

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Wed., Jan. 11

**Emmanuel Lutheran:** League at 6:30 p.m., Confirmation at 7 p.m.

**St. John's Lutheran:** Confirmation at 3:45 p.m.

**United Methodist Parish:** Kid Zone at 3:30 p.m. and Confirmation at 6 p.m. in Groton.

**Senior Menu:** Hot roast beef combination, carrots, fruit, peanut butter cookie.

**School Breakfast:** Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice, milk.

**School Lunch:** Tomato soup, grilled cheese, fruit, carrots and dip.

MathCounts at Aberdeen Simmons Middle School from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

## Thursday, Jan. 12

**Senior Menu:** Scalloped potatoes with ham, green peas, mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

**School Breakfast:** French toast sticks, links, fruit, juice, milk.

**School Lunch:** Tacos, refried beans, fruit, breadsticks.

GBB at Sisseton. C game at 5:15 p.m., JV at 6 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Wrestling with Britton-Hecla, Deuel and Tiospa Zina at Clear Lake starting at 6 p.m.

## Friday, Jan. 13

### NO SCHOOL - Inservice Day

**Senior Menu:** Sloppy Joe with whole wheat bun, oven roasted potatoes, broccoli, Waldorf salad, whole wheat bread.

**Wrestling** at Philip starting at 2 p.m. MT.

**Boys' Basketball** hosts Sisseton. C game at 5:15 p.m., JV at 6:30 p.m. with varsity to follow.

## Saturday, Jan. 14

**Wrestling** at Philip starting at 9 a.m. MT  
**7th/8th Boys' Basketball Jamboree** starting at 10a .m.

## Apts for Rent

1 bedroom and HUGE 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartments available NOW! All utilities included except A/C, 1 bedroom \$504 and HUGE 2 bedroom 2 bath \$674 Please call or text 239-849-7674

**Closed:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

## The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

"From minor scratches to a complete rebuild . . . we can do it all"

**NOW OPEN**

*Harris*  
Auto Body ABDN

**225 Brown County Hwy 19 South  
Aberdeen: 605/725-4900**

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	2-pt	3-pt	FT	Pts	Rebs	Steals	Assists	TO	Fouls
<b>Audrey Wanner</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Katie Koehler</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>4-7</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Jessica Bjerke</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>0-7</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Harleigh Stange</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>4-12</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Jennie Doeden</b>	<b>2-4</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Taylor Holm</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Alex Stange</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Miranda Hanson</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-2</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13-21</b>	<b>8-30</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>

## Mustangs hold of Groton Area in girls' basketball

It was close, but the Mustangs prevailed at the end with a 60-52 non-conference win over the Groton Area Lady Tigers Tuesday night in Waubay.

The game was carried live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass, Hefty Seed with Justin Hanson and Kalen Kjellsen, Groton Ford, James Valley Seed with Doug Jorgenson, Ken's Food Fair, Rosewood Court and Blocker Construction. Groton Area took the first lead of the contest before Waubay-Summit jumped to a 15-10 first quarter lead, held a 29-26 lead at halftime, and a last second shot at the end of the third quarter propelled Groton Area to a 41-40 lead going into the fourth quarter. Early in the fourth quarter, the game was tied twice and there were five lead changes before the Mustangs scored six straight points to take the lead., 52-47, with 2:40 left in the game. Groton Area closed to within two, 54-52, but then was held scoreless the rest of the game as the Mustangs went on for the win.

The big key of the game was free throws. Both teams made 31 field goals with Groton Area making eight three-pointers and Waubay-Summit making seven three-pointers. From the charity stripe, Groton Area was two of three of the Mustangs' eight team fouls while Waubay-Summit was 11 of 13 from the line for 85 percent off of Groton Area's 14 team fouls. Groton Area made 21 of 52 field goals for 40 percent and Waubay-Summit was 21 of 38 for 55 percent.

Audrey Wanner and Harleigh Stange led the Tigers with 14 points while Katie Koehler had 12, Jennie Doeden and Taylor Holm each had five and Jessica Bjerke added two.

The Mustangs were led by Jenna Larson with 19 and by Kelsey Pearson with 17. Adding to the tally were MaKayla ZIrbel with eight, Emily Ollerva and Zoey Wohleber each had six and Sammy Swanson added four.

Waubay-Summit won the junior varsity game, 45-30. Scoring for Groton Area: Taylor Holm 8, Sam Menzia 6, Jennie Doeden 6, Miranda Hanson 4, Payton Maine 4, and Kaycie Hawkins 2.



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**Katie Koehler**



**Audrey Wanner**



**Harleigh Stange**

**Photos by  
Julianna  
Kosel**



**Miranda Hanson**

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## Groton Coffee Cup League

**Team Standings:** James Valley 12, Ten Pins 5, Kens 4, Jungle Lanes 3

**High Series:** Vickie Kramp 188, Vicki Walter 179, Gert Erickson 178

**High Games:** Vickie Kramp 487, Vicki Walter 481, Gert Erickson 449

## Conde National League

**Team Standings:** Pirates 10, Cubs 7, Braves 7, Mets 6, Giants 4, Colts 2

**Men's High Games:** Lance Frohling 233, 201; Conner Hanson 211; Butch Farmen 186

**Men's High Series:** Lance Frohling 601, Conner Hanson 510, Butch Farmen 503

**Women's High Games:** Vickie Kramp 186, Mary Larson 180, Hope Dagartz 148

**Women's High Series:** Mary Larson 504, Vickie Kramp 489, Hope Dagartz 405

*“Angels We Have Heard On High”*

**Fill the Cooper house  
this year!**

*Open House*

**Sunday, Jan. 15, 2017**

**1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

**208 N. 2nd St., Groton**

**Refreshments Served**



## **Upcoming Events**

**Thursday, Jan. 12, 8 p.m.  
Girls' Basketball at Sisseton**

**Friday, Jan. 13. 8 p.m.  
Boys' Basketball hosts Sisseton, 8 p.m.**

**Saturday, Jan. 14  
Boys Basketball vs. Aberdeen Christian  
at Redfield Classic, 2:30 p.m.**

**[gdilive.com](http://gdilive.com)**



## Today in Weather History

January 11, 1980: A strong area of low pressure resulted in strong winds of 35 to 45 mph with gusts to 70 mph across Minnesota on the 11th and 12th. Blowing and drifting snow made roads hazardous or impassible. The strong winds also caused some damage. There were areas in western Minnesota that had a lot of blowing dirt.

January 11, 1995: A combination of an ice storm, heavy frost accumulation, and strong winds over a period of several days caused widespread damage to electrical systems resulting in power outages across central and north central South Dakota. The initial ice storm occurred on the 11th and the 12th. In the days following, widespread fog developed and resulted in heavy additional deposits of ice and frost on power lines and other surfaces. Much of the damage occurred when strong winds, mainly from the 16 through the 18th, caused the heavily weighted power lines and poles to collapse. Power outages lasted as long as eight days. Several electric cooperatives had never experienced damages of this magnitude. Some traffic accidents resulted from the icing and many vehicles slid off the roads. Property damage was estimated at 3.5 million dollars.

January 11, 2009:

1918 - A tremendous blizzard completely immobilized the Midwest, stopping mail service for two weeks. The vast storm then moved through the Great Lakes Region and the Ohio Valley. Winds reached 60 mph at Toledo OH, and the temperature plunged from 28 above to 15 below zero during passage of the cold front. (David Ludlum)

1972 - Downslope winds hit the eastern slopes of the Rockies in northern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming. Boulder CO reported wind gusts to 143 mph and twenty-five million dollars property damage. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm in the northeastern U.S. buried the mountains of central Vermont with up to 26 inches of snow, and snowfall totals in Maine ranged up to 27 inches at Telos Lake. Winds gusted to 45 mph at Newark NJ and Albany NY. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Snow and high winds in Utah resulted in a fifty car pile-up along Interstate 15. Winds in Wyoming gusted to 115 mph at Rendezvous Peak. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A cold front which the previous day produced 21 inches of snow at Stampede Pass WA and wind gusts to 75 mph at Mammoth Lakes CA, spread snow across Colorado. Totals in Colorado ranged up to 17 inches at Steamboat Springs. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Strong northwesterly winds associated with a deep low pressure system crossing the Upper Great Lakes Region ushered cold air into the central U.S. Winds gusted to 72 mph at Fort Dodge IA, and wind gusts reached 75 mph at Yankton SD. Snow and high winds created blizzard conditions in northwestern Minnesota. Squalls produced heavy snow in parts of Upper Michigan and northern Lower Michigan, with 16 inches reported at Wakefield. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2008 - Iraqis in Baghdad woke up to the novelty of falling snowflakes as the city experienced its first snowfall in about 100 years. (NCDC) A vigorous, but fast moving winter storm system moved through the Dakotas last night and early today. Although snow accumulations from the storm only ranged from 1 to 4 inches, strong winds behind the system produced significant blowing and drifting snow and widespread blizzard conditions across the area. Reports from trained spotters and law enforcement indicated visibility dropped to below one quarter mile for several hours, and near zero (white-out conditions) in many rural or unsheltered areas. Sustained north to northwest winds at many locations were on the order of 20 to 35 mph, with peak wind gusts as high as 60 to 65 mph. In addition, as the arctic air mass surged into the region, temperatures fell some 30 degrees from early this morning to mid-afternoon.

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Wind C...

Today



Chance Snow  
then Partly  
Sunny

High: 3 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: -9 °F↑

Thursday



Cold

High: 4 °F

Thursday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: -25 °F

Friday



Partly Sunny

High: 13 °F

Friday  
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: -1 °F

Saturday



Mostly Sunny

High: 13 °F

Well Below Normal Temperatures  
Continue through Saturday



*Brrr! Temperatures -10 to +10  
through Thursday*

*Dangerously Low Wind Chills  
of -20 to -40 Thursday night  
into Friday morning!*



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD  
<http://weather.gov/Aberdeen>



NWS Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 01/11/2017 at 5:53AM

Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass, Hefty Seed with Justin Hanson and Kalen Kjellsen, Groton Ford, James Valley Seed with Doug Jorgenson, Ken's Food Fair, Rosewood Court and Blocker Construction.

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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 12.2 F at 12:12 AM**

**Low Outside Temp: -4.8 F at 7:11 PM**

**High Gust: 27.0 Mph at 9:23 AM**

Rain: 0.00

## Today's Info

**Record High: 55° in 1987**

**Record Low: -30.1 in 1912**

**Average High: 22°F**

**Average Low: 1°F**

**Average Precip in Jan.: 0.19**

**Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00**

**Average Precip to date: 0.19**

**Precip Year to Date: 0.00**

**Sunset Tonight: 5:12 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:11 a.m.**



Weather Forecast for Wed, Jan 11, 2017, issued 4:57 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



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## CHANGE YOUR COURSE!

It was a stormy night. The waves were high, the winds fierce and the stars hidden behind angry clouds. Suddenly, from the bridge of his ship, the captain saw lights in front of him in the distance. He immediately had his signalman send a message: "I'm the captain of a large battleship. Change you course ten degrees."

Back came a reply: "I'm a seaman first class, Sir. You change your course ten degrees."

"I said I'm a captain. You are a seaman. I order you to change your course ten degrees," replied the captain.

"I would, Sir, but I'm on a lighthouse and can't change my course," came the message from the seaman.

We find some great advice in Proverbs: "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death." The path that many travel may "seem right" but it is "not right." It may offer many options and choices that seem exciting and require few sacrifices, but ultimately it destroys the soul and ends in death.

The right choice often requires hard work and difficult decisions, self-sacrifice and doing without. It may demand a change in lifestyle and force us to give up attractive surroundings and pleasurable experiences.

Giving in often requires giving up what matters most in life: living to please God and to be blessed by Him.

Prayer: Often in life, Heavenly Father, we know the right thing to do. But knowing what is right and doing it is often difficult. Give us strength, we pray, to "do right." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.

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## News from the Associated Press

### Tuesday's Scores By The Associated Press

#### BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Christian 65, Webster 44  
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 58, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 41  
Beresford 48, McCook Central/Montrose 37  
Bison 69, Rapid City Christian 50  
Brookings 70, Mitchell 44  
Corsica/Stickney 65, Mitchell Christian 42  
Custer 57, Lead-Deadwood 54  
DeSmet 50, Howard 34  
Elk Point-Jefferson 70, Lennox 53  
Faulkton 72, Highmore-Harrold 63  
Huron 74, Pierre 52  
Ipswich 66, Edmunds Central 29  
Irene-Wakonda 69, Alcester-Hudson 55  
Lemmon 61, Bowman County, N.D. 52  
Little Wound 95, Red Cloud 57  
Lower Brule 84, Sunshine Bible Academy 40  
Miller 81, Redfield/Doland 66  
Parker 66, Dell Rapids St. Mary 27  
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 61, Kimball/White Lake 53  
Scotland 66, Centerville 29  
Sioux Falls Christian 85, Dell Rapids 61  
Sioux Falls Lincoln 69, Yankton 59  
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 51, Sioux Falls Washington 40  
Spearfish 53, Belle Fourche 42  
Sturgis Brown 70, Hill City 60  
Tea Area 75, Tri-Valley 70  
Wagner 66, Gregory 57  
Warner 51, Britton-Hecla 42  
Winner 54, Valentine, Neb. 35  
Wolsey-Wessington 72, Iroquois 18  
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS  
Arlington vs. Deuel, ppd.  
Estelline vs. Great Plains Lutheran, ppd.  
Wilmot vs. Florence/Henry, ppd.

#### GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Belle Fourche 45, Spearfish 33  
Bowman County, N.D. 56, Harding County 39  
Brookings 50, Mitchell 29  
Canton 47, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 46  
Colman-Egan 38, Chester 32

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Dell Rapids 53, Tea Area 42  
Deubrook 55, Baltic 22  
Ethan 72, Scotland 23  
Eureka/Bowdle 37, Langford 35  
Flandreau 52, Garretson 13  
Freeman 55, Bon Homme 22  
Ipswich 65, Edmunds Central 28  
Jones County 31, Colome 23  
Leola/Frederick 52, Herreid/Selby Area 46  
Little Wound 81, Bennett County 19  
Lower Brule 45, Sunshine Bible Academy 34  
Lyman 26, Chamberlain 24  
McCook Central/Montrose 54, Hanson 46  
Menno 51, Canistota 50  
Miller 46, Redfield/Doland 31  
Philip 67, Kadoka Area 45  
Pierre 74, Huron 40  
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 71, Kimball/White Lake 44  
Sioux Falls Lincoln 59, Yankton 48  
Sioux Falls Washington 43, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 41  
St. Thomas More 57, Custer 31  
Todd County 78, White River 36  
Vermillion 42, Madison 40  
Wagner 67, Gregory 30  
Warner 48, Britton-Hecla 35  
Waubay/Summit 60, Groton Area 52  
West Central 58, Dakota Valley 53  
Winner 55, Valentine, Neb. 25  
West River Tournament  
First Round  
Faith 63, Rapid City Christian 21  
Hot Springs 38, Edgemont 33  
Moorcroft, Wyo. 60, Oelrichs 55  
Newell 49, Upton, Wyo. 38  
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS  
Deuel vs. Arlington, ppd.  
Estelline vs. Great Plains Lutheran, ppd.  
Hamlin vs. Sioux Valley, ppd.  
Timber Lake vs. McIntosh, ppd.  
Wakpala vs. Aberdeen Christian, ppd.



## Ground breaks on new administration building in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Officials have broken ground on a \$22 million city administration building in downtown Sioux Falls that divided the City Council and sparked an unsuccessful lawsuit by a citizen group.

The 79,000-square-foot, three-story annex is being constructed on a city-owned parking lot and will house staff for multiple departments, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2iApYIF>) reported.

Councilor Rick Kiley said a new government building is paramount in keeping up with the growth of Sioux Falls, which is estimated to have a population of 200,000 within six years.

"In the end, this building is about people we serve, it's about our fellow citizens, it's about our ability to provide superior service for them in a convenient and effective manner," Kiley said.

Kiley was among the minority of City Council members in favor of the project. The City Council voted in July to defund the project, but Mayor Mike Huether vetoed that decision.

Throughout the debate, Huether said Sioux Falls is well-positioned to fund the facility and cited the uncertain economic conditions of 1935 when City Hall was built.

"I can only imagine the challenges that the city and its visionaries faces as they tried to outline the reasoning . to create such a beautiful structure at such an unbelievable uncertain time in our city, in our state and in our nation," Huether said. "But thank goodness they did as we're still reaping the rewards of their sacrifice."

Citizen activists began circulating petitions to force a public vote, but the effort failed when a judge deemed signatures collected invalid.

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Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

## Daugaard: Amazon to begin collecting taxes in South Dakota

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Online retail giant Amazon has agreed to begin collecting state and local sales taxes on purchases in South Dakota, Gov. Dennis Daugaard announced Tuesday in his State of the State address.

That's a win for state government, which is heavily dependent on sales tax collections. It comes as a lackluster fiscal outlook is forcing officials to address a shortfall this year and tamp down spending increases for the next budget cycle.

"It's not going to fix everything, but it's a good start," House Republican leader Lee Qualm said. "Hopefully other companies will jump on the bandwagon."

The news follows recent moves by Amazon in Utah, Iowa and Nebraska as more states push to collect taxes on Internet purchases. The company's website says purchases shipped to over 30 states are subject to sales taxes.

Amazon will begin voluntarily collecting state and local sales taxes Feb. 1 and will remit them starting in late March, Daugaard said.

"Their decision to collect sales tax doesn't solve the sales tax issue for online purchases, but it's a big step in the right direction," Daugaard said during his speech to the Republican-held Legislature on the opening day of the 2017 legislative session.

It's difficult to project how much money the agreement will mean for the state budget until there's a year's worth of history, Daugaard said. He said the company has declined to give the state such information.

Lawmakers will work with economists to project how much money the state can anticipate moving

forward, said Republican Sen. Deb Peters, a member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. "It's going to alleviate some of the consternation we have with the current budget," she said.

Amazon didn't immediately respond to an email requesting comment from The Associated Press.

A 1992 U.S. Supreme Court decision bans states from forcing out-of-state retailers to collect taxes if they don't have a physical presence in the state.

The policy bothers brick-and-mortar retailers, who say it creates unfair competition because they're required to collect the tax. It also frustrates states like South Dakota, which receives much of its revenue from sales taxes.

The agreement means that consumers will have to pay more for their orders if they aren't already submitting use taxes when they purchase something sales-tax free.

South Dakota is missing out on \$48 million to \$58 million annually in state and municipal tax revenues, according to a court complaint filed last year by the state. The lawsuit against several remote retailers is based on a law passed during the 2016 legislative session that requires out-of-state sellers who exceed revenue and transaction thresholds to comply with state sales tax laws.

South Dakota's goal is to ultimately get the high court to overturn its previous ruling. A federal judge is currently weighing whether to send the case back to state court.

## **Bond set at \$1M for suspect in death of transgender woman**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A judge has set bond at \$1 million cash-only for a man accused of fatally stabbing a transgender woman in Sioux Falls.

Twenty-five-year-old Joshua Rayvan LeClaire appeared in court Tuesday on murder and other counts. LeClaire is charged in the death of 28-year-old Jamie Lee Wounded Arrow, whose body was found in her apartment Friday night. Police say the killing does not appear to be a hate crime.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2idBKrq>) reports video security footage shows LeClaire entering and leaving Wounded Arrow's apartment building early Jan. 1.

Court documents say LeClaire told police that he was in Wounded Arrow's apartment and used her phone after her death.

Before LeClaire's court appearance, family and friends prayed outside the courthouse for justice for Wounded Arrow, saying she was a "bright light."

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Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

## **The Latest: Daugaard backs mental health task force plans**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The Latest on Gov. Dennis Daugaard's State of the State address (all times local): 4:55 p.m.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard says he will support legislation that aims to resolve issues surrounding mentally ill people entering South Dakota's criminal justice system.

The governor said Tuesday in his State of the State address that he will support the recommendations of a task force convened by Supreme Court Chief Justice David Gilbertson.

The group studied how people with mental illness encounter law enforcement and move through the court system, jails and probation.

The governor says in some cases mentally ill people have had to wait in jail for months for mental competency evaluations.

Daugaard says the legislation would expand the pool of providers who can perform the evaluations. He says it would also give authorities tools to better respond to mental health crises and stop unneces-

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sary jail admissions.

3:50 p.m.

The House Republican leader says South Dakota could see fairly substantial revenues from a deal with online retailer Amazon to collect state and local sales taxes on purchases in the state.

House Majority Leader Lee Qualm says that he hopes other companies will "jump on the bandwagon." Gov. Dennis Daugaard announced the development Tuesday in his State of the State address.

Daugaard says Amazon will begin voluntarily collecting state and local sales taxes Feb. 1 and will remit them starting in late March. He says it's difficult to project how much money the agreement will mean for the state budget until there's a year's worth of collection history.

The governor says the company has declined to give the state such information. But, he says the deal is a "big step."

3:25 p.m.

South Dakota's Democratic legislative leaders saw a lot of their policy priorities missing from Gov. Dennis Daugaard's State of the State address.

The criticisms came after the Republican governor's speech Tuesday on the first day of the 2017 legislative session.

Senate Minority Leader Billie Sutton says lawmakers should work on issues such as pre-kindergarten education, health care, economic development and broadband access.

Sutton says it's Democrats' job to remind the Republican legislative majorities of the policies that they're not discussing that are important to South Dakota residents.

The legislative session ends March 10, although lawmakers come back to consider any vetoes near the end of that month.

1:20 p.m.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard says online retail giant Amazon will start collecting sales taxes on purchases in South Dakota.

Daugaard announced the development Tuesday in his State of the State address. The move is a win for South Dakota, which depends on sales tax collections to fund state government.

Daugaard says Amazon will begin voluntarily collecting state and local sales taxes Feb. 1 and will remit them starting in late March.

The news follows recent moves by Amazon in Utah, Iowa and Nebraska as more states push to collect taxes on internet purchases. The company's website says purchases in over 30 states are subject to sales taxes.

A 1992 U.S. Supreme Court decision bans states from forcing out-of-state retailers to collect taxes if they don't have a physical presence in the state.

1:10 p.m.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard is giving his State of the State address to South Dakota legislators at the state Capitol.

The Republican governor's speech kicks off the start of the 2017 legislative session Tuesday.

Daugaard is expected to discuss issues ranging from mentally ill people entering the criminal justice system to growing meth use and mounting drug arrests.

The legislative session ends March 10, although lawmakers come back to consider any vetoes near the end of that month.



6 a.m.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard is set to give his State of the State address to legislators at the South Dakota Capitol.

The Republican governor's speech kicks off the start of the 2017 legislative session Tuesday.

Daugaard is expected to discuss issues ranging from mentally ill people entering the criminal justice system to growing meth use and mounting drug arrests.

South Dakota Public Broadcasting will carry the 1 p.m. speech from the House of Representatives chamber live on TV, radio and the internet.

The session ends March 10, although lawmakers come back to consider any vetoes near the end of that month.

Republicans hold supermajorities in both the House and the Senate.

Online: Speech: <http://www.sd.net/home>

## Dakota Access protest policing costs exceed \$22M

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The cost of policing the Dakota Access pipeline protests in North Dakota has surpassed \$22 million — an amount that would fund the state Treasury Department for two decades and \$5 million more than the state set aside last year.

Protest-related funding decisions will be made by state lawmakers during the 2017 session. Leaders of the House and Senate appropriation committees say more funding will be approved, though the amount and method isn't known.

Rep. Jeff Delzer says state officials also still hope the federal government will help with funding.

"We're not happy at all that the federal government is not ponying up. This should be their responsibility," said Rep. Jeff Delzer, R-Underwood, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "But the fact of the matter is, until they pony up we have to cover those costs."

A large encampment in southern North Dakota swelled to thousands of opponents of the four-state, \$3.8 billion project over the summer, and then-Gov. Jack Dalrymple issued an emergency declaration in August to cover law enforcement expenses related to protests. There have been nearly 600 arrests in the region since August, but the encampment has shrunk since Dec. 4, when the Army said study is needed on alternative locations for the pipeline to cross a Missouri River reservoir, as well as study on the potential for a leak and tribal treaty rights.

The Standing Rock Sioux and its supporters believe the project, which is to carry North Dakota oil through South Dakota and Iowa to a shipping point in Illinois, threatens drinking water and Native American cultural sites, which Texas-based developer Energy Transfer Partners denies.

State-related enforcement costs have surpassed \$20 million, with agencies such as the Corrections Department and Transportation Department using money from their own budgets with the intent of repaying it later, according to Emergency Services spokeswoman Cecily Fong. Morton County, where most of the protest activity has taken place, has another \$2.5 million in costs not covered by the state, bringing the total cost to taxpayers to nearly \$22.5 million. Most of the money is going to pay personnel costs.

Fong said legislation to provide money for the continued law enforcement response might include a funding ceiling, but Sen. Ray Holmberg, R-Grand Forks, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he thinks that's unlikely.

"I don't think we will put an artificial cap on the protection of our citizens," he said.

Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

## Government ethics overhaul supporters rally outside Capitol

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Supporters of a voter-approved government ethics overhaul are urging state lawmakers not to repeal the initiative.

Roughly a dozen Initiated Measure 22 backers gathered Tuesday outside the state Capitol on the first day of the 2017 legislative session.

Supporter Mark Winegar says that the government should follow the will of the people.

The measure that passed in November instituted a public campaign finance system, tightened campaign finance and lobbying laws and created an ethics commission.

Doug Kronaizl is a spokesman for pro-Initiated Measure 22 group Represent South Dakota. He says that repealing the law would set a bad precedent.

The group is a local chapter of Represent.Us, a Massachusetts-based organization working to reduce the influence of money in politics that helped fund the South Dakota ballot measure campaign.

BC-SD-BKG--Girls's Basketball Polls, SD

## Girl's Basketball Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school girl's preseason poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking.<

Class AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP;Pvs
1. Harrisburg	(3)	5-1	34;3
2. Aberdeen Central	(4)	6-1	33;2
3. Sioux Falls Washington	(1)	5-2	27;1
4. Brandon Valley -	6-2	11;4	
5. Rapid City Central	-	4-1	10;5

Others receiving votes: Rapid City Stevens 2, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 1, Pierre 1, Sioux Falls Lincoln 1.<

Class A

Rank-School;FPV;Rcd	TP;Pvs
1. St. Thomas More (7)	7-0 37;1
2. Hamlin - 5-0	27;2
3. Lennox - 7-0	22;3
4. McCook Central-Montrose -	4-1 15;4
(tie) Little Wound (1)	10-0 15;5

Others receiving votes: Madison 3, Belle Fourche 1.<

Class B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd;TP;Pvs
1. Ethan (5)	6-0;	36;2
2. Sully Buttes (2)	6-1;	29;1
(tie)Sanborn Central-Woonsocket (1)	6-0;	29;3
4. Freeman -	6-0;	11;5

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5. Warner - 6-1;10;4  
Others receiving votes: De Smet 4, Hanson 1.<  
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## Boy's Basketball Polls By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school boy's poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking.

### Class AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs	
1. Sioux Falls Washington	(5)	5-2	33	2	
2. Sioux Falls O'Gorman	(1)	5-3	25	1	
3. Brandon Valley	-	6-1	24	3	
4. Rapid City Stevens	(1)	5-1	17	RV	
5. Sturgis	(1)	5-0	11	RV	

Others receiving votes: Huron 5, Aberdeen Central 2, Sioux Falls Lincoln 1, Brooking 1, Yankton 1.

### Class A

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs	
1. St. Thomas More	(2)	6-1	30	2	
2. Sioux Falls Christian	(5)	2-2	29	1	
3. Sioux Valley	-	9-1	19	3	
4. Vermillion	(1)	9-0	18	5	
5. Madison	-	6-1	6	RV	

Others receiving votes: Aberdeen Roncalli 5, Groton Area 5, Miller 2, Red Cloud 2, Flandreau 2, Dell Rapids 1, Stanley County 1.

### Class B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs	
1. Langford Area	(6)	8-0	36	1	
2. Bridgewater-Emery	(1)	7-0	31	3	
3. Warner	(1)	4-1	23	2	
5. Corsica-Stickney-		6-1	11	5	
4. Scotland	-	6-0	7	RV	

Sully Buttes 5, Wolsey-Wessington 4, Parker 2, Wall 1.

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## Families: Forgiving church shooter doesn't mean sparing life

By MEG KINNARD and JEFFREY COLLINS, Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Families of the nine people killed in a racist massacre at a South Carolina church have expressed a broad range of feelings when it comes to how the convicted killer should be punished.

Some think there is no justification for the death penalty, while others believe in the biblical Old Testament justice of an eye for an eye.

Dylann Roof will soon be off to federal death row, but the families he shattered when he entered Emanuel AME Church in Charleston and fired 77 shots at the end of Bible study get one last chance to confront him Wednesday as U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel verifies the jury's sentence at a hearing.



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It's the only chance for them to speak to Roof and the court directly, without having to answer specific questions.

The willingness to forgive dominated the news in the days after the June 17, 2015, shootings as victims' families and survivors offered Roof forgiveness at his bond hearing. But there are many like Melvin Graham who said forgiveness is still a work in progress and he will forever grieve the death of his sister Cynthia Hurd.

He told reporters he has struggled because he feels like it isn't quite right to see someone ordered to die, but he also knows Roof must be punished as severely as possible for what he did on earth.

"It's hard to say a person should live when nine others died," Graham said.

And while forgiveness has been offered from one side, Roof has shown no remorse for the slaughter during weeks in court. He had a final chance to ask the jury to spare his life Tuesday.

"I still feel like I had to do it," the 22-year-old avowed white supremacist told the jury instead.

Roof told FBI agents when they arrested him that he wanted the shootings to bring back segregation or perhaps start a race war. Instead, the slayings had a unifying effect as South Carolina removed the Confederate flag from its Statehouse for the first time in more than 50 years. Other states followed suit, taking down Confederate banners and monuments. Roof had posed with the flag in photos.

Roof specifically selected Emanuel AME Church, the South's oldest black church, to carry out the cold, calculated slaughter, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay Richardson said.

The gunman sat with the Bible study group for about 45 minutes. During the final prayer — when everyone's eyes were closed — he started firing. He stood over some of the fallen victims, shooting them again as they lay on the floor, Richardson said.

"They welcomed a 13th person that night ... with a kind word, a Bible, a handout and a chair," Richardson said during his closing argument. "He had come with a hateful heart and a Glock .45."

The jury convicted Roof last month of all 33 federal charges he faced, including hate crimes. He never explained his actions to jurors, saying only that "anyone who hates anything in their mind has a good reason for it."

Roof insisted he was not mentally ill and did not call any witnesses or present any evidence.

After he was sentenced, Roof asked a judge to appoint him new attorneys, but the judge said he was not inclined to do so because they had performed "admirably."

"We are sorry that, despite our best efforts, the legal proceedings have shed so little light on the reasons for this tragedy," the attorneys said in a veiled reference to the mental health issues they wanted to present.

Felicia Sanders survived the shooting. Roof spared her after hearing her pray loudly, saying she could go tell the rest of the world why he slaughtered black people in a church. She offered forgiveness at Roof's bond hearing, but has since not said if she wanted him to get life in prison without parole or death. Her aunt and son died.

Sanders husband, Tyrone, acknowledged his own struggle between earthly and eternal justice after Roof was found guilty of hate crimes and obstruction of religion charges in December.

"My thoughts were if I could get to him, what would I do," Tyrone Sanders said. "But the Lord kept me from charging."

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Associated Press writer Alex Sanz contributed to this report.

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Kinnard can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MegKinnardAP> . Read more of her work at <http://big-story.ap.org/content/meg-kinnard/> .

Follow Jeffrey Collins on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/JSCollinsAP> . His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/jeffrey-collins> .

## Convicted killer of 2 in Fort Worth set to die Wednesday

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP) — Lawyers for a Texas death row inmate who killed two men after one of them mocked him for falling for a fake drug deal are looking to the U.S. Supreme Court to keep him from becoming the first prisoner executed in the nation this year.

Christopher Wilkins, 48, is set for lethal injection Wednesday evening.

Wilkins explained to jurors at his capital murder trial in 2008 how and why he killed his friends in Fort Worth three years earlier, saying he didn't care if they sentenced him to death.

In an appeal pending before the high court, Wilkins' attorneys contended he had poor legal help at trial and during earlier appeals and that the courts improperly refused to authorize money for a more thorough investigation of those claims to support other appeals and a clemency petition.

State attorneys said courts have rejected similar appeals and that defense lawyers are simply employing delaying tactics.

Wilkins was released from prison in 2005 after serving time for a federal gun possession conviction. He drove a stolen truck to Fort Worth, where he befriended Willie Freeman, 40, and Mike Silva, 33.

Court records show Freeman and Silva duped Wilkins into paying \$20 for a piece of gravel that he thought was a rock of crack cocaine. Wilkins said he shot Freeman on Oct. 28, 2005, after Freeman laughed about the scam, then he shot Silva because he was there. Wilkins' fingerprints were found in Silva's wrecked SUV and a pentagram matching one of Wilkins' numerous tattoos had been carved into the hood.

Wilkins also testified that the day before the shootings, he shot and killed another man, Gilbert Vallejo, 47, outside a Fort Worth bar in a dispute over a pay phone, and about a week later used a stolen car to try to run down two people because he believed one of them had taken his sunglasses.

"I know they are bad decisions," Wilkins told jurors of his actions. "I make them anyway."

Wes Ball, one of Wilkins' trial lawyers, described him as "candid to a degree you don't see," and had hoped his appearance on the witness stand would have made jurors like him.

"It didn't work," Ball said.

While awaiting trial, authorities discovered he had swallowed a handcuff key and fashioned a knife to be used in an escape attempt.

"This guy is the classic outlaw in the model of Billy the Kid, an Old West-style outlaw," said Kevin Rousseau, the Tarrant County assistant district attorney who prosecuted Wilkins.

Thirty convicted killers were executed in the U.S. last year, the lowest number since the early 1980s. That tally includes seven executions in Texas — the fewest in the state since 1996. Wilkins is among nine Texas inmates already scheduled to die in the early months of 2017.

## VW emissions-cheating deal could put employees in hot seat

By TOM KRISHER and DAVID MCHUGH, AP Business Writers

DETROIT (AP) — The imminent criminal plea deal between Volkswagen and U.S. prosecutors in an emissions-cheating scandal could be bad news for one group of people: VW employees who had a role in the deceit or subsequent cover-up.

VW on Tuesday disclosed that it is in advanced talks to settle the criminal case by pleading guilty to unspecified charges and paying \$4.3 billion in criminal and civil fines, a sum far larger than any recent

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case involving the auto industry.

It's likely that VW will agree to cooperate in the probe, turning over documents and other information, said David M. Uhlmann, a former chief of the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section who is now a University of Michigan law professor.

"Companies often face the dilemma of whether to protect their employees or cooperate with government investigations, but almost always end up deciding in the company's best interest to share what information they have," Uhlmann said.

Although VW's communications with lawyers may be exempt, emails between employees and company executives should help prosecutors reach as far up VW's organizational chart as the scandal went, he said. Prosecutors now have three witnesses giving them information and have arrested Oliver Schmidt, VW's former head of U.S. environmental compliance who dealt with the EPA and California Air Resources Board after the scandal was uncovered.

The cooperation of witnesses and the company should help investigators determine if the scandal went beyond VW's engineers, Uhlmann said. But extraditing any executives from Germany would be a problem.

Volkswagen has admitted equipping diesel cars with sophisticated software that turned on emissions controls when engines were being tested by the Environmental Protection Agency, then turned them off during normal driving. The software, called a "defeat device" because it defeated the emissions controls, improved engine performance but spewed out harmful nitrogen oxide at up to 40 times above the legal limit.

Volkswagen has reached a \$15 billion civil settlement with environmental authorities and car owners in the U.S. under which it agreed to buy back up to 500,000 vehicles. The company also faces an investor lawsuit and criminal probe in Germany. In all, some 11 million vehicles worldwide were equipped with the software.

The criminal investigation likely will continue into the administration of President-elect Donald Trump and attorney general nominee Sen. Jeff Sessions. Uhlmann, who served under Republican and Democratic attorneys general, doesn't think the new administration will back off from the VW prosecution.

"All administrations want to be tough on crime, including corporate crime," he said. "I doubt the Trump administration will be any different."

A draft of the VW settlement with the government calls for the appointment of an independent monitor to oversee compliance and control measures for three years. The draft still must be approved by Volkswagen's boards and U.S. courts.

The scandal was revealed in September 2015, when West Virginia University tested on-road diesel emissions. The EPA issued a notice of violation, and VW apologized and brought in U.S. law firm Jones Day to investigate.

If finalized, a \$4.3 billion settlement would eclipse Toyota's \$1.2 billion penalty over unintended acceleration problems as well as General Motors' \$900 million payment to resolve a deadly ignition-switch scandal.

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McHugh reported from Frankfurt, Germany.

## Russia friend and sanctions foe, Tillerson gets his hearing

By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Friend of Russia and foe of sanctions in his corporate life, President-elect Donald Trump's pick for secretary of state, Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson, is an unorthodox choice for a Republican White House. He may feel perfectly at home in Trump's iconoclastic administration.

Likely to face pointed questions from both sides of the aisle at his Senate confirmation hearing Wednesday, Tillerson represents a break in a longstanding tradition of secretaries of state with extensive military, legislative, political or diplomatic experience. Yet his supporters, including former GOP grandees Condoleezza Rice and Robert Gates, point to the oil man's lengthy career as a senior executive in a mammoth multinational company as proof he has the management and negotiating skills to succeed as America's top diplomat.

Democrats and even traditional GOP hawks are expected to zero in on Tillerson's role in orchestrating business deals with Russia, which led to President Vladimir Putin awarding him the Order of Friendship in 2013. Exxon and its subsidiaries' activities in Iran and Iraq, and his environmental views are also likely to be covered, as are suspicions that Tillerson's focus will be driven by corporate interests at the expense of the nation's.

The severity of any challenge to Tillerson's nomination is unclear. Already, some leading Democrats who met privately with him have voiced relief at his views on Russia, climate change and trade, even if they appear not to mesh with those of the president-elect.

Russia is sure to be foremost on everyone's mind. With allegations of Russian interference in the presidential election roiling the nation, several lawmakers have spoken about scrutinizing his and Exxon's two-decade relationship with Putin and others in Moscow.

In prepared opening comments for his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Tillerson sought to allay fears about his ties to Russia, saying the former Cold War adversary "poses a danger" that must be taken seriously.

"We must also be clear-eyed about our relationship with Russia," he will say, according to a statement from the Trump transition. "Russia today poses a danger, but it is not unpredictable in advancing its own interests. It has invaded Ukraine, including the taking of Crimea, and supported Syrian forces that brutally violate the laws of war. Our NATO allies are right to be alarmed at a resurgent Russia."

At the same time, Tillerson plans to say that an absence of American leadership opened the door to Russia's increasing assertiveness, according to the prepared remarks. He will also call for an "open and frank dialogue" with Moscow and urge that Russia be held accountable for transgressions.

"Where cooperation with Russia based on common interests is possible, such as reducing the global threat of terrorism, we ought to explore these options," he will say. "Where important differences remain, we should be steadfast in defending the interests of America and her allies. Russia must know that we will be accountable to our commitments and those of our allies, and that Russia must be held to account for its actions."

Yet, Tillerson opposed sanctions championed by both Democrats and Republicans on Russia imposed after its annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014. The sanctions banned the transfer to Russia of advanced offshore and shale technology, and Exxon was ordered to stop drilling in the Kara Sea, leaving the site's potential riches untapped. Tillerson's main Russian business partner, Rosneft boss and close Putin confidant Igor Sechin, was added to a U.S. sanctions blacklist. Exxon ended up losing hundreds of millions of dollars.

"We do not support sanctions, generally, because we don't find them to be effective unless they are



very well implemented comprehensibly and that's a very hard thing to do," Tillerson said at Exxon's annual meeting in 2014.

That position is far from conventional wisdom in Washington, especially among members of Congress, but gained traction in some circles after the Obama administration conceded that more than a half-century of penalties on Cuba had failed to change Havana's policies.

Moscow, for its part, hasn't been swayed by the sanctions, refusing to yield Crimea or to drop its support for a low-level insurgency in eastern Ukraine. But the penalties have caused economic damage to Russia, largely because of the participation of European countries with which it has significant trade relationships.

Tillerson's responses on sanction matters will be closely scrutinized, particularly as they relate to Russia.

The nomination could hit a snag if Tillerson doesn't acknowledge that Russia interfered in the presidential election, Sen. Lindsey Graham said Tuesday.

"Hacking the one party is an attack against all parties," the South Carolina Republican told reporters. He said: "Bottom line is, if you don't want to do anything about what Russia did, if you don't believe they're a good candidate for additional sanctions, I think a lot of people are going to look at you as not having the judgment for the job."

Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's top Democrat, said he expects members to grill Tillerson about supporting more and tougher sanctions against Russia. Cardin is supporting such legislation.

"There's going to be a great deal of interest as to whether Mr. Tillerson understands that he is no longer going to be CEO of Exxon Mobil but that he's going to be secretary of state," Cardin said.

Progressive groups have their own agenda. They're seeking to rally opposition over Exxon's environmental record, deals with nations having poor human rights records and possible conflicts of interest. Exxon valued Tillerson's compensation in 2015 at \$27.3 million, most of it in stock, and he is set to receive a \$180 million retirement package from Exxon.

Tillerson, 64, has acknowledged the Earth's climate is changing, average temperature is rising and greenhouse gas emissions increasing. But he has said the subject remains a complex area of scientific study and Exxon in the past sought to undercut evidence of climate change even as its own scientists recognized the changes as early as the 1970s.

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Associated Press writer Richard Lardner contributed to this report.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

### 1. WHAT PRESIDENT-ELECT FACES FROM NEWS MEDIA

Trump is due to be queried about what role he believes Russia played in the election-year hacking of Democratic groups in his first news conference in six months, but now other unsubstantiated personal and financial allegations surfacing will very likely come up.

### 2. WHY TILLERSON IS UNORTHODOX CHOICE FOR TOP DIPLOMAT

The former Exxon Mobil CEO has been a friend of Russia and foe of sanctions in his corporate life.

### 3. BLACK LAWMAKERS TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ATTORNEY GENERAL PICK

New Jersey Democrat Cory Booker will take the rare step of testifying against a current Senate col-

league, Alabama Republican Jeff Sessions.

#### 4. 'YES WE DID'

Obama bids farewell to the nation in an emotional speech that seeks to comfort a country on edge over rapid economic changes, persistent security threats and the election of Trump.

#### 5. HOW FAMILIES OF CHARLESTON VICTIMS FEEL

Just because some of the kin of the nine people killed in a racist massacre in a church forgave Dylann Roof doesn't mean they think his life should be spared.

#### 6. FIERCE BATTLES LEAVE HOSPITAL IN MOSUL GUTTED

The complex was the scene of one of the most significant setbacks for Iraqi troops and was only retaken after a stepped-up campaign of U.S.-led coalition airstrikes.

#### 7. STUDY: SO-CALLED 'FERGUSON EFFECT' A REALITY

Three-quarters of police officers surveyed by Pew Research Center say they are hesitant to use force, even when appropriate, and are less willing to stop and question suspicious people.

#### 8. NORTH KOREA IS A BAD TRIP IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO GET HIGH

Stoners of the world: If you visit Pyongyang, leave your bongos at home, because claims that it's a pothead paradise are false.

#### 9. SO, YOU WANNA BE A ROCK STAR

Bon Jovi is holding a contest to choose bands or singers to open for their upcoming tour.

#### 10. ISRAEL BECOMING REAL-LIFE FIELD OF DREAMS

Quirky regulations for the upcoming World Baseball Classic will permit the Mideast country to pack its squad with American pro players of Jewish descent.

## Trump to face questions on Russia hacking, business ties

By **JULIE PACE, AP White House Correspondent**

NEW YORK (AP) — The last time Donald Trump held a news conference, he was plunging into a heated general election campaign with Hillary Clinton and suggested Russia could help dig up some of his rival's emails.

Nearly six months and a presidential campaign victory later, Trump will finally step before reporters again Wednesday to face questions about what role he believes Russia played in the election year hacking of Democratic groups — interference the intelligence community says was intended to help the Republican defeat Clinton. Trump has challenged that assessment and has yet to say whether a full briefing with intelligence officials last week did anything to sway him.

A U.S. official told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the intelligence officials informed Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about him. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the official was not allowed to publicly discuss the matter.

Shortly after news reports were published about the briefing, Trump tweeted: "FAKE NEWS - A TOTAL POLITICAL WITCH HUNT!"

A spokesman for President Vladimir Putin denied allegations Wednesday.

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed news reports as a "complete fabrication and utter nonsense." He insisted that the Kremlin "does not engage in collecting compromising material."

A U.S. official told The Associated Press on Tuesday that intelligence officials had informed Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about him.

At a late morning news conference in the Trump Tower lobby, the president-elect is also expected to face questions about how he plans to disentangle himself from his family-owned international real

estate development, property management and licensing business. Trump had originally planned to outline those steps at a mid-December news conference, but the event was delayed, in part because of the complexity of the matter.

Last week, Trump told The Associated Press that there was a "very simple solution" to his potential business conflicts. He's said he will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the Trump Organization, but has not made clear whether he will retain a financial interest in the company.

Trump has sporadically taken questions during the transition, popping out of the gold-plated elevators at his eponymous Manhattan skyscraper to address reporters for a few minutes or greeting the media on the driveway of his South Florida club. But those encounters have all been brief, leaving many details of the president-elect's policy positions unclear.

Trump has supplemented the short press sessions with a steady stream of 140-character tweets, weighing in on everything from the intelligence community's track record to actress Meryl Streep's critical remarks about him at the Golden Globes. The president-elect also used Twitter to stunningly suggest the U.S. should boost its nuclear capabilities, another one of the vague policy pronouncements that could come up Wednesday.

Less than two weeks from taking office, Trump is also confronting the reality of implementing his sweeping campaign promises, including building a wall along the nation's southern border and having Mexico foot the bill. Trump's team is considering relying on an existing law that authorizes fencing — and the U.S. taxpayer money to bankroll it — at the border. Trump still insists, however, that Mexico will eventually pay for any projects.

Trump and Republican lawmakers are also grappling with how to repeal and replace President Barack Obama's signature health care law, a long-sought GOP goal. Some Republicans have suggested delaying a replacement measure, though Trump told the New York Times Tuesday that he wants to take that step "very quickly or simultaneously" with the repeal.

The president-elect has not specified what he believes should be included in a new health care law.

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Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

## **Official: Trump briefed on potentially compromising report**

**By EILEEN SULLIVAN and DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top intelligence officials last week told President-elect Donald Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about him, a U.S. official says.

The briefing about the document was first reported by CNN. A summary of the allegations was separate from a classified assessment of Russia's suspected attempts to meddle in the U.S. presidential election. Trump and President Barack Obama were briefed on the intelligence community's findings last week.

Shortly after news reports were published about the briefing, Trump tweeted: "FAKE NEWS - A TOTAL POLITICAL WITCH HUNT!"

And in Moscow, a spokesman for President Vladimir Putin denied the report. Spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Wednesday dismissed it as a "complete fabrication and utter nonsense." He insisted that the Kremlin "does not engage in collecting compromising material."

A U.S. official told The Associated Press on Tuesday that intelligence officials had informed Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information

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about him. The Trump was expected to hold a previously scheduled news conference Wednesday to discuss his future plans regarding his role with the Trump Organization. The official who discussed the briefing by intelligence figures spoke on condition of anonymity because the official was not allowed to publicly discuss the matter.

The unsubstantiated dossier on Trump was compiled by a former Western intelligence operative as part of an opposition research project originally financed by a Republican client who opposed Trump, and later funded by Democrats, according to Mother Jones, which published an article about the report in October and said the operative had turned over the report to the FBI. The New York Times reported the operative had previously worked for British intelligence. The Associated Press has not been able to substantiate the information in the dossier, which misspelled the name of Russia's largest bank.

It's unclear why the intelligence officials decided to brief the president and Trump on the uncorroborated information at this time, but lawmakers and others have repeatedly noted that Russia collects intelligence on both Democrats and Republicans.

"The Russians also hacked systems associated with the Republicans. They just chose not to release that material yet," Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, the ranking Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee, said Tuesday. "There's nothing that prevents them from doing so at a time of their choosing in the future."

Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway said in an interview Tuesday on NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" that "nobody has sourced it. They're all unnamed, unspoken sources in the story." She said it may have originated with a Russian investigator or groups that wanted Hillary Clinton to win the White House.

The report had been circulating in Washington for months. In October, former Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid wrote the FBI asking the bureau to publicly disclose what it knew about the Trump campaign's ties to Russia. Reid was aware of the dossier before he wrote the letter, according to a person knowledgeable about the subject who spoke on condition of anonymity because this person was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter.

FBI Director James Comey refused earlier Tuesday to say whether the FBI was investigating any possible ties between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign, citing policy not to comment on what the FBI might or might not be doing.

Comey was pressed by Democrats on the committee about whether the FBI was conducting an investigation. There was no mention during the hearing about the summary of the dossier, which was attached to the classified hacking assessment.

"I would never comment on investigations — whether we have one or not — in an open forum like this so I can't answer one way or another," Comey told the panel during his first public appearance before Congress since the election. In late October, Comey angered Democrats when he announced 11 days before the election that the FBI was looking at more emails as part of its investigation of Hillary Clinton.

Oregon Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden said the American people had a right to know about whether there is an FBI investigation into the Trump campaign's ties with Russia.

An active FBI investigation of the next president for ties between his campaign and a nation accused of meddling in the presidential election could further stoke mistrust in the legitimacy of the democratic process. It could also put Trump's own FBI in the awkward position of examining the conduct of those closest to the commander-in-chief.

The FBI was among three U.S. intelligence agencies that collaborated on last week's report on Russia's election activity. It tied Russian President Vladimir Putin to the hacking of email accounts of the Democratic National Committee and individual Democrats like Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta. It said there was no evidence the Russians tampered with vote tallies; the agencies said they



couldn't assess if Russia succeeded in influencing Americans to vote for Trump.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., who opposed Trump in the GOP primary, said Russia's activity wasn't guided by its support for Trump, but rather "to influence and to potentially manipulate American public opinion for the purpose of discrediting individual political figures, sowing chaos and division in our politics, sowing doubts about the legitimacy of our elections."

Democrats at the committee hearing focused their toughest questions on Comey, who was widely criticized for breaking FBI policy in his decision to notify Congress about additional information that came up related to Clinton. He is in the fourth year of a 10-year term, meaning he is expected to stay on in the Trump administration.

Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., said Comey set a new standard by discussing the bureau's activity related to Clinton's private email server. That standard, she said, is the FBI discusses ongoing investigations when there is a "unique public interest in the transparency of that issue."

The intelligence agencies' findings on Russian hacking fit that standard, she argued.

"I'm not sure I can think of an issue of more serious public interest than this one," Harris said. "This committee needs to understand what the FBI does and does not know about campaign communications with Russia."

Sitting beside Comey, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said, "Fair point."

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Associated Press writer Kathleen Hennessey contributed to this report.

## **Black lawmakers to speak out against Sessions in hearing**

**By ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump's pick for attorney general, Sen. Jeff Sessions, used strong words in the first day of his Senate confirmation hearings to deny any hints of a racist past. On day two, a group of black lawmakers will speak out against his nomination — including New Jersey Democrat Cory Booker, who will take the rare step of testifying against a current Senate colleague.

Booker's testimony underscores Democratic unease with the Alabama Republican, who was rejected for a federal judgeship by the Senate Judiciary Committee three decades ago amid accusations of racial impropriety.

Sessions on Tuesday called those accusations "damnably false," denying that he had ever called the NAACP "un-American" and saying he had never harbored racial hostility. He said the allegations — which included that he had referred to a black attorney in his office as "boy" — are part of a false caricature.

"It wasn't accurate then," Sessions said. "It isn't accurate now."

Sessions has solid support from the Senate's Republican majority and from some Democrats in conservative-leaning states, and is expected to easily win confirmation. Still, he faces a challenge persuading skeptical Democrats that he'll be fair and committed to civil rights, a chief priority of the Justice Department during the Obama administration, as the country's top law enforcement official.

Republicans on the panel defended Sessions, with Texas Sen. Ted Cruz describing how Sessions helped secure convictions in a 1981 murder of a black teenager when he was a federal prosecutor. Two Ku Klux Klan members, Henry Hays and James Knowles, were arrested and convicted.

"I know we need to do better, we can never go back," Sessions said. "I am totally committed to maintaining the freedom and equality that this country has to provide to every citizen, I can assure you."

Booker calls his opposition "a call to conscience" and said he didn't make the decision to speak at the hearing lightly.

"The attorney general is responsible for ensuring the fair administration of justice, and based on his

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record, I lack confidence that Senator Sessions can honor this duty," Booker said.

Senate officials searched and could find no other case in the country's history when a sitting senator testified against a colleague picked for a Cabinet post.

Civil rights icon Rep. John Lewis, a Georgia Democrat, is also expected to testify against Sessions. Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Rep. Cedric Richmond, a Democrat from Louisiana, also will be appearing, as will David Cole, the legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Sessions also will have advocates in the hearing room Wednesday, including former Attorney General Michael Mukasey.

As Sessions was questioned Tuesday, protesters repeatedly interrupted the proceedings. Some loudly called Sessions a racist, and two were dressed as members of the Klu Klux Klan. They were quickly hustled out by police.

In his testimony, Sessions laid out a sharply conservative vision for the Justice Department he would oversee, pledging to crack down on illegal immigration, gun violence and the "scourge of radical Islamic terrorism." He vowed to stay independent from the White House and stand up to Trump when necessary.

He also distanced himself from some of Trump's public pronouncements.

Sessions said waterboarding, a now-banned interrogation technique for which Trump has at times expressed support, was "absolutely improper and illegal."

Though he said he would prosecute immigrants who repeatedly enter the country illegally and criticized as constitutionally "questionable" an executive action by President Barack Obama that shielded certain immigrants from deportation, he said he did "not support the idea that Muslims, as a religious group, should be denied admission to the United States."

Trump earlier in his campaign called for a temporary total ban on Muslims entering his country but has more recently proposed "extreme vetting."

And Sessions asserted that he could confront Trump if needed, saying an attorney general must be prepared to resign if asked to do something "unlawful or unconstitutional."

He also promised to recuse himself from any investigation there might be into Democrat Hillary Clinton, whom he had criticized during the presidential campaign. Trump said during the campaign he would name a special prosecutor to look into Clinton's use of a private email server, but he has since backed away. The FBI and Justice Department declined to bring charges last year.

Sessions was first elected to the Senate in 1996 and before that served as Alabama attorney general and a U.S. attorney.

He's been a reliably conservative voice in Congress, supporting government surveillance programs, objecting to the proposed closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility — a sharp departure from Obama's Justice Department — and opposing a 2013 bipartisan immigration bill that included a pathway to citizenship for the estimated 11 million immigrants living in the U.S. illegally.

## United Arab Emirates says 5 diplomats killed in Afghan blast

By JON GAMBRELL and MIRWAIS KHAN, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United Arab Emirates said on Wednesday that five of its diplomats were killed in a bombing in southern Afghanistan the day before, the deadliest attack to ever target the young nation's diplomatic corps.

The federation of seven sheikhdoms, founded in 1971 on the Arabian Peninsula, said it would immediately fly the nation's flag at half-staff for three days in honor of the dead from the attack Tuesday in

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Kandahar, which killed at least 11 people.

Meanwhile, the Taliban denied planting the bomb in the Kandahar attack, which also wounded the UAE ambassador to Afghanistan.

Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the UAE prime minister and vice president, said on Twitter that "there is no human, moral or religious justification for the bombing and killing of people trying to help" others.

Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, said the attack wouldn't stop UAE's humanitarian efforts. "We will not be discouraged by despicable terrorist acts carried out by the forces of evil and darkness," he said on Twitter.

The Kandahar attack targeted a guesthouse of provincial Gov. Homayun Azizi, who was also wounded in the assault, along with UAE Ambassador Juma Mohammed Abdullah al-Kaabi. The attack killed 11 people and wounded 18, said Gen. Abdul Razeq, Kandahar's police chief who was praying nearby at the time of the blast.

Razeq said investigators believe someone hid the bomb inside a sofa at the guesthouse. He said an ongoing construction project at the guesthouse may have allowed militants to plant the bomb.

"Right now we cannot say anything that who is behind this attack," he told The Associated Press, while adding that several suspects had been arrested.

The attack inside the heavily guarded compound represents a major breach of security, even in Afghanistan, a country long torn by war. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Wednesday condemned the attack and ordered a probe into the incident.

The Taliban claimed attacks earlier on Tuesday in Kabul that killed at least 38 people and wounded dozens. But on Wednesday, they issued a short statement blaming an "internal local rivalry" for the Kandahar attack.

The Taliban have denied some attacks in the past that diplomats and security forces later attributed to the group.

The UAE's state-run WAM news agency identified the Emirati dead as Mohammed Ali Zainal al-Bastaki, Abdullah Mohammed Essa Obaid al-Kaabi, Ahmed Rashid Salim Ali al-Mazroui, Ahmed Abdul Rahman Ahmad al-Tunaiji, and Abdul Hamid Sultan Abdullah Ibrahim al-Hammadi.

On the Afghan side, authorities said the dead included two lawmakers, a deputy governor from Kandahar and an Afghan diplomat stationed at its embassy in Washington.

An earlier UAE Foreign Ministry statement said the Emirati diplomats were in Kandahar as part of a humanitarian mission. Authorities said that included laying the foundation stone for the UAE-funded Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan orphanage and to sign an agreement with Kardan University for the UAE to fund scholarships there.

Emirati combat troops had been sent to Afghanistan after the 2001 U.S.-led invasion that toppled the Taliban. The UAE had troops for years as part of the NATO-led mission, and the Gulf federation also trained members of the Afghan armed forces, often winning the support of locals for praying with them in local mosques and respecting their traditions as fellow Muslims.

Multiple daily commercial flights link the countries, with Dubai serving as an important commercial hub for Afghan businessmen. Over the years, Taliban and Afghan officials also have met in Dubai to try to start peace talks.

Although the UAE is only 45 years old, Emirati diplomats have come under attack in the past, felled by assassins' bullets.

Saif Ghubash, the UAE's first minister of state for foreign affairs, died after being shot in an October

1977 attack at Abu Dhabi International Airport, an attack that apparently targeted Syrian Foreign Minister Abdul-Halim Khaddam. Khaddam later blamed the attack on Iraq.

In 1984, the UAE's ambassador to France was assassinated by a gunman who shot him in the head outside his Paris home. A diplomatic club was named in honor of the slain envoy, Khalifa al-Mubarak, in the Emirati capital Abu Dhabi in 2015.

Another Emirati diplomat was wounded in a shooting in Rome in 1984. Reports at the time linked those two attacks to the Arab Revolutionary Brigades, a Palestinian militant group.

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Khan reported from Kandahar, Afghanistan. Associated Press writers Rahim Faiez and Amir Shah in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Adam Schreck in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

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Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/jongambrellap](http://www.twitter.com/jongambrellap) . His work can be found at <http://apne.ws/2galNpz> .

## **'Yes we did' \_ Obama bids farewell in nostalgic last speech**

**By JOSH LEDERMAN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press**

CHICAGO (AP) — President Barack Obama has bid farewell to the nation in an emotional speech that sought to comfort a country on edge over rapid economic changes, persistent security threats and the election of Donald Trump.

Forceful at times and tearful at others, Obama's valedictory speech in his hometown of Chicago was a public meditation on the many trials the U.S. faces as Obama takes his exit. For the challenges that are new, Obama offered his vision for how to surmount them, and for the persistent problems he was unable to overcome, he offered optimism that others, eventually, will.

"Yes, our progress has been uneven," he told a crowd of some 18,000. "The work of democracy has always been hard, contentious and sometimes bloody. For every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back."

Yet Obama argued his faith in America had only been strengthened by what he's witnessed the past eight years, and he declared: "The future should be ours."

Brushing away tears with a handkerchief, Obama paid tribute to the sacrifices made by his wife — and by his daughters, who were young girls when they entered the big white home on Pennsylvania Avenue and leave as young women. He praised first lady Michelle Obama for taking on her role "with grace and grit and style and good humor" and for making the White House "a place that belongs to everybody."

Soon Obama and his family will exit the national stage, to be replaced by Trump, a man Obama had stridently argued poses a dire threat to the nation's future. His near-apocalyptic warnings throughout the campaign have cast a continuing shadow over his post-election efforts to reassure Americans anxious about the future.

Indeed, much of what Obama accomplished during his two terms — from health care overhaul and environmental regulations to his nuclear deal with Iran — could potentially be upended by Trump. So even as Obama seeks to define what his presidency meant for America, his legacy remains in question.

Even as Obama said farewell — in a televised speech of just under an hour — the anxiety felt by many Americans about the future was palpable, and not only in the Chicago convention center where he stood in front of a giant presidential seal. The political world was reeling from new revelations about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about Trump.

Obama made only passing reference to the next president. When he noted he would soon be replaced



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by the Republican, his crowd began to boo.

"No, no, no, no, no," Obama said. One of the nation's great strengths, he said, "is the peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next."

Earlier, as the crowd of thousands chanted, "Four more years," he simply smiled and said, "I can't do that."

Still, Obama offered what seemed like a point-by-point rebuttal of Trump's vision for America.

He pushed back on the isolationist sentiments inherent in Trump's trade policies. He decried discrimination against Muslim Americans and lamented politicians who question climate change. And he warned about the pernicious threat to U.S. democracy posed by purposely deceptive fake "news" and a growing tendency of Americans to listen only to information that confirms what they already believe.

Get out of your "bubbles," said the politician who rose to a prominence with a message of unity, challenging divisions of red states and blue states. Obama also revived a call to activism that marked his first presidential campaign, telling Americans to stay engaged in politics.

"If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the internet," Obama said pointedly, "try to talk with one in real life."

With Democrats still straining to make sense of their devastating election losses, Obama tried to offer a path forward. He called for empathy for the struggles of all Americans — from minorities, refugees and transgender people to middle-aged white men whose sense of economic security has been upended in recent years.

Paying tribute to his place as America's first black president, Obama acknowledged there were hopes after his 2008 election for a post-racial America.

"Such a vision, however well-intended, was never realistic," Obama said, though he insisted race relations are better now than a few decades ago.

The former community organizer closed out his speech by reviving his campaign chant, "Yes we can." To that, he added for the first time, "Yes we did."

He staunchly defended the power of activists to make a difference — the driving factor behind Obama's optimism in the face of so much anxiety, he said. Though the coalition of young Americans and minorities who twice got Obama elected wasn't enough to elect Democrat Hillary Clinton to replace him, Obama suggested their day was still ahead.

"You'll soon outnumber any of us, and I believe as a result that the future is in good hands," he said.

Steeped in nostalgia, Obama's return to Chicago was less a triumphant homecoming than a bitter-sweet reunion bringing together loyalists and staffers, many of whom have long since left Obama's service, moved on to new careers and started families. They came from across the country — some on Air Force One, others on their own — to be present for the last major moment of Obama's presidency.

Unexpectedly absent was Obama's younger daughter, Sasha, who had been expected to join sister Malia at the speech. The White House said Sasha stayed in Washington due to a school exam Wednesday morning.

After returning to Washington, Obama will have less than two weeks before he accompanies Trump in the presidential limousine to the Capitol for the new president's swearing-in. After nearly a decade in the spotlight, Obama will become a private citizen, an elder statesman at 55. He plans to take some time off, write a book — and immerse himself in a Democratic redistricting campaign.

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Lederman reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Ken Thomas and Calvin Woodward in Washington contributed to this report.

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Reach Josh Lederman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joshledermanAP> and Darlene Superville at <http://twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

## Another 90-game streak just a number for UConn's Auriemma

By DOUG FEINBERG, AP Basketball Writer

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — It's never about streaks with Geno Auriemma. He's been there and done that.

When you already own the longest winning streak in NCAA college basketball history, all you're doing is changing the number.

That explains his seeming nonchalance about UConn's latest record run. The Huskies have won 90 straight over the past three years to match the mark they set from 2008-10. The latest was No. 20 South Florida on Tuesday night.

"Some things you just can't really explain, you just have to enjoy it," Auriemma said after the 102-37 victory. "We don't set out to do these kinds of things. We don't set out to set records, break records or keep track of records. We set out to play as hard as we can, play with as much energy as we can. Forget the 90 wins, tonight was a perfect example of what Connecticut basketball can accomplish."

And how the Huskies play is what matters most to the Hall of Fame coach. It's what he's cared about more than anything during his 30-plus years of coaching, and that will never change.

"He really is a perfectionist," assistant coach Shea Ralph said. "You see it in practice. It would be easy for him to let them coast and just play off the talent that they have, but he never has and never will do that. He is constantly motivating them to get better. When he says he doesn't really care about the streaks, it's true. It's never talked about in practice or in the office."

Still, he couldn't have been prouder after the team's record-tying win.

"It really was more about the way the game went as opposed to whatever numbers, whatever's attached to it," Auriemma said. "The way the first 20 minutes were played. We just played like a team that was tonight on a mission to do something that was really important to them."

"I always say it's important to play great, hard and with a lot of energy every single night. That's as good a 20 minutes of basketball as any of them have been a part of."

Auriemma has been seen both streaks. In fact the Huskies have the three longest winning streaks in women's basketball history, including a 72-game run in the early 2000s. After Tuesday's win, Auriemma took a minute to compare the current run to the one they matched from a few years ago.

When the Huskies approached 90 wins last time, there was so much hoopla about tying the vaunted UCLA men's record. This time around, that isn't happening. Auriemma had a simple reason why.

"It's male and female," he said. "It was all the people coming out of the woodwork to complain we're not UCLA and you're not John Wooden. We don't have any UCLA stuff up here and I don't have anything in common with coach Wooden. I never said that (I did). It became, 'How dare you compare those two.' Everyone jumped on this bandwagon. Now people can ignore it since it's us breaking a UConn record."

Auriemma laughed when he was asked whether people will stop talking about the streak after the Huskies potentially win their 91st straight game on Saturday at SMU.

"Forget 91, I had someone ask me before the game about 100 consecutive wins," he said. "I almost hope we don't get to that point so people will stop talking about it."

That's not likely to happen. The Huskies haven't lost an American Athletic Conference game since joining the league in 2013-14 season.

Four members of the current team — Saniya Chong, Gabby Williams, Kia Nurse and Tierney Lawlor — have been part of the program for all 90 wins. They don't want to see it end anytime soon.

"It's just pretty cool that it's still going," Williams said. "Because everyone is like, it's not going to end while we're here. That's kind of the mentality."

Follow Doug on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/dougfeinberg>

## **Pew survey: Officers more reluctant to use force, make stops**

**By LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press**

ATLANTA (AP) — The so-called "Ferguson effect" — officers backing off of policing out of fear that their actions will be questioned after the fact — has been talked about but never really quantified. A new study suggests the effect is a reality, with three-quarters of officers surveyed saying they are hesitant to use force, even when appropriate, and are less willing to stop and question suspicious people.

The nonpartisan Pew Research Center questioned at least 8,000 officers from departments with at least 100 officers between May 19 and Aug. 14 last year — most of it ahead of the fatal shootings of five officers in Dallas and three officers in Baton Rouge.

What it found was a significant fear among police about their safety and about carrying out some of the everyday acts of policing.

It also shows a stark difference in how white and black officers view the protests that have taken place after some of the high-profile shootings of black suspects in the past several years, with black officers believing the protests are genuine acts of civil disobedience designed to hold police accountable, while white officers are more skeptical of the protesters' motives.

"White officers and black officers have very different views about where we are as a country in terms of achieving equal rights," said Kim Parker, the director of social trends research for the Pew Research Center.

Some of the key findings:

— 86 percent of officers said that fatal encounters between blacks and police have made policing more difficult

— 93 percent said they're more concerned about safety

— 76 percent said they're more reluctant to use force when appropriate

— 75 percent said interactions between police and blacks have become more tense

— 72 percent said they or their colleagues are more reluctant to stop and question people who seem suspicious

In 2014, a white officer in Ferguson, Missouri shot and killed black teen Michael Brown, setting off a movement drawing greater scrutiny of police use of force, particularly against black citizens. In the years since, other fatal encounters with police in such cities as Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Milwaukee, Chicago and New York have put officers under the microscope, especially as video has captured more of these events.

There has been a concern, largely shared in anecdotes, of officers holding back on stopping suspicious people or other policing out of concern that they'd be cast as racist. But the Pew survey provides the first national evidence that those concerns may be having a real impact on how officers do their jobs.

"Officers are concerned about being the next viral video and so that influences what they do and how they do it and how they think about it," said Darrel Stephens, executive director of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. He added that he doesn't believe it's rampant or that officers are turning a blind eye, "but I still have to believe it may be in a marginal-call situation where there's a reasonable suspicion on the bubble ... that those are the ones they pass up."

The survey also suggested a divide between police and the communities they serve on some social issues of the day.

For example, two-thirds of all officers say deadly encounters with blacks are isolated incidents, but 60 percent of the general public said they believe they are signs of a broader problem between police and blacks.

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A link to the report: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/01/11/behind-the-badge>

Lisa Marie Pane can be followed on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/lisamariepane> .

## Trump news spreads faster than reporters can verify

By DAVID BAUDER, Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — The spread of a report about supposed damaging information about President-elect Donald Trump collected by Russia became a public test of journalistic standards Tuesday but burst into public consciousness even as those standards were being debated.

Hours after news reports circulated that Trump had been briefed by intelligence officials about the existence of the dossier on him, BuzzFeed News published a summary of those allegations. It published despite its editor noting that there is reason to doubt the truth of them.

Most news organizations, including The Associated Press, held back on the specific allegations because they had not been substantiated. "Even Donald Trump deserves journalistic fairness," tweeted David Corn, Washington bureau chief of Mother Jones.

Yet the news spread so quickly that by Tuesday night, one specific, salacious allegation was a top trending topic on Twitter.

Ben Smith, editor of BuzzFeed, explained in a note to his staff that was published on Twitter that the news organization published the information so Americans could make up their own minds about allegations that have been circulating at the highest levels of the United States government.

"Our presumption is to be transparent in our journalism and to share what we have with our readers," Smith wrote. "We have always erred on the side of publishing."

He noted the doubt about the allegations, and said BuzzFeed had tried and will continue trying to verify them.

"People of good will may disagree with our choice," he wrote. "But publishing this dossier reflects how we see the job of reporters in 2017."

It's the latest, and a vitally important, example of how the internet has changed the flow of news and information, said veteran media ethicist Bob Steele.

"It's a very, very difficult time for editors of mainstream news organizations," he said.

BuzzFeed is taking a big risk by publishing the information, he said. It's important if such allegations are spread that organizations are clear about what has or hasn't been substantiated, and whether an effort is being made to do so, he said.

The president-elect's reaction on Twitter: "Fake news! A total political witch hunt!"

Kelly McBride, a media ethicist for the Poynter Institute, compared BuzzFeed's action to document dumps by websites like WikiLeaks.

Smith "says that this is the job of reporters in 2017," McBride said. "What I want to ask back is, 'Where's the reporting?' The job of reporting is to actually report. They didn't put anything out there about what they're doing to verify or debunk the claims or even if they're going to verify or debunk the claims."

It doesn't mean journalists should be above asking the public for help in getting to the bottom of stories; one example is stories about sexual abuse by religious officials, she said.



"I'm struggling with whether this is an act of journalism," she said. "I don't think it's journalism. It's something else."

## **Dangerous blizzard, flooding as new storm hits California**

**By ERIC RISBERG and JANIE HAR, Associated Press**

GUERNEVILLE, Calif. (AP) — About 2,000 people in a rural California community near Sacramento were asked to leave their homes Tuesday as a river swollen by days of heavy rain threatened to flood, while north of San Francisco thousands more were urged to seek higher ground.

Emergency crews and officials worked through Tuesday to try to bolster the levee in Sacramento County along the Cosumnes River, before deciding to ask 2,000 residents of Wilton to voluntarily evacuate before dark.

Sacramento County emergency services official Mary Jo Flynn said water was expected to spill over the levee before midnight, flooding low-lying roads and buildings with up to 1 foot of water.

An evacuation center will be opened Tuesday evening in neighboring Elk Grove but some residents said they plan to stay put.

"We have no concerns," Lill Nichols, who with her husband runs a horse farm near the river, told the Sacramento Bee. "We have animals and can't evacuate anyway."

In the city of Sacramento, workers wrenched open more than a half-dozen century-old spill gates on the state's biggest river, the Sacramento, to ease pressure on the swollen river and on levees there. California is in a six-year drought, and the last time state workers needed to open the gates was December 2005.

North of San Francisco, people were evacuated from businesses and homes in downtown San Anselmo after a rain-swollen creek broke its banks. The Corte Madera Creek was flowing 1 foot over flood stage Tuesday evening, the Marin County Sheriff's Office said.

Some 3,000 Sonoma County residents were under an evacuation advisory as the Russian River rose again under pounding rain. Officials red-tagged seven homes, ordering residents out, when a rain-soaked embankment came crashing down.

Johna Peterson was one of few residents who ventured out in the remote Sonoma County town of Monte Rio. Walking on the bridge across the Russian River, Peterson worried about what the coming hours and days would bring.

"I think it's going to go higher," Peterson said. "There's nowhere for this water to go."

In nearby Forestville, Kathy Granados huddled with two other people under an awning at the River Bend RV Park, watching the downpour.

"We're waiting it out," she said. "Yesterday the water dropped, but it's going to get higher. We're just sitting here. We have no electricity, no heat."

Tuesday's storm was the latest of back-to-back systems — buffered by a brief respite Monday — that have brought the heaviest rain in a decade to parts of Northern California and Nevada.

The storms are part of an "atmospheric river" weather phenomenon that draws precipitation from the Pacific Ocean as far west as Hawaii. Its impact can be catastrophic.

A blizzard warning was in effect for parts of the Sierra Nevada, the first issued in the past nine years, said Scott McGuire, a forecaster for the National Weather Service based in Reno, Nevada.

"This is definitely a dangerous, life-threatening situation going on up there," he said. "People should not attempt to travel at all."

Forecasters warned of up to 10 feet of snow in the highest mountains, with up to 7 feet of snow around the resorts of Lake Tahoe, high risk of avalanches, and wind gusts to 60 mph. The Sierra ridge

had gusts of more than 100 mph.

Many ski resorts shut down Tuesday because of the storm. A number of main roads in the Sierra were closed, including Interstate 80, or required chains.

Nearly 3 feet of new snow already was reported Tuesday morning at the top of the Mount Rose ski resort between Reno and Lake Tahoe. A series of storms already has added 33 billion gallons of water to Lake Tahoe since Jan. 1.

Har reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Ellen Knickmeyer, Olga R. Rodriguez, and Jocelyn Gecker in San Francisco, and Scott Sonner in Reno also contributed to this report.

## **I'd stand up to Trump as AG, Sessions tells senators**

**By ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions fervently rejected “damnably false” accusations of past racist comments Tuesday as he challenged Democratic concerns about the civil rights commitment he would bring as Donald Trump’s attorney general. He vowed at his confirmation hearing to stay independent from the White House and stand up to Trump when necessary.

Sessions laid out a sharply conservative vision for the Justice Department he would oversee, pledging to crack down on illegal immigration, gun violence and the “scourge of radical Islamic terrorism” and expressing support for the continued use of the Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba.

But he also distanced himself from some of Trump’s public pronouncements.

He said waterboarding, a now-banned harsh interrogation technique that Trump has at times expressed support for, was “absolutely improper and illegal.”

Though he said he would prosecute immigrants who repeatedly enter the country illegally and criticized as constitutionally “questionable” an executive action by President Barack Obama that shielded certain immigrants from deportation, he said he did “not support the idea that Muslims, as a religious group, should be denied admission to the United States.”

Trump earlier in his campaign called for a temporary total ban on Muslims entering his country but has more recently proposed “extreme vetting.”

Sessions asserted that he could confront Trump if needed, saying an attorney general must be prepared to resign if asked to do something “unlawful or unconstitutional.”

Nothing new came out of the hearing that seemed likely to threaten Sessions’ confirmation by the Republican Senate.

Yet as he outlined his priorities, his past — including a 1986 judicial nomination that failed amid allegations that he’d made racially charged comments — hovered over the proceedings. Protesters calling Sessions a racist repeatedly interrupted and were hustled out by Capitol police.

Sessions vigorously denied that he had ever called the NAACP “un-American.” He said he had never harbored racial animus, calling the allegations — which included that he had referred to a black attorney in his office as “boy” — part of a false caricature.

“It wasn’t accurate then,” Sessions said. “It isn’t accurate now.”

He said he “understands the history of civil rights and the horrendous impact that relentless and systemic discrimination and the denial of voting rights has had on our African-American brothers and sisters. I have witnessed it.”

“I know we need to do better. We can never go back,” Sessions said. “I am totally committed to maintaining the freedom and equality that this country has to provide to every citizen.”

Politics got its share of attention, too, with Sessions promising to recuse himself from any investigation

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there might be into Democrat Hillary Clinton, whom he had criticized during the presidential campaign.

Trump said during the campaign he would name a special prosecutor to look into Clinton's use of a private email server, but he has since backed away. The FBI and Justice Department declined to bring charges last year.

Sessions, known as one of the most staunchly conservative members of the Senate, smiled amiably as he began his presentation, taking time to introduce his grandchildren, joking about Alabama football and making self-deprecating remarks about his strong Southern accent.

He has solid support from the Senate's Republican majority and from some Democrats in conservative-leaning states.

But he faces a challenge persuading skeptical Democrats that he'll be fair and committed to civil rights, a chief priority of the Justice Department during the Obama administration, as the country's top law enforcement official.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., asked whether he could be trusted to enforce the laws he has voted against, including expanded hate crime protections. He said he could, noting that he accepted the *Roe v. Wade* opinion on abortion as the law of the land even though he personally opposed it.

Feinstein said, "There is so much fear in this country. I see it, I hear it — particularly in the African-American community, from preachers, from politicians, from everyday Americans."

If confirmed, Sessions would succeed Attorney General Loretta Lynch and would be in a position to reshape Justice Department priorities not only in civil rights but also environmental enforcement, criminal justice and national security.

He said he supported continued use of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility for terror suspects, a sharp departure from an Obama administration that has supported prosecuting militants in American courts.

And he hinted he'd be less eager than Obama's Justice Department to prod city police departments into court-enforceable improvement plans, known as consent decrees, to resolve allegations of pervasive civil rights violations. He said he did not consider it fair to criticize an entire department for what might be the actions of just a few.

"We need to be sure that when we criticize law officers, it is narrowly focused on the right basis for criticism," he said, adding that "to smear whole departments places those officers at greater risk."

Sessions was first elected to the Senate in 1996 and before that served as Alabama attorney general and a U.S. attorney.

He's been a reliably conservative voice in Congress, supporting government surveillance programs and opposing a 2013 bipartisan immigration bill that included a pathway to citizenship for the estimated 11 million immigrants living in the U.S. illegally.

In a dramatic turn, Senate colleague Cory Booker of New Jersey — one of three black senators — is to testify against Sessions on Wednesday. Booker's office says that will be an unprecedented instance of a senator testifying against a colleague seeking a Cabinet post.

In a statement, Booker accused Sessions of having a "concerning" record on civil rights and criminal justice reform.

## Official: Trump briefed on potentially compromising report

By EILEEN SULLIVAN and DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top intelligence officials last week told President-elect Donald Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about him, a

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U.S. official said Tuesday.

The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the official was not allowed to publicly discuss the matter.

The briefing about the document was first reported by CNN. A summary of the allegations was separate from a classified assessment of Russia's attempts to meddle in the U.S. presidential election. Trump and President Barack Obama were briefed on the intelligence community's findings last week.

Shortly after news reports were published about the briefing, Trump tweeted: "FAKE NEWS - A TOTAL POLITICAL WITCH HUNT!"

Trump was expected to hold a previously scheduled news conference Wednesday to discuss his future plans regarding his role with the Trump Organization.

The unsubstantiated dossier on Trump was compiled by a former Western intelligence operative as part of an opposition research project originally financed by a Republican client who opposed Trump, and later funded by Democrats, according to Mother Jones, which published an article about the report in October and said the operative had turned over the report to the FBI. The New York Times reported the operative had previously worked for British intelligence. The Associated Press has not been able to substantiate the information in the dossier, which misspelled the name of Russia's largest bank.

It's unclear why the intelligence officials decided to brief the president and Trump on the uncorroborated information at this time, but lawmakers and others have repeatedly noted that Russia collects intelligence on both Democrats and Republicans.

"The Russians also hacked systems associated with the Republicans. They just chose not to release that material yet," Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, the ranking Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee, said Tuesday. "There's nothing that prevents them from doing so at a time of their choosing in the future."

Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway said in an interview Tuesday on NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" that "nobody has sourced it. They're all unnamed, unspoken sources in the story." She said it may have originated with a Russian investigator or groups that wanted Hillary Clinton to win the White House.

The report had been circulating in Washington for months. In October, former Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid wrote the FBI asking the bureau to publicly disclose what it knew about the Trump campaign's ties to Russia. Reid was aware of the dossier before he wrote the letter, according to a person knowledgeable about the subject who spoke on condition of anonymity because this person was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter.

FBI Director James Comey refused earlier Tuesday to say whether the FBI was investigating any possible ties between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign, citing policy not to comment on what the FBI might or might not be doing.

Comey was pressed by Democrats on the committee about whether the FBI was conducting an investigation. There was no mention during the hearing about the summary of the dossier, which was attached to the classified hacking assessment.

"I would never comment on investigations — whether we have one or not — in an open forum like this so I can't answer one way or another," Comey told the panel during his first public appearance before Congress since the election. In late October, Comey angered Democrats when he announced 11 days before the election that the FBI was looking at more emails as part of its investigation of Hillary Clinton.

Oregon Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden said the American people had a right to know about whether there is an FBI investigation into the Trump campaign's ties with Russia.

An active FBI investigation of the next president for ties between his campaign and a nation accused of meddling in the presidential election could further stoke mistrust in the legitimacy of the democratic process. It could also put Trump's own FBI in the awkward position of examining the conduct of those



closest to the commander-in-chief.

The FBI was among three U.S. intelligence agencies that collaborated on last week's report on Russia's election activity. It tied Russian President Vladimir Putin to the hacking of email accounts of the Democratic National Committee and individual Democrats like Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta. It said there was no evidence the Russians tampered with vote tallies; the agencies said they couldn't assess if Russia succeeded in influencing Americans to vote for Trump.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., who opposed Trump in the GOP primary, said Russia's activity wasn't guided by its support for Trump, but rather "to influence and to potentially manipulate American public opinion for the purpose of discrediting individual political figures, sowing chaos and division in our politics, sowing doubts about the legitimacy of our elections."

Democrats at the committee hearing focused their toughest questions on Comey, who was widely criticized for breaking FBI policy in his decision to notify Congress about additional information that came up related to Clinton. He is in the fourth year of a 10-year term, meaning he is expected to stay on in the Trump administration.

Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., said Comey set a new standard by discussing the bureau's activity related to Clinton's private email server. That standard, she said, is the FBI discusses ongoing investigations when there is a "unique public interest in the transparency of that issue."

The intelligence agencies' findings on Russian hacking fit that standard, she argued.

"I'm not sure I can think of an issue of more serious public interest than this one," Harris said. "This committee needs to understand what the FBI does and does not know about campaign communications with Russia."

Sitting beside Comey, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said, "Fair point."

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Associated Press writer Kathleen Hennessey contributed to this report.

## **The Latest: Obama says Biden was his 1st, best choice**

CHICAGO (AP) — The Latest on President Barack Obama's farewell speech (all times CST):  
8:55 p.m.

President Barack Obama says choosing Joe Biden to be his vice president was the first and best choice he made.

He says Biden — "the scrappy kid from Scranton who became Delaware's favorite son" — has not only been a great vice president during the past eight years, but he also was an unexpected gift. Obama says that in Biden, he gained a brother.

Obama says he loves Biden and his wife, Jill, like family. He says their friendship has been one of the "great joys" for the Obama family.

The Bidens were in the audience at Chicago's McCormick Place convention center for Obama's farewell address.

Obama and Biden embraced onstage after the speech.

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8:50 p.m.

President Barack Obama says the nation's democracy needs more citizen involvement.

Obama says in his farewell speech in Chicago that "if you're tired of arguing with strangers on the internet, trying talking with one of them in real life."

He's encouraging citizens who are disappointed by their elected officials to "grab a clipboard, get

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some signatures" and run for office.

Obama is offering this advice: "Show up. Dive in. Stay at it. Sometimes you'll win. Sometimes you'll lose."

He says more often than not "your faith in America" will be confirmed.

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8:45 p.m.

President Barack Obama is thanking his wife, Michelle, and daughters Malia and Sasha for sacrificing for his political dreams.

He's noting in his farewell address that his partner for the past 25 years took on a role she didn't want and made it her own with "grace and grit and style and good humor." He says the first lady is a role model who turned the White House into a place that belongs to everybody.

Obama tells his wife that she has made him and the country proud. Obama paused for a few seconds and pressed his lips together to regain his composure while thanking the first lady.

Only 18-year-old Malia traveled to Chicago for the speech, but Obama says both daughters "wore the burden of years in the spotlight so easily."

He says that of everything he's done in life he's most proud to be their dad.

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8:40 p.m.

President Barack Obama says in his farewell address that protecting the nation's way of life is the job of citizens as well as the military.

Obama says in Chicago that "democracy can buckle when we give in to fear."

He is also making a reference to President-elect Donald Trump's campaign calls for a temporary ban on Muslim immigration to the United States.

Obama says he rejects discrimination against Muslim Americans, and he is drawing cheers for saying they are "just as patriotic as we are."

The outgoing president says the U.S. can't withdraw from global fights to expand democracy, human rights and the rights of women, gays and lesbians.

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8:30 p.m.

President Barack Obama says talk of a post-racial America after his 2008 election may have been well-intended, but it "was never realistic."

Obama — who is 55 years old — says in his farewell address that he's lived long enough to know that race relations are better than they were 30 years ago. But he says he also knows "we're not where we need to be."

He says every economic issue can't be framed as a struggle between hardworking middle-class whites and undeserving minorities, and says forsaking the children of immigrants will diminish the prospects of American children.

Obama says hearts must change. He quotes the hero of "To Kill a Mockingbird," Atticus Finch, who said that to understand a person, it helps to "climb into his skin and walk around in it."

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8:25 p.m.

President Barack Obama is acknowledging that "stark inequality" is corrosive to the nation's democratic principles, a nod to the economic uncertainty that helped Republican Donald Trump win the White House last November.

Obama says in his final speech as president that too many families in inner cities and rural counties

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have been left behind. He says many are convinced that the "game is fixed against them" and government only serves powerful interests.

The president calls that a "recipe for more cynicism and polarization in our politics."

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8:15 p.m.

President Barack Obama says in his farewell address that in 10 days the world will witness the peaceful transfer of power to a new president, drawing some jeers ahead of Donald Trump's presidency.

Obama says he committed to Trump that his administration would "ensure the smoothest possible transition" just as his predecessor, President George W. Bush, did for him.

The outgoing president says in Chicago "it's up to all of us to make sure our government can help us meet the many challenges we still face."

Obama says the nation's politics need to reflect "the decency" of the American people.

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8:10 p.m.

President Barack Obama is opening his farewell address in his hometown of Chicago, thanking thousands of supporters and reaffirming his belief in the power of change.

Obama was harkening back to the message of his first campaign for president in 2008.

At one point, he was interrupted by chants of "Four more years!"

Obama says, "I can't do that."

In the aftermath of Republican Donald Trump's election as the next president, Obama is acknowledging that the nation's progress has been "uneven." He says that for "every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back."

But the president says the country strives for "forward motion, a constant widening of our founding creed to embrace all, and not just some."

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6:30 p.m.

President Barack Obama plans to reaffirm in his farewell address his belief that change only happens when "ordinary people get involved, get engaged and come together to demand it."

Obama plans to say that after eight years in the White House he still believes in the power of change. The outgoing president plans to tell supporters in the city that launched his political career that change is the "beating heart of our American idea — our bold experiment in self-government."

Obama will note the founding fathers gave Americans the freedom to "chase our individual dreams through our sweat, toil and imagination."

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4 p.m.

President Barack Obama's final trip aboard Air Force One as president is his 445th mission on the presidential aircraft.

Obama is flying to Chicago to give his final presidential speech. The White House says he's traveled on the plane to 56 countries and to 49 of the 50 U.S. states. He's visited all 50 but never flown to Maryland.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest tells reporters aboard Air Force One that prior to Tuesday's flight, the plane had been airborne for 2,799 hours and 6 minutes during Obama's tenure. That's equivalent to spending 116 days on the plane.

Earnest says Air Force One is "a national treasure." He says Obama benefited deeply from use of the plane.

3:25 p.m.

President Barack Obama is taking an array of longtime friends, staffers and relatives along for his last trip as president.

Obama boarded Air Force One for the flight to Chicago along with first lady Michelle Obama, daughter Malia and sister Auma Obama, who is from Kenya. They were joined by Obama speechwriter Cody Keenan, national security adviser Susan Rice and counterterrorism adviser Lisa Monaco.

Vice President Joe Biden and his wife are also traveling to Chicago for the speech on a separate aircraft.

The White House says that before taking off from Andrews Air Force Base, Obama attended a farewell event with members of the U.S. Air Force division that supports presidential air travel.

3 p.m.

President Barack Obama is returning to the city that launched his unlikely political career to give one final speech.

He'll deliver a parting plea to Americans not to lose faith in their future, no matter what they think about their next president.

Obama's speech before thousands in Chicago on Tuesday evening is his last chance to try to define what his presidency meant for America, and a fitting bookend. Chicago is where the nation's first black president declared victory in 2008 and where he cultivated his decidedly optimistic brand of American politics.

Obama says in a video preview that he'll be reflecting on lessons learned from his presidency, including that Americans are fundamentally good and that the democratic system responds to ordinary people pursuing a better future.

## Homeland Security pick cites securing border as top priority

By ALICIA A. CALDWELL and KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump's choice to lead the Department of Homeland Security likes the idea of a wall to secure the border with Mexico but says technology and manpower are also a must.

"A physical barrier in and of itself will not do the job," retired Marine Gen. John Kelly told members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee during a confirmation hearing Tuesday. "Certainly it has to be a layered approach."

The normally blunt-talking Marine walked a fine line in his answers to several questions about how Trump's Homeland Security Department will carry out its many varied missions, specifically efforts to find and deport immigrants living in the country illegally. He struck a balance between defending Trump's hard-line positions on immigration and border security, and the more moderate positions of some senators, especially Democrats.

Asked about the fate of young immigrants protected from deportation by President Barack Obama, Kelly told Democratic Sen. Kamala Harris of California that "the law would guide him" in every decision he will make if confirmed.

Kelly also said the agency doesn't appear to have a particularly efficient way to track visitors who have overstayed their visas and suggested it may be appropriate to "send someone to their house ... and ask them why they haven't departed."

Answering questions about his plans to secure the border, stop the flow of drugs and curb illegal border crossings, Kelly told lawmakers border security shouldn't only focus on the frontier with Mexico, but

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said "security of the border starts 1,500 miles south of the Rio Grande in the jungles of Latin America." He added that the U.S. should do more to curb demand for drugs in the United States and help stem the violence in a trio of Central American countries whose residents have been fleeing to the United States in recent years.

Kelly's confirmation is almost assured — a reality expressed by both Republican and Democratic senators Tuesday — but members of the committee nonetheless pressed him to specify his stances on immigration enforcement, border security and some of Trump's more controversial suggestions during the campaign, including the possibility of a registration system for Muslim immigrants.

Kelly told lawmakers he does not support registering people based on ethnicity or religion and said he didn't think religion should be a basis for counterterrorism or law enforcement operations.

"I don't think it's ever appropriate to focus on something like religion as the only factor," Kelly said.

He also said he accepts with "high confidence" reports from the intelligence community that Russia attempted to interfere in the 2016 presidential election.

Kelly said he did not anticipate that immigration enforcement officials would focus on young immigrants living in the country illegally who have been temporarily protected from deportation.

"There's a big spectrum of people who need to be dealt with," Kelly said. "Those categories would be prioritized. I would guess this category might not be the highest priority for removal."

He is one of several retired generals tapped for top positions by Trump. That has raised some concerns about undue military influence in his administration and weakening the American tradition of civilian control of government.

But Kelly is widely respected by Democrats and Republicans alike. As the former head of the military's Southern Command, based in South Florida, he routinely worked with the Department of Homeland Security to combat human trafficking and drug smuggling.

In a lengthy questionnaire sent to senators, Kelly said he is committed to telling "truth to power." The commitment addresses concerns that some lawmakers have about the president-elect's willingness to take in points of view that clash with his own.

"I never hesitated to disagree with any of them, or make difficult recommendations when appropriate," Kelly said.

Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri, the panel's ranking Democrat, said his answer was "music to my ears" and promised that Kelly would hear from her often if she didn't think he was following through on the pledge.

Following Kelly's hearing McCaskill and committee chairman Ron Johnson of Wisconsin suggested Kelly could be confirmed with ease.

"I'm confident he will be a moderating influence on President-elect Trump and some of his more divisive rhetoric that he displayed during the campaign when it comes to immigration, and a Muslim ban and all the other things that were covered in the hearing today," McCaskill said.

Kelly joined the Marine Corps in 1970 and served three tours in Iraq. He was also the highest-ranking officer to lose a child in combat in Iraq or Afghanistan. His son, Marine 1st Lt. Robert Kelly, was killed in November 2010 in Afghanistan.

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Follow Alicia A. Caldwell on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/acaldwellap](http://www.twitter.com/acaldwellap)



## Contest will pick opening acts for Bon Jovi tour

By WAYNE PARRY, Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — Who says you can't open for Bon Jovi?

The New Jersey-based platinum-selling rockers are holding a contest to choose bands or singers to open for their upcoming tour.

Artists will upload videos of themselves performing original music, and concert promoters Live Nation will select 10 finalists.

Bon Jovi management will then pick winners from the finalists to perform 20-minute sets.

"Every great band starts small and builds their rep one show at a time," Jon Bon Jovi said Tuesday in a statement on the band's website announcing the contest. "That's the opportunity we were given, and now we want to pay it forward. If you're ready for the arena stage, submit your audition tapes and join us in playing for the best audiences in rock music."

Formed in Sayreville, New Jersey, the fledgling Bon Jovi landed opening act gigs with some of the biggest names in music at the time, including ZZ Top in 1983, and the Scorpions, Kiss and Ted Nugent in 1984, exposing them to millions of new fans.

The band will begin its "This House Is Not For Sale" tour Feb. 8 in Greenville, South Carolina. The last listed tour date is April 11 in Toronto, but additional dates are expected to be announced.

Entries will be judged on entertainment value, creativity and originality. No-nos include profanity, nudity, violence, drug or alcohol use, commercial endorsements of products, and disparagement of any group of people.

In addition to performing live, the winners will be featured on the Bon Jovi and Live Nation Facebook pages.

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Follow Wayne Parry at <http://twitter.com/WayneParryAC>

## Things to know about Trump's Cabinet confirmation hearings

By The Associated Press

Under the U.S. Constitution, the Senate has sole authority to confirm a president's nominee to serve in the Cabinet. And while President-elect Donald Trump can't officially nominate anyone until he becomes president on Jan. 20, the Senate is getting an early start this week on his choices for several top jobs in his administration.

The action began Tuesday with Trump's pick for attorney general, Jeff Sessions, a longtime senator from Alabama, and retired Marine Gen. John Kelly, named by Trump to head the Department of Homeland Security.

By holding hearings before Inauguration Day, the Senate can move quickly once Trump takes the oath of office and formally submits his Cabinet nominees for approval.

Republicans have a narrow majority in the Senate, meaning the hearings are unlikely to make or break nominations. Most, if not all, will go through.

But the hearings offer senators an opportunity to explore the backgrounds of Trump's team and plans for the agencies they will soon lead. For Democrats, the hearings offer a high-profile stage to challenge Trump's proposals.

Here's a look at this week's confirmation hearings:

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ATTORNEY GENERAL

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The lead-off confirmation hearing was Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions, one of the most conservative members of the Senate and a pick that has generated some of the strongest Democratic opposition.

Sessions promised that as America's top law enforcement officer, he would crack down on illegal immigration, gun violence and "radical Islamic terrorism." He said he opposes barring Muslims from entering the United States, a Trump campaign proposal from which the Republican later backed away.

Sessions also promised to recuse himself from any investigation into former Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, citing comments he'd made during the campaign. The FBI concluded last year that Clinton should not face criminal charges for using a private email system while serving as secretary of state.

Democrats have questioned Sessions' commitment to civil rights and oppose his hard line position on immigration. One Democratic senator, Cory Booker of New Jersey, plans to testify against Sessions — a rare instance of a senator testifying against a colleague seeking a Cabinet post.

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## HOMELAND SECURITY

Trump's pick for Homeland Security secretary isn't controversial, unlike the issues he'll potentially face in office.

Retired Marine Gen. John Kelly is well-regarded by Democrats and Republicans alike and his confirmation is almost assured. He joined the Marines in 1970, served three tours in Iraq and is the former head of U.S. Southern Command, which works closely with Homeland Security on issues that include drug smuggling and illegal immigration. His son, Marine 1st Lt. Robert Kelly, was killed in Afghanistan.

As Homeland Security secretary, Kelly would have a key role in advancing Trump's agenda on immigration and border security, including the president-elect's promise to build a wall on the Mexican border and to deport millions of immigrants living in the U.S. illegally.

Kelly told lawmakers that preventing the "illegal movement of people and things" would be his top priority if confirmed.

Republicans and Democrats came away from a confirmation hearing Tuesday singing Kelly's praises.

Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri said she was comforted and confident he will be a moderating influence on President-elect Trump.

Kelly would be the fifth person to lead the Department of Homeland Security, which includes agencies that protect the president, respond to disasters, enforce immigration laws, protect the nation's coastlines, fight drug smuggling and secure air travel.

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## WEAKENED DEMOCRATS

Most, if not all, of Trump's picks are expected to win confirmation. While Republicans only hold a 52-48 advantage in the Senate, Democrats changed the Senate's filibuster rules in 2013. That means Trump's choice can win confirmation on a simple majority vote along party lines.

Still, Democrats are pressing for more information about several of the nominees who are some of the wealthiest people in America. Said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.: "So many of them are billionaires and corporate titans with complex financing holdings that raise the possibility of conflicts of interest, which requires careful scrutiny."

The independent Office of Government Ethics, responsible for ensuring that nominees avoid any conflicts of interest, told the Senate late last week that in some cases it hadn't received even draft financial disclosure reports for nominees slated to appear before the Senate this week.

The confirmation hearings for education secretary Betsy DeVos, a Michigan billionaire, and Andrew Puzder, a fast-food executive and choice for labor secretary, were both postponed on Tuesday.

## THE REST OF THE WEEK

On Wednesday, hearings will be held for Trump's picks for secretary of state, Rex Tillerson, and transportation secretary, Elaine Chao. Also, a second day of hearings is planned for Sessions.

On Thursday, hearings are scheduled for Mike Pompeo for CIA director, James Mattis for defense secretary, Wilbur Ross for commerce secretary and Ben Carson for Housing and Urban Development secretary.

Mattis retired in 2013 as a Marine Corps general. Because he has been out of uniform for fewer than seven years, the minimum required by law for a former service member to serve as defense secretary, his nomination will require new legislation to override the prohibition. Congress is expected to approve such a waiver law.

## Watson leaves Clemson, Swinney on solid ground

By MARK LONG, AP Sports Writer

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Standing on college football's biggest stage and hoisting its top prize, Clemson coach Dabo Swinney and dynamic quarterback Deshaun Watson shared the ultimate hug and a few private words.

A formidable pairing. An improbable championship. An ideal ending.

Swinney and Watson's finale together, a 35-31 upset victory against Alabama in the national title game Monday night, might just be a launching point for the Tigers (14-1).

"You think this is the best of Clemson? Just wait the next five years," Watson said Tuesday. "It's going to be even more exciting, more awesome."

The Tigers claimed their first national championship since 1981, ending a 35-year drought thanks to huge plays from Watson, his receiving corps and a defense determined to avenge last year's oh-so-close loss to the Crimson Tide in the title game.

Although most expect Clemson to need a year or two to reload — the Tigers are losing a handful of offensive and defensive stars — Swinney believes his team will get another title shot in the not-too-distant future, certainly not another three-decade wait.

"There's no doubt in my mind that the best is yet to come for us," Swinney said. "I mean, we're going to continue to improve, continue to get better. Winning national championships are hard. I mean, it's very, very difficult to do. It's been 35 years at Clemson. ... It won't be 35 years before Clemson will do this again.

"God willing, I'll be a part of it. But this program is built to last."

It's certainly being built to compete with anyone in the country.

Swinney has five-star quarterback Hunter Johnson, from Brownsburg, Indiana, on the way to replace Watson, who graduated in three years and is leaving early for the NFL draft. And Clemson annually has one of the top three recruiting classes in the Atlantic Coast Conference, right on the heels of Florida State as well as perennial powers Alabama, Ohio State, Oklahoma and Michigan.

Equally promising, the Tigers are getting ready to open a \$55 million football complex that will be attached to the team's indoor practice facility. The complex will have all the usual amenities, like a weight room, a dining hall, meeting rooms and offices, but it also boasts a players' lounge that features table tennis, pool tables, miniature golf, a golf simulator, laser tag, a bowling alley, sand volleyball courts and a 24-seat high-definition theater.

Oh, and an indoor slide connecting one floor to the next.

"Yeah, it's crazy, man," Swinney said.

Swinney clearly has Clemson rolling after consecutive trips to the title game.

"We think that we have a great program to sell and we're very proud of that," he said. "The best is yet to come for us. This is not the end-all. It's a great moment, and it's something that we needed to get done. But you know, Thursday I'm going to have a team meeting with the 2017 team, and there will be a new group of seniors sitting in the front row, new challenges, new journey, kind of lay out the vision a little bit for next year.

"We'll celebrate this weekend, this championship with our banquet and the parade and all that stuff, and then we'll start over."

He'll have to start over without Watson, the team's do-whatever-it-takes leader, and several other key starters.

Watson completed 36 of 56 passes for 420 yards and three touchdowns in the title game. He also ran for a score, helping make the sequel an even better show than the original. He was just as good last year, although his efforts weren't enough in a 45-40 loss to the Tide in Arizona.

"He's the best player that's ever come through there, so it meant a lot," Swinney said, adding that Watson went 32-3 as a starter. "He set the standard. I mean, high standard. Graduated in three years, honor-roll student, represented the program in an incredible way, unbelievable leadership, so easy to coach."

"He's an incredible winner, and we're not sitting here without Deshaun Watson. This is what he came to do."

Running back Wayne Gallman and receivers Mike Williams and Artavis Scott will join Watson in the NFL. Throw in tight end Jordan Leggett and center Jay Guillermo, and the Tigers will have to replace a big chunk of their high-scoring offense.

They will have nearly as many losses on the other side of the ball, with cornerback Cordrea Tankersley, safety Jadar Johnson, linebacker Ben Boulware and defensive end Carlos Watkins all gone.

"What's next?" Swinney said. "For us it'll be, like I said, enjoying this moment, but getting excited about coming back and seeing if we can charge back up the mountain next year."

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More AP college football: [www.collegefootball.ap.org](http://www.collegefootball.ap.org) and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

## Investigators: 'Inside job' suspected in Kardashian robbery

By LORI HINNANT and SYLVIE CORBET, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Investigators in Paris focused Tuesday on the possibility that the October robbery of more than \$10 million worth of jewelry from Kim Kardashian West was an inside job following the arrests of a chauffeur and his brother.

Three Paris officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation, confirmed that Kardashian West's driver the night of the robbery and his brother were among 17 people taken into custody Monday.

Michael Madar, 40, and Gary Madar, 27, worked for the same livery company, according to two of the officials. The officials were unsure which brother chauffeured the reality TV star the night she was robbed in a rented apartment in the French capital.

An investigating judge may travel to the United States to speak with Kardashian West, a judicial official said, adding that such a trip would not be imminent. The official was not authorized to speak publicly about the investigation and asked not to be named.

The suspects ranged in age from 23 to 72 and included several people known for prior robberies and other crimes, according to a police document seen by The Associated Press.

Police officials said on Monday that subsequent searches of properties associated with the suspects yielded weapons and 140,000 euros (\$147,500) in cash. The judicial official could not immediately confirm a French press report Tuesday that more than double that amount of money had been recovered as the inventory proceeded.

French law requires the suspects to be freed by early Friday if they are not charged by then, according to the judicial official, who did not exclude the possibility that some of those detained could be let go earlier.

The police officials would not elaborate on how they believe the theft was planned. Kardashian West's bodyguard was gone for the night, and the robbers forced their way into the private apartment where she was staying, tied her up and made off with the jewelry.

Earlier this month, Kardashian West broke her silence on the robbery in a teaser for her family's reality show, telling two of her sisters her thoughts at the time: "They're going to shoot me in the back. There's no way out."

A spokeswoman for the reality star said she had no comment after Monday's arrests.

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Elaine Ganley in Paris contributed.

## Trump pushes GOP leaders for fast action on health care

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump pushed Congress on Tuesday to act swiftly to repeal President Barack Obama's health care law and follow up with a replacement. Speaker Paul Ryan, after talking with Trump, announced that the House would aim to take both steps "concurrently."

The push for speed and coordination came as growing numbers of Republicans expressed concerns about GOP leadership's plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a replacement in hand, potentially leaving the 20 million people who gained coverage under the law in limbo.

"We have to get to business. Obamacare has been a catastrophic event," Trump said in an interview with The New York Times.

"Long to me would be weeks," he added of the gap between repealing and replacing the law. "It won't be repeal and then two years later go in with another plan."

Yet that's exactly the scenario that had been envisioned by GOP leaders who've described a transition period of months or years between repealing the enormously complex law and replacing it with something else.

Under the congressional timetable, procedural budget votes set for later this week in the House and Senate would put the repeal process in motion. But the vote on repealing "Obamacare" wasn't expected until mid-February at earliest; a full replacement hadn't been expected until months or even years later.

Trump seemed confused about that schedule, telling the Times that the repeal should be "probably sometime next week," and "the replace will be very quickly or simultaneously, very shortly thereafter."

Despite his imprecision, Trump was clear that he put an imperative on speed for both repealing and replacing the law, a message certain to be received loud and clear by congressional Republicans, some of whom had been urging the president-elect to make his views on the matter better known.

And even before Trump's comments Tuesday, the notion of a lengthy transition period was running into problems on Capitol Hill from Republicans anxious about waiting too long between repealing the health law and replacing it. House Republicans in particular, who face voters every two years, are eager to dispense with the matter before the 2018 midterm elections.



Facing growing demands for speed, Ryan addressed reporters Tuesday morning and described a new approach.

"It is our goal to bring it all together concurrently," Ryan said. "We're going to use every tool at our disposal, through legislation, through regulation, to bring replace concurrent along with repeal, so that we can save people from this mess."

That may be easier said than done. Under arcane budget rules in the Senate, Republicans will likely be able to use their slim majority to push through repeal legislation without Democratic votes. But they would need Democrats' help to write a replacement bill. Ryan indicated Tuesday Republicans would try to get around that obstacle by passing some elements of the replacement bill using fast-track Senate rules, too.

Yet although they agree on certain approaches like expanding the use of health savings accounts, Republicans are far from agreeing on a unified GOP solution that could take the place of the far-reaching Affordable Care Act, frustrating some in the party.

"We've been at it now for six years and it's time for us to produce a replacement plan and hopefully we'll do that in the very near term," said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., who's among a group of Republicans pushing for a delay in the repeal bill to allow time to write a replacement.

Despite all the divisions, the comments Tuesday from Trump and Ryan were being interpreted by some Republicans as evidence of unity. Ryan told House Republicans he'd spoken Monday to Trump, and immediately after Trump made his comments to the Times, several Ryan aides took to Twitter to proclaim that the speaker and the president-elect were saying the same thing.

Amid the political maelstrom around the Affordable Care Act, millions of people are still signing up. The administration said Tuesday that 11.5 million enrolled nationwide through Dec. 24, ahead of the previous year's pace.

Trump repeatedly said throughout his campaign that he would repeal and replace "Obamacare" on "Day One," though he has never fully explained how he planned to do it. Trump was meeting Tuesday with Georgia Rep. Tom Price, his pick to lead the Department of Health and Human Services, and Seema Verma, his choice to run the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, to discuss the matter.

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Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Catherine Lucey and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar contributed to this report.

## **18 females sue gymnastics doctor, allege sexual abuse**

**By ED WHITE, Associated Press**

DETROIT (AP) — A Michigan doctor accused of sexually abusing gymnasts was sued Tuesday by 18 women and girls, the latest legal action over alleged assaults, mostly at his clinic at Michigan State University.

The lawsuit against Dr. Larry Nassar, Michigan State, USA Gymnastics and a Lansing-area gymnastics club was filed in federal court in western Michigan. It makes claims of civil rights violations, discrimination and negligence.

The Associated Press usually doesn't name people who allege sexual abuse, but one of the plaintiffs, Rachael Denhollander, 32, of Louisville, Kentucky, talked publicly about the lawsuit. She said she was assaulted by Nassar while seeing him for wrist and back injuries at age 15 in 2000.

Denhollander, who was a gymnast, said she didn't file a complaint at the time because she believed her "voice would not be heard." She said Nassar was held in high esteem at Michigan State and was

also affiliated with USA Gymnastics.

The abuse alleged by the 18 women and girls occurred over 20 years. They ranged in age from 9 to 29 at the time.

Most were minors “cloaked with innocence and trust of their youth,” attorney Stephen Drew told reporters.

In 1999 and 2000, a Michigan State runner and a softball player complained to the university’s sports medicine staff that Nassar had molested them with his hands, but no investigations were conducted, according to the lawsuit.

Nassar now faces at least five civil lawsuits. Through lawyers, he’s denied the allegations. He hasn’t been charged with any crimes related to his work at Michigan State, although he’s charged with sexually assaulting a girl at his Holt, Michigan, home.

Separately, Nassar is charged in federal court with possessing child pornography. He’s being held in jail without bond.

Michigan State said it won’t comment on specific allegations in the latest lawsuit. It said campus police investigated a complaint against Nassar in 2014 but no charges were filed. The school said it received no other complaints until last August.

Nassar was subsequently fired for not complying with employment requirements put in place after the 2014 complaint. Michigan State hasn’t elaborated.

Campus police still are investigating Nassar with state and federal authorities. Outside lawyers also are advising the university on an internal review of his work.

Indianapolis-based USA Gymnastics said it cut ties with Nassar in 2015 when it first heard allegations about the doctor.

“We find it appalling that anyone would exploit a young athlete or child in this manner,” the organization said in a statement.

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Follow Ed White at <http://twitter.com/edwhiteap>

## Despite scandal, VW in running for global sales crown

By **DAVID McHUGH, AP Business Writer**

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — It’s ironic: Volkswagen spent 2016 battling a huge scandal over cars it rigged to cheat on emissions tests.

And now stands a decent chance to pass Toyota for the title of world’s biggest carmaker for the year. Booming business in China helped Volkswagen increase its sales to 10.31 million vehicles last year across all its brands, which include Audi, Porsche and Skoda, the company said Tuesday.

That was an increase of 3.8 percent over 2015, when Volkswagen came in second to Toyota. And a strong finish to the year in December — 11.8 percent better than the same month the year before — improves the company’s chances of moving from No. 2 to No. 1 in global sales.

That Volkswagen is even in the running for top spot seems remarkable considering how terrible the year was on the legal and image front.

The company based in Wolfsburg, Germany, said Tuesday it was in advanced talks on a draft settlement with the U.S. Justice Department and U.S. Customs and Border Protection under which it would pay \$4.3 billion in criminal and civil penalties in the emissions scandal.

That sum would come on top of a \$15 billion civil settlement with U.S. environmental authorities and owners of 500,000 cars. Volkswagen also faces investor lawsuits and criminal probes in Germany. Volk-

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swagen has admitted to equipping diesel cars with software that turned emission controls on when the vehicle was being tested and off during daily driving.

The scandal news kept coming this week as Oliver Schmidt, Volkswagen's former head of U.S. environmental compliance, was arrested in Florida and appeared in a Detroit court in prison garb and shackles. Engineer James Liang had earlier pleaded guilty and offered to assist federal law enforcement in their investigation.

Despite all that, huge demand in China may be enough to push Volkswagen past its Japanese rival and Detroit-based General Motors. Neither rival has reported 2016 sales yet. For 2015, Toyota Motor Co. came in first with 10.15 million, Volkswagen was second with 9.93 million, and GM third with 9.8 million.

Volkswagen's improved sales show how crucial China has become for Germany's carmakers, including BMW and Daimler. Of the three, Volkswagen is the most dependent on the Middle Kingdom. It sold 3.98 million cars there last year, more than a third of its total unit sales.

Volkswagen was barely behind Toyota after 11 months of 2016, but China in particular fueled the strong December. U.S. sales, which are much smaller, were off 2.6 percent for the year.

To add a layer of irony, overtaking Toyota would come only after Volkswagen abandoned its goal of achieving global supremacy in raw sales numbers.

Dethroning Toyota was part of the company's Strategy 2018 pushed by CEO Martin Winterkorn, who lost his job due to the scandal. But the new CEO, Matthias Mueller, has dropped that emphasis on unit sales in the latest strategy, amid concerns it fostered a management culture that could have helped create the emissions scandal. The new plan focuses more profitability and a greater emphasis on electric vehicles, digital services such as car-sharing and ride-hailing. Toyota also downplays the sales race.

Other factors helping Volkswagen sales: The company's other brands, particularly Audi, Porsche and Skoda, helped make up for any weakness at the namesake grand.

And Volkswagen didn't sell many cars in the first place in the U.S., where the scandal first broke in September, 2015.

"China is the big equalizer," Ferdinand Dudenhoeffer, director of the CAR-Center Automotive Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen, said in an email. "Diesel plays no role there, so your reputation can't suffer. China today is the center of the automotive world, for Volkswagen as well."

"And when you look more closely at the numbers, Volkswagen didn't lose so much in the end in Europe, because Audi and Skoda were able to buck the trend a little."

After a strong last quarter of the year in China, where Volkswagen is stronger than Toyota, "Volkswagen would have to have the edge," Dudenhoeffer said.

For decades, Volkswagen has steadily grown its business in China. High-end offerings such as Porsche, Lamborghini and Bentley vehicles are imported, but the company has a large presence on the ground making cars specifically for the mass market there with Chinese partners. Its joint-venture agreements with its local partners, SAIC Volkswagen and FAW-Volkswagen, date to 1984 and 1990.

China's car market has grown for 26 straight years, and did so again in 2016. Sales were boosted by a tax cut on cars with smaller engines; some people may have brought forward purchases because it isn't clear if the tax break will be extended next year.

Volkswagen still faces serious challenges. The Volkswagen brand has shown skimpy profits due to chronically high costs, and more than half of the wider group's profits come from the luxury Audi and Porsche units. The Volkswagen division is shedding 23,000 jobs to save some \$4 billion a year from 2020, but still has a long way to go.

The top three carmakers make roughly the same number of vehicles per year, but Toyota needs

349,000 workers and GM only 202,000 while Volkswagen employs 624,000. The company remains a niche producer in the large U.S. market, and the damage to its image from the scandal won't help that. Investigations and lawsuits remain open.

And along with all the carmakers, it faces possible disruptive competition from tech companies who may muscle into their business through new ways of getting from one place to another, including ride-hailing apps, car-sharing and autonomous vehicles.

But it's a crown Volkswagen definitely wouldn't refuse.

## Ryan: GOP will work on repealing, replacing health law

By ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans will work on unraveling and replacing the health care law at the same time, House Speaker Paul Ryan said Tuesday as GOP leaders struggled to align their zeal to rapidly erase one of President Barack Obama's proudest achievements with Congress' legislative and political pitfalls.

Ryan, R-Wis., spoke to reporters amid growing concern among Republican lawmakers about erasing Obama's overhaul — which expanded coverage to 20 million people — without having an alternative to show voters. Republicans have been divided for years over how to replace the statute, and the process of crafting replacement legislation they can unify behind is likely to take months or longer.

"It is our goal to bring it all together concurrently," Ryan said.

"We will pass as much as we can" initially, Ryan said. He said Republicans would then produce a second bill to "show you the full scope of what a real replacement effort looks like."

President-elect Donald Trump has said he supports erasing Obama's law and replacing it simultaneously. Congressional leaders had said in recent weeks that they would quickly repeal the statute and with a delayed effective date, and then work on replacing it.

According to Rep. Dennis Ross, R-Fla., Ryan told Republicans Tuesday that "he had a conversation yesterday with Donald Trump, and they're on the same page."

As if on cue, both of Congress' top Republicans used a similar phrase on Tuesday.

"For people across the country, repeal means relief," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said on the Senate floor.

And at a closed-door meeting Tuesday, Ryan told House Republicans, "Repeal is relief," according to Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C.

GOP leaders have made dismantling Obama's treasured health care overhaul their premier 2017 priority. But at least six GOP senators and some House members have expressed qualms about repeal without having a substitute.

The Senate and House are expected to approve a GOP-written budget this week that will serve a crucial procedural purpose — blocking Democrats from using a Senate filibuster to derail a future bill dismantling the health care statute. That's important because filibusters take 60 votes to halt in a chamber that Republicans control by only a 52-48 margin.

Republicans plan to then write legislation erasing much of the health care law and adding some new elements they prefer, perhaps including expanded use of health savings accounts.

But Senate rules limit the provisions that can be put into a bill that's protected against a filibuster. That means Republicans would need a second, subsequent bill to fully rewrite the health care law, and that measure would need at least eight Democratic votes to pass the Senate.

Even if Congress passed repeal rapidly, Republicans say they would phase it in, perhaps over two or three years. Republicans don't want to be vulnerable to Democrats already accusing them of preparing

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to tear down the statute without knowing how or if they'll replace it.

"Turn back before it's too late," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said on the Senate floor late Monday as Democrats lambasted Republicans with five-and-a-half hours of speeches. "It will damage your party, and it will hurt millions of Americans, far more importantly."

The Affordable Care Act, signed into law in 2010, has required people to obtain coverage. It also created subsidies to help lower-earning people buy policies and expanded Medicaid, but the overhaul has been troubled by rising costs for many consumers and markets that some insurers abandoned.

The burgeoning Republican divisions come as the GOP-led Senate pushed toward a final vote this week on a budget that would prevent Democrats from using a filibuster to block a later repealing Obama's overhaul.

Republicans voicing a desire to work on repeal and replacement together include Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker of Tennessee, Susan Collins of Maine, Ron Johnson of Wisconsin and Tom Cotton of Arkansas.

The budget gives congressional committees until Jan. 27 to produce legislation annulling much of the health care law, although consequences for missing that deadline are minor.

Corker, Collins and three other GOP senators introduced a budget amendment delaying that target date until March 3. Corker said that would provide "additional time to get the policy right."

Besides health care, senators are focused this week on confirmation hearings for Trump's Cabinet picks.

In Tuesday's initial hearings, committees were examining Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., Trump's selection for attorney general, and retired Marine Gen. John Kelly, his choice for homeland security secretary. Seven others were set for hearings this week.

Also Tuesday, a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing explored spy agencies' conclusion that Russia meddled in the U.S. election by hacking and distributing Democratic party emails to help Trump win the White House.

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AP Congressional Correspondent Erica Werner contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 11, the 11th day of 2017. There are 354 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 11, 1927, the creation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was proposed during a dinner of Hollywood luminaries at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

On this date:

In 1861, Alabama became the fourth state to withdraw from the Union.

In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Grand Canyon National Monument (it became a national park in 1919).

In 1913, the first enclosed sedan-type automobile, a Hudson, went on display at the 13th National Automobile Show in New York.

In 1935, aviator Amelia Earhart began an 18-hour trip from Honolulu to Oakland, California, that made her the first person to fly solo across any part of the Pacific Ocean.

In 1942, Japan declared war against the Netherlands, the same day that Imperial Japanese forces invaded the Dutch East Indies.



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In 1946, the People's Republic of Albania was proclaimed after King Zog was formally deposed by the Communists.

In 1964, U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry issued "Smoking and Health," a report which concluded that "cigarette smoking contributes substantially to mortality from certain specific diseases and to the overall death rate."

In 1966, Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti, 64, died in Chur.

In 1977, France set off an international uproar by releasing Abu Daoud, a PLO official behind the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

In 1989, nine days before leaving the White House, President Ronald Reagan bade the nation farewell in a prime-time address, saying of his eight years in office: "We meant to change a nation and instead we changed a world."

In 1995, 51 people were killed when a Colombian DC-9 jetliner crashed as it was preparing to land near the Caribbean resort of Cartagena — however, 9-year-old Erika Delgado survived.

In 2003, calling the death penalty process "arbitrary and capricious, and therefore immoral," Illinois Gov. George Ryan commuted the sentences of 167 condemned inmates, clearing his state's death row two days before leaving office.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush's plan to send more troops to Iraq ran into a wall of criticism on Capitol Hill from both Democrats and Republicans. Democrats selected Denver as the site of their 2008 presidential convention. English soccer star David Beckham announced a five-year deal to play for the Los Angeles Galaxy.

Five years ago: Joran van der Sloot (YOHR'-uhn VAN'-dur-sloht), the longtime suspect in the still unsolved disappearance of American Natalee Holloway in Aruba, pleaded guilty in Lima to the 2010 murder of a Peruvian woman, Stephany Flores; he was sentenced to 28 years in prison. French TV cameraman Gilles Jacquier was killed while filming a pro-government rally in Homs, Syria; he was the first Western journalist to die in the Syrian uprising.

One year ago: Gunmen stormed into a Baghdad mall, killing 18 people; the Islamic State group claimed responsibility. Northern Ireland lawmakers appointed Arlene Foster as the first female leader of their unity government. No. 2 Alabama outlasted No. 1 Clemson in a 45-40 victory in the College Football Playoff championship game. Baseball Hall of Famer Monte Irvin, 96, died in Houston. William A. "Bill" Del Monte, the last survivor of the devastating San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, died at a retirement home in nearby Marin County at 109 years old.

Today's Birthdays: The former prime minister of Canada, Jean Chretien (zhahn kray-tee-EHN'), is 83. Actor Mitchell Ryan is 83. Actor Felix Silla is 80. Movie director Joel Zwick is 75. Country singer Naomi Judd is 71. World Golf Hall of Famer Ben Crenshaw is 65. Singer Robert Earl Keen is 61. Actress Phyllis Logan is 61. Musician Vicki Peterson (The Bangles) is 59. Actress Kim Coles is 55. Actor Jason Connery is 54. Former child actress Dawn Lyn (TV: "My Three Sons") is 54. Contemporary Christian musician Jim Bryson (MercyMe) is 49. Rock musician Tom Dumont (No Doubt) is 49. Movie director Malcolm D. Lee is 47. Singer Mary J. Blige is 46. Musician Tom Rowlands (The Chemical Brothers) is 46. Actor Marc Blucas is 45. Actress Amanda Peet is 45. Actor Rockmond Dunbar is 44. Actress Aja Naomi King is 32. Actress Kristolyn Lloyd is 32. Reality TV star Jason Wahler is 30. Pop singer Cody Simpson is 20.

Thought for Today: "Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could." — Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist, poet and philosopher (1803-1882).