst from the FBI about the techniques she used to connect Robinson to the evidence. Defense lawyer Michael Burt cast doubt on the analyst's conclusions.

"She can't match Mr. Robinson to the questioned samples," Burt argued.

But forensics expert Lawrence Quarino said law enforcement agencies use "extremely reliable" tests to determine the probability that a person matches with DNA found at a crime scene.

DNA testing "is the gold standard in forensic science," said Quarino, a professor and director of the

forensic science program at Cedar Crest College in Pennsylvania.

Senate hopeful Haley Stevens knows how to win in Michigan. Democrats must decide if that's enough

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

SOUTH HAVEN, Mich. (AP) — U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens is spending the closing weeks of Michigan's Democratic Senate primary making a simple case: she's the candidate who wins.

Stevens flipped a Republican-held House seat in suburban Detroit in 2018 and hasn't lost since, including surviving a bruising primary against a fellow Democratic incumbent after redistricting in 2022. She says it's what sets her apart from her opponent in the Aug. 4 primary, progressive Abdul El-Sayed.

"It is not a hypothetical that I beat Republicans," Stevens told The Associated Press after a campaign stop in West Michigan this week. "I win tough races. I have had Republicans throw everything at me and still managed to win."

Holding Michigan's Senate seat is essential to any Democratic path back to the Senate majority this fall. That imperative only grew this week after Democrats' nominee in Maine, Graham Platner, said he planned to drop out after he was accused of sexual assault, threatening another seat the party had hoped to keep competitive. While no Republican has won a U.S. Senate seat in Michigan since 1994, former U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers came within 20,000 votes of doing so in 2024.

That calculation has led Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer and influential Michigan Democrats, including former Sen. Debbie Stabenow, to rally behind Stevens, arguing she gives Democrats their strongest chance in November against Rogers, who is running again.

But if electability is the party establishment's top priority, it's an open question whether Democratic primary voters agree.

"Democratic leadership should think more in terms of what we want to accomplish, and less about, 'We've got to make it appeal to everybody,'" said Dave Burdick, 71, of Douglas, Michigan. He's backing El-Sayed, who has surged by arguing that Democrats don't have to run to the middle to win.

El-Sayed has built his campaign around bold policy proposals, rejecting corporate PAC money and casting himself as an alternative to the status quo of the Democratic Party.

"People don't want a moderate. They want somebody who's going to come in and effect change," Burdick added.

Stevens makes the case for retail politics

On a summer afternoon in South Haven, a community along Lake Michigan, Stevens walks into a pet supply store with the ease of a seasoned campaigner. Within minutes, she's chatting with the owner about the area, greeting reporters by first name and striking up conversations with customers. She slips easily between small talk and campaign mode, asking about customers' lives before mentioning legislation she's championed and asking for their vote.

"I thought she was great fun," said owner Roxanne Leder. "She was energetic and had a positive outlook."

It's the kind of campaigning Stevens' allies say has defined her political career. They acknowledge she lacks the viral progressive moments that have fueled El-Sayed's rise, but say she's at her best in small rooms, union halls and local businesses — which they say is where elections are won.

Stevens has leaned into that contrast herself.

"Unlike my opponent, I'm not running at the first mic or camera I see," Stevens said during a debate Tuesday. "We do not need a celebrity senator. We need a workhorse."

It's also a style familiar to Michigan Democrats. From former Gov. Jennifer Granholm to current-Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, successful statewide candidates have often paired an upbeat, personable campaign style with a pragmatic message centered on economic issues.

But unlike Granholm or Whitmer, Stevens has yet to generate the kind of broad grassroots enthusiasm that defined their statewide campaigns. El-Sayed, meanwhile, has packed rallies with progressive support-

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ers and high-profile endorsers.

Stevens has leaned more heavily on tens of millions of dollars in outside spending, which could become one of Stevens' biggest liabilities in the primary. Outside groups have spent more than \$30 million to boost her candidacy, dwarfing the spending behind El-Sayed. The largest spender, United Democracy Project, the super PAC affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, has spent more than \$13 million on Stevens' behalf and reserved another \$7 million before the primary.

For Burdick, the 71-year-old El-Sayed supporter, that spending is disqualifying. He said he would not vote for Stevens in the general election because of her support from AIPAC.

Leder, by contrast, said she expects to vote for Stevens in August because she's far more familiar with the congresswoman than with El-Sayed. She said she still plans to do more research before making a final decision.

"I'm just a Democrat," said Leder. "Please, please no Mike Rogers."

Michigan has a populist streak

El-Sayed is running on Medicare for All, campaign finance reform, abolishing the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency and ending all U.S. weapons sales to Israel. He's also a Muslim who has never held elected office.

To many Democratic leaders in Washington, that makes him a risky nominee in a battleground state often viewed as moderate and centered on manufacturing.

But Michigan has repeatedly rewarded candidates who cast themselves as outsiders challenging the political establishment. In 2016, Sen. Bernie Sanders defeated Hillary Clinton in the state's Democratic presidential primary by running against party leaders. Donald Trump later built his own anti-establishment coalition, carrying Michigan in 2016 and again in 2024.

Burdick, a self-described "old white guy living in rural Michigan" who is a democratic socialist, said Trump and Sanders resonated with voters because they were upset.

"Well, you know what? They're still mad," he said. "They portray people like Abdul as unrealistic, but I think it's unrealistic to think that we can continue the way that we're heading."

A two-person race changes the calculus

On Sunday, state Sen. Mallory McMorrow suspended her campaign. It prompted establishment Democrats to jump off the sidelines and back Stevens, including Democratic group EMILY's List and Attorney General Dana Nessel.

"Haley is wicked smart, has won multiple highly competitive races, and she connects with people on a level so sincere and genuine that everyone who meets her feels truly seen and heard," Nessel said in a statement.

El-Sayed has also built support among labor groups that have played an influential role in Democratic politics, including an endorsement from the United Auto Workers.

Fems for Dems, an influential Democratic grassroots group in the state, is not endorsing in the primary. But its founder, Lori Goldman, told AP in an interview that she planned to vote for El-Sayed.

"I personally am not going to have business as usual when I go to the ballot box. I want to vote for people, candidates that are going to go there and fight on our behalf," she said.

Goldman, who founded the group 10 years ago in the politically important Oakland County, acknowledges the changing dynamics of Democratic primaries.

"Who would the natural choice be 10 years ago? Haley Stevens, right? Because we just followed the party line," she said.

"People are breaking away from the party line. People want change."

US launches new airstrikes on Iran, with Tehran firing back at 3 Gulf Arab states

By JON GAMBRELL, SEUNG MIN KIM and KONSTANTIN TOROPIN Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United States launched new airstrikes against Iran early Thursday, and Tehran responded by hitting Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar in crossfire that again threatened an interim deal intended to help end the war in the Persian Gulf.

The strikes came hours after U.S. President Donald Trump said recent Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz signaled the end of the fragile ceasefire. The U.S. struck a variety of military sites and port facilities early Wednesday following Iran's targeting of several merchant vessels off the coast of Oman, sparking Iranian fire then as well.

But Thursday's attacks appeared bigger all around, with sirens sounding at least twice in Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters. There was no immediate word of damage in the three Gulf Arab countries. Kuwait's military said it was actively intercepting incoming drones and missiles. Iran's Revolutionary Guard claimed attacks on Bahrain and Kuwait.

Military officials said in a social media post that the latest strikes were intended to "further degrade" Iran's ability "to threaten freedom of navigation" in the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed before the war began with U.S. and Israeli attacks on Feb. 28.

Iranian state media reported explosions in several locations, including Bushehr, home to Iran's nuclear power plant complex, and the southern port cities of Chabahar, Konarak, Bandar Abbas and Sirik. In Iran-shahr, authorities said a strike killed a firefighter at an airport.

For the first time since April, it also appeared the U.S. strikes targeted Iranian bridges. State media reported a strike on a railway bridge in Iran's northeastern Golestan province. The Guard said two bridges had been attacked on the way to Mashhad, where officials plan to bury the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Thursday. It wasn't clear if the Golestan attack was the same one mentioned by the Guard.

Trump warns that 'it will get much worse' if attacks on shipping happen again

After leaving a NATO summit in Turkey, Trump posted several videos on his social media site of what he said were explosions in Iran and issued another warning to the Islamic Republic.

"This is in retribution for yesterday's bombing of ships by Iran. If it happens again, it will get much worse!" Trump wrote.

Trump had said earlier in the day that the latest back-and-forth fighting would not result in "long-term" military action.

"Anything that happens is going to happen very fast," Trump said, though he also suggested the U.S. military might "just finish the job."

Trump also renewed his past threats to hit Iran's civilian infrastructure, including electric plants and desalinization plants, and to seize the oil-production hub of Kharg Island.

After three tankers were hit Tuesday, the U.S. launched strikes on Iran, and Iranian forces retaliated by targeting American military sites in the Persian Gulf.

Iran has asserted that the interim ceasefire deal gives it the right to manage traffic through the strait. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, a key negotiator in talks seeking a permanent end to the war, was defiant in a post on X on Thursday morning: "America still hasn't learned that bullying and breaking promises are no longer cost-free. Let me put it plainly: if you strike, you'll get hit."

Strikes raise fears that war could resume

Trump fueled concerns that the war could restart by saying the interim agreement to pause fighting was "over," although he added that he would allow negotiations to continue.

Attacks have repeatedly threatened the shaky ceasefire, but Trump's comments added new uncertainty, and oil prices shot up after he spoke. A renewed conflict could engulf the wider Middle East and would likely again halt energy shipments through the strait.

"For me, I think it's over," Trump said when asked about the status of the ceasefire. He added that U.S. representatives can continue negotiations, but he cast doubt on the outcome. "They can talk, but I think

they're wasting their time," he said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi, also a top negotiator, retorted on X that Trump's remarks "are not a sign of power but an admission of the failure" of U.S. policy toward Iran.

Trump has made other threats to seize Kharg Island, including last month, when he also questioned whether the U.S. "has the stomach for it." Some 90% of Iranian oil exports pass through the island.

The new attacks on ships in the strait, despite the negotiations, could reflect a divide among Iran's leadership. Hard-liners seek lasting control over the waterway, which is a globally important conduit for fuel shipments and has become a critical lever in confronting the West. Pragmatists want a permanent peace deal to lift international sanctions and provide desperately needed economic relief.

Negotiations to reach a final deal had been due to start after the funeral for Khamenei, who was killed Feb. 28 in the war's first moments. The funeral, which ends Thursday, was supposed to be a period of lower tensions.

The talks are meant to focus on the toughest matters, including fully reopening the strait and rolling back Tehran's disputed nuclear program.

Judge orders E. Jean Carroll be paid \$5.8M in Trump sex abuse and defamation case; Trump appeals

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The writer E. Jean Carroll can collect \$5.8 million held in escrow since a jury found that President Donald Trump sexually abused and defamed her, a federal judge ruled Wednesday. Trump's lawyers immediately appealed but were denied an emergency order to block the payment from being made.

Trump deposited the money in an account shortly after a jury ruled against him in 2023. The U.S. Supreme Court recently let the civil verdict stand, clearing the way for Judge Lewis A. Kaplan to release the money. The initial \$5 million award has grown with interest.

The jury found Trump attacked Carroll in 1996 in the dressing room of a luxury Manhattan department store, and defamed her after she described it publicly in a 2019 memoir, during his first term as president. Trump called her allegations false and said "she's not my type" in an interview.

Trump's lawyers said Wednesday they would continue to appeal and accused his political opponents of using the legal system against him. They argued in appellate papers that Kaplan's decision shouldn't be allowed to take effect because Trump has asked the Supreme Court to reconsider its decision.

Late Wednesday, Judge Eunice C. Lee of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected their request to stop the money from being transferred to Carroll.

"It is time for this case to come to an end," Carroll's lawyers wrote in a filing with the appellate court.

"Carroll has waited more than three years for a jury's verdict to be paid," they wrote. "She should not have to wait any longer."

The jury had reached its verdict — in a trial that Trump did not attend — after Carroll testified that their flirtatious and friendly chance encounter at the department store turned violent.

Trump insisted he never knew Carroll, now 82, a former advice columnist. He accused her of trying to sell books at his expense and of having political motives.

Carroll sued Trump after New York changed its laws to give sexual abuse survivors a fresh chance to sue over attacks that happened in the distant past.

Trump "has been stalling this case for years," Kaplan wrote in a memorandum detailing his decision. "It is time for him to 'do equity' and pay the judgment."

Trump is also appealing \$83 million in defamation compensation granted to Carroll by a separate Manhattan jury after a 2024 trial where Trump briefly testified.

At that trial, Kaplan required the jury to accept the findings of the previous jury and only determine how much money, if any, Trump owed Carroll for comments he made about her while he was president.

Trump's lawyers complained that the judge, in setting rules for the damages trial, had barred Trump and

his defense team from telling the jury that the encounter with Carroll never happened.

When the 2nd Circuit declined to let all of its judges rehear an appeal of the \$83 million award, Circuit Judge Denny Chin wrote that Trump had said multiple times over many years that Carroll lied for political and financial gain and had suggested she was too unattractive for Trump to have sexually assaulted her.

"As a result of Trump's statements, Carroll was harassed and humiliated, subjected to death threats, and feared for her physical safety for years," Chin said.

"And Trump showed no remorse, continuing his attacks against Carroll during and after two federal trials, and even proclaiming two days into the Carroll I trial that he would continue to defame her 'a thousand times.'"

Prosecutors play video in court of suspect in Charlie Kirk's shooting after he turned himself in

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

PROVO, Utah (AP) — Prosecutors in Utah played a video clip Wednesday that provided a rare glimpse of Tyler Robinson after the defendant in the killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk first turned himself in.

The video showed Robinson standing in a room at the Washington County Sheriff's Office wearing a T-shirt and baseball cap. There was no audio, but an investigator said he spoke to Robinson that night to get his name and date of birth.

The short clip played as state District Judge Tony Graf sought to keep a weeklong preliminary hearing on track and said he wanted to give both sides time to present their cases.

Instead, much of Wednesday was consumed by arguments over whether prosecutors can play a recorded law enforcement interview with Robinson's roommate and romantic partner, Lance Twiggs, in court.

Graf indicated he would allow prosecutors to play redacted audio of those statements Thursday. The judge will decide after the hearing if prosecutors have enough evidence to bring Robinson to trial on an aggravated murder charge in Kirk's Sept. 10 shooting on the campus of Utah Valley University.

Robinson has not yet entered a plea and his attorneys have not commented on his guilt or innocence. They have, however, sought to get the death penalty taken off the table, so far unsuccessfully.

Robinson's lawyers said they were concerned about his right to a fair trial if Twiggs' statements were played in open court and then broadcast by media outlets. They said prosecutors would attempt to portray Twiggs' statements about what Robinson allegedly told him as a confession from Robinson, which could bias potential jurors.

Attorneys for Kirk's family and the media had urged the judge to make Twiggs' statements and other evidence public.

"To not be transparent, to not be open and let the world see what happened will create doubt and distrust in the judicial system," Kirk family lawyer Jeffrey Neiman told Graf.

Prosecutors allege Robinson sent a text to Twiggs saying he targeted Kirk because he "had enough of his hatred."

Twiggs was interviewed twice as part of the investigation, State Bureau of Investigation Agent Brian Davis testified Wednesday. He was given immunity for the statements, meaning what Twiggs said cannot be used against him in a potential criminal case, Davis said.

DNA analysis described by expert as 'the gold standard'

Robinson's lawyers have questioned the reliability of DNA testing used to link the defendant to the suspected murder weapon.

A member of Tyler Robinson's defense team interrogated a DNA analyst from the FBI about the techniques she used to connect Robinson to a towel wrapped around a rifle found at the college campus, where Kirk was shot while speaking to a large crowd.

Defense lawyer Michael Burt cast doubt on the analyst's conclusions.

"She can't match Mr. Robinson to the questioned samples," Burt argued.

Forensics expert Lawrence Quarino said law enforcement agencies use "extremely reliable" tests to

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determine the probability that a person matches with DNA found at a crime scene.

DNA testing "is the gold standard in forensic science," said Quarino, a professor and director of the forensic science program at Cedar Crest College in Pennsylvania.

FBI analyst Amanda Bakker said that after Twiggs provided a DNA sample for comparison, she was able to rerun her tests and attribute all of the DNA to two people.

Investigators found the towel and suspected murder weapon — a bolt-action rifle with one spent round — in a wooded area near where Kirk was shot.

DNA on the towel matched to two people, Jennifer Faumuina with the State Bureau of Investigation testified. One was Twiggs and the other was very likely Robinson, she said.

Prosecutors allege Robinson confessed in a note left for Twiggs that read: "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it."

The defense team pushes back

Investigators say Robinson went to a rooftop near where Kirk was speaking and shot him once through the neck as the activist was taking questions from a crowd of several thousand people. Kirk was declared dead after being taken to a hospital.

Prosecutors contend the shooting endangered others at Kirk's campus event — an aggravating circumstance that could make the crime punishable by death under Utah law. Robinson also faces possible sentence enhancements based on the prosecution's claim that he targeted Kirk because of his political views.

Robinson's defense team has pushed back on the idea that he was hostile to Kirk's politics. Defense attorney Richard Novak sought to block prosecutors from introducing a statement describing the traditional Christian values of Turning Point USA.

Maine Democrats plan convention to replace Platner: What to know about Senate race

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI and PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

SCARBOROUGH, Maine (AP) — The Maine Democratic Party on Wednesday voted to hold a convention now that Democratic Graham Platner has announced he'll drop out of the state's U.S. Senate race after a former girlfriend accused him of sexual assault.

Platner, who denies the allegation, faced considerable pressure from his own party to quit the race. The first-time candidate also has been accused of trying to influence how his replacement is selected — a claim he also denied.

Platner's planned departure have left a crucial U.S. Senate race unsettled just months before the November midterm elections. The Maine Democratic Party, which by law is responsible for naming a replacement, announced it'll move forward with holding a nominating convention to choose a new nominee. Meanwhile, potential contenders have already begun teasing their interest.

Here's what we know about the Maine Senate race and what could be next:

The clock was ticking

According to Maine law, there's a narrow provision for replacing general election candidates. Platner needed to step aside voluntarily by 5 p.m. July 13 before other contenders could have been considered.

Once he formally withdraws, the law then says the Maine Democratic Party has the authority to choose a replacement, which must be done by July 27.

The state Democratic Party held an emergency meeting Wednesday, where more than 100 state committee members signed off on holding a nominating convention in the event of a vacancy.

"There is an unprecedented amount of energy and enthusiasm among Maine Democrats, driven in part by many of the dedicated volunteers and supporters who were inspired by Graham Platner's campaign," Maine Democratic leaders said in a joint statement.

It's incredibly rare for a general election candidate to bow out of a race, in Maine or elsewhere, meaning party officials are scrambling to complete a plan if and when Platner announces he'll withdraw.

Platner campaign denies trying to influence the process

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A key question surrounding how Platner is replaced has come down to just how much leverage the oyster farmer and Marine veteran has in this situation.

Maine Democratic Party's executive director, Devon Murphy-Anderson had previously released a statement accusing Platner's campaign of repeatedly trying to "put their thumb on the scale" in determining the next Democratic nominee.

Platner's team responded with a statement saying "at no point has the campaign tried to 'put its finger on the scale'" but said they were trying to understand the process. Thousands of Maine residents voted and volunteered for Platner, a progressive who outlasted establishment-backed Gov. Janet Mills, which the campaign believes should count in the decision.

The sparring between Platner's campaign and the party continued Wednesday. Murphy-Anderson said in a statement that Platner's campaign "remains focused on distracting from the job of defeating Susan Collins in November with false accusations against us" and the party "remains hyper focused on developing a representative, transparent and inclusive process to select a new nominee when he chooses to withdraw from the race."

Platner's campaign sent a survey with a 48-hour deadline to supporters on Wednesday that asked recipients two questions: what message they have for the Maine Democratic Party, and what message they have for Platner.

Separately Wednesday, President Donald Trump was asked if Democrats should be allowed to replace Platner on the Maine Senate ballot.

"So he won the primary. It's very hard for them. So, you question whether you believe the woman. A lot of people say big falsehoods," Trump said.

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One as he returned from a NATO summit in Turkey, the president added of Platner: "He's in a bind. But, should they be able to do it? Well I guess he's gonna lose. I'd imagine he's going to lose."

List of possible replacements continues to grow

One possible contender, Nirav Shah, former director of Maine's Center for Disease Control and Prevention, has said he was "evaluating" whether to join the race. Shah said he's been in contact with the Maine Democratic Party about ensuring a possible replacement process is based on "openness, transparency and robustness."

Troy Jackson, Maine's former state Senate president, announced Wednesday he was officially entering the race. Jackson unsuccessfully ran to be the Democratic nominee for governor earlier this year with the backing of Platner and Our Revolution, the political organization started by Sen. Bernie Sanders. Jackson had filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission on Tuesday to launch a Senate exploratory committee.

Jordan Wood, a former U.S. Senate candidate who then switched to run for Maine's 2nd District and lost, posted Tuesday that he was "continuing conversations" with voters about joining the race.

Other names circulating include Shenna Bellows, the current Maine secretary of state; Dan Kleban, founder of Maine Beer Co.; and Hannah Pingree, now Maine's Democratic nominee for governor.

One name that definitely won't be on the ballot? Actor Patrick Dempsey. The "Grey's Anatomy" star and Maine native wrote an editorial Wednesday saying despite being asked, he's not interested.

Voters say they are disillusioned

Platner's campaign galvanized hundreds of volunteers around the state. This week, they've been expressing disappointment about the behavior Platner is accused of and pondering the right course of action.

Many called for him to drop out.

Paul Attardo, 64, of Scarborough, said he couldn't continue supporting Platner after the allegation, though he still has a sign promoting the candidate at the end of his driveway. He called the accusation "disappointing" as well as "indisputably sincere," and said the party needs to get to work finding a replacement.

The scenario reminded Attardo of the hasty replacement of Joe Biden during the 2024 election campaign.

"We rally behind somebody, and not unlike the Biden administration, when everybody rallied behind Joe

Biden, at the eleventh hour that failed," he said. "I sort of feel we're in a similar boat."

Family demands an independent probe after ICE officer fatally shoots a man in Houston

By LEKAN OYEKANMI, JACK BROOK and JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press/Report for America
HOUSTON (AP) — A Mexican national fatally shot by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer in Houston had no criminal convictions during his decades living in the U.S. and was driving a crew to a homebuilding site when he was killed, his family and a Texas congresswoman said Wednesday.

Lorenzo Salgado Araujo was working toward securing legal status in the U.S. and knew what to do if stopped by ICE, his son said.

Federal officials said they were stopping the vehicle in an immigration enforcement operation. Ronaldo Salgado said his father may have been scared that the people in unmarked vehicles were coming to steal the tools he had used for 35 years to build homes so he could send his three American sons to college.

"He did not deserve to die. He did not deserve to be reduced to a headline of Mexican man shot and killed by ICE. He deserved to live a quiet life as Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, a husband, a father and a job creator for dozens of men who also wanted the American dream," Salgado said during a news conference.

The shooting happened Tuesday in Magnolia Park, a neighborhood that has been a hub for Houston's Mexican American community for a century. On Wednesday night, hundreds of people marched through the neighborhood chanting "ICE out of Houston!"

Federal officials say their vehicle was rammed but don't provide evidence

Salgado Araujo was shot after he ignored commands and attempted to ram an officer who fired his weapon in self-defense, the Department of Homeland Security said Tuesday. ICE officers were targeting him because he was living in the country without legal permission, according to the department, which oversees ICE. The man's car struck an ICE vehicle, the department added.

Democratic U.S. Rep. Sylvia Garcia said Salgado Araujo had no criminal convictions.

Houston firefighters said he was shot in the abdomen. He died at a hospital.

Three other men appeared to be detained as Salgado Araujo lay moaning on the ground, according to his son, who said one of them was his uncle.

Daniel Tirado was one of the other men in the van and called his wife briefly to say they were being followed, Tirado's stepdaughter Juana Degollado told The Associated Press.

"What he remembers is that an ICE agent shot Lorenzo and the van door was closed," Degollado said.

Tirado wasn't able to contact his family until Wednesday morning, and the call lasted only five minutes, his stepdaughter said. They haven't been able to get additional information from ICE or the FBI.

Jose Rojas was also detained, according to his stepdaughter Griselda Silva. The 51-year-old Mexican national had lived in the U.S. for decades without legal status or a criminal record, she said.

ICE has not released the names of the people detained.

Federal officials have not released video or images of the shooting or the vehicles. Salgado on Tuesday joined civil rights groups and Democratic officials in urging federal authorities to release all the footage and other information it has on the shooting.

In several other shootings involving federal officers, initial descriptions by immigration officials have sometimes been contradicted later by video evidence.

Civil rights groups say ICE can't be trusted with the investigation

The federal crackdown has created a country where officers think they can "shoot and explain later," League of United Latin American Citizens President Roman Palomares said.

The league offered a \$5,000 reward for information and videos from witnesses. Ronaldo Salgado and several civil rights organizations called for an independent investigation. Some begged anyone with videos to not turn them over to ICE.

Harris County District Attorney Sean Teare said Salgado Araujo's family and the community deserve the truth, but federal authorities are exclusively handling the investigation.

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ICE and DHS representatives have not responded to repeated requests for additional comment Wednesday.

Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin took over the department in March aiming to keep it away from the controversies that marked the tenure of his predecessor, Kristi Noem.

The shooting was at least the eighth death resulting from an encounter with federal immigration officers since the start of the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

Son says his father worked hard for decades

Ronaldo Salgado said his mother was told something bad had happened to his dad around 7 a.m. Tuesday. After frantically looking for him at his job site and finding his empty van, he saw a video.

"I recognized him, not from his appearance but from his voice crying for help as he lay on the street," Salgado said.

Salgado Araujo met his wife as a teenager in Mexico. She made his lunch before he left for the day. He would listen to music and pet his dog on his porch, Salgado said.

Salgado said his dad had started the process of obtaining his work permit.

"We dotted every I, crossed every T, filled every document, attended every appointment," Salgado said. "He was close to obtaining his legal status."

Salgado Araujo had biometric scan and fingerprints done earlier this year and had carefully studied what to do if ICE pulled him over.

"Had my father seen an emblem of ICE or an emblem that says anything about a law enforcement agency, my father would have complied," his son said.

Crowd marches in Houston, and Mexico's president criticizes the killing

On Wednesday night, a large crowd marched through the city's streets, with some waving Mexican flags or holding a banner that said "Abolish ICE," while others held signs with Salgado Araujo's face on it.

The crowd started feet from where Salgado Araujo was shot and held a ceremony in his memory and prayer. They also filmed a video for his family of the crowd chanting, "You're not alone!" Garcia announced that she and other lawmakers sent a letter Wednesday to DHS demanding answers.

Meanwhile, Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum said Wednesday that the country is "preparing legal measures" over the killing of Salgado Araujo because "we cannot allow the mistreatment of our brothers and sisters in the United States."

In April, Sheinbaum expressed concern about the deaths of Mexican nationals in U.S. immigration detention, saying her government would support lawsuits filed by detainees over poor conditions or by the families of those who died. She raised the detainees' deaths to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and said she was considering an appeal to the United Nations.

Takeaways: Trump leaves NATO summit declaring 'a lot of love' with allies after a rocky start

By LORNE COOK and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — NATO's summit in Turkey on Wednesday had threatened to go off the rails even before U.S. President Donald Trump and his counterparts sat down to work. But the leaders renewed their vow to defend each other should any of them come under attack.

It came despite a fresh storm of old Trump criticism toward U.S. allies that seemed to put his commitment in doubt. In the end, Trump told reporters, "There was a lot of love in that room. A lot of unity."

"We've had a tremendous time and I think a great success," Trump said later at a news conference.

In a declaration, the leaders said their pledge to Article 5 of NATO's treaty is "ironclad." They said that "an attack on one is an attack on all."

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said U.S. allies "warmly welcomed President Trump's leadership." It jarred after Trump had insisted his America should take control of Greenland, a semiautonomous part of ally Denmark.

"The message from this summit is simple. NATO delivers," Rutte said.

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Here are some takeaways from the summit.

Iran strikes and a possible NATO role

Most of the time, U.S. military strikes are ordered up while the president is close to home.

So Trump's decision to authorize retaliatory strikes on Iran shortly after leaving a NATO leaders' dinner was unusual, and underscored a beef he has with the alliance.

Trump has complained bitterly that allies didn't help him keep the Strait of Hormuz open.

Intriguingly, Rutte refused to rule out a future role for the alliance in the war.

"Obviously Iran is outside NATO territory," Rutte said. He added: "If helpful, NATO is always willing to play a role. But first now, let's see what happens over the coming days and weeks." It's something likely to please Trump.

NATO prides itself as a defensive alliance focused on protecting the transatlantic area. Its last venture outside, into Afghanistan, ended in chaos and allies are reluctant to get drawn into any other war.

Let them have Patriots, and perhaps F-35s

Trump said the U.S. will give a license for its Patriot air defense systems to be made overseas for Ukraine to counter Russian missile attacks — a huge coup for Ukraine, which sorely needs the technology for a war now in its fifth year.

"We'll give them the right to make Patriots. We'll show them how to do it," Trump said as he met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "I think they can produce them pretty quickly."

Patriots are expensive, in high demand and take a long time to produce. Zelenskyy has for years been asking for more, and recently for a license so that Ukraine can manufacture its own, and faster.

In an uplifting moment for the summit host, Trump announced that the U.S. was prepared to lift sanctions on Turkey, opening the way for the possible sale of F-35 jets to the country, despite objections from Israel.

"I haven't totally made up my mind," he said.

Ankara purchased Russian missile defense systems in 2019 and was kicked out of the F-35 program.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has developed a close relationship with Trump, gave a thumbs-up after an interpreter relayed the news.

Good news for Ukraine; a softer Trump tone and a big loan

Beyond the Patriot announcement, Trump dropped his usual critical tone with Zelenskyy and praised his willingness to reach a deal on ending the fighting in Ukraine.

Trump said the Ukrainian president has "done an amazing job" and "been very effective" in the war.

"We've actually developed a good relationship. It's hard to believe," Trump said.

NATO leaders, meanwhile, agreed on a 70 billion euro (\$80 billion) package of military support for Ukraine both this year and in 2027.

The figure involves 30 billion euros each year from a European Union loan program for Ukraine plus 40 billion euros from NATO allies. The Trump administration has all but stopped U.S. spending on Ukraine, and the United States will not take part.

NATO diplomats say that most of the 40 billion euros for 2026 has already been raised.

More cash and defense deals, and a stronger Europe

The meeting was marked by Rutte's high-energy sales pitch to Trump. The former Dutch prime minister estimated that European allies and Canada would spend almost \$300 billion more on defense this year and last.

At a "big reveal" defense industry event, backed by thumping techno music and slick videos, Rutte hailed the "tens of billions" of dollars that were being spent on weapons and military equipment contracts.

"I would argue that without you in this chair, this would not have happened," Rutte told Trump in a tete-a-tete just before the meeting began. "Grab the win. It's there." Trump appears to have done so.

In their summit declaration, the leaders marked the start of a major transformation at the world's biggest military alliance, saying that they are "building the future: a stronger Europe in a stronger NATO."

Mystery surrounds NATO's next summit

Albania was left wondering when, and perhaps even whether, it will host NATO's next summit.

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The Balkans country had been due to host one in 2027, but instead of referencing that rendezvous as they usually do, the leaders only said: "We look forward to our next meeting."

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, a former professional basketball player, is generally well liked by his fellow leaders, but some NATO allies have cooled on the idea of holding a summit in Albania given his country's low rate of defense spending.

Others want to avoid another potentially divisive meeting with Trump. Rutte said that Albania would be the venue, "but of course we still have to decide on an exact time."

Life returns to streets around damaged NYC high-rise. Here is what comes next

By PHILIP MARCELO, MICHAEL R. SISAK and ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The streets around a midtown Manhattan high-rise where buckled columns forced evacuations gradually returned to life Wednesday, as roads reopened, residents and hotel guests were allowed back into nearby buildings, and workers shored up the damage.

After crews worked through the night to stabilize a section of the building where beams had buckled and floors had sagged, Mayor Zohran Mamdani sought to reassure wary New Yorkers, saying no more movement had been detected in the massive office-to-apartment conversion project at Pfizer's former headquarters near Grand Central Terminal.

But several other nearby buildings remained off-limits, and the city will conduct a broader inquiry into what went wrong and what can be done to prevent a more devastating development such as a collapse, the mayor vowed.

"As soon as we answer the emergency questions around safety in this moment, we are going to be conducting a full investigation as to how we got to this point," Mamdani said. "Because this is not a necessary consequence of an office to residential conversion. This, however, is clearly a breakdown in that process."

Buckled columns and sagging floors triggered collapse concerns

Authorities responding to emergency calls at the building discovered two mangled support columns on the 21st floor as well as multiple cracks and slumping floors early Tuesday, triggering mass evacuations and street closures in a bustling area not far from the Grand Central transit hub and the Chrysler Building.

In the initial hours, officials believed the steel-framed building, which was empty other than the workers, wasn't at risk of a total collapse, but "more of a localized collapse," as Fire Chief John Esposito described it.

On-site contractors were eventually allowed to reenter the building late Tuesday to do emergency repairs after city officials conducted a floor-by-floor inspection.

The renovation project is billed as the largest office-to-residential conversion in the city's history, creating some 1,600 units of housing by adding more than a dozen stories atop one tower in the complex and redesigning the other. Plans also call for adding roughly 100,000 square feet (9,300 square meters) of amenities, including a rooftop pool, a fitness center, ground floor retail and offices.

Pfizer, which was originally founded in Brooklyn in 1849, established its headquarters in the building in 1961. A massive mosaic of metal and tile honoring ancient and modern figures in medicine was displayed prominently in the high glass-windowed lobby. The pharmaceutical giant moved out in 2023 after opening a new office near Penn Station, leaving the property vacant.

Spokespersons for MetroLoft, the project developer, didn't respond to requests for comment Wednesday but have previously voiced optimism that the project could resume quickly as they've stressed that the building is not at risk of collapse.

Nathan Berman, the firm's founder, acknowledged in an interview with The Wall Street Journal, though, that the added weight from widening the top 15 or so floors of the building likely caused the damage.

Residents and hotel guests return as evacuation orders are lifted

Sally Grant and Margaret Clark were among those Wednesday waiting to be let back into the Hampton Inn near the damaged building.

They had traveled from Scotland to see Bon Jovi perform at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday but

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were evacuated and told to leave their belongings, including their credit cards, passports and medication.

"They could have given us five minutes to grab our belongings, you know, instead of just saying, 'Everybody out, everybody out,'" Clark said. "We've been left with nothing. We slept in the streets last night. The police wouldn't help us. It's been awful. Absolutely it's ruined our holiday."

There were signs of things returning to normal Wednesday on the streets surrounding the construction site, with people walking dogs, pushing strollers and riding bikes.

Some streets remained closed for much of the day while gawkers paused to take photos of the now-infamous high-rise. Unionized construction workers staged a protest — complete with a large inflatable rat — slamming the building's developers for using non-union labor.

Elinor Ruskin, 94, was among those redirected by police after trying to get through a closed block in the morning. She took it in stride.

"These things happen. I don't know if they will catch the mistake or what they will do," she said. "Anyway, you know, this is New York City."

More thorough inquiry to come as repairs are ongoing

Temporary shoring and beams were installed throughout the 37-story building as crews made their way to the top.

Photos shared on social media by the city's Department of Buildings showed multiple steel rods inserted side-by-side next to one badly bent column.

The department said the emergency work is being supervised by the owner's engineer and an independent, third-party engineering firm hired by the owner.

Once the emergency repairs are complete, Mamdani said city building officials will conduct a "rigorous assessment" to ensure the plans and the site are fully compliant with all codes before any non-emergency work proceeds.

New York, along with other major cities, has for years been pursuing ambitious overhauls to transform underused office space into residential buildings, in part to help struggling business districts and take strain off tight housing markets in need of more apartments.

Mamdani, a Democrat, told reporters Wednesday that he considers the conversions "part of our answer to the housing crisis," but he added that the projects must be done "safely and in a way that is fully accountable."

Real estate expert thinks project will still find tenants

Joshua Harris, director of Fordham University's Real Estate Institute, said it remains to be seen whether the building's problems were caused by faulty engineering, a failure to follow design plans or even hidden flaws in the original building's construction. It also remains to be seen whether the developers have the financing to absorb the cost of the delays and added expenses to make the needed fixes, he said.

What is almost certain, Harris said, is that the hulking tower, if completed, would still find willing tenants, given its prime location and the nearly unquenchable demand for housing in New York City.

"There's no real stigmatization from a death or something that was like tragic," he said. "It's probably going to be one of the safest buildings out there when it's done. You're not going to cut any corners at this point. There's too much attention on it."

Walking near the high-rise Wednesday, Sabrina DeRizzio wondered why developers keep trying to turn outdated office towers into modern housing, as she lives in one herself.

"It's not the best," she said of her building, adding that it's impossible to hang anything on the concrete walls and the unit never feels properly insulated. "The infrastructure is just not the same."

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear asks Sen. Mitch McConnell to give a public update on his condition

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear is directly asking Sen. Mitch McConnell, the state's most powerful figure in Congress, to disclose more about his condition after three weeks of silence from the 84-year-old since

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he was hospitalized in Washington.

The letter released Wednesday from Beshear, a Democrat who is considered a potential presidential candidate in 2028, to the former Senate Republican leader says, "Kentuckians have grown increasingly concerned about the current state of your health and well-being, and ability to hold office."

McConnell, whose physical condition has visibly declined in recent years, was hospitalized June 14. He has not released a public statement, photos or videos since. Aides have disclosed nothing specific about his condition, other than to say last week that McConnell "continues to improve, and is working closely with his staff on Kentucky and Senate matters while the Senate is out of session."

That lack of detail has fueled rampant speculation about his prognosis and whether he will return to the Senate when it reconvenes next week. The firestorm was enough that Republican Senate leaders, including Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D. and Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso, on Tuesday made public statements saying they had talked to McConnell and he was alert and discussing current events.

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One on Wednesday evening, as he returned home following the NATO summit in Turkey, Trump was asked about McConnell but said the pair had not spoken.

"I have no idea how he's doing," Trump said.

McConnell is retiring at the end of his term in January, and the campaign to elect his successor already is underway. Kentucky's Senate succession law, which Republican legislators have twice changed during Beshear's tenure, does not give the governor a role in picking a temporary successor should McConnell's seat become vacant before his term ends.

Under the latest change in 2024, Beshear would call a special election if the seat became vacant. The winner of that election could take office after the result is certified. The general election winner would be sworn in as part of the new Congress in January. But there are unresolved questions about the timing of a special election under the untested law and the possibility the seat could remain vacant until January.

Beshear ended the letter by wishing McConnell "a safe and speedy recovery."

A look at what an absence from the Senate or a vacancy could mean.

What happens if McConnell isn't able to return?

There is not much, if anything, that Beshear, Kentucky lawmakers or the Senate could do if McConnell remains in office but is unable to perform his duties between now and when the current Congress expires in January.

Senate rules do not allow proxy voting. But there have been extended Senate absences before, and the chamber has continued its business with however many senators are in attendance. Republicans currently hold a 53-47 advantage. Without McConnell, that means a maximum of 52 Republican votes are available.

McConnell had been among the senators blocking war powers resolutions that seek to limit President Donald Trump's military options in Iran. Without him, the administration has less of a buffer. On the other hand, McConnell already had been among the Republicans refusing to support Trump's sweeping elections law overhaul.

Why wouldn't Beshear have a say in filling any vacancy?

The 17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution calls for Senate vacancies to be filled by popular elections. But it allows state legislatures to empower governors to appoint an interim senator to serve through those campaigns. Most states have taken this option, according to the Congressional Research Service.

Kentucky law allowed interim appointments until 2021, when McConnell and other state GOP leaders persuaded the Republican-run Legislature to make a change. They did not want Beshear to shift the partisan balance in Washington if he got the opportunity. They called for a committee of the previous senator's state party to select three people from whom the governor could choose an interim senator. In this case, that would mean Beshear picking which Republican would fill a vacancy. Several states have this system.

Kentucky lawmakers changed the law again in 2024 to require a special election. The only role for the governor is to call that election.

Beshear vetoed the 2021 and 2024 changes but Republican lawmakers overrode him.

How would a special election work?

The 2024 law says Beshear "shall" issue a proclamation for a special vote but it does not say when he

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should make that proclamation or what the election date must be. Separate laws require certain minimum windows between a proclamation and the election date, but not necessarily a maximum window.

Some officials have argued that any vacancy after Aug. 3 would mean a special election concurrent with the general. They have even speculated that at some point, it would be impractical to have a special election at all given the regular election already taking place.

The Kentucky secretary of state's office declined to speculate on a hypothetical time frame.

If a special election was needed, the simplest option would be to hold it at the same time as the regular general election.

For the full Senate term that begins in 2027, Republicans nominated U.S. Rep. Andy Barr and Democrats nominated former state lawmaker Charles Booker. Concurrent elections would be separate, requiring new nominations by the parties, though they could choose Barr and Booker. Regardless, in this scenario voters would be electing the immediate replacement and the full-term lawmaker on the same Election Day.

Multiple vacant House seats have been filled that way with little national attention.

Could there be a legal fight?

Yes. The 2024 law has never been tested. If a vacancy occurred, there could be different interests between parties and even among Republicans about special election timing and whether to hold one at all. That could create any number of legal questions and disputes that have to be settled by the courts.

Beshear's office did not immediately respond to an inquiry about how he interprets the law.

Oil prices rise, and stocks drop worldwide after Trump says ceasefire with Iran is 'over'

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Oil prices rose, and stock markets dropped in shaky trading worldwide Wednesday after President Donald Trump raised doubts about the temporary truce in the war with Iran.

The S&P 500 fell as much as 1.1% after Trump said the ceasefire agreement was "over," but the index then trimmed its loss to 0.3% after Trump said recent fighting did not mean a return to full-scale war. They're his latest mixed messages on what will happen with the war, which threatens to worsen inflation for the world.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 576 points, or 1.1%, while the Nasdaq composite rose 0.2% after erasing an early loss.

The action was stronger in the oil market, where the price for a barrel of Brent crude climbed 5.2% to \$78.02 and briefly topped \$80.

That's still below its peak from earlier in the war, when the price for the most actively traded contract reached nearly \$120. But the jump is unsettling because oil prices had just dropped back to where they were before the war.

The worry is that a continuation of the war will block the Strait of Hormuz and prevent the delivery of crude from the Persian Gulf to customers worldwide. That could worsen inflation, which economists expected would ease with oil prices, and in turn force the Federal Reserve and other central banks to raise interest rates.

Higher rates can keep a lid on inflation, but they also slow the economy and hurt prices for all kinds of investments.

On Wall Street, stocks of companies in the housing industry helped lead the way lower. They were hurt by worries that rising Treasury yields in the bond market will mean higher rates for mortgages and chill the industry.

Builders FirstSource, which sells countertops, windows and other building supplies, fell 5.4%. Homebuilders PulteGroup fell 5.4%, and D.R. Horton sank 4.6%.

Companies with big fuel bills also sank. American Airlines lost 4%, and cruise operator Carnival fell 3.9%.

Helping to offset those losses was a steadying for some influential stocks in the artificial-intelligence industry. They've been under pressure in recent weeks on worries that their prices shot too high and

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that AI may not produce enough productivity and profits to make all the investments in chips and data centers worth it.

Their swings carry a lot of weight on Wall Street because AI stocks have grown into some of the U.S. market's biggest, giving their movements more effect on the S&P 500 than other stocks.

Nvidia rose 3.7%, for example, and was the strongest force pushing upward on the S&P 500 because it's the largest stock on Wall Street.

Close behind was Broadcom, which climbed 4.8% after Apple announced a multiyear commitment where Broadcom will design and produce custom components for its products. Apple said the agreement's value could top \$30 billion.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 21.14 points to 7,482.71. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 576.76 to 52,348.39, and the Nasdaq composite rose 51.96 to 25,870.65.

In the bond market, Treasury yields rose with the price of oil. The yield on the 10-year Treasury briefly got near 4.60% before pulling back to 4.57%. That's up from 4.55% late Tuesday and from just 3.97% before the war with Iran began.

In stock markets abroad, European markets turned sharply lower after Trump said, "For me, I think it's over" about the status of the ceasefire. He added that U.S. representatives can continue negotiations, "but I think they're wasting their time." Germany's DAX lost 2.2%, and France's CAC 40 sank 2.2%.

In Asia, South Korea's Kospi dropped 5.3% and continued its sharp swings amid seesawing worries and euphoria about the AI stocks that dominate its market.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index was an outlier and rose 3%. Shares that trade there of Chinese AI startup Zhipu, known also as Z.ai and traded as Knowledge Atlas Technology, jumped 13.4%.

A six-month lock-up period for "cornerstone" investors following its January trading debut in Hong Kong expires this week. China National Radio reported late Tuesday that nearly 70% of Zhipu's cornerstone investors are committed to stay on, despite previous worries that the lock-up period expiration could trigger a sell-off.

Zhipu's share price has risen more than 1,300% since its debut.

Trump says US will give Ukraine license to produce Patriot defense systems

By LORNE COOK, SEUNG MIN KIM and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump said at a NATO summit Wednesday in Turkey that the U.S. will give Ukraine a license to make Patriot air defense systems to counter missile attacks from Russia in their more than four-year war, a huge coup for Kyiv which has long requested the technology.

Allowing foreign manufacture of Patriots, which the U.S. had resisted, was a turnaround for Trump that mirrored his day at the NATO meeting: Upon arriving, he lashed out at European partners for resisting his efforts to take control of Greenland and for not supporting his war in Iran. But by day's end, he described a gathering of unity and "tremendous love," and praised member nations on their progress in increasing their defense spending.

NATO's European members plus Canada have scrambled to meet the alliance's increased defense spending targets, which Trump has demanded as the U.S. draws down troops in Europe and insists the continent take more responsibility for its own security.

Trump had reopened old wounds among the 32 NATO leaders by insisting again ahead of the summit that the U.S. should control Greenland, a semiautonomous Danish territory. That led Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen to say her country is "ready to defend every inch of NATO including our own territory."

Trump also blasted some European countries for refusing to participate in the Iran campaign, singling out Spain as "a terrible partner in NATO" and renewing his threats to cut off trade.

Trump strikes a positive tone on Zelenskyy

But the tone of Trump's meeting with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was a break from earlier encounters which ended in acrimony, and Trump praised the Ukrainian leader's willingness to reach

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a deal on ending the fighting in Ukraine.

"We've actually developed a good relationship. It's hard to believe," Trump said during a news conference with Zelenskyy, adding that he believed a deal on ending the war was on the horizon and that the U.S. would "work on some kind of security package" to provide to Ukraine.

Trump said the Ukrainian president has "done an amazing job" and "been very effective" in the war as he pledged to grant Ukraine a license to manufacture the Patriot defense systems.

"We'll give them the right to make Patriots. We'll show them how to do it," Trump said. "I think they can produce them pretty quickly."

Patriots are expensive, in high demand and take a long time to produce. Zelenskyy has for years been asking for more of them, and more recently for a license so that Ukraine can manufacture its own.

NATO chief backs latest US strikes on Iran

Ahead of the summit, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte praised Trump for the series of U.S. strikes on Iran overnight, after Tehran struck three merchant ships in the Strait of Hormuz.

"I think what you did last night was absolutely necessary," Rutte said to Trump. "It was a very strong response, and I'm with you on this."

The U.S. strikes, as well as the revoking of a license allowing Iran to sell its oil on global markets, underscored the fragility of an interim deal to end months of fighting.

Trump said of the interim agreement with Iran: "For me, I think it's over" — but added he will allow talks to continue.

"It's just a waste of time dealing with them," he said.

NATO leaders sought to show Trump they were boosting defense

Rutte has dedicated a huge amount of energy to keeping Trump's support for NATO and to holding the summit together. On Wednesday, he sought to tamp down the president's ire by giving him credit for recent increases in defense spending from NATO allies.

"Grab the win. It's there," Rutte told Trump on Wednesday.

The NATO chief pointed to countries including Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Denmark that are investing more in defense, but noted that the Trump administration expects "the Europeans and Canadians will equalize their spending with the United States."

Last month Rutte went to Washington to hail the "Trump Trillion" — the \$1.2 trillion that European allies and Canada have added to defense spending since Trump came to power in 2017.

As leaders converged on Ankara, Rutte hosted a "big reveal" event to showcase the many deals planned for the increased spending — much of it to be spent on U.S. companies, creating thousands of jobs for Americans.

At last year's summit, the allies agreed to invest 5% of their gross domestic product on defense — 3.5% on their defense budgets and 1.5% on infrastructure so troops and equipment can move faster in times of conflict.

Yet figures released by NATO on Tuesday showed that Slovenia, Belgium, Spain and the Czech Republic have struggled to meet the alliance's old spending target of 2% of GDP.

The Trump administration wants to see a leaner "NATO 3.0," with Europe taking responsibility for its own security, including Ukraine, with conventional weapons while America would continue to provide its nuclear umbrella.

The Pentagon has launched a six-month review of U.S. military presence in Europe, leaving allies to seek clarity on just how deeply Trump intends to cut U.S. force numbers.

Zelenskyy pushes for NATO entry

Zelenskyy made a fresh appeal Tuesday for Ukraine to be allowed to join the alliance, saying Ukrainian armed forces are highly experienced and would only boost NATO's defense capabilities. Russia is vehemently opposed to that.

Zelenskyy has highlighted Ukraine's adaptability and its ability to strike deep inside Russia. He said Ukraine's armed forces are "eliminating" on average 30,000 Russian troops every month.

In a declaration following Wednesday's summit, NATO leaders pledged to provide Ukraine with \$80

billion to help meet its defense needs this year and next, noting "the long-term threat Russia poses to Euro-Atlantic security."

Concern has been mounting among some countries with borders near Russia that Moscow might be preparing a hybrid attack — a combination of conventional warfare with tactics like cyberattacks — on the continent as Russian President Vladimir Putin struggles to secure victory in Ukraine.

Trump administration to lift Syria's terrorism designation

Trump also met with Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa, a former insurgent who led the offensive that unseated autocrat Bashar Assad in December 2024. Despite having once been an al-Qaida fighter, al-Sharaa has won Trump's backing as he seeks to rebuild Syria and restore its shattered ties with the West.

Later, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement that Trump has told U.S. lawmakers that the U.S. will soon remove Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism as part of a year-long normalization process with the country's new government.

"Lifting sanctions on Syria will unlock international trade and investment, give Syria a chance to rebuild, and open up a new chapter for the Syrian people," Rubio said.

In June 2025, Trump signed an executive order ending a number of economic sanctions before revoking the terrorism designation a few weeks later for al-Sharaa, though the designation for Syria remained.

Former Wisconsin judge spared prison for obstructing ICE arrest of Mexican immigrant

By CLAIRE SAVAGE and SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Former Wisconsin Judge Hannah Dugan was spared from prison Wednesday for ushering a Mexican defendant through her jury room door as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents sought to arrest him in a courthouse hallway.

U.S. District Judge Lynn Adelman fined her \$5,000, describing the case as a situation where an otherwise good person, upset by immigration policies in this country, made a bad decision in the moment.

Dugan, 67, was convicted of felony obstruction in December. Her lawyers argued during her trial that President Donald Trump's administration sought to "crush" Dugan in an effort to ensure judicial compliance with the ICE strategy of targeting immigrants as they showed up for court hearings.

Dugan resigned the Milwaukee County circuit judgeship she had held for nine years in January amid threats of impeachment from Republican state lawmakers who labeled her an activist judge. In her resignation letter, she said her prosecution threatened "the independence of our judiciary." Republican U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany, a fierce Trump loyalist running for Wisconsin governor, had urged authorities to "lock her up."

In a statement Wednesday, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Wisconsin emphasized that the jury's verdict last December and Adelman's sentence reflect Dugan's abuse of her position to obstruct law enforcement officers.

"Law enforcement officers need to be able to carry out their lawful responsibilities in the manner that is safest for them, the public and the individual they are attempting to detain," said First Assistant U.S. Attorney Brad Schimel. "Dugan's reckless and illegal actions interfered with that goal and created unnecessary risks for all involved. For that there needed to be serious consequences."

Dugan says she was just trying to do her job

Dugan addressed the court, saying she tried to do her best as a judge, and that her actions that day in April 2025 were not done maliciously but rather to maintain the "decorum and safety of the courtroom."

"I have been cast as both a scofflaw and a hero. I am neither," Dugan said, adding that she was trying to do her job. She said she has had to retire from public life because of threats against her and her family.

Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Frohling acknowledged that Dugan has experienced collateral consequences but said "judges can't choose to disregard the law."

The judge said Dugan lost her job, now has a felony conviction and experienced threats that forced her to move and stop attending community events. He also noted that Dugan's actions didn't stop the ICE agents from arresting the defendant outside the courthouse.

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"This conviction affirms that no one is above the law," Adelman said.

Prosecutors had pushed for a 'serious sentence'

Prosecutors had argued in a sentencing memo that Dugan violated her oath as a judge and put both law enforcement and the public at risk.

"Judges are entrusted with tremendous discretion, but there is a line they cannot cross," Frohling wrote. "The defendant crossed that line."

Dugan's attorneys argued she has been "punished enough," and should not be sentenced to any jail time beyond the hours she spent in federal custody.

Federal sentencing guidelines called for 15 to 21 months behind bars, but the judge, who was appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1997, wasn't bound by them. Prosecutors did not recommend a sentence, but Frohling wrote that "this was a serious offense, and it warrants a correspondingly serious sentence."

Attorney Jason Luczak said after the sentencing that they would still appeal Dugan's felony obstruction conviction. Jurors acquitted her at trial of concealing an individual to prevent arrest, a misdemeanor.

What happened in the courthouse that day

On April 18, 2025, immigration officers went to the Milwaukee County courthouse after learning Eduardo Flores-Ruiz, 31, had reentered the country illegally and was scheduled to appear before Dugan for a hearing in a state battery case.

Dugan confronted agents outside her courtroom and directed them to the chief judge's office, saying their administrative warrant wasn't sufficient to arrest Flores-Ruiz. Her attorneys said during her trial that she was following protocols that called for court employees to report any immigration agents to their supervisors.

After the agents left, she led Flores-Ruiz and his attorney out a private jury door. Agents spotted Flores-Ruiz in the corridor, followed him outside and arrested him after a foot chase. A week later, FBI agents arrested Dugan in the courthouse, leading her outside in handcuffs.

Flores-Ruiz was deported in November.

Members of a sexual predator network on Telegram tried to hide their crimes with code words

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER, STEFANIE DAZIO and HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — They called themselves the "German driving school for experts," but prosecutors say the true purpose of their Telegram chats was to brag about the women they raped and share tips about how to drug them.

In posts that sometimes included photos and videos of their attacks on unconscious victims, they referred to women as "cars," sedatives as "fuel" and rape as "driving," according to court documents. They called their victims "dead pigs."

Investigators have been poring through several years' worth of posts in roughly two dozen group chats on the popular messaging app that authorities believe served an online predator network of mainly Chinese men targeting mostly Chinese women in Germany. Their investigation has already led to the convictions of three alleged inner circle members on rape and other charges. A fourth was convicted Wednesday in Berlin.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story includes discussion of sexual violence. If you or someone you know needs help, please call 1-800-656-4673 in the U.S., 116 016 in Germany or 15117905157 in China.

"The perpetrators were characterized by a particular ruthlessness, an objectification of the victims, and the perfidious planning of their crimes," Frankfurt chief prosecutor Dominik Mies told The Associated Press.

Major details of the investigation remain unknown, at least to the public, including how many attacks and perpetrators have been linked to the German Telegram chats and how the chats, some of which reportedly had tens of thousands of members, could have operated for so long. It's also unclear if the chats are linked to a ballooning investigation in Europe and the Americas into drug-facilitated sexual assaults by

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misogynist online communities.

Chinese community rallies to support the victims

Under German privacy laws, prosecutors are limited in what they can say outside the courtroom, documents are restricted and, in the ongoing case in Berlin, members of the public have been forced to leave the courtroom during parts of the trial.

This may be why the investigation into the Telegram group has garnered less attention in Germany than might be expected. But members of the country's Chinese community, mostly women, have been attending court proceedings to show support for the victims even if they don't know them.

"What makes one really angry is to see that such groups hate women, they have no respect," said Fu Xiao, who traveled roughly 500 kilometers (310 miles) to Berlin last week to attend the trial. "Women aren't seen as people."

In China, state media has covered the cases comprehensively, but wider discussion about the prosecutions on Chinese-language social media like Rednote has been partially censored. Certain tags have been more likely to get a post deleted or banned on Rednote, screenshots and searches show. But posts using less direct language have survived the censors, including ones that refer to "date rape" or the euphemistic "students studying abroad in Germany."

China's Ministry of Public Security and Rednote didn't respond to requests for comment.

Cases echo a landmark French trial

The German cases have drawn comparisons to the attacks on Gisèle Pelicot, a French woman who, over the course of nearly a decade, was repeatedly drugged and raped by her then-husband and strangers he invited to their home. The trial — and Pelicot's decision to waive her anonymity — prompted a reckoning over rape culture in France and beyond.

"Pelicot is not an isolated case," Judge Markus Koppenleitner said during a hearing in Munich for one of the Chinese men convicted in the German investigation. "This is not a Chinese or French phenomenon, but one that also exists in Germany and, ultimately, worldwide."

Similar cases to the "German driving school" investigation have been popping up around the globe. Although authorities haven't publicly linked them to the German prosecutions, some investigators have cited tips from German authorities and journalists as crucial to their progress.

In Los Angeles, German investigators last year reached out to police about a potential suspect in drug-facilitated sexual assaults. The defendant, a graduate student from China, is accused of drugging and sexually assaulting three women in LA after he allegedly procured the drugs from a Chinese national in Germany.

In the Netherlands last month, police arrested four men suspected of drugging and sexually abusing women after hearing from authorities in Germany and the U.K. Dutch police said the alleged perpetrators used social media chat groups to disseminate videos showing the abuse and discuss how to drug victims.

And Europol, the European Union's police agency, last week announced "Project Medusa," an international operation designed to dismantle online networks that promote drug-facilitated sexual assaults. Law enforcement from Germany and the U.K. are leading the operation, which has already netted 57 arrests.

Cases raise questions about Telegram

The German predator network managed to thrive despite clear violations of Telegram's terms of service, again raising questions about how the platform has been used for criminal activity.

In 2024, the app's founder was arrested in Paris over allegations that the platform was being used for illicit activity, including drug trafficking and the distribution of child sexual abuse images. He denied wrongdoing, blaming surging numbers of Telegram users that he said "caused growing pains that made it easier for criminals to abuse our platform." The investigation is ongoing.

"Sexual violence is explicitly forbidden by Telegram's terms of service and such content is routinely removed," the company said in a statement. "Telegram fulfils all of its legal obligations in relation to such harmful content, including everything set out by" the European Union's Digital Services Act.

The company didn't respond to questions about the German cases, including how photos, videos and

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comments about sexual crimes were posted for years in the app, whether Telegram was aware of the activity and what, if anything, it did to alert the authorities.

Some of the German Telegram chats date back to at least 2020, court documents show. Attorney Magdalena Gebhard, who represented a victim in a previous Berlin trial that led to a conviction, said there was an inner circle of eight perpetrators but that some of the chat groups had up to 50,000 members.

Police only became aware of the network in 2024 after a man in Frankfurt, referred to by German courts as Dapeng Z., changed his tactics from drugging and sexually abusing female acquaintances to targeting strangers he met online, according to prosecutors.

German police arrested Dapeng Z., whom German and Chinese media have reported is the group's ringleader, in 2024 in cooperation with Chinese law enforcement, according to the Chinese consulate in Frankfurt and the Beijing News, a state-run media outlet.

He was sentenced in February to 14 years in prison for aggravated rape, attempted murder and other offenses, though he has appealed. His attorneys didn't respond to a request for comment.

Although authorities haven't publicly said how many women were victimized by the "driving school" network, they have said their investigation is ongoing, meaning there could be further arrests and additional victims. Gebhard's client, for example, only learned she had been sexually assaulted after investigators discovered video footage.

Another defendant convicted in Berlin

On Wednesday, Zhiting S., a 32-year-old trained medic, was convicted of being an accessory to rape, among other charges, and sentenced to five years in prison. The defense plans to appeal the verdict.

The Berlin state court found that in the chats, Zhiting S. had pointed to a particular sedative before an assault by the man convicted in Frankfurt, though he wasn't alone in offering such advice.

Zhiting S. also was convicted on three charges of sexual coercion related to alleged abuse of his partner in China. Video recordings led investigators to those crimes.

Defense attorney Ehssan Khazaeli said earlier that his client has admitted being part of a chat group but did not offer any significant advice.

The tenuous state of a US-Iran ceasefire renews anxiety over high fuel prices

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ and MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The potential unraveling of a fragile truce between Iran and the United States renewed anxiety Wednesday over whether fuel prices would go back up if sustained fighting kept oil tankers from traveling through the Persian Gulf.

Oil prices rose to their highest point in weeks after President Donald Trump declared the U.S. ceasefire with Iran over, responding to Iranian attacks on commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz and on American military sites in other Gulf nations. Costlier crude oil could lead to costlier gas station fill-ups as drivers in many countries were getting a break from elevated prices brought on by the war.

"Tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has essentially stopped, which tells you more about risk perception right now than any statement from Washington or Tehran," said Jorge Leon, head of geopolitical analysis at Rystad Energy, in an email. "Oil markets reacted quickly to the renewed geopolitical risk."

U.S. gasoline prices increased slightly Wednesday to an average of \$3.80 for a gallon of regular, up from \$3.79 the day before, but still well below the month-ago average of \$4.16, according to motor club federation AAA.

Crude oil makes up the bulk of the price of gasoline, so when oil prices rise, gasoline eventually follows. But it can take weeks for consumers to feel the full impacts. That's because refiners make gasoline with oil purchased in advance. The finished product then has to travel through a system of pipelines and trucks to reach gas station pumps.

Gas station owners set prices at the pump, and to stay competitive, they sometimes absorb the impact of higher oil prices instead of immediately passing it along to customers.

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To suppress high oil prices during the war, the U.S. and other countries released oil from their emergency stockpiles starting in March. But those stockpiles won't last forever.

The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve held 319.5 million barrels as of July 3. The last time the inventory was that low was in 1983, when the reserve was initially being filled up.

"Unfortunately, the drawdown of strategic stocks means that there is a lot less ammunition in Trump's holster," said Michael Lynch, a distinguished fellow at Energy Policy Research Institute in Amherst, Massachusetts.

A barrel of U.S. benchmark crude was selling for \$75.80 on Wednesday, the highest price in more than two weeks. Brent crude, the international standard, climbed close to \$79 per barrel, its highest level since June 19.

The market reaction "highlights how sensitive prices remain to any escalation around the strait, given its role as a critical transit route for global oil flows," Leon said.

Shipping uncertainty increases after fresh strikes

A day after the U.S. accused Iran of striking three commercial vessels and revoked the country's ability to openly sell crude oil on the world market, some advised the shipping industry to reconsider whether it was safe to send crewed ships through the Strait of Hormuz — and the wider Middle East.

International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez condemned attacks on ships in the strait.

"As long as the safety and security of crews cannot be assured, I urge flag states, shipowners, operators and all relevant authorities to avoid exposing seafarers to unnecessary danger by transiting the strait," Dominguez said Wednesday. "The situation in the region remains volatile."

Some traffic traversed the strait on Tuesday, according to data and analytics company Kpler, which verified 41 crossings compared to 36 on Monday. It was unclear if the crossings happened before or after the strikes. Some vessels also are going "dark" to pass through the strait and not broadcasting their locations, further complicating a complete count.

With the central route through the strait uncrossable due to mines, ships have been using two other routes, the smaller northern route, which goes through Iranian waters, and the southern route, which goes through Omani waters. The three ships struck Tuesday appeared to be using the Omani route.

An economist at advisory firm Oxford Economics said the ceasefire probably would continue to be on-and-off and Washington and Tehran could still deescalate the latest tensions instead of returning to war.

"The question is whether the latest developments merely represent a bump in the road or if we're emerging from the 'eye of the storm,'" Ben May, the firm's director of global macroeconomic research, wrote in a research note. "While Trump said negotiations with Iran were a 'waste of time', he maintained an off-ramp by noting that U.S. negotiators would continue talks with Iran, suggesting the truce hasn't been irrevocably broken."

The new doubts about the Strait of Hormuz came after two of the biggest shipping companies, Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd, announced Monday that their Gemini Corporation joint partnership would gradually resume service in the Suez Canal, which was paused due to attacks in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthis.

Recent stability in the Middle East created the conditions for the companies' decision, but "the recent deterioration could put this resumption in jeopardy once again," said Judah Levine, head of research at freight booking platform Freightos. "The said."

Hapag-Lloyd said in a Wednesday statement that it made the joint decision after "thorough assessments of the security situation in the Red Sea area" and "if the situation changes or deteriorates, contingency plans are in place."

Analysis: Platner may be done. Voters' hunger for change and willingness to take risks will remain

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

With Graham Platner's campaign teetering from an allegation of sexual assault, there's no shortage of people arguing that the 41-year-old Maine oysterman and progressive political neophyte was always too risky for a key Senate race. However, it's likely more candidates will follow his path in the future.

That's because Platner's starburst candidacy followed an increasingly familiar arc that's shown no signs of abating in American politics — the outsider who defies the warnings of party veterans and captures the hearts of primary voters, even as liabilities pile up and complicate the odds of winning the general election.

With candidates having so many ways to raise money and draw attention — and the public having so little faith in longstanding institutions — the country remains primed for new waves of anti-establishment campaigns, no matter how erratic.

"I think there's going to be a lot more of this," said Seth Masket, a political scientist at the University of Denver.

Platner initially surged on the scene with a grassroots campaign in defiance of Democratic leaders, who had rallied around 78-year-old Maine Gov. Janet Mills as their best hope of unseating Republican Sen. Susan Collins. But Mills dropped out as Platner consolidated support, weathering a steady drumbeat of revelations over a tattoo recognized as a Nazi symbol, extramarital sexting and controversial social media posts that would have wrecked a typical campaign.

But that changed this week when a former girlfriend told reporters that Platner drunkenly entered her house and sexually assaulted her in 2021, an allegation the candidate denied. Even Platner's most ardent supporters have urged him to drop out by July 13, which would allow the state party to replace him with a new candidate in a must-win race for Democrats who already faced a narrow path to wrest back control of the Senate in November.

Traditionally, political parties avoid this sort of last-minute surprise with an internal system to vet candidates. In addition, people running for national office have often previously served in local or state positions and have gone through scrutiny at that level.

That doesn't happen as much for populists who can bypass party gatekeepers and even base their entire campaigns on not being beholden to political professionals.

"I understand that people are tired of politics as usual, it's just that part of the normal political process does vet candidates, and I think people should be worried about unvetted candidates facing Republicans who will have hundreds of millions of dollars to spend to exploit weaknesses," said Neera Tanden, a veteran Democrat who has sparred with progressives over the years and currently leads the Center for American Progress, a party-aligned think tank.

A familiar story for Republicans

Of course, establishment-backed candidates can flame out, too. The last Democrat to lose a Senate race in a sex scandal was North Carolina's Cal Cunningham, a lawyer and former state senator who fell narrowly short of Republican Sen. Thom Tillis in 2020 after the disclosure of explicit text messages with a woman who wasn't his wife.

Plenty of incumbents of all ideological stripes have been brought down by scandals. The biggest recent win by a Democratic outsider came when Zohran Mamdani, a democratic socialist, won the New York mayor's primary last year against Andrew Cuomo, a former governor who was hobbled by a sexual harassment scandal.

Still, there's a longstanding pattern of insurgent candidates getting into trouble of all kinds.

Just ask Republicans. After the rise of the Tea Party in 2010, they lost multiple winnable races because outsiders defied their own party establishment to win primaries, only to lose in the general election. Republicans ended up missing a chance to gain control of the Senate despite outrage over President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act.

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The party lost more Senate races in 2012 only to launch an internal war against outsider candidates and capture the chamber with more traditional nominees in 2014.

Liberal activists have openly hungered for a Democratic variant of the Tea Party, which emerged from disgust at Republican losses during Obama's presidency. Democratic voters stood by their party establishment during Trump's first term, but after President Joe Biden's collapse and Trump's return last year they have become enraged at their own party leaders.

In primary after primary, Democratic voters have favored younger, outsider candidates this year.

"The Democrats are going through what we went through 15 or 20 years ago," said Matt Gorman, a veteran Republican strategist. "They're just in their second inning of this. The rubber's going to hit the road when they start losing winnable Senate seats."

Of course, Trump is the ultimate example of the outsider, populist candidate, one who ran openly disparaging his party's leadership and now controls it with an iron fist. He has, however, an advantage that Platner and many other anti-establishment candidates lack — a decades-long, carefully cultivated image that dominated popular culture long before he ran for office.

"If you don't have a 25-year hard name ID before jumping into politics, this matters," Gorman said of scandals like Platner's.

Liberals still want party to keep its distance

Even Platner backers like liberal podcaster Tommy Vietor were having second thoughts about the process this week.

"Obviously, a big lesson here is that vetting is really important, and some of the vetting gets done by campaigns themselves, and then ultimately it will be done by the media if the campaigns don't figure that part out," said Vietor on the Pod Save America podcast.

Vietor, who boosted Platner but has now called for him to drop out, noted that traditional vetting often doesn't pick up allegations of assault like the one threatening to sink Platner's campaign, but it can highlight red flags.

Even though Platner has not formally decided to withdraw, Maine's Democratic politicians are acting as if he has. State Sen. Troy Jackson, another progressive who opted to run unsuccessfully in the party's primary for governor, filed papers for his Senate candidacy on Tuesday, even with Platner still the nominee. Other Maine aspirants began jockeying for position before the July 27 deadline for choosing a replacement.

Platner's liberal backers have demanded he be replaced by a similarly anti-establishment candidate, saying that would best reflect the will of the state's Democratic voters who overwhelmingly backed Platner in the primary just a month ago. Whatever happens, it seems likely to leave more scar tissue along the fault lines that have split the party already this year.

Adam Green of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, which backed Platner but now has called for him to leave the race, said he hopes Platner's replacement will have a similar agenda and will not let the Senate Democrats' campaign arm "just run their campaign."

"People clearly wanted a voice for systemic change," Green said. "But it's a little unclear exactly what's happening behind the scenes."

Lionel Messi leads Argentina to 3-2 comeback victory over Egypt and spot in World Cup quarterfinals

By JAMES ROBSON AP Soccer Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — It was another World Cup epic from an Argentina team that simply doesn't know when it's beaten.

Trailing 2-0 against Egypt with 11 minutes of regulation time to play on Tuesday, the defending champions rallied for an improbable 3-2 victory and a spot in the quarterfinals.

"We have a phenomenal group, a group that never gives up no matter the difficulties and adversity. We're always together," said Enzo Fernandez, who scored the winning goal in stoppage time.

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Argentina will play Switzerland in the next round on Saturday in Kansas City, Missouri.

For much of Tuesday's game, it looked like it would be a painful exit for the 39-year-old Lionel Messi in what might be the last of his six World Cups.

Egypt led after goals in each half from Yasser Ibrahim and Mostafa Zico and could have been ahead 3-0 if not for a video review that ruled out another score.

Argentina looked down and out, its bid to be the first team to win back-to-back World Cup titles since Brazil in 1958 and 1962 all but dead.

Cue a monumental comeback.

"The heart of Argentinians is always something that pushes, that we keep going no matter what, that we give everything until the end. And honestly, with the score 2-0, we looked a bit beaten," Argentina striker Julian Alvarez said. "There was little time left, but we always manage to get something more by fighting until the end."

Cristian Romero started the rally by scoring with a header in the 79th minute. Messi, who was in tears after the final whistle, scored his eighth goal of the tournament and record-extending 21st goal at the World Cup in the 83rd to level the score at 2-2 and Fernandez completed the comeback in injury time.

"Four years have passed since Qatar, and we've come to enjoy another World Cup — and we want to win it again. That's what we're aiming for," Fernandez said.

Argentina is no stranger to heroic matches at the World Cup.

There was the 3-2 win over West Germany in the 1986 final. Then the 3-3 draw and eventual shootout victory against France to reclaim the title four years ago.

Cape Verde pushed Argentina to the brink in the last round before the defending champions eventually won 3-2 in extra time.

Tuesday's match was even more dramatic, with Messi having a first-half penalty saved and another effort hit the post.

"I'm so emotional," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said. "What a group of players, brother."

Egypt took a surprising lead in the 15th minute when Ibrahim got ahead of Lisandro Martinez to meet Marwan Attia's cross and head the ball into the bottom corner.

Argentina was quickly given the chance to level the match when Haissem Hassan tripped Nicolas Tagliafico in the box moments later. Referee François Letexier pointed to the penalty spot and Messi stepped up with an expectant crowd waiting for him to score.

Egypt goalkeeper Mostafa Shobeir had other ideas, diving to his left to block the shot for Messi's second penalty miss of the tournament after also failing from the spot against Austria in the group stage.

Despite being the all-time leading scorer at World Cups, Messi has now missed four of eight penalty kicks at the tournament.

After Messi hit the post later in the half, Shobeir pulled off another great save to stop Julian Alvarez from close range.

Egypt thought it had doubled its lead in the second half when Mostafa Zico finished off a sweeping attack. But the wild celebrations were cut short when a foul earlier in the move was confirmed on video review and the goal was disallowed.

That second goal for Egypt did come in the 67th from a similar break, and this time Zico's effort counted. It just wasn't enough.

"We looked better compared to the reigning champions. We were better in everything, but the result," Egypt coach Hossam Hassan said.

Hassan said he would not watch any further games at this year's World Cup, believing his team should have had a penalty before Argentina broke away for the winning goal.

"I'm not convinced with this outcome. I'm not convinced with the way things unfolded during this match," he said. "I do not want to try to put it nicely here with beautiful wording, selected wording, and saying hard luck and so on and so forth."

"We have been treated unfairly today," Hassan said. "We have suffered injustice."

What to know about Nigel Farage's dramatic resignation and political gambit

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Nigel Farage says the political establishment is out to stop him. But the Reform UK leader's attempt to prove it has not gone to plan.

Facing awkward questions about his finances, the anti-immigration politician dramatically announced that he's quitting Parliament in order to run again, a move critics denounced as a ploy to dodge a parliamentary probe. His resignation as a lawmaker became official on Wednesday.

Farage said the special election will be "people versus the establishment." But his opponents aren't playing ball. All the major political parties say they will not field candidates against Farage, leaving him to run all but unopposed.

The gambit could backfire further if an investigation into his finances continues and creates a scenario requiring a second special election.

Here's what to know about a dramatic development in British politics and what comes next.

Farage is a skilled political provocateur

Farage only became a British lawmaker two years ago, winning election to Parliament after seven failed attempts, and has led a series of fractious hard-right political parties. But he is arguably one of the most influential politicians of recent decades.

His obsession with taking the United Kingdom out of the European Union helped turn Brexit from a fringe cause to a reality. More recently, he has tapped into anxieties about immigration and social change in a way that echoes his ally, U.S. President Donald Trump, and European populists.

Farage has capitalized on — critics say stoked — concerns about migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, which he has called an invasion, and alleges that white people face discrimination from police.

Reform UK holds just eight of the 650 seats in the House of Commons, but consistently leads opinion polls and was the big winner in local and regional elections in May that led to the ouster of Prime Minister Keir Starmer at the hands of his own Labour Party.

If the pattern holds, Farage could become prime minister after the next election, due by 2029.

The politician's finances are under scrutiny

Farage has many sources of income other than a lawmaker's salary, including hawking gold bullion, hosting a TV current affairs show, public speaking and recording personal video messages on the Cameo website.

Parliament's standards watchdog is investigating a potentially rule-breaking donation of 5 million pounds (\$6.7 million) from Christopher Harborne, a Thailand-based cryptocurrency billionaire. Farage says the money was a personal gift he used to fund his personal security and came before he was elected to the House of Commons. Newly elected lawmakers must declare gifts worth more than 300 pounds (\$400) received in the previous 12 months if they are related to political activities.

Farage is also facing questions about his financial relationship with George Cottrell, an aristocratic crypto-gambling entrepreneur who served a U.S. prison sentence for fraud.

A finding of wrongdoing could lead to Farage being suspended from Parliament, which in turn could trigger a special election for his seaside seat of Clacton in eastern England.

Winning an election won't end questions about finances

Rather than await the outcome, Farage made the first move by triggering an election himself.

But if Farage wins, as seems highly likely, the standards inquiry is set to resume. If it finds Farage broke the rules, there could be another Clacton election within months.

Farage has said he is frustrated and fed up with politics. He has a history of walking away from parties he led. He stepped down from both the UK Independence Party and its successor, the Brexit Party, in the last decade.

Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London, says he suspects Farage will stay put to lead Reform into the next election.

"Fighting and winning a by-election is perhaps his best hope of suggesting to people that he is still very

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much a man alone, fighting the establishment," Bale said.

Farage accuses opponents of skullduggery

Farage insists he has "done nothing wrong" and is the victim of dirty tricks by his political foes and "constant demonization" by the media.

Bale said the snap election allows him to distract attention away from allegations about his finances. But he said Farage risks being seen "as a self-pitying, angry guy on an ego trip who is determined to distract people from some awkward facts."

Opponents called the move a stunt and a sign Farage is on the ropes. Reform UK has lost three consecutive special elections that it hoped to win, a possible sign its support may be sagging. The most recent loss was to Labour's Andy Burnham, who is all but certain to succeed Starmer as prime minister within weeks.

Labour, the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party all said they would not run against Farage.

"He's run himself into a cul-de-sac and it was a stunt," Starmer said Wednesday. The prime minister said Farage is "up to his neck in sleaze and he doesn't want to answer questions about it."

The garbage can that could block a path back to Parliament

So far only one candidate has announced plans to run against Farage: Count Binface, a comedian with a trash can on his head.

Jon Harvey is the man under the can, a self-described 5,000-year-old intergalactic space warrior who is a perennial candidate with no expectation of winning in the U.K.'s highest-profile elections. He has run against former Conservative Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak, London Mayor Sadiq Khan and, most recently, Burnham.

Dressed like a character in a low-budget sci-fi film, Binface offers offbeat policies catering to locals, such as synchronizing traffic lights on a particularly busy street or moving the hand dryer in the Crown & Treaty Pub in Uxbridge "to a more sensible location." A standing pledge is to cap croissant prices at 1.10 pounds (\$1.47).

Binface told the BBC on Wednesday that his main appeal in Clacton would be that "I'm not Nigel Farage." He said the lack of other candidates said more about them than him.

"Are they running scared from old Binny, or do they think that Nigel's running a cunning stunt?" he said.

Russian attacks kill 4 across Ukraine, striking Kyiv for second straight day

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian drones and missiles killed four people across Ukraine on Wednesday in attacks before dawn and at midday, as Moscow kept up its pressure on the capital of Kyiv in the latest phase of the over 4-year-old war.

Ukraine struck oil refineries in Russia's Saratov and Tatarstan regions, according to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who met with U.S. President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Turkey. Trump said the U.S. would give a license to Ukraine so it could manufacture Patriot air defense systems to counter Russia.

Russia attacks Kyiv, hours apart

In Kyiv, several explosions were heard shortly after midnight, even before authorities could issue an alert to give civilians time to find shelter.

The early morning Russian attacks killed one woman and injured two others in Kyiv, according to city administration head Tymur Tkachenko. The State Emergency Service said the attack damaged several administrative buildings and warehouses, as well as a garage complex and several trams.

Hours later, another Russian drone struck Kyiv's Desnianskyi district, killing a second person and injuring six others, Tkachenko said. A total of eight people were injured in the attacks on the capital.

In Kharkiv, two people were killed and 20 others were injured in a series of overnight strikes, according to Mayor Ihor Terekhov. In Zaporizhzhia, a Russian guided bomb injured two people Tuesday night,

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regional head Ivan Fedorov said.

Ukraine's air force says Russia fired 169 long-range strike drones and seven missiles, including five ballistic missiles. Air defenses shot down or jammed 139 drones, and two anti-radar missiles didn't reach their targets, it said.

All five ballistic missiles and 20 drones struck targets at 15 locations, the air force said, underscoring the continued strain on Ukraine's air defenses.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it struck an arms industry facilities in Kyiv, hitting a plant that manufactured components for Flamingo cruise missiles and a facility assembling mid- and long-range drones.

Trump cites a better relationship with Zelenskyy

In Ankara, Trump said the U.S. will give a license to Ukraine to manufacture Patriot air defense systems to defend against Russian missile attacks like those that have been striking Kyiv in recent weeks.

It would be a huge coup for Ukraine, which badly needs the systems that are expensive, in high demand and take a long time to produce. Zelenskyy long has been asking for more Patriot systems, as well as the license to produce them.

"We'll give them the right to make Patriots. We'll show them how to do it," Trump said, sitting next to Zelenskyy. "I think they can produce them pretty quickly."

The tone of their meeting was a markedly different from an earlier, acrimonious encounter at the White House in February 2025 when Trump berated Zelenskyy. On Wednesday, he praised the Ukrainian leader's willingness to reach a deal to ending the war, saying he has "done an amazing job" and "been very effective."

"We've actually developed a good relationship. It's hard to believe," Trump said, adding he believed a deal on ending the war was on the horizon and that the U.S. would "work on some kind of security package" for Ukraine.

Zelenskyy thanked Trump for his support and said he wanted to discuss weapons supplies, possible peace negotiations and a developing drone deal.

"Air defense is the priority," Zelenskyy said, adding that Kyiv wanted to share details of its needs under the Prioritized Ukraine Requirements List, or PURL, in which European allies and Canada are buying American weapons to help his country.

Zelenskyy also said Ukrainian and U.S. officials had begun work on a drone deal, calling it "a very good beginning."

Trump was expected to have another call with Putin following his meeting with Zelenskyy.

Ukraine hits Russian oil and gas facilities

The ministry also said air defenses downed 415 Ukrainian drones from late Tuesday to early Wednesday. Gov. Roman Busargin of Russia's Saratov region said a Ukrainian drone attack killed one person, injured several others and damaged industrial facilities.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine's long-range attacks reached the Saratov, Tatarstan and Bashkortostan regions deep inside Russia, as well as the Voronezh region, closer to the border. The strikes hit refineries in Saratov and Tatarstan, the latest energy facilities struck by Ukraine that have worsened fuel shortages across Russia.

In the Tatarstan region, Nizhnekamsk Mayor Radmir Belyayev said Ukrainian drones damaged industrial facilities in the city and injured several people. Belyayev didn't identify the damaged facilities.

Sergei Aksyonov, the Moscow-installed head of the Crimean Peninsula that was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014, said restrictions on civilian fuel sales would continue and that gasoline would not be available "on certain days."

Aksyonov said many of the decisions being made to resolve the crisis could not be disclosed publicly, adding that he was giving regular updates to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"The fuel supply situation remains strained and will continue to be so for some time," he said. "We are monitoring this issue closely in coordination with the federal government and are working on a solution."

Following a meeting with Putin, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak announced all diesel exports will be halted until the end of July as Russia grapples with fuel shortages. Similar export bans are already in place for gasoline and jet fuel.

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Putin told the meeting that Ukraine's attacks on energy infrastructure was an attempt to provoke anxiety and damage the economy — goals he described as "unachievable."

Russia's Gazprom state-controlled gas company said Ukrainian drones attacked the Krasnodarskaya compressor station serving the Blue Stream natural gas pipeline to Turkey late Tuesday. It said the attack was intended to derail Russian gas shipments to Turkey, but there was no disruption of supplies.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called it another "dangerous" attack against "the critical international energy system" and voiced hope that Turkey and other nations would warn Kyiv against such action.

Rostov regional Gov. Yuri Slyusar said Ukrainian drones damaged two oil tankers in Taganrog Bay, injuring two crew members. The crew of one of the ships had to be evacuated.

He said there was no oil spill because the tankers heading to the port of Rostov-on-Don were empty.

With Le Pen sentencing, France's presidential election veers into the extraordinary

By JOHN LEICESTER and SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France already faced one of the world's most important elections next year. Now it has one of the more unusual.

Far-right leader Marine Le Pen's decision to run for the presidency for a fourth time means that someone found guilty not once but twice of embezzling public funds will campaign to lead the European Union's largest nation.

On Tuesday, a Paris appeals court cleared a path for the 57-year-old Le Pen to run by shortening a ban on seeking public office that had spelled possible doom for her ambitions. Opponents now know who they'll be up against in the election less than 10 months away.

She's using the latest twist in her legal saga to fortify her story of a combative politician who is taking on the system in the interests, she says, of France.

"Her argument is essentially this: 'Despite all the obstacles and all the ordeals I've been through, I'm still standing, I'm still running. I entered politics to carry this national project for France through to the end,'" said Luc Rouban, a senior researcher at Paris' Sciences Po school of political sciences who studies Le Pen's National Rally party.

Legal uncertainty hangs over the election

While the Paris appeals court reduced both the ban and the prison sentence that judges handed down last year, it still ordered that she must serve a year of home detention, with her whereabouts monitored electronically.

The punishment conjured up the prospect of a candidate hoping to lead France stumping for votes with an electronic tag on her ankle.

Whether that will happen is unknown. By declaring Tuesday that she'll challenge the ruling to France's highest court, Le Pen bought time. The court said Wednesday that the process will suspend the sentence that she be electronically monitored, at least until it has ruled.

When the Court of Cassation will rule is unclear. It said Wednesday the process should conclude before the election's first round in April, with the knockout round in May.

"I will therefore campaign without an electronic bracelet," Le Pen declared.

Should she win — far from certain, despite polls suggesting she's one of France's most popular politicians — she would benefit from the legal immunity that comes with the presidency. That rules out any possibility of an electronic monitor while in office.

But electronic monitoring, if still required then, could come back into the picture after the presidency, said Julien Jeanneney, a professor of public law at the University of Strasbourg.

"In practice, however, one could imagine that a judge might decide not to require a former president of the Republic to resume wearing an electronic monitoring bracelet — particularly if the sentence had already been substantially served before" the election, he said.

Le Pen's conviction leaves her open to criticism

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Critics and potential election rivals argue that her embezzlement conviction would make her ethically unfit for the presidency.

"It's not normal," said Bernadette Flament, a 73-year-old resident of a village close to a campaign stop on Wednesday. "A president who governs, who will govern France, who has been convicted, is unacceptable."

After multiple scandals involving lawmakers and ministers, polls consistently show French voters want higher ethical standards in public life and are highly critical of what they perceive as politicians' dishonesty.

Last year, Nicolas Sarkozy became the first former French president in modern history to go to prison after he was found guilty of criminal conspiracy. He was made to wear an electronic monitor for three months.

"There is a strong public expectation on this issue," Rouban said. "Marine Le Pen may try to play down her conviction, but the fact remains that she has been convicted."

Le Pen's double-ticket candidacy isn't what it seems

Le Pen announced that she'll campaign as a "duo" with protege Jordan Bardella — which to American ears may sound like the Trump-Vance or Biden-Harris tickets in the last U.S. presidential election.

Le Pen, a veteran of three presidential campaigns and daughter of five-time presidential candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen, brings experience. The 30-year-old Bardella, president of their populist, anti-immigration National Rally party, is popular with Gen Z, with larger followings on Instagram and TikTok.

In France, it's a break with tradition for candidates to double-team a presidential election. Le Pen says Bardella would be her prime minister if she wins. They campaigned together Wednesday.

But unlike in the United States, French voters only choose one leader in the presidential election. The choice of prime minister is the president's alone and no law would oblige Le Pen to pick Bardella.

The pairing could appeal both to National Rally supporters and to "new swaths of voters attracted by Bardella's youth, communication style and apparent pragmatism, more anchored on the right and more amenable to business interests," said Célia Belin, who specializes in French politics at the European Council on Foreign Relations, a think tank.

"By running as a 'ticket,' they hope to keep this large electoral base," she said.

List of Emmy nominees in top categories

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Pitt" is the leading nominee at the upcoming Emmy Awards, with numerous actors who play doctors on the drama series snagging nominations.

"Hacks," another HBO series, got the second most nominations when the Emmy nominations were announced Wednesday in Los Angeles.

On Tuesday, NBC announced that "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" star Mariska Hargitay will host the Sept. 14 ceremony.

Drama series

"The Diplomat"; "The Gilded Age"; "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms"; "Paradise"; "The Pitt"; "Pluribus"; "Slow Horses"; "Your Friends & Neighbors."

Comedy series

"Abbott Elementary"; "The Bear"; "Hacks"; "Margo's Got Money Troubles"; "Nobody Wants This"; "Only Murders in the Building"; "Shrinking"; "Widow's Bay."

Limited series, anthology series or movie

"All Her Fault"; "The Beast in Me"; "Beef"; "DTF St. Louis"; "Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette."

Drama actor

Sterling K. Brown, "Paradise"; Gary Oldman, "Slow Horses"; Mark Ruffalo, "Task"; Rufus Sewell, "The Diplomat"; Noah Wyle, "The Pitt."

Drama actress

Carrie Coon, "The Gilded Age"; Chase Infiniti, "The Testaments"; Keri Russell, "The Diplomat"; Rhea Seehorn, "Pluribus"; Zendaya, "Euphoria."

Supporting actor drama series

Patrick Ball, "The Pitt"; Billy Crudup, "The Morning Show"; Shawn Hatossy, "The Pitt"; Gerran Howell, "The

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Pitt"; Jack Lowden, "Slow Horses"; Tom Pelphrey, "Task"; Carlos-Manuel Vesga, "Pluribus."

Supporting actress drama series

Taylor Dearden, "The Pitt"; Fiona Dourif, "The Pitt"; Allison Janney, "The Diplomat"; Katherine LaNasa, "The Pitt"; Sepideh Moafi, "The Pitt"; Julianne Nicholson, "Paradise"; Karolina Wydra, "Pluribus."

Comedy actor

Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, "Wonder Man"; Steve Carell, "Rooster"; Matthew Rhys, "Widow's Bay"; Jason Segel, "Shrinking"; Martin Short, "Only Murders in the Building."

Comedy actress

Quinta Brunson, "Abbott Elementary"; Ayo Edebiri, "The Bear"; Elle Fanning, "Margo's Got Money Troubles"; Lisa Kudrow, "The Comeback"; Jean Smart, "Hacks."

Supporting actor comedy series

Colman Domingo, "The Four Seasons"; Paul W. Downs, "Hacks"; Harrison Ford, "Shrinking"; Nick Offerman, "Margo's Got Money Troubles"; Stephen Root, "Widow's Bay"; Michael Urie, "Shrinking"; Tyler James Williams, "Abbott Elementary."

Supporting actress comedy series

Dale Dickey, "Widow's Bay"; Hannah Einbinder, "Hacks"; Janelle James, "Abbott Elementary"; Kate O'Flynn, "Widow's Bay"; Michelle Pfeiffer, "Margo's Got Money Troubles"; Megan Stalter, "Hacks"; Jessica Williams, "Shrinking."

Lead actor limited series, anthology series or movie

Riz Ahmed, "Bait"; Jason Bateman, "Black Rabbit"; Charlie Hunnam, "Monster: The Ed Gein Story"; Oscar Isaac, "Beef"; Matthew Rhys, "The Beast in Me."

Lead actress limited, anthology series or movie

Claire Danes, "The Beast in Me"; Sally Field, "Remarkably Bright Creatures"; Carey Mulligan, "Beef"; Sarah Pidgeon, "Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette"; Sarah Snook, "All Her Fault."

Supporting actor limited, anthology series or movie

Jason Bateman, "DTF St. Louis"; Richard Gadd, "Half Man"; David Harbour, "DTF St. Louis"; Richard Jenkins, "DTF St. Louis"; Charles Melton, "Beef"; Nick Offerman, "Death by Lightning."

Supporting actress limited, anthology series or movie

Linda Cardellini, "DTF St. Louis"; Dakota Fanning, "All Her Fault"; Laurie Metcalf, "Monster: The Ed Gein Story"; Joy Sunday, "DTF St. Louis"; Youn Yuh-jung, "Beef"; Constance Zimmer, "Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette."

Talk show

"The Daily Show"; "Jimmy Kimmel Live!"; "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver"; "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert"; "Saturday Night Live."

Reality competition

"Dancing With the Stars"; "RuPaul's Drag Race"; "Survivor"; "Top Chef"; "The Traitors."

Outstanding reality or reality program host

RuPaul Charles, "RuPaul's Drag Race"; Alan Cumming, "The Traitors"; Kristen Kist, "Top Chef"; Ariana Madix, "Love Island USA"; Jeff Probst, "Survivor."

Animated program

"Bob's Burgers"; "Rick and Morty"; "The Simpsons"; "Smiling Friends"; "South Park"; "Star Wars: Visions."

Outstanding television movie

"Heads of State"; "Miss You, Love You"; "People We Meet on Vacation"; "Remarkably Bright Creatures"; "Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan: Ghost War."

Scripted variety series

"Dave Chappelle: The Unstoppable..."; "The Muppet Show"; "Nikki Glaser: Good Girl"; "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour — Final Show"; "Wicked: One Wonderful Night."

Live variety special

The Apple Music Super Bowl LX Halftime Show starring Bad Bunny; 83rd Annual Golden Globes; 68th Annual Grammy Awards; The Oscars; 78th Annual Tony Awards.

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Outstanding game show host
Steve Harvey, "Family Feud"; Ken Jennings, "Jeopardy!"; Colin Jost, "Pop Culture Jeopardy!"; Jimmy Kimmel, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire."

Why World Cup game balls always make their way back onto the pitch during matches

By MAURA CAREY AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Game balls for World Cup matches have become stars in their own right during the tournament.

The ball has made headlines with its embedded technology and raised questions among fans, including: Why is everyone expected to promptly toss the ball back onto the pitch?

It's a question more out of curiosity than an outcry for change.

The thrill of catching a match ball is short-lived for World Cup -goers as staff members working the match await on the pitch in a ready position for fans to throw it back, per FIFA policy.

Some fans try to get a quick selfie with the ball if they are lucky enough to get their hands on it. A game ball would definitely be a coveted memento, especially for those who have spent thousands on flights, hotels and 100-level tickets.

"I mean, the amount of money that I spent, I should definitely be able to keep a football when I catch it from the stadium," England fan Jack Goodwin said. "I saved up for a house and blew my whole deposit bringing me and my dad out from London."

It's a tradition for American sports fans — catch a baseball at a game and you have a souvenir for life. Bonus if it's a ball from a playoff game or a milestone moment for the hitter.

In soccer, not so much.

"We don't know, and we don't care," one Congo fan said when asked if he knew why fans couldn't keep a ball kicked into the stands. "We didn't come here for a prize, we came here to watch our country."

Baseball fans climb over each other and jump over seats for balls that come their way. Most soccer fans don't have a problem throwing the ball back.

Getting to the "why?" FIFA's policy is so rigid can be difficult. FIFA did not respond to emails requesting comment on this story. However, theories range from tradition, to economic concerns, to the ball's technology, to the flow of the game.

"I don't think there's ever been a policy where you can keep the ball, which, unlike baseball, is a fairly expensive piece of equipment," soccer historian Charles Sutton said. "Back in the day, it was not unusual for there to be one ball at a game. That was it. If it went into the stands, you had to retrieve it or give it back so play could continue. Now you've got them stationed all over the field."

Fans can purchase FIFA balls from licensed vendors or pop-up stands for anywhere from \$60 to \$180. It's unclear how much soccer's ruling body pays for match-day balls, though it would seem whatever the cost FIFA could afford to have a few more on hand to ensure the match is not interrupted if one sails into the stands and a fan holds onto it.

But while Major League Baseball fans eventually won the right to keep balls hit into the stands, soccer has stood firm in its expectations over the years. The evolution of the ball itself has only reinforced FIFA's interest in getting each one back.

This year's World Cup ball, the Adidas Trionda, is the most sophisticated to date.

Gone are the days of hand-stitched, leather, 32-panel balls.

"They've evolved from being natural materials like leather to now being a polymeric material," Georgia Tech professor Jud Ready said. "That's done for a couple of reasons. First, cost, but also, performance, because polyurethane does not absorb moisture like leather would."

The Trionda is a four-panel, thermally pressed polyurethane ball, but perhaps the most defining feature is on the inside, where a 500Hz motion sensor sends real-time data to the video assistant referee system to help officials with decisions, including the oft-controversial offsides call.

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Real-time data also goes to match referees to determine whether the ball has crossed the goal-line. "The World Cup balls have radio frequency transmitters inside to serve basically as a GPS, as well as accelerometers to understand how much force is being kicked," Ready said.

Ready's colleague, professor Manos Tentzeris, said the sensor operates with 99.99% accuracy. Paired with cameras, it can pinpoint the precise location of anything on the pitch down to the tip of a shoe, which can be enough to determine whether a player is offside.

That technology isn't quite as valuable outside the stadium. Ready said the ball relies on stadium infrastructure to communicate with officials, making the electronics virtually unusable outside a World Cup venue.

Balls also must be charged before a match using a cord-free system similar to charging a smartwatch.

Because it's such a process, it seems unlikely a game ball will ever become a keepsake for a fan, but never say never — one day it could happen.

Today in History: July 9, 14th Amendment ratified

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, July 9, the 190th day of 2026. There are 175 days left in the year.

Today in History:

On July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting citizenship and "equal protection under the laws" to anyone "born or naturalized in the United States," including formerly enslaved people.

Also on this date:

In 1850, President Zachary Taylor died of gastrointestinal illness after consuming a large amount of cherries and iced milk on a hot day five days earlier; Vice President Millard Fillmore was sworn in as president the following day.

In 1896, William Jennings Bryant delivered his famous "Cross of Gold" speech at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

In 1918, 101 people were killed in a train collision in Nashville, Tennessee, in the deadliest US rail disaster in history.

In 1937, a fire at 20th Century Fox's storage facility in Little Ferry, New Jersey, destroyed most of the studio's silent films.

In 1943, during World War II, the Allies launched Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily.

In 1944, during World War II, American forces secured Saipan as the last Japanese defenses fell; the occupation allowed the U.S. to put B-29 bombers on the island, within range of Tokyo.

In 1947, the engagement of Britain's Princess Elizabeth to Lt. Philip Mountbatten was announced.

In 1965, the Sonny & Cher single "I Got You Babe" was released by ATCO Records.

In 1982, Pan Am Flight 759, a Boeing 727, crashed in Kenner, Louisiana, shortly after takeoff from New Orleans International Airport, killing all 145 people aboard and eight people on the ground.

In 2004, a Senate Intelligence Committee report concluded the CIA had provided unfounded assessments of the threat posed by Iraq that the Bush administration had relied on to justify going to war.

In 2010, the largest U.S.-Russia spy swap since the Cold War took place on a remote stretch of Vienna's main airport tarmac as planes from New York and Moscow arrived within minutes of each other; 10 Russian sleeper agents were exchanged for four prisoners accused by Russia of spying for the West.

In 2011, South Sudan officially became an independent nation.

In 2018, President Donald Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh to fill the seat left vacant by the retirement of Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Today's Birthdays: Artist David Hockney is 89. Author Dean Koontz is 81. Actor Chris Cooper is 75. Musician and TV personality John Tesh is 74. Country singer David Ball is 73. Business executive/TV personality Kevin O'Leary (TV: "Shark Tank") is 72. Singer Debbie Sledge (Sister Sledge) is 72. Actor Jimmy Smits is 71. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham is 71. Actor Tom Hanks is 70. Singer Marc Almond is 69. Actor Kelly McGillis

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is 69. Rock singer Jim Kerr (Simple Minds) is 67. Actor-rock singer Courtney Love is 62. Actor Pamela Adlon is 60. Actor Scott Grimes is 55. Actor Enrique Murciano (TV: "Without a Trace") is 53. Musician/producer Jack White is 51. Rock singer-musician Isaac Brock (Modest Mouse) is 51. Actor-director Fred Savage is 50. Actor Linda Park (TV: "Star Trek: Enterprise") is 48. Actor Megan Parlen is 46. Animator/writer/producer Rebecca Sugar is 39. Actor Mitchel Musso is 35. Actor Georgie Henley (Film: "The Chronicles of Narnia") is 31.