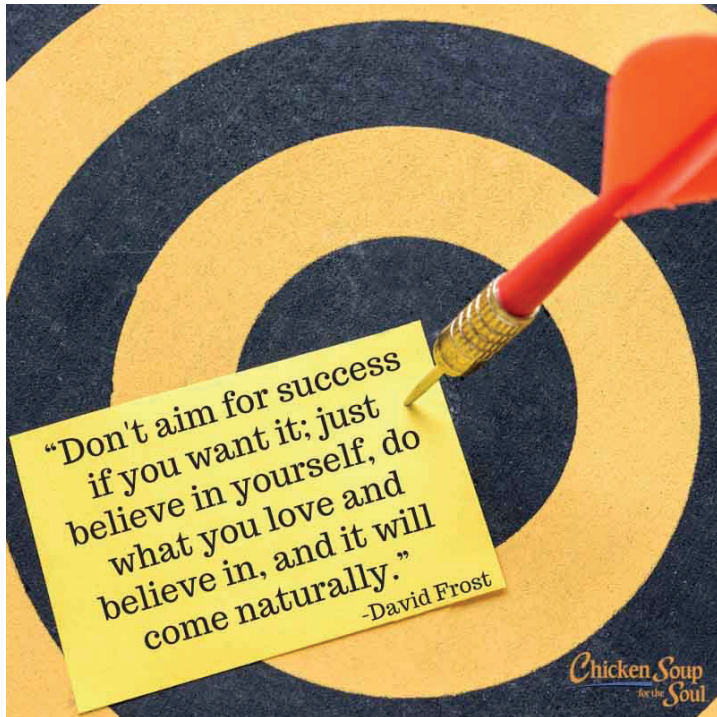


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Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

JOHNSON AGENCY

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Groton Area Schedule of Events

Monday, Sept. 24

Monday Dress up Day: MS/HS: Colleges; Elementary: Red, white and blue Day (let's get patriotic).

10 a.m.: Boys Golf regions at Olive Grove Golf Course. Teams attending are Aberdeen Roncalli, Groton Area, Dell Rapids, Madison, McCook Central-Montrose, Milbank, Sioux Valley, Sisseton, Tiospa Zina, Tri-Valley.

6 p.m.: School Board Meeting in Conference Room.

7:30 p.m.: Homecoming Coronation at GHS Gym.

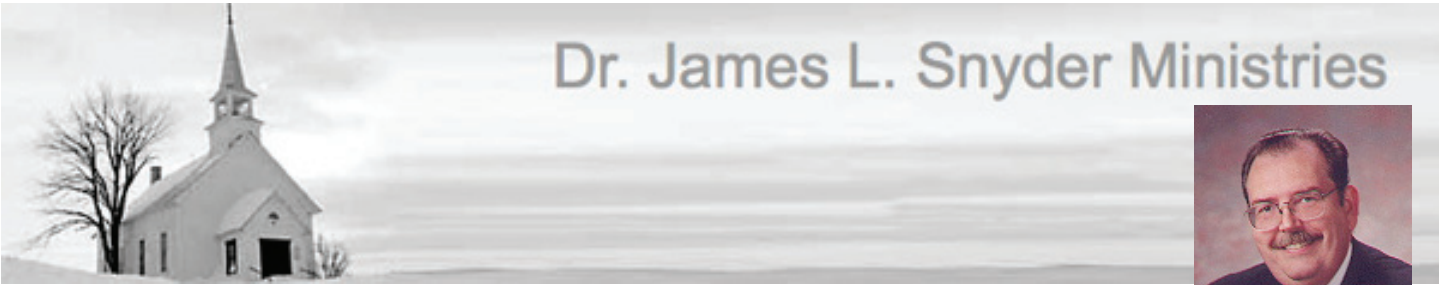
Tuesday, Sept. 25

Tuesday Dress up Day: MS/HS: Decades; Elementary: Celebrity Day (dress up like someone famous- examples: a singer, movie star, professional athlete, person from history, etc.).

4 p.m.: Cross Country meet at 4 p.m. at Olive

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Financial Tip Of The Week: Pay Attention

Enjoying a casual evening at home, reclining in my favorite easy chair reading, while the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was chatting on the telephone. I seldom pay attention to phone conversations. After all, I only get one side of the conversation, which may be misleading at the very best. I've been caught in that trap before with some pretty dire consequences. I am not going to get caught again, if I can help it.

Then an odd phrase caught my attention: "plastic surgery." My ears perked up and I heard my wife say, "I certainly agree with that article and I'm going to do some plastic surgery myself."

Well, you can imagine what thoughts were racing through my head. When she hung up the telephone, I queried her about it.

In my book, plastic surgery is a big step.

"You do support me in this plastic surgery plan, don't you?"

There are times to disagree with your spouse, but as a husband for over 45 years, I have never discovered that time. Forcing a smile, I nodded in the affirmative and told her she had my full support in whatever she decided.

I had to admit that the "time" had finally come to our humble abode. Who am I to fight it? I go by this motto, "He who smiles and agrees with his spouse lives to smile another day."

I plan to smile until the day I die.

I never really thought about plastic surgery, but perhaps my wife was right. Perhaps she could use a little face-lift. For me to get a face-lift, the surgeon would need a huge construction crane. Then comes the awkward part, what do they do with my face after it was lifted?

Women, more than men, are a little sensitive about their appearance. For a man, "appearance" means he showed up. A woman has an altogether different approach to the term "appearance."

Some women look in the mirror and see where some improvements could be made. For example, they see bags under their eyes that could not get through the airport carry-on luggage size requirement.

Then there is the problem with their nose, which could stand a little tweaking. For all practical purposes, one of those double chins has to go. Moreover, what woman couldn't use a tummy tuck and other snippings of the flesh?

Believe me; I never would have brought it up, but if that makes my wife happy, then whatever it costs, we can put it on a credit card. The only problem with putting something like this on a credit card is that by the time you pay it off you need another procedure.

But, she is worth it in my checkbook. I have no compunction whatsoever of writing out that check.

Each day I checked the appointment calendar hanging on our refrigerator to find out when she would be going in for the surgery. Day after day, I looked, but could never find any appointment.

I supposed she was a little sensitive about the whole thing and did not want it staring at her day after day on the appointment calendar. Whatever the reason, she had my silent support, for all it was worth. I am sure she would do the same for me. That is what marriage is all about. Supporting one another in the developments of life, whatever that development might be.

I decided to tuck this little bit in the back of my mind and, however it developed would be all right with

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me.

One day this week, I went to the Slurp N' Burp Café for a quiet lunch. The issue was far from my mind as I enjoyed a delicious lunch. As I finished my last cup of coffee, the waitress brought my bill and I pulled my wallet out to pay for it.

In searching my wallet for a credit card I discovered, much to my chagrin, that there were no credit cards to be found. Somehow, I had lost my credit cards. Perhaps, in the morning when I was getting dressed they dropped out of my wallet as I was placing it in my trousers.

The problem with that theory was that all the other cards in my wallet were intact.

Fortunately, I had my cell phone and called my wife.

"Honey, I've lost all my credit cards. I'm here at the restaurant and I can't find any credit cards in my wallet. Do you have any idea what I did with my credit cards?"

"I cut them all up."

"You did what?"

"You said you supported my plastic surgery plan, didn't you?"

"But, I thought..."

"You, thought what?"

Oh boy.

Dear reader: please disregard the first part of this column. If you happen to read my obituary in next week's newspaper, you will know that my lovely, vivacious, eternally youthful wife did not disregard the first part and I'm currently Resting In Pieces.

I must confess that my hearing is good; it is my understanding that falls so far short. The only exercise I'm really good at is "jumping-to-conclusions."

This is common among many people who call themselves Christians. Their hearing is good but their "doing" is not up to par.

The apostle James understood this truth quite well. He writes, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).

It is not so much what you hear that pays dividends in life, but what you do.

Volleyball drops close 5-set match to No. 9 Minnesota Duluth

Duluth, Minn. – In their first 5-set match of the 2018 season, the No. 1 Northern State volleyball team fell to No. 9 Minnesota Duluth. The Wolves took the first and fourth sets with scores of 25-23 and 25-22, but fell 25-17, 25-21, and 15-12 in the second, third, and fifth sets. With the loss the Wolves fall to 14-1 overall and 6-1 in the NSIC.

It was a tight match between the two teams, with the Wolves coming up just six points shy of the Bulldogs. Northern hit .191 in the match, recording 68 kills, 65 assists, and a match high 87 digs. They tallied nine blocks and five aces. Duluth added just two more kills and hit .263 in the contest.

NSU made a comeback in the fifth set as they trailed 12-8 mid-way through. Northern went on a 4-1 run, bringing themselves within one of the hosts. Duluth was solid at the net all afternoon, and forced two attack errors to end the match.

Hailey Busch led three Wolves in double figures with 20 kills, averaging 4.0 per set. Laura Snyder followed with 16 of her own, and hit a team high .375, while Sally Gaul notched 16. Jenna Reiff added eight kills to the team total, while Morgan Baufield recorded six and Ashley Rozell notched four. Rozell dished out 57 total assists in the match, and led the team with three service aces. She also grabbed 14 digs.

Jaiden Langlie led the Wolves defense with a match high 27 digs, averaging 5.4 per set. Lexi Boesl and Bry Goar also tallied double-figures with 16 and ten digs respectively, while Busch added 12. Baufield and Reiff rounded out the team total with seven and one respectively. Reiff and Busch led the team at the net with five and four blocks each, while Baufield tallied three and Rozell and Snyder each grabbed two.

Northern returns to Wachs Arena next Friday and Saturday for the annual Gypsy Days weekend. The Wolves will face off against No. 2 Concordia-St. Paul on Friday and Minnesota State on Saturday with both matches beginning at 6 p.m.

EARTHTALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment



From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: A friend recently told me that when her family stopped using hand sanitizer and antibacterial wipes all the time, they stopped getting sick so much. Is there any research backing up this theory, or is it just a "new" wives tale?

-- Betsy Edger, via e-mail

Your friend may be onto something. The so-called "Hygiene Hypothesis"—first put forth by British epidemiologist David Strachan in a 1989 paper in the medical journal *Thorax*—suggests that a lower incidence of infection during early childhood (thanks to more sterile, less crowded environments as compared to earlier times) could explain the rapid rise in allergic diseases in the late 20th century. As the theory goes, in the modern world our immune systems no longer have to deal with the vast numbers of potential

According to the "Hygiene Hypothesis," less exposure to bacteria and viruses during childhood — thanks to more sterile, less crowded environments as compared to earlier times — could explain the rapid rise in allergic diseases in the late 20th century. Credit: Chiot's

Run, FlickrCC.

real pathogens we experienced during the previous stages of our evolution. With so much more time on their hands, our antibodies rise up against other perceived dangers—gluten, peanuts, milk—which in fact are not really threatening. Our immune systems' over-reaction manifests itself in the form of pesky and occasionally life-threatening allergies.

And the research does seem to bear out the hypothesis. A 2003 Australian study concluded that asthma and allergy rates are higher for those who move from a developing country to a developed country. Meanwhile, a 2007 study by a group of international researchers at the Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology found that "frequent use of common household cleaning sprays may be an important risk factor for adult asthma." And a 2011 study by German researchers found that children living on farms—and therefore exposed to a wider range of microbes than their urban and suburban peers—had statistically significant lower asthma rates.

Yet others, like University College London researcher Graham Rook, think there's more to the story. He attributes rising rates of inflammatory and other human allergic disease not to modern-day hygiene but to lack of exposure to so-called "old friends"—microbes present in hunter-gatherer times when human immune systems were evolving. Rook backs up his "Old Friends Hypothesis" by citing other studies shedding light on the connection between good health and exposure to greater biodiversity in general.

"Lifestyle changes, antibiotics, caesarean births and lack of breast-feeding limit the transmission of maternal microbiota to the next generation," says Rook, adding that our "unvarying diets" lacking the microbial

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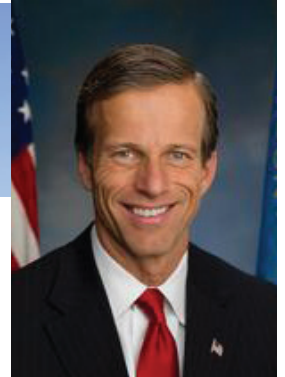
diversity our bodies evolved with combined with our limited contact with the natural world only aggravate the problem. "Without these microbial inputs in early life our immune systems, endocrine systems and metabolic systems do not develop correctly, and can malfunction."

The moral of the story? Whether you agree more with Strachan or Rook, don't be scared to indulge in nature and don't be a germaphobe. Get your kids off their screens and out into the yard, park, playground or beach where they can mingle with the dirt and get exposed to as many different microbes as possible. They'll live healthier lives and handle future health threats more easily than those who spend their childhoods over-sanitized indoors. Chances are they'll be happier adults, too, given the research correlating lack of outdoor time with increased rates of depression. Who would've think that dirt cures?

CONTACTS: Migration and Asthma, onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ppul.10323; Household Cleaning Sprays & Adult Asthma, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2020829/; Environmental Microorganisms and Childhood Asthma, www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1007302; Graham Rook, www.grahamrook.net.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. To donate, visit www.earthtalk.org. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Fighting the Opioid Crisis Head On

The opioid crisis that's plagued many areas of the country has reached epidemic levels, and it's on the rise. Last year alone, more than 72,000 Americans lost their lives to drug overdoses. Of those, nearly 50,000 were related to opioids – a highly addictive drug that can be fatal when misused, whether in the form of a prescription drug or illicit substance.

No state is immune to this battle, including South Dakota. And while it might not have affected our state the same way it has others, I can say with certainty that one opioid-related death is one too many.

Sadly, we've lost hundreds of fellow South Dakotans to this epidemic over the last decade, and nationwide, the problem is only getting worse. Today more people are dying from opioid overdoses than in motor vehicle accidents. It's now the leading cause of accidental death in the United States.

Taking on this crisis requires a strong and coordinated response from local communities all the way to the federal government, which has an important role to play in this battle. In a place where politics too often rules the day, I'm glad this fight has garnered the strong bipartisan support it deserves in Washington, D.C. It's too important not to.

In 2016, Congress passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the 21st Century Cures Act, which devoted substantial resources to states to empower them to tackle this problem in communities around the country. In March and September of this year, we passed appropriations bills that included more than \$8 billion to address the opioid crisis. All told, funding to combat this crisis has increased by nearly 1,300 percent over last four years.

Most recently, Congress passed the Opioid Crisis Response Act, which is the result of more than 70 proposals from senators across the ideological spectrum, myself included. Five Senate committees, including the Senate Commerce Committee, which I chair, contributed to this effort that will help reduce use and supply, encourage recovery, and drive innovation and long-term solutions.

The bill includes my Expanding Telehealth Response to Ensure Addiction Treatment Act, which will take meaningful steps toward expanding access to telehealth technology for Medicare patients being treated for substance use disorder. Telehealth is critical for rural states like South Dakota, which is why I'm glad this particular provision was included in the broader legislation.

It also includes my Fighting Opioid Abuse in Transportation Act, which would close a safety gap in railroad drug and alcohol testing regulations and require certain federal agencies to include fentanyl, an opioid drug, in the drug-testing panel.

Angela Kennecke, a journalist who is familiar to many South Dakotans, lost her daughter to the opioid crisis. Angela has bravely shared her family's experience, saying, in part, "I think it's best if I just tell my story and let everyone out there know what happened to my daughter. Because I really believe it could happen to anyone's daughter. It can happen in anyone's family."

She's right. It can happen to anyone's family. That's why Congress has taken this issue head on. When I say one opioid-related death is one too many, it's people like Angela's daughter, Emily, who I'm talking about. We can curb this epidemic, and with the tools that are being deployed nationwide, I'm confident we will.

Wolves football unable to get offense rolling in loss to St. Cloud State

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State University football team suffered their third loss of the season on Saturday afternoon, falling to St. Cloud State 19-14. It was a slow offensive game for both teams, as the Wolves dropped to 1-3 on the year, while the Huskies improved to 3-1.

St. Cloud State recorded the first scoring drive of the game, as the first quarter wound down with a 23-yard field goal. The Huskies then tacked on seven more points entering the second, on a touchdown by starting quarter back Dwayne Lawhorn.

Noah MacPherson set up the Northern State comeback and first touchdown of the game, as the senior notched the team's lone sack of the game, an 11-yard loss for the Huskies. The Wolves started their drive on the Huskies 25 and pushed the ball down field on six plays. Chaka Kelly recorded the touchdown with a 5-yard run through the SCSU defense.

The two teams entered the half with St. Cloud State up by three, and the Huskies extended their lead mid-way through the third on their second field goal of the afternoon, this time a 30-yard attempt. The Wolves however answered back three drives later, as Hunter Trautman hit Dakota Larson on their first play of the drive. The 42-yard pass tied the game at 13-all, and the successful PAT by Mitch Tschakert gave NSU their first lead of the contest.

SCSU however answered back in the fourth, re-taking the lead on a 35-yard touchdown pass at the 4:42 mark. Northern was unable to convert on their final two drives of the contest.

The Wolves tallied 141 passing yards, 69 yards more than their opponents, however the Huskies notched a game leading 239 yards rushing. The Wolves defense recorded one sack, while the special teams front notched 21 return yards.

Hunter Trautman threw for 141 total yards with one touchdown and a 42-yard long. Kelly led the rushers with 35 total yards, including touchdown and a 7-yard long. Larson led the receivers with 66 yards, averaging 22 yards per reception, followed by Jacob Streit with 41 yards.

MacPherson led the Wolves defense with ten total tackles including two tackles for a loss, one of which was a sack. Alex Gray and Preston Droessler followed with eight and seven tackles respectively. Etienne Ezeff kept the Husky receivers at bay with three breakups, followed by TJ Roberts with two.

Jacob Wiedrich tallied 423 yards punting and 175 yards on kickoffs. The senior averaged 35.2 yards per punt with a 56-yard long, and 58.0 yards per kickoff with two touchbacks. Tschakert went a perfect 2-for-2 on PATs in the game.

Northern returns to action next Saturday for the annual Gypsy Days game. The Wolves will face off against Winona State at 2:30 p.m. from Swisher Field.



Celebrate Women in Business

With a little over 80 percent of us in the workforce, South Dakota has the country's highest rate of working moms. I'm proud to have been part of this group, as a farmer and rancher, the owner of a hunting lodge, and a manager at my mom's restaurant. I won't say it's always been easy, but I never did it alone. My family and I were always surrounded by friends, loved ones, and a community that had our back. It's one of the wonderful things about South Dakota.

There's a day every September that's set aside to celebrate women in business, and in South Dakota, there's a lot to celebrate. Today, more than 23,000 South Dakota women own and operate small businesses. What's interesting is that while we top the nation when it comes to working moms, our state has the lowest percentage of women-owned businesses, so we have room to grow.

Like any business, women-owned businesses benefited greatly from the tax cuts package we passed last December. In it, we included a first-ever 20-percent, small-business tax deduction to help lift the financial burden of job creation.

At the same time, we gave working families a break on childcare costs. In South Dakota, at an average of nearly \$500 per month, infant care tends to cost nearly 70 percent of what it costs to rent a home. To put it another way, a year of infant care costs just \$2,000 less, on average, than a year of college. That puts many working families between a rock and a hard place financially. They can't afford to live on a single income, but the cost of childcare if both parents work is unaffordable. As such, I fought to protect the Child and Dependent Care Credit. This allows families to claim up to \$6,000 of child care expenses and deduct a portion of that from their federal income tax bill each year.

We're now working to build on those victories, finding more ways to help businesses get their start and grow. This September, my committee approved another round of tax cuts. Among other provisions, the legislation allows new start-up businesses to write off more of their initial start-up costs. I'm hopeful that will help more people ride the tidal wave of growth we've seen in recent months.

I'm also working on a repeal of regressive taxes, like Obamacare's 10 percent tanning bed tax. Today, 70 percent of tanning salons are women-owned, and many are suffering as a result of the Obamacare tax. Studies show roughly 10,000 tanning salons have closed nationwide as a result of the 10 percent levy, resulting in 80,000 people losing their job. The tax needs to be repealed.

All of that said, women-owned businesses are on the rise. According to one recent study, women are starting 1,821 new U.S. businesses every day – a big increase from an average of 952 for the five years prior. That's good news for all of us.

But let me close with a little advice my grandma gave me that's served me well – not only in business, but as a mom and as a member of the House. She told me to just say yes when opportunities arise. I would advise the same. Say yes and try a new hobby. Say yes and learn a new skill. Say yes and start a new business venture. You don't have to commit to it for the rest of your life, but give it a try. You'll never know where that opportunity will lead.

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2018 Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup

On Friday morning, Sept. 28, a few dozen cowhands will put on their boots and saddle their horses. Custer State Park employees will arise before dawn. And thousands from across the state, country and world will gather, all to continue a 53-year tradition.

The Buffalo Roundup is an experience unlike any other. You can feel the ground shake as over 1,000 half-ton creatures stampede across the prairie. Watching the brave riders drive the beasts to their destination is quite incredible. Witnessing the buffalo's power and speed from such a short distance creates a feeling of being back in the Old West.

At one time, there were 30 to 60 million buffalo roaming North America, but that number fell to fewer than 1,000 in the early twentieth century. Although population levels are nowhere near the historical peak, South Dakota buffalo have made a comeback from near extinction, thanks in part to Custer State Park.

Riders will round up a herd of 1,300 buffalo on Sept. 28th, after which about four days are needed to work the herd. Staff will vaccinate and brand the calves, check the cows for pregnancy and identify 250 buffalo for November's sale.

After the Friday morning Roundup, visitors can stay for lunch and watch staff work the herd. There will be plenty of things to do for those who decide to stay for the weekend. The Arts Festival will continue through Saturday, which is also the day of the Great Downtown Pumpkin Festival in Rapid City and the 1880 Train Oktoberfest Express. Then on Sunday, Crazy Horse Memorial visitors will be permitted to hike to the arm of the mountain carving during an organized Volksmarch.

The Roundup is something every South Dakotan should see at least once. People from all over the world come for this one-of-a-kind experience because there's nothing like it anywhere else. Consider making this worthwhile journey. I hope to see you there!

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Tax Fairness in South Dakota

This summer, the Supreme Court issued a decision to allow states to collect and remit sales tax from online retailers, like Amazon or eBay, which may not have a physical brick-and-mortar store in the state. South Dakota led the effort in the Supreme Court case *South Dakota v. Wayfair*.

By opening the door for states to collect online sales taxes, South Dakota and local governments can widen the tax base and allow for more tax competition, so that we can foster economic growth by keeping our rates low. This will bring in additional resources to help support local schools, libraries, police units and fire departments, maintain safety nets for individuals who can't care for themselves and reinvest in our communities – without raising tax rates on South Dakota families. With online sales growing at four times the rate of retail sales in recent years, state and local governments in South Dakota are losing between \$48 and \$58 million annually. By allowing for this revenue to be collected up front, our brick-and-mortar stores are on a level playing field with online vendors from out of state.

We've also taken steps to help simplify the process for businesses. The Department of Revenue has a free online service which makes it simple for vendors to comply with the law. Additionally, in 2005, South Dakota signed the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SST). The agreement, which has been signed by 24 states so far, streamlines and modernizes tax administration at the state level to reduce the burden of compliance. The SST also refers businesses to software that automatically calculates sales tax on transactions. Those who use it are immune from audit liability for sales tax transactions managed by the software. This process for collecting online sales tax, along with the streamlined sales tax provisions developed by SST, has been functioning successfully for several years. In fact, South Dakota has been adapting to SST for more than a decade.

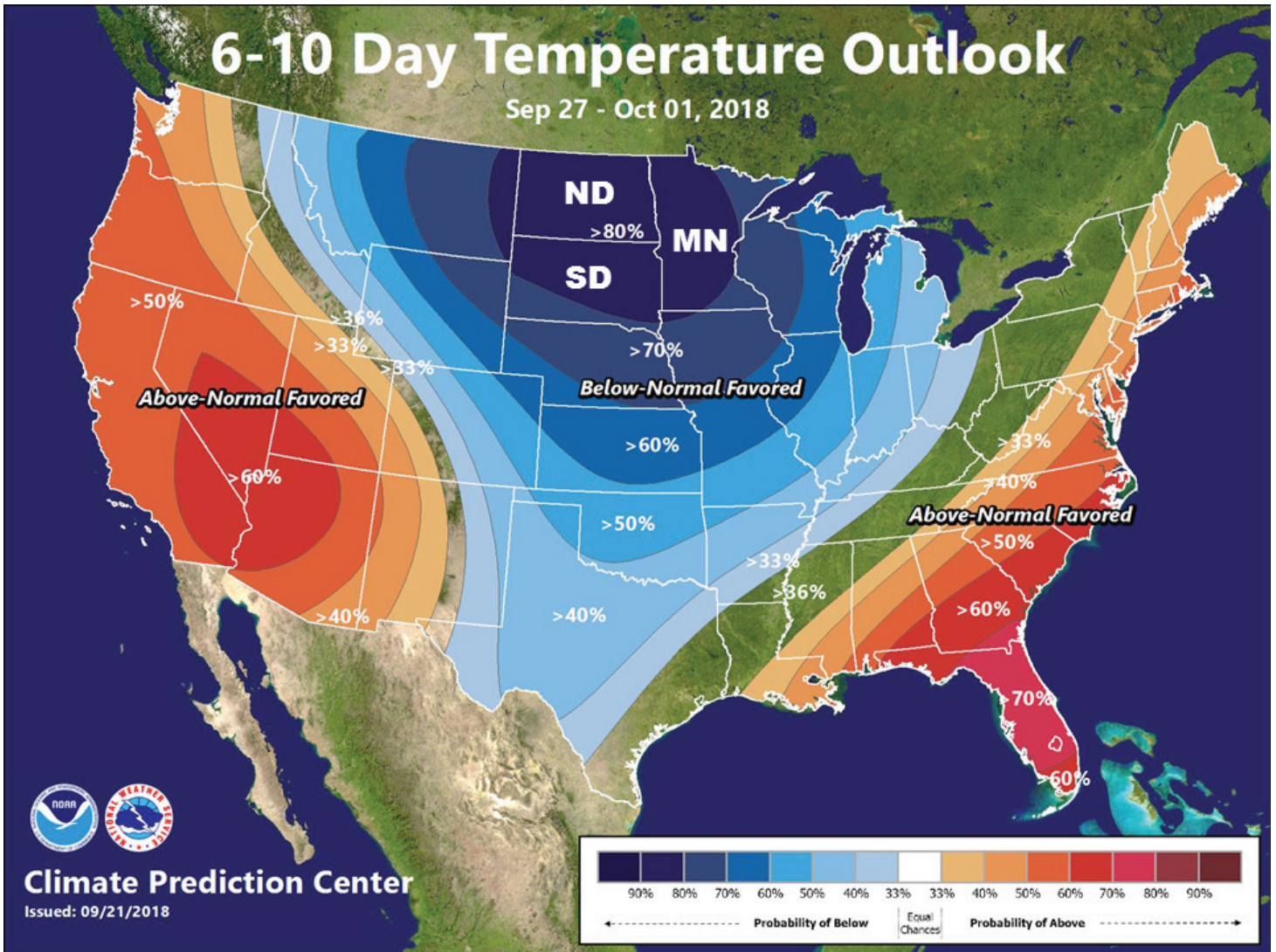
I have been a longtime advocate for granting states the right to require that out-of-state businesses collect state sales taxes on purchases sold in South Dakota. Last year, I sponsored the Marketplace Fairness Act, which would give states the right to collect the sales and use taxes they are owed under current law from out-of-state businesses or online retailers. Small businesses in our state provide good-paying jobs to South Dakotans, pay local property taxes, sponsor community events and make investments in the future of our state. The sales tax loophole that treats out-of-state businesses and online retailers differently than physical businesses in our state creates a disadvantage for brick-and-mortar stores.

The South Dakota State Legislature recently held a special session where lawmakers overwhelmingly approved a plan to allow for collections to start on November 1 of this year. While some have argued that this is just another tax on South Dakotans, it's actually about tax fairness. Individuals who make purchases online have always been responsible for paying a use tax, but because there was no method or requirement to collect it at the time of the sale—and many people don't know they have to pay it—the tax was often not paid. That now changes with the passage of the new South Dakota law. According to the South Dakota Department of Revenue, businesses without a physical presence in South Dakota must now obtain a sales tax license and pay sales tax if their gross sales into South Dakota exceed \$100,000 per calendar year or if the business has more than 200 separate transactions into South Dakota per year.

I support the legislature's decision, and I thank Gov. Dennis Daugaard for his leadership on this important issue. Communities across the state will directly benefit from their local businesses being on a level playing field with online vendors.

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Published on: 09/22/2018 at 8:15AM

Average high temperatures during late September are in the mid to upper 60s across the area; mid to lower 40s lows. This year will likely be colder. <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

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Today in Weather History

September 23, 1984: Snow fell from the early morning to the late evening hours across northwest South Dakota bringing more than a foot of snow to some locations. Camp Crook in Harding County reported 14 inches. Amounts between six and twelve inches were common across Harding and Perkins Counties as well as parts of Meade and Butte Counties. Roads in these areas were slushy with icy bridges. The snow covered much of the western third of South Dakota with depths an inch or less.

September 23, 2004: A tornado touched down northeast of Browns Valley, MN during the late afternoon. This tornado traveled through a cornfield and a farmstead before dissipating. The tornado damaged several sheds and a trailer along with toppling a large grain bin. Another tornado touched down south and southwest of Rosholt in Roberts County in the late afternoon. This F2 tornado destroyed a house, a mobile home, and a travel trailer. The tornado also killed three cattle.

1551: The Grand Harbour at Valetta, Malta, was hit by a waterspout which then moved inland. This waterspout sunk four ships, killing at least 600 people. It should be noted, the year of the event could also be 1555, or 1556 as sources conflict.

1722: La Nouvelle-Orléans (New Orleans) was founded May 7, 1718, by the French Mississippi Company, under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, on land inhabited by the Chitimacha. Four years later, a hurricane destroys nearly every building in the village, including the only church and hospital.

1815 - One of the greatest hurricanes to strike New England made landfall at Long Island and crossed Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It was the worst tempest in nearly two hundred years, equal to the hurricane which struck in 1938, and one of a series of severe summer and autumn storms to affect shipping lanes that year. (David Ludlum)

1904 - The temperature at Charlotteburg, NJ, dipped to 23 degrees, the coldest reading of record for so early in the autumn for the state. (The Weather Channel)

1975: On September 22, Hurricane Eloise intensified to attain Category 2 strength, and became a major hurricane of Category 3 status shortly after that as it turned towards the northeast. Several ships penetrated the storm's center during its passage through the Gulf. Hurricane Eloise continued to strengthen until it reached its peak winds of 125 mph and a minimum barometric pressure of about 955 mbar. It moved ashore along the Florida Panhandle near Panama City on September 23.

1983 - A thunderstorm downburst caused a timber blowdown in the Kaibab National Forest north of the Grand Canyon. Two hundred acres were completely destroyed, and scattered destruction occurred across another 3300 acres. Many trees were snapped off 15 to 30 feet above ground level. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Autumn began on a rather pleasant note for much of the nation. Showers and thunderstorms were confined to Florida and the southwestern deserts. Warm weather continued in the western U.S., and began to spread into the Great Plains Region, but even in the southwestern deserts readings remained below 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

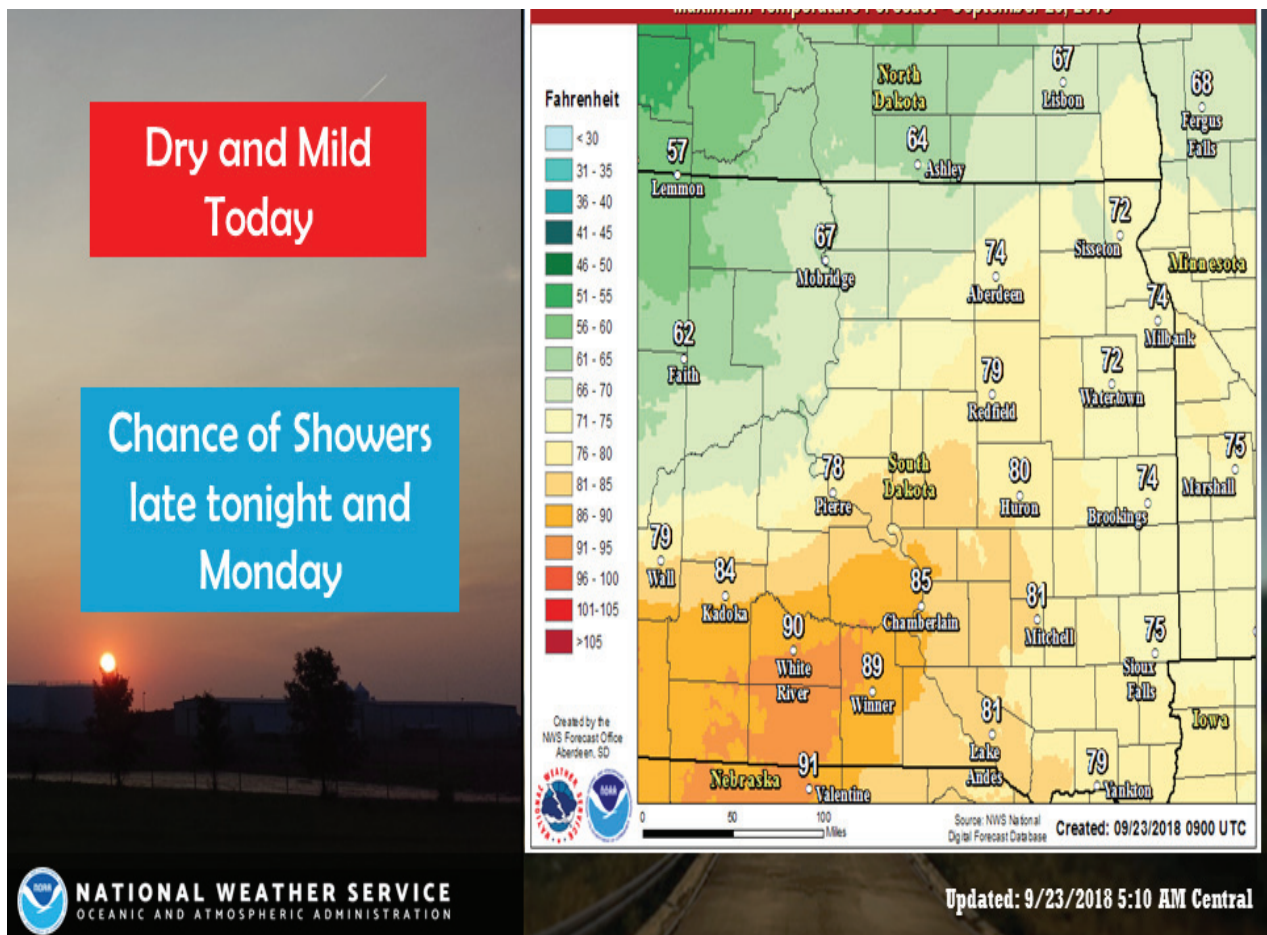
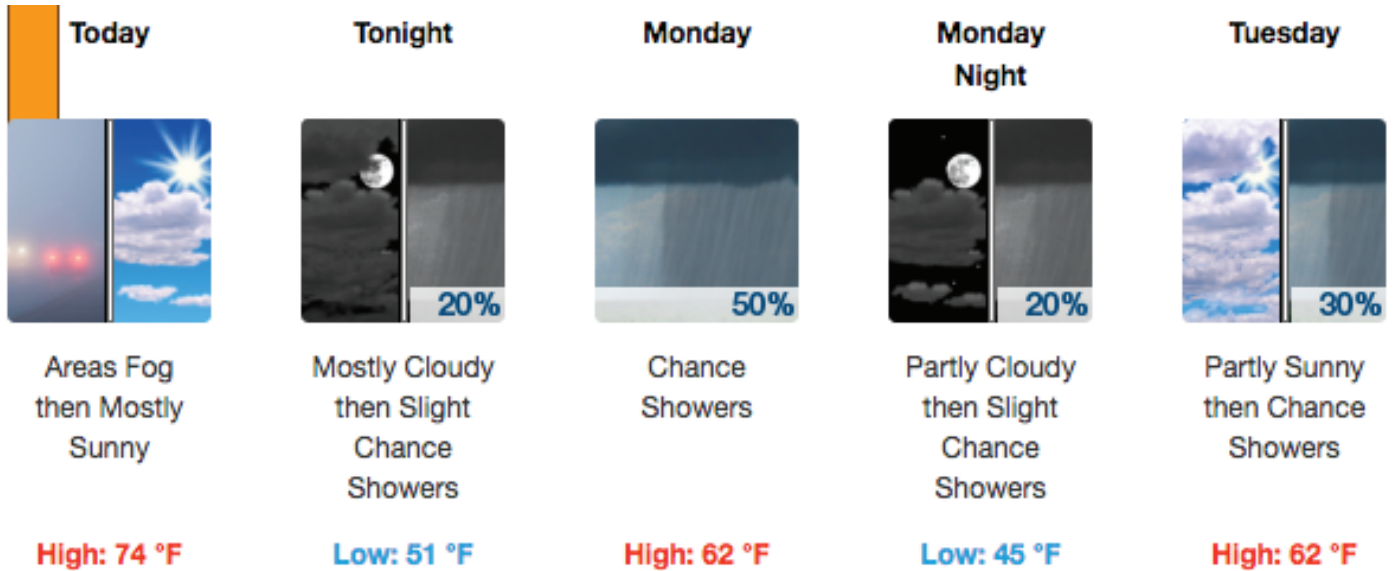
1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front in the south central U.S. produced severe weather in Oklahoma during the afternoon and early evening hours. Thunderstorms produced softball size hail near Noble and Enterprise, and baseball size hail at Lequire and Kinta. A tornado near Noble OK destroyed a mobile home injuring one person. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Seventeen cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Devils Lake ND with a reading of 22 degrees. Jackson KY reported a record low of 41 degrees during the late afternoon. Strong northwesterly winds ushering cold air into the central and northeastern U.S. gusted to 55 mph at Indianapolis IND. Winds along the cold front gusted to 65 mph at Norfolk VA, and thunderstorms along the cold front deluged Roseland NJ with 2.25 inches of rain in one hour. The temperature at Richmond VA plunged from 84 degrees to 54 degrees in two hours. Snow and sleet was reported at Binghamton NY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - Hurricane Rita reached the Texas/Louisiana border area near Sabine Pass as a category-3 hurricane with maximum sustained winds near 120 mph. A storm surge of at least 15 feet flooded parts of Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Terrebonne and Vermilion parishes, where sugar cane crop losses were estimated near \$300 million. An 8-foot storm surge in New Orleans overtopped the provisionally-repaired levees (from Hurricane Katrina damage) and caused additional flooding. A total of 10 fatalities were reported, and preliminary damage estimates ranged between \$4-5 billion.

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Published on: 09/23/2018 at 5:13AM

Dry and mild conditions can be expected across the area today. A frontal boundary will track across the area tonight and Monday, and may be the focus for showers, and possibly a few thunderstorms. Cooler temperatures can be expected during the upcoming work week.

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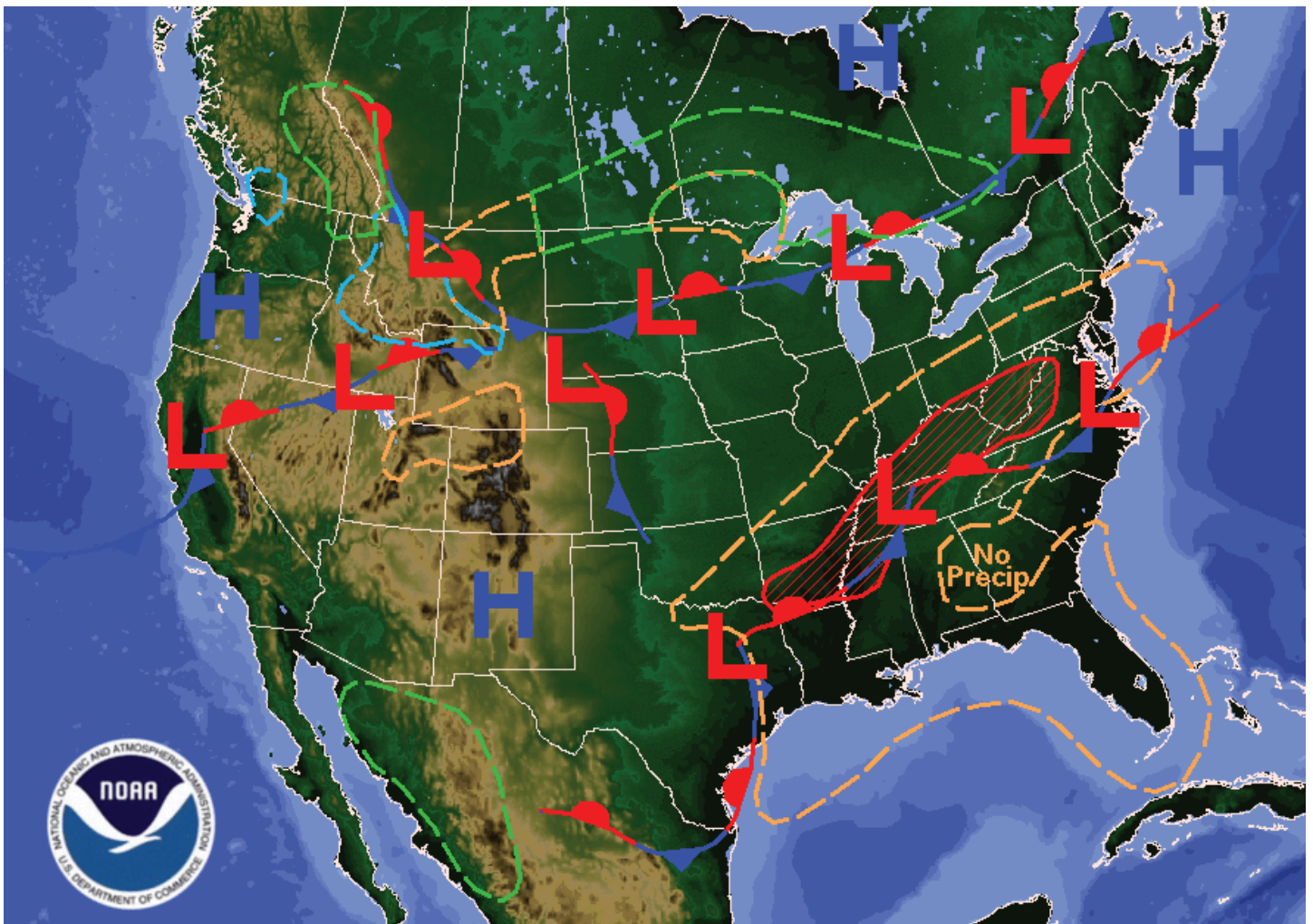
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 72.4 F at 4:27 PM
Low Outside Temp: 41.1 F at 2:08 AM
High Gust: 27.0 Mph at 9:44 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 94° in 1935
Record Low: 22° in 2012
Average High: 69°F
Average Low: 42°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.62
Precip to date in Sept.: 1.80
Average Precip to date: 17.91
Precip Year to Date: 13.01
Sunset Tonight: 7:29 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:23 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Sep 23, 2018, issued 4:48 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain	Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
Rain and T'Storms	Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
Rain and Snow	Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
Snow	Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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HELPING HANDS

Years ago there was a picture of a mother and father walking down a beautiful pathway holding the hands of their two small children who were walking with them. Underneath were the words, Their Future is in Your Hands. That is true in a certain sense and to a certain degree.

David realized there was another hand that was far more important than the hand of any parent: You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. What did he mean?

God is sufficient to save. When he began to sink in swirling waves, Peter shouted, Save me, Lord! And He did. Immediately Jesus saw a person who was in need, and He reached out and saved him. He did it for Peter, and He will do the same for anyone who willingly calls on Him for salvation.

God is sufficient to supply every need that we have. Our God is a good and gracious God who is willing to meet the needs of those who depend on Him. God not only saves us by His grace, but His Word assures us that God will supply our every need according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus. God does not give grudgingly, but generously, because His grace is endless!

God is sufficient to sustain us. Jude assures us that He is able to keep us from falling and present us before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy to His Father. Are there any other words that bring more comfort in times of anxiety, adversity or abandonment?

Prayer: Great is Your faithfulness, O Lord, to save us, supply our every need and sustain us each day of our lives. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 145:16 You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- Nov./Dec./Jan./Feb./Mar. Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meat- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 1/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 4/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 5/4/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 9/7/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2018 Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/10/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/01/2018 Olive Grove Golf Course 2018 Holiday Party

- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

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News from the Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Yankton, 25-16, 25-22, 25-20

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 16-25, 25-23, 25-16, 25-21

Crazy Horse def. Wakpala, 27-25, 25-15, 25-18

Mitchell def. Pierre, 25-19, 25-20, 28-26

Pine Ridge def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-16, 25-13, 21-25, 25-15

Belle Fourche Tournament

Pool Play

Pool A

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Sturgis, 25-6, 25-11

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Moorcroft, Wyo., 25-16, 25-13

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Hot Springs, 25-10, 25-12

Pool B

Belle Fourche def. Hill City, 25-22, 25-18

Hill City def. Bennett County, 25-15, 25-19

St. Thomas More def. Hill City, 25-23, 15-25, 26-24

Pool C

Douglas def. Lead-Deadwood, 35-33, 30-28

Douglas def. Rapid City Central JV, 25-21, 25-18

Philip def. Rapid City Central JV, 25-12, 25-20

Philip def. Douglas, 25-15, 25-8

Philip def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-11, 25-17

Pool D

Bowman County, N.D. def. Wall, 25-16, 25-23

Bowman County, N.D. def. Rapid City Christian, 25-22, 25-19

Spearfish def. Bowman County, N.D., 25-16, 25-23

Belle Fourche, S.D. Tournament

First Round

Philip def. Bowman County, N.D., 25-13, 17-25, 25-14

Kimball-White Lake Tournament

Pool Play

Pool A

Kadoka Area def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-18, 25-16

Kadoka Area def. Jones County, 25-8, 25-15

Kadoka Area def. Wessington Springs, 25-11, 27-25

Kimball/White Lake def. Wessington Springs, 25-20, 25-22

Kimball/White Lake def. Jones County, 25-10, 25-19

Wessington Springs def. Jones County, 21-25, 25-16, 25-7

Pool B

Burke def. Colome, 25-16, 25-10

Burke def. Canistota, 25-21, 18-25, 25-19

Burke def. Iroquois, 25-8, 25-7

Canistota def. Iroquois, 25-11, 25-15

Canistota def. Colome, 23-25, 25-9, 25-21

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Colome def. Iroquois, 25-11, 25-12
Seventh Place
Jones County def. Iroquois, 25-12, 25-13
Fifth Place
Wessington Springs def. Colome, 25-22, 26-24
Third Place
Canistota def. Kimball/White Lake, 36-34, 25-18
Championship
Burke def. Kadoka Area, 25-23, 25-20
Little Moreau Conference Tournament (LMC)
Play-In
Newell def. Tiospaye Topa, 17-25, 29-27, 25-14
First Round
Faith def. Newell, 25-8, 25-19
Harding County def. Bison, 25-5, 25-16
Lemmon def. Dupree, 25-19, 16-25, 25-19
Timber Lake def. McIntosh, 25-14, 25-11
Second Round
Faith def. Lemmon, 25-9, 25-14
Harding County def. Timber Lake, 25-19, 25-17
Third Round
Faith def. Harding County, 25-16, 25-23
Consolation Bracket
Bison def. McIntosh, 25-9, 27-25
Lemmon def. Bison, 25-18, 25-11
McIntosh def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-8, 25-8
Newell def. Dupree, 25-22, 25-22
Timber Lake def. Lemmon, 25-19, 25-10
Timber Lake def. Newell, 25-19, 25-17
Consolation Championship
Timber Lake def. Harding County, 25-23, 25-16
Championship
Faith def. Timber Lake, 25-19, 25-21
Miller Tournament
Miller def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-21, 25-13
Miller def. Faulkton, 25-14, 25-19
Miller def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-9, 25-6
Potter County def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-20, 25-19
Potter County def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-11, 25-18
Wolsey-Wessington def. Potter County, 25-16, 14-25, 25-21
Sanford Pentagon Tournament
Orange Division
Pool A
Parkston def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-21, 25-14
Parkston def. Sioux Valley, 27-25, 25-19
Pool B
Colman-Egan def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-20, 25-19
Hanson def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-20, 26-24
Gold Pool
Parkston def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-19, 24-26, 25-18

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Silver Pool

Alcester-Hudson def. Sioux Valley, 25-14, 24-26, 25-12

Hanson def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-17, 25-8

Bronze Pool

Great Plains Lutheran def. Bon Homme, 25-14, 25-14

Irene-Wakonda def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-21, 20-25, 25-23

Blue Division

Pool A

Northwestern def. Rapid City Central, 25-11, 25-22

Northwestern def. Freeman, 25-9, 25-8

Northwestern def. Parker, 22-25, 25-21, 25-22

Parker def. Freeman, 25-11, 25-19

Parker def. Rapid City Central, 25-23, 25-22

Rapid City Central def. Freeman, 25-13, 25-21

Pool B

Chester def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-14, 25-17

Chester def. Madison, 25-14, 25-18

Chester def. Spirit Lake, Iowa, 26-24, 17-25, 25-18

Pool C

Dell Rapids def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 21-25, 25-22, 25-23

Warner def. Central Lyon, Rock Rapids, Iowa, 25-17, 25-22

Warner def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-22, 25-21

Warner def. Dell Rapids, 25-10, 25-11

Pool D

Ethan def. Groton Area, 25-22, 19-25, 25-15

Ethan def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-12, 25-14

Groton Area def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-22, 25-5

Western Christian, Hull, Iowa def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-5, 25-5

Western Christian, Hull, Iowa def. Groton Area, 25-8, 25-17

Gold Pool

Ethan def. Parker, 25-20, 25-18

Spirit Lake, Iowa def. Ethan, 25-22, 18-25, 25-21

Silver Pool

Dell Rapids def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-18, 25-17

Rapid City Central def. Dell Rapids, 14-25, 25-16, 25-21

Rapid City Central def. Groton Area, 25-23, 26-24

Bronze Pool

Freeman def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-16, 25-21

Purple Pool

Warner def. Chester, 25-12, 25-17

Western Christian, Hull, Iowa def. Northwestern, 25-23, 25-15

Western Christian, Hull, Iowa def. Warner, 19-25, 25-15, 25-17

Sisseton Tournament

First Round

Dakota Valley def. Sisseton, 25-7, 25-8

Milbank Area def. Tri-Valley, 25-23, 21-25, 25-21

Tea Area def. Chamberlain, 25-10, 25-15

Winner def. Webster, 25-16, 25-12

Consolation Semifinal

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Sisseton def. Chamberlain, 25-20, 26-24

Tri-Valley def. Webster, 27-25, 25-16

Semifinal

Dakota Valley def. Tea Area, 28-26, 25-23

Winner def. Milbank Area, 25-22, 25-23

Seventh Place

Webster def. Chamberlain, 25-19, 25-17

Fifth Place

Tri-Valley def. Sisseton, 25-14, 25-14

Third Place

Milbank Area def. Tea Area, 25-18, 25-22

Championship

Winner def. Dakota Valley, 25-22, 25-20

Unity Christian Tournament

Unity Christian, Orange City, Iowa def. Sioux Falls Christian, 19-21, 21-19, 16-14

PREP FOOTBALL

Lead-Deadwood 57, Bennett County 7

Little Wound 36, McLaughlin 6

___ Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

03-12-13-20-22

(three, twelve, thirteen, twenty, twenty-two)

Estimated jackpot: \$319,000

Lotto America

01-07-38-43-47, Star Ball: 10, ASB: 3

(one, seven, thirty-eight, forty-three, forty-seven; Star Ball: ten; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$8.2 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$303 million

Powerball

24-61-63-64-69, Powerball: 18, Power Play: 5

(twenty-four, sixty-one, sixty-three, sixty-four, sixty-nine; Powerball: eighteen; Power Play: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$178 million

Stricker, Jobe tied for Sanford International in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Steve Stricker and Brandt Jobe topped the Sanford International leaderboard again Saturday after another cool and breezy day in the inaugural PGA Tour Champions event.

After matching Jerry Smith and David McKenzie with first-round 7-under 63s, Stricker and Jobe each shot 67 to get to 10-under 130 at Minnehaha Country Club.

"It was a challenge out there today," Stricker said. "It was gusty, the wind came out of the south, where

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we played yesterday it was out of the north, so it was a totally different golf course.”

Jobe made an 18-foot birdie putt on the par-4 18th, and Stricker missed a 6-footer to leave them tied. “It’s pretty straightforward off the tee and the greens are what make it difficult at times and you’ve just got to be in the right spot to have good birdie putts at it,” Stricker said. “If not, then you’ve got to play pretty defensive at times. ... It’s a simple game plan, but try to stay out of trouble and keep trying to put pressure on everybody.”

Stricker won in Arizona and Mississippi in consecutive starts in May for his first senior victories. Next week in France, he will be one of U.S. Ryder Cup captain Jim Furyk’s assistants.

Jobe birdied four of the last five holes. He won last year in Iowa for his lone senior title

“I think we kind of got used to what the wind was,” Jobe said. “Of course, there’s some scoring holes on the back. The front played very difficult. It was just kind of try not to screw up for a while there.”

Smith was a stroke back after a 68.

Scott McCarron also had a 68 to get to 8 under. Woody Austin was 7 under after a 64.

McKenzie had a 77 to drop into a tie for 43rd at even par.

Man dies in single-vehicle crash northeast of Reva

REVA, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol says a 67-year-old man has died after the semi-truck he was driving rolled northeast of Reva.

Authorities say the man was driving Friday on Highway 79 when his vehicle’s passenger tires went off the shoulder. Officials say his trailer remained in the ditch after the driver corrected to bring the semi onto the road, causing the rollover.

The Highway Patrol says the man died at the scene. Officials haven’t yet identified the man.

The patrol’s investigation is ongoing.

2 wounded in Wisconsin shooting discharged from hospital

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Two people shot by a colleague this week at a Wisconsin software company have been discharged from a Madison hospital, a health system spokesman said Saturday.

The two discharged patients were released Friday and a third patient remained hospitalized in fair condition on Saturday, UW Health spokesman Gian Galassi said.

WTS Paradigm employee Anthony Tong opened fire with 9mm semi-automatic pistol inside the company’s Middleton headquarters Wednesday, seriously wounding three co-workers and grazing another. A search warrant made public Friday shows that one of the victims was shot 10 times.

Police killed Tong in a shootout minutes after the attack started. The Middleton Police Department said in a statement that two officers shot at Tong: Richard O’Connor and Tyler Loether. O’Connor has worked at the department since 1998, while Loether started in 2012.

The Dane County Sheriff’s Office said in a statement that two of its deputies fired their weapons in the shootout: 21-year veteran David Lambrecht and Matthew Earll, who has served there for 11 years.

The officers and deputies have are on paid administrative leave until the official investigation is finished and the district attorney issues a ruling.

Middleton Police Chief Chuck Foulke has said Tong was not legally allowed to buy a gun. In 2004, Tong had his concealed-carry permit revoked in South Dakota after police said he was acting delusional and paranoid.

Tong’s motive remains a mystery.

Sioux Falls tourism group faces \$220K loss amid tax mix-up

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls tourism group is scrambling to cover a \$220,000 budget gap from a tax mix-up that went unnoticed for three years.

The South Dakota Department of Revenue recently notified the Sioux Falls Convention and Visitors Bu-

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reau that the organization has been receiving more hotel tax revenue than it ought to have since 2015, the Argus Leader reported.

The organization uses taxes collected on hotel stays to lure conventions, trade shows and tourists to the city through advertisements and marketing campaigns. The lodging taxes are sent to the state revenue office, which then funnels the money back to Sioux Falls and the convention bureau.

The revenue department identified that some restaurants were incorrectly filing their monthly tax bills to the state by improperly marking gross sales receipt taxes as lodging taxes. The city refers to gross sales receipt taxes as entertainment taxes.

No red flags were raised because the total amount of the tax returns each restaurant was filing were on par with prior monthly statements, said Doug Schinkel, the department's business tax division director.

"It's caused quite a bit of concern here," said Teri Schmidt, the convention bureau's director. "It's really an unfortunate situation because we plan our budget a year out."

The convention bureau was informed that it had to give back more than \$200,000 in April, Schmidt said. The organization had already set its budget for the year, so it had to make up for the oversight.

The group had to scale back on some of its advertising efforts and hiring, according to Schmidt.

Since the revenue department identified the mistake, the state's electronic filing system has been modified to not allow non-hotels to file lodging taxes. Restaurants have also been informed of proper filing requirements.

Officials consider making Devil's Bathtub an official trail

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Forest Service officials are considering a proposal to turn a little-known hiking trail in the Black Hills National Forest into a recognized attraction.

Northern Hills District Ranger Steve Kozel is looking into the project to make Devil's Bathtub a designated hiking trail, the Rapid City Journal reported.

"This area is a popular hiking destination in the summer but no official trail exists, resulting in hikers following a confusing network of user-created routes," Kozel said. "Designation of a single route would reduce potential resource damage and would ease navigation."

Devil's Bathtub's unofficial trailhead is about 8 miles (13 kilometers) south of Spearfish along the Spearfish Canyon Scenic Byway. The route has become more popular in recent years after being shared on websites, social media and smartphone apps.

The trailhead, which is a small gravel parking area, leads to a short but adventurous hike to the "tub," which is a swimming hole with a natural rock slide. The trailhead is on state-owned public land, while the rest of the hike and the Devil's Bathtub itself are on public land owned by the U.S. Forest Service.

The federal agency is considering designating its portion of the hiking route, as federal, state and local officials discuss issues with the trailhead.

Residents living near the gravel parking area have complained that the lot has become congested in recent years, making it difficult for cabin owners to enter and exit their property.

John Kanta of the state Department of Game, Fish and Parks said the state is delaying a decision until after the Forest Service decides whether it'll designate a trail on federal land.

"We're taking a backseat, but we understand there are a lot of issues there," Kanta said. "Right now, the way we see it, it's an attraction and a trail that exists primarily on Forest Service property, and we're kind of stuck in the middle."

Kozel said the agency hopes to make the decision this fall. Work to designate the trail could start next spring or summer, he said.

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

Water released from dams on Missouri River reduced

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The amount of water being released into the lower Missouri River will be temporarily

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reduced because of recent heavy rains in southeastern South Dakota and northwestern Iowa.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says it is reducing the amount of water being released from the Fort Randall and Gavins Point dams to allow area rivers to return to normal levels.

The Corps says the releases from Gavins Point dam will be reduced until the Missouri River crests near Sioux City, Iowa, which is expected in the next several days.

The releases will be restored to near 60,000 cubic feet per second after the river level recedes.

As aid checks go out, farmers worry bailout won't be enough

By JULIET LINDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Farmers across the United States will soon begin receiving government checks as part of a billion-dollar bailout to buoy growers experiencing financial strain from President Donald Trump's trade disputes with China.

But even those poised for big payouts worry it won't be enough. And while support for Trump is near unwavering in the heartland, some growers say that with the November election nearing, such disappointing aid outcomes could potentially affect their vote.

"It's pretty obvious that the rural agriculture communities helped elect this administration, but the way things are going I believe farmers are going to have to vote with their checkbook when it comes time," said Kevin Skunes, a corn and soybean grower from Arthur, North Dakota and president of the National Corn Growers Association.

Corn farmers get the smallest slice of the aid pie. Corn groups estimate a loss of 44 cents per bushel, but they're poised to receive just a single penny per bushel.

"If these issues haven't been resolved, there could be a change in the way farmers vote," Skunes said. "A person has to consider all things."

Farmers are already feeling the impact of Trump's trade tiffs with China and other countries. China has hit back hard, responding with its own set of tariffs on U.S. agricultural products and other goods.

The Trump administration is providing up to \$12 billion in emergency relief funds for American farmers, with roughly \$6 billion in an initial round. The three-pronged plan includes \$4.7 billion in payments to corn, cotton, soybean, dairy, pork and sorghum farmers. The rest is for developing new foreign markets for American-grown commodities and purchasing more than two dozen select products, including certain fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, meat and dairy.

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced last month that soybean growers will get the largest checks, at \$1.65 per bushel for a total of \$3.6 billion. China is the world's leading buyer of American soybeans, purchasing roughly 60 percent of the U.S. crop. But since Beijing imposed a 25 percent tariff on soybean, imports prices have plunged.

The lack of initial detail about how the calculations were made left farmers scratching their heads.

Asked about the confusion, Rob Johansson, the Agriculture Department's chief economist, responded that the USDA took into account a number of factors "including the share of production that is exported and the value of trade directly affected by the retaliatory tariffs."

"The level of damage is not the same for each commodity," he said in a written response to questions submitted by The Associated Press.

He estimated that there would be more than 784,000 applications for relief.

The USDA has since released a detailed analysis of how the department made its calculations.

The breakdown has stunned corn and wheat farmers who say the payments are uneven and won't do much of anything to help keep struggling farms afloat.

A lobbying group that represents wheat growers is challenging the way the administration determined payments for wheat farmers, who are set to receive 14 cents a bushel. Chandler Goule, CEO of the National Association of Wheat Growers, said the USDA assumed U.S. wheat would be sold to China this year when it made its calculations. But the assumption was flawed, he said.

China typically makes its requests for American wheat between March and June. U.S. wheat farmers

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have sold, on average, 20 million bushels of wheat to China over the past three years. But none came this year, Goule said, as Trump escalated his threatening rhetoric on trade with Beijing. He hopes the per-bushel rate for wheat goes up if there's a second round of payments.

"I am very certain that we will not sell any wheat to China this year," Goule said. "The window we sell in has come and gone."

The response among farmers has been mixed. While some are grateful for the help, most are eager for the trade disputes to be quickly resolved.

"Nobody wants to have an aid package. I mean, if you're a farmer you're in the business of producing a crop. We just want a fair price for it," said Joel Schreurs, a soybean and corn producer near Tyler in southwestern Minnesota who sits on the board of both the American Soybean Association and the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association.

His personal operation is about 1,000 acres. He farms an additional 500 acres with his son-in-law and other relatives. He estimates that the tariffs would cost him \$40,000 to \$50,000 in lost income and that he would get \$16,000 to \$20,000 in emergency aid.

Schreurs worries that it will be hard for farmers to get back the buyers they'll lose as a result of the trade wars. "And in the short term we have to find another home for those beans, otherwise they're going to pile up and it will keep prices depressed," he said.

In the Midwest, growers typically farm both corn and soybeans. Those farmers would get payments for both under the program, which began sign-ups Sept. 4.

Perdue said checks could start going out as soon as the end of September for crops that have already been harvested; payouts are based on yield.

In a recent C-SPAN interview, Perdue said he understands growers' frustrations.

"Farmers always live in unpredictable times," he said. "They're very resilient, but obviously the longer trade issues go on the longer it bears on them regarding what is the future."

Jack Maloney says corn farmers will be getting so little in bailout aid that for roughly 200,000 bushels of corn a farmer would get only about \$2,000 for their losses.

"That's not even beer money," said the Brownsburg, Indiana, corn and soybean grower.

Maloney, 62, began farming full time in 1978 and now has two employees. He said some fellow farmers are angry and upset.

"Agriculture has always been the butt of all the trade wars," he said, adding that this isn't the first time he's seen trade disruptions affect the agricultural markets.

Maloney said he had already cut back on expenses during the past three years and hasn't taken a paycheck from his farm for more than a year because of tough times before the trade war began. He said the recent tumult has dashed hopes for stabilizing agricultural markets anytime soon.

"We were seeing a little light at the end of the tunnel — the markets were improving a little," he said, "and then this tariff thing happened and this trade war."

Daniel Weinand worries the market downturn could be the death knell for his farm. Weinand, 30, grows corn, canola and yellow peas on 900 acres of rented land near Hazen, North Dakota. He said he expects to reap about 30,000 bushels of corn, and to receive about \$300 in aid.

"A penny a bushel on corn, it's not that it's entirely worthless. But it almost is," he said. "I don't know how many more years I can weather."

Associated Press writers Richard Lardner in Washington, Rick Callahan in Indianapolis and Steve Karnowski in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

Tenn. Democrat aims for Senate win by edging away from party

By JULIE PACE, AP Washington Bureau Chief

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Phil Bredesen is a Democrat. But he'd rather you not mention that.

"I need to make clear to everybody my independence from all of the national Democratic stuff," said Bredesen, the former two-term governor of Tennessee who is now running for the U.S. Senate.

So far, his strategy appears to be working. According to internal polling by both parties, Bredesen has a narrow lead over Republican Rep. Marsha Blackburn in a state that President Donald Trump won by 26 points, and capturing the open seat would strengthen Democrats' chances of taking back control of the Senate in the November elections.

Bredesen, a 74-year-old white man, is an unlikely vessel for the hopes of a national party increasingly reliant on younger voters, women and minorities — and nominating more candidates that fit that same profile. He says Democrats wouldn't be able to reliably count on his vote in the Senate, and foresees playing a role like that of Maine Sen. Susan Collins, who has broken with the GOP on several high-profile issues.

"I think you can be influential being in that swing position," Bredesen said during an interview this past week in his campaign office in Nashville's West End neighborhood.

Bredesen represents the irony facing Democrats this fall. The party is moving to the left but its prospects of regaining the Senate hinge on decidedly moderate candidates running in states Trump carried by a wide margin.

With just over six weeks until Election Day, one of Bredesen's biggest challenges may be divorcing his race from Democrats' overall Senate chances.

"A lot of conservatives in Tennessee really like Phil Bredesen and really don't want (New York Democratic Sen.) Chuck Schumer to be majority leader," said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster. "How they wrestle with that tension likely determines the outcome of the Senate race."

Democratic incumbents in Indiana, Missouri, West Virginia and North Dakota are facing a similar challenge as they try to hold on. In Arizona, Democratic Rep. Kyrsten Sinema hopes to win a Senate seat by positioning herself as a centrist, despite starting her career as a Green Party activist.

Among this group of Democrats, Bredesen has been the most overt in distancing himself from his own party. He pans Democratic leaders for being "elitist" and bemoans efforts to win elections through "demographic partitioning." While he's consistently favored allowing access to abortion during his political career, he speaks openly about how that is not a defining issue for him.

"I believe that if this race is a race between me and Congresswoman Blackburn, I win," Bredesen said. "If it's a race between Democrats and Republicans, I lose."

That's why Blackburn is trying at every turn to remind voters of the "D" that will be next to Bredesen's name on the ballot.

"He could have run as a Republican, he could have run as an independent," she said in an interview. "He chose to run as a Democrat."

The key for Bredesen, who earned millions as a health care executive before going into politics, is nostalgia. He's banking on voters looking back fondly on the 16 years he spent as Nashville mayor and then Tennessee's governor. Signs in his campaign office remind volunteers to cite accomplishments such as bringing professional football and hockey to Nashville and stabilizing the state's Medicaid expansion program.

"We were doing really good when he was in office," said Crystal Whitley, 38, an interior designer from Springfield. Whitley, who leans Republican but didn't vote for Trump, said she's likely to back Bredesen in November, and likes "that we can see how he's performed in the past."

For Bredesen to win, he'll need to both ramp up Democratic turnout and peel off moderates such as Whitley, who may endorse Trump's policies but are seeking a check on some of the president's worst impulses.

"They're not asking you to support him in everything, because most of them know he's erratic," said Bredesen, dropping in a rare criticism of Trump. "What they're asking is you not go up and set yourself up as the permanent opposition."

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Democrats acknowledge it's difficult to see how a nominee without Bredesen's track record in the state would be competitive in 2018. Tennessee has shifted further to the right since Bredesen left the governor's mansion in 2011. And it's unclear whether Republican Sen. Bob Corker, whose retirement has opened up the Senate seat, could have won a GOP primary given his frequent criticism of the president.

"By all measures, a Republican candidate should win," said Tom Ingram, a longtime Tennessee GOP strategist. "If I was a Republican candidate in Tennessee right now, I'd be very uncomfortable being behind at all."

Indeed, Bredesen's strength has left Republican Party officials anxious. Despite being a tea party favorite and frequent Fox News guest, Blackburn isn't as well-known in Tennessee as her Democratic opponent. Focus groups through the summer showed some voters confused her with another Tennessee Republican, Rep. Diane Black, who lost her bid for the GOP nomination for governor.

To close the gap with Bredesen, Blackburn is leaning hard on her close ties to the president. She recently ran a television ad featuring Trump's appearance for her at a rally in which he said, "Phil, whatever the hell his name is, this guy will 100 percent vote against us every single time." Vice President Mike Pence campaigned for Blackburn on Friday.

Blackburn's campaign is also trying to pressure Bredesen to say whether he would vote for Brett Kavanaugh, Trump's embattled nominee for the Supreme Court. Bredesen has spoken favorably about Kavanaugh's experience, and political operatives in Tennessee believe he was preparing to announce his support for the judge before Kavanaugh was accused of sexual assault.

But the allegations paused any such plans and Bredesen still won't say what he would do. He told The Associated Press both that he believed Kavanaugh was a highly qualified jurist and that Christine Blasey Ford, the woman accusing Kavanaugh of assault, had a "very credible story."

Blackburn sidestepped questions about whether she believes Ford's allegations are credible or disqualifying for Kavanaugh if true.

"If I were in the Senate at this point, I would listen to her testimony, receive that testimony and make a decision if I felt like the allegations were true and valid," she said of Ford.

Blackburn's campaign and the White House have discussed the president making another stop for her in Tennessee before the Nov. 6 election to help give the congresswoman a boost and energize Republican voters.

Bredesen, meanwhile, hasn't had any national Democratic stars publicly campaigning for him — nor does he want them.

Asked whether he wanted former President Barack Obama or other party leaders to join him campaigning before Election Day, Bredesen said simply, "No."

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

Iran's president blames US after attack on military parade

By **NASSER KARIMI** and **JON GAMBRELL**, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Sunday that an unnamed U.S.-allied country in the Persian Gulf was behind an attack on a military parade that killed 25 people and wounded nearly 70.

Rouhani did not identify those behind Saturday's attack, which was claimed by an Arab separatist group. He could have been referring to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates or Bahrain — close U.S. military allies that view Iran as a regional menace over its support for militant groups across the Middle East.

"All of those small mercenary countries that we see in this region are backed by America. It is Americans who instigate them and provide them with necessary means to commit these crimes," Rouhani said.

Saturday's attack, in which militants disguised as soldiers opened fire on an annual Iranian military parade in Ahvaz, in the oil-rich southwest, was the deadliest attack in the country in nearly a decade. Women and children scattered along with once-marching Revolutionary Guard soldiers as heavy gunfire rang out, the chaos captured live on state television.

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The region's Arab separatists, once only known for nighttime attacks on unguarded oil pipelines, claimed responsibility for the assault, and Iranian officials appeared to believe the claim. Iran summoned diplomats from Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands early Sunday for allegedly harboring "members of the terrorist group" that launched the attack.

The ministry later summoned the envoy of the United Arab Emirates as well over what it called the "irresponsible and insulting statements" of an Emirati adviser, according to the semi-official ISNA news agency.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had earlier blamed regional countries and their "U.S. masters" for funding and arming the separatists, issuing a stark warning as regional tensions remain high in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear deal.

"Iran will respond swiftly and decisively in defense of Iranian lives," Zarif wrote on Twitter.

The parade was one of many around the country marking the start of Iran's long 1980s war with Iraq, commemorations known as the "Sacred Defense Week."

The attack killed at least 25 people and wounded nearly 70, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. It said gunmen wore military uniforms and targeted a riser where military and police commanders were sitting. State TV hours later reported that all four gunmen had been killed.

At least eight of the dead served in the Revolutionary Guard, an elite paramilitary unit that answers only to Iran's supreme leader, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency. The Guard responded to the attack on Sunday, warning it would seek "deadly and unforgiving revenge in the near future."

Tensions have been on the rise since the Trump administration pulled out of the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran earlier this year and began restoring sanctions that were eased under the deal. It also has steadily ramped up pressure on Iran to try to get it to stop what Washington calls its "malign activities" in the region.

The U.S. government nevertheless strongly condemned Saturday's attack and expressed its sympathy, saying it "condemns all acts of terrorism and the loss of any innocent lives."

Initially, authorities described the assailants as "takfiri gunmen," a term previously used to describe the Islamic State group. Iran has been deeply involved in the fight against IS in Iraq and has aided Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's long civil war.

But later, state media and government officials seemed to come to the consensus that Arab separatists in the region were responsible. The separatists accuse Iran's Persian-dominated government of discriminating against its ethnic Arab minority.

Khuzestan province also has seen recent protests over Iran's nationwide drought, as well as economic protests.

Iran has blamed its Mideast archrival, the Sunni kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for funding Arab separatists. State media in Saudi Arabia did not immediately acknowledge the attack, though a Saudi-linked, Farsi-language satellite channel based in the United Kingdom immediately carried an interview with an Ahvazi activist claiming Saturday's attack.

Hamid Baeidinejad, Iran's ambassador to the U.K., called the channel's decision a "heinous act" in a post on Twitter and said his country would file a complaint with British authorities over the broadcast. Early Sunday, a Foreign Ministry statement similarly criticized Britain and said Danish and Dutch diplomats were told Iran "already warned" their governments about harboring Arab separatists.

Danish Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen condemned the attack and stressed that there would be "consequences" if it turns out that those responsible have connections to Denmark.

Yacoub Hor al-Tostari, a spokesman for the Arab Struggle Movement to Liberate Ahvaz, told The Associated Press that members of an umbrella group of Ahvazi activists his organization leads carried out the attack.

The attack undermined the Iranian government "on the day it wants to give a message to the world that it is powerful and in control," al-Tostari said. To bolster his claim, he gave details about one of the attackers that the AP could not immediately verify.

The Islamic State group also claimed responsibility for the attack, but provided no evidence it carried out the assault. They also initially wrongly said the attack targeted Rouhani, who was in Tehran at the time. The militants have made a string of false claims in the wake of major defeats in Iraq and Syria.

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The Islamic State group carried out a coordinated assault in June 2017 on parliament and the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution. At least 18 people were killed and more than 50 wounded.

In the last decade, mass-casualty militant attacks have been incredibly rare. In 2009, more than 40 people, including six Guard commanders, were killed in a suicide attack by Sunni extremists in Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan province.

Gambrell reported from in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb in Beirut, Maamoun Youssef in Cairo, Jari Tanner in Helsinki and television producer Mohammad Nasiri in Tehran contributed.

Details of Thursday hearing for Kavanaugh accuser to be set

By **LISA MASCARO, MARY CLARE JALONICK and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Details must be worked out on a tentative agreement for a Thursday hearing for Brett Kavanaugh's accuser, Christine Blasey Ford, to tell the Senate Judiciary Committee about her allegation that the Supreme Court nominee sexually assaulted her decades ago. Talks were continuing Sunday.

Lawyers for Ford and bipartisan representatives of the committee came to the tentative agreement after a short but productive phone call late Saturday, said a person briefed on the matter, who was not authorized to speak publicly and requested anonymity. The person said Kavanaugh would also appear.

Some details of the hearing, such as the order of their testimony, remained in negotiation and talks were expected to continue Sunday. A second person confirmed the tentative agreement for the hearing Thursday.

The tentative accord could begin to close days of high-stakes brinkmanship that have roiled Washington ahead of midterm elections and threatened to jeopardize Kavanaugh's confirmation to the court.

Tensions have been running on overdrive since Ford, a 51-year-old college professor in California, went public with her allegation that Kavanaugh assaulted her when they were at a house party in high school. Kavanaugh, an appellate court judge, denied the allegation and said he wanted to testify as soon as possible to clear his name.

Ford initially indicated she wanted to tell her story to the committee, but talks dragged on as her lawyers negotiated terms of her appearance.

Republicans have grown frustrated as Ford's lawyers insisted on a hearing next Thursday rather than Monday or even Wednesday and made other requests, some of which the committee chairman, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, rejected. Democrats, against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement, countered that Ford should be shown respect and given accommodation to tell her story.

As the talks continued, Grassley warned that he would schedule a Monday vote on whether to recommend Kavanaugh's nomination to the full Senate. On Saturday, both sides convened for the phone call that lasted about 15-20 minutes.

Meanwhile, Republicans viewed Ford's requests as a way to delay voting on President Donald Trump's nominee.

As Republicans were considering their next move in private talks Saturday, fresh divisions were emerging between those who have advocated confirmation and other GOP senators who have expressed his interest in hearing Ford's story before voting.

The White House is approaching Ford's potential testimony with trepidation, nervous that an emotional performance might not just damage Kavanaugh's chances but could further energize female voters to turn out against Republicans in November against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement.

Moreover, the West Wing aides who had urged Trump to remain muted in his response to the accusations worried about how the president might react to an hourslong, televised hearing. In tweet Friday, Trump broke his silence to cast doubt on Ford's story in ways Republicans had been carefully trying to avoid.

Trump mused to confidants that the "fake" attacks against his nominee were meant to undermine his

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presidency, according to a White House official and a Republican close to the White House. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss private conversations.

Other Republicans scoffed at Ford's latest offer questioning her willingness to accept the committee's request to tell her story.

"When?" tweeted the No. 2 GOP Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, a member of the committee.

Details of the Thursday hearing remain in flux.

On Friday, Grassley turned down Ford's request that only senators, not attorneys, be allowed to ask questions. The committee's 11 Republicans — all men — have been seeking an outside female attorney to interrogate Ford, mindful of the election-season impression that could be left by men trying to pick apart a woman's assertion of a sexual attack.

He also rejected her proposal that she testify after Kavanaugh, a position lawyers consider advantageous because it gives them a chance to rebut accusations.

Grassley rebuffed other Ford requests, including calling additional witnesses. Ford wants an appearance by Mark Judge, a Kavanaugh friend who Ford asserts was at the high school party and in the room where the incident occurred.

The lawyers for Ford wrote to the committee on Saturday that she "accepts the Committee's request to provide her first-hand knowledge of Brett Kavanaugh's sexual misconduct next week."

Attorneys Debra Katz and Lisa Banks said that many aspects of Grassley's latest offer were "fundamentally inconsistent" with the committee's promise of a "fair, impartial investigation." They said they remained disappointed by the "bullying" that "tainted the process." Yet they remained "hopeful that we can reach agreement on details."

Ford's interests are being aided by another prominent Washington attorney, Michael Bromwich, a former Justice Department inspector general. He said on Twitter Saturday that he had joined her legal team.

Democrats on the committee came to Ford's side.

"Let's all remember that Dr. Ford is not on trial, rather Judge Kavanaugh is seeking a lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court," said Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del. He said she "should be treated with the respect she deserves."

Patience among Republicans, though, is running thin. The GOP is facing enormous pressure from its base of conservative leaders and voters to swiftly approve Kavanaugh, who would become the second of Trump's nominees to sit on the nation's highest court, ahead of the Nov. 6 election.

Earlier Saturday amid the latest deadline standoff Vice President Mike Pence called Kavanaugh "a man of integrity with impeccable credentials." He said he expected Kavanaugh to join the high court soon.

The lawyer for a woman who Brett Kavanaugh's accuser has said attended the 1980s party at which he allegedly molested her has told Senate Republican investigators that the woman doesn't recall such a gathering or know the Supreme Court nominee.

The Washington Post reports Saturday that Christine Blasey Ford told them that Leland Keyser was at that high school party.

A GOP Judiciary Committee investigator contacted Keyser last Tuesday, saying Keyser had been "identified" as attending that party and wanted to talk to her. Committee spokesman Taylor Foy said Keyser's name "came up" in its investigation.

But in an email late Saturday, Keyser attorney Howard Walsh told the committee she "does not know Mr. Kavanaugh and she has no recollection" of ever attending a gathering with Kavanaugh.

That response seemed a setback to Ford supporters' efforts to corroborate her claim.

AP writer Eric Tucker contributed from Washington. Lemire reported from Bridgewater, New Jersey.

US considers limit on green cards for immigrants on benefits

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Trump administration has proposed rules that could deny green cards to immigrants if they use Medicaid, food stamps, housing vouchers and other forms of public assistance.

Federal law already requires those seeking green cards and to prove they will not be a burden — or “public charge” — but the new rules detail a broad range of programs that could disqualify them.

The Department of Homeland Security said Saturday that current and past receipt of certain public benefits above thresholds would be considered “a heavily weighed negative factor” in granting green cards as well as temporary stays.

The proposal “will clearly define long-standing law to ensure that those seeking to enter and remain in the United States either temporarily or permanently can support themselves financially and will not be reliant on public benefits,” the department said.

The 447-page proposal published on the department’s website will appear in the Federal Register “in the coming weeks,” triggering a 60-day public comment period before it takes effect.

Coming less than seven weeks before midterm elections, the announcement could help galvanize voters who have backed or opposed Trump’s broad crackdown on legal and illegal immigration.

Immigrant advocacy groups said people may avoid or withdraw from public aid programs even at the risk of losing shelter and suffering deteriorating health because they worry they will be denied visas.

Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center, said the proposal was “an inhumane attack on the health and wellbeing of so many families and communities across the country.”

“How you contribute to your community — and not what you look like or the contents of your wallet — should be what matters most,” she said. “This proposed rule does the opposite and makes clear that the Trump administration continues to prioritize money over family unity by ensuring that only the wealthiest can afford to build a future in this country.”

Potentially disqualifying benefits include Medicare Part D prescription drugs, Medicaid with some exceptions for emergency services and disability services related to education, food stamps and Section 8 housing vouchers.

NC river swirls with gray muck near flooded coal ash dump

By MICHAEL BIESECKER and ALAN SUDERMAN, Associated Press

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP) — Gray muck is flowing into the Cape Fear River from the site of a dam breach at a Wilmington power plant where an old coal ash dump had been covered over by Florence’s floodwaters.

Forecasters predicted the water will continue to rise through the weekend at the L.V. Sutton Power Station. Duke Energy spokeswoman Paige Sheehan said the utility doesn’t believe the breach poses a significant threat of increased flooding to nearby communities.

Sheehan said the company can’t rule out that ash might be escaping the flooded dump and flowing through the lake into the river.

Inspectors with the state Department of Environmental Quality travelled to the plant by boat on Sunday to collect water quality samples. Environmental Secretary Mike Regan said aerial video of the site show “potential coal ash” flowing into the river.

“When the environment is conducive, we will put people on the ground to verify the amount of potential coal ash that could have left and entered those flood waters,” Regan said.

Floodwaters breached several points early Friday in the earthen dam at Sutton Lake, the plant’s 1,100-acre (445-hectare) reservoir. Lake water then flooded one of three large coal ash dumps lining the lakeshore.

The ash left over when coal is burned to generate electricity contains mercury, lead, arsenic and other toxic heavy metals. Duke said Friday the plant’s inundated basin contains about 400,000 cubic yards (305,820 cubic meters) of ash.

The area received more than 30 inches (75 centimeters) of rain from former Hurricane Florence, with the Cape Fear River still rising and expected to crest Sunday and remain at flood stage through early next

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week.

Gray material the company characterized as "coal combustion byproducts" could be seen floating in the lake and river.

Earthjustice, an environmental advocacy group with a boat in the river, provided The Associated Press with images Friday showing wide gray slicks in the water. A team member plucked a turtle from the muck and rinsed it off.

"Any big spill like this raises concerns about the impacts on the estuary ecosystem in the lower Cape Fear River," said Pete Harrison, a staff attorney with Earthjustice on the boat. "This is Duke's third coal ash spill in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence, and it looks like it's the biggest yet."

Environmental Protection Agency regional administrator Trey Glenn said Friday his staff was monitoring the situation at Sutton from the state Emergency Operations Center in Raleigh, about 150 miles (240 kilometers) northwest of the Sutton plant. He said dozens of EPA staff were scattered throughout the region impacted by Florence, checking on toxic waste sites and oil storage facilities.

He said EPA has offered to help North Carolina officials respond to the Sutton incident.

"As of this evening, North Carolina has not requested additional support," he said.

Security personnel for Duke blocked access Friday to Sutton Lake Road, leading to a public dock on the reservoir, a popular boating and fishing site.

Duke denied a request for an Associated Press reporter to cross the barricade, saying the lake situation "continues to change" and is "not safe."

Sutton Lake is the former cooling pond for a coal-fired plant Duke retired in 2013 and replaced with a new generating station running off natural gas. Duke said that power plant was shut down overnight and all employees safely evacuated.

The breach at the Wilmington site is separate from last weekend's reported rupture at a nearby coal ash landfill, which spilled enough material to fill 180 dump trucks.

Duke's ash waste management has faced intense scrutiny since a drainage pipe collapsed under a waste pit at an old plant in Eden in 2014, triggering a massive spill that coated miles of the Dan River in gray sludge. The utility later agreed to plead guilty to nine Clean Water Act violations and pay \$102 million in fines and restitution for illegally discharging pollution from ash dumps at five North Carolina power plants. It plans to close all its ash dumps by 2029.

At the separate Duke plant near Goldsboro, three old coal-ash dumps capped with soil and trees were underwater Thursday after the Neuse River flooded.

Staff from the environmental group Waterkeeper Alliance visited the flooded dumps at the H.F. Lee Power Plant by boat Wednesday, took photographs and collected samples of gray sludge washing into the floodwaters.

State environmental regulators visited the site Thursday, but said they could not make a full assessment because of high water levels. The Duke spokeswoman Sheehan said any coal ash release at the Goldsboro site appeared "minimal."

Meanwhile, South Carolina's state-owned utility said floodwaters had also entered a coal ash dump at its closed Grainger plant near Conway.

Santee Cooper spokeswoman Mollie Gore said no significant environmental impact is expected because nearly all the ash has been removed from the basin and water pumped in to prevent the dike from breaking.

The company had placed a 2 1/2-foot (72-centimeter) high inflatable berm around the top of a second pond that has more coal ash in it. She estimates 200,000 tons (181 million kilograms) of ash are in a corner of the pond furthest from the rising Waccamaw River.

River forecasts project the Waccamaw will reach a new historic flood level this weekend, eclipsing a record height set by Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Associated Press reporters Jeffrey Collins in Columbia, South Carolina, and Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Virginia, contributed to this story.

Biesecker reported from Washington. Follow him at <http://twitter.com/mbieseck>

Militants attack Iran military parade, killing at least 25

By **NASSER KARIMI** and **JON GAMBRELL**, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Militants disguised as soldiers opened fire Saturday on an annual Iranian military parade in the country's oil-rich southwest, killing at least 25 people and wounding over 60 in the deadliest terror attack to strike the country in nearly a decade.

Women and children scattered along with once-marching Revolutionary Guard soldiers as heavy gunfire rang out at the parade in Ahvaz, the chaos captured live on state television.

The region's Arab separatists, once only known for nighttime attacks on unguarded oil pipelines, claimed responsibility for the brazen assault.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif blamed regional countries and their "U.S. masters" for funding and arming the separatists, issuing a stark warning as regional tensions remain high in the wake of the U.S. withdraw from the Iranian nuclear deal.

"Iran will respond swiftly and decisively in defense of Iranian lives," Zarif wrote on Twitter.

The attack came as rows of Revolutionary Guardsmen marched down Ahvaz's Quds, or Jerusalem, Boulevard. It was one of many around the country marking the start of Iran's long 1980s war with Iraq, commemorations known as the "Sacred Defense Week."

Journalists and onlookers turned to look toward the first shots, then the rows of marchers broke as soldiers and civilians sought cover under sustained gunfire. Iranian soldiers used their bodies at time to shield civilians in the melee, with one Guardsman in full dress uniform and sash carrying away a bloodied boy.

"Oh God! Go, go, go! Lie down! Lie down!" one man screamed as a woman fled with her baby.

In the aftermath, paramedics tended to the wounded as soldiers, some bloodied, helped their comrades to ambulances. Video obtained by The Associated Press of the aftermath showed bodies of soldiers, some appearing lifeless, laying on the ground in pools of blood. One had a blanket covering him. A man screamed in grief.

The attack killed at least 25 people and wounded over 60, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. It said gunmen wore military uniforms and targeted a riser where military and police commanders were sitting. At least eight of the dead served in the Revolutionary Guard, an elite paramilitary unit that answers only to Iran's supreme leader, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

"We suddenly realized that some armed people wearing fake military outfits started attacking the comrades from behind (the stage) and then opened fire on women and children," an unnamed wounded soldier told state TV. "They were just aimlessly shooting around and did not have a specific target."

State TV hours later reported that all four gunmen had been killed, with three dying during the attack and one later succumbing to his wounds at a hospital.

President Hassan Rouhani ordered Iran's Intelligence Ministry to immediately investigate the attack.

"The president stressed that the response of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the slightest threat would be harsh, but those who support the terrorists should be accountable," IRNA reported.

Meanwhile, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei described the attack as exposing "the atrocity and viciousness of the enemies of the Iranian nation."

"Their crime is a continuation of the conspiracies by the U.S.-backed regimes in the region which have aimed at creating insecurity in our dear country," Khamenei said in a statement. "However, to their dismay, the Iranian nation will persist on the noble and prideful path they have taken and will — like before — overcome all animosities."

Tensions have been on the rise between Iran and the U.S. The Trump administration in May pulled out of the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran, and since then has re-imposed sanctions that were eased under the deal. It also has steadily ramped up pressure on Iran to try to get it to stop what Washington calls "malign activities" in the region.

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Despite those touchy relations, the U.S. government strongly deplored the attack, saying that "the United States condemns all acts of terrorism and the loss of any innocent lives."

"We stand with the Iranian people against the scourge of radical Islamic terrorism and express our sympathy to them at this terrible time," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said.

Initially, authorities described the assailants as "takfiri gunmen," a term previously used to describe the Islamic State group. Iran has been deeply involved in the fight against IS in Iraq and has aided embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's long war.

But later, state media and government officials seemed to come to the consensus that Arab separatists in the region were responsible. The separatists accuse Iran's Persian-dominated government of discriminating against its ethnic Arab minority, though an Ahvazi Arab, Gen. Ali Shamkhani, serves as the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Khuzestan province also has seen recent protests over Iran's nationwide drought, as well as economic protests.

Iran has blamed its Mideast archrival, the Sunni kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for funding Arab separatists' activity. State media in Saudi Arabia did not immediately acknowledge the attack, though a Saudi-linked, Farsi-language satellite channel based in the United Kingdom immediately carried an interview with an Ahvazi activist claiming Saturday's attack.

Hamid Baeidinejad, Iran's ambassador to the U.K., called the channel's decision a "heinous act" in a post on Twitter and said his country would file a complaint with British authorities over the broadcast.

Yacoub Hor al-Tostari, a spokesman for the Arab Struggle Movement to Liberate Ahvaz, later told the AP that members of an umbrella group of Ahvazi activists his organization leads carried out the attack.

The attack undermined the Iranian government "on the day it wants to give a message to the world that it is powerful and in control," al-Tostari said. To bolster his claim, he gave details about one of the attackers that the AP could not immediately verify.

The Islamic State group also claimed responsibility for the attack in a message on its Amaaq news agency, but provided no evidence it carried out the assault. They also initially wrongly said the Ahvaz attack targeted Rouhani, who was in Tehran. The militants have made a string of false claims in the wake of major defeats in Iraq and Syria.

In Tehran, Rouhani watched a military parade that included ballistic missiles capable of reaching Israel and U.S. military bases in the Mideast. Rouhani said the U.S. withdraw from the nuclear deal was an attempt to get Iran to give up its military arsenal. United Nations inspectors say Iran is still complying with the deal, which saw it limit its nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

"Iran neither put its defensive arms aside nor lessens its defensive capabilities," Rouhani said. "Iran will add to its defensive power day by day."

Meanwhile, Iranian Gen. Abolfazl Shekarchi, a spokesman for the armed forces, alleged without evidence that the four militants involved in Saturday's attack "were dependent to the intelligence services of the U.S. and the Mossad" of Israel.

"They have been trained and organized in two Persian Gulf countries," he said, without elaborating.

Saturday's attack comes after a coordinated June 7, 2017 Islamic State group assault on parliament and the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution. At least 18 people were killed and more than 50 wounded.

That assault shocked Tehran, which largely has avoided militant attacks in the decades after the tumult surrounding the revolution.

In the last decade, mass-casualty militant attacks have been incredibly rare. In 2009, more than 40 people, including six Guard commanders, were killed in a suicide attack by Sunni extremists in Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan province.

Associated Press writer Nasser Karimi reported this story in Tehran and AP writer Jon Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. AP writers Sarah El Deeb in Beirut, and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo and television producer Mohammad Nasiri in Tehran contributed to this report.

World leaders gather at UN under threat from unilateralism

By EDITH M. LEDERER, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — With rising unilateralism challenging its very existence, the United Nations convenes its annual meeting of world leaders Monday and will try once more to tackle problems together as a community of nations, addressing threats ranging from Mideast conflicts to the effects of global warming — and also encouraging the glimmer of hope over the nuclear standoff in North Korea.

This year, 133 world leaders have signed up to attend the General Assembly session, a significant increase from last year's 114. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the expected large turnout "eloquent proof of the confidence of the international community in the United Nations," though other U.N. officials and diplomats said it's in response to growing concerns about an increasingly turbulent world.

The seven-year-old conflict in Syria and the three-year war in Yemen that has sparked the world's worst humanitarian crisis and is now seriously threatening large-scale famine will certainly be in the spotlight, along with meetings on other Mideast and African hot spots. So will Iran, which faces escalating hostile rhetoric from the Trump administration over its activities supporting international terrorism, which Tehran vehemently denies.

Guterres said last week that one of his overriding concerns in an increasingly globalized world is the threat to having the U.N.'s 193 member nations work together, which is the foundation of the United Nations.

"Multilateralism is under attack from many different directions precisely when we need it most," the U.N. chief told reporters Thursday. "In different areas and for different reasons, the trust of people in their political establishments, the trust of states among each other, the trust of many people in international organizations has been eroded and ... multilateralism has been in the fire."

Guterres challenged diplomats at last week's opening of the 73rd session of the General Assembly by saying: "At a time of fragmentation and polarization, the world needs this assembly to show the value of international cooperation."

Whether it will be able to remains in question.

At this year's gathering of presidents, prime ministers, monarchs and ministers, populist leaders will include U.S. President Donald Trump, President Andrzej Duda of Poland and Premier Giuseppe Conte of Italy along with the foreign ministers of Hungary and Austria.

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley told reporters that Trump, who champions an "America First" policy, wants to talk about "protecting U.S. sovereignty," and she reiterated Washington's opposition to the 2015 Paris climate agreement on curbing global warming and a newly agreed international compact aimed at regulating migration.

"We really value sovereignty of the country," Haley said. "It is not saying multilateralism can't work, but it's saying sovereignty is a priority over all of that, and we always have to make sure we're doing that — and there are many countries that agree with us."

Before stepping down as U.N. humanitarian chief Aug. 31, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein expressed serious concern that populism, intolerance and oppression are "becoming fashionable again."

"It all builds, because once you start down the path of intolerance, it's very difficult to stop it, unless at the end of the day you have conflict," he said.

French President Emmanuel Macron is expected to be a key voice joining Guterres in the coming week in speaking out against this trend and supporting multilateralism as key to promoting peace.

The week's activities kick off with a peace summit Monday morning honoring the 100th birthday this year of South African anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela. A statue of Mandela will be unveiled at U.N. headquarters and leaders are expected to adopt a declaration recognizing the years 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace.

Trump is hosting an event Monday on "The World Drug Problem" and Haley said 124 countries have signed a global call to action. Activists on drug policy note it was never negotiated, and one group, the Harm Reduction Coalition, called it "an instance of heavy-handed U.S. 'with us or against us' diplomacy."

The increasingly strident U.S. rhetoric against Iran is expected to be a feature in U.S. speeches. Haley said

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that "every dangerous spot in the world — Iran seems to have its fingerprints in it," which Tehran denies.

Trump pulled the United States out of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement in May and the foreign ministers of the five remaining powers who support the deal — Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — are expected to meet privately Monday evening with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

The General Assembly's "General Debate," as the ministerial session is called, officially opens Tuesday with Guterres' report on the state of the world, to be followed soon after by speeches from Trump, Macron and late in the morning by President Hassan Rouhani of Iran.

The U.S. holds the rotating presidency of the U.N. Security Council in September and has scheduled two ministerial meetings, the first on Wednesday presided over by Trump. It was initially to focus on Iran but has now been broadened to the topic of "nonproliferation" of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

"I'm sure that is going to be the most watched Security Council meeting ever," Haley told reporters.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will preside over the second meeting Thursday on North Korea, an issue the Security Council was united on in imposing increasingly tough sanctions. But that unity now appears to be at risk over enforcement of sanctions and the broader issues of how to achieve denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and when sanctions should be lifted against North Korea.

Guterres welcomed the recent "positive meeting" in Pyongyang between the leaders of North and South Korea but warned that "there will not be success in intra-Korean negotiations if simultaneously there is not success in the American and North Korean" negotiations to rid the Korean Peninsula of nuclear weapons.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations has received 342 requests for meetings during the high-level week.

They includes sessions on conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Mali and Central African Republic as well as the plight of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, aid for Palestinians, education for girls, modern slavery, environmental threats, efforts to end poverty, and the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Asked what are the big issues, Russia's U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, told The Associated Press: "All of them are big issues — nonproliferation, cooperation, the world peace architecture — it's every year, but this year it's maybe more topical than ever."

Uruguayan Ambassador Elbio Rosselli said the biggest issue for his country is multilateralism.

"It's a vow that all of us ought to keep reinforcing particularly at this juncture where so many undercurrents and contrary views are surfacing on different scenarios," he told AP. "The validity of this institution is more than ever necessary, and for that we need the recommitment of all states."

Comcast beats Fox in Sky auction with \$39B bid

LONDON (AP) — Comcast has emerged as the top bidder for European broadcaster Sky after a rare auction held by British regulators.

After three rounds of secret bidding on Friday and Saturday, Comcast offered the higher price of 17.28 pounds (\$22.58) per share for Sky, the equivalent of nearly 30 billion pounds (\$39 billion). Rival 21st Century Fox offered 15.67 (\$20.47) per share.

In a statement, Sky recommended that shareholders accept Comcast's offer and sell their shares immediately. Comcast said it hoped to complete the takeover by the end of October.

"Sky is a wonderful company with a great platform, tremendous brand and accomplished management team," Comcast Chairman and CEO Brian Roberts said in a statement. "This acquisition will allow us to quickly, efficiently and meaningfully increase our customer base and expand internationally."

Philadelphia-based Comcast is one of the largest cable television providers in the U.S. Around 29 million customers get cable television, internet access and other services from Comcast.

Britain's regulator, the Takeover Panel, set up the auction to reduce uncertainty for Sky after months of offers and counteroffers from the American media giants. Sky is Europe's largest pay-television operator, with 22.5 million customers in seven countries and popular programming including English Premier League soccer and "Game of Thrones."

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Fox owns 39 percent of Sky. It now must decide whether to sell its stake or remain a minority shareholder. Fox had long been trying to acquire the 61 percent of Sky it doesn't already own. Fox founder Rupert Murdoch's last bid sank amid a 2011 phone-hacking scandal, in which journalists working for Murdoch newspapers were accused of gaining illegal access to the voicemail messages of crime victims, celebrities and members of the royal family.

A bidding war emerged last December, when Comcast made an offer for Fox's entertainment assets, which Walt Disney Co. is in the process of buying for about \$71 billion (54 billion pounds). Comcast eventually dropped out of that contest to focus on its acquisition of Sky.

Its winning bid came at a steep price. Comcast initially made a \$31 billion (23.7 billion pound) bid for Sky last February, then raised that bid to \$34 billion (26 billion pounds) in July.

British regulators organized the rare auction in part to ensure that Sky's value didn't erode during the long bidding process. The last time such an auction took place was in 2007, when Tata beat out CSN to buy Britain's Corus, creating what at the time was one of the world's top five steelmakers.

Travel still dangerous in flooded areas of North Carolina

By **GARY D. ROBERTSON, MARTHA WAGGONER and ALAN SUDERMAN, Associated Press**

BLADENBORO, N.C. (AP) — Travel remained dangerous Saturday in southeastern North Carolina, where the governor warned of "treacherous" floodwaters more than a week after Hurricane Florence made landfall, and urged residents to stay alert for flood warnings and evacuation orders.

Gov. Roy Cooper said nine of the state's river gauges are at major flood stage and four others are at moderate stage, while parts of Interstates 95 and 40 will remain underwater for another week or more. Emergency management officials said residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed will begin moving into hotel rooms next week.

"Hurricane Florence has deeply wounded our state, wounds that will not fade soon as the flood waters finally recede," Cooper said.

South Carolina also has ordered more evacuations as rivers continue to rise in the aftermath of a storm that has claimed at least 43 lives since slamming into the coast more than a week ago.

The small farming community of Nichols, South Carolina, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) from the coast, was completely inundated by water, Mayor Lawson Battle said Saturday. He called the situation "worse than Matthew," the 2016 hurricane that destroyed almost 90 percent of the town's 261 homes. Battle said flooding from Florence has wiped out the 150 or so homes rebuilt afterward.

"It's just a mess," said Battle, who was awaiting a visit from Gov. Henry McMaster. "We will try everything we can to come back ... but we need to have federal and state help."

Benetta White and David Lloyd were among 100 people rescued with helicopters, boats and high-wheeled military vehicles during a six-hour operation in southeastern North Carolina's Bladen County that lasted into Friday morning — their second evacuation in a week. White and Lloyd, who live in the North Carolina town of Kelly, were given little time Thursday night to evacuate when the Cape Fear River came rushing onto their property. By the time they loaded their van, they had to slog through waist-high, foul-smelling water to get to a neighbor's pickup.

From there, they went to the town's fire department and were taken by an Army truck to a shelter at a Bladen County high school.

"We had to evacuate again, all over again, and got trapped in a bunch of water and almost lost our lives," said White.

In Wilmington, where Hurricane Florence made landfall and which had been cut off by floodwaters, officials said they'd identified three safe routes into town. They encouraged people to avoid travel in areas where the risk of flooding remains.

North Carolina Emergency Management Director Michael Sprayberry said Saturday that eastern counties continue to see major flooding, including areas along the Black, Lumber, Neuse and Cape Fear rivers. The

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Cape Fear river is expected to crest Sunday and remain at flood stage through early next week.

He said residents who register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency can begin moving into hotels Monday. The program initially will be open to residents in nine counties, then will be expanded. A FEMA coordinator said about 69,000 people from North Carolina already have registered for assistance.

North Carolina environmental officials said they're closely monitoring two sites where Florence's floodwaters have inundated coal ash sites .

The state is using drones to get photos and video of a dam breach at the L.V. Sutton Power Station in Wilmington, where gray muck has been seen flowing into the Cape Fear River, and at the H.F. Lee Power Plant near Goldsboro, said Michael Regan, secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

He said Saturday that the video and photos show sand and "potential coal ash" leaving the Sutton site, and the DEQ will put people on the ground when it is safe. He said that DEQ staff has seen that coal ash left the basin and entered flood waters at the H.F. Lee plant, and is trying to determine "how much of that, if any" has entered into the Neuse River.

In Conway, South Carolina, water from the Waccamaw river began flowing into a Santee Cooper ash pond. The company said in a statement that the overtopping occurred Saturday morning, but no significant environmental impact was expected because nearly all of the ash had been excavated from the pond.

The National Weather Service confirmed Saturday that 10 tornadoes spawned by Hurricane Florence touched down Monday in Virginia, the strongest of which leveled a flooring company in Chesterfield and killed one worker.

An economic research firm estimated that Hurricane Florence has caused around \$44 billion in damage and lost output, which would make it one of the top 10 costliest U.S. hurricanes. The top disaster, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, cost \$192.2 billion in today's dollars, while last year's Hurricane Harvey cost \$133.5 billion

Moody's Analytics estimates Florence has caused \$40 billion in damage and \$4 billion in lost economic output, though the company stressed that the estimate is preliminary and could go higher or lower.

South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster has estimated damage from the flood in his state at \$1.2 billion. He asked congressional leaders to hurry federal aid.

Waggoner and Robertson reported from Raleigh, North Carolina. Also contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Jeffrey Collins in Columbia, South Carolina; Dee-Ann Durbin in Detroit; Chevel Johnson in New Orleans; Meg Kinnard in Galivants Ferry, South Carolina; Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Virginia; Jay Reeves in Birmingham, Alabama; Michael Biesecker in Washington and Tammy Webber in Chicago.

For the latest on Hurricane Florence, visit <https://www.apnews.com/tag/Hurricanes>

Parents face tougher rules to get immigrant children back

By GISELA SALOMON and CLAUDIA TORRENS, Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Armando Tabora desperately wants to get his teenage daughter out of the government detention facility where she has been for more than three months. He has been stymied at every turn.

The Florida landscaping worker took the bold step of going to a government office to submit fingerprints and other documents required for immigrants to get their children out of government custody — and now that information is being shared with deportation agents. He was then told that the woman he rents a room from would also need to submit fingerprints, something she refused to do. He then sought out friends who are here legally to help him out, to no avail.

"I don't know what to do," said Tabora, an immigrant from Honduras who has lived more than a decade in the shadows without being detected. "My daughter is desperate, crying. She wants to get out of there."

The drama of parents being separated from their children at the border dominated the headlines this year, but thousands of immigrant families are experiencing a similar frustration: the increasing hurdles they must surmount to take custody of sons, daughters and relatives who crossed the border on their own.

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The Trump administration has imposed more stringent rules and vetting for family members to get these children back as part of an across-the-board hardening of immigration policy.

As a result, family members are struggling to comply with the new requirement, keeping children in detention longer and helping the number of migrant kids in government custody soar to the highest levels ever. Federal officials insist the policies are about ensuring the safety of children.

More than 12,000 children are now in government shelters, compared with 2,400 in May 2017. The average length that children spend in detention has increased from 40 days in fiscal year 2016 to 59 in fiscal year 2018, according to federal data.

The requirements include the submission of fingerprints by all adults in the household where a migrant child will live. These sponsors — the term the U.S. uses for adults who take custody of immigrant children — are also subject to more background checks, proofs of income and home visits, lawyers say.

And this information will now be shared with Immigration and Customs Enforcement — something that did not occur in the past. ICE said this week that the agency has arrested 41 sponsors since the agencies started sharing information in June.

Lawyers and advocates say that change has had a chilling effect because many family members live in the country illegally and have been deterred from claiming relatives for fear they will be deported.

"They are saying: 'We are going after the people trying to take care of them (children),' " said Jen Podkul, director of policy at Kids in Need of Defense.

The government has long required families to go through some vetting to serve as sponsors. The issue has become more prevalent in the last five years when tens of thousands of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras started coming across the border.

Since October 2014, the federal government has placed more than 150,000 unaccompanied minors with parents or other adult sponsors who are expected to care for the children and help them attend school while they seek legal status in immigration court.

Under Trump, the rules have been toughened in what the administration says are necessary steps to keep children from ending up in the homes of people with criminal records and other issues that could endanger kids.

"If somebody is unwilling to claim their child from custody because they're concerned about their own immigration status, I think that de facto calls into question whether they're an adequate sponsor and whether we should be releasing the child to that person," Steven Wagner, acting assistant secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, said when the policy was announced in May.

The issue of sharing information with ICE arises because children and adult immigrants are handled by separate federal government agencies. Children are in the custody of the Health and Human Services Department's Office of Refugee Resettlement, while adults are handled by ICE.

Until the new fingerprinting policy took effect, the government rarely shared such information with immigration officials unless a fingerprint match showed that a potential sponsor had a particularly alarming record, said Holly Cooper, co-director of the Immigration Law Clinic at the University of California, Davis.

The tougher rules have put many immigrants in the position of doing something that once seemed unthinkable: turning over their fingerprints and other information knowing that it'll be shared with ICE.

Marvin Puerto did just that to get custody of his 9-year-old son, Nahun. Puerto crossed the border in 2014 and has been trying to live in Missouri in the shadows since then. He and his wife, Eilyn Carbajal, waited two months to get custody of the boy.

"I did not want to do the fingerprints, but I had no choice," said the 29-year-old construction worker. "Now they have all my information. I feel they are going to accuse me of smuggling family members."

Workers at The Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama say that after the Office of Refugee Resettlement started sharing information with ICE in June, two to four sponsors a week did not show up for appointments and a few who did visit refused to get fingerprinted.

After the New York Civil Liberties Union sued in February on behalf of a detained Salvadoran teen and his mother, the government was required to release case files on 45 children held under similar circum-

stances. In about half a dozen of those cases, reluctance to provide fingerprints was a factor in holding up children's release, forcing some sponsors to scramble for another place to live and others to drop out of the application process, the NYCLU said.

If unaccompanied minors are not placed with sponsors they can end up in a federal foster care program. Some could be deported to the same dangers from which they fled.

Many of the parents and other relatives trying to secure their children's release are poor and, to cover expenses, often share homes with others who are unrelated or in the country illegally. Many of those roommates have been reluctant to submit their fingerprints.

For Adan, a 27-year-old Guatemalan living in south Florida, leaving his 17-year-old sister in detention was out of the question. He followed the process and was given custody of her. Now, he wants to leave his apartment.

"I feel I need to move to have a sense of security", said the landscaper about ICE knowing where he lives. He did not provide a last name because of his immigration status.

Associated Press Writer Adam Geller contributed to this report from New York.

Cosby to fight 'sexually violent predator' tag at sentencing

By MARYCLAIRE DALE, Associated Press

Bill Cosby's sentencing hearing Monday will begin with testimony about his sex offender evaluation and, presumably, a fierce debate over whether the 81-year-old actor should be branded a sexually violent predator.

The stakes are high given the lifetime counseling, community alerts and public shaming the designation would trigger. And it could become evidence in the defamation lawsuits filed against Cosby by accusers who say he branded them liars when he denied molesting them.

Defense lawyers say the state's latest sex-reporting law, despite several revisions, remains unconstitutional.

"It's the modern-day version of a scarlet letter," said lawyer Demetra Mehta, a former Philadelphia public defender, "which I think is sort of an interesting philosophical issue at this time with the #MeToo movement, but also criminal justice reform."

Pennsylvania's sex-offender board has examined Cosby and recommended he be deemed a predator, concluding that he has a mental defect or personality disorder that makes him prone to criminal behavior. Montgomery County Judge Steven T. O'Neill will have the final say Monday.

O'Neill has presided over the case for nearly three years, from shortly after Cosby's December 2015 arrest to a 2017 trial that ended in a jury deadlock to the jury finding this past April that Cosby drugged and molested a woman at his suburban Philadelphia estate in 2004. He faces anything from probation to 30 years in prison on the three felony counts of aggravated indecent assault.

It's unclear if the judge, in weighing the predator label, will consider the dozens of other Cosby accusers who have gone public or his deposition in the trial victim's 2006 lawsuit, when Cosby acknowledged getting quaaludes to give women before sex; described sex acts as the "penile entrance" to an "orifice" and "digital penetration"; and said he often gave young women alcohol but didn't drink or take drugs himself because he liked to stay in control.

Defense lawyers fighting the predator label note that sexual offender registration laws are in flux in Pennsylvania and elsewhere.

Numerous courts, including the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, have found the laws so vague as to be unconstitutional. Courts have also debated whether the programs unfairly amount to extra punishment, especially for people convicted of misdemeanors. Cosby has added one of the state's top appellate lawyers, Peter Goldberger, to his defense team.

"This is going to probably be a very important case for sex-offender law when it's up on appeal," Mehta said. "It's an area of law that is just sort of unsettled right now. . There's a lot up on appeal, but there's not a lot decided."

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Pennsylvania alone now has 2,200 people classified as sexually violent predators, of the more than 20,000 people on its Megan's Law list of sex offenders. The Megan's Law group has their names, pictures and towns listed online, but they're not subject to the same monthly counseling mandates as the "predator" group, and authorities don't actively warn communities of their nearby presence.

The stigma may not be as paralyzing for a man like Cosby — in his 80s, living in a gated house and presumably not looking for work or going to the local gym. However, it's one more stain on his reputation.

Defense motions note that the sex offender board's recommendation followed an evaluation by just a single board member, and that the evidence needs only to meet a "clear and convincing" standard.

That violates Cosby's "right to reputation without confrontation, without trial by jury and without proof beyond a reasonable doubt," defense lawyer Joseph Green Jr. argued in a July court filing.

Legal experts believe a "predator" classification would be a legal finding that Cosby accusers could use in their defamation suits, including one involving seven women plaintiffs that's pending in Massachusetts.

"That may (also) be about legacy protection, about what the obituary says, what the Wikipedia page says," said Daniel Filler, dean of Drexel University's Kline College of Law. "You can bet, especially in crowd-sourced things, everything's going to begin with 'he's a sexually violent predator.' It's like a slogan. He has a tag now."

Some see signs of hope on North Korea as Trump heads to UN

By **MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — North Korea's Kim Jong Un is "little rocket man" no more. President Donald Trump isn't a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard."

In the year since Trump's searing, debut U.N. speech fueled fears of nuclear conflict with North Korea, the two leaders have turned from threats to flattery.

And there's fresh hope that the U.S. president's abrupt shift from coercion to negotiation can yield results in getting Kim to halt, if not abandon, his nuclear weapons program.

Trump will address world leaders at the United Nations on Tuesday on the back of an upbeat summit between South and North Korea, where Kim promised to dismantle a major rocket launch site and the North's main nuclear complex at Nyongbyon if it gets some incentive from Washington.

North Korea remains a long, long way from relinquishing its nuclear arsenal, and the U.S. has been adding to, not easing, sanctions. Yet the past 12 months have seen a remarkable change in atmosphere between the adversaries that has surprised even the former U.S. envoy on North Korea.

"If someone had told me last year that North Korea will stop nuclear tests, will stop missile tests and that they will release the remaining American prisoners and that they would be even considering dismantling Nyongbyon, I would have taken that in a heartbeat," said Joseph Yun, who resigned in March and has since left the U.S. foreign service.

Since Trump and Kim held the first summit between U.S. and North Korean leaders in Singapore in June, Trump has missed no chance to praise "Chairman Kim," and Kim has expressed "trust and confidence" in the American president he once branded "senile."

But progress has been slow toward the vague goal they agreed upon — denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which has eluded U.S. presidents for the past quarter-century. The U.S. wants to achieve that by January 2021, when Trump completes his first term in office.

Although Kim won't be going to New York next week, meetings there could prove critical in deciding whether a second Trump-Kim summit will take place any time soon.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has invited his North Korean counterpart Ri Yong Ho for a meeting in New York, and Trump will be consulting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, fresh from his third summit with Kim this year. It was at that meeting in Pyongyang that the North Korean leader made his tantalizing offers to close key facilities of his weapons programs that have revived prospects for U.S.-North Korea talks.

Yun, who spoke to reporters Friday at the United States Institute for Peace in Washington, said the U.S.

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goal of achieving denuclearization in just two years is unrealistic, but the offer to close Nyongbyon, where the North has plutonium, uranium and nuclear reprocessing facilities, is significant and offers a way forward.

That's a far cry from last September. After Trump's thunderous speech, Yun's first thought was on the need to avoid a war. The president vowed to "totally destroy North Korea" if the U.S. was forced to defend itself or its allies against the North's nukes. "Rocket man is on a suicide mission for himself and his regime," the president said.

His blunt talk triggered an extraordinary, almost surreal, exchange of insults. Kim issued a harshly worded statement from Pyongyang, dubbing the thin-skinned Trump a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard." A day later, the North's top diplomat warned it could test explode a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean.

Tensions have eased hugely since then, and cracks have emerged in the international consensus on pressuring North Korea economically to get it to disarm.

The U.S. accuses Russia of allowing illicit oil sales to North Korea. Trump has also criticized China, which has fraternal ties with the North and is embroiled in a trade war with the U.S., for conducting more trade with its old ally. Sanctions could even become a sore point with South Korea. Moon is eager to restart economic cooperation with North Korea to cement improved relations on the divided peninsula.

All that will increase pressure on Washington to compromise with Pyongyang — providing the incentives Kim seeks, even if the weapons capabilities he's amassed violate international law. He's likely eying a declaration on formally ending the Korean War as a marker of reduced U.S. "hostility" and sanctions relief.

That could prove politically unpalatable in Washington just as it looks for Kim to follow through on the denuclearization pledge he made in Singapore.

Frank Aum, a former senior Pentagon adviser on North Korea, warned tensions could spike again if the U.S. does not see progress by year's end, when the U.S. would typically need to start planning large-scale military drills with South Korea that North Korea views as war preparations. Trump decided to cancel drills this summer as a concession to Kim.

"Things can flip pretty quickly," Aum said. "We've seen it going from bad to good and it could fairly quickly go back to the bad again."

Tanzania death toll 209 as survivor found in capsized ferry

By TOM ODULA, Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — It was a stunning discovery. As rescue divers probed a capsized Tanzanian ferry two days after the disaster and the death toll soared past 200, a man was found in an air pocket, alive.

He was an engineer, regional commissioner John Mongella told reporters. As the badly overloaded ferry overturned on Thursday in the final stretch before reaching shore, the man shut himself into the engine room, the Tanzanian Broadcasting Corporation reported.

Video footage showed the man, barefoot and head lolling, carried quickly along a busy street by medical workers and military personnel as a siren wailed. His condition was not immediately known.

No further survivors were likely. Search efforts were ending so the focus could turn to identifying the dead, Tanzania's defense chief Venance Mabeyo told reporters at the scene.

Mass graves were dug, and colorfully painted coffins arrived. Hundreds of family members and others waited quietly on the shore.

One woman dropped to her knees in the sand next to the covered body of her sister and wept.

"We have found him after three days and now we are transporting his body to Kamasi for burial," said Temeni Katebarira, the brother of one victim.

Earlier in the day, workers continued to haul bodies from the water. Abandoned shoes were scattered on the sand.

"From morning till now we have retrieved more than 58 bodies. This includes both children and adults," said TropistaTemi, a Red Cross volunteer. "Because of the congestion we have not been able to do full totaling. Later, we will do a full tally."

But the total number of deaths might never be known. No one is sure how many people were on the

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overcrowded ferry, which officials said had a capacity of 101. It tipped as people returning from a busy market day with their goods prepared to disembark, while horrified fishermen and others watched.

Officials on Friday said at least 40 people had been rescued.

President John Magufuli has ordered the arrests of those responsible. He said the ferry captain already had been detained after leaving the steering to someone who wasn't properly trained, The Citizen newspaper reported.

"This is a great disaster for our nation," Magufuli told the nation in a televised address late Friday, announcing four days of national mourning.

Pope Francis, the United Nations secretary-general, Russian President Vladimir Putin and a number of African leaders have expressed shock and sorrow.

The MV Nyerere, named for the former president who led the East African nation to independence, was traveling between the islands of Ukara and Ukerewe when it sank, according to the government agency in charge of servicing the vessels.

Accidents are often reported on the large freshwater lake surrounded by Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Some of the deadliest have occurred in Tanzania, where aging passenger ferries often carry hundreds of passengers and well beyond capacity.

In 1996, more than 800 people died when passenger and cargo ferry MV Bukoba sank on Lake Victoria. And nearly 200 people died in 2011 when the MV Spice Islander I sank off Tanzania's Indian Ocean coast near Zanzibar.

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Trump picks combat over caution in court fight

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, CATHERINE LUCEY and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Combat won out over caution.

White House aides and congressional allies worked all week to keep President Donald Trump from unloading on the woman who has accused Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct.

But as Kavanaugh's nomination hung in the balance, Trump couldn't contain his frustration any longer and unleashed a direct Twitter attack on the credibility of Christine Blasey Ford, who says Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her decades ago during a high school party.

Friday's tweet landed with a splat in the noxious brew of gender and politics that has taken over a high-stakes confirmation battle playing out against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement. In keeping with Trump's natural instinct to fight back when under attack, as well as his long pattern of defending powerful men against the claims of women, the president's tweet reflected growing anger over all the focus on Ford's accusation.

Trump initially believed he could support his nominee without wading into the specific allegations against Kavanaugh since they did not involve him. But that began to change as Trump watched ongoing coverage of the accusations, particularly on Air Force One TVs tuned into Fox News on his long flight Thursday from Washington to Las Vegas, according to a White House official and a Republican close to the White House. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss private conversations.

Trump began to view the allegations as a scheme to undermine his pick and told one confidant that he doubted Ford's credibility. The "fake" attack on Kavanaugh reminded him of the broadsides launched against him during his presidency and the claims of sexual misconduct that dogged him at the end of his campaign.

Increasingly convinced the accusations were a Democratic plot being advanced by the media, Trump tweeted that if the attack was really so bad, "charges would have been immediately filed with local Law Enforcement Authorities by either her or her loving parents."

With that, he blew right past the advice of aides, who had counseled Trump to avoid attacking Ford directly, warning that it could backfire and damage Kavanaugh's chances and hurt vulnerable Republicans

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in the midterm elections.

As is often the case with the president's tweets, this one seemed to catch many off guard. Shortly before Trump's tweet, White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told reporters at the White House there was "no reason" to attack Ford. Asked if she had been advising Trump to avoid criticism, Conway said: "The president doesn't need anybody to tell him. He does the right thing."

Trump's refusal to hold back has a history.

In 2015, he tweeted: "When somebody challenges you unfairly, fight back - be brutal, be tough - don't take it. It is always important to WIN!"

Throughout his presidency, Trump has taken an aggressive posture, picking fights with his perceived enemies. He has complained loudly over the Russia probe and special counsel Robert Mueller. He carps constantly about what he sees as unfair coverage by the news media. He has targeted a number of potential 2020 Democratic opponents and continues to lambast former President Barack Obama. He also has gone after congressional Republicans at times and lacerated his own attorney general, Jeff Sessions.

It was just that sort of Twitter-driven ire that congressional Republicans and White House aides guiding the Kavanaugh confirmation had hoped to avoid. Since the allegation first surfaced, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley and White House Counsel Don McGahn have kept in constant contact with one another, people familiar with their conversations said. The lawmakers told the top White House lawyer early on that Trump's reaction was a wild card that could undermine their attempts to confirm Kavanaugh in such a highly charged political and cultural moment.

Beyond those early conversations, congressional Republicans left it up to the White House to explain the stakes to the president. White House aides relayed the congressional concerns to Trump, as Conway and other officials walked a tight rope in defending Kavanaugh while also remaining sympathetic toward his accuser. When Trump first spoke out Monday, he largely stuck to the talking points that his aides had prepared.

His fairly tame response — allowing that there might be a need for a brief delay on the committee vote on Kavanaugh's nomination — had some White House aides believing they had gotten through. But it didn't last.

Trump traveled to Nevada on Thursday without McGahn or chief of staff John Kelly for a rally and a bill signing, joined by press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders and aides Dan Scavino, Stephen Miller and Johnny DeStefano. He launched his tweets just before sunrise Friday from his gold-hued high-rise hotel off the Vegas Strip in the hours before a political fundraiser.

His combative tone sent White House and congressional aides rushing to try to contain the fallout with wavering GOP lawmakers whom they feared would bend over backward to distance themselves from Trump's barbs. And aides worried that the president could unleash further attacks in future appearances.

Trump has long defended powerful men against claims from women and has faced numerous accusations himself.

His campaign was nearly derailed in October 2016 when a video from TV's "Access Hollywood" emerged that captured him boasting about groping women. After a reluctant apology, Trump returned to denying any wrongdoing, dismissing the claims of more than a dozen women who accused of him of sexual misconduct, and mocking some of them for not being attractive enough for him to seduce.

Even as the #MeToo movement gained steam, giving a voice to women who said they were abused by powerful men, the White House has steadily denied accusations against the president and his allies.

Trump backed longtime friend Roger Ailes, the Fox News executive accused of misconduct by more than two dozen women, and later hired Ailes' onetime aide Bill Shine to be his White House communications director. He publicly defended Rob Porter, an aide who resigned after his two ex-wives accused him of spousal abuse. And he backed Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore despite accusations that Moore pursued relationships with underage women. All three men denied the allegations.

Lemire reported from Las Vegas.

Vatican, China make breakthrough deal on bishop appointments

By FRANCES D'EMILIO, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican and China said Saturday they had signed a “provisional agreement” over the appointment of bishops, a breakthrough on an issue that stymied diplomatic relations for decades and aggravated a split among Chinese Catholics.

The deal resolved one of the major sticking points in recent years, with the Vatican agreeing to accept seven bishops who were previously named by Beijing without the pope’s consent.

The development comes nearly seven decades after the Holy See and Beijing severed official relations. Beijing’s long-held insistence that it must approve bishop appointments in China had clashed with absolute papal authority to pick bishops.

With the status of the seven bishops now reconciled, the Vatican said all bishops in China are now in communion with Rome — even though the Catholic community in China is still split between Catholics who belong to the official Chinese church and those in the underground church who remain loyal to the pope.

“Pope Francis hopes that, with these decisions, a new process may begin that will allow the wounds of the past to be overcome, leading to the full communion of all Chinese Catholics,” a Vatican statement said.

Some Chinese Catholics have opposed such a deal, notably Hong Kong Cardinal Joseph Zen, who previously called it a sell-out of Chinese Catholics who refused to join the state Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and who paid the price of remaining faithful to Rome during years of persecution.

Zen didn’t reply Saturday to an AP request for comment. But on his blog, the cardinal criticized the lack of specifics in the accord, including no mention of the status of several underground bishops named by the pope.

“What is the message this communique conveys to the faithful in China? ‘Trust us! Accept the agreement!’” he wrote. That, he said, was tantamount to the Chinese government telling Catholics to “Obey us! We are in agreement with your pope!”

Vatican spokesman Greg Burke, speaking in Vilnius, Lithuania, where Pope Francis was visiting, indicated the accord would serve as a blueprint for future appointments of bishops, who lead the faithful in their dioceses.

Burke told reporters the aim of the accord “is not political but pastoral, allowing the faithful to have bishops who are in communion with Rome but at the same time recognized by Chinese authorities.”

The Vatican’s No. 2 official indicated that the pope and Chinese authorities would jointly approve new bishop appointments.

“What is required now is unity, is trust, and a new impetus: to have good pastors, recognized by the Successor of Peter (Pope Francis) and by the legitimate civil authorities,” said Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

A Vatican official earlier this year said the deal allows the pope to effectively veto future bishop names proposed by Beijing. That official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because diplomatic negotiations were involved, had described it as the best arrangement the Holy See could achieve for now.

The deal’s provisional nature left open the possibility of improvements down the line.

The Vatican described the provisional agreement as “the fruit of a gradual and reciprocal rapprochement” following a “long process of careful negotiation.”

While the agreement could help pave the way for formal diplomatic ties and possibly an eventual papal trip to China, it was also sure to anger Catholics who vigorously advocated for the Vatican to maintain a hard line on caring for the 12 million faithful in China.

The accord was signed in Beijing during a meeting between China’s deputy minister for foreign affairs, Wang Chao, and the Vatican undersecretary for state relations, Monsignor Antoine Camilleri.

In Beijing, the Foreign Ministry said “China and the Vatican will continue to maintain communications and push forward the process of improving relations between the two sides.”

Yet even as China professed the desire for better relations with the Holy See, the deal was signed against a backdrop of a Chinese crackdown on religions.

In one glaring case of pro-Vatican Catholics in China, Bishop Guo Xijin, head of an underground diocese, was whisked away in March by government agents in the southern village of Saiqi. It wasn’t immediately

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clear how the new accord affected him and others opposing Chinese authorities.

"The question now is: What is going to happen to the bishops who are under house arrest?" said the Rev. Bernardo Cervellera, a Vatican-China expert and chief editor of the missionary news agency Asia News.

Cervellera noted that Shanghai's underground bishop and others were under house arrest and some priests were imprisoned. He said about a year ago, about 10 priests were in prison in Hebei province near Beijing, but he didn't know their current situation.

The Vatican "had to start a dialogue from a weak position, because China is very powerful and therefore dictated the rules of this dialogue," Cervellera told the AP.

Under President Xi Jinping, China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong, faithful are seeing their freedoms shrink even as the country experiences a religious revival. Experts and activists contend that as Xi is consolidating power, he is waging the most systematic suppression of Christianity since the Chinese constitution allowed for religious freedom in 1982.

Xi is trying to infuse all of the religions in China with "Chinese characteristics" such as loyalty to the Communist Party.

As part of this drive, Islamic crescents and domes have been stripped from mosques and a campaign is underway to "re-educate" tens of thousands of Uighur Muslims. Tibetan children have been moved from Buddhist temples to schools and banned from religious activities during summer holidays, state-run media have reported.

This spring, a 5-year plan regarding Christians was introduced, along with new rules on religious affairs. Over the last few months, local governments across China have shut down hundreds of private Christian "house churches."

The Vatican spokesman indicated there was still some ways to go for better relations between the Catholic Church and China.

"This is not the end of a process. It's the beginning," Burke said. "This has been about dialogue, patient listening on both sides even when people come from very different standpoints."

In Beijing, Zhang Ye, a 31-year-old Catholic leaving church after a Saturday evening Mass, said the Vatican couldn't afford to ignore the importance of China and the growing number of believers in the country.

"My biggest wish is that we can have more communication and interactions with Vatican," he said.

Bridging different points of view has characterized much of Francis' five-year papacy, and led to the Vatican helping improve relations between another communist nation, Cuba, and the United States.

In Taiwan, the reaction focused on the plight of ordinary Catholics.

"As the world watches China increasingly tightening control over religious practices, Taiwan trusts that the Holy See has made appropriate arrangements to ensure that Catholic adherents in China will receive due protection and not be subject to repression," Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said.

Nicole Winfield in Vilnius, Lithuania; Xun Hou, Wayne Zhange and Gillian Wong in Beijing; Johnson Lai in Taipei and Paolo Santalucia in Rome contributed.

Some Democrats warn of dangers of election overconfidence

By **STEVE PEOPLES** and **JUANA SUMMERS**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The fight for the House majority is over.

At least that's the sense from a growing number of Democrats who are increasingly confident in their quest to seize control of at least one chamber of Congress six weeks before Election Day.

The surging optimism among Democrats, usually shared in private, has begun to spill into the open as President Donald Trump's approval ratings sink and the Republican Party struggles under the weight of the president's self-imposed political crises and erratic behavior.

"I do believe Democrats will win back the House of Representatives," said New Mexico Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Our candidates are in a strong position."

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Democratic confidence is particularly strong among campaign operatives who work closely with women, a critical voting bloc that has turned away from Trump's GOP in the suburban and exurban districts where the House majority will be won or lost this fall. Polls suggest women are turbocharged and eager to punish Trump's party as the voting season begins.

"I have all intentions of this institution delivering the U.S. House back for the Democrats," said Stephanie Schriock, president of EMILY'S List, an organization that supports female Democrats. "We have the candidates in place to do that and then some."

But with the shock of Trump's 2016 victory still fresh, some Democrats are painfully aware that significant factors could emerge in the 45 days before the election that could derail their presumptive success. They're contending with massive spending by GOP super PACs, competing in gerrymandered congressional districts and are increasingly worried about some key candidates.

That's leaving some top Democrats warning their party of the dangers of overconfidence.

"This is no time for confidence. This is no time for braggadociousness or bluster," New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Booker, a potential 2020 Democratic presidential contender, reminded his party of Hillary Clinton's stunning loss in the last presidential contest: "If there's any complacency, if there's any resting on their laurels, we need to go back to how people felt in the early days of November 2016."

That's a tough message to push at a time when even Republican campaign professionals publicly and privately acknowledge that conventional metrics for predicting election outcomes favor Democrats.

At this point in President Barack Obama's first term, Gallup reported the Democrat's approval rating at least five points higher than Trump's current 38 percent approval. Obama's party would go on to lose 63 House seats in 2010.

On top of Trump's low approval, Republicans this year have also been saddled by more than 40 House retirements, ceding the power of incumbency in several competitive races. And there are continued signs that the Democratic base is far more energized in the early years of the Trump era than the GOP.

"I would never tell a politician to be confident because of how the world changes," said Republican strategist Rick Tyler. "But by applying those metrics, Democrats should pick up 80 seats."

Former Democratic National Committee Chair Donna Brazile turned heads in a recent interview with ABC when she predicted a Democratic takeover in the Senate. Democrats need to pick up just two seats to claim the Senate majority, but most of the competitive Senate contests this year takes place in a Republican-leaning state.

"We're confident," Brazile said. "Not overconfident, but confident that we can run the tables in the Senate."

Money could complicate Democrats' plans.

While Democratic House candidates are outraising their GOP competitors in many cases, Republicans are expected to win the larger spending battle largely because of their reliance on Super PACs that can raise unlimited sums of money.

Schriock said EMILY'S List expects to spend \$37 million to influence the election, outpacing its investment in the last presidential contest. On the other side, the Congressional Leadership Fund, a super PAC allied with House Speaker Paul Ryan, expects to spend roughly \$100 million.

Already, the Republican powerhouse has committed more than \$70 million to shape the House landscape, primarily by running attack ads to put Democratic candidates on defense as the midterm season moves into its final weeks.

In Minnesota, which began early voting on Friday, Ryan's super PAC is dumping \$8 million into an advertising campaign targeting two congressional districts. They include the 8th district, where 32-year-old former Democratic state Rep. Joe Radinovich faced charges that "he's spent his life running from the law" in a recent ad that cites multiple traffic violations.

Radinovich's campaign called the claims "egregious" and "disgraceful," saying it falsely portrayed unpaid parking tickets as crimes and misrepresents a marijuana-related citation that the Democrat received as a teen.

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Fair or not, the Republican attacks are jeopardizing an open seat in a Democratic-leaning state. It's not the only one.

Democrats are struggling for traction in a series of contests that should be prime pickup opportunities — on paper, at least. Polling suggests several vulnerable Republicans in swing districts are performing better than expected, a list that includes Reps. Carlos Curbelo of Florida, Will Hurd of Texas, and John Katko of New York.

And in Florida's 27th district, a heavily Hispanic open seat in Miami, former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala is locked in a surprisingly close contest with Republican Maria Elvira Salazar, a well-known Hispanic television reporter.

But don't relay those concerns to the people who lined up for hours outside Philadelphia's Dell Music Center on Friday to see Obama rally Democratic voters in a pivotal swing state.

Della Jamison, a 65-year-old Democrat from North Philadelphia, was exuberant about her party's chances when asked. In Pennsylvania alone, Democrats envision flipping a half dozen House seats.

"We are on the battlefield, baby," Jamison said. "It's already done."

Peoples reported from New York. AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report.

Rosenstein's fate could turn on which account Trump believes

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The fate of Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein could turn on whether President Donald Trump believes the account of an ex-FBI official who, as Trump once asserted in a tweet, had "LIED! LIED! LIED!"

Rosenstein discussed secretly recording Trump, though one person who was present at the time said Rosenstein was just being sarcastic, and reportedly suggested removing the commander in chief from office. Rosenstein issued a swift denial to both claims.

The revelation that the second-ranking Justice Department official had even broached those ideas has created even more uncertainty for him at a time when Trump has railed against law enforcement leadership he has perceived as biased against him.

The president, at a Missouri rally Friday night, said there was a "lingering stench" at the Justice Department that "we're going to get rid of." He didn't name names.

A key witness in the episode is Andrew McCabe, who was temporarily elevated to FBI director after Trump fired James Comey. McCabe documented conversations with senior officials, including Trump and Rosenstein, in memos that have been provided to special counsel Robert Mueller as part of the Trump-Russia investigation.

The discussion about possibly recording Trump occurred during a meeting with McCabe in May 2017 following Comey's firing. Comey's dismissal infuriated many rank-and-file agents, but the White House has said that decision was made on the Justice Department's recommendation.

A memo from McCabe also describes Rosenstein as having discussed the potential removal of the president under the Constitution.

While Trump has publicly scorned Rosenstein, the president has been every bit as harsh toward McCabe, who was fired in March amid a watchdog investigation that concluded he repeatedly lied about his involvement in a news media disclosure.

Trump once called McCabe's firing a "great day for democracy" and asserted without elaboration that McCabe knew all "about the lies and corruption going on at the highest levels of the FBI." The inspector general's findings have been referred to prosecutors for possible criminal charges.

Friday's news reports raised the prospect that Trump could fire Rosenstein. Any dismissal could affect Mueller's investigation into possible coordination between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign. Rosenstein appointed Mueller and oversees his work.

Trump said at the Missouri rally that the Justice Department has some "great people" but also "some

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real bad ones." He said the "bad ones" were gone, "but there's a lingering stench and we're going to get rid of that, too." It was unclear to whom he was referring, and the White House did not respond to questions about Rosenstein's remarks.

Rosenstein's comments were first reported by The New York Times, which also said he raised the idea of using the 25th Amendment to remove Trump as unfit for office. Rosenstein denied it.

"I never pursued or authorized recording the President and any suggestion that I have ever advocated for the removal of the President is absolutely false," he said in a statement.

The differing accounts of the conversation underscore the conflicts that roiled the FBI and Justice Department early in the Trump administration. Rosenstein, just weeks into his job, wrote a memo critical of Comey's handling of the Hillary Clinton email server investigation that the White House used as justification for firing Comey.

Rosenstein distanced himself from the White House soon after Comey's firing by saying his memo "was not a statement of reasons" for firing Comey. Comey, meanwhile, has criticized Rosenstein's role in the firing but has said Rosenstein has acted honorably since then.

Comey and McCabe, once close associates at the FBI, have provided wildly divergent accounts about who knew what when regarding a 2016 Wall Street Journal story on an FBI investigation into the Clinton Foundation.

McCabe says he told Comey that he had authorized FBI officials to share information with a reporter in order to push back against a story McCabe felt was going to be unfair to the bureau and inaccurate. Comey has said McCabe did not acknowledge having done so and left the impression that he didn't know who had shared the information with the journalist.

The inspector general's office has accepted Comey's account over McCabe's in concluding that McCabe repeatedly lied to internal investigators under oath. McCabe denies that.

The Justice Department on Friday distributed a list of instances in which the inspector general said McCabe had made false statements in the past. The department also released an email from one attendee who said Rosenstein's "statement was sarcastic and was never discussed with any intention of recording a conversation with the president."

One of the people briefed on the conversation in question, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the confidential nature of the interaction, said it occurred during a moment of frustration between McCabe and Rosenstein.

Rosenstein was rankled by the revelation that Comey had kept memos about his interactions with the president, and McCabe wanted a more aggressive approach toward the White House, the person said.

At that point, Rosenstein said to McCabe something to the effect of, "What do you want, you want me to wear a wire?" according to the person. Rosenstein was asked in the meeting if he was serious, and he said yes, but he did not mean for the wire comment to be taken seriously as a tactic to investigate Trump, the person said.

The person also said that a memo from McCabe describes Rosenstein as referencing the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, which says that a president can be declared "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office" upon a majority vote of the vice president and the Cabinet.

The person said a different memo about that day from another FBI official, Lisa Page, does not include the 25th Amendment reference. But another person with knowledge of the interactions, who also insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations, said there were multiple meetings that day and that Page's notes are about a different meeting, which explains why her notes don't line up with McCabe's.

McCabe's lawyer, Michael Bromwich, said in a statement that McCabe had drafted memos to "memorialize significant discussions he had with high level officials and preserved them so he would have an accurate, contemporaneous record of those discussions." He did not address the content of the memos.

Associated Press writer Jonathan Lemire in Springfield, Missouri, contributed to this report.

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Sept. 23, the 266th day of 2018. There are 99 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 23, 1955, a jury in Sumner, Mississippi, acquitted two white men, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, of murdering black teenager Emmett Till. (The two men later admitted to the crime in an interview with *Look* magazine.)

On this date:

In 1780, British spy John Andre was captured along with papers revealing Benedict Arnold's plot to surrender West Point to the British.

In 1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition returned to St. Louis more than two years after setting out for the Pacific Northwest.

In 1889, Nintendo was founded in Kyoto, Japan, as a playing card company.

In 1846, Neptune was identified as a planet by German astronomer Johann Gottfried Galle (GAH'-luh).

In 1926, Gene Tunney scored a ten-round decision over Jack Dempsey to win the world heavyweight boxing title in Philadelphia.

In 1952, Sen. Richard M. Nixon, R-Calif., salvaged his vice-presidential nomination by appearing on television from Los Angeles to refute allegations of improper campaign fundraising in what became known as the "Checkers" speech.

In 1957, nine black students who'd entered Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas were forced to withdraw because of a white mob outside.

In 1962, "The Jetsons," an animated cartoon series about a Space Age family, premiered as the ABC television network's first program in color.

In 1987, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., withdrew from the Democratic presidential race following questions about his use of borrowed quotations and the portrayal of his academic record.

In 1999, the Mars Climate Orbiter apparently burned up as it attempted to go into orbit around the Red Planet.

In 2001, President George W. Bush returned the American flag to full staff at Camp David, symbolically ending a period of national mourning following the 9/11 attacks.

In 2002, Gov. Gray Davis signed a law making California the first state to offer workers paid family leave.

Ten years ago: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahhd) accused what he called "a few bullying powers" of trying to thwart his country's peaceful nuclear program and declared in a speech before the U.N. General Assembly that "the American empire" was nearing collapse. A 22-year-old gunman opened fire at his trade school in Finland, killing 10 people before fatally shooting himself.

Five years ago: Facing possible firing, Lois Lerner, the Internal Revenue Service official at the center of the agency's tea party scandal, retired. An Egyptian court ordered the banning of the Muslim Brotherhood and the confiscation of its assets. After 20 consecutive years of losing, the Pittsburgh Pirates clinched at least a National League wild card when they beat the Chicago Cubs 2-1 and Washington lost to St. Louis 4-3. (The Pirates' year came to an end as they lost to the St. Louis Cardinals in a division series that went the full five games.)

One year ago: President Donald Trump tweeted that NBA star Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors was no longer invited to the White House because Curry had said he didn't want to make such a visit with his championship team; NBA star LeBron James responded with a tweet calling Trump a "bum" and saying, "Going to the White House was a great honor until you showed up!" Large amounts of federal aid began moving into Puerto Rico to help communities still without fresh water, fuel, electricity or phone service in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Julio Iglesias is 75. Actor Paul Petersen (TV: "The Donna Reed Show") is 73. Actress-singer Mary Kay Place is 71. Rock star Bruce Springsteen is 69. Director/playwright George C. Wolfe

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is 64. Rock musician Leon Taylor (The Ventures) is 63. Actress Rosalind Chao is 61. Golfer Larry Mize is 60. Actor Jason Alexander is 59. Actor Chi McBride is 57. Country musician Don Herron (BR549) is 56. Actor Erik Todd Dellums is 54. Actress LisaRaye is 52. Singer Ani (AH'-nee) DiFranco is 48. Rock singer Sarah Bettens (K's Choice) is 46. Recording executive Jermaine Dupri is 46. Actor Kip Pardue is 42. Actor Anthony Mackie is 40. Pop singer Erik-Michael Estrada (TV: "Making the Band") is 39. Actress Aubrey Dollar is 38. Actor David Lim is 35. Pop singer Diana Ortiz (Dream) is 33. Actress Cush Jumbo is 33. Actor Skylar Astin is 31. Tennis player Melanie Oudin (oo-DAN') is 27.

Thought for Today: "Ours is a problem in which deception has become organized and strong; where truth is poisoned at its source; one in which the skill of the shrewdest brains is devoted to misleading a bewildered people." — Walter Lippmann (1889-1974).