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Brown County Fair Tickets Available

The Groton Daily Independent has some Brown County Fair Tickets available for \$50 each. 2 each of Cooper Alan & Jackson Dean, Aug. 12, 8 p.m.; 2 each of Tyler Hubbard & Blackhawk, Aug. 13, 8 p.m.; 2 each of Theory of a Deadman & Sevendust, Aug. 14, 8 p.m.; and 1 of Lee Brice & George Birge, Aug. 15, 8 p.m. I do take Venmo. Text Paul at 605-397-7460 if interested.

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



Community Calendar

Wednesday, Aug. 5

Senior Menu: Swedish meatballs, mashed potatoes with gravy, winter blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Wrestling Camp, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., GHS Gym and Arena

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.

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

Groton Chamber meeting, noon, City Hall

Thursday, Aug. 6

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, peas, fruit, whole wheat bread.

First day of football practice

Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

Family Fun Fest, 5:30-7:30 p.m., downtown Groton

Summer Smash, 7:30 p.m., GHS Parking Lot

Friday, Aug. 7

Senior Menu: Taco bake with ground beef, Mexican rice with beans, Catalina blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Storybook Land Theatre Presentation, 10 a.m., GHS Gym

State Jr. Legion Baseball Tournament at Redfield

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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.

The Moon's New Scar

A discarded SpaceX rocket segment was on track to slam into the moon this morning at around 2:35 am ET, likely creating a crater about 16 feet deep and 65 to 100 feet wide. The unintentional impact offers scientists a rare chance to study human-made lunar collisions, which could become more common with the rise of space debris.

The 45-foot-long, nearly 10,000-pound second stage helped launch two lunar landers in January 2025. Atmospheric drag was supposed to pull the stage back into Earth's atmosphere afterward, but SpaceX says conditions including solar activity redirected it toward the moon. This morning's collision will likely have occurred near the Einstein Crater at a speed of roughly 5,400 miles per hour—more than twice that of a rifle bullet—releasing as much force as about 15,000 sticks of dynamite.

The SpaceX collision is the second known accidental human-made impact on the moon, following a 2022 crash by a Chinese rocket segment that created a pair of craters.

US Water Targeted

At least 12 states have reported cyberattacks targeting drinking water and wastewater utilities, with officials investigating whether Iranian-linked hackers were behind some of the incidents. Authorities say drinking water was not contaminated, though some Minnesota residents experienced low-pressure water flow or received boil water notices.

The attacks targeted internet-connected control systems used to manage pumps, wells, valves, and water pressure rather than the water itself. More than 30 systems in Minnesota and nine in Michigan have reported compromises, while utilities in at least 10 other states have also been affected. Officials say hackers changed passwords, altered network settings, and temporarily locked operators out of control systems, but built-in safeguards and manual operations prevented contamination. Iranian-linked groups have previously targeted US water facilities and other US organizations.

There are over 152,000 public water systems in the US. See how hackers can turn critical infrastructure into a weapon—and how a raindrop can travel miles before it reaches your tap.

👉 **Humankind:** A Chicago woman bakes about 100 cookies every weekend and leaves them in a tiny tree house for her neighbors to enjoy.

Arson Arrest

Washington authorities have arrested a man accused of sparking the Old Trails fire, one of three wildfires in Spokane that are 0% contained as of this writing. The fires have collectively burned more than 16 square miles, destroying more than 700 houses and structures and forcing more than 65,000 people to evacuate.

The suspect is 37-year-old Aaron Farinacci, previously convicted for killing his father in 2010. He was identified by a witness who says they saw him bent by the side of the road on Saturday near where the fire started. Farinacci is accused of using a match or lighter to spark the fire and was charged with first-degree arson. Authorities are still investigating the cause of the other two fires. (How do arson investigators do it?)

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Spider-Man: Brand New Day" earns over \$1B globally in six days, a near-record pace only surpassed by "Avengers: Endgame" in 2019.

Ohio State tops college football preseason coaches' poll for the first time since 2015.

Cleveland unveils name—the Sirens—and logo for its WNBA expansion franchise, set to debut in 2028.

Country songs claim all Top Five spots in the Billboard Hot 100, with Ella Langley's "Choosin' Texas" holding the No. 1 spot for the 16th week.

Science & Technology

Leonardo DiCaprio's and Jeff Bezos' foundations cofound and fund a \$200M initiative to save 100 of the world's most endangered species, calling it the largest-ever fund dedicated to the cause.

Carnivorous plants may be more widespread than previously believed, after scientists confirm that a plant Charles Darwin suspected was carnivorous ingests insects (More, w/photos)

Scientists identify the "fecal revolution," a period when nutrients and organic matter from animal waste appear to have triggered an explosion of plant and animal diversity.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close at record highs (S&P 500 +1.8%, Dow +1.7%, Nasdaq +2.6%), fueled by earnings reports.

SpaceX revenue rises 92% from year ago in first earnings report since going public.

Bending Spoons buys productivity software provider Airtable for \$1.2B.

Jeff Bezos to sell roughly 15 million Amazon shares worth over \$4B.

Chipotle removes jalapeños tied to Minnesota salmonella outbreak amid health probe; shares fall nearly 10%.

Politics & World Affairs

Progressive Abdul El-Sayed leads in Democratic Senate primary race in Michigan as of this writing, ahead of centrist Rep. Haley Stevens (D, MI-11); winner will face former Rep. Mike Rogers (R, MI-8) in November.

The House Committee on Ethics launches investigation into Rep. Max Miller (R, OH-7) over ex-wife's abuse allegations.

Guatemala's Fuego volcano erupts, prompting more than 650 villagers to evacuate.



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Groton City Council discusses ballpark improvements, cybersecurity

By Elizabeth Varin

A discussion about repairing unstable bleacher stairs at the Groton baseball complex expanded into a debate Tuesday night over funding priorities and the responsibilities of the Groton Baseball and Softball Foundation.

Some council members and a representative from the Groton Baseball/Softball Foundation expressed concern that the bleachers have become unstable, with sections of stairs shifting when people walk on them.

Foundation Vice President Jarod Fliehs said that while many areas of the bleachers are level, the stairs are a big issue.

"It seems like it's more of a safety hazard on city property," he said.

While those in attendance agreed the issue should be addressed, some questioned whether the foundation's initial project proposal estimated to cost more than \$15,000 was the best solution before other options had been explored.

Councilman Brian Bahr said he has looked at the bleachers, but doesn't agree with the proposal to use a crane to move the bleachers, install new support and a sidewalk, and then move the bleachers back into place. He recommended bringing someone in to add shims and weld them to the bleacher stairs.

"In all my years in building, there's good money and bad money thrown at things," he said. "...Safety is always important, but we can come up with something cheaper and not just land on the first thing presented."

Fliehs also outlined additional improvements the foundation hopes to pursue at the baseball complex, including moving the scoreboards on the smaller fields as they are obstructed by the dugouts and possibly putting some sidewalk leading to the fields to help those in wheelchairs, those with walkers or those with strollers.

The discussion shifted from facility projects to the foundation's role in managing the program when Bahr said the organization should take on more operational responsibilities—such as distributing uniforms and hats to players—rather than relying on city staff while simultaneously requesting city funding for capital improvements.

Discussion ended with no action or recommendations on repairs to the bleachers.

The council also discussed contracting with an information technology management company to strengthen the city's cybersecurity.

Finance Officer Douglas Heinrich said recently the city had an issue with questionable things being looked up on the library computer, which prompted the city to restrict access to the computers at the library to adults only. It also prompted Heinrich to reach out to IT Outlet, a company that already works with the city when they need computer technical support, to see about IT management.

Basically IT Outlet would act as the city's IT department for \$225 a month or roughly \$3,500 a year, Heinrich said. It would allow the city to be proactive when facing future tech issues.

"I'm not saying ours is bad at this point," he said. "I'm just saying things are different now."

Council members expressed support for the idea, and Heinrich said he will keep discussing it with IT Outlet and bring an agreement back to the council for a vote.

Earlier in the meeting, the council heard a recap of the 14U Legion baseball season with baseball players and coaching thanking the council for helping fund their trip to the state championship tournament in Vermillion.

Baseball Coordinator Matt Locke told the council about the great experience it was for the players, especially getting to stay together for the weekend instead of in different hotel rooms around the area. While the season ended on a loss, the players grew so much as players over the summer.

Players and coaches thanked city leaders for their continued support of the program before shaking hands with council members.

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Players at the meeting were Rylan Blackwood, Hank Hill, Gavin Hanten, Knox Mulder, Owen Tewksbury, Trayce Schelle, Tucker Leicht, Hudson Eichler, Graham Rose, Kyson Kucker, Easton Larson, Asher Zimmerman, Keegan Kucker, Carter Boorgen, Mason Locke and Bentley Ehresmann. Coaches were Josh Larson, Chris Ehresmann and Matt Locke. (Photos by Elizabeth Varin)

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2026 South Dakota American Legion State Class "B" Sr. Baseball Tournament

Friday - July 31, 2026

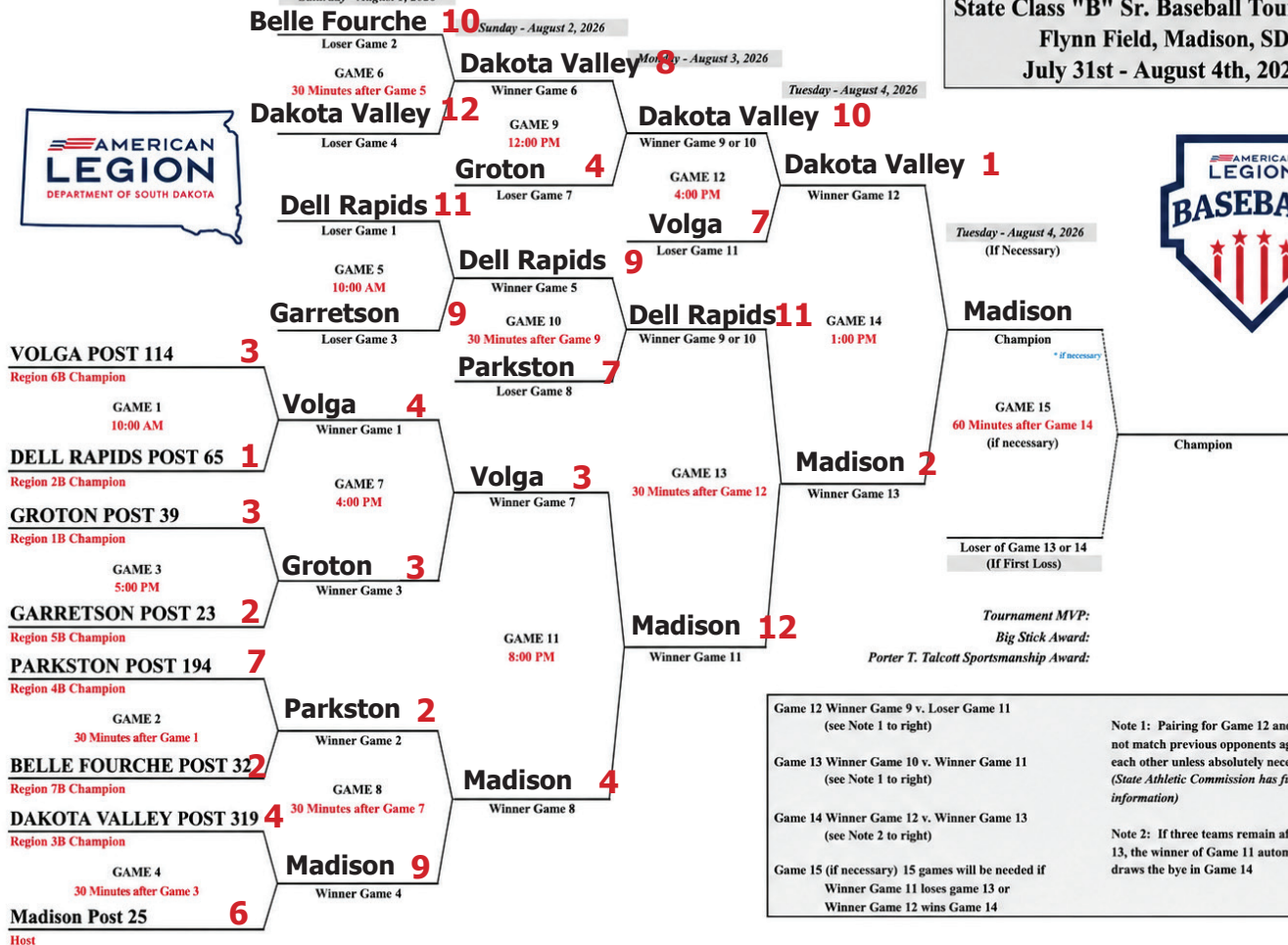
Saturday - August 1, 2026

Sunday - August 2, 2026

Monday - August 3, 2026

Tuesday - August 4, 2026

South Dakota American Legion
State Class "B" Sr. Baseball Tournament
Flynn Field, Madison, SD
July 31st - August 4th, 2026



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Family Fun Fest -Thursday, Aug. 6 ~ 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Spink County Fatal Crash

What: Single vehicle versus train fatal crash

Where: 174th Street and 386th Avenue, 0.25 miles east of Redfield City Limits, South Dakota

When: 7:22 p.m., Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Driver 1: 59-year-old male from Redfield, South Dakota, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2013 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited

Seat Belt Used: No

Spink County, S.D.- A Redfield, South Dakota man died Wednesday in a single-vehicle crash versus train crash near Redfield.

Names of the those involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates a BNSF train was traveling southbound on the train tracks. At the same time, the driver of a 2013 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited was traveling westbound on 174th Street. The Jeep struck the train as it entered the intersection. The driver sustained fatal injuries.

Pennington County Fatal Crash

What: Single-vehicle fatal crash

Where: Bombing Range Road and Sheep Mountain Road, 4.5 miles south of Scenic, South Dakota

When: 7:55 a.m., Monday, August 3, 2026

Driver 1: 18-year-old female from Wall, South Dakota, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2008 Chevrolet Impala

Seat Belt Used: No

Passenger 1: 19-year-old male from Pierre, South Dakota, serious non-life-threatening injuries

Seat Belt Used: No

Pennington County, S.D.- A Wall, South Dakota woman died Monday in a single-vehicle crash near Scenic, South Dakota.

Names of the those involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2008 Chevrolet Impala was traveling northbound on Bombing Range Road when the vehicle left the road. She attempted to correct and lost control of the vehicle, sending it into a roll. The driver sustained fatal injuries. Her passenger was taken to a Rapid City hospital with serious non-life-threatening injuries.

The investigation is ongoing. All information released is preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

South Dakota's Democratic nominee for US Senate drops out

Announcement narrows race to an independent and the Republican incumbent

BY JOSHUA HAIAR

South Dakota's Democratic U.S. Senate nominee ended his campaign Tuesday.

"In recent weeks, my family has faced extraordinary personal challenges," Julian Beaudion said in a written statement. "As many of you know, we experienced a devastating house fire while continuing to navigate significant personal financial hardship."

The deadline for the state Democratic Party Central Committee to nominate a replacement candidate is next Tuesday. The party issued a news release Tuesday evening that did not say whether party leaders will pick a new nominee. Instead, the news release said the party "respects Julian Beaudion's decision to suspend his campaign for U.S. Senate" and added that he "would have made an outstanding U.S. senator for South Dakota."

Party officials did not immediately provide a response to South Dakota Searchlight questions on Tuesday evening.

Beaudion is a businessman and former state trooper. He had been receiving support from party officials, but some other Democrats had been calling for Beaudion to drop out, saying they believe the independent candidate in the race, Brian Bengs, has a better chance to beat incumbent Republican Sen. Mike Rounds. Bengs ran as the Democratic nominee against Republican U.S. Sen. John Thune in 2022 and received 26% of the vote.

Beaudion alleged in his statement that "an opponent and those associated with the opponent, hit my family and I with intimidating threats to drop out of this race."

"Those attacks were personal and never about politics," Beaudion's statement said. "The mental and physical safety of my family is my priority and for this reason alone, I step aside."

The Bengs campaign replied to Searchlight questions by sending a written statement from Bengs.

"I have never spoken ill of Julian, and I won't start now," Bengs' statement said, in part. "He is a patriot and I applaud his action. We were both under a great deal of stress, but I entirely reject the notion that there was some behind-the-scenes conspiracy. Nobody has been attacked or threatened."

The effort to force Beaudion out of the race included American Muckrakers, a website operated by a North Carolina man.

American Muckrakers published articles in recent weeks praising Bengs and sent an email to South Dakota media outlets in June containing allegations about Beaudion, with references to some of the personal struggles Beaudion ultimately alluded to in his statement Tuesday.

The Bengs campaign, in response to earlier Searchlight questions, said it has no formal relationship with American Muckrakers or its author.

Several people who spent decades working in Democratic politics had also been calling for Beaudion to leave the race. They included Steve Jarding, a former executive director of the South Dakota Democratic Party; Steve Hildebrand, who was the deputy national campaign manager for then-Sen. Barack Obama's successful 2008 presidential campaign and worked on earlier campaigns for former South Dakota U.S. Sens. Tom Daschle and Tim Johnson; and Drey Samuelson, who was Johnson's chief of staff for 28 years.

Hildebrand had said there's a stigma associated with the Democratic brand in South Dakota that would prevent Beaudion from winning, and Jarding said "the Democratic brand in South Dakota is dead." They said Beaudion should drop out to consolidate votes and resources behind Bengs. Beaudion said in his

statement Tuesday that he will not endorse Bengals or Rounds.

Democrats have not held a statewide office in South Dakota since January 2015, when Sen. Johnson — who was slowed by health problems — left office after opting against a reelection campaign. Rounds, a former governor, won the race for Johnson's Senate seat and has held it ever since.

The gap between registered Republican and Democratic voters in South Dakota has widened in recent years, and Republicans now outnumber Democrats 2.5 to 1. The Democratic Party has been further subjugated by the rise of independents and voters who list no label or affiliation on their registration, who now collectively outnumber Democrats in the state.

South Dakota Democratic Party Chairman Shane Merrill told Searchlight prior to Tuesday that he disagreed with the assertions by Jarding, Hildebrand and Samuelson that the party's brand is too damaged to win statewide elections in South Dakota.

"I find it rich that the folks that made their living off the South Dakota Democratic Party are now running away from the brand instead of trying to help build and strengthen the brand," Merrill said. "If we would all work together, we could probably accomplish more."

Rounds has used the Democratic feud over Beaudion to raise campaign donations, sending emails to potential donors saying "the Democrats are running a fake independent to flip my seat."

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.

Black Hills highway project pits safety against scenery as public comments pour in

BY MAKENZIE HUBER

Paul Horsted calls himself a "re-photographer." He takes new photos at historic places to show what has and hasn't changed.

His projects have included photography books retracing the 1874 Custer expedition into the Black Hills, and pairing historic photos of Yellowstone National Park with modern ones.

"There's a joy to that for me," he said.

Horsted, of Custer, and dozens of other people who appreciate the beauty of the Black Hills are worried about changes that could be wrought by a state highway project. The South Dakota Department of Transportation plans to reconstruct a 16-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 85 from the Wyoming border to the intersection with U.S. Highway 14A at Cheyenne Crossing, which includes picturesque stretches through a canyon cut by Spearfish Creek.

The department says the \$47 million project will make the road safer for locals, commuters and visitors. But a surge in public concern about the project's potential impact on the scenic character of the area led the department to extend the public comment deadline from June 19 to Sept. 4. The department has received more than 200 comments so far regarding the latest version of the proposal.

Horsted walked near the highway earlier this summer. He saw snails and butterflies, and trout swimming in the creek.

"We can't stand in the way of all development and progress, but something is always lost along the way," Horsted said. "That's what some of us are longing for and aiming to preserve as much as we can when it comes to this project and the incremental development that comes with it."

The organizer of opposition to the project is David Miller, who grew up in Deadwood and lives in Rapid City. He chooses not to live within the Black Hills, he said, hoping to leave as little impact on the forest as possible.

"We would sacrifice a lot of what makes this place what it is for speed and convenience," Miller said of the highway project.

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State says balance needed between beauty and safety

U.S. 85 has been regraded, resurfaced or repaired 10 times since 1950, but hasn't been touched since 2010. The department says the roadway is in poor condition, and the project would also widen lanes, add paved shoulders and extend "clear zones" — buffer areas just beyond the road's edge — to increase safety in case of run-off-the-road crashes.

The goal is to find a balance between traffic safety and preserving the Black Hills, said Mark Malone, department project manager.

"Having a safer highway and an aesthetically pleasing highway do not have to be mutually exclusive," Malone said in an email.

Engineers have been refining the proposal since a June open house. In an email to Miller, Malone said the team plans to "take a closer look" at a segment of the project to "identify areas where centerline shifts may not be necessary." As of June, the proposal had eight locations where the road would be realigned.

In Spearfish Canyon, there's little room to maneuver. Any shift toward the canyon walls risks disturbing rock faces and vegetation, project critics say, and any shift toward the creek risks encroaching on the waterway and its banks.

Malone said that as the department "develops alternatives or refines current options" it will seek to minimize work near the creek and "strive to reduce impacts" to landowners along the road.

About 600 vehicles traverse the highway each weekday, and 850 per day on weekends. The speed limit is 55 mph in most stretches, though curves have slower advisory speed limits.

The June proposal calls for roadway adjustments to provide a "consistent design speed," Malone said.

"This inconsistency on the existing roadway creates issues for driver expectations for unfamiliar drivers as well as leads drivers either speeding up or slowing down," Malone said. "The variations in their speed, especially the large differential between vehicles, create safety concerns and lead to crashes."

Between 2020 and 2024, 77 crashes resulted in one fatality and 31 injuries, a crash rate more than six times higher than the statewide average for "similar facilities" — roads of comparable type and traffic volume — over that time period. The roadway's crash rate is 9.07 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled. A comparable roadway is U.S. Highway 14A, which has a crash rate of 1.27.

About a third of the crashes involved motorcycles and more than one-fourth involved wild animals. Vehicles left the roadway in about 60% of crashes.

Most of the crashes happened in optimal driving conditions, during daylight hours when the road was dry. More than half occurred between June and September — a period that includes the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally — and about one-third involved turning or lane changing.

Concerns about 'incremental development'

Horsted, Miller and others opposed to the project are sensitive to the potential impacts on the environment after witnessing other recent road construction in the Black Hills — particularly on U.S. 385, a \$72 million project from Deadwood to Hill City that widened lanes, extended shoulders, straightened curves and required clearing trees and blasting rock.

Such reconstruction favors convenience over land stewardship, Horsted said, potentially turning U.S. 85 into "just another strip of pavement through the Black Hills."

Horsted wonders if widening the road and shoulders is the only way to make the highway safe, or if reduced speed limits or other traffic-calming measures could work.

Not everyone opposes the project. Robin Nichols Miller, a local who drives on U.S. 85 daily, said the road is a hazard.

"There are no shoulders on this road, so if someone slides or runs off it, they will more than likely incur a rollover crash," Nichols Miller wrote in response to a social media post by Horsted.

She added that some crashes have blocked traffic for hours and that existing pullouts are often too short for large trucks or campers to pull over and let other traffic pass.

"Progress and growth, whether in population or visitors, requires making things safe for everyone," Nichols Miller said. "Many of us who drive or ride this road on an almost daily basis recognize the road needs to

be made safer and can't wait for them to get started."

Horsted hopes the department will host another public meeting given the public interest and the potential changes being considered. The department has said it does not plan to do so.

"We're on guard," Horsted said. "I hope the Department of Transportation will listen carefully."

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.

Governor grants Rapid City \$1 million for industrial park, following \$7.5 million state loan

BY JOSHUA HAIAR

South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden issued \$1 million Tuesday from an economic development fund under his control to support an industrial and business park in Rapid City.

The money comes from the Future Fund, which is built up through fees submitted by employers when they pay taxes to support unemployment benefits.

The governor awards the dollars at his discretion, although a state law that took effect July 1 places new restrictions on the fund, including a more detailed description of acceptable uses and a requirement that awards must be recommended by the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

The grant to benefit Rapid City comes atop a \$7.5 million loan approved by a governor-appointed board in May from the state's Revolving Economic Development and Initiative Fund, known as the REDI Fund. It offers low-interest loans to startup firms, businesses that are expanding or relocating, and local economic development corporations. Of that, \$2 million is allocated for purchasing land and \$5.5 million is for infrastructure.

Another \$1 million is coming from the city's economic development partnership, Elevate Rapid City, which is overseeing the project and was awarded the state funds. The project is part of Rapid City's Catalyst Tax Increment Financing District. TIF districts capture new and higher property tax revenue to pay off initial financing needed to develop a site.

Elevate Rapid City will use the money to help prepare 128 acres of land near Haines Avenue and Mall Drive in the northern part of the city. That infrastructure is meant as an incentive for businesses considering expanding or locating in Rapid City, according to Jack Valentine, president and CEO of Elevate.

"This investment in Northline Business Park will give local businesses room to grow and help Rapid City compete for new employers," Valentine said.

Elevate hopes to have sites ready to build on in 2027.

In a press release on the Future Fund award, Rhoden said the money will help "ensure Rapid City can compete for tomorrow's jobs, businesses, and investments."

Rhoden has awarded Future Fund dollars to several projects this year, including a \$1 million grant last week for Mitchell to develop a business and industrial park.

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.

US Senate stopgap fails to renew more than \$38B a year in state transportation funding

BY JACOB FISCHLER

WASHINGTON — The stopgap spending bill supported by an overwhelming majority of U.S. senators does not address tens of billions in expiring transportation funding, leaving states facing a massive effective budget cut starting Oct. 1.

The 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law, which authorized highway and transit programs for five years, expires Sept. 30. Roughly \$38.6 billion per year in extra federal transportation funding is set to expire with it, even if the continuing resolution the Senate advanced 89-4 Monday becomes law.

The stopgap measure, a version of which has also passed the House, would keep the government funded mostly at current levels, and reauthorize highway and transit programs through Dec. 11.

But it would not renew the advance appropriations that provided \$184 billion over five years for a host of transportation programs under the infrastructure law President Joe Biden signed in his first year in office.

Ben Gilsdorf, an associate legislative director for transportation at the National Association of Counties, said in a Tuesday interview that the advance appropriations funded many of the group's top transportation priorities.

"It's not all of the programs under (the infrastructure law) that would stop without an extension," he said. "But for us, it's several of the most impactful ones."

The National Association of Counties was part of a broad range of advocacy groups representing business, labor, cities, state departments of transportation and every mode of transportation that signed a letter last month asking Congress to extend the supplemental funding.

Funding for Transportation Department programs makes up a bit more than half of the total advance appropriations in the infrastructure law, which also includes major funding for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Energy Department and telecommunications program.

The total advance appropriations for fiscal 2026 were about \$66.2 billion, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Bridges, airports, transit and more

The DOT funding largely flows to state departments of transportation.

Returning to pre-2021 baseline infrastructure spending would leave every state with less federal funding to cover varied transportation needs.

About 30%, \$10.8 billion per year, of the extra transportation funding is determined by formula, meaning the amounts sent to each state vary based on population, highway miles and other factors.

California is the only state that would lose 10 figures worth of funding, at nearly \$1.1 billion.

But even Vermont, the state with the lowest total funding lost, would see \$55.6 million less in formula funds if the funding is not extended, according to data Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chair Patty Murray of Washington sent to her fellow Democratic senators last month.

A total of 10 formula programs representing different modes of transportation would be affected, according to the fact sheet from Murray's office.

More than half of the formula funding, \$5.5 billion, is slated for the Federal Highway Administration's bridge repair program.

Airport construction funds represent the next-greatest funding at \$3 billion per year. The Federal Transit Administration's grant program to maintain transit system infrastructure would lose \$950 million and state transportation departments would lose another \$900 million in federal funding for electric vehicle charging stations.

Other affected programs are for highways in Appalachian states, truck safety inspections, ferry boats and terminals, FTA grants for senior passengers and those with disabilities and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration programs.

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In addition to formula funds, the remaining 70% of advance appropriations is distributed via 25 competitive grant programs, according to the Murray document.

Grant programs to fund ports, large highway and rail projects, transit station upgrades, roadway safety and other projects would be among those losing funding.

Complicating spending negotiations

While the law that initiated the additional funding was bipartisan, there are indications an extension could be a more partisan issue.

Murray said ahead of the Senate floor vote Monday that Republicans did not “agree to our efforts to extend critical advance appropriations for infrastructure” and vowed to continue pursuing the additional funds.

Appropriations Chair Susan Collins, a Maine Republican, did not reference advance appropriations in a press release announcing a deal on the stopgap bill.

Republicans, who hold majorities in both chambers of Congress, may prefer to settle the future of the funding through a long-term surface transportation bill or full-year appropriations measure, Gilsdorf said.

Even if the Senate bill is enacted, there will be an opportunity when it expires to revisit the issue, he said. “There’d be another bite at the apple,” he said.

A person familiar with negotiations who was not authorized to speak on the record said Tuesday that the advance appropriations in the 2021 law were meant to be one-time funding, and that extending them in a stopgap measure meant to preserve the status quo would be inappropriate.

The funding is part of a larger policy debate than is usually considered in a continuing resolution, the person said.

The issue could hang over negotiations for full-year spending bills, likely to begin in earnest after November’s elections.

Senate appropriators have not reached a deal for top-line spending levels for fiscal 2027.

Republicans, at President Donald Trump’s urging, are seeking a massive boost to defense programs.

Democrats historically seek parity between non-defense and defense spending, but have relaxed that stance while the extra infrastructure funds have been flowing. Without that additional funding, Democrats might be less amenable to compromise.

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.

Wildfire veterans fear federal tactics, extreme fires could put crews at risk

Trump appointees have called for an aggressive ‘full suppression’ response to putting out wildfires

BY ALEX BROWN

As millions of acres burn across the western United States, some wildland fire veterans are fearful that aggressive fire suppression tactics ordered by the Trump administration — coupled with extreme, fast-moving blazes — could put firefighters in danger as conditions escalate this month.

Those extreme weather conditions fueled disaster in Eastern Washington Saturday when a fast-moving wildfire jumped the Spokane River and swept through neighborhoods of Spokane, destroying more than 600 structures and forcing 60,000 residents to evacuate. Incident Commander Tom Clemo called the blaze “probably the largest, most destructive fire in Washington’s history.”

No deaths have yet been reported in Spokane, but Mayor Lisa Brown told local journalists the city is “still assessing the potential for lives to be lost.”

“There is not a fire department in the U.S. that can handle a wind-driven event this size,” said Spokane Assistant Fire Chief Lance Dahl to the Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Leading up to this year’s fire season, federal officials with the U.S. Forest Service and the Interior De-

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partment directed their wildfire crews to use a "full suppression" strategy and attack wildfires urgently. Following a hot, dry winter that left much of the West parched, federal land managers said it was imperative to contain fires quickly before they get out of control.

But following several dangerous incidents, including the deaths of four federal firefighters in Colorado in June, some longtime wildland fire leaders are questioning that strategy. Many see it as a return to the Forest Service's decades-old "10 a.m." policy, which sought to suppress all fires by the morning after they were reported.

While many states also adhere to "full suppression" policies that aim to keep blazes contained, federal officials have previously had more discretion to let fires burn under supervision if they're not threatening communities. More concerning, wildfire veterans say, is the possibility that rhetoric from Trump administration officials is putting pressure on fire crews to use aggressive tactics to meet those suppression goals.

Federal policies that sought to extinguish all fires quickly over much of the past century are now understood by foresters to be a major contributor to the current wildfire crisis. In many places, forests that used to experience fire at regular intervals have grown denser than historical norms, with trees competing for water and thick underbrush covering the forest floor. That gives fuel to the fires and contributes to fast-moving blazes.

"No one in the agencies have said it, but it sure looks like (a return to the 10 a.m. policy) when you read the directions," said Jane Darnell, who has worked in administrative roles supporting wildfire response and spent more than 30 years with the Forest Service before retiring in 2020. "We lived with the 10 a.m. policy for 100 years, and we got here. This full suppression promise to the public is a promise that can't be kept."

Many wildfire leaders say they've seen extreme, unprecedented fire behavior this season that only adds to the risk of deploying crews aggressively.

'Full suppression'

In April, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins and Interior Secretary Doug Burgum sent directions to agency leaders in preparation for the summer wildfire season. Both called for a "full suppression" strategy.

"Accelerate initial attack and use a full suppression strategy, in coordination with our interagency partners, across all land jurisdictions to suppress fires early and limit growth," Rollins wrote.

Burgum called for "prompt, decisive" suppression of fires, adding that decisions should be "balanced with firefighter safety and a clear assessment of probability of success."

While both letters mention safety, some wildland fire veterans say agency leaders have put a clear emphasis on attacking fires aggressively. Some fear that crew leaders are being pressured to deploy close to the fire line, rather than choosing the safest place to make a stand.

"I found it disturbing," said Riva Duncan, a former wildland fire chief who served more than 30 years with the U.S. Forest Service. "You've got somebody in a suit in an office who's never fought fires saying you've got to go direct attack."

Duncan serves as president of Grassroots Wildland Firefighters, a nonprofit that advocates on behalf of wildfire professionals.

In addition to the agency directives, wildfire veterans noted the rhetoric from President Donald Trump, who has threatened to impose tariffs on Canada as retaliation for wildfire smoke.

"If managers and leaders are hearing from the politicos, 'put them all out, put them all out,' are we putting people in where we shouldn't be?" said Bobbie Scopa, who had a 45-year career as a firefighter and now serves as vice president with Grassroots Wildland Firefighters. "I'm hearing from some young firefighters who feel like they are getting pressure to take actions. It's stupid and you're scratching your head and people are getting hurt."

The Interior Department did not respond to a Stateline interview request. The Forest Service declined to comment, saying its resources are focused on fire response.

Dangerous incidents

Already this year, fire crews across the country have been involved in a number of dangerous incidents, including the tragedy in Colorado that left four firefighters dead after a fast-moving blaze overran their

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position.

"We've already had nine entrapments (firefighters having their position surrounded by fire) this year. That's crazy," Duncan said. "That suggests to me that fires are moving quickly and growing so fast."

Federal officials have said an investigation team is reviewing the Colorado incident.

"I do trace the tragedy in Colorado to that policy that compelled them to go out and aggressively attack the fires even when conditions did not favor safety or success," said Timothy Ingalsbee, a former wildland firefighter who now serves as executive director for Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics & Ecology, a group that advocates for ecological fire management.

"This policy that compels crews to blindly rush out and attack all fires is just not smart and it's very unsafe," Ingalsbee said. "They're throwing back to the policy of the 1930s, ignoring everything we've learned about fire ecology and fire behavior"

Other wildland fire veterans say they need to see more details before blaming the deaths in Colorado on federal strategy.

"It's just really hard to connect that at this time," Duncan said. "I have faith that the investigation team is looking at that."

But many former firefighters decried the feds' abandonment of "managed fire" as a tool. Under that approach, federal land managers in previous years have been given the discretion to let some fires burn under supervision, so long as they didn't threaten homes or infrastructure. In those cases, advocates say, agency leaders recognized the ecological benefits of fire, along with the potential to reduce the risk of catastrophic blazes in the future.

"The problem is not fire itself, it's our relationship with it," said Darnell, the retired Forest Service administrator. "We can work with these fires that are highly unlikely to have catastrophic effects on infrastructure, keep them on there until the weather puts them out."

Ingalsbee, with the firefighter safety group, shared a similar sentiment.

"Excluding fire from the landscape and attacking all fires, that policy ended in the '70s because it was failing," he said. "It's performative firefighting, it's failing to accomplish tangible goals and it's putting lives in danger. Fire is nature's recycling."

State leaders respond

At the state level, foresters in the Pacific Northwest — the region hardest hit by fires this year — say they have not yet seen evidence that federal agency directives are causing firefighters to take more risks.

Most state agencies are required by state law to suppress, rather than manage, fires. Oregon state forester Kacey KC said the state's landscape is too parched this year to safely manage fires for ecological benefits.

"Every fire we can keep small is good," she said. "Especially in conditions like this, there is not good fire right now on this landscape."

In Washington, state forester George Geissler said he had not heard of federal crews taking extra risks. But he cautioned that federal leaders should be careful of their rhetoric.

"If you set goals, but you don't set a good leadership tone related to safety, you can have those type of decisions being made," he said.

Geissler said the bigger concern this year has been chaos within the leadership of the federal agencies. Under Trump, the Forest Service and Department of the Interior have been hit with severe staff reductions. The Forest Service is in the midst of a major reorganization. And firefighting operations from multiple agencies within the Interior Department have been consolidated into the U.S. Wildland Fire Service, established by Trump this year without congressional approval.

"In the past, you knew who to go to, you knew which position had what," Geissler said. "Now with the rapid changes, the loss of personnel, it's a little bit scattered."

Federal crews aren't the only ones that have been involved in dangerous wildfire situations this year. Two separate incidents in Washington state left firefighters injured as a fire overran their position. One of those incidents, the Lyons Ferry Fire, involved a Washington Department of Natural Resources helicopter crew. Geissler said that was a wakeup call for the agency that fire conditions are extreme this year.

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"When the weather is this bad, all of those (safety protocols) become more and more critical," he said. "We did a full safety standdown over it, because that was an extremely close call for those firefighters."

Darnell, the retired Forest Service administrator, said she would not be surprised to hear of more incidents in which firefighters deploy their individual emergency shelters — last-resort devices that can save lives but do not offer full protection in extreme scenarios.

"We've got conditions on the ground that are so explosive, it really begs us to be really careful about where we put people," Darnell said. "I hope we don't see any significant loss of life for firefighters."

Stateline reporter Alex Brown can be reached at abrown@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.

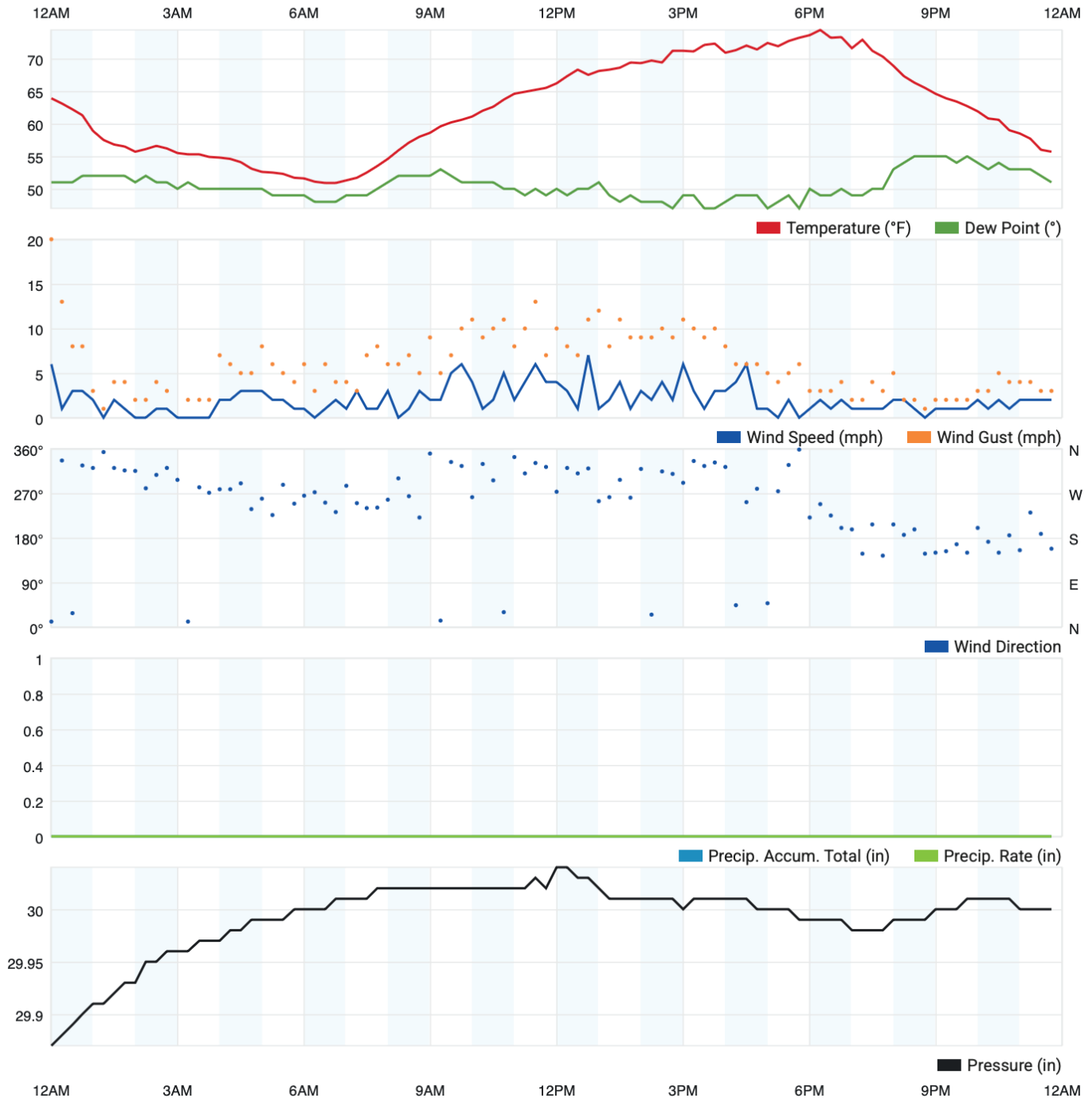
Based in Seattle, Alex Brown covers environmental issues for Stateline. Prior to joining Stateline, Brown wrote for The Chronicle in Lewis County, Washington state.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

August 4, 2026



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Today



High: 82 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Patchy
Smoke

Tonight



Low: 59 °F

Patchy Smoke
then Partly
Cloudy

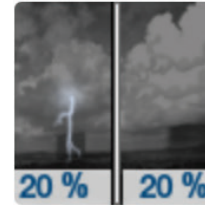
Thursday



High: 88 °F

Becoming
Sunny

Thursday
Night



Low: 61 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms then
Slight Chance
Showers

Friday



High: 81 °F

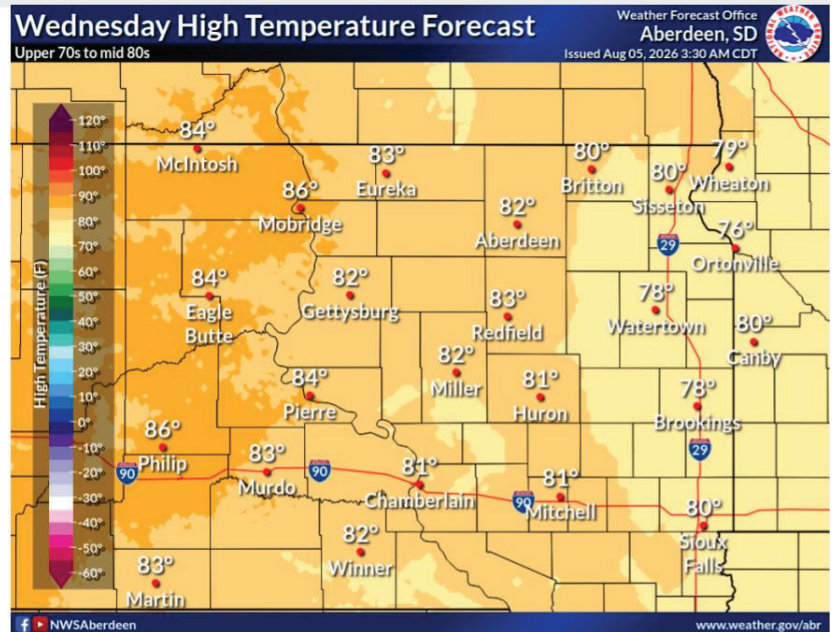
Sunny



Pleasant Conditions Continue Today

August 5, 2026
3:56 AM

- Highs in the upper 70s east, to the mid 80s over central SD.
- Southwest winds 10 to 25 mph across the region.
- Patchy surface smoke across central SD this afternoon?
- Shower/thunderstorm chances (20-30%) return to parts of central/northeast SD Thursday night.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Dry conditions are expected today with highs ranging from the upper 70s east to the mid 80s across central SD. There may be some patchy surface smoke across portions of central SD this afternoon. Thunderstorm chances return to the forecast Thursday night. There is a Marginal Risk (level 1 of 5) for severe storms across south central SD during that time.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 74 °F at 6:14 PM

Low Temp: 51 °F at 6:35 AM

Wind: 14 mph at 12:03 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 1107 in 1941

Record Low: 41 in 1994

Average High: 85

Average Low: 59

Average Precip in Aug.: 0.37

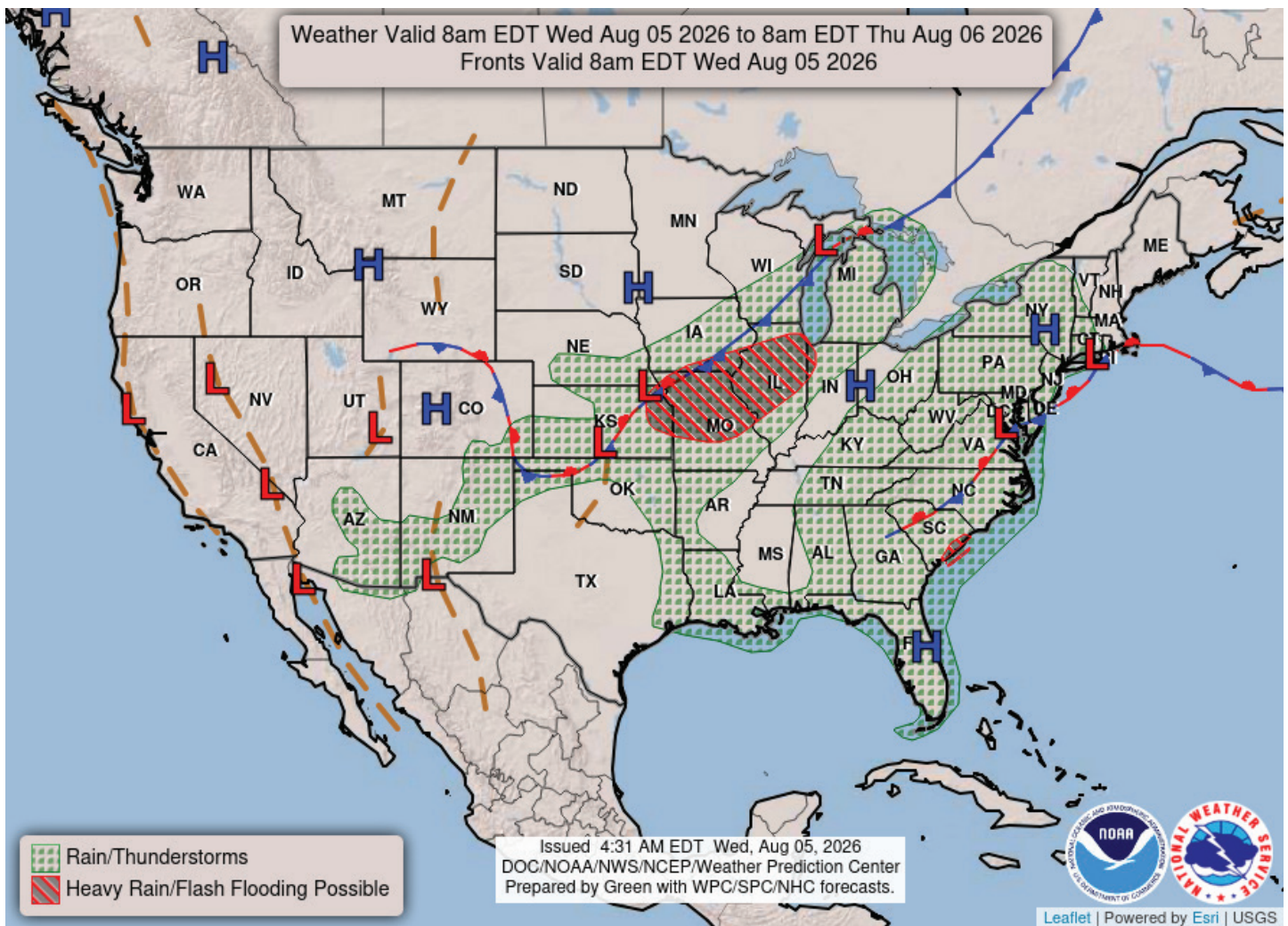
Precip to date in Aug.: 9.79

Average Precip to date: 14.47

Precip Year to Date: 19.26

Sunset Tonight: 8:55 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:22 am



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Today in Weather History

August 5, 1987: Six tornadoes touched down in central South Dakota. Five of these tornadoes touched down in Lyman County, including three which did damage near Kennebec within 25 minutes of each other. One of the tornadoes destroyed three farms, downing outbuildings, power lines, granaries, and killing cattle.

August 5, 2000: A wet microburst with winds estimated at 120 mph caused substantial damage in and around Mitchell. Apartments and several mobile homes were destroyed, vehicles were overturned, and other damage occurred to buildings and vehicles. Widespread tree and power line damage also occurred. Ten people were injured, although the majority of the injuries were minor. The damage path was approximately a mile and a half long and a mile wide, extending over the southwest part of Mitchell.

1843 — A spectacular cloudburst near Philadelphia turned the small creeks and streams entering the Delaware River into raging torrents. As much as sixteen inches of rain fell in just three hours. Flooding destroyed thirty-two county bridges, and caused nineteen deaths. It is believed that several small tornadoes accompanied the torrential rains, one of which upset and sank more than thirty barges on the Schuylkill River. (David Ludlum)

1875: Several tornadoes moved across northern and central Illinois. One of the stronger tornadoes touched down in Warren and Knox County where it destroyed 25 homes and killed two people. Another in a series of tornadoes touched down near Knoxville and moved east into northern Peoria County. This estimated F4 tornado injured 40 people and was described by eyewitnesses as looking like a "monstrous haystack."

1961 — The temperature at Ice Harbor Dam, WA, soared to 118 degrees to equal the state record established at Wahluke on the 24th of July in 1928. The afternoon high of 111 degrees at Havre, MT, was an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Severe thunderstorms raked eastern South Dakota. The thunderstorms spawned half a dozen tornadoes, produced softball size hail at Bowdle, and produced wind gusts to 90 mph south of Watertown. Hot weather continued in eastern Texas. Afternoon highs of 100 degrees at Houston and 106 degrees at Waco equalled records for the date. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Indiana and Lower Michigan to Pennsylvania and New York State during the day. Thunderstorms in Michigan produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Ashley, Hastings and Lennon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — Thunderstorms produced severe weather in Oklahoma, and from Iowa to the Upper Ohio Valley, with 216 reports of large hail or damaging winds between early Saturday morning and early Sunday morning. Thunderstorms moving across Iowa around sunrise produced extremely high winds which caused ten million dollars damage to crops in Carroll and Greene Counties. Thunderstorm winds at Jefferson IA reached 102 mph. Afternoon thunderstorms produced tennis ball size hail at Bay Mills, WI. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotion

Our God Is Able

Jesus is our greatest example of unwavering trust in the Father through every circumstance.

Ephesians 3:20-21: 20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Jesus knew what it meant to have limited financial resources, to have those closest to Him question His actions, and to be rejected by those He sought to serve (Matthew 8:20; Mark 3:21; John 6:66-67). Yet in spite of such opposition, He didn't let circumstances affect His trust in the Father.

We're called to follow Jesus' example by believing that God is able to do what He's promised. For instance, Hebrews 7:25 assures salvation for whoever comes to God through Jesus. The Father will pardon everybody who has genuine faith in His Son and will make each one a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). No matter what trouble a person may have caused, the Lord invites him or her to draw near in faith and receive the gift of everlasting life. God also promises to establish in truth everyone who trusts in Him (Romans 16:25). Through His Word and Spirit, we start to see things as our Father does, which helps us understand what pleases Him.

By believing that God keeps His promises, we grow stronger in our faith and gain peace. Hardships that would once have thrown us off course lose their power. Hope replaces discouragement, and trust overcomes doubt. Next time trouble comes, focus on God's promises and ability to care for you.

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:
08.04.26

5 21 46 49 52 3

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

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 58 Mins 15
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.04.26

14 21 51 55 65 21

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$70,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 43
Mins 16 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.03.26

3 11 27 41 48 7

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,350,000

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 58 Mins 15
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.01.26

6 16 20 30 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 13 Mins 15
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.03.26

11 15 21 28 33 6

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 42 Mins 15
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.03.26

8 30 41 48 54 4

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$786,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 42 Mins 15
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Russian missile and drone barrage in Ukrainian capital region kills 17

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian missile and drone strikes on Kyiv and the surrounding region killed 17 people and wounded 44 others overnight into Wednesday, smashing business premises and a train station, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

The targets hit included a brewing company, a warehouse for construction material, and a mail sorting office that had nothing to do with the war, Zelenskyy said. But the Russian Defense Ministry said the businesses masked ties to the military.

The nighttime attack lasting about two hours was the latest in a series of large-scale Russian ballistic missile strikes that have become near-routine this summer. The intensified barrages are exploiting Ukraine's critical shortage of interceptor missiles for the U.S.-made Patriot systems, the sole air defense weapon in its arsenal able to shoot down ballistic missiles. Zelenskyy has pleaded with other countries to send more of the ammunition made scarcer by the Iran war.

Supplies of air defense missiles to Ukraine during the first half of this year tumbled to one-third of the 2025 level, Zelenskyy said.

"Ballistic interceptors are what could have saved the lives of those killed today," Zelenskyy said on social media. "It is very important for our partners to understand that delays in supplying them, or a reluctance to hand over anti-ballistic systems, lead directly to such horrific casualties and destruction."

Ukraine hits back with long-range drones

With U.S.-led peace efforts apparently stalled, Ukraine has stepped up its deep strikes on key Russian targets such as oil refineries in an effort to compel Russian President Vladimir Putin to negotiate. Zelenskyy has accepted an unconditional ceasefire demanded by U.S. President Donald Trump but Putin has refused.

In its latest attack on logistics facilities of Wildberries, Russia's biggest online retailer, Ukrainian drones hit a warehouse in the Tula region south of Moscow, the company and the region's governor said Wednesday.

It was the 14th Wildberries warehouse to catch fire in less than three weeks, according to a Ukrainian tally. Ukraine says the company provides goods that can be used by the military. Kyiv is also keen to unsettle the Russian public with high-profile attacks.

The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces downed 475 Ukrainian drones overnight over 16 Russian regions, as well as illegally annexed Crimea and the waters of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.

Russia says it struck war-related targets in the Kyiv region

Russia fired 24 ballistic missiles, four other missiles identified as either hypersonic Zircons or supersonic Oniks, and 115 drones, many of them jet-powered and harder to stop due to their speed, in the attack, Ukrainian authorities said.

The Russian Defense Ministry said it struck transport, logistics and distribution centers involved in military activity. It listed four targets in Kyiv, claiming they ran war-related operations.

Serhii Beskrestnov, an adviser to Zelenskyy, said the war of attrition has entered a new phase. "The enemy is attacking everything indiscriminately — retail warehouses, food storage facilities, logistics hubs, enterprises, building materials warehouses," he said on Facebook.

It was not immediately possible to reconcile the different Russian and Ukrainian accounts of the military value of what was hit.

Mykhailo Hukov, a 40-year-old Kyiv warehouse worker, said an air raid warning that included a ballistic missile threat sounded just after midnight, prompting an immediate evacuation order.

"So everyone started running," he told The Associated Press. "I turned everyone around so they wouldn't go back inside for their backpacks."

Minutes later, in an underground shelter, they heard "some very loud, very loud explosions."

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Ukraine's largest private postal operator, Nova Poshta, said a Russian cluster munition destroyed one of its sorting centers in Kyiv.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the center was "storing and distributing dual-use goods, including those used in the production of long- and medium-range uncrewed aerial vehicles, as well as robotic systems and electronic warfare systems." It claimed that two other logistics centers in the Kyiv region stored drones or components for drones.

Separately, the Russian ministry said its forces hit three bulk carriers on the Black Sea south of Odesa that it claimed were transporting weapons and military equipment for the Ukrainian armed forces. Ukrainian officials didn't comment on that claim.

Truck drivers make a narrow escape

Ivan Braga, a 46-year-old truck driver from Moldova who was in Kyiv during the attack, said he and a colleague ran from their vehicle when it was struck by shrapnel in a blast wave.

"We didn't even have time to grab our documents or anything else," Braga told The AP. "I couldn't believe it. I'd already been in Kyiv and had heard explosions before, but nothing like today."

One of the companies that came under heavy fire was Epicentr, one of Ukraine's largest retail and construction chains. It said in a statement on Facebook that "in minutes, Russian missiles destroyed what the company had built over decades." One employee was killed and three others were wounded.

According to the Russian Defense Ministry, the Epicentr logistics center handled order processing, sorting, storing, and delivery of dual-use goods and components for drone production.

Record heat wave impacts people and animals in Japan and Korean Peninsula

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Fans fainting at a baseball park. Lions dying at a zoo. A woman taking shelter in a car found dead. A doctor advising people to eat dog meat to promote stamina.

The scenes caused by a record heat wave in Northeast Asia illustrate how extreme temperatures have gripped South Korea, North Korea and Japan.

In most of South Korea, a major heat wave advisory was in place Wednesday as temperatures in densely populated greater Seoul, home to 20 million people, and adjacent areas soared as high as 39 degrees Celsius (102.2 degrees Fahrenheit).

North Korean authorities have issued a heat wave advisory in many areas and called for people to take safety steps to avoid heat-related health problems.

Japan's anti-disaster agency reported more than 18,000 people with heat stroke symptoms were transported to hospitals during the week of July 20 to 26.

South Korea heat is a 'national disaster'

Since mid-May in South Korea, about 2,220 people have been diagnosed with heat-related illnesses and 19 have died, according to a report from Interior and Safety Ministry. About 17,140 livestock, such as chickens, ducks and pigs, and about 160,000 farmed fishes also have died.

On Sunday, the southeastern city of Yangsan saw temperatures reaching 42.5 Celsius (108.5 Fahrenheit), the highest figure recorded since weather observation began in Korea in 1904.

In a Cabinet meeting Tuesday, President Lee Jae Myung instructed officials to view the ongoing heat wave as "a national disaster" and make all-out efforts to protect lives.

On Tuesday night, a spectator in his 20s collapsed while watching a baseball game between SSG Landers and LG Twins at a stadium in Incheon city, west of Seoul. Emergency personnel administered CPR and transported him to a hospital, halting the game for about 10 minutes.

Another fan in his 20s fell unconscious and received treatment at the stadium after the game, according to the Korea Baseball Organization, which announced Wednesday that all 10 games scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday were canceled and would be rescheduled.

North Korean hospital official recommends cooling food

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Min Son Yong, deputy director of the internal medicine department at Pyongyang General Hospital, told North Korea's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper on Sunday that people should eat dog meat and fish porridge to supplement protein to beat the heat.

Euphemistically known as "dangogi," or sweet meat, dog meat has long been considered a stamina food in North Korea and is traditionally eaten during the hottest time of the year.

Min also recommended watermelons, cucumbers, tomatoes, mung beans and ginger to cool down, the newspaper reported.

Dog meat also has been eaten in China, Vietnam and African countries, as well as in South Korea, which plans to formally ban slaughtering, breeding or selling dog meat for human consumption beginning next year.

Humans and animals suffer in Japan heat

Japan's Environment Ministry issued a heat stroke alert for most of the western and southern Japan on Wednesday. While temperatures in the Tokyo region temporarily fell this week, intense heat continued to hit southern Japan.

In the southwestern city of Kumamoto, relief and cleanup work continued following a magnitude 7.1 earthquake on July 28 that killed 38 people, including a woman in her 70s who developed heat stroke while taking shelter in a car. More than 43,000 households were still without water on Wednesday.

Three lions have died at a Tokyo zoo, with a number of their animal peers developing apparent heat-stroke symptoms.

Tama Zoological Park said, Mugi, a 3-year-old female lion, developed a loss of appetite on July 19 and was unable to stand the following day. Suspecting heat problem, zoo keepers provided ventilation and a water sprinkler to cool her down. The lion eventually died on July 28 despite treatment with subcutaneous fluid, liver tonics and vitamins, the zoo said.

Two other female lions, Ichigo, 11, and Luena, 15, also died within a few days, the zoo said.

Autopsies showed dehydration and multiple organ failure in all three animals and officials say they believe heat was the cause of the health problems.

Stevens and El-Sayed are in a close race for Michigan's Democratic Senate nomination

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI, JACQUELINE GANUN and JESSE BEDAYN Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Moderate candidate U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens and progressive favorite Abdul El-Sayed were in a tight race for Michigan's Democratic U.S. Senate nomination in the early morning hours of Wednesday.

Both addressed supporters, saying the vote count could continue well into the day.

"We knew that this was going to be a close race, and that's exactly what we've got," Stevens said. "I am feeling fired up, and you should be too."

The bitter and expensive campaign attracted national attention not just because the general election for the seat will help decide which party controls the Senate. It also became the most notable proxy battle between the Democratic Party's establishment and progressive wings.

Candidates from the left-flank — including democratic socialists — have found surprising success in the party's U.S. House primaries, including in New York and Denver. Those races, however, were in deep-blue cities.

Michigan has a purple hue. A progressive victory here would be a more significant notch.

El-Sayed maintained a lead as initial results rolled in Tuesday night, though Stevens made up ground as Wayne County, the state's most populous and home to Detroit, reported more votes into the night.

Wayne has historically released results later than other counties, and its voters have tended toward establishment candidates over progressives. That meant Stevens could see a boost as the counting dragged on, though that did not guarantee victory.

The crowds' energy at each watch party was a measure of the race's competitiveness: Early in the

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evening, El-Sayed's supporters in Detroit's Majestic Theatre cheered at the first batches of votes, before mellowing. Hours later, Stevens' previously subdued partygoers roared as she narrowed the margin.

"Whatever happens tonight," El-Sayed told a thinned but still energetic crowd, "we have a responsibility to ensure that we unite, unite to make sure that Mike Rogers never sees the inside of the U.S. Senate."

Former U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers is the Republican nominee.

El-Sayed, a former Wayne County health director, campaigned on "Medicare for All," campaign finance reform and ending military aid to Israel. Stevens, a four-term congresswoman, focused on manufacturing and the economy. She stressed her past victories in tough races, saying she would be best positioned to beat Rogers.

Stevens benefited from tens of millions of dollars in outside spending, including the largest investment in a race ever from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which supports pro-Israel candidates.

Voters also chose nominees in competitive House races and for governor. In the GOP gubernatorial primary, U.S. Rep. John James, who was backed by President Donald Trump, beat businessperson Perry Johnson. In the Democratic gubernatorial primary, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson defeated Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson.

Michigan is a must-win Senate race for Democrats

The race will help decide which party controls the chamber in the last two years of President Donald Trump's term. Those stakes have added heat to the rivalry, with moderates arguing that El-Sayed would have a harder time than Stevens against a Republican in the general election.

That divide was laid bare by the two candidates' heavy-hitting backers: Sen. Bernie Sanders supported El-Sayed, while Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer was behind Stevens.

Stevens won election to Congress in 2018 after serving as chief of staff to President Barack Obama's auto task force, which helped oversee the federal rescue of General Motors and Chrysler. Her campaign and allied groups have repeatedly highlighted that experience.

El-Sayed, who lost the 2018 gubernatorial primary to now-Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, cast himself as the anti-establishment candidate and argued that Democrats need to reject corporate influence and embrace a more progressive agenda.

While the candidate has said he is not a democratic socialist, he found support from some of the group's members. That included Melat Kiros, who recently beat a longtime incumbent in a Democratic primary for a Denver-based House seat and was at El-Sayed's watch party. Also there was Hasan Piker, a progressive and controversial influencer online.

The candidates' differences were clear to some voters.

Kenneth Woodside, 87, of West Bloomfield, said he voted for El-Sayed over Stevens because "the nation is ready for someone who wants to take some more action rather than on the road we are now, which is on the road to an oligarchy and authoritarianism."

Nessa Fuller, 51, of Birmingham, said she voted for Stevens because she will "fight to get the right things done, and she'll work with other people, which is really important to me."

Outside influences spent millions on the Senate race

National groups poured unprecedented sums into the race, making it one of the country's biggest tests of outside spending.

Groups backing Stevens spent more than \$50 million, led by more than \$30 million from AIPAC and its affiliates.

The spending thrust Israel policy into the center of the race even though the ads never mentioned it. While El-Sayed called for ending military aid to Israel, Stevens maintained strong support for the relationship.

Israel became a contentious issue within the Democratic Party amid a war in Gaza that killed more than 73,000 Palestinians in its retaliatory offensive after about 1,200 people were killed and 251 hostages were taken in attacks by the militant group Hamas.

Voters also decided on governor and US House matchups

Trump traveled to Michigan on July 27 and gave a speech at a General Motors plant, at one point call-

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ing the gubernatorial hopeful James and several other Republican politicians, including Rogers, onstage. Before his primary win, James, a second-term congressman, ran twice unsuccessfully for Senate. The primary turned uglier than Republicans hoped, with Johnson spending big sums of money on ads targeting James.

There are several competitive House races this year that will help decide whether Republicans hold their slim majority or Democrats reclaim the chamber.

In the 4th District, which stretches along Lake Michigan, Democratic state Sen. Sean McCann beat election newcomer Diop Harris II to become the nominee. He will face GOP Rep. Bill Huizenga, who again won his party's nomination.

In the 7th District, community organizer William Lawrence defeated former U.S. Ambassador Bridget Brink and former Navy Seal Matt Maasdam to win the Democratic nomination. Lawrence will challenge Republican Rep. Tom Barrett in the seat representing the Lansing area.

The 10th District, which opened up due to James' run for governor, includes a portion of Oakland County and stretches across conservative communities in Macomb County.

In the GOP primary there, Trump-endorsed Michael Bouchard beat Steffan Demetropoulos and Justin Kirk. For the Democrats, former prosecutor Christina Hines defeated state House Rep. Tim Greimel and former Commerce Department attorney Eric Chung.

And in a heavily Democratic district representing Detroit, the 13th, Rep. Shri Thanedar looked to fend off a primary challenge from state Rep. Donovan McKinney, who argued that the city should once again have a Black representative in Congress. After Thanedar won election in 2022, Detroit had no Black representation in Congress for the first time since the early 1950s.

Trump says deal to reopen Strait of Hormuz could come as early as Wednesday

By ELENA BECATOROS, SAMY MAGDY and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump said a deal on the Strait of Hormuz could come as early as Wednesday, as Iran and Oman inched toward an agreement to reopen the critical waterway and potentially help bring an end to the war.

Israel and the U.S. originally cited goals including toppling Tehran's government and ending its nuclear program, but the war has devolved into a fight over the strait as Iran's attacks and threats ground shipping to a halt.

Closure of the strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil and natural gas once passed, has driven up the price of fuel and basic goods far beyond the region, roiling the global economy. Trump is also under mounting pressure to end an unpopular war ahead of midterm congressional elections scheduled for later this year.

Trump says deal to reopen strait is close

The U.S. president was asked by reporters traveling with him in California about a report on the Axios news site that an announcement on the Strait of Hormuz could be made on Wednesday.

"It could happen. Tomorrow or the next day," he said, speaking on Tuesday evening California time. "A lot of progress has been made."

Oil prices eased Wednesday on hopes of a deal that would allow shipping to resume. Brent crude, the international standard, slipped by 1.2% to \$78.43 per barrel early Wednesday.

The U.S. and Iran reached a deal to open the strait in June, only for attacks to resume. In recent days, Trump has again alternately threatened massive strikes and voiced support for diplomatic efforts.

Ships attacked in Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz

Even as hopes increased that a deal on the Strait of Hormuz could be imminent, attacks on shipping in the region continued.

The Iranian-backed Houthi rebels claimed Wednesday they had fired ballistic missiles toward a Saudi oil

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tanker called the Wafa in the Red Sea. Brig. Gen. Yahya Sare, a military spokesman for the Houthis, made said in a pre-recorded statement that the vessel was targeted in the northern Red Sea off the Saudi port city of Yanbu. He didn't provide evidence.

There was no immediate comment from Saudi Arabia.

The attack is part of a recent escalation between the rebels and Saudi Arabia which threatened to reignite the Yemen civil war four years after the two sides reached a de-facto truce. In July, the Houthis announced they were closing the Bab el-Mandeb Strait that leads to the Red Sea for Saudi-linked shipping in retaliation for the kingdom's blockade on Yemen and an attack on the international airport in Yemen's rebel-held capital, Sanaa.

On Tuesday, an Indian-flagged commercial ship sank in the Red Sea off Yemen after being struck by an explosive-laden boat, Yemeni and Indian authorities said. Yemen's coast guard rescued the crew, which included 13 Indians and a Yemeni. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Earlier Tuesday, a cargo ship reported being "hit by an unknown projectile" while traversing the Strait of Hormuz, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center.

The center said the reported strike damaged the vessel at around 2 a.m. local time, about 37 kilometers (23 miles) northeast of the Omani port city of Al Khasab. The British maritime security firm Ambrey said the ship sustained damage.

The agreement would see routes controlled by Iran and Oman, regional officials tell AP

The possible agreement emerging from talks between Iran and Oman calls for ships to enter the Persian Gulf through an Iranian-controlled route and exit through a route controlled by Oman, two regional officials told The Associated Press. Service fees would be charged for providing security and preserving the maritime environment, the officials said.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations.

The Trump administration has previously ruled out any deal that would give Iran control over the strait, which was an open international waterway before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28. About one fifth of the world's oil and natural gas passed through the strait, but shipping through the waterway has been reduced to a trickle at best by Iran's attacks since the start of the war.

In an exchange with reporters on Monday, the U.S. president reiterated his public opposition to tolls being charged in the strait. "I'm not going to let them charge," Trump said. "Anybody's going to charge, we'll charge."

The regional officials said negotiations are still underway and that the final agreement could take a different form, with any deal linked to lifting the U.S. blockade on Iran's ports.

US and Iranian officials say progress is being made

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Tuesday that Tehran's talks with Oman were focused on "establishing safe inbound and outbound shipping lanes," routes that "uphold sovereign rights while also addressing the national security considerations of both Iran and Oman."

"The final results of these negotiations will be announced once concluded," he added, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed progress had been made in those talks, "but not finality yet."

Rubio has previously ruled out any deal that would give Iran control over the strait, saying last month that would create a "very dangerous precedent" for other parts of the world.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told CNBC that "there is a chance we may have a deal today or tomorrow to open the strait and move towards a more normalized position in this conflict."

Trump said Monday that the U.S. was in talks with Iran, saying it was Tehran's "last chance" to reach a deal and avoid another U.S. military escalation. Iran has denied it is negotiating with the U.S., saying the talks are only with Oman.

"The first phase is the opening of the straits. The second phase will be the denuclearization," Trump said. "And that will take a little while."

Oil prices and world shares gain after Wall Street hits fresh records on strong corporate earnings

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Shares advanced in Europe and Asia on Wednesday after the U.S. stock market rallied to records, helped by strong corporate earnings reports and hopes for a deal setting the stage for talks that might eventually lead to an end to the war in Iran.

Oil prices resumed their ascent, with Brent crude gaining more than 1%.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX rose 0.3% to 26,268.90, while the CAC 40 in Paris edged less than 0.1% higher. Britain's FTSE 100 was up 0.2% at 10,898.40.

The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were up 0.2%.

Benchmarks jumped more than 3% in Tokyo and Seoul as shares in computer chipmakers and other AI-related companies advanced.

Japan's Nikkei 225 gained 3.7% to 66,300.44, with chipmaker Kioxia surging 4.2% while chip testing equipment maker Advantest soared 8.8%.

The Kospi in Seoul shot up 3.8% to 6,598.26, led by a 5.8% gain for memory chipmaker SK Hynix. Tech giant Samsung Electronics advanced 2.5%.

Taiwan's Taix advanced 2.9% as major chipmaker TSMC gained 3.7%.

"Clearly today the market is rallying on the back of AI stocks. You look across the other sectors, there's a bit of activity here and there, but really the focus has been back on semiconductors, technology and AI," said Neil Newman, head of strategy for Astris Advisory Japan.

Elsewhere in the region, the Shanghai Composite index picked up 1.5% to 3,878.43, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 0.4% to 25,915.82.

In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.9% to 9,227.80.

The Sensex slipped 0.2% after the Reserve Bank of India chose to keep its key repo rate unchanged at 5.25%, saying the economy was resilient despite shocks from the Iran war, but risks remained.

Declines in oil prices have buoyed shares.

Brent crude, the international standard, reversed early losses, gaining 1.4% to \$80.45 per barrel early Wednesday. On Tuesday, it sank 5.3% as hopes rose for progress toward a full reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. Oil prices swung between \$72 and \$102 through July on uncertainty about when calm in the Middle East would allow oil tankers to freely exit the Persian Gulf again to deliver crude around the world.

Iran and Oman were inching toward a deal to reopen the strait, though that appears to be contingent on the United States lifting its blockade on Iran's ports.

"All in all, it's looking much brighter. We're still not completely out of the woods yet, but I think we're seeing some route out of this now and it's been reflected in the markets," Newman said.

U.S. benchmark crude picked up 0.7% to \$76.29 per barrel.

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 shot up 1.8%, topping its prior all-time high set in June. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 1.7% to its own record set the day before, while the Nasdaq composite jumped 2.6%.

Profits are piling up for companies as easing oil prices assuage worries about inflation.

Palantir Technologies helped lead the way, surging 29.5% after its CEO Alex Karp said its overall revenue leaped 93% in what he called an "otherworldly" quarter.

Such reports have helped to allay worries over a possible bubble in stock prices because of the AI boom.

Shares in Chipotle Mexican Group tumbled 9.7%, however, on fears that its future profits could be hurt after the chain removed jalapeños from some of its restaurants following a salmonella outbreak. Chipotle said that Minnesota health officials have no ongoing concerns with it.

Reports on the U.S. economy showed it remains resilient even though inflation is worse than anyone would like. U.S. employers were advertising nearly 7.4 million job openings at the end of June, the Labor Department said, a slight slowdown from May's level but close to economists' expectations.

In other dealings early Wednesday, the U.S. dollar slipped to 157.81 Japanese yen from 157.74 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1535 from \$1.1532.

WHO chief arrives in Congo to support Ebola response as cases near 4,000

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — The head of the World Health Organization has arrived in Congo to support measures being ramped up to slow the world's fastest-growing Ebola outbreak, the agency said Wednesday, as confirmed cases reach nearly 4,000.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus arrived in Kinshasa, Congo's capital, late Tuesday night and is scheduled to meet with partners and Congo's President Félix Tshisekedi, the WHO country office told The Associated Press. It's his second visit to the country since the outbreak was declared in mid-May.

The Ebola outbreak reached 3,874 cases, including 1,751 deaths as of Monday, according to the latest data published overnight by Congo's Ministry of Health.

The outbreak has eclipsed all other Ebola outbreaks in history in terms of rate of transmission and is the second-largest outbreak on record, only behind the 2014-2016 West Africa outbreak that recorded more than 28,000 cases, including over 11,000 deaths.

The Bundibugyo virus that is causing the outbreak has no approved treatment or vaccine, and local officials believe the outbreak had been raging on in a remote part of eastern Congo long before it was declared on May 15.

Most of the new cases being recorded in the outbreak are outside of contacts being monitored after their exposure to patients, showing that Ebola is still spreading faster than the response that has been expanding.

In Ituri province, the epicenter which accounts for nearly 90% of cases, many localities are still not accessible due to safety concerns amid rebel conflict. Many health workers have gone on strike to protest lack of payment, although some have reported receiving their payment in recent days.

The Africa Centers for Disease and Control Director-General Dr. Jean Kaseya said Tuesday when he visited Bunia, Ituri's capital, that contact tracing isn't working, with at least 60-70% of new cases coming outside of the contact list.

"We need to be innovative on the way to approach the contact list," Kaseya said.

Late detection of cases remains challenging and has been a key contributing factor to the 45% fatality rate, officials say. The 77 new cases reported in the previous 24 hours included 44 deaths, according to the health ministry's update.

At least 717 patients are in isolation while 749 patients have recovered.

A rare glimpse into Tibet, where some hope to preserve language and customs despite China's new law

By E. EDUARDO CASTILLO Associated Press

LHASA, Tibet (AP) — Kalsang Lhamo traces a series of vertical strokes, slow but firm, practicing Tibetan calligraphy. A 73-year-old retired nurse, she has spoken Tibetan all her life but never learned to write it. Now, in classes at a center for older adults, she immerses herself in the script.

Lhamo also speaks and writes Chinese, which China mandated as its primary language for schools and government agencies in a sweeping new "ethnic unity" law implemented July 1. Under the new regulations, acts deemed to incite division among China's 56 ethnic groups are prohibited, and schools, families and other institutions are expected to foster patriotism, national unity and a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation.

The law has been widely criticized as a way to further erode the rights of Tibetans and other minorities, and for the authority it gives Beijing to target activities it considers separatist, even outside China. The Chinese government has dismissed foreign criticism as "ideological bias."

In Tibet — a remote Himalayan region officially designated autonomous but tightly controlled by Beijing — the stakes are particularly high. This year, China is marking the 75th anniversary of what it calls the

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"peaceful liberation" of Xizang — the Chinese name for Tibet — an event many Tibetans in exile and other critics regard as an invasion.

Some Tibetan activists say the new law represents more forced cultural assimilation and extended control over ethnic minorities. Rights groups say language policies have already been implemented in other minority regions, including expanded Mandarin education for Uyghurs in Xinjiang and the replacement of some Mongolian-language instruction with Mandarin in Inner Mongolia.

"Minority communities that seek to maintain their culture will be pushed toward a double life of public conformity and private reservations," wrote James Leibold from La Trobe University and Tenzin Dorjee from the advocacy group Tibet Action Institute in Foreign Affairs magazine.

The Associated Press last month joined a government-organized trip to Tibet, including stops in the regional capital, Lhasa, and the city of Shannan, where authorities arranged visits to palaces, Buddhist temples, tourist sites, local businesses and the eldercare center where Lhamo studies. Government officials accompanied the foreign journalists throughout the visit, and AP journalists were not free to move around or conduct reporting independently. The AP retained full editorial control of its content.

Reminders that Tibet is part of China are everywhere, from Chinese airport welcome messages and billboards promoting ethnic unity to Chinese national flags and President Xi Jinping portraits in public squares and buildings.

Some Tibetans, like Lhamo, have found ways to embrace their language and identity, even as critics say the new law pushes China's majority Han culture. In Tibet, that can mean studying the Tibetan script, speaking it at home and with family members, preserving traditional weaving and attending Buddhist rituals.

At these religious sites in Tibet, no signs or references to the Dalai Lama

At the Jokhang Temple, one of Tibet's holiest religious sites, Tibetans and Han Chinese visited. Some rested outside. Most people in Tibet practice Tibetan Buddhism.

"As a Tibetan, I think it's important to preserve our language and our culture," said Qongqiu Quco, a 19-year-old student who came with her aunts, some of them Buddhist nuns.

"Everyone in our ethnic group hopes that our culture can be passed down to future generations," said Quco, an aspiring teacher who speaks Tibetan much of the time. But at school, she noted, students speak different Tibetan dialects, so they use Mandarin.

For Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama is their spiritual leader. But at Jokhang Temple, there are no signs or references to the current Dalai Lama, who has lived in exile since fleeing to India after a failed 1959 uprising against Chinese rule.

The succession of the 14th Dalai Lama, who established a government-in-exile unrecognized by Beijing, has become one of the most contentious issues surrounding Tibet. The Dalai Lama has said his successor could be born outside China and that only his office has the authority to recognize his reincarnation.

Beijing says the selection must comply with Chinese law and receive government approval. China has long accused the Dalai Lama of promoting separatism.

The Potala Palace, one of Tibet's most revered sites and once the winter residence of the Dalai Lamas, also had no public reference to the current leader. Thousands visit daily — tourists from across China and local Buddhist believers who pray and leave offerings, including money.

Today, the Chinese national flag flies there.

China's unity law 'codifies' a policy that's already playing out, an expert says

Benno Weiner, a professor and historian on modern China and Tibet at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, said many effects of the policy shift have already been visible for years — particularly stripped-away education and language rights.

"I don't think the law itself changes things," he said. "I think it sort of codifies and sort of summarizes a trend that's been going on."

Beijing says the policies improve educational opportunities and ensure equal access for ethnic minorities.

The same week as AP's government-organized trip, China's No. 4-ranked Communist Party leader, Wang Huning, toured Tibet, where he said the priority in governing the region was maintaining stability. He

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called for the implementation of the unity law and urged authorities to "guide Tibetan Buddhism to adapt to socialist society," according to a report by state news agency Xinhua.

On its trip, AP visited a traditional Tibetan medicine facility; artisan workshops and cultural centers with traditional crafts, including ceramic making and textile weaving; and a Tibetan opera performance, where workers and performers spoke about the importance of preserving local traditions.

Weiner noted that the Chinese government's approach to cultural preservation often emphasizes elements seen as less politically sensitive and suitable for tourism.

"The parts of culture that they want to protect and maybe even enhance are the sort of anodyne or nondangerous clothing, certain celebrations that are not religious in many cases," he said. "Things that maybe not that coincidentally also attract tourists."

At the Tibet Museum, an exhibit highlights Tibet's historical links with Chinese dynasties over centuries, a narrative Beijing uses to argue that Tibet has long been part of China. Many Tibetans in exile dispute that, arguing that Tibet was independent for much of its history.

Laba Ciren, the Communist Party's official in charge of the museum, spoke to journalists about the new law. "It only brings benefits and does not have any negative effects," he said.

Billboards carry the law's message: Promote integration

Access to Tibet is tightly restricted for foreigners. But for those who do arrive, a first observation — after the thinner air, with Lhasa Gonggar International Airport at 3,600 meters (11,800 feet) elevation — might be the official welcome messages.

Some signs are written in Chinese and Tibetan. But outside the terminal, a large sign, in Chinese, says simply: "Xizang welcomes you."

From highways to city streets in Lhasa and Shannan, billboards promoting ethnic unity are a constant presence. In part, one reads, in Mandarin and then Tibetan: "Forge a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation."

In Lhasa, Lhamo retired 22 years ago. With her children grown, she tries to make it to classes at the center every day — writing, grammar, poetry — in part because she wasn't able to attend school as a child.

"Our mother tongue is the Tibetan language," she said proudly.

Afghanistan's child deaths are rising as food distributions face cuts, UN says

By GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Child malnutrition has reached critical levels in a third of Afghanistan's provinces and is expected to worsen as funding shortfalls force cuts in food distributions and other support, the U.N. World Food Program said Tuesday.

"We must act now to stem the rise in child deaths, which this crisis is provoking," John Aylieff, WFP's country director in Afghanistan, said in a statement, adding that "it is already too late for too many."

Afghanistan continues to recover from decades of conflict and upheaval, including the chaotic withdrawal of U.S. forces in 2021 as the Taliban took power.

Olga Cherevko, spokesperson for the U.N. humanitarian office in Afghanistan, said nutrition specialists report that "wasting among children has worsened this year in over three-quarters of the country." Children suffering from a condition known as wasting are acutely malnourished, become very thin for their height, and need immediate therapeutic feeding.

But "too many children arrive at health facilities severely malnourished" while others never make it, Cherevko told reporters at U.N. headquarters by video from Afghanistan, where she has traveled across the country in recent months and weeks.

WFP said 142 health centers closed in 2025 because of aid reductions and more than 13,000 children lost access to nutrition treatment. It did not mention any specific donor, such as the United States, where the Trump administration has made sweeping cuts in foreign aid.

Nearly 3.7 million Afghan children are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year, along with

1.2 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, according to WFP.

The agency said 12 Afghan provinces have reached critical levels of acute child malnutrition, a record number. It cited a combination of conflict, unemployment, rising food prices, disease outbreaks, poor water and sanitation and reduced humanitarian funding.

Deliveries delayed by the Iran war and other fighting

WFP said supply shortages linked to conflict in the Middle East and the nine-month closure of Pakistan's border because of fighting between the neighbors have disrupted deliveries of nutrition products, leaving nearly one million malnourished women and children without essential nutrition services for five months.

From August through October, WFP said food distributions aimed at preventing famine in the worst-hit areas are being suspended due to lack of funding, even though the annual peak season for malnutrition is between July and October.

It said it urgently needs \$540 million over the next six months.

WFP previously described cuts as 'devastating'

Humanitarian groups in Afghanistan are grappling with steep funding cuts. In February, Aylieff told The Associated Press that cuts had been "devastating" and were forcing the agency to turn away three out of four acutely malnourished children.

Funding for food assistance has dropped sharply — by about 59% since 2022 — even as needs have surged, according to a recent WFP report.

In June, the U.S. pledged \$800 million to WFP, which said it will help more than 38 million people in at least 37 countries.

Cherevko of the U.N. humanitarian office said the larger \$1.71 billion humanitarian appeal for Afghanistan is just over 26% funded, which is "alarming," especially since malnutrition and other indicators are worsening.

A man carrying ammo was monitoring security at Trump golf course near Los Angeles, authorities say

By JAIMIE DING Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) —

A man carrying ammunition and with a gun in his vehicle was arrested Sunday at President Donald Trump's Los Angeles-area golf course after appearing to monitor security preparations ahead of Trump's fundraiser there on Tuesday, authorities said.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said Jeanine John Taele, 38, took photos and video and had a 16-round magazine with ammunition in his pocket. A search of his pickup truck in the golf course parking lot turned up a loaded 9mm pistol, binoculars and a badge that read "security protection agent," according to the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles.

Law enforcement searched his home in the nearby city of Downey on Monday and found a rifle and other firearms, magazines and ammunition, body armor and notebooks with "concerning statements," federal authorities said. No details about the statements were released.

The sheriff's department announced the arrest as Trump was preparing to arrive for the Republican National Committee dinner Tuesday at the Trump National Golf Course in Rancho Palos Verdes just south of Los Angeles.

"Mr. Taele's troubling behavior at the President's public golf course merely days before the President was expected to arrive raised serious red flags for law enforcement," Patrick Grandy, the assistant director in charge of the FBI's Los Angeles office, said in a statement. "There is no room for error, particularly in light of previous attempts on President Trump's life."

Last year a jury found a man guilty of trying to assassinate Trump at the president's Florida country club. And while a candidate in 2024, Trump narrowly escaped an assassination attempt by a shooter on a roof at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Ahead of Tuesday's event, federal agents conducted a security assessment last Friday at the Trump

course near Los Angeles. A person later identified as Taele was seen walking throughout the course, wore an earpiece and took photographs and videos of federal agents' activities, authorities said.

Taele drove away but then returned to the course Sunday. He approached federal agents and said he was employed by the State Department and was there for a security detail. Taele said he had a loaded weapon in his vehicle and was arrested after it was searched, according to federal officials.

Taele was charged with several felonies including second-degree robbery, receiving a large-capacity magazine and possession of a short-barreled rifle or shotgun. He was also charged with carrying a concealed firearm in a vehicle, a misdemeanor.

He pleaded not guilty to all the charges Monday and was ordered to stay away from the golf course and not possess weapons. His bail was set at \$250,000.

It wasn't clear if Taele had an attorney, and family members could not immediately be reached for comment.

Takeaways from Tuesday's elections: Democrats' division on display in Michigan Senate race

By MIKE CATALINI and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

The Democratic primary for Michigan's Senate seat hung on a razor's edge early Wednesday, with the unresolved race becoming the latest and most dramatic example of a lingering divide over political tactics and progressive ideology as the party seeks a path back to power.

During much of the Trump era, Democratic primary voters have often followed the urging of party leaders and favored moderate candidates like U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens. But this year, they've veered toward insurgents like Abdul El-Sayed, who tapped into widespread discontent with the Democratic establishment and the status quo in Washington.

The race was too early to call after midnight Wednesday with only a few percentage points separating the two candidates.

Democrats need to rack up as many wins as possible to take back the U.S. Senate, so the party has little room for error against the Republican nominee, former U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers.

Republicans faced their own test in Michigan in the governor's race, where President Donald Trump's handpicked candidate, U.S. Rep. John James, defeated Perry Johnson, a wealthy, free-spending outsider.

More primaries were taking place in Kansas, Missouri, Virginia and Washington. The contests will solidify November matchups, particularly in Virginia, where Democrats failed to redraw the state's congressional map earlier this year.

Here are some takeaways from Tuesday's elections:

Test time for Democrats in Michigan's Senate race

The choice between El-Sayed and Stevens has become a focal point for Democrats this year, and the race has become bitter. Whoever wins will need to bring splintered factions back into the fold to beat Rogers.

Speaking at her election night party as votes were still being counted, Stevens looked ahead to the general election and said voters had to be ready to take on Rogers in the fall. El-Sayed, speaking at his own event, said that there was "so much more that unites us."

"Tomorrow we begin to mend fences," El-Sayed said.

The seat is open because Democratic Sen. Gary Peters is retiring, and Democrats are under pressure to defend it to preserve their chance of winning control of the chamber.

The campaigns have taken sharp aim at one another. Sen. Bernie Sanders, one of El-Sayed's most prominent supporters, called Stevens "nothing more than an employee" of billionaires. El-Sayed has been a pointed critic of Israel and called the military campaign in Gaza a "genocide," an accusation rejected by the Israeli and U.S. governments.

Stevens has criticized El-Sayed's style, comparing him unfavorably to a celebrity who is always "running at the first mic or camera." She has also suggested he's not electable in the fall, saying Republicans have been propping him up because they think El-Sayed will be easier to beat.

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Trump's endorsement overpowers self-funded candidate for governor
Republican voters picked their nominee for Michigan governor on Tuesday as well, going with Trump's endorsed candidate, Rep. John James.

The president's backing typically carries significant weight in Republican politics, but businessman Perry Johnson had lent his campaign more than \$30 million, according to Michigan campaign finance records.

Trump's endorsement hasn't always overcome big spending. In Georgia's race for governor, Rick Jackson spent \$100 million, largely of his own money, to defeat Trump-backed Burt Jones in a runoff.

On the Democratic side in Michigan, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson defeated Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson.

AIPAC continues to be a lightning rod

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee has long been an influential force in U.S. politics, but it's been under pressure as Democratic support for Israel erodes over the war in Gaza.

The organization has suffered a series of losses in Democratic primaries that saw a surge of progressive candidates. Victors range from Rep. Analilia Mejia, who won a special election to Congress in suburban New Jersey, to Evanston Mayor Daniel Biss, who captured the Democratic nomination for a U.S. House seat in Illinois.

AIPAC's biggest investment has been in Michigan, where it and its affiliates have spent more than \$30 million supporting Stevens, a stalwart backer of Israel. El-Sayed and his backers have seized on the group's intervention as an example of the problems of big money in politics.

Although the outcome in Michigan remained uncertain, AIPAC had some success Tuesday. In Missouri, former Rep. Cori Bush fell short in her rematch against Rep. Wesley Bell, who defeated her two years ago.

Bush had blamed her previous loss on AIPAC, even vowing revenge on the organization in her concession speech. "AIPAC, I'm coming to tear your kingdom down!" she pledged.

However, she was quickly defeated as voters in the St. Louis-area district decided to stick with Bell.

Virginia is on Democrats' minds

One of Democrats' most bitter defeats this cycle took place in Virginia, where that state's supreme court in May overturned a voter-approved initiative to redraw the state's House map to make four more seats easier for the party to win.

The failed effort was part of Democrats' attempt to match Republicans' own redistricting campaign, which was spurred by Trump last year in hopes of making it easier for his party to hold control of the House.

Democrats are optimistic they can recover at least a couple of those Virginia seats the old-fashioned way. On Tuesday, they got what they wanted in the state's two swing seats, with former Rep. Elaine Luria winning the nomination to compete for the 1st District in Virginia Beach and prosecutor Shannon Taylor getting the nod to run in the Richmond-area 2nd District.

The longer shot comes in the heavily rural 5th District in central Virginia, where Tom Perriello, who briefly represented the region in President Barack Obama's first term, won the Democratic nomination to try to win a now even more conservative-leaning seat.

The Latest: Michigan awaits outcome of fierce Democratic Senate primary

By The Associated Press undefined

The Democratic Senate race between Rep. Haley Stevens and former public health official Abdul El-Sayed is one of the clearest tests yet of the party's future.

El-Sayed is a progressive who's run against much of the Democratic machine. Stevens has establishment support, and she's backed by roughly \$30 million from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC. Democrats will likely need to defend the open Senate seat against Republican Mike Rogers in order to take control of the Senate next year.

Meanwhile, Rep. Wesley Bell won Tuesday's Democratic primary in Missouri's 1st Congressional District

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against former Rep. Cori Bush, settling a rematch that provided a test of America's evolving viewpoints on Israel.

Bell was backed by a political group affiliated with AIPAC. The pro-Israeli group also financed his ouster of Bush in the 2024 primary after Bush criticized Israel's response to Hamas' attack on the country in 2023.

In Michigan, Kansas, Missouri, Virginia and Washington state, voters are settling primaries in a host of races. Also in play is whether Democrats, who tried to redraw districts in Virginia to their advantage but were rebuffed by the state supreme court, can pick candidates who can defeat Republicans in the fall.

Here is a look at the Latest:

El-Sayed says 'tomorrow we begin to mend fences' after bruising primary

With votes still being counted, Abdul El-Sayed called for Democratic unity headed into the general election, saying the primary slog "pales in comparison to the lies that Mike Rogers and Donald Trump are going to tell."

"There is so much more that unites us than divides us," he said. "Whatever happens tonight, we have a responsibility to ensure that we unite, unite to make sure that Mike Rogers never sees the inside of the U.S. Senate."

Abdul El-Sayed does not declare victory, but says he vastly overperformed expectations

El-Sayed said it was too early for him to declare victory but still praised his supporters and the movement behind his campaign.

"I wish I could tell you I was declaring victory right about now," he said.

The crowd, which had grown quieter in recent hours, grew loud as his speech went on.

"We are not a purple state. We are a state in need of a movement," he said.

Abdul El-Sayed takes the stage in Detroit

The crowd chanted "Abdul! Abdul! Abdul!" as the progressive candidate took the stage at Detroit's Majestic Theatre. An election night digital display was lifted to reveal a Michigan state flag.

Stevens urges supporters to 'get some sleep or get some coffee' and await results

"Then we got to be ready to go," U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens told a crowd in Detroit, focusing on the road to a general election against Republican nominee Mike Rogers.

"We got to wake up and be ready to go, because if we are going to win this thing, which we are, we are going to have to get ready and show Mike Rogers what a little stick it to 'em looks like."

Haley Stevens tells watch party results may come in the early morning

Stevens entered the room to chants of "Haley."

"We knew this was going to be a close race," Stevens said. She said the primary results may not be finalized until early morning.

"Friends, I am feeling good," Stevens said.

Michigan Democratic officials show up at Stevens' watch party

Former U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, former Gov. Jim Blanchard and U.S. Rep. Hillary Scholten appeared at Stevens' watch party to back a candidate who has leaned heavily on endorsements from top party officials.

"She's really a terrific legislator, and at the same time, I know she can beat Mike Rogers," Stabenow told The Associated Press.

Stabenow, who was the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate from Michigan, said it was essential for voters to rally behind whoever wins. She said she hopes the other candidate endorses the winner.

"I know Haley will," Stabenow said.

Stevens campaigned earlier this week with Stabenow and Scholten at events in Muskegon Heights and Grand Rapids, Michigan. She has also been endorsed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and retiring U.S. Sen. Gary Peters, whose seat Stevens hopes to win.

William Lawrence will take on incumbent Tom Barrett for critical seat this fall

"This is a great night, but I want to make one thing clear - the JOB IS NOT FINISHED," Lawrence posted on X following his primary victory.

The 7th District, which includes the state capital of Lansing, is one of the most competitive in Michigan.

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In 2024, the district flipped red when Tom Barrett won with 50.3% of the vote, though Barrett previously lost to a Democrat in 2022.

Lawrence is more progressive than his competitors, which some worry may jeopardize the seat for Democrats.

The Democratic candidate cofounded the Sunrise Movement, an environmental advocacy group. In his victory speech, he focused on opposing data centers and billionaires in politics.

"Everybody here in the 7th District, regardless of your political persuasion, we share so much more in common than that which separates us," Lawrence said. "We share so much more in common than these billionaires in Silicon Valley, and Wall Street, and these insiders in D.C. We're gonna find that common ground."

US Rep. John James calls on Michigan's 'politically homeless' to join him after GOP gubernatorial nomination win

James said Tuesday that his victory marked a beginning to "Michigan's comeback."

Warning against a "socialist agenda" he said was backed by Democratic nominee Jocelyn Benson, James added that "we should never underestimate how pain and desperation make false promises sound like hope."

In remarks to supporters, James also thanked Trump, who backed him in his effort to defeat Perry Johnson. The businessman had lent his campaign more than \$30 million, according to state campaign finance records.

If elected in November, James would become Michigan's first Black governor.

Former prosecutor Christina Hines wins Michigan's 10th District Democratic primary

Hines beat former state House Rep. Tim Greimel and former Commerce Department attorney Eric Chung.

Democrats have targeted the 10th Congressional District as they try to win a majority in the U.S. House. The district includes a portion of Oakland County and stretches across very red communities in Macomb County.

It's currently held by Republican U.S. Rep. John James, who is running for Michigan governor.

El-Sayed campaign says he will speak within the hour

The campaign announced at El-Sayed's primary night event in Detroit that he would speak no later than 1 a.m. ET even if a race call has not happened. Attendees were remaining upbeat, although the crowd in the Majestic Theatre had thinned substantially.

El-Sayed had projected confidence going into the final day of the campaign, already looking ahead toward facing Republican Mike Rogers. But after midnight, the race remained too early to call.

Democrats' US Senate nominee in Kansas can raise money, but winning remains tough

The Rev. Adam Hamilton, pastor of the nation's largest United Methodist congregation, emerged from an 11-person Democratic field in Tuesday's primary after fundraising at a far faster clip than incumbent Republican Sen. Roger Marshall.

But Marshall's status as an incumbent — and his lack of serious opposition to the GOP nomination — allowed him to start the fall campaign with far more cash on hand. History gives him another advantage in Republican-leaning Kansas: No Democrat has won a U.S. Senate race in the state since 1932.

Hamilton, founder of the 22,000-member Church of the Resurrection, raised nearly \$4.4 million after entering the race in February, his campaign finance reports show. Marshall has raised about \$1.6 million this year, but he didn't start from zero.

Marshall emerged from the primary with about \$5.5 million in cash on hand, spending less than \$327,000 as of mid-July. Hamilton spent about \$2.4 million on his primary campaign and is starting the fall race with about \$2 million in cash.

Michigan state Sen. Sean McCann defeats Diop Harris II in 4th District Democratic primary

McCann is trying to flip a Republican-held district that runs along Lake Michigan in the western part of the state.

A Kalamazoo native and former state representative, McCann was elected in 2022 to the Michigan Senate. He also served as a Kalamazoo city commissioner.

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Harris, a political newcomer, worked as a staff assistant and legislative correspondent for Ohio Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown.

Trump weighs in on Michigan's Democratic Senate primary

President Donald Trump said he expected that Michigan Republican Mike Rogers, a former congressman, would fare better in the Senate race if Abdul El-Sayed is the Democratic nominee.

"Based on the polls, he'll do much better against Abdul than he's going to do against the congresswoman (Democrat Haley Stevens)," Trump said in a pre-taped interview with the show "Fox News @ Night."

The president said that Democrats who identify as socialist would destroy the nation's cities if elected.

"They're always filthy, disgusting, dirty, and that's what you'll get," said Trump, who added that he is a "clean person."

Stevens supporter says people are ready for change but questions if El-Sayed can deliver

Derryl Reed said he was so confident Stevens is going to win that he brought a bouquet of flowers to give to her.

"I want to come out and support her and congratulate her on her victory," Reed, 79, said.

Reed, who is on the Oakland County Democratic Party's leadership team, said he understands Abdul El-Sayed's appeal as an outsider candidate, but it's that same lack of political experience that would hurt his chances in the general election.

El-Sayed is "able to come out and promise things," Reed said. "The question is, can he deliver on the things he's promised?"

Reed said no matter who wins the primary, Stevens and El-Sayed have to meet within the week to present a united front Democratic voters can rally behind.

"Democrats need to get their acts together. Trump and the Republicans have given them so much material to work with, it shouldn't even be close," Reed said. "It should be a landslide in November."

William Lawrence defeats 2 other Democrats in Michigan's 7th District primary

Lawrence, a community organizer, will face Republican incumbent Tom Barrett, who flipped the competitive district red in 2024. Barrett's win helped Republicans keep a slim majority in the U.S. House.

Lawrence supports government funding of universal healthcare and quality housing, according to his campaign website.

On Tuesday, he defeated Bridget Brink, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, and former Navy SEAL Matt Maasdam. Barrett ran unopposed in the Republican primary.

El-Sayed holds narrow lead with decisive Wayne County votes still to come

Abdul El-Sayed maintained a lead over Haley Stevens as initial results were released. He was propelled by strong performances in Kent County, home to Grand Rapids, and heavily Democratic Washtenaw County.

Stevens narrowed El-Sayed's lead as Wayne County, the state's most populous, released more results. Home to Detroit, Wayne has the state's highest share of Black residents and is a Democratic stronghold in general elections. Stevens targeted a big showing there, including bringing in South Carolina U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn to stump on her behalf.

In recent establishment-vs.-progressive matchups, Wayne has delivered for the establishment candidate, although that doesn't guarantee a statewide victory. Hillary Clinton won about 60% in Wayne in Michigan's 2016 presidential primary but still lost the state narrowly to Bernie Sanders.

Wayne County historically releases results later than most of the state, which could result in a boost for Stevens as the night wears on.

Republican John Braun advances in battleground Washington district

State Sen. John Braun will advance to the general election in the 3rd Congressional District, challenging Democrat Marie Gluesenkamp Perez in one of the GOP's top pickup opportunities.

Gluesenkamp Perez has won twice in the Republican-leaning district, both times defeating Joe Kent, who faced scrutiny about his ties to white nationalists.

Compared with Kent, Braun has a more conventional Republican background. He's the president of a family business that makes ambulances and other emergency response vehicles, and he has served more than a decade in the state Legislature, rising to be the Senate Republican leader.

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The district in Southwest Washington includes the northern suburbs of Portland, Oregon, as well as rural communities reliant on ports, timber, agriculture and fishing.

US Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez fends off progressive challenger in battleground Washington district

The moderate Democrat will advance to the general election despite a longshot challenge from the left in the 3rd Congressional District.

Gluesenkamp Perez, who has won twice in a battleground district that voted for Trump, is one of a dwindling number of Democrats representing a rural, working class district.

She's been vocal in warning her fellow Democrats that their party is losing touch with blue-collar voters like those she represents.

Challenger Brent Hennrich made a progressive case against her, highlighting her votes for the Laken Riley immigration bill and a version of the SAVE Act, a voting bill favored by Trump.

But he struggled to raise money or secure support from progressive politicians and interest groups that have helped insurgent challengers topple Democratic incumbents this year in Colorado and New York.

Bush says 'I am not down, sad' after loss to Bell

With her supporters cheering and clapping, Bush said she remains "that same fighter that stood up for you before."

"I don't have to have a title to fight for my people, St. Louis," she said.

Saying Bell had ties to Republican candidates in the past, Bush also implied that GOP forces had targeted the district for possible redrawing "because if they make this a Republican district, they already got somebody ready."

Bell, a former St. Louis County prosecutor, was backed by a political group affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. The pro-Israeli group also financed his ouster of Bush in the 2024 primary after Bush criticized Israel's response in Gaza to Hamas' attack on the country in 2023.

"This ain't over, y'all," she said. "Let them all reap what they sow."

Bell thanks voters for putting their faith in him a second time

"There's going to be times we disagree on issues, but that should never stop us from doing the work for regular folks," Bell said. He went on to say that is "because progressives are supposed to make progress."

Bell said he saw "cruelty, chaos and corruption" from the Trump administration, which the crowd chanted "yes" in response to. He said November is a chance for voters to have a voice.

"To everyone who trusted me to represent you, thank you, and when we talk about the progress we need to make, I think the folks know, and St. Louis knows, that I'm always going to wake up working for you," Bell said.

Cori Bush, in losing rematch, says Wesley Bell 'ran a whole campaign on smears'

The former U.S. House member was greeted with chants of "we love you, Cori" as she took the stage at an events center in Dellwood, more than an hour after U.S. Rep. Wesley Bell was declared victor of the Democratic primary rematch.

Bush, who had been part of the progressive group of House members known as the "Squad," also says Republican billionaires "want to control this district," referencing GOP efforts to possibly redistrict the area more favorably to their party.

Polls have closed in Washington state

In-person voting centers in Washington closed at 8 p.m. PT, which is 11 p.m. ET. The state votes almost entirely by mail. Comparable past elections can offer clues about when to expect the first vote results and how long the vote count might take.

In the 2024 state primary, the AP first reported results at 11:06 p.m. ET, or six minutes after polls closed. The last vote update of the night was at 11:43 p.m. ET, with about 51% of total votes counted. The vote count surpassed the 75% mark on the Thursday following the election at 7:56 p.m. ET and reached about 95% of the total vote six days after the election at 7:24 p.m. ET.

☐ Follow tonight's results in Washington

Stevens' watch party buoyed by Wayne County votes

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Stevens' supporters moved into an adjoining room with a large American flag overlooking the crowd to the tune of Stevie Wonder's "Superstition."

Buoyed by incoming votes from Wayne County, people chatted, occasionally breaking out into chants of "Haley." Some held up signs above the crowd reading "Haley Stevens for US Senate" and "Michigan Made."

Michigan has seen big increases in early voting and voting by mail

The number of people who voted in person early at Michigan polling places ahead of Tuesday's primary was nearly double the number for the 2024 primary, Deputy Secretary of State Aghogho Edevbie said.

Edevbie also said that the number of people voting by mail also increased by more than 20% compared to the 2022 primary.

He said during a brief news conference that 1.3 million people had cast mail ballots as of Tuesday, up 226,000 from the 2022 primary. Another 139,000 people voted early in person — compared to fewer than 74,000 in 2024.

Edevbie also told reporters that 28,000 people registered to vote Tuesday and then cast their ballots.

Chris Stigall wins Missouri Republican primary to replace longtime US Rep. Sam Graves

The conservative talk radio host's victory in the five-person primary gives him an edge in the November election for the sprawling 6th Congressional District that includes rural northern Missouri and part of Kansas City.

Graves has represented the district for a quarter century and currently is chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Stigall once worked for Graves and was endorsed by the congressman shortly after Graves announced in late March that he was not seeking reelection.

US Rep. Wesley Bell says in victory speech that he will work for the people in St. Louis

"When we think about all of the division that we hear, I think it is important that we focus on what this place can be," Bell said.

Bell's speech focused on the work he plans to do for the city, which was met with applause. He described St. Louis as a "sleeping giant" and encouraged applause for campaign volunteers around the room.

"I have a tremendous group of folks, and we just got to work," Bell said.

Stevens watch party cheers for Wayne County votes

The crowd at Stevens' watch party erupted into cheers, applause and chants of "Haley" as votes from Wayne County, Michigan's most populous, began to roll in.

The campaign over a failed ballot measure showed Kansas what judicial races might have looked like

Spending on broadcast and digital advertising reached nearly \$13 million during the campaign over an unsuccessful proposal to amend the Kansas Constitution to elect state Supreme Court justices, according to the ad-tracking firm AdImpact. Voters rejected the measure in Tuesday's primary.

Opponents of the Kansas ballot measure spent almost \$9 million on broadcast and digital ads. That was more than twice as much as the \$4 million spent by supporters.

The governor now appoints the justices from among three finalists selected by a nominating commission, with no role for the Republican-controlled Legislature. The measure's backers had hoped that if they were successful, they could start electing conservative justices in 2028.

Twenty-two states elect their justices, and some have multi-million dollar races. In Wisconsin, spending in a race last year topped \$100 million.

3 killed in Idaho In-N-Out shooting included a man known for helping others get sober

By DAVE COLLINS and SARAH RAZA Associated Press

The three people killed when a gunman opened fire at an In-N-Out Burger in Idaho included a worker at the restaurant chain and a man from the area known for helping others get sober.

Authorities released the names Tuesday of the people who died when the 24-year-old gunman opened fire at the Twin Falls restaurant. Police have said they are confident he acted alone but were still trying

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to determine a motive.

Police identified those killed as Ashley Garibay, 23, from Stockton, California; Dale Schultz, 66, of Salt Lake City; and Christopher Claunch, 59, of Hagerman, Idaho, about 28 miles (45 kilometers) northwest of Twin Falls.

Hundreds of community members, many holding candles or roses, gathered at a park in Twin Falls Tuesday night for a vigil to honor the victims. Some wrote notes to those who had been killed on large blue hearts arranged on a trio of crosses while others stood arm-in-arm and prayed.

Teresa Yocham, who lives in Twin Falls, said the shooting sickened her and she wanted to come out to show support.

"We are strong as a community and we come together in hard times and that's what this was about," she said.

Victims of the shooting remembered

Garibay worked for the burger chain on a team that trained new employees away from her home in Stockton. Her family said she loved her work and called her an "amazing, beautiful soul who loved living life."

"She was adventurous, outgoing, smart and driven, never letting obstacles get in her way," her family said in a statement. "She lit up a room with her bright smile and a laugh that was contagious."

The In-N-Out location opened in late July as part of the California chain's Idaho expansion. Garibay got her first job at one of the restaurants, and she dreamed of one day managing one of the stores, her family said.

One of Claunch's friends, Garren Taylor, said Claunch completed a rehab program for alcohol abuse in Idaho a couple of years ago and was immediately hired at the center. Taylor said Claunch, known to those close to him as "Toph," dedicated his life to helping others get sober.

"He helped hundreds of people," Taylor said Monday. "He was just a gift to anyone he came in contact with. It wasn't about the paycheck. His attitude was: 'I get to help someone today.'"

Gregory Glenn, pastoral administrator for the Madeleine Choir School in Salt Lake City, described Schultz as a "beloved alumni parent" and "gifted artist" in a post on social media. He said Schultz's wife was injured in the shooting.

"While we mourn the loss of Dale, we continue to pray for Reinette, who remains hospitalized as she recovers from her injuries," he wrote Monday.

Police have opened a center where those who were affected by the shooting can get support and request or collect personal items left at the scene. Flags in the city will be at half-staff until next week.

Chaos at In-N-Out Burger

The attack Saturday at the In-N-Out Burger ended when the gunman, identified by police as Chad Williams, shot and killed himself.

Witnesses described a chaotic scene in and around the Idaho restaurant as shots were fired. One customer told The Associated Press that she and her daughters were waiting inside when she heard shots from the kitchen and an employee told her to get down. Another woman and her mother were waiting in the drive-thru line when they saw people running across the road and workers bolting out of the restaurant as a man directing traffic told them there was a shooter.

A man who was at a stoplight near the restaurant described seeing a person with an AR-style rifle emerge from the drive-thru and a man with a pistol start firing toward the suspect.

During the attack, an off-duty state trooper and a civilian fired on Williams, diverting him from the restaurant, police have said.

Steven Pixley was among those injured. He was riding his motorcycle near the In-N-Out when he heard a pop and his left hand dropped, his cousin Shane Klaas said Tuesday.

A bullet went into his arm above his elbow and exited right below it, Klaas said. The shooting left Pixley without use of three of his fingers, and doctors are waiting for the swelling to go down so they can do surgery, Klaas said.

"His attitude is wonderful, which is a big part of getting through this," Klaas said. "He's laughing, he's joking."

Klaas said Pixley recently moved to Twin Falls, found a job and was trying to get his life together. "He had everything in front of him," Klaas said. "And then this just, I mean, this is just senseless."

Fuego volcano spews more ash and mud as Guatemala shelters 1,700 who fled nearby villages

By SONIA PÉREZ D. Associated Press

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Guatemala remained on alert Tuesday after evacuating villages during an eruption of the Fuego volcano, one of Central America's most active.

About 1,700 people remained in shelters with the evacuations to stay in place until conditions improve, according to the country's disaster agency CONRED.

Officials raised the alert level to red in Sacatepéquez, Escuintla and Chimaltenango, where about 29,000 people are affected by ashfall and schools remain closed. Authorities warned the next 72 hours were critical on Tuesday, as mudflows up to 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) long continue descending from the volcano, with incoming rain expected to increase the risk of additional volcanic mudflows.

Mudflows have not reached villages and no structures reported damaged or at risk. Claudinne Ogaldes, executive secretary of CONRED, recommended residents in the three municipalities cover their water deposits and use face masks as protection from ash.

The eruption started Monday morning, with clouds of gas and ash rising above the volcano as lava and pyroclastic flows rolled down the slopes. More mud and ash were emitted Tuesday.

Among those evacuated were around 250 people from El Porvenir and the hamlet of Las Lajitas. CONRED also warned of ash spreading to nearby towns.

A major highway that passes close to the volcano, National Route 14, was closed. The Education Ministry suspended classes in nearby towns.

During a previous eruption of Fuego, or the Volcano of Fire, in June 2018, hundreds of people were killed and a whole village was destroyed. Another eruption last year spurred preventive evacuations.

Lawyers in Reflecting Pool case say Justice Department knew case was flawed

By MATTHEW DALY and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department knew or should have known for weeks that its case against a former Olympian charged with intentionally damaging the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool was flawed, and that he bore no responsibility for longstanding problems at the landmark, defense lawyers said Tuesday.

U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro on Friday moved to dismiss the indictment against David Hearn, saying in a 20-page filing that newly produced evidence from the Interior Department showed the former Olympic canoeist was not responsible for damage to the pool's lining.

Pirro's office attributed the damage instead to a botched installation by a contractor as well as "the rush to complete the project prior to events associated with the America 250 celebration" in the weeks surrounding July 4, as directed by President Donald Trump.

Lawyers for Hearn on Tuesday urged a judge to permanently dismiss the case and foreclose the possibility that the Trump administration could revive it. They took issue with Pirro's assertion that prosecutors only recently learned about the pre-existing defects at the pool, saying the government had "disregarded readily available evidence" that the liner was already failing because of installation flaws.

"From the outset, the evidence showed that the pool liner was already failing and that Mr. Hearn did not cause the damage alleged in the indictment," Hearn's legal team argued in a 28-page motion filed Tuesday in D.C. Superior Court.

The poor condition of the pool was "plainly visible" for weeks and was publicly documented through

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photographs, video and news reports, the lawyers wrote.

"Defying both decency and common sense, the government proceeded to indict Mr. Hearn before it had obtained or evaluated the information necessary to establish a good-faith basis for the charge," the defense attorneys wrote.

In addition, they say, the government's key eyewitness was never presented to the grand jury, and a key prosecution witness on the question of damages "stated that the repairs at issue would have been necessary regardless of Mr. Hearn's alleged conduct and could not identify any additional cost caused by Mr. Hearn."

The contractor, Virginia-based Atlantic Industrial Coatings, "publicly acknowledged, before Mr. Hearn was indicted, that portions of the project required repair," the lawyers said. The firm was awarded a \$14.7 million no-bid contract to repaint and waterproof the pool's concrete floor.

A spokesperson for Pirro's office did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

Trump continued to insist on Tuesday night that the pool had been vandalized and defended the contractors.

"They did a beautiful job," Trump said. "There were a couple of little things, but that was not a big deal. And everybody saw the vandalism. All you have to do is look at the tape."

The president said that Pirro was "totally wrong." Interior Secretary Doug Burgum has backed Trump's claims that vandals damaged the pool.

The dismissal of charges against Hearn was an embarrassing setback for the Justice Department and marked a rare moment during Trump's second term of an aide or political appointee openly defying him.

Hearn has said he was on a bike ride June 19 when he reached in to examine the pool's newly peeled coating and briefly touched a chunk attached to the side of the pool. But he said he obeyed a park worker who told him to let go of it.

Felony charges, including a possible 10-year prison sentence, were brought "without a meaningful investigation into the central and obvious question in this case: whether Mr. Hearn caused, or even could have caused, any damage to the Reflecting Pool," Hearn's lawyers said.

Duane 'Keffe D' Davis, charged with organizing the 1996 killing of Tupac Shakur, is on trial

By JESSICA HILL Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The man who prosecutors say orchestrated the 1996 killing of rap icon Tupac Shakur is scheduled to go to trial Monday, almost 30 years after the fatal drive-by shooting in Las Vegas.

Duane "Keffe D" Davis, 63, faces a single count of murder with a deadly weapon with the intent to promote, further or assist a criminal gang in Shakur's death. He's been jailed since late 2023 and has pleaded not guilty.

For decades, Shakur's unsolved killing has gripped hip-hop fans. He's considered one of the most influential rappers of all time with songs that speak to the human experience of love, heartache and familial relationships. When Shakur died, he was in the midst of a fierce battle for dominance in a music scene increasingly shaped by rival gangs.

The trial, which is expected to last about a month, likely won't reveal who pulled the trigger. Instead, prosecutors hope to prove that Davis was the shot caller and provided the weapon. Gunfire came from the Cadillac that Davis was in, and he's one of the only people there that night who is still alive. Prosecutors say if Davis hadn't written explicitly about the killing, or talked about it in interviews, it's likely no one would have been charged.

Cold case is revived on Tupac Shakur's killing

On Sept. 7, 1996, Shakur was in the passenger seat of a black BMW and Death Row Records co-founder Marion "Suge" Knight was driving. They had just watched Mike Tyson knock out Bruce Seldon and were headed to a nightclub where Shakur was scheduled to perform. But at a red light near the Las Vegas Strip, a white Cadillac pulled up beside them, and gunfire erupted.

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Shakur was shot multiple times and died six days later, while Knight survived with minor injuries. Knight is serving a 28-year prison sentence for a fatal hit-and-run.

The case went cold until Davis began making public statements about his involvement as a leader of the South Side Compton Crips. In 2019, he published a tell-all memoir. The book, along with interviews Davis gave, revived the police investigation.

Davis' defense attorneys argue there is no evidence he directed the shooting and the state relies on witnesses who weren't there. The defense said Davis left the narcotics trade in 2009 and worked a steady job before illness forced him to retire in 2014.

For Shakur's family, the last 30 years have been exhausting and stressful, his stepbrother Maurice "Mopreme" Shakur said. Sitting through the trial will be retraumatizing, Shakur said, but he's "cautiously optimistic" justice will come.

"I hope that the trial is fair, and we find out the truth," he said.

Shakur's death a result of longstanding gang feud, witnesses say

Hundreds of pages of grand jury transcripts portray Tupac Shakur's shooting as a culmination of a long-standing feud between rival record labels — Death Row Records and Bad Boy Records — and rival gang sects Mob Piru and South Side Compton Crips.

Witnesses said South Side Compton Crips hung out with and provided protection to Bad Boy Records, which was founded by Sean "Diddy" Combs and included rappers like The Notorious B.I.G., or Christopher Wallace. Mob Piru, part of the larger Bloods gang, was associated with Death Row Records, which featured rappers like Shakur, Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre.

The rival gangs fought and retaliated against each other both before and after Shakur's death.

Prosecutors allege Davis orchestrated the shooting to get revenge after Shakur and his entourage beat up Davis' nephew, Orlando "Baby Lane" Anderson, at the MGM Grand hours before Shakur was killed.

Davis' book will be front and center at the trial

The prosecutors' case relies on "Compton Street Legend," the book Davis co-authored about the shooting and his time in the Crips, as well as police and media interviews he participated in.

Davis' attorneys unsuccessfully fought to block the use of the book and a recording of a 2008 police interview in the trial. They argued the book was fictionalized and had a co-author, making it impossible to know which parts Davis wrote. They also argued Davis' interview with a federal task force investigating the deaths of Wallace and Shakur was supposed to be confidential and not used against him.

The memoir says that Shakur and his entourage "crossed the line" when they beat up Anderson.

"We couldn't let no record company studio gangsters do us like that," the book says.

Davis was in the passenger seat of the Cadillac and passed a gun to the back seat earlier that night, according to the book. When they encountered Shakur and Knight, Davis claimed to see Shakur reach for a weapon and wrote that "one of my guys from the back seat grabbed the Glock and started bustin' back."

No weapon was found in Knight and Shakur's car, according to retired Las Vegas police Detective Clifford Mogg, who was assigned to the investigation in early 2018.

The trial could bring closure — or more questions

Mopreme Shakur said nothing would bring back his stepbrother.

"That would be justice for me," he said. "But we all know that is unattainable."

Mopreme Shakur said he wants allegations that Combs was involved to be explored further. In his book, Davis claims that Combs wanted Knight and Shakur killed. Combs has denied having any involvement in Shakur's death.

He's serving roughly four years in prison after being convicted of prostitution-related charges. Combs' attorney did not return emailed requests from The Associated Press for comment.

Shakur's influence in the music industry endures

Shakur sold over 75 million records worldwide with hits like "California Love," "Changes" and "Dear Mama." His songs spanned from party anthems to deep social commentary. The issues he discussed still resonate with people 30 years later, history professor Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar said.

"I can't think of anyone else in the history of hip-hop who's had a greater impact in such a short period of time," said Ogbar, who is the founding director of the Center for the Study of Popular Music at the University of Connecticut.

The Danube River's water is dropping so low that World War II ships are emerging

By MARKO DROBNJAKOVIC Associated Press

PRAHOVO, Serbia (AP) — Water levels on the Danube River, the second longest in Europe, have dropped so low because of drought that the hulks of dozens of World War II German battleships are emerging into view.

They are a curious distraction from the summer heat crisis. The Danube's record low water levels also have forced power plants to the brink of shutting down, and governments across Central and Eastern Europe are taking steps to conserve electricity.

In the middle of the river separating Serbia and Romania near the Serbian port of Prahovo, a rusty hull is now visible along with a broken mast where the Nazi flag used to fly.

The ships, some still laden with weapons, belonged to Nazi Germany's Black Sea fleet that the Germans deliberately sank as they retreated from Romania and as Soviet forces advanced deeper into Europe near the end of the war.

Historians say up to 200 German warships were scuttled in September 1944 near Prahovo in the Danube gorge as they came under Soviet fire. The idea behind the deliberate sinking was to slow down the Soviet advance in the Balkans. But Nazi Germany surrendered months later, in May 1945.

The sight of the old warships is a reminder that the Serbian government, with European Union financial support, has long been trying to do something about them. Some were removed from the river by Communist Yugoslav authorities, but most have remained because of the explosives they carried.

Now, however, authorities are trying to keep traffic flowing on the Danube, which flows through 10 nations, as the dropping water levels create dangerous conditions. Experts have linked the unusually hot weather to global warming and other factors.

Krsta Brandic, a Prahovo resident, said the low water levels have almost stopped ship traffic: "As you can see, the (big) ships can't pass anymore."

Firefighters scramble to contain fires outside Athens before winds and high temperatures return

By DEREK GATOPOULOS and SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Firefighters raced to exploit a break in high winds to strengthen containment lines on fires west of the Greek capital Tuesday ahead of stronger gusts and hotter temperatures in the coming days.

Several fires that burned through mountain communities and coastal areas west of Athens were brought under control overnight. Planes and helicopters dumped water inside the contained perimeters through the morning, dousing hot spots while the winds stayed calm.

"There is a huge fire load in the area and the risk goes up as the day progresses," said Costas Tsingas, head of the Greek Firefighters Association. "The goal is for the day to end better than it started."

Fires started through negligence prompt wave of arrests

Burning for a fifth day, the blaze outside Athens prompted the evacuation of more than 1,000 people and was blamed on a faulty power line from a wind farm.

Restrictions and park closures are imposed locally according to fire-risk levels. Authorities say 33 people were arrested between June 29 and Aug. 2 for starting fires, including 30 through negligence and three on suspicion of arson. Most of the negligence cases involved farm work carried out despite local bans, including welding.

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On Tuesday, crews were working against the clock: Winds typically pick up in the afternoon, a coastal phenomenon common across the Mediterranean in summer as land heats faster than the sea and draws in stronger breezes.

The army deployed tracked earth movers to carve fire breaks across the scorched hillsides, while specialist units pushed into forest areas on foot to extinguish smoldering embers before they could reignite.

The evacuations from around the seaside resort of Porto Germeno and other areas west of the capital included more than 250 rescued by boats from beaches.

Wildfires in France expose ammunition

Prolonged heat waves across Europe this summer have left France tinder-dry, fueling blazes that this week exposed long-buried ammunition in a forested area.

The massive wildfire outside the southwestern city of Bordeaux, which has scorched about 420 square kilometers (162 square miles), uncovered what is believed to be World War II-era ammunition.

Demining experts have found more than 400 shells and other munitions at Le Porge, the hardest-hit town, where 183 homes were destroyed. Residents described hearing explosions believed to be blasts from the old shells, authorities said.

The fire remained contained and thousands of evacuees were allowed to return Monday. More than 224,000 people fled in France's largest civilian evacuation outside wartime.

In the southern Netherlands, firefighters and military helicopters battled a forest blaze for the second day Tuesday amid high temperatures and shifting winds. The fire has destroyed 100 hectares of trees and was burning out of control but was not immediately threatening homes. Nobody has been injured in the blaze. The cause is not known.

Virginia Democrats pick establishment nominees for 2 US House seats they hope to flip in November

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Virginia voters on Tuesday picked establishment Democrats — a prosecutor and a former congresswoman — as their nominees to take on Republican incumbents in two congressional districts the party hopes to flip in November as part of a broader fight for control of the U.S. House.

Shannon Taylor, the elected top prosecutor in a suburban Richmond county, will take on longtime GOP incumbent Rob Wittman in the 1st Congressional District. The coastal 2nd Congressional District, a true swing district with a heavy military presence, will see a rematch between two veterans — former Democratic Rep. Elaine Luria and Jen Kiggans, who ousted her in 2022.

Taylor and Luria were backed by the House Democrats' campaign arm and a wide array of Democratic leaders, including Gov. Abigail Spanberger.

Democratic primaries elsewhere in the U.S. this year have highlighted a divide between progressive challengers and more moderate, establishment-backed rivals, and in some races, outsiders have notched surprising upset wins. But in Virginia, Democratic primary voters have a history of rewarding moderate candidates, a trend that continued with the wins by Luria and Taylor on Tuesday. Taylor won in a crowded, seven-way primary that included a progressive candidate who won about a fifth of the vote, while Luria defeated three opponents.

Virginia Democrats hope they can flip at least two seats after their aggressive, voter-approved redistricting plan was overturned by the state Supreme Court earlier this year.

More bullish observers, including the governor, argue as many as four districts could flip, including the 5th District, where former U.S. Rep. Tom Perriello won the Democratic primary and will face incumbent Rep. John McGuire in November.

"Virginia Democrats are going on offense. We will compete everywhere, defend our ground, flip Republican-held seats, and hold Donald Trump and his allies accountable for higher costs, attacks on our freedoms, and corruption that puts personal interests ahead of the people they serve," state Sen. Lamont Bagby, chairman of the state Democratic Party, said in a statement.

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Jeff Ryer, chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia, said voters would look critically at Spanberger's leadership and instead "elect common-sense conservative leaders who will fight for lower taxes, more freedom, and greater opportunity."

The primary sets up a rematch in the 2nd District

Virginia is currently represented in the U.S. House by six Democrats and five Republicans, all of whom will be seeking reelection this year.

The coastal 2nd District, with its population center in Virginia Beach, is a must-win for Democrats aiming to retake the House. Luria's primary victory sets up what will be a closely watched general election rematch with Kiggans.

Luria, a retired Navy commander, flipped the district in 2018 and served for two terms before Kiggans defeated her in 2022. Luria was a member of the Jan. 6 committee, which investigated the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

In a victory speech to supporters, Luria argued that Kiggans had campaigned on a pledge to be bipartisan but had not meaningfully distinguished herself from President Donald Trump. She also acknowledged that the district has routinely swung back and forth between electing Democrats and Republicans, saying, "We have a long road and a long fight ahead."

Kiggans, a former Navy helicopter pilot, on Tuesday defended her record as a "proven leader who brings people together and gets results for our military and families." She said in a statement that she would be campaigning in the coming months with a focus on "lowering costs, putting more money back in your pocket, standing up for our families, and working across the aisle to deliver real results."

Democrats are hoping momentum will help them flip the GOP-leaning 1st District

The 1st District, with a population center in the Richmond suburbs, has generally tilted Republican. Taylor won a crowded primary contest, even as many Democratic voters backed a more progressive candidate, Salaam Bhatti.

After her victory, Taylor drew a line from her experience as a prosecutor to the way she said she would govern if elected.

"I've spent the last 14 years prosecuting violent criminals, fraudsters and anybody who abuses our trust. If they took advantage of our community, I held them accountable. And that's exactly what I'm going to do when I'm in Congress," she told a crowd of cheering supporters gathered at an Irish pub in the district.

In the primary, Taylor emphasized her record on public safety and promoted an agenda she said would help fight corruption in Washington, including a ban on stock trading and a lifetime federal lobbying ban for members of Congress.

She will go on to face Wittman in the general election.

Wittman said in a statement that he had a proven record of delivering for the district and argued that Taylor had advocated for progressive criminal justice reforms.

Only two House incumbents faced primary challengers

Elsewhere, two incumbents, Democratic Rep. Don Beyer and McGuire, defeated their primary opponents.

In central Virginia's 5th District, Trump-endorsed McGuire, a former Navy SEAL and state lawmaker, beat veteran Melanie Lucero.

He will go on to face Perriello, a former congressman who is seeking the chance at a comeback and won a three-way race for the Democratic nomination. Perriello formerly represented the district for one term beginning in 2009. Some Democrats are hopeful about the party's chances of flipping the 5th District, though it leans solidly Republican.

Beyer won in northern Virginia's overwhelmingly blue 8th District surrounding Washington and is expected to cruise to reelection in November.

Republicans will decide on a long-shot challenger for US Senate

Voters also settled a three-way statewide contest to pick the Republican nominee to challenge Democratic Sen. Mark Warner, a well-known former governor who was first elected to the Senate in 2008 and currently serves as the ranking Democrat on the chamber's Intelligence Committee.

Defeating Warner, who did not have a primary challenger, is expected to be a difficult task. The race is not among those seen as a battleground that will determine control of the Senate.

Bert Mizusawa, a decorated retired Army major general, emerged as the GOP primary winner.

In suburban Richmond, Republican voter Chris Weymouth, 85, voted for Mizusawa because she believed he would put America first, support the Constitution and protect America's freedoms. She said Democrats have moved so far left she would "never" consider voting for one.

Man charged with setting Spokane's largest wildfire was questioned about 2 other blazes last year

By MANUEL VALDES, ED WHITE, MARTHA BELLISLE and GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — A man charged with intentionally setting a wildfire that's destroyed hundreds of buildings in and around Washington state's second-largest city was questioned by law enforcement during two fire investigations last year, though he wasn't charged in either, court documents show.

Aaron F. Farinacci, of Spokane, was arrested Monday and booked on suspicion of first-degree arson in connection with the Old Trails Fire, the biggest of three blazes that have destroyed at least 700 buildings and forced tens of thousands of people from their homes. According to court records, he denied setting the fire. His bond was set at \$1 million.

The other two fires burning around Spokane were also started by humans, though not necessarily intentionally, investigators said Tuesday. The exact cause remains under investigation.

No deaths have been reported and cooler, calmer weather aided firefighters again Tuesday. Only one of the three fires — the Autumn Lane fire — grew. But hotter, drier and windier conditions are expected later in the week.

Farinacci, 37, served about a decade in prison after killing his father in Arizona in 2010. Last year, authorities questioned him in two fire-related cases in Spokane, according to a probable cause statement filed in Spokane County Superior Court.

One involved several "bus-sized" fires in an area near Farinacci's apartment in July 2025, police records in that case say. The other involved a wildfire in a state park that prompted evacuation notices the following month. In neither case was he arrested.

A tip leads to an arrest

On Saturday, Paul Child, 64, was driving with his grandson along some railroad tracks in his rural neighborhood northwest of Spokane. He saw a man standing and looking toward nearby trees. About 10 minutes later, as they were returning home, the man was still there.

"He was bent over in the brush, acting nervous," Child told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "You get the feeling this guy's up to something."

"No longer than 10 minutes after I got home, my daughter says, 'There's a fire,'" Child recalled. "My first words were, 'That SOB started a fire!' It was the exact spot where he was standing."

Child's daughter called 911 and he drove back to the spot where he'd seen the man, sheriff's detective Michael Drapeau wrote in the probable cause statement. He gave a police officer a description of the man he had seen — bald, white, wearing a green shirt and carrying a backpack.

A responding sheriff's deputy saw a man matching that description walking more than 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) away and detained him. Another deputy also responded, and Child showed up to identify the person in custody — Farinacci — as the one he had seen in the area of the fire, the document states.

Farinacci had a backpack and a fanny pack, in which he had a pack of cigarettes, waterproof matches and a butane lighter, it says. He told the deputies he didn't start the fire and he denied having been in the area where it started. He was wearing a green T-shirt that read, "who needs luck I have charm," the detective wrote.

The deputies were unaware of Farinacci's prior fire-related contacts and the cause of the Old Trails Fire hadn't been determined yet, so they released him to continue working on evacuation efforts, Drapeau wrote.

But the following day, a wildland fire investigator ruled out other possible causes, including sparks from

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electric wires or passing trains, and police arrested Farinacci on Monday.

"As it happens in so many critical cases, it was citizens who were paying attention to their surroundings, being aware and willing to step up and say something that led to the relatively quick apprehension of Mr. Farinacci," Sheriff John Nowels told reporters.

Child credited the heroic work of police and firefighters responding to the disaster, and said he hopes people who lost homes "can get some kind of peace of mind or a little bit of comfort" from the arrest.

Farinacci appeared in court Tuesday via video link from the jail and was represented by Colin Charbonneau, director of the Spokane County public defender's office. A judge set his arraignment for Thursday.

In an effort to get comment from Farinacci's family, The Associated Press sent a message to a possible social media account for a brother.

Police contacted him about earlier fires

A detective investigating the Old Trails Fire ran a criminal history check on Farinacci and found that he had been contacted by law enforcement twice before during fire investigations.

Spokane police responded to reports of several fires on July 8, 2025, near Farinacci's apartment. The area near the Spokane River involved several "bus-sized" fires and prompted a significant emergency response, according to a police record.

The Washington State Patrol made contact with Farinacci the following month while pursuing a suspect in a wildfire at Riverside State Park. They found him on a park bench, "seemingly out of breath from possibly running." They took photos of him. He was wearing a green T-shirt just like the one he was seen wearing on Saturday, the document says.

Convicted of manslaughter

Farinacci, then age 21, shot and killed his father in Mesa, Arizona, during a 2010 argument about washing dishes, police said. Farinacci also shot himself but survived.

He was charged with murder but pleaded guilty in 2012 to manslaughter and aggravated assault, records show.

A judge in 2011 found that Farinacci was mentally fit to assist in his own defense, though defense lawyer Jose Colon continued to raise questions about his mental health and noted that he had been hospitalized multiple times for psychiatric treatment, court records show.

In a letter to the judge, Beth Farinacci, who had married Farinacci's father, said second-degree murder, not manslaughter, would have been a more appropriate way to resolve the case.

"Manslaughter is for when someone accidentally kills another person. It is not for someone who intentionally points a loaded gun at their father and shoots him in his face and back," Beth Farinacci wrote.

Farinacci was released from probation in Arizona in early 2024. A probation officer said Farinacci maintained a stable residence with his girlfriend and her family in the previous year, but also noted he hadn't completed a mental health evaluation or domestic violence treatment.

Drone activity a serious concern

The fires were among dozens across the Western U.S. that have stretched the ability of federal, state and local agencies to fight them. More than 1,000 firefighters, many from outside of Washington state, were in the Spokane area Tuesday, and that number was expected to rise.

On Monday afternoon, during the hottest part of the day, authorities had to ground all of their firefighting aircraft for nearly two hours due to repeated airspace incursions by privately operated drones, said Tom Stokesberry, spokesperson for the critical incident team managing the fire response.

Federal authorities on Tuesday granted a law enforcement task force the authority to down, by means of electronic disruption, any drones that cross into restricted airspace, he said.

In one neighborhood, blackened vehicles, a boat twisted by the heat and melted plastic recycling bins remained. Across the street, lawns were still green and houses were spared, as residents continued to run hoses or sprinklers to water their properties.

Some residents who had to flee blazes returned to find only chimneys left standing.

"There's nothing to save," Miriam Sim, 76, said as she and her husband, Daniel Sim, surveyed the ruins

of the home where they had lived since 2005.

Netanyahu says no Israeli withdrawal from Gaza until Hamas has been completely disarmed

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY, IBRAHIM HAZBOUN and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza City (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday that Israel will not withdraw from its current lines in Gaza until Hamas has completely disarmed and pushed back on a recent deal announced by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Netanyahu's remarks cast more doubt on the deal to disarm Hamas, which was seen as a potential breakthrough for ending the war. It also marked a rare public display of friction with the Trump administration.

The agreement called for Hamas to begin disarming and for Israel to halt its strikes and begin withdrawing from the roughly 60% of Gaza it currently controls. It was based on an October ceasefire agreement that ended major military operations and brought about the release of the remaining hostages held in Gaza but has stalled on other fronts.

Netanyahu, who faces a tough battle for reelection in October, reiterated his stance that disarmament should come first. He said Israeli forces would continue to "do whatever is necessary to protect themselves, our territory, and our citizens."

The Trump administration "sent us a draft. We did not agree. It is not our draft. We sent our comments. ... This is our position," Netanyahu said in a video posted on social media.

Mass funeral held for dozens killed in 2023 strike

Earlier on Tuesday, Palestinians gathered for a mass funeral of more than 100 bodies finally recovered from a deadly Israeli strike in Gaza in 2023. More than 300 people were killed on Nov. 22, 2023, weeks into the war with Hamas, when warplanes flattened a residential block in Gaza City's Sabra neighborhood.

Around 40 bodies were recovered soon afterward in a frantic scramble of rough tools and bare hands, but most were buried deep beneath the rubble. Reports of the high number of victims in one of the war's deadliest attacks took days to reach the public in the chaos just before its first ceasefire.

Over the weekend, first responders dug through the destroyed buildings and recovered remains of 112 victims, including 40 children, according to the Civil Defense, a rescue agency operating under the Hamas-run Interior Ministry.

It said 157 bodies still have not been found.

"The only crime of these martyrs was that they remained steadfast and resilient in their homes, believing that these homes would protect them," one relative, Taysir al-Hassayna, told The Associated Press following the funeral prayers.

For the missing, it's "as if their bodies had evaporated without a trace."

The current ceasefire has allowed recovery of remains

Only now are some bodies of people killed in the war's ferocious early months slowly being recovered, as the fragile ceasefire allows such efforts to push ahead in parts of devastated Gaza.

Those discoveries have contributed to the war's rising toll. The Hamas-led militant attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killed around 1,200 people and saw 251 taken hostage. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed more than 73,377 Palestinians, including since the ceasefire, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

At least 7,400 people have been reported by relatives to still be under the rubble, Zaher al-Waheidi, head of the ministry's records department, told the AP. The true number is likely thousands higher because in some cases entire families were killed in a single bombing, leaving no one to report the missing, al-Waheidi has said.

The people mourned on Tuesday were from a residential block belonging to the Hassayna and Abu Sharia clan, and many were related. AP has identified at least 60 families across Gaza who lost 25 or more family members during the first three months of war.

On Tuesday, the remains of the victims, wrapped in Palestinian flags, were laid in rows on the ground. Many were marked with photos, and flower petals were scattered around them all. Hundreds of people

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surrounded the bodies for funeral prayers, some standing on the rubble.

Following the prayers, people carried the bodies on stretchers along a narrow street lined by destroyed buildings and buried them in a nearby cemetery.

Deadly strikes continue and rebuilding is on hold

At least 1,252 people have been killed in Gaza since the ceasefire took effect, according to the territory's Health Ministry.

The ministry, part of the Hamas-led government, maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by U.N. agencies and independent experts. It does not give a breakdown of civilians and militants but says women and children make up most of the dead.

Israel says its strikes are against militants who endanger its soldiers, took part in the Oct. 7 attack or carry out other violations. Five Israeli soldiers have been killed since the ceasefire.

The U.S.-backed ceasefire agreement last October called for Hamas to be disarmed and for Israel to withdraw. An International Stabilization Force was to be deployed, and an independent Palestinian administration was to oversee governance and reconstruction.

Israel says everything hinges on Hamas giving up its weapons, while Hamas says Israel must end its strikes and begin withdrawing from the territory. Each side accuses the other of violating the truce.

Gaza remains largely shattered. Most of its 2 million Palestinians are displaced, many living in tent camps where poor conditions and overcrowding have led to rodent infestations and outbreaks of infectious diseases such as chickenpox.

Trump administration revokes visa of Brazil's ambassador to US in spat with Lula

By MATTHEW LEE and MAURICIO SAVARESE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration has revoked the visa of Brazil's ambassador to the United States in retaliation for Brazil's denial of visas last month for two American diplomats who sought to visit ahead of upcoming elections as well as what it said was Brazil's stalling on approving President Donald Trump's nominee to be ambassador in Brasilia.

The State Department said the decision was a reciprocal response to Brazil's actions, and officials said the step had been delayed several times to give Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva room to back down, something he did not do. Officials said, however, that it could be quickly reversed if Brazil takes appropriate action and accepts Trump's ambassadorial choice.

Brazil's government in a statement responded by accusing the United States of not following international law in nominating its ambassador to Brazil. It said the U.S. government's decision to revoke the Brazilian ambassador's visa was politically driven with the aim of influencing Brazil's election in October.

Trump has had a fractious relationship for some time with Lula's administration, which has opposed him on numerous policies, particularly in the Western Hemisphere regarding Venezuela and Cuba. Their relationship also has been strained by Trump's fondness for Lula's first term successor and then predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, who is currently under house arrest, and his son Flávio, who is Lula's main opponent in the election.

Lula has spared Trump himself from criticism and claims they liked each other when they first met at the United Nations Assembly General in September of last year. The Brazilian leader has blamed Secretary of State Marco Rubio for some of the actions against his country.

Brazil's ambassador is not being expelled

Despite the revocation of her visa, Brazil's ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti is not being expelled from the United States, said one State Department official, who like several others spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive diplomatic matter. The ambassador was previously a senior United Nations official.

She could be allowed to resume her official duties if the Brazilian government accepts Trump's choice of former Florida House speaker Danny Perez to be U.S. ambassador to Brazil. Perez was nominated to the

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post in June and the official said Brazil had signaled it would not act on the appointment until after the first round of Brazil's election on Oct. 4.

Perez' nomination was submitted to the Senate on June 1. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted on July 22 to send his nomination to the full Senate, where a vote was expected by the end of this week.

Brazil's government said the U.S. should have asked for consent to send Perez in private, as established by the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations, before the nomination was made public. It added the U.S. government's request to send Perez is still "under analysis."

Brazil denied visas last month for Riley Barnes, the assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor, and one of his top aides after reports emerged that the pair were going to criticize Lula or the election process.

The State Department denied the allegations and said the two had planned to visit Brasilia on July 27-30 to meet government officials, religious leaders and others about "election integrity," religious freedom and freedom of expression.

It said the visit was routine and that "any insinuation of a 'ploy' to undermine a democratic nation's election is a baseless lie."

The Brazilian government on Tuesday stood by its assessment, saying the two Americans "were planning to visit the country to cast doubts about the integrity of the Brazilian electoral system, in an unacceptable attempt to interfere in the national political process."

Last week, a top Brazilian diplomat told journalists the government was expecting a response from Rubio. The diplomat was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The same Brazilian diplomat told the AP on Tuesday, also under condition of anonymity, that the Lula administration is trying to figure out why the U.S. government is rushing to have an ambassador in Brasilia only months before October's election. The post in the Brazilian capital has been vacant since Trump returned to the White House in January 2025.

The Trump administration has taken other actions against Brazil

Lula, who is 80 and seeking his fourth term as Brazil's president, will face Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, whose father once served as Brazil's president and whose family has many ties with the Trump administration.

Sen. Bolsonaro and his brother, Eduardo, visited U.S. officials in Washington, including Trump, in late May. Shortly afterward, the Trump administration classified Brazil's biggest drug-trafficking groups — First Command Capital and Red Command — as foreign terrorist organizations, a move Lula opposes.

The Trump administration also imposed an up to 37.5% tariff hike on thousands of Brazilian exports, which came into force Friday. The U.S. government claims the South American nation has unfair competition practices and fails to stop forced labor practices — both accusations rejected by the Lula administration as an attempt to sway the election to Sen. Bolsonaro.

Brazil's government said Tuesday's decision was not an isolated incident.

"It forms part of a deliberate escalation of hostile measures against Brazil, driven by ideological motives that are incompatible with a bilateral partnership that has always been guided by mutual respect," the government statement said. "The improper intent to interfere in the forthcoming presidential election is also evident."

Jair Bolsonaro has for years fed concerns about the country's electronic voting system, without providing any evidence for his claims. He is now serving a 27-year prison sentence at home for an attempted coup. He has long insisted that the machines, used for a quarter-century, are prone to fraud.

Sen. Bolsonaro has recently repeated some of these claims, although he steered clear of those on Saturday when his Liberal Party confirmed him as a presidential candidate in Sao Paulo.

Brazil's government said it "has spared no effort to resolve these differences" with the U.S. government.

Missouri election chief rejects bid to hold public vote on Trump-backed congressional districts

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri's top election official has rejected a citizens' petition seeking a statewide referendum on new congressional districts backed by President Donald Trump.

Supporters of the referendum had submitted hundreds of thousands of petition signatures in a bid to force a November election on a new U.S. House map approved by the Republican-led state Legislature. But Republican Secretary of State Denny Hoskins asserted Tuesday that the petition is void because congressional redistricting plans cannot be subject to voter referendums.

The number of petition signatures submitted doesn't matter, Hoskins said, because "challenging a congressional map is unconstitutional under Missouri law."

A group backing the referendum effort said it will contest Hoskins' decision in court.

"Secretary of State Hoskins is making a last desperate attempt to silence the people's voice in Missouri," Richard von Glahn, executive director of People Not Politicians Missouri, said in a statement, while asserting there are more than enough signatures to qualify the referendum for the ballot.

Missouri was the second Republican-led state, after Texas, to respond to Trump's call last year to redraw congressional districts to the GOP's advantage in hopes of holding on to the party's slim House majority in the midterm elections.

The new map, which is being used in Tuesday's primaries, dramatically reshapes the Kansas City-based 5th Congressional District, held by longtime Democratic Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, by stretching it into rural central Missouri to give it a Republican tilt. Republicans already hold six of Missouri's eight congressional seats and hope to gain another under the new map.

Hoskins shoots down amendment on citizen initiatives

Hoskins also rejected a potential November ballot measure seeking to fortify the initiative process.

The proposed amendment would bar the Legislature from making it harder to qualify citizen initiatives for the ballot or approve them at an election. It also would make it harder for the Legislature to reverse or amend voter-approved initiatives by requiring an 80% vote in both the House and Senate, instead of the current simple majority.

Although supporters had submitted thousands of signatures, Hoskins asserted that the petition violated a constitutional prohibition against rolling multiple subjects and sections of the constitution into a single amendment.

The Respect Missouri Voters coalition said it will take legal action to try to get its amendment on the ballot.

"This brazen disregard for the will of the people is exactly why the people of Missouri came together to gather signatures ... because we are sick of these games in Jefferson City," said Bob Johnson, a coalition member and former Republican state senator.

For both the redistricting referendum and the citizen initiative measure, Hoskins released opinions from Republican Attorney General Catherine Hanaway laying out the rationale for his decisions.

Missouri's redistricting plan has faced lots of litigation

People Not Politicians, the group sponsoring the referendum drive, submitted more than 300,000 signatures to the secretary of state's office in December. Local election officials reviewed the signatures' validity over the ensuing months and approved well more than the roughly 111,000 needed to qualify for the ballot.

But Hoskins waited until the last day allowed under state law to announce his decision about the referendum — a move that let the new districts be used in the meantime.

Hoskins had long signaled that he was likely to reject the referendum. He asked a federal court last fall to block the referendum petition from being submitted, arguing that congressional redistricting is not subject to a referendum under the U.S. and Missouri constitutions. A judge dismissed the lawsuit as premature, noting in a December ruling that Hoskins had the authority to reject the petition himself if he thought it was unconstitutional.

When Missouri candidates began filing for office in February, Hoskins said they were doing so under the

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new districts and told The Associated Press that “the referendum process was never meant to be used for redistricting.”

If Hoskins is wrong, and a court orders him to place the redistricting referendum on the ballot, it’s unclear what that means for the 2026 elections. Would candidates who win Tuesday’s primaries be allowed to continue running under the new districts in November while voters simultaneously decide whether those districts can be used in future elections? Would candidates run in different districts for the general election than were used in the primaries? Or would courts order a do-over for the congressional primaries using the state’s prior congressional districts?

Missouri’s mid-decade redistricting effort already has been among the most litigated nationally, triggering about a dozen lawsuits over the past year.

Republicans are ahead in the national redistricting fight

Legislative voting districts typically are redrawn at the start of each decade, immediately after a census. But Trump’s call for Republicans to redraw districts to their advantage led to an unusual outbreak of mid-decade mapmaking. The redistricting effort gained additional steam when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a majority Black congressional district in Louisiana in late April, prompting Republicans in several Southern states to also redraw districts that had large minority populations.

All told, Republicans think they could win as many as 16 additional seats from new House maps enacted in eight states — Texas, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Florida, Tennessee, Louisiana and Alabama. Democrats, whose counterattack faced several setbacks, think they could win up to six additional seats from new districts in California and Utah.

Voters ultimately will determine whether the new districts perform as intended. Even with redistricting, Republicans are facing headwinds. The president’s party historically has lost congressional seats in the midterms, and Trump’s poor approval ratings could provide an extra hurdle for Republican candidates.

Nearly 145 million people — about two of every five U.S. residents — live in states with new congressional districts for this election. Additional states are considering redistricting before the 2028 elections. Maryland lawmakers voted Tuesday to place an amendment on November’s ballot that could pave the way for mid-decade redistricting.

Trump is making a rare Western trip to to raise cash for Republicans and talk about the economy

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — President Donald Trump is making a rare visit to California and Nevada this week to try to draw contrasts with Democrats on the economy, border security and crime, seeking to shore up support for Republicans in November elections that will determine whether his party keeps control of Congress.

The Republican president has struggled to connect with voters on the economy as elevated inflation and Americans’ feelings of uncertainty have overshadowed the stock market gains he often cites along with a low national unemployment rate.

Just before Trump arrived in Los Angeles on Tuesday to speak at a Republican National Committee fundraising dinner at a golf club his family owns in Rancho Palos Verdes, authorities revealed that a California man who was carrying ammunition and had a gun in his car had been arrested Sunday at the golf course. The man appeared to have been monitoring security preparations.

On Wednesday, Trump will discuss the economy during an event at Red Rock Casino in Las Vegas. Only 32% of U.S. adults approved of Trump’s handling of the economy in an AP-NORC poll conducted in late July. In the same poll, most Americans, 69%, characterized the state of the economy as “poor,” and many said the cost of everyday essentials like groceries and gas was a “major” source of stress in their lives.

Trump’s overall approval rating is at 33%, slightly below where he stood at this point in his first term.

Trump is likely to take aim at Democratic Gov. Newsom

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During the trip, Trump is likely to throw barbs at California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat eyed as a likely candidate for his party's presidential nomination in 2028. Newsom has become one of the president's highest-profile opponents.

White House spokesperson Olivia Wales said the president plans to "draw a sharp contrast between his commonsense agenda and the radical policies of Democrats like Gavin Newsom," touting his own efforts to cut taxes, reduce fraud in government programs, and crack down on immigration and crime.

California was one of Trump's first domestic stops after returning to office in January 2025. He surveyed the aftermath of wildfires that had wiped out whole neighborhoods of Los Angeles County, left thousands of people homeless and killed more than two dozen.

Newsom greeted Trump at the airport on that trip, and they chatted amiably and gestured toward cooperation despite a bitter history. But the comity did not last. Six months later, Newsom argued in a speech that "democracy is under assault" by Trump after the president sent National Guard troops and U.S. Marines into Los Angeles without Newsom's consent. This came after protests following a series of immigration raids by federal authorities.

Trump routinely mocks Newsom and refers to the governor using a derogatory nickname, while Newsom taunts the president with frequent social media posts.

The Democrat's press office put out a statement Tuesday saying that Trump was traveling to California not to help survivors of the wildfires but to raise money and attack the state with lies.

"More than anything, we'd like the President to keep the promise he made on January 24, 2025: to 'take care of Los Angeles,'" Newsom said. "18 months later, survivors are still waiting. And while you're here, Mr. President, welcome to the world's fourth-largest economy — growing faster than Texas and Florida combined. Enjoy your stay."

"Trump treats California like his personal political punching bag — right up until he needs someone to write a check," California Democratic Party Chair Rusty Hicks said in a statement. "He may hit up a few billionaire donors who bankroll his political operation, but the people of California have already made it clear: they want nothing to do with his chaos and corruption."

Housing prices are a big issue at Trump's second stop: Nevada

Nevada, where Trump will be on Wednesday, is led by a Republican governor, Joe Lombardo, who faces Democratic Attorney General Aaron Ford in a battle for reelection in November. The contest is considered one of the most competitive governor's races in the country.

The Nevada State Democratic Party is putting up billboard signs about Trump's visit that tie him to Lombardo and higher costs. The state is grappling with a shortage of affordable housing, exploding energy demand from artificial intelligence data centers and federal cuts to key state programs.

Trump has tried for several months to sell voters on his income tax cuts and claims of a manufacturing renaissance. But interest rates are high, a gallon of gasoline costs more because of the Iran war, tariffs are still reshaping the economy and, by the White House's own estimates, there is a national shortage of housing.

The president called his own housing bill a "yawn," and past speeches advertised by the White House as being about the economy, including one he delivered at a General Motors facility in Michigan last week, gave way to Trumpian weaves about his political enemies and construction projects in the nation's capital.

SpaceX posts loss in first report as a public company but less than expected

By BERNARD CONDON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — SpaceX reported a smaller loss than Wall Street expected along with a surge in revenue in its first quarterly report as a public company as it sharply boosted spending, particularly on artificial intelligence.

The company run by Elon Musk posted a loss of \$541 million, or 9 cents per share, in the three months

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through June, less than half what financial analysts had forecast. Revenue jumped to \$7.8 billion, up more than 90% from the year-earlier period.

A standout in the quarter was the company's big cash source, its "connectivity" business, with revenue jumping 66% from a year earlier as the number of subscribers to its Starlink satellite communications service doubled to 12 million.

"It's not out of the question that at some point, Starlink will deliver a majority of the world's internet," Musk said in call with analysts.

SpaceX stock rose 9% in regular trading Tuesday, but gave most of the gain back after hours. The rocket, satellite and AI company's stock has fallen by roughly half since peaking in June shortly after an initial public offering that briefly made Musk the world's first trillionaire.

Investors are worried Musk has oversold them on the company's future prospects for space travel and its AI chatbot Grok. They're also bracing for volatile trading as some company insiders get the opportunity to sell shares after the expiration of what's known as a lockup provision later in the week.

Another area of concern is SpaceX spending on infrastructure and R&D, which jumped to \$18 billion from less than \$3 billion a year ago. The company's chief financial officer, Bret Johnsen, said to expect similar capital expenditures for the next two quarters.

Musk defended the outlays, a concern also weighing on many other technology companies spending heavily on AI, saying the resulting supercharged growth meant the company would reach a trillion dollars in revenue a year faster now, 2030 rather than 2031.

Shares jumped 19% on their first day of trading in June, making Musk the first-ever trillionaire. The subsequent drop, as well as a decline in the shares of Musk's electric vehicle company Tesla, have knocked his wealth down to \$783 billion, according to Forbes.

Musk was asked several times about the prospects for the gigantic Starship rocket that is key to SpaceX realizing his ambitions. Starship successfully deployed satellites in space during a test late last month.

Musk said he expected SpaceX will attempt to test the reusability of Starship at the end of the month when it will attempt to grab the spacecraft and its booster with mechanical arms upon their return to their base. NASA hopes to use Starship to put astronauts on the moon again in the near future.

"We want to put boots on the ground — boots on the moon — in 2028," said SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell.

SpaceX shares could see continued volatility. Some insiders have been barred from selling in the public offering but that prohibition begins to ease on Thursday when more than 900 million shares are released for trading, more than doubling the amount currently available. The lockup release is the first of several tranches of stock that will be freed to trade over the next several months.

The company also runs the social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

Maryland lawmakers ask voters to clear the way for a congressional map designed to boost Democrats

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

Maryland voters will decide in November whether to clear the way for a new congressional map that would favor Democrats in all eight of the state's U.S. House districts for the 2028 elections.

Both chambers of the Democratic-dominated state legislature on Tuesday approved putting an amendment on the ballot to allow the change. Sending it to voters required three-fifths approval of both legislative chambers, which met in a special session to consider the change. It cleared the House 96-38 and the Senate 32-13.

Gov. Wes Moore, a Democrat, praised lawmakers for putting the measure before voters, and joined them in saying it was necessary to combat President Donald Trump's push for a mid-decade redistricting that favors Republicans.

"I continue to believe that our country needs national redistricting reform. But until that happens, inaction is not an option," Moore said in a statement. "Maryland will not be caught flat-footed while Republicans

engage in political redlining that guts decades of progress that the generations before us fought for.”

In a state where Democrats now occupy seven of the eight House seats, Republicans are calling the effort a blatant power grab — and a move that violates a new state law intended to give voters more time to consider proposed amendments.

In debate in the House on Tuesday, Republican Delegate Kevin Hornberger told his colleagues: “Just because we can go ultra-partisan doesn’t mean we should go ultra-partisan.” Other Republicans said constituents weren’t behind it and one Democratic lawmaker worried that the change could cost rural parts of the state federal resources if they’re put in the same districts with suburban areas.

In the debate, Democrats emphasized that the amendment does not include approval of any specific new maps.

If the amendment is ultimately approved, it would likely be part of a rapid reconfiguration of congressional district lines that began last year when Trump urged Republican-controlled states to adjust their maps to help the party in the 2026 midterm elections. Normally, redistricting happens just once a decade after new Census data is released.

Eight states — Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee and Texas — have redrawn maps to help Republicans, who could pick up as many as 16 seats due to the redistricting. New maps in California and Utah could give Democrats an advantage in six races.

Maryland moved more slowly — and with an approach that will not change districts for this year’s elections — because Democratic state Senate President Bill Ferguson blocked an earlier initiative aimed at putting new maps in place for this year. He was worried that the state Supreme Court, with most of its members appointed by a Republican former governor, could backfire — especially because a judge in 2022 rejected a new map that could have boosted the Democrats.

Ferguson said his view changed after the U.S. Supreme Court weakened the Voting Rights Act in April, giving Republicans grounds for reconfiguring districts with large minority populations in Southern states.

The question that could go to voters is designed to make it hard for the court to reject redistricting. It would make it clear that the parameters the judge cited — including that districts be compact in form and have regard given to “natural boundaries” — apply only to state legislative districts, not congressional ones.

That would allow congressional districts to cross the Chesapeake Bay, which is the only way Democrats could draw a map that gives them an edge in every congressional district. Currently, the only district on the rural Eastern Shore east of the Bay is also the only one represented by a Republican, Rep. Andy Harris, the chair of the conservative House Freedom Caucus.

Salvadoran man complained of access to medication before death at NJ immigration jail, family says

By HALLIE GOLDEN and JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

Family members of a Salvadoran man who died at a New Jersey immigration jail are demanding an independent investigation into his death, alleging he was denied proper medical care inside a facility that has become a flashpoint for protests against President Donald Trump’s immigration crackdown.

The man, Edwin Lopez-Cornejo, was hospitalized Saturday after having a “medical emergency” while being held at Delaney Hall in Newark, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He died the same day.

His official cause of death will be released following further medical examination, according to ICE, which listed his age as 41. Relatives said he was 39.

At a news conference Tuesday, distraught family members said Lopez-Cornejo had complained he was not getting regular access to his medications, which he took for diabetes, high blood pressure and seizures. His mother, Maria Cornejo, said he called the day before his death to tell her he had spoken to a doctor early Friday and had lost feeling in half his face and arm.

“My son needed medical attention, and he didn’t receive it,” Cornejo said in Spanish. “He was a good

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father. A good son. A hardworking man. He didn't harm anyone."

Through tears, his 12-year-old daughter, Ashley Lopez, said the family knew his health had worsened in detention. "All of us were worried about him," she said.

In their statement, ICE said Lopez-Cornejo "received proper medical care and was seen by medical professionals" while in custody. He had been held at the facility since his arrest on June 18, according to the agency, which accused him of entering the country illegally.

In all, at least 56 people have died in ICE custody during Trump's second term. Hundreds of people detained across the U.S. have brought lawsuits accusing immigrant detention facilities of failing to provide proper medical care.

In recent months, Delaney Hall has been the site of fierce protests by immigration advocates, with demonstrators at times attempting to block vehicles from entering or leaving the facility. Earlier this year, some people held at the jail launched a hunger strike over the conditions, according to Cosecha, an immigrant advocacy group.

The facility is owned by Geo Group, a private prison contractor that operates multiple detention centers across the country. The contractor deferred comment to ICE.

After Lopez-Cornejo's death, Democratic politicians and civil rights groups renewed their calls to shutter the 1,000-bed facility.

"This is not the first death of a detainee at Delaney Hall, and absent decisive action, it will not be the last," Democratic U.S. Sen. Cory Booker said in a statement. "I have visited the facility myself and witnessed these conditions firsthand, so I say this plainly: Delaney Hall must be closed immediately and permanently."

In December, Jean Wilson Brutus, a 41-year-old Haitian national, died after collapsing at the jail in what a medical examiner ruled was due to a blood clot blocking an artery in his lungs.

On Monday, U.S. Rep. Rob Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat who has routinely visited Delaney Hall, told reporters another person detained by ICE died in July after they had a seizure while they were being processed at the facility. Menendez said ICE granted the person a "discretionary release" from custody after they were taken to a hospital and lost consciousness, and the person died shortly afterward.

Menendez did not identify the person. ICE didn't immediately respond to an inquiry about the case.

Menendez said ICE did not report the death, in line with a policy change announced earlier this year in which the agency no longer reports deaths that occur within 30 days of someone's release from custody.

ICE has also not publicly recognized the July 24 death of 29-year-old Priciliano Trejo in Georgia, which came nine days after the agency released him from custody while he was hospitalized in a coma, according to a coalition of advocacy groups in the state. The agency has not responded to inquiries about Trejo's death.

On Tuesday, Lopez-Cornejo's brother, Danilo Lopez, called for the release of all medically vulnerable detained people, adding that the family would seek an independent state investigation into the "health crisis" at Delaney Hall.

In a statement, New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill, a Democrat, said her administration's inspection efforts "continue to face obstruction."

"Every effort to block oversight raises serious questions about what is happening inside Delaney Hall and what those operating the facility are trying to hide," she added.

Todd Blanche's nomination for attorney general clears critical hurdle after deal with GOP holdouts

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche cleared a critical hurdle Tuesday in his bid to be confirmed to the post after swaying Republican holdouts on a Senate committee to advance his nomination for a floor vote.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 12-10 along party lines in support of the nomination of President Donald Trump's former personal attorney, who has aggressively pushed the Republican administration's priorities since taking over from Pam Bondi in April.

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The vote followed a deal struck late Sunday between Blanche and two Republican senators — John Cornyn of Texas and Thom Tillis of North Carolina — who had been threatening to block his confirmation over the settlement of Trump's lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service regarding the president's leaked tax returns.

Cornyn and Tillis backed Blanche's nomination after the Justice Department confirmed in writing that it wasn't moving forward with a \$1.8 billion fund to compensate Trump allies who believe they were prosecuted for political purposes, which the administration announced as part of the settlement.

After days of negotiations, Blanche issued an order Sunday evening confirming "beyond any doubt, that there is no Fund."

It was still unclear, though, if Republicans will have enough votes in the full Senate to confirm Blanche. A vote could come by the end of the week.

If all Democrats oppose him, Blanche can only afford to lose two Republican votes if Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, who was hospitalized after a fall, does not return before then.

Maine Sen. Susan Collins, a moderate Republican who is in a tough reelection race this year, said in a statement Tuesday afternoon that she would not support Blanche because he has taken actions that "eroded the department's independence," including the creation of the settlement fund.

At least two other Republican senators have not said if they will vote to confirm Blanche — Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy, who lost reelection earlier this year when Trump endorsed one of his primary opponents. Both declined comment when asked how they will vote.

Democrats complain about the fund

Democrats say Blanche's order doesn't go far enough to prevent the Trump administration from reviving the fund after the acting attorney general's confirmation and have called for legislation to permanently bar it.

The order also doesn't stop the administration from compensating Trump allies — including people who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 — through a previously established process that allows people to file claims for damages if they believed they were wronged by the government.

The fund "can easily be revived with a new order from the Department of Justice 15 minutes after Mr. Blanche is confirmed as attorney general," said Dick Durbin of Illinois, the top Democrat on the committee.

Cornyn and Tillis had also pressed for clarification on a separate part of the settlement that would grant Trump and members of his family immunity from tax audits.

Under the deal, the Justice Department clarified in writing that the tax audit immunity agreement applies only to claims open at the time of the settlement and does not protect Trump from examination of future tax filings. It also makes clear that only the parties that brought the lawsuit — Trump, two of his sons, and the Trump Organization — are covered by the tax agreement.

Cornyn said his reasons for backing Blanche go beyond the deal struck Sunday, adding that he believes the Justice Department needs a "stabilizing force" at the helm.

"The Department of Justice does not need a temporary, unconfirmed nominee as our nation's top law enforcement official. Trump needs someone in this role, as well, with a strong legal mind," Cornyn said.

Blanche's independence has been called into question

Blanche has faced intense scrutiny regarding his ability to maintain independence from the White House, the Justice Department's pursuit of the president's political foes and the agency's handling of files related to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein's sex trafficking investigation.

But it was the settlement of Trump's \$10 billion lawsuit against the IRS that threatened to derail Blanche's nomination, forcing a delay in the committee vote last week amid pressure from the two Republican senators, who are not returning to Capitol Hill after their terms end in January.

Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley, who chairs the committee, said Tillis and Cornyn's demands were "common sense." Grassley said the senators' concerns about the "Anti-Weaponization Fund" and the IRS settlement were shared by many other lawmakers, including himself.

"I'm grateful that they as well as Mr. Blanche and the White House worked in good faith to solve them, formally rescinding the fund, clarifying the scope of the release of claims has put this issue to bed once and for all," Grassley said.

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Trump's lawsuit has been sharply criticized because of the highly unusual way it was handled, with the president challenging an agency overseen by the executive branch he leads. A judge last month slammed the case as an improper exercise in self-dealing and referred one of Trump's attorneys who filed it for potential disciplinary action.

Blanche was an important figure for Trump's defense

Blanche, a former federal prosecutor and key member of Trump's defense team as the Republican battled four indictments, arrived at the Justice Department last year as deputy attorney general. He was elevated to acting attorney general following Bondi's failure to meet Trump's demands to successfully prosecute his perceived political opponents.

While Blanche insisted he wasn't auditioning for the permanent post, he moved swiftly to accelerate investigations into Trump foes and advance other White House priorities, drawing condemnation from critics who say he has not shed his title as Trump's personal lawyer.

Shortly after Blanche took the top post, the Justice Department moved to indict longtime Trump adversary James Comey, the former FBI director, on charges of threatening the 47th president by posting a social media photograph of seashells in the numerical arrangement of "86 47."

Comey's lawyers have accused the Justice Department of misleading judges, submitting documents containing false statements and withholding key facts to bring what the defense described as a politically motivated prosecution.

Blanche separately appointed Joseph diGenova, a former Justice Department prosecutor from the Reagan administration, to oversee a Florida-based investigation into whether former law enforcement and intelligence officials conspired over the last decade to undermine Trump.

US stocks hit records as profits keep piling up for Palantir and others, while oil prices ease

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. stock market rallied to records on Tuesday as profits kept piling up for companies and as oil prices eased.

The S&P 500 shot up 1.8%, and the main measure of Wall Street's health topped its prior all-time high set a couple months ago. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 907 points, or 1.7%, to its own record set the day before, while the Nasdaq composite jumped 2.6%.

Despite worries about high inflation, the war in Iran, frustration with the economy and a possible bubble in stock prices because of the boom in artificial-intelligence technology, Wall Street hit its latest apex and rewarded investors who remained patient because profits keep soaring for companies. Stock prices tend to follow the path of corporate earnings over the long term.

Palantir Technologies helped lead the way and surged 29.5% after CEO Alex Karp said its overall revenue leaped 93% in what he called an "otherworldly" quarter. Besides reporting a stronger profit for the spring than analysts expected, the AI company also raised its revenue forecast for the full year of 2026.

Caterpillar climbed 5.6% after the heavy-equipment maker likewise reported stronger profit and revenue than analysts expected. It was the first time Caterpillar made more than \$20 billion in sales and revenue in a quarter, and CEO Joe Creed said it's seeing strong order rates and a growing backlog across its main businesses.

Caterpillar is also benefiting from the AI boom through increased orders for turbines used to power data centers, among other things.

They're the latest companies to deliver even better profits for the latest quarter than investors expected, following strong results from Amazon, Microsoft and others. Coming into this week, companies in the S&P 500 index were on track to deliver growth of nearly 50% in earnings per share for the spring from a year earlier, according to FactSet.

That would be the biggest such jump since 2021, when the economy was roaring back to life after cratering in the COVID-19 pandemic. With corporate profits up so much, when stock prices are still roughly

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where they were two months ago, stocks don't look as expensive as they did before, according to Phil Segner, a co-portfolio manager at the Leuthold Group.

Also helping stocks on Tuesday was another drop for oil prices.

Brent crude, the international standard, sank 5.3% to \$79.36 per barrel as hope once again took over from fear in the oil market. It had swung sharply between \$72 and \$102 through July on uncertainty about when the war with Iran would allow oil tankers to freely exit the Persian Gulf again to deliver crude around the world.

It's jerked up and down many times as uncertainty built, receded and then built again, not only week to week but also hour to hour. Analysts warn more swings could be ahead, but the latest drop in oil prices nevertheless helped ease Wall Street's worries about inflation. That pulled down yields in the bond market, which in turn relaxed pressure on the overall economy and on prices for stocks and other investments.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 4.62% from 4.70% Monday and from 4.75% at the end of last week. That's a notable move for the bond market, though it remains well above its 3.97% level from before the war with Iran.

Higher yields make it more expensive for all kinds of Americans to borrow money, from homebuyers looking for a mortgage to big companies looking to build AI data centers.

Reports on the U.S. economy, meanwhile, showed it remains resilient even though inflation remains worse than anyone would like. One said U.S. employers were advertising nearly 7.4 million job openings at the end of June, a slight slowdown from May's level but close to economists' expectations.

In stock markets abroad, indexes rose modestly across much of Europe and Asia.

South Korea's Kospi had a more significant move and climbed 1.6%. Seoul has seen some of the world's sharpest swings because two companies swept up in AI mania dominate its market, Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix. The Kospi had dropped 5.1% and soared 17.9% in the prior two days.

Stocks of computer chip companies also strengthened on Wall Street, where gains of 2.6% for Nvidia, 6.6% for Broadcom and 7.6% for Micron Technology were some of the strongest forces lifting the S&P 500.

They more than offset a drop for Chipotle Mexican Group, which fell 9.7% on fears that future profits could be hurt after the chain removed jalapeños from some of its restaurants following a salmonella outbreak. Chipotle said that Minnesota health officials have no ongoing concerns with it.

All told, the S&P 500 rallied 136.02 points to 7,736.52. The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 907.47 to 54,085.88, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 671.10 to 26,584.99.

Divided federal appeals court says Trump administration was wrong to terminate climate funds

By MICHAEL PHILLIS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A divided federal appeals court on Tuesday said the Trump administration improperly terminated billions of dollars in funds to boost clean energy projects, handing a win to a coalition of nonprofits picked to run the Biden-era effort.

Climate United Fund and other nonprofits won't have access to their funds immediately as the decision will be put on hold for several days giving the Environmental Protection Agency time to ask the Supreme Court to step in.

The judgement by the full U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia is a loss for the Trump administration in one of its earliest efforts to dismantle President Joe Biden's campaign to reduce climate-warming greenhouse gases. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, commonly referred to as a "green bank," is a \$20 billion congressionally authorized program that provided money to nonprofits that would then make loans and invest in small energy projects, energy-efficient buildings and transportation.

EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin accused Climate United Fund and other nonprofits picked to run the green bank of mismanagement and potential fraud. He froze billions that had been placed in a Citibank account for the program and then terminated their grants. The groups disputed any wrongdoing and sued, arguing the Trump administration broke the law and violated the Constitution by not spending money authorized

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by Congress.

"Despite efforts to harm the awardees with false allegations and misinformation, there remains no legal basis for terminating our grant award and clawing back funds that were already disbursed in our bank accounts," Climate United said in a statement.

In September, a divided three-judge panel of the same appeals court overturned a lower court and said the Trump administration had broad power to cancel grants without having to face charges of illegality in federal court.

The full appeals court agreed to revisit that decision, a rare occurrence reserved for the most important cases.

Zeldin early last year told Fox News that he suspected the green bank "was a clear-cut case of waste and abuse" that "in my opinion, is criminal."

U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan last year said that when the federal government was asked for evidence of fraud, the agency didn't provide it and shifted its position to more general concerns about the level of EPA oversight over the program. Chutkan ruled the government can't violate the law and terminate the contracts and that the groups should have access to some of their frozen money. That order was put on hold during appeal.

A lawyer for the nonprofits argued at the time that the agency had already allocated the money by putting it in the Citibank account for the program's use.

The agency argued the nonprofits are making constitutional and statutory arguments that don't apply in a simple contract fight, and that the matter should be heard by a different court that can only award a lump sum — not force the government to keep the grants in place. Federal officials argue there is no law or provision in the Constitution that compels the EPA to make these grants to these groups.

The green bank was created by the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, a Biden administration priority that boosted clean energy and climate-friendly projects. President Trump's tax and spending bill last year, however, repealed part of the law that established the bank and rescinded money that hadn't already been obligated to its recipients. That added a layer of complication to the legal case.

Six of 10 judges agreed with a lower court judge that the Trump EPA likely violated the 2022 law when it terminated the grants and tried to claw back funds based on a policy disagreement.

However, one of the six judges that agreed the grant terminations were improper said Trump's bill complicated whether the clean energy groups could access funds going forward.

The remaining four judges broadly disagreed with the majority and sided with the EPA, saying that after Trump's tax and spend bill, the agency likely would have authority to end the grants.

The EPA did not immediately provide comment.

FACT FOCUS: No, you won't need an ID to shop at city-owned grocery stores in New York City

By MELISSA GOLDIN Associated Press

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani's plan to open five city-owned grocery stores is being misrepresented online in posts that claim identification will be required to shop there. The claims are juxtaposed against Democratic resistance to nationwide voter ID requirements.

Republican officials and other major public figures, as well as conservative social media influencers, were among those who made the claim.

Misinformation began spreading in response to a comment made at a press conference last week by Jeanny Pak, the interim president and CEO of New York City's Economic Development Corporation. Asked how the city will stop people from taking advantage of lower prices at the stores, Pak mentioned the possibility of a "library-card-esque" system.

But city officials say there will be no ID requirement for shoppers.

Here's a closer look at the facts.

CLAIM: ID will be required to shop at city-owned grocery stores in New York City.

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THE FACTS: This is false. No one will be asked to show ID to shop at stores owned by the city, according to officials. A customer card, akin to a loyalty savings card at a traditional supermarket, is being discussed as a way to manage supply and stop people from reselling large amounts of discounted items, but the program would be voluntary and would not require ID to access.

Mamdani laughed off the claim during an appearance on The Joy Reid Show on Monday night, saying: "When we're talking about a city-run grocery store, one in each borough, which by the way, you do not need an ID to shop at, no matter what you've just heard in the news of today, we're talking about actually addressing the question of skyrocketing grocery prices."

Joe Calvello and Dora Pekec, both spokespeople for Mamdani, similarly refuted the claims in X posts that evening.

"Insane that this even needs to be said, but to be absolutely clear: NYC Grocery stores will be open to everyone," Calvello wrote. "There will be no system to verify identity, residency or income, and no one will be asked to show ID to shop. This is the dumbest and fakest online news cycle I have seen."

The system Pak referred to as "library-card-esque" at last week's press conference is a customer card that would help stores manage supply and keep aspiring resellers from buying discounted items in bulk, according to Cassio Mendoza, another Mamdani spokesperson. He explained that obtaining such a card would not require ID, residency, or income verification and would be available to anyone who wants one.

In a request for proposals seeking private grocery store operators to run the city-owned shops, the system is described as "a voluntary free-to-access membership card program to monitor sales activity, and implement the discount program and any associated demand management measures." It makes clear that the cards should not be required for physical access to the stores.

A statement from the Mayor's Office further clarified that "the operator selected through the City's procurement process will determine the specific design of that card system" and that "it is not something people will need to apply for through City Hall or another government agency."

The false claim spreading online is being used to criticize opponents of voter ID laws, many of whom are Democrats. In particular, President Donald Trump's SAVE America Act would require people to show documentary proof of citizenship before registering to vote and impose nationwide voter ID requirements. The measure has passed the U.S. House but has not gotten a vote in the Senate, where even some Republicans oppose it.

"Comparisons to voter ID laws or the SAVE Act simply do not apply," the Mayor's Office statement reads. "This is not an identification system, nor is it a mechanism to verify who someone is, where they live, or how much they earn."

Iran and Oman make progress on a deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, officials say

By SAMY MAGDY, AAMER MADHANI and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Iran and the Gulf Arab state of Oman have made progress toward a deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a potential breakthrough that could help wind down the war in the Middle East, regional officials said Tuesday.

Under the emerging agreement, ships would enter the Persian Gulf through an Iranian-controlled route and exit through a route controlled by Oman, with service fees charged for providing security and preserving the maritime environment, two regional officials told The Associated Press.

They said negotiations are still underway and that the final agreement could take a different form, with any deal linked to lifting the U.S. blockade on Iran's ports. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations unfolding behind closed doors.

Any agreement formalizing Iran's control of the strait would mark a significant strategic victory for Tehran. For that reason, the U.S. could seek to block the deal by refusing to lift the blockade. The strait was an open international waterway before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28.

A U.S. official familiar with the negotiations said that any "temporary" routes established through the

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strait would not involve approvals by Iran or charges. The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. remains committed to returning to the status quo in which "no party controls the lanes or the ability to transit through them."

U.S. President Donald Trump is under mounting pressure to end an unpopular war that has driven up gas prices ahead of midterm elections and drawn down U.S. supplies of some munitions. In recent days, he has again whipsawed between threatening massive strikes and voicing support for diplomatic efforts.

In an exchange with reporters on Monday, Trump reiterated his public stance that he's opposed to tolling in the strait. "I'm not going to let them charge," Trump said. "Anybody's going to charge, we'll charge."

US and Iranian officials confirm progress without giving details

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the bilateral talks with Oman are focused on "establishing safe inbound and outbound shipping lanes," routes that "uphold sovereign rights while also addressing the national security considerations of both Iran and Oman."

"The final results of these negotiations will be announced once concluded," he added, in remarks carried by Iran's state-run IRNA news agency.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, speaking to reporters at the State Department, said "there's been progress made in those talks, but not finality yet. We're hoping that will happen very shortly."

Rubio has previously ruled out any deal that would give Iran control over the strait, saying last month that it would create a "very dangerous precedent" for other parts of the world.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told CNBC that "there is a chance we may have a deal today or tomorrow to open the strait and move towards a more normalized position in this conflict."

Asked whether there would be tolls for movement through the strait, Bessent said: "I think it would be freedom of movement."

The potential agreement between Iran and Oman was first reported by The New York Times.

Trump says this is Iran's 'last chance'

A fifth of the world's traded oil and gas transited the waterway before the war. Iranian attacks on ships have largely shut it down, causing a spike in the price of fuel, fertilizer and other goods, and rattling economies far beyond the Middle East.

Trump said Monday that the U.S. was in talks with Iran, saying it was Tehran's "last chance" to reach a deal and avoid another U.S. military escalation.

"The first phase is the opening of the straits. The second phase will be the denuclearization," Trump said. "And that will take a little while."

Iran has denied it is negotiating with the U.S., saying the talks are only with Oman.

The two sides reached an interim agreement in June to reopen the strait and launch 60 days of talks aimed at ending the war and resolving the longstanding dispute over Iran's nuclear program. That agreement collapsed over escalating hostilities focused on the strait, and the deadline is around two weeks away.

Cargo ship reports strike in Strait of Hormuz

Meanwhile, a cargo ship reported being "hit by an unknown projectile" in the strait off the coast of Oman, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center said, without providing further information on the ship, including what flag it was sailing under or whether it was carrying cargo.

The ship sustained damage, according to British maritime security firm Ambrey, which did not elaborate.

In recent weeks, Iran had repeatedly attacked ships using a route running close to Oman that is overseen by the U.S. military and intended to bypass Tehran's control.

Authorities seek a motive in the mass shooting at an Idaho In-N-Out Burger

By MICHAEL BIESECKER and DAVE COLLINS Associated Press

A driver charging his electric taxi and a former law enforcement officer who tried to intervene were among the seven people wounded in a mass shooting at an Idaho fast food restaurant that also left three people dead, according to friends and relatives of the two men.

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The attack Saturday at a new In-N-Out Burger in Twin Falls ended when the gunman, identified by police as 24-year-old Chad Williams, shot and killed himself. On Monday, police were still trying to determine why Williams carried out the attack, which happened early in the afternoon in a busy shopping plaza in the southern Idaho city.

Many details about Williams' life were still unknown Monday, but an initial search of court records in Idaho and Arizona, where he used to live, didn't show any criminal cases matching his name and birth date.

Man who knew gunman says he was 'pretty chill'

Elijah Moseley, who lived across the hall from Williams in a College of Southern Idaho dorm a few years ago, described him as "an introvert" and "a pretty chill guy."

"I was never scared or weirded out by him," he said.

Moseley said he considered Williams a relatively close friend, though they lost touch a couple of years ago.

"I'm shocked by this and sick to my stomach about this," he said.

Detectives are confident that Williams acted alone, Police Chief Matthew Hicks said Sunday, noting that Williams' family is cooperating fully with the investigation.

Two of the wounded victims were treated at a hospital and released, three were listed as stable, and two others were in critical condition, police said Sunday.

During the attack, an off-duty state trooper and a civilian fired on Williams and diverted him from the restaurant, the chief said. Police haven't disclosed their names or those of the victims, but some victims have been identified by friends and relatives. Twin Falls spokesperson Josh Palmer said Monday that police were still trying to identify next of kin.

A vigil is planned for Tuesday evening at Twin Falls City Park, Palmer said.

In-N-Out employee among those killed

The attack happened at an In-N-Out that opened late last month as part of the California chain's Idaho expansion, and an employee at the burger joint was among those killed, the fast-food chain's owner, Lynsi Snyder, said in a statement. She didn't identify the worker.

Kimberley Castaneda confirmed to The Associated Press that her brother, Christopher Claunch, was among those killed, but she declined to discuss him further.

Garren Taylor, one of Claunch's friends, said that two years ago, Claunch completed a rehab program for alcohol abuse at Renaissance Ranch Recovery Center in Rupert, Idaho, and was immediately hired there. Taylor said Claunch, known to those close to him as "Toph," had since then dedicated his life to helping others get sober.

"He helped hundreds of people," Taylor recalled Monday. "He was just a gift to anyone he came in contact with. It wasn't about the paycheck, his attitude was: 'I get to help someone today.'"

Renaissance Ranch declined to comment Monday.

Wounded man moved closer to gunfire to help

In a Facebook post, Marcus Scott James said his son Austin "A.J." Scott James was critically wounded in the attack and faces a long recovery. He said his son was shot after he moved "toward the danger" when he heard gunfire in an effort to protect others.

"We are incredibly thankful that God spared his life and that his wife and friend were there to provide immediate care until he could get to the hospital," he wrote.

Marcus James said in a message to the AP on Monday that his son used to work as a law enforcement officer for the Twin Falls police and the Idaho State Police. He declined to comment further on his son's actions, saying it is his son's story to tell.

Terry Dudley, a driver for North Star Taxi, was shot as he was charging one of the company's Teslas in a parking lot next to the In-N-Out Burger, said James Palmer, who owns the taxi service and is Dudley's friend.

Palmer said Dudley called him to tell him he was shot after he couldn't get through to 911. He said Dudley was flown to a hospital in Boise and remained there Monday with serious injuries, he said.

"It's a lot, man," Palmer said. "It's daunting, to say the least, to even try to gather the scope of all this. It's been absolute chaos."

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He said Dudley was "kind of like my right hand."

Gunman left local college before graduating

Williams attended the College of Southern Idaho from August 2022 and December 2023, according to the school's president, L. Dean Fisher. He didn't graduate or earn a certificate from the school, which has about 10,000 students.

Williams served in the student senate but was unanimously impeached by his fellow senators in February 2023. Moseley, who served as the senate pro-tempore at the time, said Williams was ousted because he wasn't very active or engaged in student government.

Runaway online rumors sparked frantic rush by migrants to the Spanish territory of Ceuta

By AKRAM OUBACHIR Associated Press

FNIDEQ, Morocco (AP) — It started with Instagram posts that suggested Spain's border with Morocco was opening up. Then came Facebook users tracking coast guard patrols and TikTok videos showing where to swim.

After many shares and comments, thousands of Moroccans became convinced that Europe was suddenly within reach.

Within hours, young people began heading toward the border with the Spanish territory of Ceuta in North Africa. Packed buses rolled into the neighboring Moroccan city of Fnideq. Regional trains filled up. Taxis did too.

By the time authorities reacted, some 72,000 people had reached Ceuta in just a few days, the largest migration surge between Morocco and Spain in years. More than 80 migrants died on both sides of the border, including some who drowned and others who were killed in a stampede, authorities said.

Nearly all of the surviving migrants soon returned, but the fallout from last week's events will linger.

Rumors started online

In the northern Moroccan city of Larache, about 93 miles (150 kilometers) from Ceuta, three friends watched a video posted by an Instagram account called Haraga Ceuta claiming the border would be open. Haraga refers in Moroccan dialect to young migrants who destroy their identification papers and try crossing illegally into Europe.

The post convinced Anas Amrani, Yahya Harak and Ismail Atik that it was worth risking the journey.

For migrants hoping to reach Spanish territory, the most common route begins in Fnideq, where many attempt the roughly 3-mile (5-kilometer) swim around the border breakwater. Others leave from the nearby village of Belyounech.

One TikTok video mapped the exact route swimmers should follow.

On Facebook groups such as Fnideq Bab Sebta, users shared screenshots from vessel-tracking platforms to identify moments when coast guard patrols appeared lighter. Some sought advice on using inflatable boats. Others advertised wetsuits for sale.

"I saw online that the border was open, and I decided to go," said 17-year-old Omar Danbor from Fnideq, walking back exhausted along the coast.

It's unclear who was behind the claims that the border was open or who operated many of the social media accounts, several of which were deleted soon after the crossings. The Associated Press contacted several accounts but received no response.

The surge to Ceuta touched a political nerve in Europe, and the European Union is investigating what happened. The EU's migration commissioner expressed concern Tuesday about online disinformation but didn't identify a specific culprit.

Chaos unfolded at the breakwater

As migrants reached the shores of Ceuta, mass chaos erupted at a narrow concrete breakwater where many tried to climb onto land.

According to multiple migrants interviewed by AP, people rushed to scramble over the slick rocks at the

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same time, pushing and climbing over one another. Several said they saw people knocked back into the water and forced beneath others, leaving them unable to resurface as migrants sought to reach land.

"I stepped on the face of a dead man while I was climbing out. I hope God forgives me and all those whose bodies were found," said Lahcen Kalouch, a Moroccan migrant who reached Ceuta before returning home distraught.

At least 72 people died on the Spanish side of the border. Another 11 died on the Moroccan side.

Tens of thousands of migrants have since returned to Morocco, either after being expelled or leaving by choice because of a lack of shelter, food and water in Ceuta.

Some misinterpreted Spain's new migration measures

Some migrants misunderstood recent legal developments in Spain, including Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's immigration regularization measures and a court ruling limiting authorities' ability to immediately return migrants who swim into Ceuta.

Sánchez's recent efforts to regularize migration were meant only for people already living in Spain prior to Jan. 1, the majority of whom hail from Latin America and entered Spain legally but overstayed their visas. But some in Morocco misinterpreted his policy, believing they would be allowed to stay. That belief spread online.

"Pedro Sánchez is a liar. He told us if we came, we would get jobs and papers, but they sent us back," said Adam Assil, a migrant from Casablanca, even though Sánchez never made such a promise.

While attempts to reach Ceuta are common, migration activists said this episode was different because of the way rumors snowballed online, encouraging thousands of people to head toward the territory at the same time instead of in smaller, scattered groups.

Failures happened on both sides of the border

Moroccan authorities said the migration wave was not spontaneous. The Interior Ministry blamed the "exploitation of the digital sphere" and "the spread of misinformation." Officials offered no evidence but said an investigation had been opened. Spain's government made similar statements.

Ceuta officials said they had warned the Spanish government of a surge in arrivals before the massive crush on Thursday. The Spanish Interior Ministry said Monday that it had not received "any report or warning regarding the mass arrival of people in Ceuta," and it praised cooperation with the Moroccan authorities in sending most of the migrants back.

"Nobody addressed how these individuals managed to breach the border," said Mustapha Azaitraoui, a Moroccan geographer specializing in migration dynamics. "If a large group of people can cross the border under these circumstances, it suggests a broader security issue that has yet to be acknowledged publicly."

Migrants reject government claims of smuggling

Both Morocco and Spain blamed the Ceuta crisis on human smugglers and trafficking networks, saying organized criminal groups encouraged the mass crossings.

But returning Moroccan migrants interviewed by AP largely rejected that explanation.

"No one smuggled me there. I wanted to go of my own free will, but that country is not worth all this sacrifice," Kalouch said.

"There are no mafias. The border was open, and I crossed. But now I regret it," said Danbor, his clothes still wet after making the journey back.

The Spanish Interior Ministry said investigations into smuggling networks are ongoing and noted that Spain and Morocco have carried out joint operations against trafficking groups. The Moroccan Interior Ministry did not respond to questions about smuggling networks.

Several politicians and experts have suggested it would be impossible for so many to cross without Moroccan complicity. A high-ranking Moroccan diplomat appeared to push back against that.

"It would be reductive to say that Morocco should have used force to stop the migrants," said the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the issue is highly sensitive in Morocco. "We are not Europe's police."

The lack of jobs is a key factor

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Morocco's economy is projected to grow by 4.5% this year, boasting major factories, advanced ports and ambitions to become a regional hub for the car industry.

Yet for many young Moroccans, that transformation has not translated into stable work. Youth unemployment remains high, with 37% of people ages 15 to 24 out of work. Among university graduates, unemployment stands at nearly 20%. The dream of migration is often reinforced by stories of relatives who left and returned with cars, new clothes and foreign currency.

One of those who breached the border was a 16-year-old who grew up a few dozen miles from Ceuta. Europe had always seemed a dream close enough to see, yet impossibly far.

So when he saw a post on Facebook suggesting the border was open and thousands were making it across, he joined the rush.

Days later, he was back in Morocco, crying as he asked strangers for money for a taxi home.

"They fired tear gas at me and beat me with batons. There's nothing for me there," said the teen, who spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear of being stigmatized following his failed border crossing attempt.

"I just wanted to provide for my mom," he said, wiping his tears.

Today in History: August 5, Nelson Mandela arrested

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 5, the 217th day of 2026. There are 148 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 5, 1962, South African anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela was arrested on charges of leaving the country without a valid passport and inciting workers to strike; it was the beginning of 27 years of imprisonment.

Also on this date:

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln signed the Revenue Act of 1861, which levied the first income tax on Americans (a flat tax of 3% on those making over \$800/year) to help fund the Union's Civil War effort.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Adm. David G. Farragut led his fleet to victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay, Alabama.

In 1884, the cornerstone for the Statue of Liberty's pedestal was laid on Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor.

In 1914, the first electric traffic light system was installed in Cleveland, Ohio, at the intersection of East 105th Street and Euclid Avenue.

In 1936, Jesse Owens of the United States won the 200-meter dash at the Berlin Olympics, collecting the third of his four gold medals.

In 1953, Operation Big Switch began as prisoners taken during the Korean War were exchanged at Panmunjom.

In 1957, the music and dance show "American Bandstand," hosted by Dick Clark, made its national network debut, beginning a 30-year run on ABC.

In 1962, Marilyn Monroe, 36, was found dead in her Los Angeles home; her death was ruled a probable suicide from "acute barbiturate poisoning."

In 1964, U.S. Navy pilot Everett Alvarez Jr. became the first American flyer to be shot down and captured by North Vietnam; he was held prisoner until February 1973.

In 1974, the White House released transcripts of subpoenaed tape recordings showing that President Richard Nixon and his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, had discussed a plan in June 1972 to use the CIA to thwart the FBI's Watergate investigation; revelation of the tape sparked Nixon's resignation.

In 2010, 33 workers were trapped in a copper mine in northern Chile after a tunnel caved in (all were rescued 69 days later).

In 2011, the sun-powered robotic explorer Juno rocketed toward Jupiter on a five-year quest to discover the secret recipe for making planets. (Juno reached Jupiter on July 4, 2016.)

In 2024, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who had ruled Bangladesh for 15 years, fled to India after weeks

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of student-led protests in which more than 800 people were killed and about 1,400 were injured.

Today's Birthdays: Country music songwriter Bobby Braddock is 86. Pop singer Samantha Sang is 75. Actor-singer Maureen McCormick is 70. Rock musician Pat Smear is 67. Author David Baldacci is 66. Actor Janet McTeer is 65. Basketball Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing is 64. Actor Mark Strong is 63. Director-screenwriter James Gunn is 60. Actor Jonathan Silverman is 60. Actor Jesse Williams is 45. Actor/singer Olivia Holt is 29. NBA guard Anthony Edwards is 25. Actor Albert Tsai is 22.