

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 1 of 64

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [3- Help Wanted](#)
- [4- Today on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [5- Obit: Mary Jane Jark](#)
- [5- Death Notice: David Blackmun](#)
- [6- Obit: Carol Dohman](#)
- [7- Soccer Coaches Poll](#)
- [8- BC Commission Agenda](#)
- [9- Fact Brief: Free/reduced lunch rate](#)
- [10- SD News Watch: State of South Dakota faces lawsuit over proof-of-citizenship voter registration law](#)
- [11- SD SearchLight: Federal government funds conservation in South Dakota while cutting the people who do the work](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Despite record low in veteran homelessness, half the states saw increases](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: Trump, McMahon promote school voucher program as students return to class](#)
- [15- SD SearchLight: U.S. Supreme Court lifts pause on Trump mail-ballot order](#)
- [17- SD SearchLight: Trump administration plans \\$100,000 visa fee for high-skill foreign workers](#)
- [18- Weather Pages](#)
- [22- Daily Devotional](#)
- [23- Subscription Form](#)
- [24- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [25- News from the Associated Press](#)

Community Calendar

Tuesday, Aug. 25

Senior Menu: Egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fruit, cookie.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

NEC Boys Golf Meet, 10 a.m., Olive Grove Golf Course

Volleyball at Hamlin (C match at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m. followed by varsity)

Wednesday, Aug. 26

Senior Menu: Roasted chicken breast, roasted potatoes, California blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.

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

Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

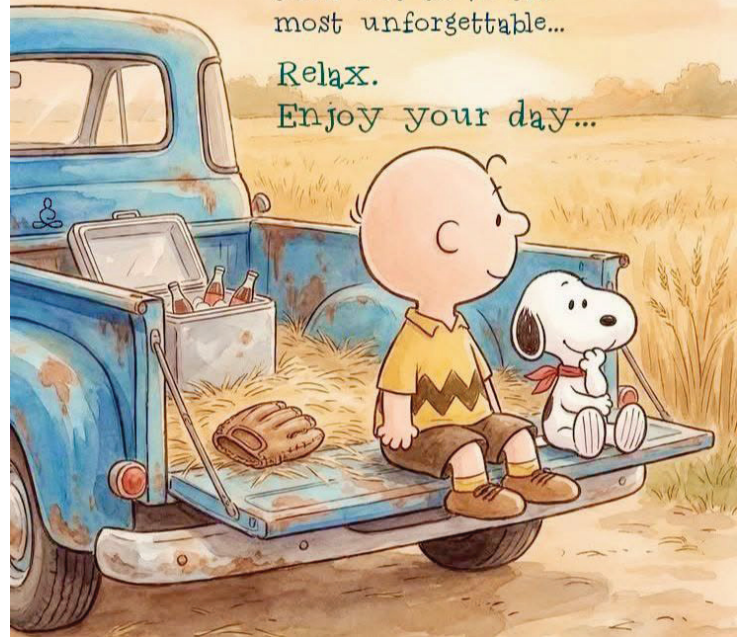
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

Good Morning

Sometimes days that
feel the most ordinary
turn out to be the
most unforgettable...

Relax.

Enjoy your day...



Thursday, Aug. 27

Senior Menu: Cheeseburger casserole, sweet potatoes, corn, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Boys Soccer at Freeman/Marion/Parker/Viborg-Hurley, 4 p.m.

Girls Soccer at Garretson, 4:30 p.m.

Cross Country at Whetstone Creek Golf Course, Milbank, 5 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 28

Senior Menu: Ham and cheese sandwich, potato salad, fresh celery, fruit.

Football hosts Beresford, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 29

Volleyball: C Match at Matchbox, Aberdeen, 9 a.m.

Volleyball: at Huron Area (vs. Brandon Valley at 10 a.m.; vs. Brookings at noon; vs. Huron at 1 p.m., vs. Sturgis, 4 p.m.)

Boys Soccer hosts Dakota Valley, 1 p.m.

Airport Fly-In/Drive In at Groton Airport

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 2 of 64

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.

Tehran Trade Squeeze

The Trump administration expanded secondary sanctions against Iran yesterday, threatening penalties against foreign countries and companies that do business with Tehran. The move could restrict their access to the US financial system. The Treasury also sanctioned nearly 60 people, entities, and vessels that it says are tied to Iran's nuclear and missile programs, oil trade, and cyber operations.

The measures add pressure to an economy already strained by previous sanctions and a US naval blockade. The rial hit a record low yesterday, with \$1 buying roughly 2.02 million rials, while the IMF projects Iran's economy will shrink more than 5% this year. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent did not specify which countries could face secondary sanctions, but China, Turkey, and the UAE are Iran's largest trading partners. China buys roughly 80% to 90% of Iran's oil exports.

Iranian oil reaches China via intermediaries and ship-to-ship transfers that can obscure its origin. Independent refineries, known as "teapots," are among its major buyers.

Reno Fire Spreads

A fast-spreading wildfire near Reno, Nevada, has injured at least seven people, destroyed more than 30 homes, and burned about 23 square miles of land as of this writing. Officials have called on roughly 63,000 people to evacuate their homes.

The Hawk Fire began Saturday near Hawk Meadow Trail, northwest of the city (how do dispatchers name wildfires?). Officials said Sunday the fire was human-caused but did not share additional details. The fire quickly spread, aided by dry vegetation and fast winds, with gusts predicted to reach 25 miles per hour today. The winds can change direction quickly and carry fires to new locations, making the fires especially difficult to contain. Dry thunderstorms risk fueling the spread further. Unlike many other states, Nevada is at especially high risk for wildfires due not only to its dry climate but also to its prevalence of non-native, invasive grasses, including cheatgrass and medusahead.

 Humankind: Pizza place turns an inconsiderate prank call for \$300 worth of pizza into a good deed by donating all the pies to a local hospital.

From Trash to Treat

Researchers have 3D-printed high-protein cookies from crop waste and recycled plastic. The cookies, dubbed µBites, are part of a NASA-funded project aimed at feeding astronauts on long-duration missions.

The team used water, heat, pressure, and oxygen in a 32-step process to break down polyethylene terephthalate, the main component in single-use water bottles. The resulting carbon-rich liquid was combined with yeast engineered to consume it. As the yeast fed, it converted the carbon into proteins, fats, and other nutrients. Researchers combined these nutrients with sweetener, fiber, and starch to create a paste, which they then printed into cookies. Humans are awaiting institutional approval to try the cookies, but the prototypes reportedly smell good.

Experts say the technology could also help divert plastic waste while meeting global food demand, which is projected to increase by up to 56% by 2050 with population growth. All the plastic water bottles purchased from 2009 to 2019 would tower over New York's Manhattan Island.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 3 of 64

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

San Francisco 49ers owner Jed York pleads no contest after arrest on suspicion of engaging in prostitution. Cleveland Browns tap Deshaun Watson as starting quarterback after tight competition with Shedeur Sanders.

Paramount Pictures is developing a sequel to the 2003 romantic comedy "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" with Kate Hudson as a producer.

Teletubbies IP WildBrain buys AI firm in \$11M cash and stock deal to create toys, apps, and platforms that let kids interact with TV and movie characters.

Science & Technology

New smartphone app Mobilio helps people with blindness or low vision navigate faster and avoid obstacles; early testing suggests it can rival a human guide.

Language skills appear to stay resilient with age, new brain imaging study shows; the language network seems to remain nearly unchanged in older adults even as other cognitive systems decline.

A 20-minute workout may protect memory after a sleepless night as well as a 90-minute nap; new study suggests both preserve cognitive function through different brain pathways.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 -0.3%, Dow +0.3%, Nasdaq -0.8%) as the US warns of global sanctions against Iran.

FTC settles Zillow and Redfin antitrust case after alleging Zillow paid Redfin \$100M to curb competition.

California cancels Paramount settlement talks over \$111B Warner Bros. merger, alleging Paramount leaked discussions.

Taiwanese prosecutors charge nine people, including staffers from Nvidia and Super Micro, over alleged illegal export of AI servers to China.

Politics & World Affairs

Supreme Court rules President Donald Trump can carry out parts of an executive order restricting mail-in voting.

US military says it struck an alleged drug-smuggling boat in the Pacific Ocean, killing two people.

The UK says it will share classified technical information with Ukraine for making long-range missiles; France to provide additional interceptor missiles.

Ocean temperatures hit a record high in August, EU's climate change monitor finds (More, w/graph) | How higher ocean temperatures strengthen hurricanes.

EMPLOYMENT

Wanted full or part time help for harvest. Someone who can drive combine, semi or tractor. Housing available. Near Aberdeen call 605-380-4898. (0819.0909pd).
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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 4 of 64



Volleyball

Groton Area at
Hamlin

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 5 p.m.



Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE



YouTube



A production of the
Groton Daily Independent

For more info: GDILIVE.COM

C game starts at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.
C and JV sponsor is Farmers Union Insurance.

Varsity match sponsors on GDILIVE.COM are: Agtegra, Avantara-Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom Ts, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Farmers Union Insurance, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Heartland Energy, Jacobson Electric, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Cafe, Locke Electric, Malpert Insurance, Poet, Rix Farms / R&M Farms, S & S Lumber, Spanier Harvesting and The Meat House of Andover.

The Life of Mary Jane Jark

The memorial service for Mary Jane Jark, 81, of Stratford, SD, will be 10:30am, Monday, August 31, 2026, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 214 7th Ave. SW, Aberdeen, with Pastor Bret Bierman officiating. Inurnment will follow at Oakwood Cemetery, West Rondell, Stratford. Mary Jane died Saturday, August 22, at her home in Stratford.

Visitation will be 3:00pm to 7:00pm, Sunday, August 30, with family present from 5:00pm to 7:00pm, followed by a prayer service at 7:00pm at Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home, 1111 South Main Street. Aberdeen.

Mary Jane was born March 21, 1945, in Webster, SD. She was raised by her grandparents John and Susan Johnson in Groton, SD. She attended school in Groton and worked at the bank and a café in Groton.

On July 12, 1969, Mary Jane was united in marriage to Duane Jark in Groton. They made their home in Stratford and raised their children there. Mary Jane worked at the United States Post Office in Stratford, Warner and later Aberdeen before retiring.

Mary Jane was a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Stratford. She was also a member of Stratford American Legion Auxiliary Post 207. Mary Jane was active on the Brown County Fair Board and enjoyed helping with the flowers around the fairgrounds.

She was a wonderful cook and would take food to the elevator for Duane and his co-workers. She was also instrumental in providing the food for the Stratford Community Theatre. Mary Jane loved her flowers, especially geraniums, and caring for her yard with the mowing and trimming. Entertaining others, especially for the 4th of July celebrations, was a passion of hers. For many years, Mary Jane bowled on leagues in Groton at The Jungle Lounge and enjoyed ice skating at the Groton Ice Carnival. Mary Jane was the #1 Grandma. She was always there for her granddaughters cheering them on in all their activities. She was a loving wife and a great caregiver for Duane over the years.

Grateful for having shared Mary Jane's life are her husband, Duane, her children: Larry Jark and Laura Haven; and her four grandchildren: Joclyn, Ella, Ashley, and Lilly Haven.

Preceding Mary Jane in death are her maternal grandparents, John and Susan, her granddaughter, Maria Kahla Haven, her uncle Joyce Johnson and great-aunt Nellie Larson.

In lieu of flowers, the family prefers memorials be made to Stratford Community Theatre, 293 Rondell Avenue, Suite 1, Stratford, SD 57474, or the Stratford American Legion Auxilliary Post 207, 14545 400th Ave, Stratford, SD, 57474.



Death Notice: David Blackmun

Mass of Christian Burial for David Blackmun, 83, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Friday, August 28th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. Father Jordan Samson will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery, Groton under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held on Thursday from 5-7 p.m. at the chapel with a wake service at 7:00 p.m.

Dave passed away Saturday, August 22, 2026 at Avantara Groton.

The Life of Carol Dohman

Mass of Christian Burial for Carol Anne (Rix) Dohman, 87, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Thursday, August 27th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. Father Greg Tschakert will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. There will be closed casket visitation prior to services.

A beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, teacher, and friend, passed away on Sunday, August 23, 2026 surrounded by the love of her family. Her life was defined by faith, devotion to family, hospitality, and a deep appreciation for the simple joys of life.

Carol Anne was born on November 8, 1938, in Aberdeen, South Dakota, to Arden and Dorothy (Donovan) Rix. She was raised on the family farm northeast of Groton, where she developed a lifelong love of horses and trail riding. Carol attended Groton Public Schools and graduated as class president in 1956. She continued her education at Presentation College in Aberdeen, earning a degree in education and beginning a career that reflected her passion for nurturing and guiding young people.

On June 30, 1958, Carol married the love of her life, Leslie "Les" Dohman, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Groton. Together they built a life centered on faith, family, and community.

Carol and Les began their married life in Miller, South Dakota, where Carol taught second grade and Les worked for Bell Telephone. They later moved to Aberdeen, where Carol taught at Sacred Heart School while Les continued his career with Bell Telephone. Their next chapter led them to a farm near Putney, a place that became especially dear to Carol's heart. There, she and Les raised their seven children and created countless cherished family memories.

In 1994, Carol and Les moved to Groton. Living across from the high school, Carol delighted in preparing lunches and welcoming her grandchildren into her home. She and Les faithfully attended countless school programs, sporting events, and activities, supporting their growing family with love and enthusiasm. In retirement, they enjoyed traveling to visit their children across the country and spending summer weekends relaxing at their cabin on Pickerel Lake.

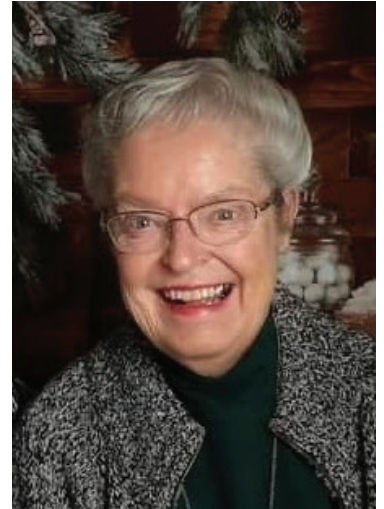
A devoted member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Carol was active in the Altar Society, Putney Ladies Aid, several bridge clubs, the American Legion Auxiliary, Extension Club, and Wednesday Coffee Club. She valued the friendships and sense of community these organizations provided throughout her life.

Carol's home was a place of warmth and welcome. Her children and grandchildren always knew they would find something delicious to eat at Grandma's house. She found joy in crafting, sewing, scrapbooking, and playing games with her grandchildren. Whether sharing stories around the kitchen table or offering a favorite treat, Carol had a gift for making others feel loved. A Diet Coke and a cookie could always bring a smile to her face.

Carol was preceded in death by her husband, Les; her parents, Arden and Dorothy Rix; and three infant grandchildren, Aaron Dohman and twins Christopher and Taylor Bohnenkamp.

She leaves behind a loving family who will forever cherish her memory: her seven children, Anne Dohman; Arden (Vivian) Dohman; David (Tammy) Dohman; DeLynne (Andrew) Roloff; Susan (Jeff) Bohnenkamp; Steve (Tamra) Dohman; and Diane (Ryan) Kurtz. She is also survived by 18 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren, and her sister, Kathleen (John) Monson, along with many nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Carol's legacy lives on through the family she cherished, the lives she touched as a teacher, and the countless memories created around her table. Her faith, kindness, generosity, and unwavering love will be remembered always.



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 7 of 64

2026 South Dakota HS Soccer Coaches Poll

August 24, 2026 - SDHSSCA Bi-Weekly Coaches Poll for Boys and Girls soccer. The Soccer Coaches Association will be releasing our rankings every two weeks during the season.

Boys AA

1. Sioux Falls Lincoln
- T2. Aberdeen Central
- T2. Sioux Falls Jefferson
- T2. Watertown
5. Sioux Falls Washington

Receiving Votes: Spearfish, Rapid City Stevens, Sioux Falls Roosevelt, O'Gorman, Harrisburg, Tea Area

Girls AA

1. Harrisburg
2. Yankton
3. Rapid City Stevens
4. Pierre T.F. Riggs
5. O'Gorman

Receiving Votes: Aberdeen Central, Brookings, Spearfish, Watertown, Mitchell, Sioux Falls Jefferson

Boys A

1. James Valley Christian
2. Vermillion
3. St. Thomas More/Rapid City Christian
4. Freeman/Marion/Parker/Viborg-Hurley
5. Groton Area

Receiving Votes: Hot Springs, Belle Fourche, West Central, Dakota Valley, Custer

Girls A

1. Sioux Falls Christian
2. Dakota Valley
3. St. Thomas More
4. West Central
5. Groton Area

Receiving Votes: Garretson, Belle Fourche

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 8 of 64



BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026, 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS

COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Moment of Silence in Remembrance of Mary Jane Jark and Emerson Schaunaman
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Becca Tullar, 4-H Advisor
 - a. Recognize SDSU 4-H Volunteer Award Recipient's from Brown County
5. Opportunity for Public Comment
 - ❖ *Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes or at Boards Discretion. Presentations will be limited to 3 minutes*
6. Richmond Dam Update
7. Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager
 - a. Preliminary 2026 Fair Report
8. Mike Scott, Landfill Manager
 - a. Approve waiving the Fees for Annual Fall Residential Cleanup
9. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent
 - a. R-O-W for Northern Electric
 - b. Approve list of Surplus Equipment to be sold
 - c. Set Bid Dates for BR350 & approach Culvert
 - d. Department Update
10. Approve & Authorize Chairman to sign 2027 LEMPG Agreement
11. Approve & Authorize Chairman to sign letter of support for F35 for South Dakota
12. Approve to purchase 105 1st Ave SW Building
13. Amend Resolution #2026-34 – Reconveyance and General Meeting Minutes of August 11th.
14. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2026
 - b. Claims/Payroll
 - c. HR Report
 - d. Travel Requests
 - e. Zoning Ordinances – Set Hearing Date/Authorize Advertising
 - f. Final Plats
 - i. Ben & Alyssa Gustafson First Addition
 - ii. Locken Estate Addition
15. Other Business
16. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
17. Adjourn

You can join the Brown County Commission Meeting via **your computer, tablet, or smartphone on the following:**

<https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

You can also dial in using your phone in the United States: **+1 (872) 240-3311** - Access Code: **601-168-909** #

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

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

FACT BRIEFS

Fact brief: Does SD have the lowest eligible free/reduced lunch rate among neighboring states?

Photo: (Woodleywonderworks / Wikimedia Commons)

No.

Though South Dakota's percentage of public school students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is among the lowest nationally, Montana and North Dakota both have lower rates when comparing South Dakota to its immediate neighbors.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 32.6% of students in the state qualified for free or reduced lunch in 2022-23, compared to Montana (18.7%) and North Dakota (30.8%). Nationally, South Dakota ranked eighth.

This year, students whose families fall between 130% and 185% of the poverty line will receive free school lunches after the state Legislature passed a bill in early 2026. The new law is expected to cost \$601,000 annually and will affect about 8% of the state's students, bill sponsor Rep. Kady Wittman said.

North Dakotans are set to vote in November on a measure that would provide free breakfast and lunches to all students starting in 2027-28.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State of South Dakota faces lawsuit over proof-of-citizenship voter registration law

Nonprofit and Sioux Falls man challenge implementation of law that creates a class of 'federal only' voters

BY JOHN HULT

A nonprofit organization and a Sioux Falls voter filed a lawsuit Monday in federal court over the implementation of South Dakota's new proof-of-citizenship requirement for voter registration.

Senate Bill 175, passed by lawmakers and signed into law by Republican Gov. Larry Rhoden in March, requires documentary proof of citizenship from people registering to vote.

That proof can take forms including a birth certificate, passport, driver's license, non-driver's identification card or tribal identification card, or "any other type of acceptable documentary evidence of citizenship" under federal law. Photocopies are acceptable for any of the documents except driver's licenses or state or tribal ID cards.

People who don't provide those documents are registered but receive a "federal-only" ballot, meaning one that lists only candidates for federal offices such as the president and Congress, but not state or local offices.

In addition to proof of citizenship, the new law requires a person to provide a physical address in South Dakota, other than a mail-forwarding service or post office box, to be registered for voting in state and local elections. That provision — enforceable at the time of registration or upon a request for an absentee ballot — targets people such as full-time recreational vehicle drivers who may receive forwarded mail and register their vehicles in the state but otherwise don't live there.

An analysis of voter data by South Dakota Searchlight in May showed that about 1,500 people in South Dakota had been registered as "federal only" since the law took effect with the governor's signature in March.

The lawsuit alleges that South Dakota's rollout of the proof-of-citizenship requirement has disqualified eligible voters over erroneous minutiae and failed to offer them a realistic shot at fixing problems with their registration application.

The lawsuit asks a judge to force the state to:

Accept photocopies of driver's licenses, tribal IDs and nondriver IDs for voter registration.

Rescind guidance requiring in-person registration for people who use such IDs as proof of citizenship.

Make sure registrants designated as federal-only are offered accurate explanations as to why they've been denied access to state and local ballots.

Offer voters registered as federal-only an opportunity to challenge the designation.

The lawsuit also seeks a ruling that the non-acceptance of photocopies for state and tribal IDs violates the U.S. Civil Rights Act, and asks the state to pay the plaintiffs' attorney fees.

Group's proposed rule changes previously rejected

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, nonprofit group that holds registration drives, provides voter education and lobbies on voting rights issues.

Members of its South Dakota chapter argued before the state's Board of Elections for rule changes earlier this summer that would have addressed the issues raised in their lawsuit. The board voted the changes down 5-2, ruling that the League lacked the legal standing to propose them.

The League's lawsuit, which also includes a Sioux Falls man named Jaysen Hill as a plaintiff, names

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 11 of 64

South Dakota Secretary of State Monae Johnson, the state Board of Elections and each board member as defendants.

The lawsuit says the League's representatives have tried to work with Johnson's office to fix what they see as issues with the law's administration, but that her office has been unwilling to do so.

The complaint says Minnehaha County registered Hill as federal-only after he applied to register by mail, sending a photocopy of his state identification card in May.

The card showed his address, the lawsuit says, but the letter he received telling him he'd be registered federal-only said he'd failed to provide a physical address. Hill was "confused" about the letter, which the lawsuit says is a form letter sent to those registered as federal-only.

Hill "now believes he was registered as a federal-only voter because he submitted a photocopy of a state identification card," the lawsuit says, running afoul of the requirement to present the actual ID card.

"It was never made clear to Plaintiff Hill by any state or local officials that he was registered as a federal-only voter because he failed to provide documentary proof of citizenship, nor is it clear to Plaintiff Hill how he should go about fixing his application."

Hill "was unable to participate" in the June 2 primary election, the lawsuit says.

State says it's yet to see lawsuit

Hill and the League are represented by lawyers from the American Civil Liberties Union of South Dakota and the ACLU Foundation, a lawyer from the Sioux Falls law firm Heidepriem Purtell Siegel Hinrichs, and attorneys for the Campaign Legal Center, a nonpartisan legal aid organization in Washington, D.C., founded more than two decades ago by a former member of the Federal Election Commission.

Kathryn Johnson, president of the League of Women Voters' South Dakota chapter, said in a press release that the state's approach to the proof-of-citizenship issue "has not only effectively shut down our League's ability to register new voters, but it has pointlessly caused voter confusion and made voting harder."

Andrew Malone, a lawyer with the ACLU of South Dakota, said in the release that the case is about making sure the state's new law is administered "in compliance with federal mandates."

"There is no proof of widespread voter fraud or evidence of non-citizens voting that justifies a law that imposes burdensome show-your-papers requirements for eligible voters to cast their ballots," Malone said.

Tony Mangan, spokesman for South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley, told South Dakota Searchlight on Monday evening that the office had yet to be served with the lawsuit.

Secretary of State Monae Johnson and a spokesman for her office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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

COMMENTARY

Federal government funds conservation in South Dakota while cutting the people who do the work

by Brad Johnson

The federal government has found a strange way to practice conservation: put billions of dollars on the table, then cut many of the people needed to turn that money into work on the ground.

That is the disconnect South Dakota's congressional delegation should be concerned about, because right now the two policies are moving in opposite directions.

The latest example is the America the Beautiful Act. Sen. Mike Rounds cosponsors the Senate bill, and Rep. Dusty Johnson cosponsors the House effort. It would renew the Legacy Restoration Fund and provide nearly \$2 billion a year to repair deteriorating infrastructure in national parks, wildlife refuges and on other federal lands.

There is good reason to support it. South Dakota has Badlands and Wind Cave national parks, Mount

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 12 of 64

Rushmore National Memorial, Jewel Cave National Monument, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, five national wildlife refuges and hundreds of waterfowl production areas.

If the federal government owns these places, it ought to maintain them. But Congress cannot keep applauding the money while ignoring the missing people.

The National Park Service lost about 24% of its permanent workforce last year. The Trump administration's fiscal 2027 proposal would take staffing from about 16,000 full-time-equivalent positions to roughly 13,100 — about 20% lower. Fish and Wildlife Service staffing would fall about 25%.

So, Congress may spend billions repairing yesterday's backlog while shrinking the workforce needed to prevent tomorrow's.

A big appropriation can rebuild a park road. It cannot inspect the culvert next spring. Congress has not yet figured out how to issue a press release that clears a clogged drainageway.

The disconnect is even larger on farms and ranches.

Congress has pushed conservation spending to historic highs. The Inflation Reduction Act added \$19.5 billion over five years for programs administered largely by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act signed by Trump last year repealed the remaining IRA conservation funding but shifted much of that investment into the regular farm bill baseline, boosting major conservation programs through 2031.

A Democratic administration sharply increased conservation funding. A Republican Congress and Trump kept much of it going while cutting the workforce needed to deliver it.

Between January 2025 and January 2026, NRCS lost about 23% of its workforce. USDA's own budget documents brought the issue home. They projected NRCS technical-assistance staffing in South Dakota falling from 113 full-time-equivalent positions to 40.

Those were projections, not evidence that 73 positions disappeared. But a nearly two-thirds reduction needs explaining. At some point, calling that efficiency starts to resemble admiring the emperor's new suit.

The South Dakota Farmers Union warned U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins that NRCS staffing losses were increasing workloads and reducing the agency's ability to process applications.

NRCS work does not happen by mailing a check. Someone has to walk the land, examine soils, design the grazing or water system, complete engineering, prepare contracts and inspect finished work.

Cut enough people, and historic conservation funding can produce a historic waiting list.

That is where Senate Majority Leader John Thune, Rounds and Johnson could speak up.

Johnson said early in 2025 that USDA cuts and layoffs would not affect farmers. Given what has happened since, he should say whether he still believes that. Rounds supports nearly \$2 billion a year for public-land repairs. Good. Then he should explain how cutting Park Service and Fish and Wildlife staffing protects that investment.

And Thune is not a spectator. As Senate majority leader, he helped Congress maintain historically high agricultural conservation funding. Now he should insist that enough people remain to put it to work.

The administration says fewer employees, more contractors and greater efficiency can make this work. Fine. South Dakota's delegation should ask for the proof: How many NRCS field employees remain in the state? Are producers waiting longer? How many Park Service and Fish and Wildlife positions have been lost here?

Those answers would tell us whether Washington is becoming more efficient or simply creating the next backlog.

These are not partisan questions. They are basic management questions anyone running a farm, ranch or business would ask before putting more money into an operation after sharply reducing its workforce.

What Washington has created is not a temporary mismatch. It is a structural contradiction.

Congress can appropriate billions. But somewhere between the press release and the finished project, somebody still has to show up and do the work.

Brad Johnson is a certified general real estate appraiser and longtime journalist. He is past president of South Dakota Lakes and Streams Association, president of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation, a member of the National Wildlife Federation's board of directors, and served 16 years on the South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources. He lives in Rapid City and Watertown.

Despite record low in veteran homelessness, half the states saw increases

Veteran homelessness has fallen more than 56% since 2010

BY ROBBIE SEQUEIRA

Veteran homelessness dipped slightly from 2024 to 2025, according to the latest results from the January 2025 point-in-time count.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development counted 32,495 veterans experiencing homelessness, 387, or 1.2%, fewer than the previous year. HUD counted 18,877 veterans in shelters, and 13,518 living unsheltered in places not meant for habitation.

Twenty-five states recorded increases in veteran homelessness from 2024 to 2025, and 23 recorded decreases. Just two states — Alaska and Massachusetts — saw no change.

The state with the largest increase, by raw numbers, was Oregon, which saw 228 added veterans, a 16% increase. Pennsylvania saw an increase of 98 veterans, a 14% increase, while New York, with an additional 93 homeless veterans, had a nearly 8% increase.

Mississippi had the largest percentage increase, rising 88%, going from 40 homeless veterans in 2024 to 75 a year later. Utah and Wyoming saw increases of 36% and 30%, respectively.

California recorded the largest numerical decline, with 624 fewer veterans experiencing homelessness, a 7% dip to 8,686. Florida declined by 192, while Indiana and Illinois each recorded 79 fewer homeless veterans. North Dakota's numbers dropped 36% to 28 homeless veterans.

Since 2010, veteran homelessness has fallen by more than 56%, reaching an all-time low in 2025, and it's been one of the few sustained decreases in any subset of homelessness during that time span. Details from this past January's point-in-time count have not been released.

Adam Ruege, principal of policy and evaluation at Community Solutions, a national nonprofit that works with cities, counties and states to reduce homelessness, said the long-term decline resulted from sustained federal investments in housing and mental health services dating back to 2009.

States have taken a bigger role in addressing veteran homelessness, with programs ranging from incentives for landlords, to coordinated services.

"Twenty years ago, being a veteran increased your likelihood of being homeless," said Ruege, who previously worked for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "What we're seeing states do now, is that they are filling the gap between what the federal response isn't doing and what localities can't do because of funding constraints."

In July, New Jersey announced that its Bringing Veterans Home initiative saw more veterans finding housing than entering homelessness. According to state officials, since the initiative launched in November 2024, it has permanently housed more than 2,500 veterans, backed by more than \$30 million in state and federal money. There's pending legislation to codify the program.

In March, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs had a statewide by-name registry that allows agencies and service providers to coordinate individual cases instead of making veterans navigate programs independently. The registry, at last update, showed 150 veterans experiencing homelessness, dropping 25% in a year and 41% in two years.

States making efforts to incent or spur landlord participation in voucher and other housing programs, Ruege said, is one of the biggest steps toward getting veterans into permanent housing.

Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis approved a statewide measure in June that created a pilot program getting landlords to participate in a federal voucher program that compensates landlords for holding a vacant unit for up to 45 days while a veteran prepares to move in and reimburse up to \$2,000 in qualifying property losses beyond the security deposit.

Maine Democratic Gov. Janet Mills signed a law in April that establishes an incentive program that can give grants to nonprofits for landlord and housing provider incentives, risk-mitigation payments and veterans' past due rent.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 14 of 64

"I think a big factor in their success has been recruitment of landlords," said Ruege. "It's just a matter of political and private will, and in some ways, the will of a landlord, to make strides in cutting down homelessness on the local level."

California announced \$109.6 million in July for 278 permanent supportive homes across four communities, including 103 units reserved for veterans.

In March, Pennsylvania awarded about \$805,000 from its Veterans' Trust Fund to county agencies and nonprofits, including programs providing emergency housing assistance, residences, for veterans leaving homelessness and services for veterans exiting homelessness.

Erin Healy, a principal for large-scale change at Community Solutions, said veterans have often been treated differently from other groups experiencing homelessness.

"So, there is a sense of urgency around veteran homelessness, which doesn't necessarily exist, even though it should, for all homelessness," Healy said. "But we know these solutions and more empathy can still work for these other groups that are experiencing homelessness."

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's 2024 *Grants Pass v. Johnson* ruling gave governments greater latitude to enforce public camping restrictions, at least 14 states and more than 350 cities have adopted tougher laws targeting camping, sleeping or other activities associated with unsheltered homelessness.

Indiana, for example, enacted a statewide public camping ban that took effect in July, while Georgia and Oklahoma have adopted laws that can hold local governments accountable for failing to enforce restrictions on public camping and related conduct.

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

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

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

Trump, McMahon promote school voucher program as students return to class

BY SHAUNEEN MIRANDA

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and U.S. Education Secretary Linda McMahon on Monday touted a national private school voucher program set to launch in early 2027.

During a White House Rose Garden event celebrating the back-to-school season, Trump and McMahon lauded the incoming federal school choice effort along with many of the education policies the administration has pursued, including ongoing efforts to dismantle the 46-year-old Education Department.

At least 30 states have already opted in to the school voucher program, which allocates up to \$1,700 in federal tax credits for people donating to organizations that provide private and religious school scholarships.

The program, known as the Education Freedom Tax Credit, was created in the GOP's mega tax and spending cut bill Trump signed into law in July 2025.

"One year ago, as part of the great, big, beautiful bill, we passed the Education Freedom Tax Credit — the largest ever expansion of school choice — and we want every parent to have the power to send their child to a high-quality school that shares their values," Trump told the crowd of educators, parents and students.

Monday's event highlighted Trump and congressional Republicans' continued focus on school choice as a central point of their education agenda, with the upcoming voucher program marking a pillar of that effort.

The umbrella term "school choice" centers on alternative programs to a student's assigned public school. While opponents argue these efforts drain critical funds and resources from school districts, advocates say the initiatives are necessary for parents dissatisfied with their local public schools.

Attendees at the Rose Garden also included Republican Govs. Jim Pillen of Nebraska and Sarah Huckabee Sanders of Arkansas, as well as GOP Rep. Tim Walberg of Michigan, who chairs the House Committee on Education and Workforce.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 15 of 64

McMahon echoed the president, saying the federal program gives parents “unprecedented freedom to choose the path that is best for their child.”

She added that “it’s no surprise that over half of our nation’s states — both red and blue — have raced to this historic choice option, benefiting families whether their child attends public or private school.”

Dems working to reverse program

Meanwhile, congressional Democrats are already attempting to axe the program.

Sens. Mark Kelly of Arizona and Mazie Hirono of Hawaii in April introduced a bill in the Senate, alongside nearly 30 of their colleagues, that would repeal the program.

Rep. Gwen Moore of Wisconsin introduced a companion bill in the House in June with Reps. Suzanne Bonamici of Oregon, Maxwell Frost of Florida, Adelita Grijalva of Arizona, Mark Pocan of Wisconsin and dozens more original co-sponsors.

The legislation faces a dismal fate in the GOP-controlled House and Senate.

Shauneen Miranda is a reporter for States Newsroom’s Washington bureau. An alumna of the University of Maryland, she previously covered breaking news for Axios.

U.S. Supreme Court lifts pause on Trump mail-ballot order

BY ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — With just over two months until the November midterms, the U.S. Supreme Court gave way Monday for President Donald Trump to have a hand in regulating mail-in ballots nationwide, a voting method he has falsely claimed is rife with corruption since he lost the 2020 presidential election.

In an unsigned emergency docket opinion, the court’s conservative majority wrote the Trump administration is likely to prevail on its argument that 23 Democratic-led states do not have standing to stop his executive order to change how the U.S. Postal Service processes mail-in ballots.

The majority justices also wrote that a lower court’s injunction is “causing irreparable harm,” but left open the possibility that the executive order could still be considered unconstitutional.

“The Court’s disposition of this application does not mean that any measure taken by the Government to implement the Order will necessarily be lawful. On that score, time will tell,” the majority wrote.

The legality of a Massachusetts federal district court order, which paused the executive order to overhaul vote-by-mail systems before the Nov. 3 midterms, will now be decided by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson dissented.

In a lengthy dissent, Jackson wrote the ruling “needlessly injects chaos and uncertainty into the upcoming midterm elections.”

The principle of courts not altering voting systems too close to the election has been eroded, she said, amounting to a “Kafkaesque nightmare.”

“States administering elections and the voting public that relies on them to do so deserve clarity, not caginess or confusion,” she wrote.

Final rule issued

The March 31 executive order at the heart of the case in part directs USPS to direct the redesign of mail-in ballot envelopes, including adding a unique barcode. It also asks USPS to collect voters’ names and addresses from state elections officials and directs the U.S. Justice Department to investigate and prosecute state officials who violate the order.

The Postal Service issued a final rule Friday detailing how the process would be carried out.

Whether an overhaul of mail-in ballots for each state could be completed in time for the Nov. 3 election remains to be seen, as vote-by-mail documents are sent to voters well in advance of Election Day.

A federal district judge in Massachusetts chastised the Trump administration for sowing confusion and “creating” an emergency by noticing a rule Friday that the U.S. Postal Service will eventually require federally regulated mail-in ballot voting envelopes and state data.

A 95-page notice alerting that the final rule would appear in the Federal Register on Aug. 26 outlined

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 16 of 64

justifications for federal requirements on states to redesign ballot envelopes and provide a list of recipient names and addresses to USPS. The final rule became effective Friday, according to the document.

The final rule runs contrary to U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani's Aug. 11 preliminary injunction barring the federal government from changing states' mail-in voting rules prior to the Nov. 3 midterm elections, the judge wrote in a brief order on the docket Sunday.

"Defendants did not file an appeal and did not seek, let alone obtain, a stay of the preliminary injunction," Talwani wrote. "Nonetheless, on August 21, 2026, USPS issued its Final Rule, with an anticipated publication date in the Federal Register of August 26, 2026."

Talwani was appointed to the bench by President Barack Obama in 2013 and unanimously confirmed by the Senate the following year.

Effective date delayed

The rule includes a provision that it will not be in effect for this year's midterm elections if Talwani's injunction is still in place, but the judge said it would still create significant confusion for voters.

The Trump administration asserted the rule would "have no effect on the rules themselves while the injunctions are in place, while ignoring the confusion that the publication will engender," Talwani wrote.

It's unclear what effect the final rule will have on the active litigation on the issue.

The federal government had appealed Talwani's injunction because, it argued, Trump's order could not be challenged until an agency published a final rule.

Groups want quick order

The voting rights advocacy groups, led by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, who sued President Donald Trump and administration officials over a March executive order overhauling mail-in voting procedures swiftly filed an emergency motion Saturday.

They urged Talwani to quickly enforce her injunction, and to order expedited responses from the administration, citing "immediate, ongoing, irreparable harm caused by Defendants' violation of the preliminary injunction, and in light of these fast-approaching dates."

"There are now only 73 days before the November 2026 election, and far fewer before mail ballots begin to go out," they wrote.

The Trump administration appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court in late July a similar district court ruling against its mail-in voting restrictions order in a case brought by nearly two dozen Democrat-led states.

The states argued that the federal government has no constitutional role in election administration, that the executive order unfairly limited vote-by-mail, which some states use exclusively, and that an overhaul of ballot requirements this close to an election was unworkable.

High court appeal

In a supplemental brief filed to the Supreme Court justices Monday, U.S. Solicitor General D. John Sauer said the USPS's rule issuance "underscores the need for relief from the district court's improper, unripe injunction."

"The Postal Service's final rule imposes only modest requirements for preparation and envelope design for federal ballot mail — requirements that fall well within its traditional authorities to impose mailing standards for particularly sensitive types of mail," wrote Sauer, who formerly worked as Trump's personal defense attorney.

Democratic officials in 23 states — California, Massachusetts, Nevada, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania — and the District of Columbia brought the suit challenging the executive order.

Twelve states with Republican attorneys general — Alabama, Missouri, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota and Texas — joined the appeal to the Supreme Court on the federal government's side.

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

Trump administration plans \$100,000 visa fee for high-skill foreign workers

BY ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — The Department of Homeland Security is planning to drastically increase the fee for hiring high-skilled foreign workers within the United States to \$100,000, according to a preview of a proposed rule published Monday.

The administration noted in the Federal Register that it plans to use the fee to “serve as a dedicated revenue mechanism to help recover a portion of the federal government’s costs of administering the lawful immigration system, including activities carried out by DHS” and the departments of Justice, State and Labor.

Currently, it costs anywhere from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for an employer to hire a highly skilled foreign worker through the H-1B visa program. Congress created the program in the 1990s and visas are capped annually at 65,000, with an additional 20,000 for foreign workers who graduate with a masters or doctoral degree from a U.S. institution.

A federal judge in June struck down the Trump administration’s attempt to increase the H-1B visa to \$100,000 for foreign workers hired outside the U.S.

Workers on a temporary H-1B visa work in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine or education.

Employers use the H-1B program to hire foreign workers who have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree for up to three years, but the temporary visa can be extended for up to six.

Last year, the Trump administration imposed a one-time \$100,000 H-1B visa fee to employers in an effort to prevent high-skill jobs going to foreigners instead of U.S. citizens. However, the program is used to fill high-skill jobs that are difficult to fill with American workers.

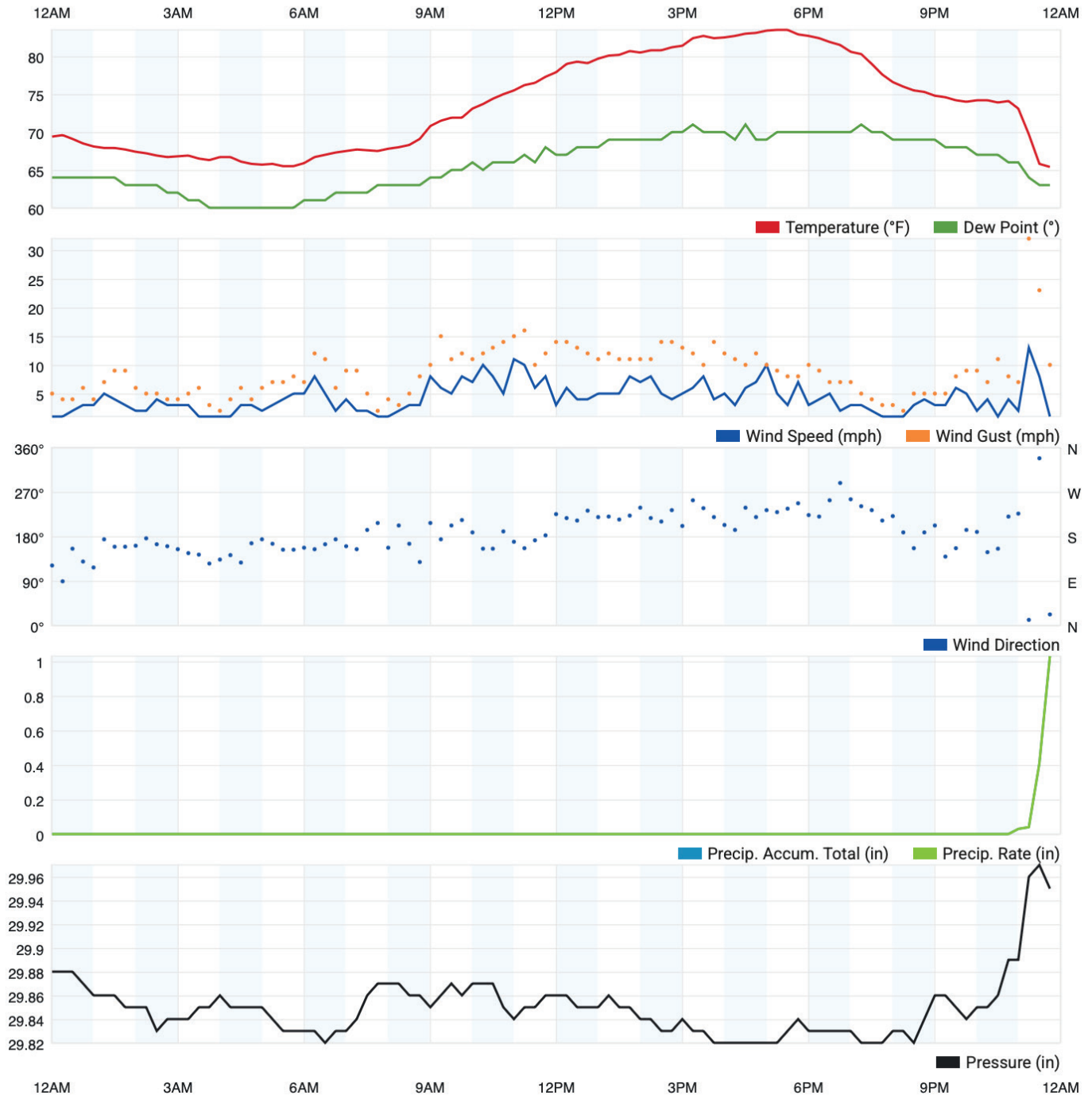
Ariana covers the nation’s capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 18 of 64

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

August 24, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 19 of 64

Today



High: 83 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 59 °F

Mostly Clear

Wednesday



High: 81 °F

Sunny

Wednesday
Night



Low: 51 °F

Mostly Clear

Thursday



High: 82 °F

Sunny

Today



Increasing Sun
80-86°

Wed



77-84°

Thurs



77-87°

weather.gov/abr

August 25, 2026 3:48 AM



High pressure settles over the region through Thursday afternoon. Seasonable to slightly above normal temperatures and dry conditions are expected.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 20 of 64

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 84 °F at 5:28 PM

Low Temp: 65 °F at 5:32 AM

Wind: 33 mph at 11:13 PM

Precip: 0.38

Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1926

Record Low: 38 in 1896

Average High: 82

Average Low: 54

Average Precip in Aug.: 1.81

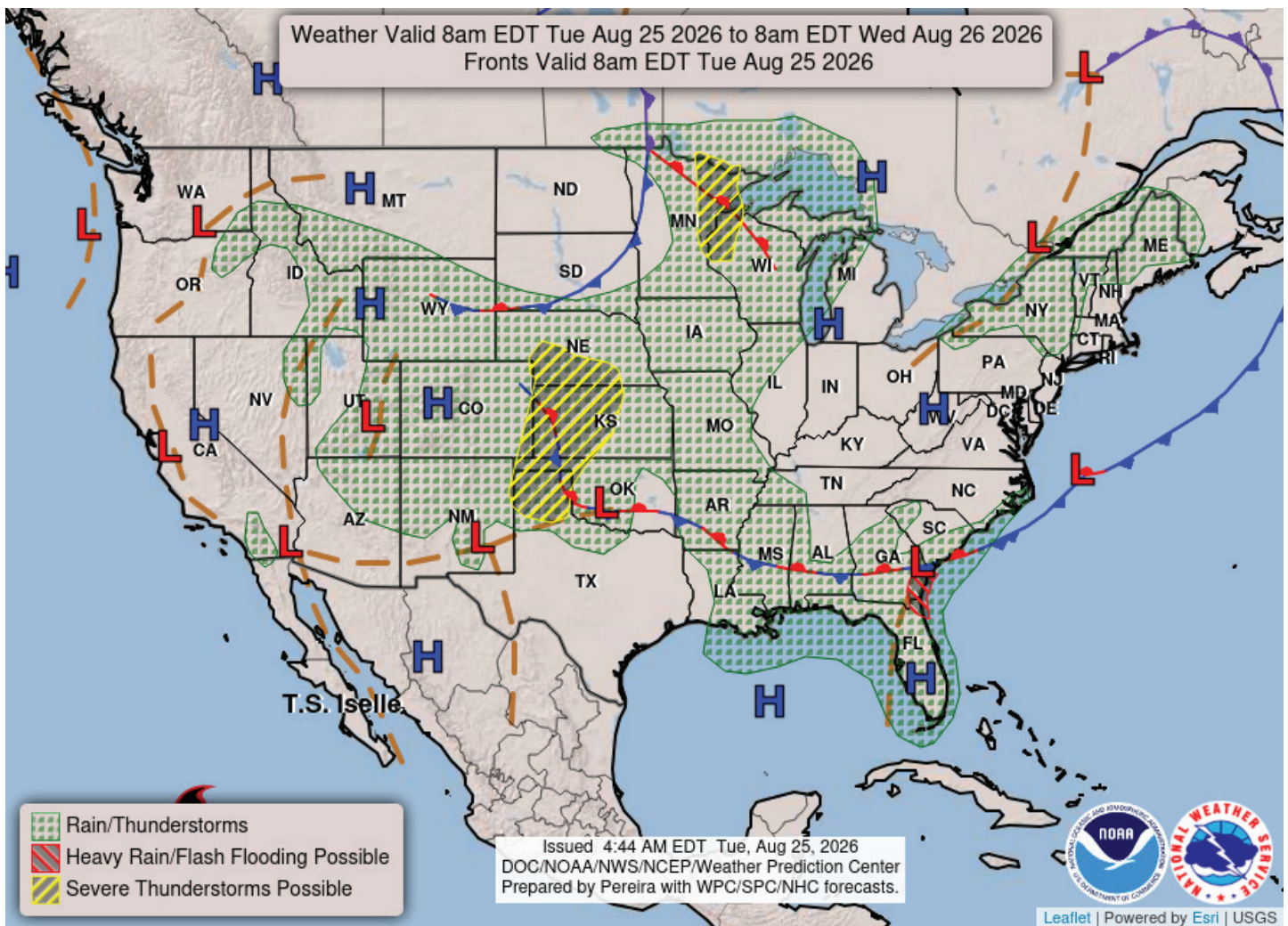
Precip to date in Aug.: 10.52

Average Precip to date: 15.91

Precip Year to Date: 19.99

Sunset Tonight: 8:23 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:46 am



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 21 of 64

Today in Weather History

August 25, 1990: Severe thunderstorms moved across central and northeastern South Dakota produce golf ball size hail and wind gusts exceeding 60 mph. One storm produced a weak F0 tornado between Bowdle and Roscoe in Edmunds County.

1814: In the early afternoon, a strong tornado struck northwest Washington D.C. and downtown. The severe tornadic storm arrived the day after the British Troops had set fire to the Capitol, the White House, and other public buildings. The storm's rains would douse those flames. The tornado did major structural damage to the residential section of the city. The tornado's flying debris killed more British soldiers than by the guns of the American resistance. The storm blew off roofs and carried them high up into the air, knocked down chimneys and fences and damaged numerous homes. Some homes were destroyed. It lifted two pieces of cannon and deposited them several yards away. At least 30 Americans were killed or injured in the heavily damaged buildings, and an unknown number of British killed and wounded.

1885 — A severe hurricane struck South Carolina causing 1.3 million dollars damage at Charleston. (David Ludlum)

1940 — New Jersey experienced its coldest August morning of record, with lows of 32 degrees at Layton and Charlotteburg. (The Weather Channel)

1948: One of the worst tornadoes to strike New Zealand occurred at Hamilton on this day. This estimated F2tornado killed three people, injuring dozens, and destroying or severely damaging almost 150 houses and 50 business premises in Hamilton and Franklin.

1987 — Morning thunderstorms produced heavy rain in eastern Nebraska and southwestern Iowa. Stanton IA reported 10.50 inches of rain. Water was reported up to the handle of automobiles west of Greenwood NE. Rainfall totals for a two day period ranged from 7 to 14 inches across southwestern Iowa. Crop damage was in the millions for both states. Subsequent flooding of streams in Iowa the last week of August caused millions of dollars damage to crops, as some streams crested ten feet above flood stage. (Storm Data)

1988 — Seven cities in California reported record high temperatures for the date, including Sacramento with an afternoon reading of 104 degrees. Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in Arizona. Chino Valley was drenched with 2.50 inches of rain in just thirty minutes washing out a couple of streets in town. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Morning thunderstorms drenched Spencer, IN, with 4.10 inches of rain in three hours causing extensive street flooding. Evening thunderstorms in eastern Kansas produced up to six inches of rain around Emporia, and four inches of rain in just forty-five minutes near Parsons, and also produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Lake Melvern. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 — Katrina becomes a hurricane just before landfall in south Florida between Hallandale Beach and North Miami Beach. Maximum sustained winds at the time of landfall were near 80 mph. There were eleven fatalities in South Florida, including four by falling trees. More than 1.3 million customers lost electrical services, and preliminary insured loss estimates ranged from \$600 million to \$2 billion in the state of Florida (Associated Press).



Building Intimacy With God

Every small step toward God can lead us into deeper intimacy with Him.

Psalms 139:1-4: 1 O LORD, You have searched me and known me.

2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.

3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.

Intimacy with God doesn't just happen. As is true of any meaningful relationship, closeness with Him requires intentionality and ...

Honesty about where we are. We can't build intimacy while pretending everything is fine. God already knows our struggles, doubts, and failures. He wants us to bring our real self to Him rather than a polished version. Confession isn't about informing God of something He doesn't know; it's about agreeing with Him about the truth of our condition.

Willingness to trust in His character. Intimacy grows when we understand who God truly is. The more we know His faithfulness, goodness, and love, the more confidently we can draw near. Trust doesn't mean we never question; rather, it means we anchor ourselves in what we know to be true about Him.

Vulnerability before Him. We're to open our heart to God—in other words, let Him see our fears, disappointments, and longings. Unlike other relationships, where vulnerability can lead to rejection, the Lord knows us fully and loves us still.

God designed us for intimacy with Him. He's always available, always present. Even small steps toward Him—a moment of honest prayer, reading His Word, sitting quietly in His presence—draw us closer (Psalm 145:18). He meets us wherever we are.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 23 of 64

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Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.24.26

7 19 26 41 49 4

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 5 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.21.26

1 25 34 48 57 24

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$130,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 50 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.24.26

7 13 23 35 44 3

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,930,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 5 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.22.26

5 7 11 23 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$36,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 20 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.24.26

5 6 34 38 39 7

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 49 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.24.26

3 16 33 38 68 2

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$96,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 49 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

FBI sets \$25,000 minimum reward for dozens of unsolved Indian Country cases

By SARAH RAZA Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation has established a minimum reward of \$25,000 in cases where people went missing or were killed in Indian Country, part of a broader effort to address high rates of violence affecting Native American communities.

The new minimum applies to more than 50 unsolved homicides and missing-person cases in tribal communities. Most of the cases are less than 10 years old, though a dozen have been unsolved for more than two decades, an AP analysis found.

Victims' families and experts are unsure the higher amounts will be enough to get tipsters to come forward, citing people's fears and distrust of the federal government.

"Everybody's scared in Oglala," said Lisa Carlow, whose father Patrick Carlow Sr. was found dead in his Pine Ridge Reservation home in 2023. "So to me it's like, okay, what do you guys know that you're not saying?"

The FBI investigates federal crimes on nearly 200 Native American reservations, along with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. At the end of 2025, the FBI's National Crime Information Center recorded just under 1,500 active cases involving missing Native Americans, though not all become federal cases.

The FBI cited several cases in its recent announcement, including that of 8-year-old Maleeka Boone, who it said was likely struck by a vehicle on the Navajo Nation, and San Carlos Apache teenager Emily Pike, whose body was found after she disappeared from an Arizona group home.

Higher rewards could stir new interest

Mary Kathryn Nagle, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and an attorney who advocates for families of missing Native Americans, said federal investigators often "parachute in" to investigate crimes in tight-knit communities where witnesses may stay silent because of distrust and fear of retribution.

Still, she said, larger rewards could provide an incentive for people to talk, and show families their loved ones' cases are being taken seriously.

"We have people in Indian Country who know what happened to our relatives," she said.

Luana Ross, who is Bitterroot Salish and a co-director of the Native Voices program at the University of Washington, said cash rewards could boost interest but often aren't paid out.

"It is my opinion that in reservation communities, people would be extremely reluctant to turn a friend or relative into a criminal justice system that hasn't served them well," she said.

Lisa Foster's longtime friend Mona Renee Vallo was found dead after a suspected hit-and-run along historic Route 66 in Laguna Pueblo, New Mexico, in 2022. Foster hopes the higher reward money will renew interest in the investigation.

Foster described Vallo as a positive, bubbly friend who could have fun no matter what. She was a member of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

"Someone knows something there," Foster said. "They have to. I mean, it's weird that she went to work and then all of a sudden this happened to her."

Frustration mounts as families seek answers

The reward in Carlow's case was increased to \$25,000 in July, up from \$10,000.

Carlow's family says the 73-year-old rancher was respected in the Oglala community. He mowed the grass for others and spent time with his grandchildren. The family said more calls started coming in after the reward was increased, but the wait for answers continues.

Meanwhile, the FBI declined to provide The Associated Press an update on the case.

"It's so hard to get your hopes up like that and think, 'This is it, we finally got dad's killer.' And then nothing comes of it," Lisa Carlow said.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 26 of 64

She said fear keeps community members who may have information from contacting authorities.

"I think that's like deep-rooted within our people," said her sister, JoDee Carlow. "It's not just on Pine Ridge. It's on every reservation."

Relatives don't want cases to be forgotten

The FBI initially offered \$5,000 for information in the deaths of two brothers from Ohio, Matthew and Philip Reagan. The reward was later doubled and now will hit \$25,000. Though not Native Americans, they were killed on the Navajo Nation and are featured on the FBI's Indian Country cases website.

The brothers planned to visit Canyon de Chelly National Monument during a trip to California. Authorities believe their SUV got stuck in mud after GPS sent them off course near Sawmill. They were shot multiple times while walking to seek help, authorities said.

Matthew Reagan's wife, Faye Wurstner-Reagan, said she doubts a \$25,000 reward will persuade anyone in the small community to come forward.

"You would have to promise someone, like, actual protection," she said. "I mean, they brutally murdered two men."

She suggested the FBI instead put resources toward law enforcement to keep the cases from going cold and for liaisons to keep families informed.

FBI spokesperson Brooke Brennan in Phoenix said investigating crimes in Indian Country often is complex because of the remoteness, limited resources and extensive workload.

Wurstner-Reagan hopes that families united in pain and grief over missing loved ones and unsolved killings might one day see justice.

"We're just getting forgotten, like no one is remembering any of us, and we're just told it's an active investigation," she said.

A tornado tears through a village in southern France, injuring 39 and wrecking 300 homes

PARIS (AP) — A tornado ravaged a small village in southern France, leaving dozens injured, local authorities said Tuesday.

Rescue teams were continuing their search after the tornado left the village of Pomas in ruins.

Marie-Hélène Bouissac, the deputy head of the local government office, confirmed a total of 39 people were injured, including two in critical condition.

No missing persons have been reported so far.

Some 300 homes were damaged and emergency accommodation centers have been opened to relocate residents. The Aude prefecture said 1,400 households were still without electricity on Tuesday morning.

The tornado wreaked havoc in the village of 1,000 inhabitants, reducing homes to rubble and destroying numerous cars.

The region was under a thunderstorm alert at the time and wind gusts exceeding 100 kilometers per hour (62 miles per hour) were recorded at a nearby meteorological station. The third stage of the Vuelta a Espana bike race, which was held in southern France on Monday, was halted because of hail.

According to Meteo France, the national weather agency, a few dozen tornadoes occur each year in mainland France, most of them of low intensity.

Ship disabled by attack in Strait of Hormuz and other news from around the Middle East

By The Associated Press undefined

An oil tanker was hit with a projectile off the coast of Oman in the Strait of Hormuz, according to a report Tuesday that highlighted the ongoing dangers for shipping companies attempting to use the waterway while Iran holds it in firm control.

The attack came as a high-level delegation from Pakistan, which has been a main mediator between

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 27 of 64

the United States and Iran, was wrapping up meetings in Tehran with the goal of bringing a negotiated end to the nearly six-month old war.

Here's a look at the latest developments in the Iran war and the wider Middle East on Monday. Full coverage can be found [here](#).

Oil tanker hit and disabled off the eastern coast of Oman

The oil tanker was hit Monday night a few miles off the east coast of Oman, according to a report Tuesday from the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization.

The unknown projectile hit the engine of the ship and disabled it, but all crew have been reported safe, the UKMTO said.

There were no immediate reports of any environmental impact from the attack, but oil spills from other ships damaged during the war have caused growing concerns about ecological damage.

About a fifth of the world's traded oil was shipped through the Strait of Hormuz freely before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28. Iran now has a stranglehold on the shipping traffic through the strait and periodically fires at vessels attempting to transit, though there was no immediate claim for Monday's attack.

The U.S. is also operating a blockade of Iranian ports and has fired on vessels.

Pakistani officials say 'highly positive' talks held with Iran

A delegation from Pakistan led by army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir departed Tehran on Tuesday after talks with Iran's president and other senior officials on reopening the Strait of Hormuz and reviving stalled negotiations to end the Iran-U.S. conflict, the Pakistani military said.

Pakistan has sought to mediate a resolution between Iran and the U.S., maintaining contacts with officials in both countries and urging them to resolve their differences.

Pakistan Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who accompanied Munir, said their meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian had been "very positive and productive," focused on eventually bringing about an end to the conflict.

"Significant progress was made, and the meeting concluded on a highly positive note," Naqvi said in a post on X. He added, "We remain hopeful that this momentum will help pave the way for further progress and lasting peace in the region."

Discussions also included reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the military said.

Iran and Oman, which is on the opposite side of the strait from Iran, are currently finalizing their own proposal for managing the waterway, but it remains unclear whether it would be a plan acceptable to the U.S.

Oman's foreign minister was to meet with Iranian authorities Tuesday.

No answers a year after Israeli soldiers kill 22 Palestinians including journalists and rescuers

Tuesday marked one year since Israeli soldiers killed 22 Palestinians, including journalists and rescue workers, in a double strike on a hospital in Gaza that provoked global outrage. No one has been held accountable.

Israeli officials said the target was a suspected Hamas camera on the roof of Nasser Hospital. Among those killed were Reuters cameraman Hussam al-Masri and Mariam Dagga, a visual journalist who worked for The Associated Press and other news organizations.

Despite repeated requests by the AP, the army has not provided details about the investigation or a timeline for when it could be completed. Rights groups say Israel rarely holds troops accountable for killing Palestinians, pointing to long investigations that rarely lead to prosecution.

China warns about US sanctions threat disrupting Iran cooperation

China's Foreign Ministry says it is closely following plans announced by U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent to expand sanctions to entities and individuals linked to Iran, including some based in China.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said China-Iran cooperation "should not be disrupted or undermined," noting that it had been conducted in accordance with international law.

China is one of Iran's biggest trading partners and purchases the majority of its total oil exports.

The Treasury Department on Monday said it was imposing sanctions on nearly 60 Iran-linked entities, including several based in China.

But Bessent stopped short of imposing secondary sanctions on countries that trade with Iran, which Bessent said was because he wanted countries to have an opportunity to shift away from Iran before it was too late.

He did not name any countries that could face sanctions, saying "they know who they are."

Lin said unilateral sanctions "lack a basis in international law" and added that economic warfare would only "further exacerbate tensions."

A year after Israeli strikes killed journalists at a hospital, no one has been held accountable

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — It's been a year since Israeli soldiers killed 22 Palestinians, including journalists and rescue workers, in a double strike on a hospital in Gaza. No one has been held accountable.

Israeli officials said the target was a suspected Hamas camera on the roof of Nasser Hospital. Among those killed were Reuters cameraman Hussam al-Masri and Mariam Dagga, a visual journalist who worked for The Associated Press and other news organizations.

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As global outrage over the Aug. 25, 2025, strikes grew, the Israeli military said that in addition to taking out the camera, six of those killed were linked to Hamas, without providing evidence.

But an Israeli soldier, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of retribution, now says the military could find no evidence linking the camera, which belonged to al-Masri, to Hamas. The soldier, who was privy to discussions surrounding the military's response, said none of the six was the intended target of the strikes.

AP sent detailed questions to the military about the allegations, as well as other questions about the strikes. The military didn't address the questions but said the incident is being examined and findings will be transferred to the Military Advocate General's Corps to reach a verdict on whether to open a criminal investigation. It didn't provide a timeline.

AP reported at the time that one of the six Israel said was linked to Hamas wasn't on the hospital's list of casualties and two others were medical or emergency personnel. That, along with the soldier's account, raises serious questions about Israel's rationale for the strikes.

Why did troops fail to identify the cameraman as al-Masri, even though journalists were known to film at the hospital? Why did they strike a second time, causing most of the deaths and raising accusations of a "double tap" attack on first responders, which would be a war crime?

AP and Reuters released a statement Tuesday calling again for Israel to provide a full explanation of the strikes. The news organizations also called on Israel to give journalists access to Gaza to support colleagues who have been covering the war from the beginning.

"A year later, we remain devastated by their deaths and are still searching for answers from the Israeli authorities about what happened that day," the statement read.

Nasser Hospital was a vital location for journalists

News agencies like Reuters and AP supplied live video footage to newsrooms around the world from the hospital, one of the few functioning in Gaza at the time. AP repeatedly informed the army that its journalists were there.

The first strike killed al-Masri and another person. As other journalists, including Dagga, and rescue workers rushed up an external staircase to help the wounded and document what happened, the military struck again, killing 20 people. Based on footage and multiple eyewitnesses, none was armed. In all, Israel struck the hospital four times using high-explosive tank shells.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 29 of 64

Israeli officials afterward said Hamas was using the camera to observe nearby troops. They alleged “suspicious behavior” around the camera, but the only example they gave was that a towel draped over the camera and the person filming appeared to be an effort at concealment.

Al-Masri routinely covered equipment with a white cloth to protect it from the sun and dust, a common practice among journalists in Gaza and other hot climates.

Last week, the army announced criminal investigations into two other high-profile attacks by its troops in Gaza — the 2024 killing of 5-year-old Hind Rajab and her family, and the 2025 killing of 15 paramedics. It cleared troops in three other attacks that killed workers from international aid groups.

Soldier details an attempt at damage control

The soldier was connected to AP through Breaking the Silence, a group founded over two decades ago by Israeli veterans that collects testimony from soldiers and is critical of Israel’s actions in the Palestinian territories.

The soldier said after high-profile strikes that kill civilians without clear military purpose, army officials search for militant links among those killed.

Breaking the Silence said its testimonies show there is a “retroactive incrimination process” in which Palestinians who are killed are automatically counted as militants, even when unarmed.

Retroactive incrimination is used as a “near automatic justification for every bullet, shell or missile fired, and as a tool used to avoid carrying out real investigations,” Nadav Weiman, the group’s executive director, said.

AP independently confirmed some details of the soldier’s account, which is consistent with the military’s public response. Breaking the Silence said it corroborated the account with its own sources.

The Israeli military has raided or laid siege to hospitals throughout the war, accusing Hamas of using them as command centers and to hide fighters, though it’s provided evidence for only some of its claims.

Hamas security men have been seen in hospitals during the war, controlling access to certain areas. Earlier this year, Doctors Without Borders suspended some operations at Nasser Hospital for several months after patients and staff reported seeing armed, masked men roaming parts of the building.

Tank shells were fired after a drone failed

The soldier, and a former military official with knowledge of the situation, said a high-ranking army official initially approved use of a precision weapon to take down the camera but an attempt by drone failed for unknown reasons. The former official spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren’t authorized to talk to the media.

The division commander then approved an alternative method, said the soldier, without saying what the method was. It’s unclear who made the decision to fire tank rounds, which can cause more damage than drone strikes.

Oded Ailam, former head of the counterterrorism division in Israel’s Mossad spy service, said while commanders on the ground have a degree of freedom, they don’t have a “blank check.”

“If the change is significant, particularly where it may affect the risk to civilians, it must remain within the authority, rules and intent of the original order, or require renewed approval,” he said.

Israeli troops have killed over 200 journalists in the war

Israeli troops have killed 207 Palestinian reporters in Gaza since Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack ignited the war, according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists. Israel has barred foreign journalists from entering Gaza, giving Palestinian journalists a critical role.

Sara Qudah, CPJ’s Middle East and North Africa regional director, said Israel has a responsibility to conduct a prompt and transparent investigation. “When journalists can be killed without credible accountability, it becomes harder and more dangerous for the press to document conflicts and for the public to know what is happening,” she said.

The lack of answers has been agonizing for families.

Ezz al-Din al-Masri said he doesn’t understand why his brother, Hussam, was killed. “Unfortunately, we found that the blood of journalists in Gaza is cheap ... as if the rules protecting journalists do not apply

to them," he said.

Dagga, 33, had just taken her last photos before rushing up the stairs. Whenever her father, Riyadh Abu Dagga, visits her grave, he carries her phone and camera with him — she always had them with her. He visits her apartment near Nasser Hospital and cries.

"Had any of the daughters of the soldiers been killed unjustly, they would not have stayed silent," he said of the Israelis. "They would want to know why."

Australia's music industry bans AI-generated tracks from official charts

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Australia's recorded music industry will bar tracks wholly generated by artificial intelligence from official charts as burgeoning generative technologies threaten artists' livelihoods, a representative said on Tuesday.

The crackdown comes as a variation of Madonna's pop hit "Like a Prayer" created by an Australian producer using AI-generated vocals and drums has spent 16 weeks in the Australian top 20, stoking debate about generative AI's place in music. It peaked at number two on the Australian Record Industry Association's top 20 Australian singles chart in May and remained in fourth place on Tuesday.

Wholly AI-generated tracks will be banned from the ARIA charts from Monday next week, but some AI-assisted music will remain eligible, an ARIA statement said.

Tracks can be eligible only if "humans wrote the song and performed the lead vocal and the primary instruments," among other requirements, the statement said.

AI-generated music would also be ineligible for the Australian industry's prestigious ARIA awards.

ARIA chief executive Annabelle Herd said: "These changes reflect our intent to remain dynamic and promote the human nature of artistry in what is — to say the least — a rapidly developing space."

"The ARIA Charts will always remain a transparent measurement of the music Australia consumes, but a chart that rewards unlicensed AI output would undercut the very basis of the recorded music we exist to represent," Herd added.

Eligible music must also be produced using legal AI services. Music was appearing on streaming services that had apparently been developed with AI tools trained on artists' music without authorization.

The Australian rules are in step with new principles released in July by the London-based International Federation of the Phonographic Industry. The federation represents the recording industry worldwide.

The international guidelines state that to qualify for official music charts, a track must be "substantially human made."

Sydney Conservatorium of Music composer and lecturer Alexis Weaver told Australian Broadcasting Corp. the debate around AI in music was "exceptionally fraught and very emotional for a lot of musicians and so everyone will have a different opinion."

Weaver applauded ARIA's move as a "wonderful step forward" that sent a message ARIA wanted to "prioritize and value human creativity."

"It can be quite hard to avoid AI tools in the current landscape," Weaver said. "There is a way to use it while you're still steering the ship and making the main creative choices."

A women's shelter for refugees in Poland fights for survival as anti-Ukrainian sentiment rises

By CLAUDIA CIOBANU Associated Press

KRAKOW, Poland (AP) — When Nastya Podorozhnya's relatives fled the war in Ukraine for neighboring Poland, volunteers welcomed them with open arms.

Podorozhnya, 29, was already living in Poland when the war began. But days before Russia's full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022, she rushed back to Ukraine to help her sister and nieces get out.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 31 of 64

As she returned to Poland alongside an influx of refugees in the war's first days, she witnessed the outpouring of support from Polish volunteers. But she also spotted a risk: Ukrainian women accepting help from strangers could become vulnerable to human traffickers.

That was when she decided to found Martynka, a helpline and support group for female Ukrainian refugees escaping gender-based violence.

Four years later, she is struggling to keep the organization afloat. Funding for refugee support is drying up, hostility toward Ukrainians is growing, and Poland still lacks a long-term integration strategy. As war fatigue deepens, politicians are increasingly exploiting anti-refugee sentiment for political gain.

The shift is being felt by groups such as Martynka. While fundraising was relatively easy in the first months of the war, international donors have since turned their attention to other global crises.

Martynka's shelter, located in an inconspicuous two-bedroom apartment in central Krakow, has hosted more than 100 women and children. Women receive help to escape abusers and access medical care, psychological support, jobs and housing.

"It often starts with me having tea in this very kitchen with the women and they tell me what happened to them and I say 'girl, same,'" Podorozhnya told The Associated Press during an interview in the Krakow shelter, referring to her own experience of a man trying to rape her on a street in Poland in 2016.

As Podorozhnya and her colleagues struggle to raise enough money to keep the shelter open, she says calls for donations frequently trigger a torrent of online abuse.

"It's because I'm Ukrainian," she said.

Ukrainian refugees contribute to Poland's economy

Around 3.5 million Ukrainians fled to Poland in the first weeks of the war, according to the U.N. Poles greeted them at train stations and opened their homes to them, while the government granted refugees access to jobs and social security benefits.

The two countries share a long history of brutality at the hands of Russia, and Poland remains a key ally to Ukraine in the war.

By the end of 2022, the number of Ukrainian refugees in Poland had stabilized at around 1 million. Those who stayed were rapidly absorbed into the labor market: More than 70% found employment, and a Deloitte study estimated that they contributed 2.7% of Poland's gross domestic product in 2024.

In addition to the refugees, most of whom are women and children, more than 1 million Ukrainians were already living in Poland before the war, primarily as economic migrants.

Historical grievances resurface

The refugees have increasingly become targets of anti-Ukrainian rhetoric. In research published this year, Ukrainian migrants interviewed by Olena Babakova, a researcher at Warsaw's Vistula University, identified the 2025 Polish presidential campaign as the period when anti-Ukrainian feeling intensified, as it became a common theme for all parties, not just the far right.

Karol Nawrocki, representing the national-conservative camp and who eventually won the presidency, promised legislation that would prioritize Polish citizens over Ukrainians when accessing public services. Rafał Trzaskowski, the liberal candidate, proposed restricting child welfare benefits for Ukrainians.

As tensions increased, historical grievances between the countries resurfaced.

In June, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy decided to name a military unit after a Ukrainian paramilitary organization accused of massacring Poles during World War II, causing outrage in Poland. Nawrocki responded by withdrawing a state honor awarded to Zelenskyy, further escalating the tensions.

"And it's not only negative feelings, Ukrainians really experience hostile conversations and attacks," Babakova told the AP.

According to data from the Polish police, 180 Ukrainian citizens were victims of prejudice-motivated crimes by mid-July, a significant increase compared with 275 for the whole of 2025 and 267 in 2024.

In response to multiple media reports of Ukrainians beaten on Polish streets over the summer, Prime Minister Donald Tusk said in late July that "we must wage war on violence and hatred."

Help for vulnerable refugees is decreasing

The Polish government has been steadily cutting support for Ukrainian refugees, saying that many have stabilized their situation.

Poland's ombudsman has warned that the changes disproportionately affect the most vulnerable groups, including single mothers with several children, older people and those with chronic illnesses or disabilities. Because most Ukrainian men of military age, between 23 and 60, are prohibited from leaving the country, single mothers are overrepresented among the refugees.

Yuliia Repenko from the Ukrainian House said that her nongovernmental organization, which provides help to Ukrainians, was "increasingly supporting people who are particularly vulnerable to exclusion."

The Polish government has defended its decision to cut back aid to Ukrainian refugees. Katarzyna Nowakowska, Poland's deputy minister for family, labor and social policy, told the AP that the most vulnerable applicants still receive direct help from the state and any other refugees needing support should turn to social workers.

As the Polish government has been scaling back its support, international aid has also declined, further limiting options. Data from the U.N. refugee agency shows a steady drop since 2022 in the funding provided by international donors for Ukrainians, with only half the agency's identified needs financed this year, compared with 94% in 2022.

"Financial supporters have moved on from helping Ukrainian refugees, but the war is still ongoing," said Sonia Novytska, a Martynka helpline worker. "If anything, it has become deadlier since the start."

Martynka received about 1,800 requests for help last year, and staff expect that number to increase, Novytska said. Not only victims of violence contact the helpline now, but also mothers struggling to provide food and shelter for their children.

"What Poles need to understand is that we are helping the people that could otherwise become homeless in their neighborhoods, the people who might start abusing substances out of despair they can't make ends meet," Podorozhnya said.

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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 33 of 64

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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 34 of 64

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Trump's trade war with Canada could rattle economies in states with key Senate races

By BILL BARROW and PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — President Donald Trump's trade war with Canada is escalating as the midterm elections approach, threatening Republican efforts to address voters' economic concerns in a year when control of the U.S. Senate hinges on states along the border between the United States and its northern neighbor.

The dispute flared over the weekend after negotiations broke down, leading Trump to raise tariffs on \$20 billion in Canadian imports. Canada plans to announce tariffs of its own on Tuesday, and the spiraling conflict could lead to higher prices and scrambled supply chains for Americans already aggravated at the president's management of the economy.

Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, one of Democrats' top targets this year, warned that fallout from Trump's approach would hurt U.S. businesses and consumers.

"Imposing new tariffs on Canada is a mistake," Collins said while campaigning Monday, and she mentioned lobsters, blueberries, lumber and other Maine products that end up in Canadian markets.

The issue also puts pressure on Republicans in Michigan, Ohio and Alaska, states where Canada is an important trading partner. Many Democrats seem eager to capitalize on the matter as they try to regain the Senate majority, despite the party's own history with protectionist sentiments.

"Trump is escalating a trade war with Canada for his own vanity," Michigan's Democratic nominee Abdul El-Sayed said on social media, adding that his Republican opponent, former Rep. Mike Rogers, is a "rubber stamp" for such policies. A third of the state's exports go north of the border.

Marc Short, a top adviser to then-Vice President Mike Pence during the first Trump presidency, said the issue is a political trap for Republicans.

"It's hard, obviously, because you don't want to incur the wrath of the president," he said. "But at the same time, I think if you're representing agricultural states, especially, your voters are probably anxious to have somebody representing their interests in Washington right now."

Trump charges forward on tariffs

It's possible that Trump will change course or delay his plans. But for now, the president is making no apologies for the economic turmoil.

"Canada has been ripping off the United States for years," Trump blasted on his Truth Social platform Monday, adding that he will raise tariffs on all Canadian automobiles and auto parts and steel to 50% in 2027. He added, "WE DON'T NEED CANADA, THEY NEED US!"

Trump's top trade official more calmly downplayed the dispute. "This is something where we don't actually expect a huge impact," U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer told reporters outside the West Wing.

Vice President JD Vance visited Maine on Monday, where he praised "our very independent friend Susan Collins" and assured voters "we're very mindful of the fact that Maine is a border state with Canada." He said the administration is trying to make sure Maine "gets a fair deal."

Collins did not appear with Vance on Monday or during his last trip to Maine. She campaigned on her own as she tries to hold off a challenge from Democratic nominee Troy Jackson, a former state legislative leader.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 35 of 64

Jackson, a logger before going into politics, said tariffs are another example of how Collins does not do enough to stand up to the president.

"Troy spent most of his life working along the Canadian border, so he knows how important this relationship is to Maine's economy," Jackson spokesman Dan Gottlieb said.

Republicans are trying to defend Senate control

Trump made no secret of his affection for tariffs during his comeback campaign, promising that higher taxes on imports would generate a windfall for the U.S. Treasury and boost domestic manufacturing. But concerns about inflation and affordability have not receded, including in states with key races this year.

Maine, Ohio, Michigan and Alaska boast industries including fisheries, auto parts, lumber and produce that export items across the northern border, while Canadian imports are sold by a range of U.S. retailers.

Iowa, which also has a competitive Senate race, does not border Canada or its waters, but also exports more goods to Canada than any other nation.

Majority Forward, a political action committee tied to Senate Democrats, already ran television advertisements against Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan of Alaska during last year's partial government shutdown.

"The tariffs are hitting Alaska the hardest," the ad said. "Call Dan Sullivan and tell him ... stop raising our costs."

Trade is a key issue in Ohio

Former Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown is trying to return to Washington by unseating Republican Sen. Jon Husted. Brown has long been a union-friendly protectionist Democrat. But he's argued against Trump's approach, saying it's one thing to get aggressive with an adversarial economic powerhouse like China but another to impose uneven, unpredictable tariffs on neighboring nations.

Husted signed a bipartisan letter earlier this year urging the administration to proceed carefully while renegotiating a trade agreement with Canada and Mexico. But he's also embraced the White House's economic policies, recently appearing with Vance at an Ohio steel plant to praise the administration's economic agenda.

"Today is a new day, it truly is," Husted said. "It's a new day because of the 'America First' agenda."

Brown has not yet criticized Husted on Canadian tariffs, concentrating instead on the senator's support for data centers and Trump's war with Iran. But Senate Majority PAC spokeswoman Lauren French said the Canada tariffs fight fits seamlessly into the broader case that Brown and other Democrats are making about Trump and his allies.

"It's another proof point for the argument that this is a guy who continues to raise your costs for no reason at all," she said.

Vance says Trump wants 'fairness'

Short said Trump's first-term protectionism was easier to defend because it was more focused on China. In the second Trump presidency, Short said, "we've so alienated our normal trading partners that part of their retaliation has been not to buy agricultural products," thus cutting off replacement markets for any lost trade with Beijing.

In Maine, Vance insisted Trump only wants to level the playing field with Canada.

"They don't expect anybody to fight back," Vance said. "We're sick of that."

He also criticized Canada as treating China more fairly than the U.S. in trade negotiations.

"It's over," Vance said. "We expect fairness in our trade policy."

Collins shared a different goal.

"I really want us to go back to the very friendly, economically beneficial relationship that we have with our Canadian neighbors," she said.

The last few witnesses in the Lindsay Clancy murder trial are set to testify

PLYMOUTH, Mass. (AP) — After nearly a month of testimony, jurors in the Lindsay Clancy murder trial are set to hear from the final witnesses in a case that has largely been about her mental state when she strangled her three young children.

The trial will resume Tuesday with more testimony from a forensic psychologist hired by prosecutors to evaluate Clancy's psychiatric history and assess the defense claim that she was suffering from acute postpartum psychosis when she killed the children at their Massachusetts home.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story includes discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988.

Kirk Heilbrun told jurors Monday that he believed Clancy took her children's lives so they wouldn't "suffer" after she killed herself. He said he didn't believe Clancy's claim that she hallucinated a voice telling her to kill the children.

Clancy's lawyer, Kevin Reddington, will get a chance Tuesday to question Heilbrun about his conclusions. Prosecutors are then expected to call at least one more expert witness before the trial moves on to closing arguments, likely no earlier than Wednesday.

Earlier in the trial, jurors heard from other medical experts, called by the defense, who said Clancy wasn't responsible for her actions because she had lost her grip on reality due to postpartum psychosis, a rare mental illness that can follow childbirth.

In the months before killing her children, Clancy had sought treatment for mental health problems from multiple providers and admitted herself to a psychiatric hospital.

After killing her children, Clancy jumped from a second-floor window. She remains paralyzed from the waist down.

Prosecutors say the former labor and delivery nurse planned the killings and contrived to get her husband out of the house by sending him to pick up medicine for one of their children and dinner for the family.

Clancy, 36, has pleaded not guilty to murder charges in the January 2023 deaths of Callan, Dawson and Cora Clancy, who ranged from 8 months to 5 years old.

Supreme Court sides with Trump administration on mail voting restrictions ahead of midterms

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court opened a path Monday for possible implementation of President Donald Trump's executive order restricting mail-in voting, though it remains unclear how much can be put in place before the fast-approaching midterm elections.

The decision leaves room for additional court challenges that could further slow Trump's order, and other similar cases have already been filed. The U.S. Postal Service laid out how it would implement the order last week, but time is running short to impose major changes. North Carolina is sending out ballots Sept. 4 overseas and to military voters, and other states will quickly follow suit in just a few weeks.

The Supreme Court's conservative majority didn't decide the legality of Trump's order, instead ruling that states who sued did not have the legal right to challenge it.

While the emergency order is not final, it does have the potential to create chaos around voting across the country, with Trump often questioning the integrity of elections and the nation's highest court again the possible arbiter of a political controversy.

"The Court's disposition of this application does not mean that any measure taken by the Government to implement the Order will necessarily be lawful. On that score, time will tell," the majority wrote in an unsigned order.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 37 of 64

The three liberal-leaning justices publicly dissented, with Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson writing that the rule “lets another shoe drop in the Kafkaesque nightmare that our precedents have been steadily creating for certain plaintiffs who seek to bring election-related challenges.”

New York Attorney General Letitia James foreshadowed more legal fights ahead, calling the decision a “painful setback” but vowing it would “not be the final word.”

The court’s order opens a path for the administration to begin action to restrict mail voting, but it also could lead to further litigation that could freeze the federal government again.

“This is just the first inning of a very fast nine-inning game,” said Derek Muller, a law professor at Notre Dame University.

Democrat-led states push back against Trump’s order

Mail balloting has long been a favorite target for Trump, who has claimed that it breeds fraud despite strong evidence to the contrary and his own use of the voting method.

Trump’s executive order, signed in March, calls on his administration to create lists of eligible voters and orders the U.S. Postal Service to deliver mail ballots only to people on those lists. New requirements released Friday would forbid the Postal Service from sending mail ballots from any state that does not comply with Trump’s order.

A Postal Service spokesperson did not immediately respond messages seeking comment. The White House did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Democratic officials in 23 states and the District of Columbia sued to block the order. They argued that the Constitution gives states and Congress the power to run elections, and Trump’s changes could lead to chaos and partisan abuse.

“The consequences of allowing such transformative changes to take effect so close to this fall’s elections would be extreme,” attorneys for the states wrote. Dozens of state and local election officials weighed in, asking the justices to leave the order frozen while election preparations are already underway.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said Monday the order was aimed at making it “harder for Americans to vote” in the pivotal elections for control of Congress, and vowed that Democrats would “fight every attempt to hijack mail-in voting and rig the rules before voters have their say this November.”

A judge in Massachusetts blocked the plan for the midterm elections in those states. An appeals court upheld her decision. She later granted a second order blocking it nationwide in a separate case, another remaining stumbling block for the Trump administration, which Monday night asked her to void or suspend it in light of the Supreme Court ruling.

The Justice Department appealed to the Supreme Court on procedural grounds in late July, arguing that the states sued too soon. They also pointed to another ruling out of Washington, where a judge allowed Trump’s order to proceed. An appeals court backed that decision, while still leaving room for future court action if the changes are implemented.

Federal attorneys argued that the Massachusetts order “blocks the government’s ability to finalize and implement the President’s proposed policies to promote election integrity for the upcoming federal elections in November.”

A dozen Republican-leaning states supported the federal government in their own appeal before the high court, saying states would have input on the final voter lists.

Trump fights mail-in voting despite its growing popularity

The Supreme Court has previously ruled against Trump-backed arguments on mail-in ballots, finding in a 5-4 decision that states can count ballots that arrive after Election Day. That case was decided after full briefing and arguments, rather than on the court’s emergency docket.

Trump has blamed mail voting — without credible evidence — for his loss to Democrat Joe Biden in 2020. He has promoted the proposed changes in his executive order as safeguards to keep non-U.S. citizens from voting.

He’s also repeatedly pressed for the passage of the legislation that requires proof of citizenship to vote. Noncitizen voting has been shown to be exceedingly rare, and is a felony that can be punishable by de-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 38 of 64

portation.

Using mail ballots has become increasingly popular with voters of both parties, with about 30% of all ballots cast that way during the 2024 presidential election, according to federal data. The process also is secure. A 2025 Brookings Institution study found only about four cases of fraud out of every 10 million mail ballots cast.

David Becker, a former justice department lawyer who co-wrote a book debunking Trump's 2020 election lies, said the high court created "pure chaos leading up to the midterm elections, waiting weeks after an administration filing, and just days before mail ballots go out, to completely rewrite the rules."

Canada to announce retaliatory tariffs as Trump tells its leaders to 'fall in line'

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada will announce retaliatory tariffs against the United States on Tuesday after relations deteriorated sharply Monday, with President Donald Trump telling Canadian leaders to "fall in line" or face consequences "far WORSE" than existing tariffs and Prime Minister Mark Carney accusing Washington of trying to subordinate Canada.

Trump also threatened new 50% tariffs on Canadian vehicles, auto parts and steel, while Carney said U.S. trade demands showed Washington wanted to "destroy our major industries," including autos, steel and aluminum.

Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne and three other Cabinet ministers are also expected Tuesday morning to share details of supports for workers affected by tariffs. Carney said earlier Monday that Canada may need to move away from matching U.S. tariffs dollar for dollar and instead use more targeted retaliation aimed at protecting Canadian workers and businesses.

"An attitude at the negotiation table that Canada is a subsidiary of the United States" is "not something we're going to accept," Carney said.

Carney was even more blunt in French.

"We learned during the negotiations that the Americans want to destroy our major industries, including autos, steel and aluminum," Carney said. "That was one of the main reasons we said no. It was a bad deal."

The fiery words from both sides show how U.S.-Canada relations have deteriorated since Carney walked away from trade negotiations with the Trump administration late Friday, triggering the president's threatened 50% tariffs the next day on about \$20 billion worth of Canadian goods.

Canada and the United States share one of the world's largest trading relationships, with deeply integrated supply chains across autos, energy, agriculture and manufacturing, making a prolonged trade fight potentially costly for businesses and workers on both sides of the border.

Carney cast doubt on the U.S.'s dependability, saying Canada was finding reliable partners "everywhere in the world, except in the United States. Except in the United States. And Russia."

Trump unleashes personal attacks on Canadian leaders

On Monday, Trump came back with further tariffs, warning that he would impose them on Canada's auto industry beginning next year.

"Canada has been ripping off the United States of America for years," Trump wrote on social media, criticizing what he called the country's "ridiculously high tariffs" on American farmers.

Carney said Washington's auto-sector proposals would gradually have the effect of dismantling Canadian production.

"This is the most successful automotive partnership in history," Carney said, referring to the deeply integrated Canada-U.S. industry.

Meanwhile, Ontario Premier Doug Ford unleashed his own tirade. In an interview with The Associated Press, he said Trump had underestimated Canadians' willingness to endure economic pain rather than give in to U.S. pressure.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 39 of 64

"We're all in," Ford said. "Up here, we're at a fever pitch; everyone's in for an economic war. They know they're going to have to sacrifice."

Trump responded in a social media post by attacking Ford personally, calling him "the less charismatic, intelligent, and overall unimpressive brother of the late, great, Rob Ford," and once again referring to Canada's prime minister as "Governor Carney."

Ford dismissed the insults: "If you think an insult from him hurts me? Well, bring it on, buddy, I'm ready."

Ford is a Progressive Conservative whose party differs from that of Carney, a Liberal, but the two underscore broad political unity in Canada over the trade fight with Trump.

Ford threatens critical minerals and electricity

Ford said "everything is on the table" if the dispute worsens, including cutting off electricity and critical minerals from Ontario.

Critical minerals are increasingly important to U.S. national security and manufacturing. The Pentagon has sought more secure supplies of minerals used in military aircraft, missiles, munitions and electronics as Washington tries to reduce reliance on China, which dominates the mining or processing of several strategically important minerals.

Ford said Canada should also consider increasingly severe retaliation if Trump continues targeting Canadian industries, including oil and potash, while Ontario could raise electricity prices or stop sending power south.

"We power 1.5 million homes and businesses," Ford said. "Everything's on the table. I'll do whatever it takes."

Ford has used electricity as leverage before. During an earlier phase of the dispute, Ontario imposed a 25% surcharge on electricity exported to Michigan, Minnesota and New York. Trump responded by threatening to double tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum before both sides backed away.

Auto industry becomes a central battleground

Ford accused Trump of not simply seeking a better trade deal but aiming to hollow out Canadian industries and move production south.

Ford said Trump wants to make Canada a vassal state.

"He wants to bleed out every single sector and bring them down to the U.S.," Ford said.

The auto sector is especially important to Ontario, the center of Canada's vehicle manufacturing industry. Plants and suppliers in Ontario are tightly integrated with factories in Michigan and other U.S. states, with parts routinely crossing the border multiple times during production.

Automakers including Ford, General Motors and Stellantis operate major assembly plants in Ontario, and the wider supply chain supports tens of thousands of jobs. Trump's new threat of a 50% tariff on Canadian vehicles and parts puts that sector directly at the center of the escalating dispute.

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said Monday that "the only reason Canada has auto production in the first place" was because of the 1960s Auto Pact, under which Canada used access to its market to encourage vehicle production north of the border.

Ford says he opposed preliminary deal

Ford also disclosed that he had opposed the preliminary agreement Carney was considering before Canada walked away from negotiations, and that he was unwilling to restore American liquor to Ontario store shelves as part of an agreement.

"I wasn't going to put the booze back on the shelves," Ford said. "I was ready to go out there and call a press conference ... and say I'm not buckling over."

Ford said he understood Washington had sought language late in the negotiations that would have restricted Canada's ability to negotiate trade agreements with other countries without U.S. approval. Carney has called that demand unacceptable and a question of Canadian sovereignty.

Carney said the dispute also exposed a deeper divide over language and culture, saying protections for French and Canadian culture that Washington views as trade irritants are considered fundamental rights in Canada.

"Who does he think he is?" Ford said of Trump. "You gotta be kidding."

The UK will help Ukraine make long-range missiles by sharing classified tech information

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Monday that the U.K. will help Ukraine make its own long-range missiles by sharing classified technical information for British components.

Burnham, who was in Kyiv alongside other international leaders for Ukraine's Independence Day, said defense firm MBDA will release details on U.K.-made parts for the SCALP missile to Ukraine to help the country assemble the weapons.

However, experts say that won't result in operational missiles soon — or address Ukraine's most pressing needs in its war against Russia's full-scale invasion.

Here's what to know about the missiles and how significant the announcement is for Ukraine:

What the SCALP missile is

The SCALP missile is the French-produced version of the U.K.'s Storm Shadow, an air-launched, high-precision missile with a range of more than 250 kilometers (155 miles). Both use shared French and British technology.

Measuring 5.1 meters (16.7 feet,) the missile is hard to detect and is designed to hit fixed or stationary targets such as hardened bunkers and key infrastructure, according to MBDA. The defense firm says the missile uses an advanced navigation system and is exceptionally accurate.

Storm Shadow and SCALP missiles are in service with the British, French and Italian air forces, as well as other export countries. They have been used in conflicts in Iraq, Libya and Syria.

The missiles won't be ready till next year at the earliest

Ukraine is already in talks with France, which recently agreed to help set up assembly lines for the missiles in Ukraine so that Kyiv can produce its own version of the weapons. It is not known how far advanced the plans are, or when such missiles may become operational.

"Any impact ... will in part depend on how quickly Ukrainian-assembled SCALP cruise missiles can be introduced into service," said Douglas Barrie, a senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Arun Dawson, a researcher at the Freeman Air and Space Institute at King's College London, said the news won't help Ukraine through this winter and likely won't start having an effect until next year, at the earliest.

"What Ukraine needs is protection from Russian ballistic missile attacks," he said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Sunday that his country is receiving substantially fewer Patriot defense systems, even as Russian ballistic attacks are increasing. The shortfall is particularly serious because the United States and European partners are struggling to expand production.

What a SCALP missile can do, Dawson said, is equip Ukraine with deep strike offensive ability. "You can use it to take out the Russian sites from which they are launching these ballistic missiles," he said.

Matthew Savill, director of military sciences at London's Royal United Services Institute, noted that Ukrainian development of its own ballistic and cruise missiles will complement the mass of firepower it can launch using drones, which are relatively slow and not that stealthy.

A weapon like a SCALP missile "has a sophisticated warhead and strikes the target at a velocity that means it can penetrate hardened structures and destroy buried targets in a way a slower drone without such a warhead is unable to do, at present," Savill said.

The British announcement on Monday drew ire from Russia. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov accused the U.K. of "fanning the flame" of the war on Kyiv's side — a claim Burnham swiftly dismissed.

"Who started the fire?" Burnham asked reporters Monday.

The UK has supplied Ukraine with missiles since 2023

Britain became the first country to supply longer-range strike weapons to Ukraine in 2023 when it donated a number of Storm Shadow missiles to Kyiv. The missiles gave Ukraine capacity to strike targets in Russia well behind the front lines, as well as in Russian-occupied Crimea.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 41 of 64

The U.K. is also helping Ukraine develop low-cost strike weapons in other ways.

Officials have been working with British defense companies to test a new ground-launched strike system that could hit targets more than 500 kilometers (310 miles) away while carrying a powerful 225-kilogram (496-pound) warhead.

European leaders mark Ukraine's 35th Independence Day as Russian invasion pushes on

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — European leaders joined President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Monday to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Ukraine's independence and boost its long-range missile program as Russia pressed on with its 4-year-old invasion of the country.

One of President Vladimir Putin's key goals in starting a war with Russia's neighbor in February 2022 was to return Kyiv to Moscow's orbit. Ukrainian lawmakers voted on Aug. 24, 1991, to proclaim the country's independence, and a nationwide referendum later that year overwhelmingly approved it.

With no significant changes on the front line for months and no apparent progress after more than a year of U.S.-led peace efforts, both countries are locked in a spiral of escalating aerial attacks that are killing civilians and smashing infrastructure.

Europe rallies around Ukraine

U.K. Prime Minister Andy Burnham, on his first overseas trip since taking office last month, joined almost a dozen other European leaders, as well as other dignitaries in Kyiv on Monday.

"For Ukraine, independence is not an abstract idea. We defended it against all odds," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said on social media. "In times like these, nations learn how important it is to have allies by your side."

Burnham co-chaired a meeting of what's been dubbed the Coalition of the Willing — a group of over two dozen countries helping Ukraine resist Russia's onslaught.

Burnham said he is pushing British industry to help a Ukrainian project that is working on a low-cost alternative to the U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems that are desperately needed but are in short supply. He urged other countries to encourage Washington to adopt stiffer sanctions on Russia and press Moscow to accept U.S. attempts to secure an unconditional ceasefire.

Zelenskyy said in a speech at Kyiv's St. Sophia Square that the presence of European leaders reflected continental fears about Russia's wider ambitions.

"We all understand that in this Russian war against us — against Ukraine — far more is being decided than the future of Ukraine and Eastern Europe," he said.

"No nation in a war like this could rely solely on its own weapons," Zelenskyy said. "No nation could withstand attacks of such intensity without the world's help."

Ukraine eyes local production of Anglo-French missile

The leaders brought pledges of further military and financial support. Burnham announced his government has agreed to allow defense company MBDA to release classified information relating to British components used in the SCALP long-range missile. That paves the way for France and Ukraine to advance plans for the weapon's production in Ukraine.

SCALP is the French version of the U.K.'s Storm Shadow missile, with both systems incorporating shared technology.

"Ukraine has been Europe's protector, not a drain on our security, but the front line of keeping Europe safe," Burnham said, adding that Kyiv and its partners "must keep up the pressure on Moscow."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Kremlin views the plan "extremely negatively." He accused the U.K. of "taking part in this war" on Kyiv's side.

Ukraine has leaned heavily on NATO countries for help fighting Russia's bigger army, although relations with the United States have been cooler under President Donald Trump.

Russia, meanwhile, is getting help from North Korea and China.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 42 of 64

Ukraine displays its drones in a parade

Ukraine's swift development of innovative drone technology has enabled it to blunt Moscow's battlefield progress as well as hit targets deep inside Russia, as far as 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) from their border. The speeches in St. Sophia Square were accompanied by a parade of domestically produced weapons.

Both Russia and Ukraine are trying through long-range strikes to inflict economic pain, disrupt military supplies and erode public morale.

Ukraine's long-range drones have repeatedly hit facilities in Russia's vital oil industry, causing fuel shortages, and have also engaged in a campaign against Russia's largest online retailer, Wildberries.

But foreign suppliers also have to take into account their own needs, weapon production levels and the depth of stockpiles.

As the air war has intensified, Ukraine's stocks of Patriot interceptors to counter Russia's ballistic missiles have dwindled. Kyiv urgently needs more interceptors before winter, when Russia routinely bombards its power grid, but the demands of the Iran war and slow output of the sophisticated interceptors have left Ukraine short and vulnerable.

Finnish President Alexander Stubb said he believed that striking Russian targets like Wildberries was a "sensible military strategy" that would hasten peace negotiations.

Ukrainian strikes kill 3 teenagers

Three teenagers were killed and six children were wounded in the southern Russian city of Krasnodar, Russia's children's rights ombudswoman Maria Lvova-Belova said, as Ukraine attacked several warehouses of Ozon, another online retailer, for the third straight day, according to officials and the company.

Ozon said a large fire raged at its logistics facility in the suburbs of Krasnodar following the overnight attack.

A drone also hit the grounds of an Ozon logistics center in the southern Russian region of Adygeya, said regional Gov. Murat Kumpilov, although the company said its warehouse wasn't damaged.

In all, four Ozon premises appeared to have been targeted.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's General Staff said its forces struck the Russian state-owned Kamenetsky Combine defense company in the Rostov region overnight, starting a fire. The plant produces rocket and missile fuel, it said.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses overnight intercepted and destroyed 351 Ukrainian drones over eight Russian regions, the Crimean Peninsula and the Azov and Black seas. Moscow illegally annexed Crimea in 2014.

The ministry also said its forces overnight struck Ukrainian ports and vessels delivering military cargo.

Russia has also turned its sights on Ukrainian shopping malls, supermarkets and gas stations in recent months. Russian drones struck a shopping center in central Ukraine in a daytime attack Friday, killing 16 people and wounding 130, Ukrainian officials said.

Ukraine's southern Odesa region came under a large-scale Russian missile and drone attack Monday, with food storage facilities and energy infrastructure among the targets, regional authorities reported.

Eighteen people, including two children, were injured in a Russian drone strike on Chernihiv in northern Ukraine, according to Ukraine's Emergency Service.

It was not possible to independently verify each side's reports.

Newsom returns to a defining California fight: Who pays for wildfire damage?

By SOPHIE AUSTIN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The bookends of California Gov. Gavin Newsom's nearly eight years in office have been defined by a crucial question: Who should cover the cost of damage from wildfires caused by utility equipment?

The most destructive wildfire in state history, a blaze that killed 85 people and destroyed more than 18,000 buildings in Northern California, started two days after Newsom won the governorship in 2018.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 43 of 64

Investigators determined it was caused by Pacific Gas & Electric equipment. Facing tens of billions of dollars in liability, the giant utility filed for bankruptcy just weeks after Newsom's inauguration.

Months later, Newsom signed a law creating a \$21 billion fund, paid for by utility shareholders and ratepayers, to help utilities pay for wildfire damages if they take certain safety measures.

Now, as the final legislative session of his governorship ends, Newsom is trying to broker a deal with lawmakers aimed at further shielding utilities from financial trouble if their equipment sparks a wildfire. His push comes as another major utility, Southern California Edison, faces claims from the state's second-most destructive blaze, a 2025 fire that killed 19 people outside of Los Angeles. Investigators ruled this month that it was sparked by one of the company's transmission towers.

Newsom's plan could limit the amount electric and gas companies have to pay victims and attorneys. One of the goals is to stabilize the state's electricity rates, which are among the highest in the nation and have continued to climb in recent years. Utilities have raised rates to pay for wildfire prevention and recovery as climate change has made the blazes more intense and frequent. Six of the state's 10 most destructive wildfires have been caused by utility equipment.

Newsom says the state needs to act quickly because he expects the wildfire fund to run out soon. His plan would require survivors to get paid by utilities sooner.

"Status quo is not going to work," Newsom recently told reporters. "It's not going to work for victims, who consistently are last in line. And that's at the core of this reform."

But some of those victims are pushing back. They've said Newsom's plan prioritizes utilities over the needs of fire survivors. Meanwhile, insurance companies are concerned they would foot more of the bill for property damage. A coalition including the state's major utilities — PG&E, Southern California Edison, and San Diego Gas & Electric — has been urging lawmakers to pass the plan. The last-minute legislative battle could help shape Newsom's legacy as he considers a run for president in 2028.

Newsom says his plan strikes a fair balance

Under California law, utilities have to pay damages for fires ignited by their equipment, even if a judge doesn't find them negligent. Home insurers that pay for policyholders' rebuilding expenses can try to get reimbursed by utilities.

Newsom's plan could change that by making insurance companies cover more of the cost of property damage. The proposal would also require utility CEOs to forfeit bonuses if their company sparks a wildfire resulting in more than \$1 billion worth of damage. And utility shareholders could be fined up to \$10 million for violating wildfire prevention requirements, according to the governor's office, which hasn't released the full details.

Personal Insurance Federation of California, a group representing property insurers across the state, said insurance rates will increase if the plan is implemented. The onus should remain on utilities to pay, said Rex Frazier, the federation's president.

"Being responsible for your actions is something that parents tell children," he said in a statement. "Hopefully the Legislature will tell this to the utilities."

Fire survivors are also frustrated with the plan, which could limit their payouts. Joy Chen, executive director of Every Fire Survivor's Network, a group of survivors of the 2025 Los Angeles-area fires, blasted it at a virtual town hall this month.

"This is overall a massive transfer of liability for the three for-profit utility monopolies that have continued to burn down communities across California," Chen said.

The California Professional Firefighters sent a letter to Newsom on Monday expressing its support for his proposal.

"The stability of the state's utilities, insurance plans, and recovery funds must all be balanced with ensuring that wildfire victims and impacted communities are able to recover and rebuild," the union wrote.

The Legislature has until Aug. 31 to pass a plan. If they don't, Newsom could call them back for a special session.

Democratic legislative leaders say the state needs to address the issue but haven't specified what a deal could include. Newsom proposed another \$18 billion last year to supplement the wildfire fund, which the

Legislature approved.

An economist says the state should reduce utility liability

California's longstanding requirement that utilities cover the cost of wildfire damages regardless of whether they were negligent is based on the fact that they are providing a public service, said Meredith Fowlie, an economist who co-directs an energy institute at the University of California, Berkeley.

But as climate change has fueled more frequent and destructive fires, the state should rethink how to distribute the ballooning costs of recovering from those blazes, she said.

"Utilities can start fires, but they don't by themselves create catastrophe," Fowlie said.

Other factors make wildfires turn into catastrophes, such as failing to clear vegetation or upgrade homes to make them more fire-resistant, she said. The question of who should be held responsible — and by how much — is "a critical, core issue that we have not dealt with and is not going away," Fowlie said.

Newsom says he's prepared to tackle the issue he's kept revisiting since he took office.

"I'm not going to walk away and hand a real mess to the next governor," he said last week.

Strikes in Gaza kill 4, including 2 children, a week after US asked Israel to curb attacks

By WAFAA SHURAFI and SALLY ABOU ALJOUD Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Palestinian residents of war-battered Gaza fled homes and businesses as Israeli strikes and tank fire killed at least four people Monday, including two children, hospital officials said, a week after a U.S. delegation asked Israel to draw down attacks.

After evacuation warnings by Israel's military, a strike hit a building in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza. One family was unable to flee and a 4-year-old child was killed, according to Awda Hospital, where he was taken. His mother and sister were wounded. There was no Israeli military comment.

Israeli strikes hit three other buildings across the territory after residents said they received evacuation warnings. Some people sprinted away, with mothers carrying children, while others moved amid the rubble in wheelchairs or with canes.

Smoke rose over the already devastated landscape.

Israel's military said it carried out strikes in the Shati refugee camp in Gaza City and in Deir al-Balah after issuing warnings, targeting what it described as two Hamas weapons storage facilities inside mosques. The military did not provide evidence but said the facilities contained dozens of "Kalashnikov rifles, magazines and additional military equipment."

An earlier Israeli strike on a tent in Deir al-Balah killed a man, according to Al-Aqsa Hospital, where his body was taken. Israel's military said it killed a militant affiliated with Hamas' special forces unit.

Others were killed or hurt in Khan Younis in the south

A man was killed and five others were wounded in an Israeli strike in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the casualties.

And Israeli tank fire hit an area east of Khan Younis, killing a 10-year-old girl, according to the hospital, where her body was taken.

Israel's military did not immediately comment on the strike in Khan Younis and said it was not aware of the incident with the child.

Israel has continued to carry out targeted killings in the week since a U.S. delegation met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in an effort to push last year's ceasefire deal forward.

U.S. negotiator Jared Kushner asked Netanyahu to draw down Israel's attacks in Gaza, a person familiar with the meeting said last week, speaking on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to brief journalists.

Israel has announced strikes on six of the seven days since that meeting.

Israel says it is targeting militants and related sites

While the heaviest fighting in Gaza has subsided since the ceasefire took hold in October, Israeli airstrikes

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 45 of 64

have killed at least 1,288 Palestinians, according to Gaza'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.

Militants have carried out shooting attacks on Israeli troops, and Israel says its strikes are in response to that and other ceasefire violations. Five Israeli soldiers have been killed since the ceasefire.

Palestinian officials have reported strikes on homes and police stations, and Hamas has claimed that attacks are designed to destabilize Gaza and prevent progress on the ceasefire's next steps, which include demilitarizing and reconstructing the territory and the deployment of an international stabilization force.

Israel warns against kites sent from Gaza

In the period before the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel that sparked the war, burning kites and balloons were sent from Gaza into Israel, causing fires and other damage.

Now Israeli officials are expressing concern after several kites were found in a kibbutz near Gaza. No weapons or dangerous materials were attached. Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz in a statement Sunday threatened to ramp up strikes on Gaza unless Hamas ensures the kites stop flying toward Israel.

Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem has called the kites "essentially children's toys" and accused Israel of using them as "an attempt to justify the continuation of aggression and violations against our people."

The Oct. 7 attack killed some 1,200 people and saw 251 taken hostage. All hostages or their remains were later released. Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza has killed more than 73,422 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry.

Wife of active-duty Army sergeant is deported to Honduras under Trump's immigration crackdown

By JACK BROOK Associated Press/Report for America

The wife of an active-duty U.S. soldier was deported Monday to her native Honduras, according to her family and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Cristy Maryori Villafranca-Trejo is at least the seventh spouse or parent of an active-duty U.S. military service member to be deported under President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

The Associated Press has found more than 50 cases in which immediate family members of U.S. troops were placed in federal immigration detention after the Trump administration rolled back protections for military families. In some instances, DHS has released military spouses following media attention and advocacy by congressional leaders.

Villafranca-Trejo's husband, Army Sgt. Hedar Leonel Turcios Juarez, said he has been struggling to manage his military duties since she was detained July 11 outside a Walmart near Fort Bliss, Texas, where he is stationed. Since then, he's had to care for their 6-year-old daughter without his wife's help. Instead of training in the mornings, he takes his daughter to first grade, and he said he has already had to postpone a planned assignment at another base.

"I don't know if I will be able to continue with this," Turcios Juarez told AP of his Army career. "I have to make a plan to make sure I can still fulfill my military responsibilities — but also take care of my family."

DHS confirmed Villafranca-Trejo's deportation, saying she had "received due process."

Villafranca-Trejo, who has no known criminal record and entered the U.S. in 2016 at age 18, was issued a final order of removal by an immigration judge in 2017 after failing to appear at a hearing, according to DHS. Villafranca-Trejo's husband said she had not received a notice for the hearing she missed and did not realize she had been ordered deported until they went to apply for her green card after marrying in 2022.

Originally from Honduras, Turcios Juarez became a U.S. citizen in 2024 after enlisting two years earlier.

Villafranca-Trejo's motion to reopen her case was denied last May and an appeal before the Board of Immigration Appeals remained pending, according to her attorney. She had also been waiting for about a year for a decision on her application for military parole-in-place, a program that allows the immediate family of U.S. troops to remain in the country to apply for a green card.

"We were following the rules -- we did everything we could on our side to fix this problem," Turcios

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 46 of 64

Juarez told the AP.

Prior to Trump's second administration, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement would typically allow immediate family members of U.S. troops to adjust their legal status even if they had been issued a final order of removal, according to Dan Gividen, who served as ICE deputy chief counsel from 2016 to 2019 under Trump.

"If you've got an active-duty military member that's married to someone now, and that's going to give her the opportunity to get a green card, you wouldn't detain them, much less execute the removal order," Gividen said.

JP Caballero, a spokesperson for U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar, a Democrat representing El Paso, said Escobar had opened a congressional inquiry into Villafranca-Trejo's case and visited her at the Camp East Montana detention facility in Texas earlier this month.

"My heart breaks for her, her children and the soldier who must feel so betrayed by the country he is sacrificing for," Escobar told AP in a statement. "There are far too many families like theirs who are being targeted instead of supported."

Turcios Juarez said he is unsure how he will care for his daughter without his wife. He still hasn't figured out how to tell his daughter what has happened. But he says he still wants to keep serving his country.

"I love what I do, I want to keep doing this," he said of the Army. "I just don't know how I am going to keep doing this."

Firefighters make progress against a Nevada wildfire that's destroyed more than 30 homes

By HAVEN DALY and JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

RENO, Nevada (AP) — Crews have started to contain a wildfire in the Sierra Nevada foothills near Reno, Nevada, that destroyed more than 30 homes as it spread perilously close to dense neighborhoods, officials said Monday.

Containment reached 27% and there was no new growth of the Hawk Fire, which has held steady at about 23 square miles (60 square kilometers) since it burned out of control on Sunday, authorities said at an afternoon news briefing.

"We are making progress," said U.S. Forest Service District Ranger Matt Zumstein.

The number of residents under evacuation orders and warnings was reduced to about 63,000, down from more than 90,000 people when the blaze mushroomed over the weekend. While winds have eased, there's still concern that gusts could push the flames through dry brush into newly developed neighborhoods in Nevada's largest city outside of metro Las Vegas.

Firefighters are also contending with hot temperatures and low humidity. At least 32 homes have burned and six are damaged, but authorities said those numbers are sure to rise as assessment teams begin to survey the charred areas.

Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve said the way the fire spread so quickly at its height had her fearing for the worst.

"It lit up these areas like nothing I've seen before," she said Monday. "It took your breath away, in the worst way."

Hawk Fire triggers evacuations and school closures

Schools across Washoe County were closed Monday because of the evacuations and to keep roads clear for emergency crews. Nevada's governor declared a state of emergency in the county and mobilized the National Guard to help with aerial firefighting and protecting evacuated neighborhoods northwest of downtown Reno.

At one roadblock, residents expressed frustration Monday that they could not get back into their homes.

"There's no fire here! Why are the National Guard here?" a driver yelled.

Washoe County Sheriff Darin Balaam said he understands that some residents are frustrated that they can't get home but the danger isn't over yet. "It just takes that little breeze and one ember," he said.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 47 of 64

Wildfires near Reno are blamed on human activity

The fire near the California state line began Saturday and exploded in size on Sunday. At least seven people — three first responders and four civilians — have been injured.

This is the third large wildfire in the rugged terrain north of Reno in the past two weeks — all caused by human activity, according to fire officials. They haven't said whether the Hawk Fire was intentionally set or accidental. Much of the area that burned was sagebrush and grass.

Reno, home to about 280,000 people, is known for its casinos and as a gateway to nearby Lake Tahoe, North America's largest alpine lake and a popular vacation destination. It's also southwest of Nevada's Black Rock Desert, site of the annual Burning Man festival, which begins next Sunday.

Many who travel to Burning Man make Reno a regular stop. Organizers on Monday asked attendees to not take hotel rooms and other resources away from fire evacuees, while being mindful of closures.

"Treat our neighbors, first responders, hospitality workers and everyone affected by this emergency with patience and care," a Burning Man statement said.

Fire claims a Reno woman's home for a second time

Videos posted on social media showed the smoldering ruins of homes and cars, with only a scorched basketball hoop still standing.

Crystal Hallock, 53, lost her home to fire for a second time in less than a decade. She moved into the rebuilt house in 2019, a year after an electrical fire burned it down.

On Saturday, with a giant plume of smoke and flames visible on the nearby mountaintop, she fled with her children, grandchildren and pets. Her ex-husband tried to save the property and her vintage Cadillac, grabbing a garden hose as flames melted children's toys and burned bushes.

She urged him over the phone to get out and feared the worst when the line went dead. "He was saying he can't breathe, it's so dark I can't see, and I'm screaming at him, 'Leave the car, just leave it,'" she said Monday.

Thirty minutes later, he called to say he had gotten out with the car. "I'm truly blessed because I have a place to stay with my animals and my grandkids. We were all able to get out safely," she said from a niece's apartment in Reno.

Nevada fire spread quickly in foothills

Many residents had little time to evacuate after the fire exploded in size.

"Honestly, I thought it was like in a movie," said Ruby Delatorre, who got back from a concert only to find her home in the evacuation zone. She returned Sunday to walk to her house and get a few more possessions.

"I literally want to cry and go back for all my stuff. I just got what I thought I needed," Delatorre said.

Some who spotted the smoke on Saturday thought it was from another wildfire that has been burning the past two weeks.

"The flames were pretty close to my house, and the smoke was really thick, but we have no idea if our house survived or not," Jon Hanbury said Monday at Reno's convention center, which is now a shelter.

Wildfire threat remains high in the West

Much of Nevada's western edge is under an increased risk of wildfires this week because of high winds and low relative humidity, the National Interagency Fire Center said. The National Weather Service says the region will see warm, dry and breezy conditions, and that critical fire weather conditions are possible in the week's later half. Reno sits at an elevation of 4,500 feet (1,370 meters).

Extremely dry conditions across the American West have sparked a rash of wildfires this summer. Fires in eastern Washington state forced the evacuation of 60,000 people in the Spokane area in early August.

Nationwide, there have been more than 50,000 wildfires — the most over the past 10 years covering the same time period, according to the national fire center.

US set for largest mass visa revocation in history targeting up to 200,000 foreigners, officials say

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is preparing to revoke the business and tourism visas of up to 200,000 foreigners who have applied for or are currently seeking asylum status in the United States. If it happens, the move would be the largest single mass revocation of visas in U.S. history and would likely face legal challenges.

Unless challenged or revised, the State Department is expected to announce in the coming weeks the revocation of so-called B1 and B2 visas issued between 2016 and 2026 whose holders have sought asylum or are now seeking asylum, according to State Department documents obtained by The Associated Press and two U.S. officials. The action will be taken in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security.

"We are coordinating with DHS to identify and revoke the nonimmigrant visas of foreigners who have come to the United States claiming to be short-term visitors, but then file for asylum to stay here permanently," said State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott.

He declined to comment on the number of visas that might be revoked, saying "as the process will be ongoing, the number of revocations remains dynamic and will be done on a rolling basis."

The revocations would not necessarily result in their immediate deportation, the officials said. Most of those with asylum cases currently pending would be recategorized but would lose their status as business or tourism travelers, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the revocations are not final yet.

Since President Donald Trump took office for his second term last year, his administration has steadily ramped up restrictions on visa applicants — demanding more information about their social media histories, requiring the posting of expensive bonds for the processing of visas, and outright banning the issuance of visas to citizens of certain countries.

In a social media post on Monday, Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau called out people who he said try to use tourist and business visas to get into the United States and then apply for asylum.

"People in the US and all over the world are fed up with bogus asylum claims," Landau wrote on X. "Asylum isn't supposed to be a loophole to circumvent immigration law." Landau cited the case of a Colombian citizen who came to the U.S. in 2015 on a tourist visa and then applied for asylum.

B1 visas are generally issued for business trips and B2 visas are generally issued for tourism, family visits or medical care. It was not immediately clear from the documents or the officials how many of these visa holders are seeking or have sought asylum in the United States and would be affected by the revocations.

Current applicants for B1 and B2 visas are asked to affirm that they will not apply for asylum in the United States and prove that they intend to return to their home countries.

In the past 18 months, the State Department has revoked about 175,000 visas for people who have been convicted or accused of crimes ranging from drunken driving to rape and robbery, as well as for people who have spoken out publicly against U.S. policies, particularly in the Middle East.

The administration has also moved to crack down on so-called birth tourism, a practice the administration claims is used by foreign pregnant women to come to the United States to give birth so that their child will benefit from birthright citizenship. Trump has tried several times to end birthright citizenship, but those challenges have been rejected by courts, including the Supreme Court.

The State Department documents obtained by the AP suggest screening of current B1 and B2 visa holders began after the State Department received information about asylum requests from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Economists don't expect reopening the US to Mexican cattle imports to reduce high beef prices

By JOHN HANNA and SARAH RAZA Associated Press

The U.S. reopened a border crossing in Arizona to cattle from Mexico on Monday as part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to reduce record-high beef prices, though economists doubt the move will mean much to grocery store shoppers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has said concerns about the New World screwworm's spread lessened enough to allow the movement of cattle from Mexico at a crossing in Douglas, Arizona, about 230 miles (370 kilometers) southeast of Phoenix. Over time, it hopes to reopen other crossings in New Mexico and Texas.

"Today, the border in Sonora is open for livestock," Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said during a Monday morning news conference in Mexico City, referring to the Mexican state bordering Arizona.

Cattle were coming across the border by mid-afternoon Monday.

Beef prices clearly are a concern for President Donald Trump, who announced Friday that he would allow up to 331,000 tons (300,000 metric tons) of imported ground beef into the U.S., tariff-free, to be sold at below-market prices over the next 90 days. In February, the White House said closing the border to livestock imports from Mexico more than a year ago was "essential" to containing the screwworm but it has exacerbated a shortage of cattle for slaughter in the U.S.

"The administration obviously has a lot of incentive to try to be able to say that they're doing something about high beef prices in particular," said Derrell Peel, a professor of agribusiness at Oklahoma State University. "Beef has been singled out because it is an expensive product and because it's just high profile."

The Trump administration closed the border to cattle imports in May 2025 as part of its response to the screwworm, a parasite with flesh-eating larvae that can infest and even kill cattle or other animals. The move came as the U.S. already was struggling to meet beef demand, thanks to a cattle herd that has been shrinking for five years and now is the smallest in decades.

Because the USDA plans a phased reopening of the border, it will take months for Mexican imports to return to their traditional levels, Peel said. Mexico has traditionally provided 1.1 million head, or about 3% of the U.S. cattle supply.

"I don't expect to see any measurable impact on cattle prices or beef prices soon," Peel said.

The smallest US herd in decades fueled record prices

The USDA reported that on Jan. 1, the U.S. cattle herd had dropped to 86.2 million head, the lowest figure in 75 years. Beef prices skyrocketed over the past five years, rising significantly faster than food prices as a whole, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The average price of a pound (453 grams) of ground beef rose nearly 57% from July 2021 to July 2026, from \$4.39 to \$6.89 — hitting a peak of \$6.90 in May — with a 10% increase over the previous year. Food prices have risen about 25% overall in those five years, according to the bureau's numbers.

The price for a pound of uncooked steak rose 35% over the past five years, reaching a record \$13.06 per pound in July, also 10% higher than a year before.

But Glynn Tonsor, a professor of agricultural economics at Kansas State University, said the potential effect on beef prices from the smaller supply of cattle was lessened because the U.S. beef industry is more efficient and has been able to get more meat from each animal than in past years.

The USDA says the reopening starts at a safe spot

U.S. government and industry officials view the New World screwworm fly as a major threat to the nation's \$113 billion cattle industry. It was an annual warm-weather scourge for U.S. ranchers from at least the 1930s through the 1960s, until the U.S. largely eradicated it. The fly was contained for years near the Panama Canal, but returned to southern Mexico in late 2024 and advanced toward the U.S., with the first case in Texas since 1966 reported June 3.

Since then, more than 40 cases have been confirmed in southern Texas and southeastern New Mexico, with infestations of cattle, sheep, goats and dogs.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 50 of 64

In her July announcement of plans for a phased reopening of the border, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said it was possible to start with an Arizona crossing because the northern Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua had stronger animal health programs than other parts of Mexico. She also said each animal would be inspected and declared free of the parasite before crossing the border.

U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee Chair John Boozman said the USDA is taking a "careful, science-based" approach to reopening the border and imposing strong animal health protocols.

"This is an important step for America's cattle producers, especially our feeders in the border states," Boozman, an Arkansas Republican, said in a statement. "Restoring this long-standing trade is critical to strengthening our cattle supply and supporting a healthy, competitive beef industry."

Drought, low prices led to the smallest US herd in 75 years

Drought in cattle-producing regions of the U.S. is a major reason the national herd is so small, said David Anderson, professor of agricultural economics at Texas A&M University. If grass doesn't grow, cattle have nothing to graze upon, forcing ranchers to sell them off. Low cattle prices over the past two decades also are a factor.

"Where we are today is sort of the culmination of some 18, 19, 20 years of very low cattle prices," he said. "That forces us to reduce our herds. Drought forces us to reduce them even further."

The shortage of cattle also has left beef processing plants operating below capacity.

Tyson Foods, one of the nation's largest meat processors, announced in November that it was reorganizing its beef operations and closing a plant in Lexington, Nebraska, about 220 miles (354 kilometers) southwest of Omaha. Earlier this month, it announced plans to close a plant in Utah outside Salt Lake City and another in Illinois about 150 miles (241 kilometers) southeast of Chicago.

In June, another major U.S. processor, JBS USA, announced plans to close beef plants in Memphis and outside Philadelphia, though it later said it would keep some operations at the Pennsylvania plant to preserve 400 jobs there.

Rebuilding the U.S. herd — and ultimately lowering prices — likely will take years, largely because a cow typically has only one calf a year, Peel said. In addition, breeding a heifer keeps her out of the food supply, tightening it further as the herd is rebuilt.

Peel said prices will remain high for some time and for elected officials, "There's nothing you can do."

Trump's 'economic D-Day' threats become warnings for countries to sever financial ties with Iran

By FARNOUSH AMIRI, CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, AAMER MADHANI and DIDI TANG Associated Press WASHINGTON (AP) — Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced a new round of sanctions aimed at Iran on Monday and warned every country that does business with the Islamic Republic to sever those financial ties or face retaliation from the United States.

President Donald Trump's pledge last week to unleash an "economic D-Day" against Tehran turned out to be new warnings to cut off Iran from the rest of the global economy. Asked why the U.S. was not imposing secondary sanctions on Iran's trading partners, Bessent told reporters he wanted countries to have an opportunity to shift away from Iran before it was too late.

"Why would I want to blow up the global financial system?" Bessent said.

The Trump administration is struggling to find an off-ramp nearly six months into an unpopular war with an increasingly obstinate Iran. Diminishing stockpiles of key weapons appear to have forced U.S. officials to pivot to economic warfare, though Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said later Monday that he was not ruling out resuming strikes to hit Iran during a lull in hostilities.

Washington had promised new sanctions would put even more pressure on an Iranian economy already battered by previous penalties and a U.S. naval blockade.

But the announcement Monday provided little detail and did not name which countries could face secondary sanctions. China, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates are Iran's largest trade partners.

"We are level-setting with every country to tell them our expectations. We know who they are. They

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 51 of 64

know who they are," Bessent said. "So when the hammer of U.S. Treasury actions falls upon them, they will have no one to blame but themselves."

Dubbing the campaign "Operation Economic Outcast," Bessent said Trump has been "making phone calls to world leaders with specific requests to cease their interactions" with Iran and has already seen results.

The UAE announced last week that it was suspending all trade, commercial exchanges and financial transactions with Iran until further notice after a reported missile attack on the Gulf country. Bessent said the UAE decision was "not a coincidence."

Shortly before the announcement, Iranian parliamentary Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said the U.S. is not in an economic position to further restrict Tehran's relations with other countries.

"Iran's trading partners, both in the media and through messages sent to us, have made it clear that they don't take these statements into account anywhere," Qalibaf, who has been Iran's lead negotiator over the past six months, posted on X.

Bessent is pressed on what the new campaign means for China

Asked whether the U.S. would target China, Bessent said that "no one is above the reach of U.S. sanctions," despite the fragile trade truce in place between the world's two largest economies.

"If they facilitate transactions and are part of the ecosystem that turns Iranian oil into money, into repression, they will be targeted," he added.

Experts say the U.S. is likely to carefully calibrate its actions on China, just a month before Chinese leader Xi Jinping is expected to visit the U.S.

How much the announcement matters "depends on the aggressiveness with which President Trump is willing to enforce it," said Ali Wyne, senior research and advocacy adviser for U.S.-China relations at the International Crisis Group. "Thus far, despite threatening severe economic consequences for countries that do business with Iran, he has largely given China a pass."

The Treasury Department said Monday that it was imposing sanctions on nearly 60 Iran-linked entities, accusing them of roles in Iran's nuclear and missile programs, cyber activities and oil shipments.

That includes Hong Kong-based Sweet Ocean Industrial Limited and associated people and businesses, which were accused of helping Iran acquire sensitive goods such as laser optics equipment. Also penalized was China-based Shenzhen Huamei, which is a service provider for the Iran-based logistics company BRE Line, as well as BRE Line's branch in Hong Kong, for allegedly supporting the missile and nuclear programs.

Iranian currency falls to a record low

Hours before Bessent's announcement, Iran's currency hit a record low.

The rial dropped to 2.02 million to the U.S. dollar as trading opened on currency markets. Iran's official Central Bank rate stood at around 1.5 million rials to the dollar, but the market rate is what most Iranians pay.

The currency had already been under pressure before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, as Iran faced double-digit inflation and negative growth. The rial has repeatedly hit new lows as nearly six months of war have taken an even greater toll.

Iranians find daily staples increasingly unaffordable. Since the war began, rice is up some 60% and beef prices are more than 150% higher. The International Monetary Fund forecasts that gross domestic product will contract more than 5%.

Still, economic pressure has not yet translated into political pressure. Iran retains a key strategic advantage: Its attacks and threats on ships in the Strait of Hormuz have brought traffic in the vital waterway to a near halt, damaging the world economy and heaping pressure on U.S. President Donald Trump ahead of congressional elections.

The war, as a result, has devolved into a fight over who controls the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil transited before the conflict. Iran is now refusing to fully reopen it unless it can charge ships.

Iran and Oman, which is on the opposite side of the strait, are reportedly in the final stages of agreeing on a plan for joint management of the waterway. Oman's foreign minister is set to visit Iran on Tuesday.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 52 of 64

Pakistani delegation visits Iran

Pakistan, which played a key role in brokering a 60-day ceasefire in June, sent a high-level delegation to Iran on Monday to encourage the U.S. and Iran to return to negotiations, two senior officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The military confirmed only Field Marshal Asim Munir's visit, saying it was aimed at de-escalating tensions in the region.

Trump spoke with Munir ahead of the army chief's visit to Iran, according to a person familiar with the discussion who spoke on condition of anonymity to confirm a private conversation. Reuters, citing Pakistani sources, first reported the call.

Munir met Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni in Tehran, according to the two senior officials. Munir was accompanied by Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and other officials. Munir was expected to remain in Iran overnight and meet the Iranian president and other senior officials before returning to Pakistan.

His previous visit to Tehran in May helped pave the way for a memorandum of understanding signed by the U.S. and Iran in June.

In downtown Tehran, 73-year-old Sadegh Mahmoudi did not hold out hope for a resolution. He joined a line of about a dozen people to purchase U.S. dollars with his remaining savings to hedge against further declines.

"There is no hope for a deal and peace," he said.

Wall Street drifts at the start of a week that could swing stocks and bonds

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks drifted to a mixed finish Monday as the countdown ticks toward potentially market-moving events coming later in the week. The areas of the bond market that the U.S. Treasury Department is trying to calm down, meanwhile, eased a bit.

The S&P 500 slipped 0.3% and pulled a bit further from its all-time high set earlier this month. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 140 points, or 0.3%, and the Nasdaq composite fell 0.8%.

Tech stocks led the way downward following big swings through the summer on worries that the frenzy around artificial-intelligence technology sent prices too high and that the huge demand for AI chips won't be sustainable if they don't produce enough profits.

Chip giant Nvidia has been a tremendous winner of the AI boom and become Wall Street's largest and most influential stock because of it. It will deliver its latest quarterly earnings report on Wednesday, which could dictate the next big move for AI-related stocks.

Nvidia sank 2.9% and was the heaviest weight on the S&P 500, where the majority of stocks rose. Drops of 5.8% for Micron Technology and 2.6% for Broadcom also helped drag the index lower.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 21.51 points to 7,652.86. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 140.15 to 53,417.16, and the Nasdaq composite sank 200.26 to 25,980.19.

The other big factor moving stocks recently has been the bond market, where longer-term Treasury yields climbed through the summer on worries about high inflation, huge government debts and other factors. High yields make it more expensive for everyone to borrow, not just the government, and have already pushed up mortgage rates and hurt the housing industry.

The U.S. Treasury Department announced a surprise move last week to increase the size of planned buybacks of Treasuries, which could help contain the rise in yields for 10- and 30-year Treasuries. But analysts warned the move may have only a limited effect because of how small the size of the buybacks are and how they do not fix the fundamental problems of too-high debt for the U.S. government and expensive oil prices because of the war with Iran.

On Monday, the yield of the 10-year Treasury eased to 4.70% from 4.74% late Friday and is back below where it was late Tuesday, before the U.S. Treasury Department made its surprise announcement.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 53 of 64

Helping to bring yields down on Monday was a drop in oil prices. Brent crude fell 2.3% to \$90.54 per barrel.

Last month it zigzagged between \$72 and \$102 as hopes rose and fell that the United States and Iran could reach a deal that would allow oil tankers to freely exit the Persian Gulf again. The United States on Monday announced new sanctions aimed at Iran, which helped drag the value of Iran's currency to a record low against the U.S. dollar.

Despite Monday's easing of Treasury yields, analysts warn the U.S. government's attempts to influence the bond market could ultimately mean higher pressure on inflation. Inflation already is worse than nearly everyone would like and has been for years.

That raises the pressure on the Federal Reserve to raise the federal funds rate, which affects very short-term overnight loans. When the Fed raises that rate, it could help keep a lid on inflation by trying to slow the overall economy and undercutting prices for stocks and other investments.

The Fed's new chairman, Kevin Warsh, is set to deliver a speech Friday at an economic symposium in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The mountain setting has been the backdrop for major Fed policy announcements in the past, but investors are unsure of what they may get from Warsh this time around.

Warsh has insisted that he wants to give financial markets fewer clues about what the Fed will do with interest rates, hoping that markets react more to incoming data about the economy and inflation than to what the Fed is signaling.

But with U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announcing his move last week, Warsh now holds the ball, according to economists at Bank of America. Expectations are high among investors for Warsh to talk about inflation and how the Fed could potentially react, and a failure to deliver could lead to bond yields rising further, they said.

In stock markets abroad, indexes dipped around much of the world. South Korea's Kospi fell 3.1%, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 1.9% for two of the biggest moves.

Seoul has been home to some of the world's sharpest swings this summer because it is dominated by two tech titans benefiting from the AI boom, Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix.

Iran warns of a harsh response as US announces new sanctions and other Middle East news

By The Associated Press undefined

Iran warned that new U.S. sanctions on Tehran announced Monday would not bring peace to the region. Meanwhile, Israeli and Syrian officials met less than a week after Israeli strikes in Syria. And Israel said it killed a Hamas commander in Gaza.

Here's a look at the latest developments in the Iran war and the wider Middle East on Monday. Full coverage can be found [here](#).

Iran threatens response ahead of US sanctions announcement

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson warned that Tehran would respond harshly to expanded U.S. sanctions, including measures against countries it sees as cooperating with Washington.

"Any escalation of this situation will undoubtedly bring about consequences," Esmail Baghaei said. "Our hands are not tied."

The new head of Iran's top security body warned Sunday that Tehran will see any country's support for the sanctions as an "act of war."

The expanded sanctions come after weeks of impasse. The United States has not dislodged Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil passed before the war started nearly six months ago.

Iran's demands for reopening the strait include lifting the U.S. naval blockade, withdrawing U.S. forces from the region and reparations for damages sustained in the war. It has held separate talks with Oman, on the other side of the strait, on jointly managing the waterway regardless of whether a new deal is brokered with the U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 54 of 64

Sanctions have historically raised prices of basic goods in Iran, but after decades of withstanding them, Iran's economy has adapted through finding new trading partners and building domestic industries.

The country's currency hit a record low on Monday.

China warns new sanctions will 'escalate the situation'

China said Monday that sanctions and additional pressure "will not help resolve the issue," as the U.S. has threatened to impose secondary sanctions on countries that trade with Iran.

"They will only exacerbate tensions and escalate the situation, which is in no one's interest," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said during a daily briefing in Beijing.

He added that China was calling on all parties to avoid measures "that could further intensify differences and conflicts and disrupt global economic development and financial stability."

China is considered the biggest buyer of Iranian oil, and was importing more than 80% of Iranian oil before the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran.

Netanyahu claims Iranian assassination attempt on his son

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Israel's Channel 14 television that Iran had attempted to assassinate one of his sons. He said that without security around his son, the attempt would have succeeded.

"Iran targeted one of my sons. Iran tried to murder one of my sons," he said in a phone interview with the television station.

Netanyahu did not say which son, where the attempt happened, what the attempt was and how it was thwarted. His office also gave no further details when asked by The Associated Press.

Israeli and Syrian officials meet following an Israeli airstrike

Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani met over the weekend with a high-level Israeli delegation in Jordan to try to defuse tensions after Israel last week struck an air base in northern Syria, Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

The U.S.-mediated discussions on Sunday focused on restarting negotiations for a future security agreement, SANA said.

Israel struck the Abu Duhur air base in Idlib province, saying it aimed to stop Turkey — which has supported the new Syrian government's efforts to rebuild its armed forces after 14 years of civil war — from establishing a presence there.

Syrian officials during the talks asserted the right to develop an army and freely forge alliances with any country, SANA said.

They also called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from a buffer zone in southern Syria they have occupied since December 2024, and reiterated Syria's stance that the Golan Heights — which Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war and later annexed — is Syrian territory.

Israeli officials didn't immediately comment on the meeting.

Israeli strikes kill 4 in Gaza, including 2 children

Israeli strikes killed at least four people Monday in the war-torn Gaza Strip, including two children, hospital officials said.

In the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza, a strike hit a building after residents said they received an evacuation warning. A 4-year-old child was killed after his family was unable to flee, according to Awda Hospital. His mother and sister were wounded.

Four other structures, including mosques, were hit after residents said they received evacuation warnings, sending scores of already displaced Palestinians fleeing again. Smoke rose over a landscape of rubble and destroyed buildings as elderly people pushed wheelchairs or used canes, women carried babies and others sprinted for safety.

Commenting on some of the strikes, the Israeli military said it struck Hamas weapons storage facilities in mosques after issuing warnings, but provided no evidence.

Separately, Israel said it killed a militant affiliated with Hamas' special forces unit in an overnight airstrike. Israel says it targets Palestinian militants who participated in the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that sparked the war.

Israel has announced targeted strikes on six of the seven days since U.S. negotiator Jared Kushner's meet-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 55 of 64

ing with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week hoping to push the ceasefire deal forward.

At least 1,288 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire took effect last October, according to Gaza's health ministry, part of the Hamas-run government. Its numbers are generally considered reliable by the international community.

A Palestinian American says he can't freely leave West Bank home

Loui Ridi had traveled from Ohio a week ago to join his relatives at his home in the village of Qusra in the occupied West Bank, which was besieged this month by Israeli settlers. He says he is unable to move freely.

The Israeli military declared the area a closed zone to restore order in Qusra. Ridi said settlers returned throughout the week to the hill above his house.

Since Israeli settlers surrounded the house more than two weeks ago, preventing occupants from leaving, Israeli soldiers have encouraged them to leave but Israel's police have not announced arrests.

The siege and Israel's response have sparked condemnation from Israeli rights groups and foreign officials, including U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, who called the violence terrorism.

Palestinians consider the West Bank, home to some 3 million Palestinians and 560,000 Israeli settlers, the heart of any future state and have condemned Israel's expansion there. This year has seen a dramatic spike in violence carried out by Israeli settlers against Palestinians.

Trump administration removes Syria from blacklist

The Trump administration on Monday formally removed Syria from the U.S. State Department's blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism, making permanent a series of sanctions removals that had been initially announced more than a month ago.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio had announced the move in early July, but there was a 45-day period for congressional review before it was formalized. That review period has now expired and sanctions related to the designation have been almost completely removed, the State and Treasury departments said.

"Treasury is following through on President Trump's promise to give the Syrian people a chance at greatness," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a statement.

US strikes a vessel in the eastern Pacific, killing 2 people in first attack in months

By KONSTANTIN TOROPIN and BILL BARROW Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a pause of more than two months, the U.S. military announced Monday that it once again carried out a strike on a vessel in the eastern Pacific Ocean, killing two people accused of trafficking drugs.

It brings the overall death toll to 223 people killed in 67 strikes during the nearly yearlong U.S. campaign of bombing alleged drug boats off Latin America's Caribbean coast and in the eastern Pacific Ocean. U.S. Southern Command says the campaign has resulted in the destruction of 64 speedboats, three "low-profile" ships and a semisubmersible craft.

The command said on social media early Monday that forces "executed a lethal kinetic strike on a low-profile vessel operating along established narco-trafficking routes in the Eastern Pacific." The military said the strike occurred Sunday, and it marked the first since powerful back-to-back June 24 earthquakes in Venezuela killed thousands of people.

As with most of the military's statements, Southern Command did not provide evidence that the vessel was ferrying drugs.

"We are committed to imposing total systemic friction on narco-terrorists — disrupting their operations, dismantling their leadership, and eliminating cartel terror across the region," said Gen. Francis Donovan, who leads U.S. Southern Command.

The latest strike comes as the Trump administration pursues deals with allied nations to extend its offensive to land across multiple Latin American countries. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said during a visit to Panama this month that Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras had agreed to allow the U.S. to carry

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 56 of 64

out joint military operations against criminal groups on their soil. Guatemala denied reaching such a deal. Ecuador launched similar missions with the U.S. in March.

The Trump administration's boat bombing campaign began in early September and has left numerous survivors, but most of them have never been recovered.

U.S. Southern Command said in a separate statement Monday that there have been more than 20 search and rescue efforts overall, almost all of which were unsuccessful.

According to data compiled from the command's social media posts, the strikes have generated 28 survivors with only three people ever being rescued — one person during a strike in March who was transferred to the Costa Rican Coast Guard, and two wounded people who were later repatriated to their home countries of Ecuador and Colombia.

The very first strike in September 2025 left two survivors who were killed in a second, follow-up strike. When that became public, it drew concern from some lawmakers and those who study military law. The White House insisted it was done "in self-defense" to ensure the boat was destroyed and in accordance with armed conflict laws.

But some legal scholars said a second strike killing survivors would have been illegal under any circumstance, armed conflict or not.

President Donald Trump has said the U.S. is in "armed conflict" with cartels in Latin America and has justified the attacks as a necessary escalation to stem the flow of drugs into the United States and fatal overdoses claiming American lives. But his administration has offered little evidence to support its claims of killing "narcoterrorists."

Critics have questioned the overall legality of the boat strikes as well as their effectiveness, in part because the fentanyl behind many fatal overdoses is typically trafficked to the U.S. over land from Mexico, where it is produced with chemicals imported from China and India.

The Pentagon's watchdog said in May that it plans to look into whether the U.S. military followed an established targeting framework when carrying out the strikes. However, the evaluation is focused specifically on what's known as the six-phase Joint Targeting Cycle and not on the legality of the strikes, the inspector general's office said.

3-year college degrees grow more popular in the US, saving time and cash. But critics aren't sold

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH AP Education Writer

Giles Sims, 34, was sick of getting passed over for jobs because he didn't have a college degree.

But with a wife and a widowed mother to help support, he needed a quick solution. So the laid-off web developer turned to one of a growing number of three-year degree programs.

"I can't afford to be out of the workforce for four years. That just seems like forever, and the three-year made it seem less daunting," said Sims, a student at Ensign College, a private Salt Lake City school that recently changed all its bachelor's degrees to require fewer classes than a traditional four-year degree.

The condensed programs have exploded in popularity. As of this spring, 26 U.S. states have a college that offers at least one reduced-credit, three-year bachelor's, according to the nonprofit research group RAND.

Advocates say these programs are a solution to the college affordability crisis and a godsend for non-traditional students like Sims.

Critics, however, worry that they'll narrow too much what students learn, confuse employers, limit graduate school options and create headaches in fields that require state licenses.

The American Association of University Professors, for one, says the programs devalue the meaning of a college credential.

"This is not innovation. This is just cutting corners," said Todd Wolfson, AAUP's president.

A new option to graduate more quickly, but with reduced credit

For decades, colleges have offered accelerated programs that let students finish faster, often by forgo-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 57 of 64

ing long summer breaks, maximizing transfer credits and condensing semester-long courses into shorter, five- to 10-week terms.

But those programs maintained the same course load, measured as credits. The new programs let students finish faster by completing as few as 90 credit hours. That shaves a year off the typical 120-hour bachelor's degree.

Three-year bachelor's degrees are common in other countries including the United Kingdom, India, France and Italy. But they can create complications for graduates seeking admission to U.S. graduate schools, which sometimes require extra coursework.

Some of the earliest colleges in colonial America, modeled after English institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, initially had three-year degrees, said John Thelin, the author of "A History of American Higher Education." By the 19th century, the four-year format had taken hold, partly because there wasn't an established system of public high schools to prepare students, Thelin said.

"The colleges would have to kind of start from scratch," he said.

A change in accreditation opened the door to shorter degrees

The idea of bringing three-year degrees to the U.S. got attention in 2009 when Robert Zemsky, the founding director of the Institute for Research on Higher Education at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, argued in a Newsweek cover story that three-year degrees could shake up a broken system.

But there was a roadblock, he recalled recently. "Accreditors said, 'College is 120 credits, not 90 credits,'" he said.

Years passed. And in 2022, amid mounting concerns about college affordability, Zemsky helped revive the idea. The College-in-3 Exchange was born, and dozens of higher education institutions joined the network to look for ways to help students get degrees faster.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities was the first accreditor to say yes in 2023, when it approved reduced-credit programs at Ensign and Brigham Young University-Idaho. Other accreditors quickly followed.

As of May, 119 reduced-credit programs had been publicly announced, according to the RAND analysis, which was conducted to help education officials in Ohio as they weigh the feasibility of reduced-credit degrees.

It comes at a time when tuition and fees averaged \$11,950 for in-state students at public schools and \$45,000 at private nonprofits last school year, although many students get discounts that reduce the price, according to a report from the College Board, the nonprofit that oversees the SAT.

Some degrees are easier to compress

Private nonprofit schools offer three-quarters of the reduced-credit programs, frequently online. Typically, they compress the majors by reducing electives. Business degrees in fields such as marketing and management are the most common, followed by computer and information sciences.

Other majors, such as engineering, with its extensive math requirements, have been harder to shrink. And RAND found just six reduced-credit degrees in teacher education, which involves real-world experience requirements and state licensure.

Jill Cohen, 42, lives on a ranch in rural Yoder, Colorado, and is completing her teaching degree through one such program at Indiana Wesleyan.

She quit her old job selling life insurance and turned to teaching after a farming accident nearly claimed her life. Already, she is in the classroom, teaching middle school English, as she works on the degree through a special "Grow Your Own" program designed to address staff shortages.

Because her home is busy — she has twin 12-year-olds, along with a menagerie that includes horses, goats and chickens — she appreciates the streamlined degree.

"Why do I need to take, you know, underwater basket weaving when I could just take the evolutionary structure of the English language — what I'm going to be teaching," she said.

However, programs with state licensing requirements are one of the biggest worries for Jenna Kramer,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 58 of 64

a policy researcher at RAND.

Indiana Wesleyan, which has a growing slate of reduced-credit offerings, said its education programs are specifically designed to meet Indiana licensing requirements. Students from elsewhere will need to check if the programs meet their state requirements, said Pam Downing, the school's director of communications, in an email.

The RAND report also found the programs are so new that there are no standard practices for admitting three-year degree recipients into graduate school.

Students acknowledge it's a gamble

Gabriella Staten, a 20-year-old student in the reduced-credit digital marketing program at Mount Mary University, a Catholic women's institution in Milwaukee, estimates it will save her at least \$20,000. While she sometimes wonders whether employers will take her degree as seriously as a four-year degree, she decided she could prove herself.

"Even if they were to look a little bit down on the three-year pathway, I can show them otherwise with the work," she said.

Wesley Hardy, who is three semesters into a bachelor of applied science in accounting at Ensign, also sees the pros and cons. He likes that the three-year format will get him into the workforce faster.

But he noted that the requirements to become a certified public accountant — something he has considered — vary by state. Many require 120 semester hours to sit for the exam and 150 to become licensed. Graduate school often is needed.

Bruce Kusch, president of Ensign, said he has talked to multiple college presidents and doesn't anticipate that graduate school will be a problem. But Hardy, 22, has questions about how it would work.

"Would I have to take extra classes?" he asked. "It's definitely something I've thought of."

Prince Harry to leave board of African Parks conservation nonprofit

LONDON (AP) — Prince Harry is stepping down as a trustee of African Parks, a nonprofit organization that manages protected areas in partnership with authorities in 13 countries from Chad to Zimbabwe.

Harry, who last week announced he and his family were returning to live in the U.K., left the board of trustees after 10 years of service to the organization, a spokesperson for prince confirmed on Monday.

African Parks said in a statement dated Aug. 19 that the prince's departure was part of a "governance refresh" in which a Kenyan Supreme Court justice and the president of AGRA, which helps small farmers in Africa, will join the board. The changes take effect Sept. 30.

Harry's departure comes four months after the Indigenous rights group Survival International called on him to resign after it alleged human rights abuses by rangers employed by African Parks. Previously, the prince left Sentebale, the charity he co-founded to fight poverty and AIDS in southern Africa, in March 2025 after relations with the organization's chair broke down.

"We extend our thanks to all the members of the Board who generously volunteer their time in support of our conservation mission — and particularly to The Duke of Sussex, for a decade of committed service to African Parks," Vas Narasimhan, chair of the African Parks board, said in a statement.

Harry and his wife, Meghan, stepped aside from royal duties when they moved to the U.S. They will not return to royal duties and are expected to live in a non-royal residence outside London.

US and Canada fall deeper into a trade war with new tariffs as talks collapse and blame is spread

By PAUL WISEMAN and ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — The United States and Canada, historic allies along an undefended border, fell deeper into a trade war Saturday marked by angry recriminations and new tariffs that are expected to raise prices for products in both countries.

Each side blamed the other for the collapse of negotiations in Washington late Friday, leading the U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 59 of 64

to impose 50% tariffs on \$20 billion worth of Canadian goods and Canada setting Sept. 8 as the start of its retaliatory penalties.

President Donald Trump's import taxes will hit about 5% of what Canada ships to the United States every year, ranging from hockey sticks to tongue depressors. Prime Minister Carney said Ottawa would respond with targeted tariff protection for industries exposed to the new U.S. duties, including some steel products. He also mentioned the dairy, appliance, agricultural equipment, pulp and paper and electronics sectors.

No further talks were planned. Whatever the eventual outcome, a loss of trust seems one of the earliest casualties.

Carney accused Washington of using "economic integration as a weapon" and said "its signature was written in pencil." Resorting to the language of battle, he said his country had been "attacked" by the new American tariffs. "You're at war when you get attacked," he said, adding that Canada had the reserves, resilience and plan to respond.

But to Trump's chief trade negotiator, Jamieson Greer, the U.S. was compelled to act after a year of retaliation by its longtime partner.

"We've said enough, and so we've taken countermeasures. Our interest is in protecting American workers and protecting American supply chains," the U.S. trade representative told "Fox & Friends Weekend." Canada cites 'unacceptable demands' as US says it offered favorable terms

Carney said Canada had been willing to drop remaining retaliatory tariffs on steel, aluminum and autos if the U.S. substantially lowered its own, and to encourage provinces to restore U.S. alcohol sales. But he said Washington's final demands went too far. "They asked too much and offered too little," Carney said.

Greer said the Republican administration was offering to cut tariffs on steel, autos and lumber, "things that are sensitive for them. And they've always had the best deal, and they still would have an even better deal, but they didn't want that."

As a result, he said, "We're moving forward with measures that respond to Canadian retaliation."

Carney said the U.S. added last-minute terms that would have reduced tariff relief for Canadian-made vehicles, restricted Canada's ability to strike trade deals with other countries and weakened protections for language, culture and sovereignty.

He said such demands were "unacceptable."

The breakdown in negotiations marked a sharp reversal from two days earlier, when officials from the two countries sounded as if they were headed toward a compromise.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford, who leads Canada's most populous province, praised Carney for rejecting the deal, saying it would have hurt Ontario's auto, steel and manufacturing sectors. Ford urged Canada to use "every tool in our toolbox" to fight the U.S. tariffs.

The moves also call into question the future of a North American trade agreement covering the United States, Canada and Mexico that is crucial to industry in all three countries.

Carney said the breakdown was "certainly not good news" for the review of that agreement and that the failed negotiations had given Canada "a new perspective" on what Washington wants from the broader economic relationship.

A typically cooperative alliance goes sour

The political impact will likely be even bigger than the economic fallout. The countries sold each other \$880 billion worth of goods and services last year.

The tariffs were initially supposed to kick in at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday. Trump extended the deadline for three days to allow talks to continue, but the countries could not reach an agreement in time.

The U.S. and Canada have wrangled for decades over trade, poking each other over sore spots such as Canadian softwood lumber imports and U.S. access to Canada's protected dairy market.

Somehow, they still managed to remain friends, allies and trading partners. Canadian soldiers fought alongside Americans in Afghanistan after 9/11. The 5,525-mile U.S.-Canada border is undefended, and nearly 330,000 people and \$2 billion worth of goods cross it every day; 800,000 Canadians live in the United States.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 60 of 64

Trump's approach to dealing with Canada marks an extraordinary departure from the traditionally cooperative relationship between the two countries. Trump has imposed tariffs on Canadian goods in a push to bring manufacturing back to the United States and made inflammatory comments about turning Canada into America's 51st state.

Carney said Canada had recognized that "America has changed" and that the two countries would "not return to our old relationship."

Canadians and Americans are frustrated

The Canadian public is fed up. A petition to expel U.S. Ambassador Pete Hoekstra, a Trump ally, has collected nearly 248,000 signatures since July 21. It accuses the former Republican congressman from Michigan of having "normalized" Trump's talk of annexing Canada, among other things.

The two countries had good reasons to find a compromise.

Nearly 72% of Canada's goods exports last year went to the United States. The Trump administration might be wary of imposing new tariffs — paid by U.S. importers who try to pass along the cost to consumers via higher prices — before the November midterm elections. American voters are already frustrated with the high cost of living.

"Both sides will be under immense pressure in the coming days to still find an off-ramp," said Ryan Marjerus, a partner at King & Spalding and a former U.S. trade official.

Joshua Bolten, CEO of the Business Roundtable, which represents leaders of major U.S. companies, warned the tariffs and retaliation risk "raising costs for American businesses and families" and disrupting vital supply chains, and urged both governments to resume negotiations.

Trump has turned to Depression-era trade penalties

Trump has made tariffs the centerpiece of his second-term economic agenda. Last year, he imposed double-digit import taxes on almost every country, justifying them by declaring the long-standing U.S. trade deficit a national emergency. The Supreme Court in February ruled that he had overstepped his authority. The justices struck down the trade penalties and set the stage for the federal government to pay refunds to importers.

So Trump has looked for other legal authority to justify tariffs.

After the Supreme Court struck down much of Trump's earlier tariff program in February, the administration turned to other legal authorities. For Canada, Trump invoked Section 338 of the Tariff Act of 1930, a rarely used Depression-era provision allowing tariffs of up to 50% against countries deemed to discriminate against U.S. businesses.

The provision is part of the Smoot-Hawley tariff law, widely blamed by economists and historians for worsening the Great Depression by restricting global trade. Section 338 has never previously been used to impose tariffs.

The rift comes as the United States, Mexico and Canada are trying to renew a trade agreement that Trump negotiated in his first term and once praised as a triumph. The United States has begun formal talks with Mexico over revamping the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, known as USMCA. But talks with Canada have not begun and escalating trade conflict casts doubt on whether they will.

The world inches toward catastrophic climate events: 'Bigger shocks are on the way'

By PETER PRENGAMAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In the opening scene of American writer Kim Stanley Robinson's "The Ministry for the Future," a heat wave combined with a breakdown of the electrical grid in India kills 20 million people. The devastation causes the world's nations to unite to combat climate change.

Scientists have long warned that the world will experience more intense extreme weather events like heat waves, storms, floods and droughts. But what once seemed like the realm of fiction is now discussed as a possibility, even an inevitability.

Warning about an "extreme of extremes" or the "Other Big One," a play off the California reference of

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 61 of 64

a big future earthquake, can be fraught. After all, nobody can say for sure when a weather catastrophe may happen. But in the last few years, the planetary ingredients needed for a massive disturbance have been building. And alarm is growing.

"The risk is that people just think you are exaggerating," said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with the California Institute for Water Resources. "It's the 'Boy Who Cried Wolf' problem. Sometimes wolves are real. If it's outside the door, wouldn't you want to know?"

The risks have been known, and building, for over 150 years

In the 1850s, while living in Seneca Falls, New York, amateur scientist Eunice Newton Foote did a series of experiments that put different substances, including carbon dioxide and moist air, inside glass cylinders and left them in the sun. What she found was extraordinary: cylinders with carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that is released when coal, gas or oil is burned, heated up faster and took longer to cool after the sun went down.

Fast-forward: Today, Earth is being heated by massive amounts of greenhouse gases being pumped into the atmosphere, leading to a gradual rise in average global temperature. That increase, 1.44 degrees Celsius (2.59 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer in 2025 compared to the early 1800s, leads to more frequent, and more intense, extreme weather events.

The country that has released the most greenhouse gas, and thus contributed most to climate change, is the United States. But don't expect recognition of that, much less major government-led efforts to combat it, as the country marks its 250th birthday. President Donald Trump has called climate change "the greatest con job ever," referred to climate policies as a "Green New Scam" and said U.N. climate predictions were made by "stupid people."

At any given time there are numerous extreme weather events happening around the globe. Indeed, some have already been so big that we have arguably entered an age of extremes.

Consider Australia's "Black Summer" of wildfires in 2019 and 2020, when 19 million hectares (over 46 million acres) were scorched. Or Pakistan in 2022, when flooding left a third of the country under water. Or Hurricanes Milton and Helene in 2024, which ravaged parts of the southern United States. That is to say nothing of periodic smaller disasters, such as last year's Texas floods that engulfed young campers; the Los Angeles wildfires that chewed through entire neighborhoods; and Typhoon Kalmaegi, which walloped Vietnam and the Philippines.

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick, a climate scientist at Australian National University, says she had a "come to Jesus moment" when she realized that constant extreme weather events wouldn't stop even if the world could immediately reach net zero, the point when as much greenhouse gas is taken out of the atmosphere as released into it. Many countries and major companies have net-zero targets for 2050 or beyond.

Because carbon dioxide can remain in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, and so much has already built up, the damage could take centuries to reverse. And we keep adding more.

"It's the issue of the frog in the boiling water," said Perkins-Kirkpatrick. "If we get used to bracing ourselves, are we going to notice?"

What's clear is that no country is truly prepared for a major climate disaster, and the risks are changing.

Robinson, whose book was published in 2020, says if he were writing today he would include a chapter on wildfires, which have become larger and more destructive. And while the potential heat disaster he writes about in India would arguably be less likely today, thanks to less reliance on the grid and use of solar power, Robinson believes the risks of catastrophe have increased.

The book, he says, "still has a purpose."

People have a natural aversion to contemplating worst case scenarios

It's basic psychology to avoid talking about uncomfortable things. Climate change, depressing and overwhelming, falls into that category.

Instead of taking action by radically reducing greenhouse gas emissions, or updating our infrastructure to live in a world altered by extreme weather events, a common response, from governments to individuals has largely been to ignore it. Part of the challenge is the care scientists must take when discussing extreme events.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 62 of 64

It's impossible to say, for example, that a disaster will happen in a certain year or even decade. But modeling improves every year, and the amount of time between extreme events is shrinking.

Sonia Seneviratne is a Swiss climatologist who vice chairs a working group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the top U.N. body of climate scientists. Seneviratne likens the risk to smoking and lung cancer. People who smoke won't necessarily get lung cancer, but the chances are higher and doctors should say that. Similarly, the risk of massive extreme events rises with every tenth of a degree.

"If such an event happened, I could already see the criticism of people saying, 'Climate scientists didn't tell us,'" Seneviratne said. "But we did."

While earthquakes are not connected to climate change, the way many cities in earthquake-prone California have prepared for a potential Big One is as an example of what's possible. Central to that effort has been Lucy Jones, a seismologist and author of "The Big Ones: How Natural Disasters Have Shaped Us (and What We Can Do About Them)."

In 2014, Jones, then with the U.S. Geological Survey, worked with Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's administration in developing an initiative that produced widespread retrofitting and earthquake preparedness in LA, and then later in other California cities. Two years later, she formed a nonprofit that advises on preparing for earthquakes and other disasters.

Jones says people will make changes if they believe risks are real and solutions are possible. Without that belief, the response will likely be to ignore the issue.

"Climate denial is one way of coping," said Jones. She said people rationalize by thinking, 'I won't believe it's true, so I'll feel safer.'"

In the movies, the final resolution is often extreme — and not helpful

Over the last quarter century, many movies have focused on extreme weather events, which provide action and danger to any plot. The cinematic portrayals usually have one of two endings: everything will be okay or we are doomed.

Consider two popular climate movies that came out 15 years apart. In the 2004 "The Day After Tomorrow," Jack Hall, played by Dennis Quaid, is a climate scientist who, speaking at a U.N. climate conference in Delhi, urges a major reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, warning that a failure to do so will lead to major extreme weather events.

"The climate is fragile," says Hall.

"The economy is fragile," responds the U.S. vice president.

Shortly after, the disaster that Hall warns about happens. Melting polar ice halts the North Atlantic Current, which moves warm ocean currents northeast across the Atlantic. There are giant cyclones, massive hailstones, heavy flooding and tornadoes before a big freeze takes over — so cold that anybody outside dies.

Eventually the vice president, who has become president, apologizes to the nation for exploiting nature.

"We were wrong," he says.

In the 2021 satire "Don't Look Up," two astronomers played by Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Lawrence discover a giant comet heading toward Earth. They try to spur action to avoid annihilation. The U.S. president, played by Meryl Streep, isn't interested.

"At this exact moment, I think we sit tight and assess," Streep says after learning the comet is heading straight toward Earth.

"How big is this thing? Can it destroy my ex-wife's house?" jokes a television news host.

At the end, almost everybody dies, a scenario that even the worst predictions of climate impacts don't envision.

Science tells us catastrophe is not a question of if, but when

As powerful as extreme weather events have already gotten, much worse is likely to come. It's basic physics.

More than half all greenhouse gases produced by humans throughout history have been released into the atmosphere over 50 years. Those gases create heat, which scrambles weather patterns and ecosystems.

The when of a major climatic event, or more likely several in different parts of the world, can't be known

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 63 of 64

with certainty. A catastrophic event in any given area could be in 50 years, or 10 years, or sooner.

People who deny climate change is real will point out that scientists get projections wrong, and it's true that not every climate model has been correct. But over the last decades, if anything, climate scientists have been too conservative. Climate impacts are happening much faster than predicted.

One of many examples: in January 2022, the U.K. Climate Risk Assessment said there was a 0.02% chance of 40C (104F) or above heat before 2040. That summer, parts of the U.K. topped 40C.

We have also reached a moment when "tipping points" — when deterioration of a given planetary system has crossed a threshold from which it can't recover — are no longer positioned as theoretical or futuristic.

The most commonly cited is corals. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, between 2023 and 2025, 84% of the world's corals suffered the expelling of microscopic algae in response to heat stress, which often leads to dying. Even if temperatures were to sharply drop, the recovery of most corals is doubtful.

The Amazon rainforest, which stores massive amounts of carbon dioxide and helps regulate the climate, is also at risk of a tipping point. Persistent drought, large wildfires and deforestation to make way for cattle have degraded swaths of forest in recent decades. The debate today is when, not if, the Amazon will release more carbon dioxide than it holds.

This year's El Niño, a natural and periodic warming cycle, is expected to be the strongest ever recorded, which could push temperatures even higher, breaking records and leaving damage along the way.

Overall, the Earth is on a dangerous path.

"We need to be talking about some of the worst things that can happen," said Tim Lenton, climate science professor at the University of Exeter. "It's natural to think that some bigger shocks are on the way."

Congo's Ebola outbreak records one of its highest weekly death tolls yet

BUNIA, Congo (AP) — More than 300 people died of Ebola in eastern Congo in the past week, one of the highest weekly tolls yet, government data showed Monday, as health workers struggle to catch up with an outbreak that is spreading at unprecedented speed.

Ministry of Health data showed that as of Saturday, the outbreak had recorded 5,514 cases and 2,642 deaths, including 317 deaths reported in the previous seven days. But Congolese experts have said the outbreak that started weeks before it was confirmed could be three times the known size.

This is the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak in history, with many people dying outside treatment centers. It has recorded seven times more deaths at this stage than the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak that is the deadliest in history with over 11,000 in all.

Most new cases in Ituri province, the current epicenter, still come from outside monitored contacts.

Nearly half of people infected have died — 47.9% — but the government data shows much higher rates in hard-to-reach areas such as North Kivu province, which has a fatality rate of 68.6%.

Frontline workers to receive vaccine used in past outbreaks

A key challenge has been the lack of approved vaccines or treatments for the rare Bundibugyo virus responsible for the outbreak.

On Friday, Congo received more than 16,000 doses of the Ervebo vaccine that was effective in past Ebola outbreaks caused by a different, more common type. The World Health Organization says it also will be used in clinical trials for a Bundibugyo virus vaccine.

WHO says it's not known whether Ervebo can protect against the Bundibugyo virus, although early laboratory and animal data suggest it may offer some protection.

Officials have not said when the vaccine will be rolled out to frontline workers. In Ituri, locals expressed optimism that it will help slow the outbreak.

"I am very pleased that these vaccines have finally arrived," said Héritier Ramazani, a resident. "We are fed up with recording new cases of Ebola every day."

The outbreak is unfolding in some of the most challenging conditions imaginable, with rebel threats and

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 080 ~ 64 of 64

intense population movements.

Medical teams in Ituri and other affected provinces also face work stoppages by responders who haven't been paid, anger from long-traumatized communities, bad roads and misinformation claiming that Ebola isn't real.

Experts believe the virus was spreading in the mining town of Mongbwalu as early as February, months before authorities declared the outbreak on May 15.

Today in History: August 25, National Park Service created

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 25, the 237th day of 2026. There are 128 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act, establishing the National Park Service as an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior to maintain the country's natural and historic wonders and "leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Also on this date:

In 1875, Matthew Webb became the first person to swim across the English Channel, crossing from Dover, England, to Calais (ka-LAY'), France, in under 22 hours.

In 1928, an expedition led by Richard E. Byrd set sail from Hoboken, New Jersey, on its journey to Antarctica.

In 1944, Paris was liberated by Allied forces after four years of Nazi occupation during World War II.

In 1948, in the House Un-American Activities Committee's first televised congressional hearing, Alger Hiss denied charges by Whittaker Chambers that Hiss was a communist involved in espionage. (Hiss was later convicted of perjury and sentenced to five years in prison; he maintained his innocence until his death in 1996.)

In 1981, the U.S. spacecraft Voyager 2 came within 63,000 miles of Saturn's cloud cover, sending back pictures of and data about the ringed planet.

In 2001, R&B singer Aaliyah (ah-LEE'-yah) was killed with eight others in a plane crash in the Bahamas; she was 22.

In 2012, Neil Armstrong, 82, who commanded the historic Apollo 11 lunar landing and was the first man to set foot on the moon in July 1969, died in Cincinnati, Ohio.

In 2017, Hurricane Harvey, the fiercest hurricane to hit the U.S. in more than a decade, made landfall near Corpus Christi, Texas, with 130 mph sustained winds; the storm would deliver five days of rain totaling close to 52 inches, the heaviest tropical downpour that had ever been recorded in the continental U.S.

In 2020, two people were shot to death and a third was wounded as 17-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse opened fire with an AR-15-style rifle during a third night of protests in Kenosha, Wisconsin, over the police shooting of a Black man, Jacob Blake. (Rittenhouse, who was taken into custody in Illinois the next day, said he was defending himself after the three men attacked him as he tried to protect businesses from protesters; he was acquitted on all charges, including homicide.)

In 2022, regulators approved California's plans to require all new cars, trucks and SUVs to run on electricity or hydrogen by 2035. (President Donald Trump signed a resolution in June 2025 blocking California's plan, prompting a court challenge by the state).

Today's Birthdays: Actor Tom Skerritt is 93. Former U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Wright is 91. Film director John Badham is 87. Baseball Hall of Famer Rollie Fingers is 80. Rock musician Gene Simmons (Kiss) is 77. Rock singer Rob Halford (Judas Priest) is 75. Musician Elvis Costello is 72. Film director Tim Burton is 68. Country musician Billy Ray Cyrus is 65. Actor Blair Underwood is 62. NFL Hall of Famer Cornelius Bennett is 61. DJ Terminator X (Public Enemy) is 59. Singer-songwriter Jeff Tweedy (Wilco) is 59. Television chef Rachael Ray is 58. Country singer Jo Dee Messina is 56. Model Claudia Schiffer is 56. NFL Hall of Famer Marvin Harrison is 54. Actor Alexander Skarsgard is 50. Actor Rachel Bilson is 45. Actor Blake Lively is 39. Actor China Anne McClain is 28.