

Groton Daily Independent

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- Groton Area School (updated 8-29)**
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- Other Notices (updated 8-21)**
- Frederick Town (Updated 8-15)**
- Groton Area School (updated 8-7)**
- Claremont Town Official Notices Book**

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper
recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

JH v-ball match (8th grade only) with Hitchcock/Tulare on Tuesday, Oct 10th has been CANCELLED! H/T has a conflict with their JH playing that night.

27

Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, baked potato with sour cream, green beans, chocolate cake, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: French toast, sausage links, fruit, milk and juice.

School Lunch: Meatballs, mashed potatoes, cooked carrots, romaine salad, fruit.

Emmanuel: Confirmation, 7 p.m.

United Methodist: Coffee fellowship, 9 a.m.

Lions Bar Bingo: 6:30 p.m. at the Groton Legion.

Christian & Missionary Alliance: 7 p.m.: Program for children up to sixth grade, youth group for 7th-12th grade, adult Bible Study.

28

Senior Menu: Turkey with dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, broccoli, carrot bar, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast sandwich, fruit, milk and juice.

School Lunch: Mac and cheese, peas, carrots with dip, tea bun, fruit.

Cross Country: at Sisseton, 4 p.m.

JH Football: hosts Roncalli, 7th grade at 4 p.m.; 8th grade at 5 p.m.

Volleyball: at Roncalli, 7th and 8th grade matches at 4:30 p.m., C and JV matches at 6 p.m. followed by varsity match.

Youth Football: 6 p.m., Groton 5th/6th at Britton; 6 p.m.; Groton 3rd/4th at Britton.

29

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, peas, Swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, fruit, yogurt, milk and juice.

School Lunch: Pancake on stick, tri taters, cauliflower with dip, fruit.

Football: at Milbank, 7 p.m.

Dance Practice: Groton Community Center (Sugar Babes 3:50 to 4:35, Sweet Sensations 4:40 to 5:25, Spice Girls 5:30 to 6:30)

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance: Men's Bible Study at the Groton Dairy Queen, 6:30 a.m.



Hanlon Brothers
Gravel Hauling

New & Cleaning of
Stockdams with our
60' reach trackhoe

605/395-6531



This bulletin board features a flower with many hands made by the students. It is featured in the open area of the Lower Pod of the Groton Area Elementary School. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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It's Volleyball Action on GDILIVE.COM



Groton Area Tigers

VS

Roncalli Cavaliers



Thursday, Sept. 28, 2017, 7:15 p.m.
at Aberdeen Roncalli

[Click here for the program](#)

It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM



Groton Area Tigers

VS

Milbank Bulldogs



Friday, Sept. 29, 2017, 7:00 p.m.
at Milbank

[Click here for the program](#)

Guthmiller advances to state in golf

The regional golf tournament was held Monday at Dell Rapids. Sophomore Cade Guthmiller placed 18th in the region with scores of 47 and 42 for a total of 89.

Others golfing for Groton were freshmen Tristan Traphagen with scores of 55 and 50 and a total of 105; Hunter Kassube with scores of 50 and 56 and a total of 106, and Lucas Simon with scores of 65 and 64 and a total of 129.

The state golf meet will be held October 2-3 at Dakota Valley.

The Life of LaVonne Engstrom

LaVonne A. Engstrom, age 88, of Watertown, SD, passed away on Friday, September 22, 2017 at Jenkins Living Center. She is the widow of Conrad "Connie" Engstrom, Jr.

Funeral services were held Monday, September 25, 2017 at the Wight & Comes Funeral Chapel in Watertown with Pastors Sara Nelson and Scott Dempster officiating.

Burial in Mt. Hope Cemetery, Watertown, SD.

Honorary Pallbearers were the Staff at Jenkins Living Center.

LaVonne April Engstrom was born on April 1, 1929 to John and Edith (Mere-ness) Whiteaker near Verdon, SD. She grew up on a farm near Groton, SD and attended school in Groton and graduated from Groton High School in 1946.

She married Conrad "Connie" Engstrom, Jr. on October 4, 1947 at the First United Methodist Church in Aberdeen, SD. Together they raised three children, Connie, Allan and Kevin. The family lived in Wisconsin for many years and then returned to Watertown. LaVonne and Connie lived at Lake Kampeska

until 1996 when they moved into Watertown. Connie Engstrom passed away on October 18, 1999.

LaVonne's whole world was her family who she adored! She loved being a homemaker, cooking and baking and planting flowers. She created cherished memories for the whole family with wonderful Holiday celebrations! She especially loved spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The special bond she had with her granddaughter Jenni Lake. The bond was deep and forever.

LaVonne is survived by her children, Connie Lake, Al (Bobbi) Engstrom and Kevin (Jeanne) Engstrom; eight grandchildren, Troy (Heather) Engstrom, Jenni Lake, Nathan (Jackie) Lake, Staci (Kevin) Smunk, Travis (Chera) Engstrom, Traci (Justin) Stephens, Breanna (Jesse) Kell and Rudy Engstrom; and 11 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents John and Edith Whiteaker; her husband, Connie; one brother, Les Whiteaker; and one sister, Louise Blattert.



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All auto owners!
Save \$2-\$4 /tank
& grow your local economy
by choosing low carbon
Super Premium E30's
94 octane, more power,
same mileage, fewer
carbon deposits, lower
maintenance costs,
slashed benzene & related
genotoxic, carcinogenic
tailpipe emissions;
*see sdfu.org's E30 tab for
info, E30 prices\locations.

***Farmers Union's
PSA: Courtesy Merle
Anderson (Merle is 94
year old founder of Ace
and legendary ethanol
supporter... "because it is
the right thing to do")**

Help Wanted

We are Hiring Nurses – RN or LPN,
Full or Part Time.

NEW WAGE PACKAGE!!!

Contact Jessica Lindskov or Nellie Peterson at 605-397-2365 or apply in person.

EOE/AA/M/F/V/D-Drug Free Workplace



**1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton
605-397-2365**

Flu vaccinations available at Sanford Aberdeen

ABERDEEN, S.D. —Sanford Aberdeen will host several flu vaccination clinics throughout the month of October to help prepare for the upcoming flu season.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends annual flu vaccines for everyone over six months of age, but they are especially important for those with high risk of flu complications, including pregnant women, adults aged 65 and older, and young children. Due to CDC recommendations against using flu mist, Sanford Health will only offer flu vaccination injections.

Flu vaccinations will be offered at Sanford Aberdeen Clinic:

Tuesday, Oct. 3: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 12: 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 13: 7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 14: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 20: 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 27: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Registration is recommended, but walk-ins are welcome. To schedule, call Sanford Aberdeen Clinic at 605-226-5500.

Mil levy set for Groton Area School

The Groton Area School Board adopted the 2018-19 budget which included slight adjustments to the district's mil levy.

For Ag property, the mil levy will increase from 3.269 this year to 3.530 next year. Home owner occupied property will increase from 5.388 this year to 5.395 next year. Commercial property and non-ag decreased from 9.331 this year to 9.001 next year. Patrons of the former Bristol and Conde schools do not pay the .243 bond redemption tax this year and will not pay the bond redemption tax year of .223. The valuations for the Groton Area School district increased from \$1.081 billion in 2016 to \$1.233 billion in 2017 to \$1.333 billion in 2018.

Student enrollment in 2006 was 623 compared to 589 last year and the projection is around 570 this year. Friday is the date that the final enrollment will be submitted to the state that will determine state aid. Certified staff has dropped by one since 2006 to 49. The square miles of the district increased from 785 square miles in 2006 to 871 square miles in 2018.

The expense budget for 2018 \$5.322 million in general fund, \$1.486 million in capital outlay and \$0.928 in special education fund. The projected fund balance at the end of the 2017-18 school year will be 26 percent in general fund, 50.7 percent in capital outlay and 10.1 percent in special education.

Three more change orders were approved at the board meeting Monday night. One was for fire extinguishers and cabinets for \$3,175. Superintendent Joe Schwan said he was disappointed that the engineers didn't catch this earlier when they fire extinguishers could have been installed flush with the wall. Now that will be fastened to the wall. The cut out the holes would be dusty and they did not want dust getting into the filtering system. Another was \$22,505 to fix a drainage issue that was not included in the original design. Schwan also expressed disappointment that this could not have been done with the original design and could have saved the district some money had it been done prior to the sidewalk being installed. The board agreed to negotiate with the engineer on the cost of these two items. The other item was \$415 for an access panel for the new lighted building sign.

The board learned Monday evening that Kelly Kjelden and his wife will be moving to Aberdeen in the next 30 to 40 days as they have sold their Groton home. That will mean that Kjelden will need to resign off the board and will leave a vacancy. The board will meet in October to discuss how to handle the vacancy for the rest of his term will expire in 2018.

Chuck Padfield and Adam Franken are now official bus drivers. The board approved the agreements with them. They were substitute drivers prior to the agreements.



Superintendent Joe Schwan and Board President Steve Smith review the procedure on the handling of a vacancy. Kelly Kjelden will be leaving the district in 30-40 days and will be moving to Aberdeen. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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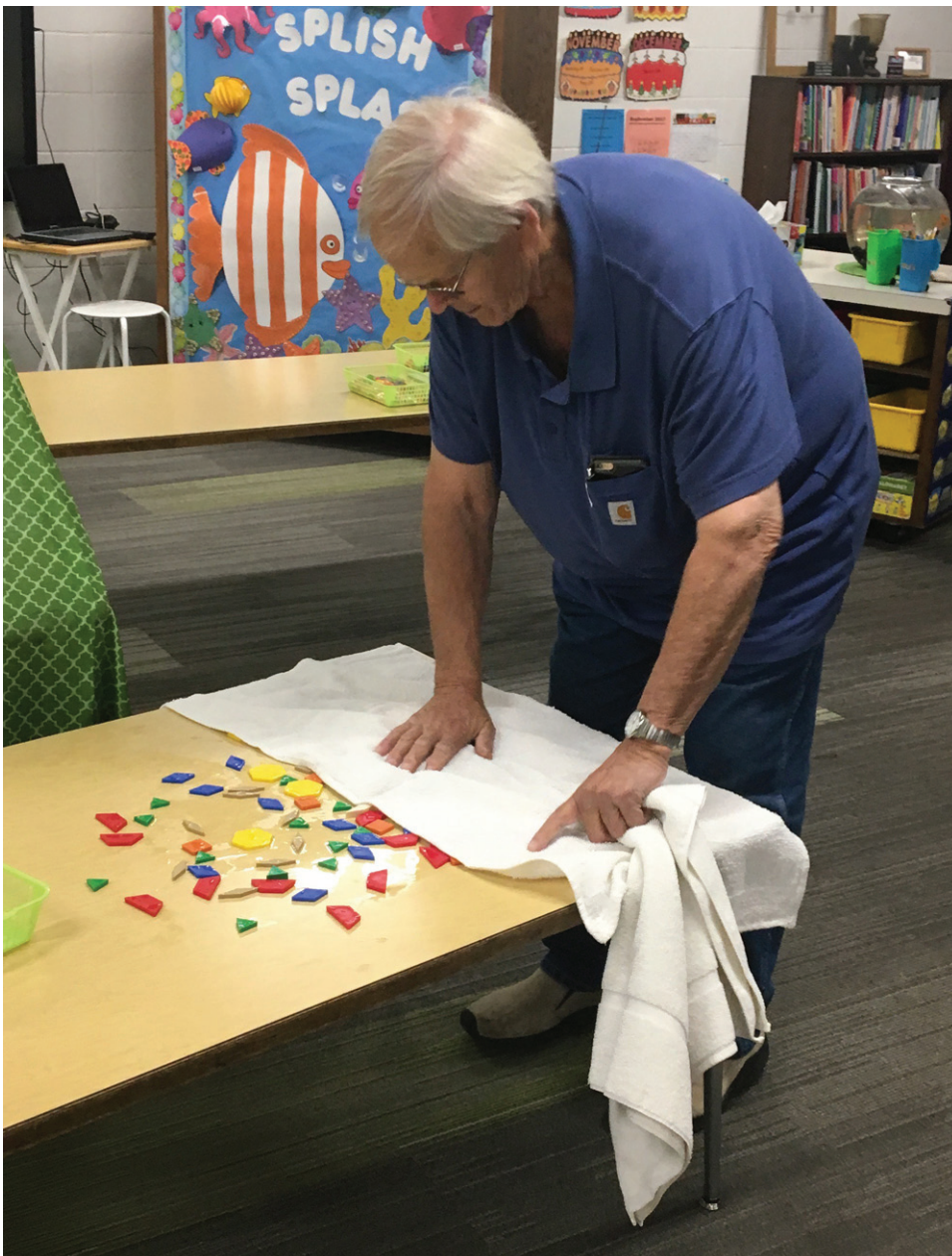
The board agreed to allow the Groton Youth Rally committee to use the gym free of charge for the youth rally scheduled for November 15.

The second and third grade teachers presented their programs and gave the school board a tour of their new rooms at the elementary school. The school board meeting was held in the lower pod of the elementary school. The teachers had glowing reports of the renovations and were well pleased with the new set up.

Matt Locke was hired as the eighth grade girls' basketball coach at 5% of base salary. Shannon Wiedrick was hired as a student custodian at \$9.25 per hour for up to 20 hours per week. Sarah Lewandowski was hired as an elementary special education paraprofessional at \$11.40 per hour.

An open enrollment for a sophomore from the Aberdeen School District was approved.

- Paul Kosel



Board member Merle Harder helps to dry off some plastic pieces that got wet just before the school board meeting. The contractors were testing the sprinkler system and a coupling broke in the kindergarten room. The leak was fix and the system was pressurized again and is working fine.



Best thing to happen in Groton for safe travel

Roger Rix is one of the local farmers who is totally ecstatic about the new green-yellow-red lights at the junction of US12 and SD37 in Groton. He said that the lights are perfectly timed and will do wonders to keep people safe. "I go through the intersection many times a day and when I come from the north," Rix said, "by the time I slow up and get to the intersection, the lights are turning yellow on US12. I'm very happy about these lights and they are a great asset to the community. This is the best thing that happened for safe travels in our community." (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The road going south on Washington Street has been a short cut through city property, but the recent rain has ruined the property as people continued to use it. The city has not shut off access to this short cut. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

2017 Pheasant Hunting Forecast: West is Best, More CRP Needed to Turn the Tide in Midwest Pheasant Country

St. Paul, Minn. – Sept. 25, 2017 – Pheasants Forever has released its 2017 Pheasant Hunting Forecast, the most comprehensive upland hunting planner in the nation. While record snowfalls and a severe drought in 2017 contributed to significant bird population decreases in parts of the Midwest, expanses of the West and Great Plains show exciting signs for the season ahead. Future pheasant hunting prospects will rely heavily on the quantity and quality of grassland habitat available, stressing the importance of the 2018 Farm Bill and the resolve of upland hunters to advocate and contribute to the work of habitat conservation.

Pheasant hunting prospects for 2017 are a mixed bag of good and bad news, offering the traveling bird hunter an expectation of remarkable wingshooting in certain states with a bit of boot leather mileage, intel, and personal grit. On the flip side, Pheasants Forever remains steadfast in its task to help restore grasslands in the Midwestern states – South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota – where a perfect storm of extreme weather conditions and the loss of Conservation Reserve Program acreage have led to significant population decreases since last September.

Habitat in the form of diverse grasslands remains the key ingredient in the recipe for producing pheasants over the long-term. Pheasants Forever is working diligently to raise the national cap of the Conservation Reserve Program, from 24 million acres to 40 million acres, to ensure resilience of future pheasant populations. Pheasants Forever members and chapters continue to effect change on the habitat front nationwide with 1.7 million acres impacted over the course of last year, making habitat readily available when Mother Nature is at its worst.

The following is a regional breakdown of Pheasants Forever's 2017 Pheasant Hunting Forecast. View the entire state-by-state outlook [here](#), and begin planning your trips to the golden fields of fall.

Go West Young Man

Several states west of the Missouri River are offering up pheasants in larger quantities this fall, including Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Idaho, Oregon, and the Texas Panhandle. Want more? Each of these states also promises increased opportunities for quail hunting which will be outlined in Quail Forever's 2017 Quail Hunting Forecast in the coming weeks.

Colorado is best known as a "sleeper state" for pheasant hunting, and 2017 is no exception. Adequate rainfall has contributed to excellent habitat conditions and an overall increase in ringneck abundance for the coming fall. The northeast and southeast corners of the state will provide great opportunities this fall for adding roosters to the game bag.

Kansas continues its comeback in pheasant country since the disastrous drought of 2011 and 2012. With a renowned public access program and strong crowing counts for 2017, Kansas is surely a destination that should be added to the "hit list" for this fall.

Midwest Down, but Not Out

In the upper Midwest, states such as North Dakota and South Dakota witnessed inclement winter weather and a prolonged summer drought that spelled disaster for growing pheasant broods, while Minnesota and Iowa roadside counts showed a decrease in population. Although the news is not favorable, things are not all gloom-and-doom for hunters:

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South Dakota still manages the most robust pheasant population in the world with a preseason population somewhere between 6-7 million pheasants. With ample public access opportunities, blocks of quality habitat will still produce a bumper crop of roosters.

Iowa's roadside count was undoubtedly affected by dry weather – no dew equates to little reason for birds to make an appearance on gravel. Reports from landowners, Pheasants Forever members and agency biologists in the state, suggest the pheasant population is strong for this fall. Additionally, Iowa is preparing for its best quail hunting season since the mid-1980s.

Eastern States Making Haste

East of the Mississippi, states such as Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan have seen gains in wild bird populations for 2017. Pheasants Forever partnership programs - including the Michigan Pheasant Restoration Initiative and Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas in Pennsylvania – are experiencing the positive impact of statewide focus on habitat improvements in pheasant country.

Wisconsin hunters should look forward to increased bird populations for the fall of 2017, particularly in the western counties of Barron, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk and St. Croix. An early spring for the state showed an 82 percent increase in pheasant production for Wisconsin's primary pheasant range, as well as an increase in pheasants broods of 8.8 percent from 2016.

Michigan's mail carrier survey showed an increase in brood numbers (132 in 2017 vs 86 in 2016) and higher numbers than any previous survey in the years of 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2016. Habitat works, and the Michigan Pheasant Restoration Initiative is living proof - hunters can expect increased pheasant opportunities in Michigan this fall

Demonstrating habitat conservation is the nexus to wild pheasant populations, Pheasants Forever joins the Pennsylvania Game Commission in announcing the first-ever youth wild pheasant hunt on the state's Central Susquehanna Wild Pheasant Recovery Area.

Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden Club met at the home of Laurie Mitchell with Pam Rix assisting. Thirteen members answered roll call with their favorite county fair food. Bev Sombke, president, reminded the group about the Fall board meeting in Watertown, September 30, at the Ramkota at 11:00 am. Yard of the week winner for September 10 Rich and JoAnn Krueger, September 17, Bob and Kristie Gibbs and September 24, Spike and Pat Nehls. These will finish the program for the season. The group will decorate main street for fall on Tuesday, September 19. Next meeting will be October 16, at 5:30 pm at the Groton Rehab Center. Linda Anderson and Deb McKiver will host and Deb will give the program. Following the meeting Pam Rix gave the program on "How to catch Fruit Flies."

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Today in Weather History

September 27, 1983: A lightning caused grass fire burned 25,000 acres northwest of Reliance during the evening hours. At its peak, the fire was four miles wide by ten miles long.

September 27, 1985: Snow fell across south central South Dakota from the evening of the 27th until the early afternoon of the 28th. Three to five inches of snow occurred with up to 18 inches reported around Winner. Eight to 12 inches fell around Gregory and Burke.

1816 - A black frost over most of New England kills unripened corn in the north resulting in a year of famine. (David Ludlum)

1822: Using various documents and meteorological observations determined a hurricane moved ashore on this day in South Carolina. One account from Bull Island, South Carolina records the eye passing directly over that location.

1959: Typhoon Vera was the strongest and deadliest typhoon on record to make landfall on the islands of Japan. Damage totals from this typhoon are estimated at \$4.85 billion (USD 2015). An estimated 4,000 deaths occurred from Typhoon Vera. This Category 5 Typhoon first made landfall on September 26 near Shionomisaki on Honshu. Vera transitioned to an extratropical cyclone on September 27, which continued to affect the island for an additional two days.

1959 - A tornado 440 yards in width traveled twenty miles from near Hollow, OK, to western Cherokee County KS. Although a strong tornado, it was very slow moving, and gave a tremendous warning roar, and as a result no one was killed. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - Afternoon highs of 103 degrees at Long Beach, CA, and 105 degrees at the Los Angeles Civic Center were the hottest since September records were established in 1963. Fierce Santa Ana winds accompanying the extreme heat resulted in destructive fires. (The Weather Channel)

1985 - A record early season snowstorm struck the Central High Plains Region. The storm left up to nineteen inches of snow along the Colorado Front Range, and as much as a foot of snow in the High Plains Region. (Storm Data)








1987 - While those at the base of Mount Washington, NH, enjoyed sunny skies and temperatures in the 70s, the top of the mountain was blanketed with 4.7 inches of snow, along with wind gusts to 99 mph, and a temperature of 13 degrees. Severe thunderstorms developed along a cold front in the south central U.S. A thunderstorm west of Noodle TX produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 70 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced large hail in southeastern Wyoming during the afternoon, with tennis ball size hail reported at Cheyenne. Strong winds ushering the cold air into the north central U.S. gusted to 59 mph at Lander WY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Freezing temperatures were reported in the Great Lakes Region and the Ohio Valley. Houghton Lake MI reported a record low of 21 degrees. Thunderstorms in the western U.S. produced wind gusts to 50 mph at Salt Lake City UT, and gusts to 58 mph at Cody WY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Patchy Frost and Patchy Fog then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Partly Sunny then Mostly Sunny and Breezy
High: 72 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 73 °F	Low: 43 °F	High: 68 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 71 °F



Pleasant Conditions Today!



Highs Around 70

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 9/27/2017 5:06 AM Central

Published on: 09/27/2017 at 5:07AM

Tranquil weather conditions today with highs around 70.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 60.5 at 3:11 PM

Low Outside Temp: 47.6 at 1:19 AM

High Gust: 15 mph at 3:51 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 95° in 1952

Record Low: 22° in 1900

Average High: 67°F

Average Low: 41°F

Average Precip in Sept: 1.97

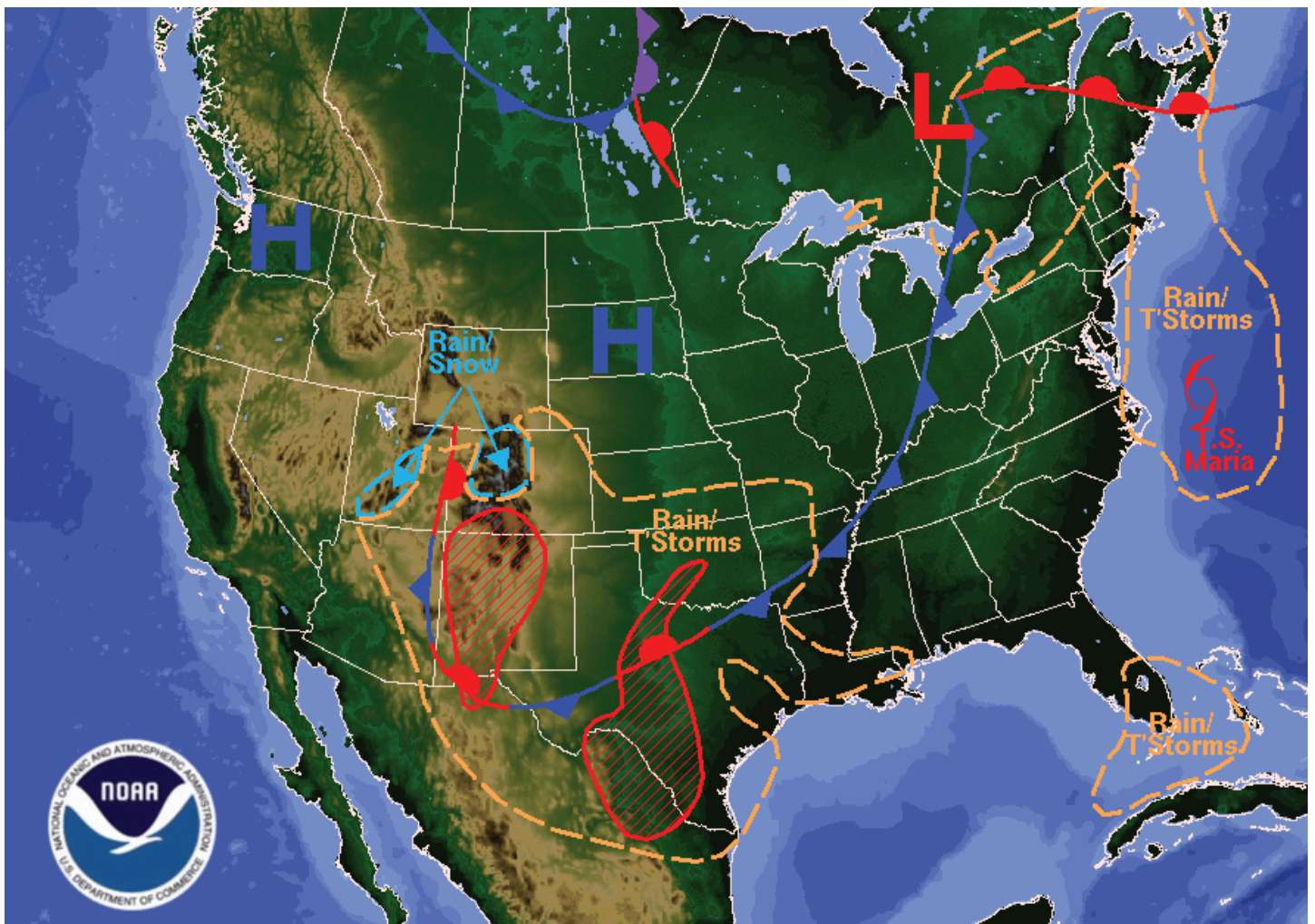
Precip to date in Sept: 3.57

Average Precip to date: 18.26

Precip Year to Date: 13.09

Sunset Tonight: 7:20 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:28 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Sep 27, 2017, issued 4:53 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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PRAISE THE CREATOR!

Years ago a rural farmer was driving his Model "T" into town when it stopped in the middle of a cross-road. He lifted the hood and was amazed at the wires and strange parts he had never bothered to look at previously. Confused, he walked around the car several times then got inside and tried to start it. Again and again he stepped on the starter, the engine would start, run a few seconds and then stop. In frustration he got out once again and slammed the door.

A gentleman approached him in a finely tailored suit, white shirt and tie and said, "Sir, your carburetor is out of adjustment. May I help you?"

Puzzled at the man's appearance and offer to help he said quickly, "What do you know about this car?"

"Oh, I know very much about it," came the reply. "I am Henry Ford and I made your car. Since I made it, I can fix it."

God created the universe from "nothing." Man came from His creative power. Yet, when things go wrong in God's universe among the men He created, men generally look to other men to fix the problem or problems. Research is initiated, heads of state meet and negotiate, and conferences are held with any resolution only lasting for a short time.

Jesus taught us to pray, "Your will, Father, is to be done on earth as it is in heaven." It was God's plan that the planet He created would reflect His will and bring glory to His name. We know, however, that the first man and woman He created refused to follow His plan. Because of their decision all of us are affected by its results – suffering, wars and rumors of wars.

One day we know that He will return to earth, restore His creation and reign over His Kingdom. He will be exalted.

Prayer: May our hearts be encouraged, Lord, as we look forward to the day You will return and become our exalted King. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 46:10b He says, "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

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News from the Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Colome, 25-15, 25-8, 25-14
Avon def. Scotland, 25-22, 25-18, 25-19
Baltic def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-14, 25-14, 25-17
Belle Fourche def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-23, 25-5, 25-14
Beresford def. Lennox, 21-25, 25-16, 25-19, 25-23
Canistota def. Freeman Academy, 25-17, 19-25, 25-20, 18-25, 20-18
Crow Creek def. St. Francis Indian, 25-16, 25-22, 25-13
Dakota Valley def. Bon Homme, 25-13, 25-10, 25-10
Dell Rapids def. McCook Central/Montrose, 22-25, 26-24, 18-25, 25-17, 15-13
DeSmet def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-17, 25-15, 25-17
Edgemont def. Hot Springs, 29-31, 25-18, 25-23, 23-25, 15-12
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Garretson, 25-15, 25-9, 25-11
Ethan def. Bridgewater-Emery, 18-25, 25-21, 28-26, 25-19
Gayville-Volin def. Mitchell Christian, 25-17, 25-15, 26-24
Gregory def. White River, 25-22, 14-25, 25-21, 25-23
Harding County def. Dupree, 25-16, 25-20, 25-19
Herreid/Selby Area def. Edmunds Central, 25-12, 25-10, 25-11
Hill City def. Custer, 25-20, 17-25, 20-25, 25-22, 15-13
Huron def. Brandon Valley, 25-21, 25-18, 25-17
James Valley Christian def. Iroquois, 25-13, 25-2, 25-14
Kadoka Area def. Bennett County, 25-20, 25-18, 25-9
Kimball/White Lake def. Lyman, 25-11, 25-6, 25-8
Lake Preston def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-19, 25-21, 25-22
Langford def. Faulkton, 30-28, 27-29, 23-25, 25-20, 15-11
Lemmon def. Bison, 25-14, 25-18, 25-11
Leola/Frederick def. North Border, 25-17, 25-14, 25-21
McIntosh def. Newell, 25-15, 25-19, 25-8
Menno def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-17, 25-22, 25-21
Milbank def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-10, 25-12, 25-16
Miller def. Chamberlain, 25-13, 25-7, 25-8
Mobridge-Pollock def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-15, 28-26, 25-17
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Platte-Geddes, 25-18, 25-17, 25-14
Northwestern def. Redfield/Doland, 25-15, 25-18, 25-13
Parker def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-12, 25-12, 25-6
Rapid City Stevens def. Rapid City Central, 25-17, 25-12, 25-14
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-20, 25-13, 25-19
Sioux Falls Christian def. Vermillion, 25-12, 25-11, 25-10
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-21, 25-21, 17-25, 15-25, 15-10
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-18, 25-16, 25-20
Sioux Valley def. Flandreau, 25-9, 25-17, 25-23
St. Thomas More def. Douglas, 25-20, 25-9, 25-15
Sully Buttes def. Potter County, 25-17, 16-25, 25-20, 25-21
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Watertown def. Pierre, 19-25, 25-18, 25-12, 18-25, 15-9
Webster def. Waubay/Summit, 20-25, 14-25, 25-20, 26-24, 15-12
West Central def. Canton, 25-13, 25-17, 22-25, 25-18
Yankton def. Brookings, 22-25, 25-17, 25-16, 25-22
Hamlin Triangular
Castlewood def. Deuel, 25-16, 25-14, 25-11
Hamlin def. Castlewood, 25-17, 25-14, 33-31
Hamlin def. Deuel, 25-20, 25-19, 21-25, 25-10

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

01-10-57-66-75, Mega Ball: 4, Megaplier: 4

(one, ten, fifty-seven, sixty-six, seventy-five; Mega Ball: four; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$15 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$66 million

Rapid City business sent bill for cleanup of grease spill

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Firehouse Brewing Company in Rapid City has been charged more than \$2,300 for cleanup costs associated with a cooking oil and grease spill that occurred last month in an alley behind the restaurant.

The spill was reported Aug. 14. City crews spent more than four hours cleaning the alley.

Firehouse Brewing Co. owner Bob Fuchs said someone walking through the alley intentionally knocked over one of the business's barrels. He said it contained less than 20 gallons of discarded cooking grease.

City spokesman Darrell Shoemaker tells the Rapid City Journal that the business wasn't cited for any violations, but it was sent a bill for the cleanup.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Police investigate 3 dead in Lennox home as murder-suicide

LENNOX, S.D. (AP) — Authorities suspect murder-suicide in the deaths of three family members found shot in a home in Lennox.

Lincoln County Sheriff Dennis Johnson says a man, a woman and an 8-year-old boy were found in the home Tuesday morning.

Johnson says the three are related. The Argus Leader reports he told reporters evidence "very strongly suggests" a murder-suicide.

Johnson says the public is not in danger and that crime scene is contained to the house. He says a handgun was found at the scene and at least six shots were fired. The sheriff says dispatchers got a call from a relative about 10 a.m.

Schools in Lennox were locked down briefly after the shooting.

Rapid City ammunition company gets \$50M contract with Navy

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City company has landed a \$50 million federal contract to provide ammunition to the U.S. military.

The Rapid City Journal reports the U.S. Naval Sea Systems Command announced last week that Black Hills Ammunition is contracted to provide 5.56-millimeter long-range ammunition for U.S. combat forces to use.

While the contract is lucrative for the company, the actual quantity of ammunition purchased will likely be much less, said Jeff Hoffman, one of Black Hills Ammunition's co-owners.

The ammunition company will absorb production expenses over the contract's five-year length. The government won't necessarily purchase as much ammunition as it requires the company to produce.

"As a contractor, we're obligated to be prepared to deliver that quantity should the government order it," Hoffman said. "The government is only obligated to order a small fraction of that."

Hoffman said that although his company may not ultimately reap the full \$50 million in the contract, the deal still provides financial stability and a resulting boost to the local economy over the next five years.

"We take good care of our people, and contracts like this allow us to be able to do that," Hoffman said.

Black Hills Ammunition designs, manufactures and markets ammunition for weapons ranging from sporting firearms to military sniper rifles. It began developing 5.56-millimeter ammunition more than two decades ago, with their first federal contract coming in 1996 to provide for Army sharpshooters participating in inter-service marksmanship competitions.

Hoffman said word spread in the military of his company's ammunition, eventually leading to federal contracts with all four military branches within three years.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Tribal leader irked by state deal with Dakota Access builder

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The leader of the Standing Rock Sioux and an attorney for private North Dakota landowners believe the builder of the Dakota Access pipeline got off too lightly when it settled allegations by state regulators that it violated rules during construction.

North Dakota's Public Service Commission, which could have fined Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners hundreds of thousands of dollars but didn't, has defended the agreement, saying its provisions are more meaningful than a fine. ETP says the agreement proves the company is a good corporate citizen.

The PSC last year accused Energy Transfer Partners of not reporting to regulators the discovery of American Indian artifacts, which were not disturbed. The commission also was investigating whether crews removed too many trees and mishandled soil while laying pipe.

The agreement approved last week calls for ETP to help develop and promote an industry manual for handling artifacts discoveries, to plant many more trees along the pipeline route than the company had proposed, and to address any landowner concerns about soil remediation.

ETP is not required to admit any liability, which irks Standing Rock Sioux Chairman Dave Archambault, who believes the state is allowing the company to "fool everybody."

"The costs of their unlawful behavior, their unjust behavior, are insignificant compared to what their gains are going to be" from the \$3.8 billion pipeline, he said. The pipeline began moving North Dakota oil through South Dakota and Iowa to a distribution point in Illinois on June 1.

Private landowners' attorney Derrick Braaten said a fine might have sent a better message about following state rules. He said he's "nervous about the message this sends to other applicants, particularly because I have landowners with interests in lands affected by other pipelines with siting applications before the PSC."

The settlement came after weeks of private negotiations and no public hearings.

"This is all disturbing to me," Archambault said. "It seems like when the tribes speak, nobody listens, but when somebody else says something, the state listens."

Commissioner Brian Kroshus has estimated it will cost ETP more than \$100,000 to meet the terms of the

settlement. Commissioner Julie Fedorchak said after the commission approved the deal that "We weren't looking for the death penalty here. We wanted to hold the company responsible for fulfilling their obligations and commitments to the citizens."

ETP spokeswoman Lisa Dillinger said the agreement is evidence that the company strives to be "a valued member of the communities through which we pass and a good business partner with the state." She said the company also has donated \$20,000 to the State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation for technology upgrades. That was not part of the settlement terms.

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

Officials: Man shot by deputy had pointed pellet rifle

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Minnehaha County sheriff's officials say a man shot by a deputy over the weekend had pointed a pellet rifle at officers who responded to a domestic disturbance near Sioux Falls.

Minnehaha County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Michelle Boyd said at a briefing Tuesday officials responded to a mobile home park about 1:20 a.m. Saturday on a report of an intoxicated individual who was throwing things. Boyd says Christopher Sanftleben came out of the home and threatened officers with a pellet rifle. Boyd says a deputy fired six rounds with one bullet hitting Sanftleben. She said officers began life-saving measures.

Authorities did not disclose the extent of the man's injuries.

Sheriff Mike Milstead says the deputy who fired the shots is returning to duty. A report from state investigators is expected in 30 days.

Soybean and corn harvests get underway in South Dakota

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The soybean and corn harvests are underway in South Dakota, though less than half of both crops are rated in good to excellent condition after a summer of drought.

The weekly crop report from the federal Agriculture Department says about 1 percent of the corn crop and 4 percent of the soybeans are harvested, well behind the average pace.

Winter wheat seeding has reached the halfway mark, near the average. About 6 percent of the crop has emerged.

In the ranching community, pasture and range conditions are rated 57 percent poor or very poor. Stock water supplies are 54 percent in those categories.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor map shows nearly three-fourths of South Dakota still in some stage of drought.

Suspect pleads not guilty in fatal overdose death in Lead

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — A New York state man has pleaded not guilty in a fatal overdose death in South Dakota.

Authorities charged 27-year-old Derek Kenny, of Setauket, New York, after a 14-month investigation into the June 2016 death of a 24-year-old Grace Fitzgerald, of Lead.

The Rapid City Journal reports that Kenny recently was extradited to South Dakota and pleaded not guilty to manslaughter and drug charges. He is free after posting \$50,000 bond.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Standoff outside Sioux Falls library ends with arrest

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A long standoff between police and a man who claimed to be armed outside the downtown Sioux Falls library ended with his surrender.

Police say they were looking for the 43-year-old parole violator and found him sitting in a car in the library parking lot about 1 p.m. Monday. Tactical officers were called when the man told police he was armed. The Argus Leader says a downtown block was closed as dozens of police cars and SWAT vehicles filled the street. Police sent one sniper to the top of a parking ramp at the nearby Holiday Inn.

Officers negotiated with the man for more than three hours before he peacefully surrendered. Police searched his vehicle for weapons, but it wasn't immediately clear if he had any.

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

Pennington County commissioner fined for violating ordinance

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Pennington County commissioner who disagrees with government oversight of septic systems has been convicted of violating a county zoning ordinance.

Seventy-seven-year-old George Ferebee after a five-hour trial on Monday was found guilty by a judge and fined \$200 for maintaining on his rural Hill City property a septic system that lacked an operating permit.

Ferebee had fought the charge for two years. He said during his sentencing that he still believes the zoning ordinance is unconstitutional. His attorney indicated he'll appeal.

2nd person dies of injuries suffered in Edmunds County crash

IPSWICH, S.D. (AP) — A second person has died as a result of a fiery weekend crash in Edmunds County. The Highway Patrol says a pickup truck eastbound on U.S. Highway 12 crossed the centerline about midday Sunday and collided with a westbound car.

The car caught fire, and the 24-year-old driver was declared dead at the scene west of Ipswich. Authorities say the 62-year-old driver of the pickup died of his injuries later in a Sioux Falls hospital. Neither man was immediately identified.

Saudi women will be allowed to drive in the kingdom in 2018

By **ABDULLAH AL-SHIHRI and AYA BATRAWY, Associated Press**

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Saudi Arabia's surprise decision to grant women the right to drive in the conservative kingdom marks a significant expansion in women's rights, but activists said Wednesday it is also only the first step in a long list of demands for equality.

Saudi Arabia was the only country in the world to ban women from driving. The royal decree late Tuesday comes into effect next summer, but it comes nearly three decades after women began agitating for the right to drive.

As recently as 2013, dozens of women uploaded videos online of themselves behind the wheel of a car during a campaign launched by Saudi rights activists. Some videos showed families and male drivers giving women a "thumbs-up," suggesting many were ready for the change.

While women in other Muslim countries drove freely, the kingdom's blanket ban attracted negative publicity. Neither Islamic law nor Saudi traffic law explicitly prohibited women from driving, but they were not issued licenses and were detained if they attempted to drive.

The decision to change course and grant women licenses was praised by the White House, which said President Donald Trump views the change as "a positive step toward promoting the rights and opportunities of women in Saudi Arabia."

The secretary-general of the United Nations Antonio Guterres described it as "an important step in the right direction." British Prime Minister Theresa May also hailed the decision, saying the empowerment of women around the world "is key to nations' economic development."

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Prince Khaled bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington and the king's son, said that letting women drive is a "huge step forward" and that "society is ready."

"This is the right time to do the right thing," he told reporters in the U.S. Women will be allowed to obtain licenses without the permission of a male relative.

Aziza Youssef, a professor at King Saud University and one of Saudi Arabia's most vocal women's rights activists, said women were "happy" but also that the change was "the first step in a lot of rights we are waiting for."

"I am really excited. This is a good step forward for women's rights," she said speaking to The Associated Press from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi history offers many examples of women being punished simply for operating a vehicle.

In 1990, 50 women were arrested for driving and lost their passports and their jobs. More than 20 years later, a woman was sentenced in 2011 to 10 lashes for driving, though the late King Abdullah overturned the sentence.

As recently as late 2014, two Saudi women were detained for more than two months for defying the ban on driving when one of them attempted to cross the Saudi border with a license from neighboring United Arab Emirates in an act of defiance.

The decree indicated that women will not be allowed to drive immediately. A committee will be formed to look into how to implement the new order, which is slated to take effect in June 2018.

For years, the kingdom has incrementally granted women more rights and visibility, including participation in the Olympic Games in London and Rio, positions on the country's top consultative council and the right to run and vote in local elections in 2015.

Despite these openings, Saudi women remain largely subject to the whims of men due to guardianship laws, which bar them from obtaining a passport, traveling abroad or marrying without the consent of a male relative. Women who attempt to flee abusive families have also faced imprisonment or been forced into shelters.

King Salman and his young son and heir, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, tested the waters over the weekend by allowing women into the country's main stadium in Riyadh for annual celebrations of the nation's founding. The stadium had previously been reserved for all-male crowds to watch sporting events.

Women and men also flooded a main street in the capital, bopping their heads to pop music as green lights flickered overhead in the color of the flag. The scene was shocking for a city in which gender segregation is strictly enforced and where women are seldom seen walking the streets, much less mixing in close quarters with males.

The 32-year-old crown prince has also opened the country to more entertainment, allowing musical concerts and even a Comic-Con event as part of a wide-ranging push to reform the economy and society. This year, the government announced that for the first time girls in public schools would be allowed to play sports and have access to physical education.

The decree stated that the majority of Muslim scholars on the country's highest clerical council agreed that Islam allows women the right to drive.

However, many of those same ultraconservative clerics, who wield power and influence in the judiciary and education sectors, have also spoken out in the past against women driving, playing sports or entering the workforce. They argue such acts corrupt society and lead to sin.

One Saudi cleric even stated in 2013 that driving could affect a woman's ovaries and hurt her fertility. That same year, around 150 clerics and religious scholars held a rare protest outside the Saudi king's palace against efforts by women seeking the right to drive.

Almost immediately after the news broke, an Arabic hashtag on Twitter was trending that said: "The women of my house won't drive."

Women in Saudi Arabia have long had to rely on male relatives to get to work or run errands, complicating government efforts to boost household incomes as lower oil prices force austerity measures. The more affluent have male drivers. In major cities, women can access ride-hailing apps such as Uber and Careem.

Saudi rights activist Sahar Nasief, who lives in in the Red Sea city of Jiddah, has for years been involved in the campaign for women to drive. She said she couldn't believe the news when her son called to tell her. She immediately opened Saudi state TV to confirm if it was true.

"I am very optimistic about the future," she said. "Things have to change. People are demanding it. Young people don't want to live the way we lived. They want to live better. They want to live how other people are living."

— Batrawy reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Iranian soldier beheaded by IS in Syria mourned as an icon

By **NASSER KARIMI, Associated Press**

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's supreme leader and thousands of others Wednesday mourned a young Revolutionary Guard soldier beheaded by the Islamic State group, a killing that has struck a nerve within the Islamic Republic as its forces continue to suffer casualties in Iraq and Syria.

The slaying of 25-year-old Mohsen Hojaji captured the imagination of many in Iran, a Shiite-ruled nation whose national religion considers as acts of mourning and acknowledging sacrifices a sacred act. Since his death, artists and others have memorialized Hojaji in videos and paintings, while discussion of his slaying has muted domestic criticism of Iran's foreign military operations, especially in Syria.

His funeral in Tehran brought Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who prayed near his Iranian-flag-wrapped casket. Mourners later lay flowers atop his coffin, while on the street soldiers with the paramilitary Guard mixed with men wearing black and women in long black chadors. Many carried drawn portraits of Hojaji, while others unfurled the black flags common during Muharram, a Shiite mourning period.

Many current and former government officials, including parliament speaker Ali Larijani and former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, attended the funeral. Politics entered the mourning as well, as a cleric on hand alleged Israel and the U.S. were behind the Islamic State group, drawing cries of "Death to Israel" and "down with the U.S." from the audience.

"We swear on blood of Hojaji we will not rest until destroying Israel," cleric Ali Reza Pahanhian said from the podium. "Israel, we swear on the head of Hojaji that we will behead your leaders. Guards! Prepare your missiles for annihilation of Israel."

Hojaji is one of many Guard members and volunteers to be killed in Iraq while advising Shiite militias battling the Islamic State group or in Syria, where Iranian forces backed embattled President Bashar Assad. More than 2,000 have been killed, roughly half of them foreign troops including Afghans and others.

But while the Islamic State group tried to use Hojaji's capture and subsequent beheading as propaganda, many in Iran saw it differently. An image of Hojaji from an Islamic State video, showing him stoically standing after his capture with smoke rising behind him in the Syrian desert, inspired a sense of patriotism in an Iran in which some have grown tired of its military operations abroad.

"Look at the photo, there is no sign of weakness despite him being shot and captured," his 23-year-old widow Zahra Abbasi earlier told Iranian media. "There is no fear in the eyes. It is all bravery, courage. He is like a mountain."

Graphic artist Hassan Rouholamini took the frame and reimagined it with Hojaji being welcomed by the third Shiite saint, Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. Hussein himself was beheaded at the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq in the 7th century, an event Iranians will mark with this week's coming Ashoura commemoration.

Khamenei himself even referred to Hojaji as a "dear martyr" in a speech.

"God emboldened Hojaji as an evidence of numerous young people" willing to fight and be killed defending Islam, the supreme leader said.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate cleric who himself criticized the Guard in his re-election campaign, also praised Hojaji for showing how Iranian people are ready to sacrifice themselves for the greater good.

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Hojaji's death has caused a rare unity across hard-liners, moderates and reformists within Iran. Many activists, artists, athletes, celebrities and politicians, including Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, have offered condolences and expressed sympathy.

His death also has silenced some criticism of Iran's foreign military operations, especially in Syria. In May, Tehran's former reformist mayor, Gholamhossein Karbashi, said in a public speech that diplomacy rather than military presence can solve the problems in Syria.

Hojaji's body was first taken to Iran's holy city of Mashhad for a blessing in the shrine of Imam Reza, the eighth Shiite Imam. He will be interred Thursday in his hometown of Najafabad, some 400 kilometers (250 miles) south of Tehran.

Associated Press writer Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

In Alabama, a McConnell rebuke, a Trump miscalculation

By **BILL BARROW** and **KIM CHANDLER**, Associated Press

HOMEWOOD, Ala. (AP) — A firebrand Alabama jurist wrested a U.S. Senate nomination from an appointed incumbent backed by millions of dollars from national Republicans, adding a new chapter Tuesday to an era of outsider politics that ushered Donald Trump into the White House yet leaves his presidency and his party in disarray.

Roy Moore's 9-point victory over Sen. Luther Strange, backed by the White House and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill, ranks as a miscalculation and temporary embarrassment for the president; it's a more consequential rebuke for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who Moore said should step aside as GOP floor chief.

The Kentucky Republican already is struggling to capitalize on his narrow 52-48 majority. He failed this week to deliver a long-promised health care overhaul, with equally perilous fights looming on taxes, the budget, immigration and the nation's credit limit. Now, McConnell may also face a 2018 midterm election cycle complicated by GOP primary challengers who, like Moore, make the Senate leader an albatross for establishment candidates, including incumbents Dean Heller of Nevada and Jeff Flake of Arizona.

Moore, the famed "Ten Commandments judge" twice removed from elected judicial office for defying federal courts, declared his nomination a message to Washington leaders "that their wall has been cracked and will now fall," though he excepted the president from his ire. "Together we can make America great," he said, echoing Trump's campaign slogan.

In Mississippi, state lawmaker Chris McDaniel, who nearly defeated Sen. Thad Cochran in 2014, called Moore's win an "incredibly inspiring" blueprint that leaves him on the cusp of challenging Sen. Roger Wicker in 2018. "We know Mitch McConnell was rejected tonight — and Roger Wicker is just another part of Mitch McConnell's leadership apparatus," McDaniel told The Associated Press, saying he expects conservative challengers to emerge in other states, as well.

Trump and McConnell quickly closed ranks behind Moore after Strange conceded, underscoring their desire to keep the seat in Republican hands. Trump tweeted congratulations to Moore after the win. "Luther Strange started way back & ran a good race. Roy, WIN in Dec!" he said.

Three tweets supporting Strange on Monday and Tuesday disappeared from Trump's Twitter account. The White House didn't immediately respond with an explanation. On Wednesday morning Trump sent a tweet praising Moore.

"Spoke to Roy Moore of Alabama last night for the first time. Sounds like a really great guy who ran a fantastic race," said Trump's tweet.

The Senate Leadership Fund, a McConnell-aligned political action committee, also pledged to support Moore after spending \$9 million on Strange's behalf.

A West Point graduate and Vietnam veteran, Moore now is the favorite over Democrat Doug Jones in a Dec. 12 special election, though Republicans quietly worry the sometimes controversial Moore could yield an uncomfortably close race to fill the seat previously held by Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

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Trump, meanwhile, must reconcile being the president who promised to “drain the swamp” yet endorsed and campaigned alongside Strange, 64, a lobbyist-turned-politician, in lieu of Moore, a 70-year-old figure steeped in anti-establishment fervor. Adding intrigue was the fact that Strange got his Senate post by being promoted from his job as Alabama attorney general by a now-convicted former governor whom Strange’s office had been investigating for corruption.

Trump’s choice left him opposite from his campaign architect and departed White House adviser Steve Bannon, who campaigned for Moore and introduced the nominee to his supporters Tuesday night as revelers watched returns showing Moore victorious in 63 of Alabama’s 67 counties.

Bannon cast Moore’s romp as a win for Trump, regardless of the president’s Strange endorsement. “Who is sovereign, the people or the money? Alabama answered today,” Bannon said.

Mississippi’s McDaniel said conservatives never blamed Trump for taking sides. “We supported Donald Trump because he was an agent of change, and he’s still an agent of change,” McDaniel said. “In this instance, he must have been given bad advice to retain this particular swamp creature.”

And it’s worth noting that Trump turned his trip to Alabama last week into a national spectacle having nothing to do with Strange or Moore, as the president blasted professional athletes who protest during the national anthem. The fallout cemented Trump’s bond with his core supporters and raised questions about how interested Trump really was in the Alabama race.

Elsewhere in Republican ranks, there are warnings not to make the Alabama results more than one state’s choice.

Republican pollster Whit Ayres, who has worked for Senate campaigns across the country, said Trump learns the same lesson his predecessor, Barack Obama, learned watching Democrats lose control of Congress and then seeing Trump defeat his chosen successor, Hillary Clinton. “You can’t just transfer the popularity of your brand to another candidate,” Ayres said.

As for Strange, Ayres noted the freshman senator was facing voters for the first time since being appointed by a governor who eventually resigned in disgrace. “No other Republican Senate incumbent will carry that baggage,” Ayres said.

In defeat, Strange did not directly confront those variables, telling a subdued crowd in suburban Birmingham he was proud of his team’s effort and grateful both to Trump and his Senate colleagues, but befuddled by the campaign he’d just concluded.

“We’re dealing with a political environment that I’ve never had any experience with,” Strange said. “The political seas and winds in this country right now ... are very hard to navigate, very hard to understand.”

Chandler reported from Montgomery, Alabama.

Follow Barrow and Chandler on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/BillBarrowAP> and <https://twitter.com/StatehouseKim> .

Congress at crossroads after another GOP health care failure

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress is at a crossroads after Republicans’ stinging failure to repeal Barack Obama’s health care law. But what’s next — more partisan conflict, or a pragmatic shift toward cooperation?

Unless Republicans and Democrats in Congress can work together — and bring along an often unpredictable President Donald Trump — political conflict over health care may spread. Bipartisan talks on legislation to stabilize the health law’s shaky insurance markets are on again, but time is short and there’s no guarantee of success.

Adding to concerns: Congress has yet to renew funding for programs that traditionally enjoy broad support, such as children’s health insurance and community health centers, despite approaching deadlines.

Feelings were raw Tuesday after Senate GOP leaders announced they would not take their latest “repeal

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and replace" bill to the floor for lack of support. But some lawmakers said it's still possible to bridge the partisan gap on a limited set of priority issues.

Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., said he would resume efforts to reach a bipartisan deal with Democratic Sen. Patty Murray of Washington to stabilize markets for individual insurance policies that 18 million people rely on. More than half of those consumers are covered under the health law.

Alexander is chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee, and Murray is his Democratic counterpart. He runs the risk of being accused by some fellow Republicans of trying to "bailout Obamacare."

Murray is under pressure from fellow Democrats not to make concessions to Alexander, who is seeking changes that would ease the path for states to get waivers from some of the law's requirements, potentially leading to plans with lower premiums.

"I'm still concerned about the next two years, and Congress has an opportunity to slow down premium increases in 2018, begin to lower them in 2019, and do our best to make sure there are no counties where people have zero options to buy health insurance," Alexander said in a statement.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, who has worked with Republicans on a range of health care issues, said cooperation is the only way to avoid creating needless problems for constituents.

"You recognize the opportunities that are in front of you," said Wyden, ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee, which oversees health care funding. "My hope is we can come together."

Wyden's list includes renewing the Children's Health Insurance Program for 9 million kids, whose funding expires this week, as well as short-term action to stabilize the Affordable Care Act's insurance markets, by guaranteeing subsidies for copays and deductibles. Experts say that could cut expected double-digit premium increases in many states by about half.

The missing ingredient seems to be leadership, say outside observers.

Neither Trump, nor House Speaker Paul Ryan, nor Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has given clear approval for a bipartisan approach. Some Republican and Democratic governors have called for a health care reset that would involve both parties working together on a limited agenda, but their suggestion hasn't been embraced in Washington.

"The question is whether you can you forge a coalition that doesn't include either the hard right or the hard left," said GOP health economist Gail Wilensky. "I have not been able to answer who would provide the leadership for such an effort. Neither the leadership in the House or the Senate has embraced the notion of trying to forge a bipartisan coalition, and it is very hard to move legislation without that."

Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., said Tuesday that Trump at a meeting with lawmakers raised the possibility of seeking a deal with Democrats. There's no hint what that might entail.

If anything, Democrats have been moving to the left after Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders relaunched his "Medicare for all" plan recently. Under Sanders' plan, government would pay for medical services, replacing employers and insurers. Some liberal activists argue that support for "single-payer" should be a qualifying test for Democratic candidates in 2018 and beyond.

Other Democrats say single-payer would lead to political defeat, because of the massive tax increases required.

"It's not going to happen," said former congressman Henry Waxman, one of the main authors of the Obama law. "You can talk about it, and plant a flag, and say that's where you'd like to go, but in the meantime people need their insurance coverage."

Wednesday is the deadline for insurers to sign contracts to offer policies for 2018 on the health law's markets. Sign-up season starts Nov. 1. About half the 18 million Americans with individual policies get no subsidies under the health law. Without congressional action some are facing premiums that rival a mortgage payment.

Saturday is the deadline for Congress to act on children's health insurance and community health center funding. Brief delays are not expected to cause disruptions, but a protracted holdup would.

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. OUTSIDER POLITICS THAT BENEFITED TRUMP NOW LEAVES GOP IN DISARRAY

The president and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell backed Alabama Sen. Luther Strange, but Republican voters gave firebrand jurist Roy Moore the victory in a primary runoff.

2. CONGRESS AT CROSSROADS AFTER HEALTH CARE FAILURE

After Republicans stumbled again in their drive to repeal "Obamacare," the question remains whether bitterly divided lawmakers can work together in a bipartisan way.

3. WHAT IS TRUMP'S VISION FOR TAX CODE

The grand plan would cut taxes for individuals and corporations, simplify the tax system, and likely double the standard deduction used by most Americans.

4. BIG STAKES IN FIGHT OVER POLITICAL MAPS

The big question at the heart of next week's Supreme Court clash is whether there can be too much politics in the inherently political task of drawing electoral districts.

5. WHERE WOMEN WILL FINALLY BE PERMITTED TO DRIVE

Saudi women will be allowed to get behind the wheel for the first time next summer, marking a significant expansion of women's rights in the ultra-conservative kingdom.

6. A MINI CITY RISES IN MEXICO

The Francisco Kino Elementary School has become a shelter for people displaced by last week's earthquake, with medical care, haircuts and massages, but the residents' frustrations are growing.

7. ESCALATION SEEN IN POISONING OF AFRICAN WILDLIFE

Conservationists say easy access to agricultural chemicals and the surging illegal market for animal parts are putting a number of already beleaguered species under more pressure.

8. WHY OUTER BANKS REMAIN A CONCERN

The barrier islands off the North Carolina coast are only getting a glancing blow from a weakening Tropical Storm Maria, but officials still warn of severe beach erosion.

9. 'THE SPIN STOPS HERE'

It felt like a flashback on Fox News Channel, with Bill O'Reilly looking into the camera and declaring his famous catchphrase as a guest on "Hannity."

10. COLLEGE BASKETBALL TAKES BIG HIT WITH ARRESTS

Federal charges against assistant coaches for bribes and kickbacks will have immediate and potentially long-term impacts on the programs involved.

Scope of Puerto Rico damage so wide that US aid hard to see

By BEN FOX and DANICA COTO, Associated Press

MONTEBELLO, Puerto Rico (AP) — Relatives helped Maribel Valentin Espino find shelter when Hurricane Maria roared through her community in northern Puerto Rico. Neighbors formed volunteer brigades to cut fallen trees and clear twisty mountain roads after the storm had passed. Now, friends and a local cattle ranch provide the water they need to survive in the tropical heat.

Valentin and her husband say they have not seen anyone from the Puerto Rican government, much less the Federal Emergency Management Agency, since the storm tore up the island Sept. 20, killing at least 16 people and leaving nearly all 3.4 million people in Puerto Rico without power and most without water.

"People say FEMA is going to help us," Valentin said Tuesday as she showed Associated Press journalists around the sodden wreckage of her home. "We're waiting."

Many others are also waiting for help from anyone from the federal or Puerto Rican government. But the scope of the devastation is so broad, and the relief effort so concentrated in San Juan, that many people from outside the capital say they have received little to no help.

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Valentin, her husband and teenage son live in one such area, Montebello, a 20-minute drive into what used to be lushly forested mountains near the northern coastal municipality of Manati. Hurricane Maria's Category 4 winds stripped the trees bare and scattered them like matchsticks. "It seemed like a monster," she recalled.

The roads are passable now but the community is still isolated. "Nobody has visited, not from the government, not from the city, no one," said Antonio Velez, a 64-year-old who has lived there his entire life.

The same complaint echoed throughout the southeast coastal town of Yabucoa, the first town Maria hit as it barreled across the island with 155 mph winds.

"Nothing, nothing, nothing," said 58-year-old retiree Angel Luis Rodriguez. "I've lost everything, and no one has shown up to see if anyone lives here."

At a nearby river, dozens of people gathered to bathe and wash clothes as they grumbled about the lack of aid.

"There's been no help from the mayor or from the federal government," said 64-year-old retiree Maria Rodriguez as she held a coconut in her right hand and took sips from it. "After Georges hit us (in 1998), they responded quickly. But now? Nothing. We need water and food."

Nearby, one girl engaged in a thumb war with a friend as she filled an empty water bottle with her other hand. Downstream, a woman sat cross-legged in the water behind a friend and helped wash her hair.

The recovery in the first week since the storm has largely been a do-it-yourself affair. People collect water from wells and streams, clear roads and repair their own homes when they are not waiting in day-long lines for gasoline and diesel. For most, the only visible sign of authority are police officers directing traffic, a critical service because traffic lights are out across the island.

"I have seen a lot of helicopters go by. I assume those are people from FEMA," said Jesus Argilagos, who lives in Manati and works at a grocery store that is only open part of the day because of the power crisis. "People get pissed off because they see them going back and forth and not doing anything."

There are several thousand U.S. federal employees in Puerto Rico helping with the recovery effort. They are most visible in San Juan, where officials with FEMA, Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection have a presence at hotels that before the storm served tourists in the Condado neighborhood or at the convention center that has become a staging ground for relief efforts.

Federal workers supplied diesel to generators at hospitals and delivered desperately needed food and water to hard-hit communities across the island. They have repaired the air traffic control systems and power at the airport, which is receiving about 100 flights a day but is still far from normal operations. U.S. agents have also provided security across the island and the Coast Guard has worked with local authorities to restore the sea ports, a vital link because Puerto Rico is almost completely dependent on imports.

In addition, teams from the Army Corps of Engineers are helping to repair the electricity grid and to inspect and look for ways to avert the collapse of a dam near the western town of Quebradillas that has developed a crack and that officials have said could potentially fail. And personnel from Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs have provided care and helped evacuate people from Puerto Rico with chronic medical conditions.

Teams also were scheduled to visit the central mountain town of Aibonito, which was cut off from the rest of the island for five days. Many people began rationing their food and water supplies as they dwindled, unclear of when they would have contact with the outside world.

"We thought somebody was going to stop by," said Ana Lidia Mendoza, a 48-year-old cook at a barbecue restaurant who lost part of her roof. "They told us that we had to stay calm."

Gov. Ricardo Rossello and Resident Commissioner Jennifer Gonzalez, the island's representative in Congress, have said they intend to seek more than a billion dollars in federal assistance and they have praised the response to the disaster by President Donald Trump, who plans to visit Puerto Rico next week, as well as FEMA Administrator Brock Long.

"I am confident that they understand the seriousness of the situation," the governor said Tuesday.

Still, it is hard to avoid the fact that the response looks different than previous ones. After hurricanes in Louisiana, Texas and Florida, waves of power company trucks from other states descended in long

convoys, something that is obviously not possible on an island 1,000 miles to the southeast of the mainland. After the devastating earthquake in Haiti in January 2010, the U.S. military sent ships and the skies seemed to be filled with heavy-lift helicopters and planes carrying emergency relief, though the scale of that disaster was far worse.

Hurricane Maria was the strongest hurricane to hit Puerto Rico in nearly 100 years and officials say the cost of recovery will dwarf that of the punishing Hurricane Georges in 1998. Whatever the final bill, Valentin just hopes it will factor in people like her. "If FEMA helps us, we are going to build again," she said.

Trump, GOP roll out tax plan; cuts rates, doubles deduction

By **MARCY GORDON** and **ANDREW TAYLOR**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans are rolling out a wide-ranging plan to cut taxes for individuals and corporations, simplify the tax system, and likely double the standard deduction used by most Americans.

Months in the making, the plan meets a political imperative for Republicans to deliver an overhaul of the U.S. tax code after the failure of the health care repeal.

The public reveal of the plan was set for Wednesday. The day before, details emerged on Capitol Hill while Trump personally appealed to House Republicans and Democrats at the White House to get behind his proposal.

"We will cut taxes tremendously for the middle class. Not just a little bit but tremendously," Trump said as he met with members of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. He predicted jobs "will be coming back in because we have a non-competitive tax structure right now and we're going to go super competitive."

Among the details: repeal of the tax on multimillion-dollar estates, a steep reduction in the rate corporations pay from 35 percent to 20 percent and potentially four tax brackets, down from the current seven. The current top rate for individuals, those earning more than \$418,000 a year, is 39.6 percent.

The goal, the architects say, is a simpler tax code that would spur economic growth and make U.S. companies more competitive with overseas rivals. Delivering on the top legislative goal will be crucial for Republicans intent on holding onto their congressional majorities in next year's midterm elections.

The tax overhaul plan assembled by the White House and GOP leaders aims at the first major revamp of the tax system in three decades. It would deliver on a major Trump campaign pledge.

The outlines of the plan were described Tuesday by GOP officials who demanded anonymity to disclose private deliberations.

The plan would likely cut the tax rate for the wealthiest Americans from 39.6 percent to 35 percent. A new surcharge on wealthy taxpayers might soften the appearance of the wealthiest Americans and big corporations benefiting from generous tax cuts.

Republicans already were picking at the framework, pointing up how divisions within GOP ranks can complicate efforts to overhaul taxes as has happened with the series of moves to repeal the Obama health care law.

The White House said Trump planned to point to Indiana as a model for cutting taxes and regulations when he outlines his overhaul plan at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis on Wednesday.

Trump will cite Indiana's time under Vice President Mike Pence, the state's former governor, as an example of how a tax revamp can produce economic growth. A senior White House official said Trump will tell supporters that "it's time for Washington to learn from the wisdom of Indiana." The official spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of the formal announcement.

The trip will offer a bipartisan flavor as well. Indiana Sen. Joe Donnelly, a Democrat, said he would travel with Trump on Air Force One to the event. Donnelly is running for re-election in 2018 and is a top target for Republicans in next year's mid-term elections.

The proposal was crafted behind closed doors over months by top White House economic officials, GOP congressional leaders and the Republican heads of tax-writing panels in the House and Senate. Trump

and the Republicans were putting the final touches on the plan when the Democrats were brought in. A senior House Democrat saw it as the opening of negotiations.

Trump had previously said he wanted a 15 percent rate for corporations, but House Speaker Paul Ryan has called that impractically low and has said it would risk adding to the soaring \$20 trillion national debt.

Trump said Tuesday some of the components included doubling the standard deduction used by individuals and married couples, and increasing the child tax credit. Most Americans would be able to file their taxes on a single page. "We must make our tax code simple and fair. It's too complicated," Trump said.

Some conservative GOP lawmakers, meanwhile, dug in their heels on the shape of the plan.

Rep. Mark Meadows, head of the House Freedom Caucus, said he'd vote against legislation if it provided for a corporate tax rate over 20 percent, a rate for small businesses higher than 25 percent, or if it fails to double the standard deduction.

"That's the red line for me," Meadows said at a forum of conservative lawmakers. He noted he was speaking personally, not as head of the conservative group.

The Democrats have insisted that any tax relief should go to the middle class, not the wealthiest. Tax cuts shouldn't add to the ballooning debt, they say.

Rep. Richard Neal of Massachusetts, the top Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, came away from the White House meeting in a negotiating mood. "This is when the process gets kicked off," Neal told reporters at the Capitol.

The rate for wealthiest taxpayers shouldn't be reduced, he said.

Still, there may be room to negotiate over the Republicans' insistence on repealing the estate tax, Neal indicated, since "there are other things you can do with it" to revise it, short of complete elimination.

Associated Press writer Ken Thomas contributed to this report.

Big stakes in high court fight over partisan political maps

By MARK SHERMAN and SCOTT BAUER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats and Republicans are poised for a Supreme Court fight about political line-drawing with the potential to alter the balance of power across a country starkly divided between the two parties.

The big question at the heart of next week's high court clash is whether there can be too much politics in the inherently political task of drawing electoral districts. The Supreme Court has never struck down a districting plan because it was too political.

The test case comes from Wisconsin, where Democratic voters sued after Republicans drew political maps in 2011 that entrenched their hold on power in a state that is essentially evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans.

"It could portend massive changes in our electoral system," Washington lawyer Christopher Landau said, if the court for the first time imposes limits on extreme partisan gerrymandering, or redistricting. Courts have struck down racially discriminatory maps for decades.

Wisconsin Republicans controlled the redistricting process that followed the once-every-decade census because they held the governor's office and both houses of the legislature. They worked in secret to fashion precise, computer-generated maps and won approval on a party-line vote.

The results in three elections held under those maps have almost perfectly aligned with their predictions, even in 2012, when Democratic President Barack Obama carried the state. Democratic legislative candidates won a majority of the vote statewide then, but wound up as the minority party in the State Assembly.

"I don't want anybody, any party, to be in full control," said Emily Bunting, an organic farmer from western Wisconsin who joined the lawsuit. "I want fair elections, is what I want. I don't think a Democratic gerrymander is any better than a Republican one. I think that issue needs to be addressed."

A handful of Republican elected officials, including Sen. John McCain of Arizona and Gov. John Kasich of Ohio, have joined in the call for the court to rein in extreme partisan gerrymandering.

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"From our vantage point, we see wasted votes and silenced voices. We see hidden power. And we see a correctable problem," McCain and Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse said in a Supreme Court brief.

But the parties are otherwise sharply divided, with Republicans arguing that courts should not be involved in the competition between the parties to wring gains out of redrawn electoral maps. Texas Solicitor General Scott Keller told the justices that "political competition is a necessary component of legislative-controlled redistricting."

A three-judge court in Wisconsin, though, agreed with the Democratic voters that there was too much politics in the Wisconsin maps. The redistricting packed Democratic voters into some districts and scattered them across others, with the aim of limiting how many seats Democratic candidates could carry, even in a good year for Democrats.

The case will be argued before the nine justices on Tuesday, although the arguments will be tailored to just one, Anthony Kennedy.

People on both sides of the case widely anticipate that the four liberal justices will side with the voters who sued. Conversely, the four conservatives probably will think these disputes should be resolved by the political branches, not the courts.

That leaves Kennedy, who has left the door open to court challenges to extreme partisan redistricting, but has never found a satisfactory way to measure it.

The legal team representing the Democratic voters is saying, "Justice Kennedy, we have found the shiny holy grail you said was lacking," Landau said. He was describing the test that the three-judge court used to establish the districting plan's discriminatory intent, its likely durability over its 10-year life and the inability to explain it other than for partisan advantage.

Gerald Hebert, who directs voting rights and redistricting litigation at the Campaign Legal Center, said the case his team is making is not a partisan one, even though the center represents Democrats in the case.

"If we're going to get Justice Kennedy's attention, we have to make sure he really understands this is not just a Democratic problem. It happens to be right now that Republicans control way more legislatures. But ... in states where Democrats control the entire redistricting process, the districts also are gerrymandered," Hebert said.

Other lawsuits challenging maps are ongoing in Maryland, where Democrats hold all but one of the state's eight seats in the House of Representatives, and North Carolina, another narrowly divided state in which Republicans nonetheless hold commanding majorities in the legislature and the state's congressional delegation.

Defending the maps in the Supreme Court case, Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel, a Republican, said courts would be overwhelmed with partisan redistricting lawsuits if the high court rules against the state.

"The Supreme Court has never permitted a map to be struck down when you followed traditional redistricting criteria and these maps do," Schimel said.

Thirty-one years ago, in an earlier case about partisan redistricting, it was the Republican National Committee that pointed to the dangers when one party held too much sway over map-making.

"The new technology available to redistricters provides those in the majority with a very tempting means of discriminating against any minority, political or otherwise," the RNC wrote, concluding that "the vitality of America's political parties, and the integrity of our representational government, are at stake."

Bauer reported from Madison, Wisconsin. Associated Press writer Carrie Antfinger contributed to this report from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Trump promises visit, aid to storm-ravaged Puerto Rico

By LAURIE KELLMAN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Suddenly, just about all President Donald Trump can talk about is Puerto Rico.

After not mentioning the hurricane-devastated island for days, Trump on Tuesday pushed back aggressively and repeatedly against criticism that he had failed to quickly grasp the magnitude of Maria's destruction or give the U.S. commonwealth the top-priority treatment he had bestowed on Texas, Louisiana and Florida after previous storms.

Trump announced that he would visit Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands next week. He also sent out a tweet about Puerto Rico's needs. He talked about Puerto Rico during a meeting on tax cuts. He raised the subject at a Rose Garden news conference with the prime minister of Spain.

And he attended a hurricane briefing. He called a meeting of agency heads tasked with helping Puerto Rico recover, and sent top officials out to the White House driveway to talk to reporters. FEMA Administrator Brock Long delivered specifics: 16 Navy and Coast Guard ships in the waters around Puerto Rico and 10 more on the way.

Throughout, Trump stressed that Puerto Rico's governor had praised the federal response, characterizing Ricardo Rossello as "so thankful of the job we're doing."

Six days after Maria struck the island, conditions in Puerto Rico remain dire, with 3.4 million people virtually without electrical power and short of food and water. Flights off the island are infrequent, communications are spotty and roads are clogged with debris. Officials said electrical power may not be fully restored for more than a month.

Trump, who had proposed visiting Puerto Rico earlier this month, said that next Tuesday was the earliest he could get there without disrupting recovery efforts.

His public focus in recent days on other matters, particularly his extended commentary on NFL players who kneel during the National Anthem, generated criticism that he was giving Puerto Rico short shrift after devoting considerable public attention to storm damage in Texas and Florida.

Rep. Nydia Velazquez, D-N.Y., said she had been concerned that Trump's continued tweets about NFL players showed he didn't grasp the severity of the crisis. She warned that if he didn't start taking it seriously, "this is going to be your Katrina," referring to criticism of President George W. Bush following the slow federal response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

And it wasn't just Democrats.

"The crisis for these Americans needs more attention — and more urgency from the executive branch," tweeted Republican Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska, a frequent Trump critic. Florida GOP Sen. Marco Rubio concurred, tweeting about San Juan, "MUST get power crews in ASAP."

"We have a fundamental obligation to Puerto Rico to respond to a hurricane there the way we would anywhere in the country. #HurricaneMaria," Rubio tweeted Tuesday.

For any president, there's much to be gained politically from ably handling the government's response to natural disasters, and Trump is no exception. His approval ratings in the most recent Gallup tracking poll ticked up, to 39 percent, after his trips to survey damage from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida.

But Trump's fixation on Puerto Rico on Tuesday stood in sharp contrast to his focus on other matters between Maria's landfall Sept. 20 and Monday, including his fight with the NFL over football players protesting during the National Anthem. The president has tweeted about the NFL more than two dozen times since Friday.

By Monday, Democrats, Republicans and Rossello were emphasizing that Puerto Ricans are Americans, too.

Trump was intent on showing he'd gotten the message — but still wasn't ready to set aside the NFL issue entirely.

"We are totally focused on that," Trump said Tuesday of the growing crisis on the U.S. island. "But at the same time, it doesn't take me long to put out a wrong and maybe we'll get it right. I think it's a very important thing for the NFL to not allow people to kneel during the playing of our National Anthem."

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Even as Trump insisted he has plenty of time to prioritize both issues — “All I do is work,” he said Tuesday — criticism lingered.

Particularly galling to Trump’s critics were his first tweets since last Wednesday when he urged people on the island to stay safe as Maria came ashore. In a trio of tweets on Monday night, he suggested that Puerto Rico was suffering in part because it had incurred “billions of dollars” in debt to “Wall Street and the banks which, sadly, must be dealt with.”

“Texas & Florida are doing great but Puerto Rico, which was already suffering from broken infrastructure & massive debt, is in deep trouble.” Still, he promised, “Food, water and medical are top priorities - and doing well.”

Rep. Joe Crowley, D-N.Y., said it was “absolutely ridiculous” for Trump to mention Puerto Rico’s debt “when people are suffering and dying. Here’s a president who’s used bankruptcy throughout his entire career.”

Associated Press writer Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

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College basketball takes a big hit with arrests

By JOHN MARSHALL, AP Basketball Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — University of Arizona assistant basketball coach Emanuel Richardson entered the federal court wearing the same clothes he was arrested in earlier in the day, there to face charges of accepting bribes and paying at least one recruit to attend the school.

Across the country, nine other people, including three more assistant coaches, were arrested after a federal probe revealed hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to influence star athletes’ choice of schools, shoe sponsors, agents, even tailors.

The arrests will have an immediate — and potentially long-lasting — impact on the programs involved. As the tentacles of the probe reach deeper into college basketball, more schools could come into the crosshairs and the black eye on the sport could darken.

“The picture of college basketball painted by the charges is not a pretty one,” acting U.S. Attorney Joon H. Kim said.

Richardson, along with fellow assistant coaches Chuck Person of Auburn, Southern California’s Tony Bland and Oklahoma State’s Lamont Evans were all suspended after charges against them were announced.

James Gatto, director of global sports marketing for basketball at Adidas, Rashan Michel, a maker of custom suits for some of the NBA’s biggest stars, and various financial advisers and managers also were charged.

Federal prosecutors said at least three top high school recruits were promised payments of as much as \$150,000, using money supplied by Adidas, to attend two universities sponsored by the athletic shoe company. Court papers didn’t name the schools but contained enough details to identify them as Louisville and Miami.

Louisville is already under NCAA probation over a sex scandal after an investigation into a Cardinals staffer hiring escorts for sex parties and to strip for recruits and players. The NCAA said Louisville must vacate up to 123 victories earned with ineligible players and suspended Louisville coach Rick Pitino five games for failing to monitor staffer Andre McGee.

Pitino also had to testify in 2010 in a federal extortion trial for the wife of the school’s equipment manager, when he acknowledged under oath to having an extramarital affair with her in a Louisville restaurant.

Pitino is not named in the federal documents, though the school acknowledged it is under investigation by the FBI.

“These allegations come as a complete shock to me. If true, I agree with the U.S. Attorney’s Office that these third-party schemes, initiated by a few bad actors, operated to commit a fraud on the impacted universities and their basketball programs, including the University of Louisville,” Pitino said in a statement.

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"Our fans and supporters deserve better and I am committed to taking whatever steps are needed to ensure those responsible are held accountable."

But, as the leader of the program, Pitino could end up taking the blame if the allegations prove to be true. The NCAA could also give Louisville the death penalty, grounding the basketball powerhouse.

Auburn coach Bruce Pearl could face similar heat.

He coached at Tennessee from 2005-11 before being fired and hit with a three-year show-cause penalty by the NCAA for lying to investigators about recruiting violations. Pearl was given a second chance at Auburn, but another scandal could spell trouble for him if the allegations are proven true.

Regardless of whether the federal probe leads all the way to the top, the programs could take a hit — and not just from the NCAA.

With the prospect of an NCAA investigation on the horizon, top recruits may stay away. Current players in the programs could be declared ineligible if the probe finds they accepted money from an agent or an assistant coach.

Arizona coach Sean Miller has one of the top recruiting classes for 2018, and the Wildcats have been projected to be a top-10 team this season. Andy Enfield has a strong incoming recruiting class at Southern California and has a potential top-10 team this season.

The trajectory of the two Pac-12 programs could be altered as the probe deepens.

And the initial charges could be just the tip of the iceberg. More programs and coaches could be entangled as the FBI digs deeper, and schools where the arrested coaches previously worked could face scrutiny.

The FBI and U.S. attorneys have the reach and the power to expand the investigation. It has also set up a tip line and encouraged anyone with information on the case to come forward.

This is far from over, and the implications could last for years.

More AP college basketball: <http://collegebasketball.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_Top25

Firebrand jurist Moore wins GOP primary runoff in Alabama

By KIM CHANDLER and BILL BARROW, Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Firebrand jurist Roy Moore won the Alabama Republican primary runoff for U.S. Senate on Tuesday, defeating an appointed incumbent backed by both President Donald Trump and deep-pocketed allies of Sen. Mitch McConnell.

In an upset certain to rock the GOP establishment, Moore clinched a nine-point victory over Sen. Luther Strange to take the GOP nomination for the seat previously held by Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Moore will face Democrat Doug Jones in a Dec. 12 special election.

It was a political resurrection for the 70-year-old former Alabama chief justice who was twice removed from those duties after taking stands for public display of the Ten Commandments and against gay marriage. Moore, in his victory speech, returned to themes of God and government, saying that he had "never prayed to win this campaign" but only that's "God's will be done."

"We have to return the knowledge of God and the Constitution of the United States to the United States Congress," Moore told a cheering crowd in his victory party in Montgomery.

Moore predicted the race could be a bellwether for the 2018 midterms, saying the victory tells the establishment in "Washington, D.C., that their wall has been cracked and will now fall."

The race has pitted Trump against his former strategist Steve Bannon who had argued Moore was a better fit for the "populist" movement. Introducing Moore, Bannon told a frenzied crowd that the victory was a repudiation of the "fat cats" of Washington who pumped millions into the Alabama race to boost Strange.

Bannon declared Moore's win a victory for Trump, despite the president's support for Strange. Moore said he supports the president and his agenda.

After the race, Trump tweeted his congratulations to Moore, noting that "Luther Strange started way back & ran a good race." Trump and Moore spoke by telephone later Tuesday night.

The Senate Leadership Fund, a group with ties to McConnell, had spent an estimated \$9 million trying

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to secure the nomination for Strange.

SLF President and CEO Steven Law said Tuesday that Moore won the nomination "fair and square" and the group will now back him. Law says Moore "has our support, as it is vital that we keep this seat in Republican hands."

In a statement, McConnell congratulated Moore and said Senate Republicans are committed to keeping the seat in GOP hands.

Even though Alabama has not sent a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in two decades, Democrats are hopeful they have an opening in the December election against Moore.

Jones is a former U.S. attorney best known for prosecuting the Klansmen who killed four girls in a 1963 church bombing. He said Tuesday that he wanted to focus the race on the "kitchen table issues" that matter to all Alabamians, "health care, education for our kids, jobs and a living wage."

Strange supporters were at least somewhat divided on how they will approach the general election in December.

"It will be closer than if Luther had won" the nomination, said Perry Hooper, a former state lawmaker who predicted some Republicans will stay home in December or even vote for Jones.

But Hooper, who served as Trump's Alabama campaign chief, said he's all in for Moore. "Ultimately, this is about helping the president," Hooper said. "This is a Republican state, and Roy will help the president."

Moore was twice elected chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court and twice removed from those duties. In 2003, he was removed from office for disobeying a federal judge's order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the state courthouse lobby. Last year, he was permanently suspended after a disciplinary panel ruled he had urged probate judges to defy federal court decisions on gay marriage and deny wedding licenses to same-sex couples. He denied that accusation.

Strange told his supporters that "we wish (Moore) well going forward." But he quickly shifted to his own bewilderment at the race he just finished.

"We're dealing with a political environment that I've never had any experience with," Strange said.

Strange also thanked Trump and Vice President Mike Pence for backing him. Trump, Strange said, may "be criticized" for coming to Alabama on his behalf. "Sometimes it's just about friendship ... a common goal to make the country better," he said.

Moore, propelled by evangelical voters, consolidated support from a number of anti-establishment forces, including the pro-Trump Great America Alliance and Bannan.

Moore led Strange by about 25,000 votes in the crowded August primary, which went to a runoff between the two because neither topped 50 percent in the voting. The low-turnout election gave an advantage to Moore as his loyal supporters flooded the polls.

Strange, the state's former attorney general, was appointed to Sessions' seat in February by then-Gov. Robert Bentley, who resigned two months later as lawmakers opened impeachment hearings against him. Throughout the Senate race, Strange had been dogged by criticisms of accepting the appointment from a scandal-battered governor when his office was in charge of corruption investigations.

On the outskirts of Montgomery, 76-year-old Air Force retiree John Lauer said Trump's endorsement swayed him to vote for Strange on Tuesday.

"I voted for Strange. I'm a Trump voter. Either one is going to basically do the Trump agenda, but since Trump came out for Luther, I voted for Luther," said Lauer said.

Many at Moore's victory party had supported the former chief justice through the years in his stands over the Ten Commandments and other issues.

"I'm so happy. I prayed and God answered my prayers," Patricia Riley Jones of Abbeville said as she outstretched her arms to hold a Moore sign and America flags high aloft above her head. "He's a great Christian man. He stood up for God."

Associated Press writer Jay Reeves contributed to this story.

Supreme Court grants temporary stay of execution in Georgia

By KATE BRUMBACK, Associated Press

JACKSON, Ga. (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court granted a temporary stay of execution Tuesday night for a Georgia inmate whose attorneys argue that the 59-year-old black man's death sentence was tainted by a juror's racial bias.

Keith Leroy Tharpe, known as "Bo," was set to be put to death at 7 p.m. EDT at the state prison by injection of the barbiturate pentobarbital, but the hour came and went as the justices considered his case. Just before 11 p.m. EDT, the court announced the temporary stay.

"I'm glad they're willing to take the time to consider these serious issues in Mr. Tharpe's case," said Tharpe attorney Brian Kammer.

The justices will now decide whether to hear Tharpe's case, but it's not immediately clear when that decision will be made.

Tharpe was convicted of murder and two counts of kidnapping in the September 1990 slaying of Jaquelyn Freeman.

Tharpe's wife left him on Aug. 28, 1990, taking their four daughters to live with her mother. Tharpe ignored an order not to contact his wife and during an argument over the phone on Sept. 24, 1990, he said that if she wanted to "play dirty," he would show her what dirty was, a Georgia Supreme Court summary of the case said.

Freeman was traveling to work with Tharpe's estranged wife when Tharpe blocked their vehicle with a borrowed truck, ordered them out and fatally shot Freeman.

About three months after the killing, Tharpe was tried, convicted and sentenced to death.

Years after Tharpe's trial, his legal team interviewed a white juror in the case and he freely used the N-word, according to filings by Tharpe's lawyers. Juror Barney Gattie, who has since died, also said Freeman was from a family of "good black folks," but Tharpe wasn't in that category and should be executed for his crime, according to an affidavit.

"After studying the Bible, I have wondered if black people even have souls," Gattie said.

Gattie later said he had been drinking when he talked to Tharpe's legal team and didn't understand what his statement would be used for. He also said his comments had been "taken all out of proportion" and "misconstrued." He testified that he voted for the death penalty because of the facts of the case, not because of Tharpe's race.

The state of Georgia said the juror racial bias claim was barred by evidence rules and that there is insufficient evidence to show that juror bias affected the trial's outcome.

The Georgia Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to stop the execution.

The U.S. Supreme Court issued the temporary stay based on a separate motion that Tharpe's attorneys had filed in federal court in June seeking to reopen his case based on the allegations of juror racial bias. A federal judge and the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals denied that motion.

In a clemency application, Tharpe's lawyers described a tough childhood and an extensive history of substance abuse that they said included getting black-out drunk by age 10 and a debilitating crack cocaine habit.

They said Tharpe feels deep remorse over Freeman's killing and has kicked his addictions during his time in prison, devoted his life to God and sought to help improve the lives of others.

Tharpe would have been the second inmate executed this year by the state, and the 19th nationwide. Georgia executed nine people last year.

4 coaches, Adidas executive charged in college bribe scheme

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and TOM HAYS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In one of the biggest crackdowns on the corrupting role of money in college basketball, 10 men — including a top Adidas executive and four assistant coaches — were charged Tuesday with using hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to influence star athletes' choice of schools, shoe sponsors, agents, even tailors.

Some of the most explosive allegations appeared to involve Louisville, one of college basketball's biggest powerhouses, which is already on NCAA probation over a sex scandal.

Federal prosecutors said at least three top high school recruits were promised payments of as much as \$150,000, using money supplied by Adidas, to attend two universities sponsored by the athletic shoe company. Court papers didn't name the schools but contained enough details to identify them as Louisville and Miami.

"The picture of college basketball painted by the charges is not a pretty one," said acting U.S. Attorney Joon H. Kim, adding that the defendants were "circling blue-chip prospects like coyotes" and exploited them to enrich themselves.

Prosecutors said that while some of the bribe money went to athletes and their families, some went to coaches, to get them to use their influence over their potentially NBA-bound players.

The coaches charged are Chuck Person of Auburn, Emanuel Richardson of Arizona, Tony Bland of Southern California and Lamont Evans of Oklahoma State. Person and Evans were suspended, and Bland was placed on administrative leave.

Bland appeared in court in Tampa, Florida, wearing handcuffs and ankle chains. He said little during a brief hearing other than to answer the judge's questions and did not enter a plea.

Richardson appeared in court in Tucson, Arizona, where he was set for release on \$50,000 bond. His lawyer declined to comment.

Those charged also include James Gatto, director of global sports marketing for basketball at Adidas; Rashan Michel, a maker of custom suits for some of the NBA's biggest stars; and various financial advisers and managers.

NCAA President Mark Emmert condemned the alleged misconduct, saying, "Coaches hold a unique position of trust with student-athletes and their families, and these bribery allegations, if true, suggest an extraordinary and despicable breach of that trust."

Since 2015, the FBI has been investigating the influence of money on coaches and players in the NCAA. Kim noted a special FBI hotline was set up and asked anyone aware of additional corruption to come forward.

Prosecutors said the coaches took bribes to use their "enormous influence" to steer players toward certain financial advisers and agents.

Most if not all of the 10 defendants were under arrest. Lawyers for Gatto and two of the coaches did not immediately respond to requests for comment. It was unclear whether Evans had an attorney.

Adidas said it was unaware of any misconduct by an employee and vowed to fully cooperate with authorities.

Gatto and others are accused of funneling \$100,000 to the family of a high school athlete to gain his commitment to play at Louisville and to sign with Adidas once he became a professional. Louisville and Adidas announced a 10-year, \$160 million extension of their sponsorship deal over the summer.

The player's name was not released, but details in the criminal complaint make it clear investigators were referring to Brian Bowen, who did not return messages seeking comment.

Louisville coach Rick Pitino said the allegations "come as a complete shock to me."

The development comes as Louisville is appealing a four-year NCAA probation over a scandal involving escorts hired for players and recruits. The scandal could cost the school its 2013 national championship.

In court papers Tuesday, the FBI said it recorded a July meeting at which an assistant coach at Louisville was briefed on a plan to funnel thousands of dollars to a potential high school recruit. The participants in

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the meeting noted they had to be careful because Louisville was on probation.

"We gotta be very low key," said the coach, according to the FBI.

Investigators said agents wiretapped a call in which Gatto and another defendant discussed an unidentified coach at Miami requesting that Adidas pay as much as \$150,000 to another recruit, in part to prevent him from accepting a similar offer from a rival apparel company.

Louisville interim President Gregory Postel confirmed the university has been informed it is part of the investigation and said, "Any violations will not be tolerated."

Miami said it will cooperate with authorities, while USC said it appointed former FBI Director Louis J. Freeh to conduct an internal investigation.

The investigation began after Martin Blazer, a Pittsburgh-based financial adviser to pro athletes, began cooperating with authorities in 2014. Blazer, accused by the Securities and Exchange Commission of taking money from clients without permission, pleaded guilty this month to fraud and other crimes.

He admitted making payments and loans to NCAA athletes as far back as 2000 to get them to hire him.

Person, associate head coach at Auburn, was drafted by the Indiana Pacers in 1986 and played for five NBA teams over 13 seasons.

Prosecutors said Person accepted about \$91,500 in bribes from Blazer last year to steer clients to him when they reached the NBA. Some payments were alleged to have been arranged by Michel, a former NBA referee turned high-end clothier.

Person was quoted by prosecutors as telling one player: "The most important part is that you ... don't say nothing to anybody ... don't share with your sisters, don't share with any of the teammates, that's very important 'cause this is a violation ... of rules. But this is how the NBA players get it done."

Prosecutors said Evans solicited at least \$22,000 over the past two years, while Richardson in February was paid \$20,000 in bribes, some of which he kept for himself and some of which he gave to at least one high school athlete to get him to play for Arizona.

Associated Press writers Fred Goodall in Tampa, Florida, Gary Graves in Louisville, Kentucky, Larry Lage in Detroit and Fred Lief in New York contributed.

Trump, GOP weigh surtax on wealthy, doubled deduction

By MARCY GORDON and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans are considering an income tax surcharge on the wealthy and doubling the standard deduction given to most Americans, with the GOP under pressure to overhaul the tax code after the collapse of the health care repeal.

On the eve of the grand rollout of the plan, details emerged on Capitol Hill on Tuesday while Trump personally appealed to House Republicans and Democrats at the White House to get behind his proposal.

"We will cut taxes tremendously for the middle class. Not just a little bit but tremendously," Trump said as he met with members of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. He predicted jobs "will be coming back in because we have a non-competitive tax structure right now and we're going to go super competitive."

Among the details: repeal of the tax on multimillion-dollar estates, a reduction in the corporate rate from 35 percent to 20 percent and potentially four tax brackets, down from the current seven. The current top rate for individuals, those earning more than \$418,000 a year, is 39.6 percent.

The goal is a more simple tax code that would spur economic growth and make U.S. companies more competitive. Delivering on the top legislative goal will be crucial for Republicans intent on holding onto their majorities in next year's midterm elections.

The tax overhaul plan assembled by the White House and GOP leaders, which would slash the rate for corporations, aims at the first major revamp of the tax system in three decades. It would deliver a major Trump campaign pledge.

The outlines of the plan were described by GOP officials who demanded anonymity to disclose private

deliberations.

The plan would likely cut the tax rate for the wealthiest Americans from 39.6 percent to 35 percent. A new surcharge on wealthy taxpayers might soften the appearance of the wealthiest Americans and big corporations benefiting from generous tax cuts.

Republicans already were picking at the framework, pointing up how divisions within GOP ranks can complicate efforts to overhaul taxes as has happened with the series of moves to repeal the Obama health care law.

Details of the proposal crafted behind closed doors over months by top White House economic officials, GOP congressional leaders and the Republican heads of tax-writing panels in the House and Senate were set to be released Wednesday. Trump and the Republicans were putting the final touches on the plan when the Democrats were brought in. A senior Democrat saw it as the opening of negotiations.

Trump had previously said he wanted a 15 percent rate for corporations, but House Speaker Paul Ryan has called that impractically low and has said it would risk adding to the soaring \$20 trillion national debt.

Trump said Tuesday some of the components included doubling the standard deduction used by families and increasing the child tax credit. He said the majority of Americans would be able to file their taxes on a single page. "We must make our tax code simple and fair. It's too complicated," Trump said.

Some conservative GOP lawmakers, meanwhile, dug their heels in on the shape of the plan.

Rep. Mark Meadows, head of the House Freedom Caucus, said he'd vote against tax legislation if it provided for a corporate tax rate over 20 percent, a rate for small businesses higher than 25 percent, or if it fails to call for a doubling of the standard deduction.

"That's the red line for me," Meadows said at a forum of conservative lawmakers. He noted he was speaking personally, not as head of the conservative grouping.

Disgruntlement came from Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., over the process of putting together the plan.

"I get that we want to move to 3 percent but I'd like to know how," Kennedy said referring to Trump's ambitious goal of annual growth in the economy through tax cuts. "I'm not much into all the secrecy," he said. "We need to do this by November, and at the rate we're going I'm not encouraged right now."

The Democrats, while acknowledging the tax system should be simplified, have insisted that any tax relief should go to the middle class, not the wealthiest. Tax cuts shouldn't add to the ballooning debt, the Democrats say.

Rep. Richard Neal of Massachusetts, the top Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, came away from the White House meeting in a negotiating mood. "This is when the process gets kicked off," Neal told reporters at the Capitol.

The rate for wealthiest taxpayers shouldn't be reduced, he said. Democrats are concerned by indications from Trump and his officials that "they intend to offer tax relief to people at the top," he said.

Still, there may be room to negotiate over the Republicans' insistence on repealing the estate tax, Neal indicated, since "there are other things you can do with it" to revise it short of complete elimination.

Associated Press writers Ken Thomas and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Ivanka Trump's supply chains in China cloaked in secrecy

By ERIKA KINETZ, Associated Press

SHANGHAI (AP) — It is no secret that the bulk of Ivanka Trump's merchandise comes from China. But just which Chinese companies manufacture and export her handbags, shoes and clothes is more secret than ever, an Associated Press investigation has found.

In the months since she took her White House role, public information about the companies importing Ivanka Trump goods to the U.S. has become harder to find. Information that once routinely appeared in private trade tracking data has vanished, leaving the identities of companies involved in 90 percent of shipments unknown. Even less is known about her manufacturers. Trump's brand, which is still owned by the first daughter and presidential adviser, declined to disclose the information.

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The deepening secrecy means it's unclear who Ivanka Trump's company is doing business with in China, even as she and her husband, Jared Kushner, have emerged as important conduits for top Chinese officials in Washington. The lack of disclosure makes it difficult to understand whether foreign governments could use business ties with her brand to try to influence the White House — and whether her company stands to profit from foreign government subsidies that can destroy American jobs. Such questions are especially pronounced in China, where state-owned and state-subsidized companies dominate large swaths of commercial activity.

"There should be more transparency, but right now we do not have the legal mechanism to enforce transparency unless Congress requests information through a subpoena," said Richard Painter, who served as chief White House ethics lawyer for George W. Bush, and is part of a lawsuit against President Donald Trump for alleged constitutional violations. "I don't know how much money she's making on this and why it's worth it. I think it's putting our trade policy in a very awkward situation."

An AP review of the records that are available about Ivanka Trump's supply chain found two potential red flags. In one case, a province in eastern China announced the award of export subsidies to a company that shipped thousands of Ivanka Trump handbags between March 2016 and February of this year, Chinese public records show — a possible violation by China of global fair trade rules, trade experts said.

The AP also found that tons of Ivanka Trump clothing were exported from 2013 to 2015 by a company owned by the Chinese government, according to public records and trade data. It is unclear whether the brand is still working with that company, or other state-owned entities. Her brand has pledged to avoid business with state-owned companies now that she's a White House adviser, but contends that its supply chains are not its direct responsibility.

Ivanka Trump's brand doesn't actually make its products directly. Instead, it contracts with licensees who oversee production of her merchandise. In exchange, those licensees pay the brand royalties. The AP asked Ivanka Trump's brand for a list of its suppliers. The company declined to disclose them. The clothing, footwear and handbag licensees contacted by AP also declined to reveal source factories.

Trump's Democratic opponents have previously faulted Ivanka Trump for outsourcing the production of her company's branded goods to Chinese factories with questionable working conditions. On Tuesday, Democratic National Committee spokesman Daniel Wessel cited the AP's reporting to argue that the secrecy around her brand's subcontracting relationships could conceal potential conflicts of interest.

"What we don't know is the extent to which foreign governments could use, or are already using, her business ties to try to influence the White House," he said.

Abigail Klem, president of IT Operations LLC, which manages Ivanka Trump's brand, said the company does not contract with foreign state-owned companies or benefit from Chinese government subsidies. However, she acknowledged that its licensees might.

"We license the rights to our brand name to licensing companies that have their own supply chains and distribution networks," Klem said in an email. "The brand receives royalties on sales to wholesalers and would not benefit if a licensee increased its profit margin by obtaining goods at a lower cost," she added.

But Michael Stone, chairman of Beanstalk, a global brand licensing agency, said lower production costs for licensees would ultimately benefit Ivanka Trump by freeing up money for marketing or lower retail prices, both of which drive sales.

"It gives her a competitive advantage and an indirect benefit to her financially," Stone said. "The more successful the licensee is the more successful Ivanka Trump is going to be."

The AP identified companies that sent Ivanka Trump products to the United States by looking at shipment data maintained by ImportGenius and Panjiva Inc., private companies that independently track global trade. Panjiva's records show that 85 percent of shipments of her goods to the U.S. this year originated in China and Hong Kong, but beyond that, it's becoming more difficult to map the brand's global footprint.

The companies that shipped Ivanka Trump merchandise to the U.S. are listed for just five of 57 shipments logged by Panjiva from the end of March, when she officially became a presidential adviser, through mid-September. Panjiva collects data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which did not immediately release the missing data to AP.

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While in many cases the manufacturer ships goods directly, merchandise can also be made by one company and shipped by another trading or consolidation company.

There used to be more visibility. Last year, 27 percent of the companies that exported Ivanka Trump merchandise to the U.S. were identified in Panjiva's records, and back in 2014 a full 95 percent were named. For two of Ivanka Trump's licensees — G-III Apparel Group Ltd. and Marc Fisher Footwear — the number of shipments appears to plunge in 2015, likely because they "requested to hide" their shipment activity, according to Panjiva records. Neither company responded to AP's questions.

The brand declined to comment on the growing murkiness of its supply chain.

Chris Rogers, an analyst at Panjiva, said any company can ask customs authorities to redact its information for any reason. About a quarter of companies request anonymity, he said, but the majority don't mind disclosing who they're doing business with.

"A lot of companies have said, 'yes there might be a commercial disadvantage, but we want to be transparent about our supply chain,'" he explained. "Why would we want to cover up the fact that we're working with this particular company?"

While ethics lawyers may see disclosure as the best antidote to conflict of interest, many brands see it as a tool to keep supply chains scandal-free. Public outcry over sweatshop conditions and worker suicides prompted companies like Nike Inc. and Apple Inc. to disclose the names and addresses of their manufacturers, and a growing number, including Gap Inc., the H&M Group, New Balance Athletics Inc., Adidas AG and Levi Strauss & Co., publicly identify their suppliers.

Ivanka Trump should do the same, said Allen Adamson, founder and CEO of BrandSimple Consulting. "It's a missed opportunity to lead by example."

What shipping records do show is that a company called Zhejiang Tongxiang Foreign Trade Group Co. Ltd., a sprawling conglomerate once majority-owned by the Chinese state, sent at least 30 tons of Ivanka Trump handbags to the U.S. between March 2016 and February.

Zhejiang province's commerce department said in June 2014 that it would help lower export costs for that same company, along with nine other local enterprises, through a special three-year trade promotion program. Among the measures outlined were export insurance subsidies and funding for online trading platforms and international marketing, as well as special funds earmarked for foreign trade companies with large-scale, fast-growing exports.

The value of the subsidies is unclear, as are details about how the directives were implemented, but using subsidies to reduce the price of exports is considered so destructive to fair trade that the World Trade Organization generally bans the practice. Chinese government subsidies hurt American workers but can lower costs for U.S. companies that import made-in-China merchandise, potentially boosting their profits. President Donald Trump has called companies that benefit from foreign government subsidies "cheaters."

The AP spoke with four trade experts in the United States and China who said the Zhejiang measures appeared to violate World Trade Organization rules. "These are clearly export subsidies," said Gary Hufbauer, a trade expert at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington.

Zhejiang province's Department of Commerce and the Zhejiang Tongxiang Foreign Trade Group declined comment.

The AP also found that from Oct. 2013 to Jan. 2015, Jiangsu High Hope International Group Corp., a conglomerate majority-owned by the Jiangsu provincial government, shipped 45 tons of Ivanka Trump clothing to the U.S., according to records from ImportGenius and Panjiva.

High Hope told AP it had "a small number of business dealings" with Ivanka Trump licensee G-III Apparel, but declined to answer questions about whether the relationship is ongoing.

G-III, which is based in New York City, declined to respond to specific questions but said in a statement that it is "committed to legal compliance and ethical business practices in all of our operations worldwide." Ivanka Trump licensee Mondani Handbags & Accessories Inc., also headquartered in New York, did not respond to requests for comment.

Ivanka Trump's brand said it was in the process of reviewing its supply chains with the help of "independent experts whose mission it is to advance human rights" and emphasized that all licensees, manu-

facturers, subcontractors and suppliers are required to abide by the law, as well as ethical practices set forth in a vendor code of conduct.

The AP asked to see the code of conduct, but the brand declined to share it.

Associated Press researchers Fu Ting in Shanghai and Yu Bing in Beijing, and reporter Jeff Horwitz in Washington contributed to this report.

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Collapsed Mexico school raises questions about quake codes

By GARANCE BURKE, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — On paper at least, the Mexico City school appeared to be structurally sound and built to withstand a major earthquake. But it collapsed, killing 26 people, most of them children. And now authorities are looking into whether an apartment reportedly built on top of the two-story school was to blame.

Claudia Sheinbaum, the borough president of the southern Mexico City district where the school went down in the 7.1 magnitude quake, told a news conference Tuesday that the school appeared to have its paperwork in order, at least according to documents filed by architects and engineers who supposedly inspected the structure. She said an investigation was being launched to look for any abnormalities not revealed in those documents.

"We can't stop just with the paperwork," Sheinbaum said. "We are going to do a review of the building itself."

Authorities said that the owner of the privately owned Enrique Rebsamen school built an apartment for herself on top of the collapsed wing, which local media said included a Jacuzzi, and were looking into whether the extra weight may have played a role in the collapse.

Sheinbaum said she didn't know if that was true, but said the owner, Mónica García Villegas, had a permit dating back to 1983 to build a school and apartments on the lot, though it was unclear whether she had permission to add a third story to the section of the school that collapsed.

The school was just one of dozens of buildings that collapsed in the Sept. 19 quake that killed at least 333 people, 194 of them in Mexico City. Questions have been raised about whether new building standards put in place after a 1985 quake that killed 9,500 people had been adequately followed.

Although construction began on the school in 1983 — two years before the new codes went into effect — it was expanded over the next 34 years with no evidence of noncompliance, Sheinbaum said. She said the only immediately evident paper work problems during that time were two cases of unregistered expansion work, and Garcia Villegas paid a fine for not registering the work and was allowed to proceed.

On Tuesday, Meyer Klip Gervita, head of the Institute of Administrative Verification, said that earlier this year authorities had asked the school to stop operating because no record of its zoning permit could be found. But the school appealed and remained open while the case made its way through court. The apparent violation was not enough to force the school's closure. The institute was created to ensure compliance with city building ordinances among other responsibilities.

Phone calls to a number registered to Garcia Villegas, who was pulled alive from the rubble, rang unanswered.

Seismologists and engineers say the Mexico City buildings most at risk in a quake are those, like the school building, that were built atop an Aztec-era lake bed, where the muddy soil can amplify earthquake waves.

But, although an architect signed a document certifying the school was structurally sound, experts questioned the method used to evaluate it, which Sheinbaum said involved piling sandbags on its upper floors to simulate 85 percent of the structure's maximum design-carrying weight, and then measuring the resulting floor sag.

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Kit Miyamoto, a structural engineer and California Seismic Safety Commissioner, said sandbags can't test for earthquake resistance.

"Seismic is a lateral force, so if you just put a whole bunch of sandbags it is not going to tell you the story of the seismic capacity of the building at all," Miyamoto said. "You can do testing, to determine what kind of reinforcement" a building has, including ground-penetrating radar or exposing rebar.

The school's first wing was built in 1983, but other additions and floors were added over the years, said Francisco Garcia Alvarez, president of the Mexican Society of Structural Engineers, who evaluated the school site after its collapse.

A third floor appeared to have been added recently to the original 1983 structure that was toppled in the quake, raising questions about what construction permits, if any, the school had obtained, how recently it had been inspected and what architectural plans were submitted in the first place. Paper work filed as recently as June by a private architect working for the school asserted that the parcel had not been modified in a way that would violate the permitted land use.

The quake, whose epicenter was only about 100 miles from the capital, hit the city's south side where the school is located with a force much stronger than the original school structure was built to withstand in the early 1980s, Garcia Alvarez said.

That caused a failure in the building's joints where the columns met the beams, he said, noting that the addition of a third floor would have added more weight to the structure. Still, he said, its possible role in the collapse needed further study.

Sheinbaum, who is widely expected to run for mayor, faces heightened political scrutiny over the school's collapse, which killed 19 children and seven adults, leaving behind a pile of wreckage still visible in a cordoned-off street of the leafy neighborhood manned by soldiers.

"We all just keep working, but then all of a sudden it hits you," said Alfonso Martinez, one of hundreds of volunteers who have been ferrying shovels, hard hats, food and water to rescue workers since the earthquake struck last week. "People are going in and out of grief about all the lives that were lost."

Neighbors said that the school had grown quickly over the years and they had noted new construction. "We saw there was a third floor put on there but we didn't suspect someone was living there," said Juan Antonio Gudino. "I just thought it was an office."

Across Mexico City, some 40 buildings collapsed in the earthquake and some 500 others were so severely damaged they will either have to be demolished or receive major structural reinforcement, according to Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera. Another 1,300 are repairable, and about 10,000 buildings inspected so far were found to be habitable.

Still, experts stressed that reforms to building codes following the 1985 earthquake had lowered the number of casualties. But, they said, more needed to be done to ensure compliance.

"From what we can tell the new codes worked well, and helped avoid more harm," said Eduardo Miranda, a professor in Stanford University's civil and structural engineering department, who evaluated buildings following the quake. "But some of these buildings may have failed because people did not follow the codes."

Unlike in the United States, where city engineers typically check architectural drawings for structural integrity, authorities in Mexico City perform an administrative check of submitted plans, but don't vet structural calculations, he said.

Two blocks from the school, bouquets of white chrysanthemums line a makeshift memorial with the names of those pulled from the wreckage — a reminder of the tragedy that befell the school.

"We were all focused on following the code," Sheinbaum said. "We are all asking ourselves if we could have done more."

Associated Press writer Mark Stevenson contributed to this report.

Cuba tells Tillerson: No culpability in health 'attacks'

By JOSH LEDERMAN and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Cuba's top diplomat insisted Tuesday that his government had nothing to do with unexplained health "attacks" on U.S. diplomats, telling Secretary of State Rex Tillerson that Cuba still has no evidence to explain what transpired in Havana. Tillerson emphasized that it's Cuba's responsibility to protect diplomats on its soil, regardless of who is to blame.

The former Cold War foes appeared no closer to resolving the bizarre, frightening health crisis after a hastily arranged meeting between Tillerson and visiting Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez. Cuba requested the meeting as the U.S. considers shuttering the newly re-opened U.S. Embassy in Havana, a response that would deal a devastating blow to the delicate rapprochement between the countries.

The meeting between Tillerson and Rodriguez marked the highest-level diplomatic contact between the countries since the start of President Donald Trump's administration in January. It comes as the re-engagement, started under President Barack Obama, is being jeopardized by mounting alarm over the unexplained incidents that have harmed at least 21 Americans — some with ailments as serious as traumatic brain injury.

The Cuban Embassy in Washington, describing the evening meeting, said Rodriguez told Tillerson that Cuba "has never perpetrated nor will it ever perpetrate attacks of any kind against diplomats." Rodriguez added that his government also would never let a third party — such as another country hostile to the U.S. — use Cuban territory to attack Americans.

"He stated that according to the preliminary results obtained by the Cuban authorities in their investigations, which have borne in mind the information given by the U.S. authorities, there is no evidence so far of the cause or the origin of the health disorders reported by the U.S. diplomats," Cuba's embassy said in a statement.

Tillerson, for his part, told the visiting Cuban that the U.S. still has "profound concern" for the safety and security of its diplomats in Havana. After all, the U.S. has detected incidents as recently as late August that led to medically confirmed cases of injury, the U.S. has said.

"The secretary conveyed the gravity of the situation and underscored the Cuban authorities' obligations to protect embassy staff and their families under the Vienna Convention," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said. The Vienna Convention refers to international law that governs how host countries must treat foreign envoys.

Neither country, in their descriptions of the meeting, offered any details about what the U.S. response might entail. Yet Rodriguez told Tillerson that "it would be regrettable that a matter of this nature is politicized," reviving an argument Rodriguez made last week before the United Nations General Assembly.

And Rodriguez argued that the U.S. acted inappropriately in May by kicking out two Cuban diplomats posted in Washington. The State Department has said it took that action to protest Havana's apparent failure to protect American diplomats in Cuba, not because the U.S. believed Castro's government was behind the attacks.

Still, Rodriguez said Cuba has an "impeccable record" in protecting diplomats, the embassy said.

The ongoing U.S. deliberations about possibly shuttering its embassy, confirmed by Tillerson last week, constitute the most striking example of how the incidents are weighing on the U.S.-Cuba relationship. The U.S. and Cuba re-opened embassies in Havana and Washington in 2015 after Castro and Obama reached a historic agreement to resume diplomatic relations after a half-century of enmity.

The Trump administration has also considered smaller-scale steps such as withdrawing all nonessential personnel from Havana, leaving the embassy technically open but unable to perform its full range of functions unless and until the health concerns are resolved, U.S. officials have said.

For months after U.S. diplomats started falling ill in Havana, the U.S. and Cuba sought to prevent the issue from becoming an overriding irritant in the relationship. Neither country disclosed publicly that the incidents were occurring, even after Washington in May expelled the two Cuban diplomats.

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Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan told Congress on Tuesday that it was a reasonable suspicion that Cuban authorities either were involved in the incidents or at least knew they were occurring. Cuba keeps tight surveillance on American diplomats in the country and would be likely to know if something significant were happening to them.

But Sullivan acknowledged that with so much unknown, even that assumption is less than certain, and added, "As a U.S. government official, I don't know that."

Yet while the U.S. has avoided blaming Cuba directly for the incidents, the growing public outrage has forced both countries to adopt a tougher tone. Several U.S. lawmakers have called on the Trump administration to expel all Cuban diplomats from Washington.

At least 21 U.S. diplomats and their families have suffered a variety of physical symptoms since late last year as a result of what Tillerson has described as "health attacks." Some have been diagnosed with mild brain injury and permanent hearing loss. U.S. investigators have pursued the possibility the attacks were carried out with some sort of sonic device but have been unable to determine the cause or a culprit.

The U.S. cases involve diplomats and their families, some who have permanent hearing loss or concussions. Others suffered nausea, headaches and ear-ringing. Some are struggling with concentration or common word recall, The Associated Press has reported.

The U.S. has said the tally of Americans affected could grow as more cases are potentially detected.

Trump aides told not to use personal phones _ but some do

By JEFF HORWITZ, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House officials are clearly instructed: Don't use your personal phones for official business. But some aides appear to have done it anyway, and it's getting fresh scrutiny along with questions about the use of personal email accounts.

The inquiries into private communication could prove uncomfortable for President Donald Trump, who relentlessly attacked Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton for her use of a private email account and server during her time as secretary of state.

Multiple current and former Trump White House officials have used private email accounts and texts from personal phones for private conversations, sometimes using encrypted messaging apps. That's despite clear directives not to use personal devices for administration business and to save the records if they do.

House lawmakers have requested more information about the use of private email addresses and texting or the use of messaging apps on personal phones. They're also asking about the oversight and record-keeping policies of the Trump White House. They acted after word surfaced that White House adviser Jared Kushner set up a private email account after the election to conduct work-related business.

Further, The New York Times recently reported the names of six close Trump advisers, including Kushner, Steve Bannon and Reince Priebus, who have used private email to discuss White House matters. Bannon and Priebus no longer work at the White House.

The extent of private communications on personal phones — or whether records were retained— is not clear.

Rep. Trey Gowdy, a South Carolina Republican who chairs the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and the top Democrat on that panel, Rep. Elijah Cummings, sent letters Monday to the White House general counsel and the State Department. They said they want more details on whether staffers are using personal emails, texting or encrypted messaging applications, and if they are preserving the records.

The Presidential Records Act requires senior White House staff members to preserve their professional communications, with the records eventually transferred to the National Archives. Electronic communications outside of official channels, such as private email or text messages on a staffer's personal phone, are supposed to be copied to a government account within 20 days.

White House aides are instructed as part of their training not to use personal devices for official business and are told to save records if they do, said two people with knowledge of administration practices.

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A memorandum went out to all White House personnel in February outlining the rules. The memo, provided to The Associated Press, states that records rules apply to "other forms of electronic communication, including text messages."

The memo adds: "You should not use instant messaging systems, social networks, or other internet-based means of electronic communication to conduct official business without the approval of the Office of the White House Counsel."

"Legally, the case is clear — you're supposed to save this stuff," said Alex Howard, deputy director of the Sunlight Foundation, which advocates for transparency and open record keeping in government.

Howard said that White House officials who sent and received messages via private channels did not necessarily violate the law — if they later forwarded those off-the-books communications to an official government account or preserved them in some other fashion.

"People will make mistakes," he said. "The key is, are those mistakes intentional?"

One reason White House aides text from private phones is simple. They cannot send texts from their official phones, a policy set during the Obama administration. When Blackberry devices were standard, a White House communications system automatically archived those messages.

When smartphones supplanted Blackberries, however, White House information technology administrators adopted a new policy: No texts at all.

"With iOS and text, you could get messages (and malware) from anyone," said Tony Scott, Barack Obama's federal chief information officer from 2015 until the end of Obama's second term. The decision to disable texting was made "more from a security perspective than anything else."

Trump White House officials aren't the first to come under scrutiny for private communications. In 2010, the White House deputy chief technology officer, Andrew McLaughlin, was reprimanded for using a Gmail account to communicate with his former colleagues at Google.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters Monday that the use of private email accounts by staff is "to my knowledge, very limited."

"White House counsel has instructed all White House staff to use their government email for official business, and only use that email," she said, adding that "we get instructed on this one pretty regularly."

Kushner's lawyer, Abbe Lowell, on Sunday confirmed Kushner's use of a personal email in his first few months of the administration. He said the emails usually involved news articles and political commentary. Lowell also said any non-personal emails were forwarded to Kushner's official account and "all have been preserved in any event."

There are considerable differences between Clinton's email practices and what is known about the Trump administration so far.

Clinton maintained multiple private servers, and an FBI investigation found tens of thousands of emails, including many with classified material. While some Trump officials used private accounts, there is no evidence so far that classified material was transmitted through private email accounts.

Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey and Julie Pace contributed to this report.

Trump suddenly focuses on Puerto Rico, promises visit, aid

By LAURIE KELLMAN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Suddenly, just about all President Donald Trump can talk about is Puerto Rico.

After not mentioning the hurricane-devastated island for days, Trump on Tuesday pushed back aggressively and repeatedly against criticism that he had failed to quickly grasp the magnitude of Maria's destruction or give the U.S. commonwealth the top-priority treatment he had bestowed on Texas, Louisiana and Florida after previous storms.

Trump announced that he would visit Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands next week. He tweeted about Puerto Rico's needs. He talked about Puerto Rico during a meeting on tax cuts. He raised the subject at a Rose Garden news conference with the prime minister of Spain.

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And he attended a hurricane briefing. He called a meeting of agency heads tasked with helping Puerto Rico recover, and sent top officials out to the White House driveway to talk to reporters. FEMA Administrator Brock Long delivered specifics: 16 Navy and Coast Guard ships in the waters around Puerto Rico and 10 more on the way.

Throughout, Trump stressed that Puerto Rico's governor had praised the federal response, characterizing Ricardo Rossello as "so thankful of the job we're doing."

Six days after Maria struck the island, conditions in Puerto Rico remain dire, with 3.4 million people virtually without electrical power and short of food and water. Flights off the island are infrequent, communications are spotty and roads are clogged with debris. Officials said electrical power may not be fully restored for more than a month.

Trump, who had proposed visiting Puerto Rico earlier this month, said that next Tuesday was the earliest he could get there without disrupting recovery efforts.

His public focus in recent days on other matters, particularly his extended commentary on NFL players who kneel during the National Anthem, generated criticism that he was giving Puerto Rico short shrift after devoting considerable public attention to storm damage in Texas and Florida.

Rep. Nydia Velazquez, D-N.Y., said she had been concerned that Trump's continued tweets about NFL players showed he didn't grasp the severity of the crisis. She warned that if he didn't start taking it seriously, "this is going to be your Katrina," referring to criticism of President George W. Bush following the slow federal response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

And it wasn't just Democrats.

"The crisis for these Americans needs more attention — and more urgency from the executive branch," tweeted Republican Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska, a frequent Trump critic. Florida GOP Sen. Marco Rubio concurred, tweeting about San Juan, "MUST get power crews in ASAP."

"We have a fundamental obligation to Puerto Rico to respond to a hurricane there the way we would anywhere in the country. #HurricaneMaria," Rubio tweeted Tuesday.

For any president, there's much to be gained politically from ably handling the government's response to natural disasters, and Trump is no exception. His approval ratings in the most recent Gallup tracking poll ticked up, to 39 percent, after his trips to survey damage from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida.

But Trump's fixation on Puerto Rico on Tuesday stood in sharp contrast to his focus on other matters between Maria's landfall Sept. 20 and Monday, including his fight with the NFL over football players protesting during the National Anthem. The president has tweeted about the NFL more than two dozen times since Friday.

By Monday, Democrats, Republicans and Rossello were emphasizing that Puerto Ricans are Americans, too.

Trump was intent on showing he'd gotten the message — but still wasn't ready to set aside the NFL issue entirely.

"We are totally focused on that," Trump said Tuesday of the growing crisis on the U.S. island. "But at the same time, it doesn't take me long to put out a wrong and maybe we'll get it right. I think it's a very important thing for the NFL to not allow people to kneel during the playing of our National Anthem."

Even as Trump insisted he has plenty of time to prioritize both issues — "All I do is work," he said Tuesday — criticism lingered.

Particularly galling to Trump's critics were his first tweets since last Wednesday when he urged people on the island to stay safe as Maria came ashore. In a trio of tweets on Monday night, he suggested that Puerto Rico was suffering in part because it had incurred "billions of dollars" in debt to "Wall Street and the banks which, sadly, must be dealt with."

"Texas & Florida are doing great but Puerto Rico, which was already suffering from broken infrastructure & massive debt, is in deep trouble." Still, he promised, "Food, water and medical are top priorities - and doing well."

Rep. Joe Crowley, D-N.Y., said it was "absolutely ridiculous" for Trump to mention Puerto Rico's debt "when

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people are suffering and dying. Here's a president who's used bankruptcy throughout his entire career."

Associated Press writer Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

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Asian stocks mixed as investors turn focus on US tax reform

By **YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets were mixed on Wednesday as investors awaited the outlines of U.S. tax overhaul plans by President Donald Trump while news headlines on geopolitical tensions surrounding North Korea have quieted.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.3 percent to 20,270.97 and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 0.3 percent to 5,656.40. But South Korea's Kospi added 0.1 percent to 2,375.92. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 0.5 percent to 27,662.57. China's Shanghai Composite Index was nearly flat at 3,345.12. Stocks in Southeast Asia were mixed.

US POLITICS WATCH: House Republicans and the Trump administration officials are due to give details of the plans for a long-awaited tax proposal on Wednesday, which are expected to reduce individual and corporate tax rates. While analysts expect not much will be done immediately, with absence of other headline-dominating news, it will still be the key event.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "With the focus back on monetary policy and particularly fiscal policies in the U.S., markets in the Asian region may sit tight midweek awaiting updates," said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore. "The impact of a successfully implemented (tax overhaul) plan would be far-reaching with President Trump placing a key focus on bringing back funds from U.S. firms 'parked overseas'."

YELLEN TALK: Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen said at a conference of economists that the Fed is puzzled that inflation remains so low. While she and other policymakers still think inflation will eventually reach the Fed's 2 percent target, Yellen conceded the Fed may need to change its assumptions. Yellen also said the Fed should take care not to raise rates too slowly. The comments may have changed some economists' view on the prospects of a December rate hike but it still seems likely that the Fed will continue to lift the rate gradually higher, said Ric Spooner, chief market analyst at CMC Markets.

WALL STREET: U.S. stock indexes finished barely higher on Tuesday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 0.18 points to 2,496.84. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 11.77 points, almost 0.1 percent, to 22,284.32. The Nasdaq composite gained 9.57 points, or 0.2 percent, to 6,380.16. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks gained 4.91 points, or 0.3 percent, to a record 1,456.86.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude rose 24 cents to \$52.12 per barrel on New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract slid 34 cents to finish at \$51.88 a barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude, the standard for international oil prices, gained 22 cents to \$58.14 a barrel in London. It gave up 51 cents to \$57.92 a barrel in London on Tuesday.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 112.41 yen from 112.23 yen. The euro fell to \$1.1788 from \$1.1791.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 27, the 270th day of 2017. There are 95 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On September 27, 1942, Glenn Miller and his Orchestra performed together for the last time, at the Central Theater in Passaic, New Jersey, prior to Miller's entry into the Army.

On this date:

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In 1540, Pope Paul III issued a papal bull establishing the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, as a religious order.
In 1779, John Adams was named by Congress to negotiate the Revolutionary War's peace terms with Britain.

In 1854, the first great disaster involving an Atlantic Ocean passenger vessel occurred when the steamship SS Arctic sank off Newfoundland; of the more than 400 people on board, only 86 survived.

In 1917, French sculptor and painter Edgar Degas died in Paris at age 83.

In 1928, the United States said it was recognizing the Nationalist Chinese government.

In 1939, Warsaw, Poland, surrendered after weeks of resistance to invading forces from Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union during World War II.

In 1943, Bing Crosby, the Andrews Sisters and the Vic Schoen Orchestra recorded "Pistol Packin' Mama" and "Jingle Bells" for Decca Records.

In 1954, "Tonight!" hosted by Steve Allen, made its network debut on NBC-TV.

In 1962, "Silent Spring," Rachel Carson's study on the effects of pesticides on the environment, was published in book form by Houghton Mifflin.

In 1979, Congress gave its final approval to forming the U.S. Department of Education.

In 1989, Columbia Pictures Entertainment Inc. agreed to a \$3.4 billion cash buyout by Sony Corp.

In 1991, President George H.W. Bush announced in a nationally broadcast address that he was eliminating all U.S. battlefield nuclear weapons, and called on the Soviet Union to match the gesture. The Senate Judiciary Committee deadlocked, 7-7, on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ten years ago: Soldiers fired into crowds of anti-government demonstrators in Yangon, Myanmar, reportedly killing at least nine people; Kenji Nagai, 50, a video journalist for Japan's APF News, was among the dead. President George W. Bush promised to take steps to reduce air traffic congestion and long delays that were leaving travelers grounded.

Five years ago: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the U.N. General Assembly that the world had only a matter of months to stop Iran before it could build a nuclear bomb. NFL referees returned to the field after a tentative deal with the league ended a lockout; games had been marred by controversy, blown calls and confusion as substitute referees officiated during the first three weeks of the season. Actor Herbert Lom, 95, best known as Inspector Clouseau's long-suffering boss in the "Pink Panther" movies, died in London.

One year ago: The United States provided another \$364 million in humanitarian aid to Syrians as their nation's civil war appeared to be getting worse. President Barack Obama announced career diplomat Jeffrey DeLaurentis as his choice to become the first U.S. ambassador to Cuba in more than a half-century. Scientists announced the first baby born from a controversial new technique that combined DNA from three people — the mother, the father and an egg donor. (The goal was to prevent the child from inheriting a fatal genetic disease from his mother.)

Today's Birthdays: Actress Kathleen Nolan is 84. Actor Wilford Brimley is 83. Actor Claude Jarman Jr. is 83. Author Barbara Howar is 83. World Golf Hall of Famer Kathy Whitworth is 78. Singer-musician Randy Bachman (Bachman-Turner Overdrive) is 74. Rock singer Meat Loaf is 70. Actress Liz Torres is 70. Actor A Martinez is 69. Baseball Hall of Famer Mike Schmidt is 68. Actor Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa is 67. Singer Shaun Cassidy is 59. Comedian Marc Maron is 54. Rock singer Stephan (STEE'-fan) Jenkins (Third Eye Blind) is 53. Former Democratic National Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz is 51. Actor Patrick Muldoon is 49. Singer Mark Calderon is 47. Actress Amanda Detmer is 46. Actress Gwyneth Paltrow is 45. Rock singer Brad Arnold (3 Doors Down) is 39. Christian rock musician Grant Brandell (Underoath) is 36. Actress Anna Camp is 35. Rapper Lil' Wayne is 35. Singer Avril Lavigne (AV'-rihl la-VEEN') is 33. Bluegrass singer/musician Sierra Hull is 26.

Thought for Today: "Life is like a coin. You can spend it any way you wish, but you only spend it once."
— Lillian Dickson, American missionary (1901-1983).