

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, March 14, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 247 ~ 1 of 46

County offices opening at noon

Per the Brown County Commission the Brown County Courthouse and non-essential offices are closed until noon today (3/14/19).

Scott A Meints, SD CEM-A

Director - Brown County Emergency Management

Groton Area Schedule of Events

Thursday, March 14, 2019

Girls Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls

Boys Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls

No School, Groton Area School District - Spring Break

Friday, March 15, 2019

Girls Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls

Boys Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls

No School, Groton Area School District - Spring Break

Help Wanted

Looking for a fun, part-time job? Groton Dairy Queen is now hiring. Stop in for an application. (0216.0316)

Bates Township Equalization Notice

Bates Township Equalization Meeting Notice:

The Bates Township Board of Equalization will meet at the Clerk's home on Tuesday, March 19th, 2019 at 7 pm.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Betty Geist
Bates Township Clerk
14523 409th Ave
Conde, SD 57434
(0313.0320)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$19.21. 17306

Bates Township ROW Maintenance

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and expenses charged to the landowner.

Landowner is responsible for spraying all noxious weeds.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors

Betty Geist
Township Clerk
(0313.0320)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$20.11. 17307

- 1- Help Wanted
- 1- Bates Township Notices
- 1- County offices opening at noon today
- 1- No travel in Brown County
- 1- Service Notice: Eunice Alberts
- 2- Truss Pros is Hiring
- 2- ALL state offices are closed today
- 3- Ice formed on trees last night
- 4- Three in Four Americans Remain Afraid of Fully Self-Driving Vehicles
- 5- Blizzard Warning
- 5- Keith joins Harr Motors
- 6- Precipitation ending time
- 6- Significant Flooding Causing Hazardous Travel
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Weather Pages
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2019 Groton Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

No travel in Brown County

SD DOT and the Brown County Sheriff have issued no travel advisory for all Brown County Highways, State Highways, and township roads in Brown County. Roadways are ice covered, along with blowing snow, reduced visibility are creating dangerous travel conditions. This NO travel advisory will be in effect until otherwise noted or plow can open up roadways and visibility improves.

Scott A Meints, SD CEM-A

Director - Brown County Emergency Management

Service Notice: Eunice Alberts

Services for Eunice Alberts, 86, of Groton will be 10:00 a.m., Saturday, March 16th at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton. Rev. Charlie Bunk will officiate. Burial will follow at Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the church on Friday from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m.

Eunice passed away Monday, March 11, 2019 at her home.

CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

Governor Orders Closure of ALL State Government Offices In South Dakota

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Kristi Noem has ordered the closure of state government offices in all South Dakota counties Thursday (today) due to the snowstorm and flooding that continue to impact the state.

Only essential personnel within state offices in all counties should report to their work stations.

This storm now features blizzard conditions in much of the state. Interstate 90 remains closed from the Wyoming Border to Chamberlain-Oacoma. "No Travel Advisories" have been posted on other highways. Heavy rain has caused flooding in south central and southeast South Dakota with water covering some roads and highways.

Officials are monitoring the storm closely. People are being urged not to travel today. It is uncertain when many roads will be reopened.

The public is encouraged to continue monitoring updates from state and local governmental entities and the media about the changing weather and road conditions.

NOW HIRING!

Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

**Looking for assemblers - both shifts &
Class A CDL Drivers**

**New Starting Competitive Wages
Overtime Available**

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health, Dental & Vision insurance
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- STD
- LTD
- 401k
- Holiday Pay
- Vacation Pay
- Paid Sick Leave
- Referral Bonuses

To apply visit www.uslbm.com/careers or call Diane at 605-448-2929.

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Ice started to form on the branches of the trees in the late afternoon hours yesterday. The wind has picked up and a blizzard warning is now in effect until 1 a.m. tomorrow. No travel is advised on any road in Brown County. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Three in Four Americans Remain Afraid of Fully Self-Driving Vehicles

AAA believes testing, experience and education will aid consumer acceptance

March 14, 2019 – A year after a number of high-profile automated vehicle incidents, American attitudes toward fully self-driving cars have not rebounded. AAA's annual automated vehicle survey found that 71 percent of people are afraid to ride in fully self-driving vehicles - indicating that overall sentiment has not yet returned to what it was prior to these incidents occurring (63 percent). AAA believes the key to helping consumers feel more comfortable with fully self-driving vehicles will be bridging the gap between the perception of automated vehicle technology and the reality of how it actually works in today's cars.

"Automated vehicle technology is evolving on a very public stage and, as a result, it is affecting how consumers feel about it," said Greg Brannon, AAA's director of Automotive Engineering and Industry Relations. "Having the opportunity to interact with partially or fully automated vehicle technology will help remove some of the mystery for consumers and open the door for greater acceptance."

Experience seems to play a key role in impacting how drivers feel about automated vehicle technology. Many cars on the road today are equipped with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), which are considered the building blocks for fully self-driving vehicles. AAA's recent survey revealed that regular interaction with ADAS components like lane keeping assistance, adaptive cruise control, automatic emergency braking and self-parking significantly improves consumer comfort level. On average, drivers who have one of these four ADAS technologies are about 68 percent more likely to trust these features than drivers who don't have them.

Even more promising, AAA found that Americans are receptive to the idea of automated vehicle technology in more limited applications. About half (53 percent) are comfortable with low-speed, short distance forms of transportation like people movers found at airports or theme parks while 44 percent are comfortable with fully self-driving vehicles for delivery of food or packages. However, once the passengers become more personal – in particular, transporting their loved ones – one in five remain comfortable.

"Despite fears still running high, AAA's study also shows that Americans are willing to take baby steps toward incorporating this type of technology into their lives," continued Brannon. "Hands-on exposure in more controlled, low-risk environments coupled with stronger education will play a key role in easing fears about self-driving cars."

Recently, AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah, in partnership with the city of Las Vegas, Keolis North America and the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), piloted the first and largest self-driving shuttle for the public to operate in live traffic, in an effort to give more people the opportunity to gain real-world experience with automated vehicle transportation. The self-driving shuttle was the first in the country to be fully integrated with smart city infrastructure and operate on open, public roads. Participants had the voluntary opportunity to take a survey post-ride regarding the impact of their personal experience with the shuttle on their perception of self-driving vehicles. Of those who responded, many reported their sentiment improved following the experience of riding the shuttle.

Currently, more than half of Americans (55 percent) think that by 2029, most cars will have the ability to drive themselves, however, this timeline may be overly optimistic given the number of vehicles already on the road today. Those who are skeptical that fully self-driving cars will arrive that soon, cite reasons such as lack of trust, not wanting to give up driving, the technology won't be ready and that road conditions will not be good enough to support the technology.

While experts agree that a fully self-driving fleet is still decades away, it is likely that more highly automated vehicles will be on the roads in the coming years. The more drivers understand both the benefits and limitations of the technology that is currently available, AAA believes the more prepared and receptive they will be for the experience of riding in a fully automated vehicle when the time comes.

To help educate consumers on the effectiveness of emerging vehicle technologies, AAA is committed to

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conducting ongoing, unbiased testing of automated vehicle technologies as well as researching how related emerging technologies can help reduce or prevent crashes. Previous research includes ADAS technology naming, testing of driver support systems and the annual automated vehicle survey (2016, 2017, January 2018 and April 2018).

To learn more about autonomous vehicle technology, visit the AAA Exchange website and AAA Mid-Atlantic Driver-less Cars website.

Methodology

A telephone omnibus survey was conducted January 10-13, 2019. A total of 1,008 interviews were completed among adults, 18 years of age or older.

A dual-frame approach was used that combined landline and cell phone interviews to ensure that adults who only or primarily communicate via cell phones are included and properly represented. Survey responses are weighted by six variables (age, gender, geographic region, race/ethnicity, education, and landline vs. cell phone only) to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total continental US population, 18 years of age and older.

The margin of error for the study is 4% at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups will have larger error margins.

BLIZZARD WARNING

Issue Date: 2:43 AM Thu, Mar 14, 2019

Expiration: 1:00 AM Fri, Mar 15, 2019

...BLIZZARD WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 1 AM CDT FRIDAY...

* WHAT...Blizzard conditions. Additional snow accumulations of up to two inches. Winds gusting as high as 55 mph.

* WHERE...Brown County.

* WHEN...Until 1 AM CDT Friday.

* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Plan on slippery road conditions.

Widespread blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility.

The hazardous conditions could impact the morning or evening commute. Strong winds could cause tree damage.

A Blizzard Warning means severe winter weather conditions are expected or occurring. Falling and blowing snow with strong winds and poor visibilities are likely. This will lead to whiteout conditions, making travel extremely dangerous. Do not travel. If you must travel, have a winter survival kit with you. If you get stranded, stay with your vehicle.



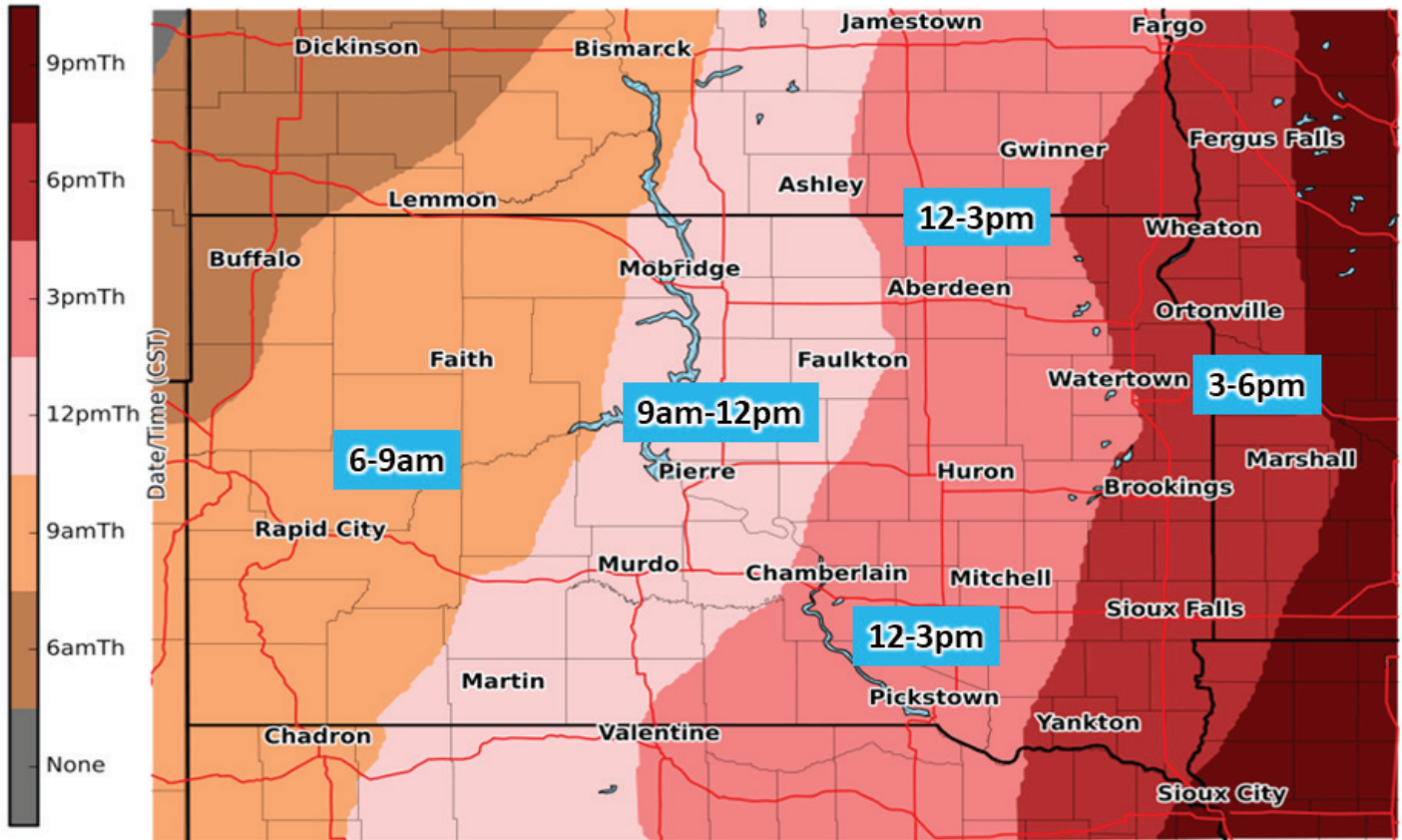
 **HARR**
Motors

**4255 6th Ave
SE, Aberdeen**

Hi, my name is Bary Keith, a Groton resident. I have just recently joined the Harr Motors sales team. I'm excited to start helping people get into the right vehicle for them. Right now, any vehicle purchased from me, until the end of April, will receive an Autostart at no charge. Give me a call (605-216-6952) or (605-725-8624) or stop out and see me at Harr Motors today!!!

Precipitation Ending Time

Valid: 03/14/2019 04:00 AM - 03/15/2019 01:00 AM CDT



National Weather Service
Aberdeen SD
03/14/2019 03:06 AM CDT

Follow Us:   
weather.gov/Aberdeen

Published on: 03/14/2019 at 5:45AM

Significant Flooding Causing Hazardous Travel

PIERRE, S.D. – Officials are advising motorists that heavy rains throughout the day have caused significant flooding in southeast and south central parts of the state, mostly south of I-90. There is also flooding east of Sioux Falls/I-29. Many roads are closed or have a No Travel Advised status.

Crews are doing what they can to get barriers put up, mark flooded highways and clear outlets where possible. Citizens are also asked to report any flooded highways by calling 9-1-1. If you encounter a flooded roadway, turn around and do not drive through the floodwaters, the roadway may be washed out underneath. Flood waters will be especially hard to see after dark so please use extreme caution if driving.

As the rains continue to move up from the south, officials expect more closures and No Travel Advisories through the evening that will remain in place overnight.

In addition to more rain, snow and high winds will be moving in to the area overnight creating additional travel difficulties.

Motorists should visit www.safetravelusa.com/sd or call 5-1-1 to check the latest road conditions and travel advisories before attempting to travel.

Reminder, Interstate 90 is closed between Exit 260 Oacoma/Chamberlain and the Wyoming border.

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Today in Weather History

March 14, 1989: A fast-moving winter storm produced freezing rain and heavy snow across most of South Dakota. Visibility was reduced to 100 ft within areas of blowing snow. Driving conditions became treacherous, resulting in abandoned vehicles, several accidents, and the temporary closing of I-29 from Sioux Falls to the North Dakota border.

March 14, 1990: Heavy Snow fell across parts of the southwest, central, and north central South Dakota from the late afternoon on the 13th into the morning hours of the 14th. Highest accumulations were recorded in the north-central part of the state, including 9 inches at Gettysburg, 8 inches at Pollock, and 5 inches at Pine Ridge.

March 14, 2002: Heavy snow of 6 to 16 inches fell across parts of central and northeast South Dakota from the early morning to the evening hours. Some freezing rain fell across parts of the area before changing over to snow. Also, the winds increased from the north resulting in blowing snow and reduced visibilities. The combination of ice, heavy snow and blowing snow resulted in challenging travel conditions. There were several accidents across the area along with many vehicles sliding off the road. Schools either started late or were closed. Some snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Blunt, 7 inches at Murdo, 8 inches at Stephan and Clark, 9 inches at Gann Valley and Miller, and 11 inches at Highmore and Wattertown. Locations with a foot or more of snowfall included, 12 inches at Hayti and Milbank, 14 inches at Castlewood and Presho, 15 inches at Clear Lake, and 16 inches at Kennebec.

1933: A deadly tornado outbreak affected the Middle Tennessee region, including Nashville on this day. The outbreak, which produced five or more tornadoes, killed 44 people and injured at least 461 others. The strongest tornado, F3, cut a path through the center of Nashville. About 1,400 homes were damaged or destroyed. Windows were blown out of the State Capitol Building.

1935: Suffocating dust storms frequently occurred in southeast Colorado between the 12th and the 25th of the month. Six people died, and many livestock starved or suffocated. Up to six feet of dust covered the ground. Schools were closed, and tenants deserted many rural homes.

2008: An EF2 tornado moved through downtown Atlanta, Georgia shortly before 10 pm damaging the Georgia Dome where the SEC men's basketball tournament was underway.

1870 - The term blizzard was first applied to a storm which produced heavy snow and high winds in Minnesota and Iowa. (David Ludlum)

1944 - A single storm brought a record 21.6 inches of snow to Salt Lake City UT. (The Weather Channel)

1960 - Northern Georgia was between snowstorms. Gainesville GA received 17 inches of snow during the month, and reported at least a trace of snow on the ground 22 days in March. Snow was on roofs in Hartwell GA from the 2nd to the 29th. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A powerful storm in the western U.S. produced 15 inches of snow in the Lake Tahoe Basin of Nevada, and wind gusts to 50 mph at Las Vegas NV. Thunderstorms in the Sacramento Valley of California spawned a tornado which hit a turkey farm near Corning. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Squalls in the Great Lakes Region continued to produce heavy snow in northwest Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, and produced up to 14 inches of snow in northeast Ohio. Poplar WI reported 27 inches of snow in two days. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - High winds in Colorado and Wyoming gusted above 120 mph at Horsetooth Heights CO. High winds in the Central Plains sharply reduced visibilities in blowing dust as far east as Kansas City MO. Winds gusting to 72 mph at Hill City KS reduced the visibility to a city block in blowing dust. Soil erosion in northwest Kansas damaged nearly five million acres of wheat. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


1990 - Fifty-three cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings warmed into the 70s and 80s from the Gulf coast to the Great Lakes Region. Charleston WV was the hot spot in the nation with a record high of 89 degrees. It was the fourth of five consecutive days with record warm temperatures for many cities in the eastern U.S. There were 283 daily record highs reported in the central and eastern U.S. during between the 11th and the 15th of March. (The National Weather Summary)


2007 - The temperature in Concord, NH, reaches a record high of 74 degrees less than one week after a record low temperature of 7 degrees below zero on March 8, an 81 degree temperature swing in six days.


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Blizzard Warning

| Today | Tonight |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| 90% → 50% | |
| Snow and Blowing Snow | Patchy Blowing Snow and Windy |
| High: 31 °F | Low: 18 °F |

| Friday |
|---|
|  |
| Partly Sunny |
| High: 30 °F |

| Friday Night |
|--|
|  |
| Mostly Cloudy |
| Low: 8 °F |

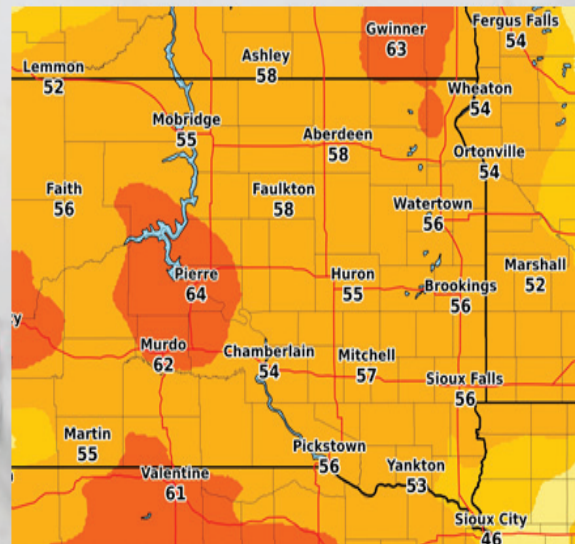
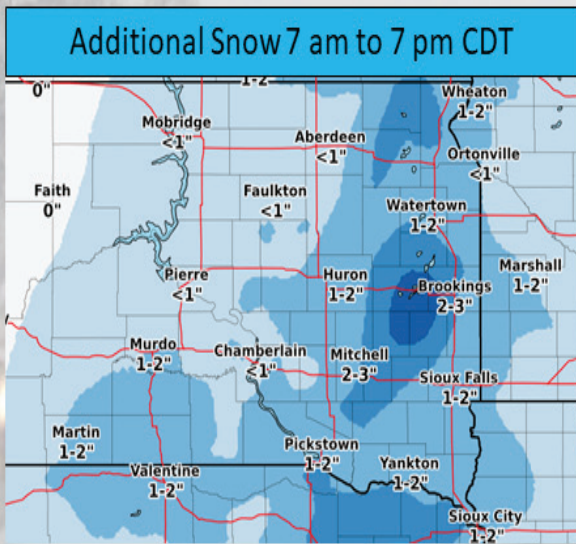
| Saturday |
|---|
|  |
| Partly Sunny |
| High: 31 °F |

Additional Snowfall Today

- ✓ Snow gradually ending in the in western SD.
- ✓ Snow developing in the northeastern SD this morning.
- ✓ Snow will end later this evening.

Highest Wind Gusts Today

- ✓ Very Strong Winds!
- ✓ Widespread blowing and drifting snow!
- ✓ Winds will slowly diminish this evening through tonight.



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 3/14/2019 5:00 AM Central

www.weather.gov/abr, Facebook, Twitter

Published on: 03/14/2019 at 6:02AM

Light snow will continue across central South Dakota this morning, with blizzard conditions expected to continue. Light snow will develop across much of northeast South Dakota this morning, with blizzard conditions expected over that area. 30 to 50 mph winds with gusts to 60 are anticipated region wide. Conditions should improve this evening as winds slacken.

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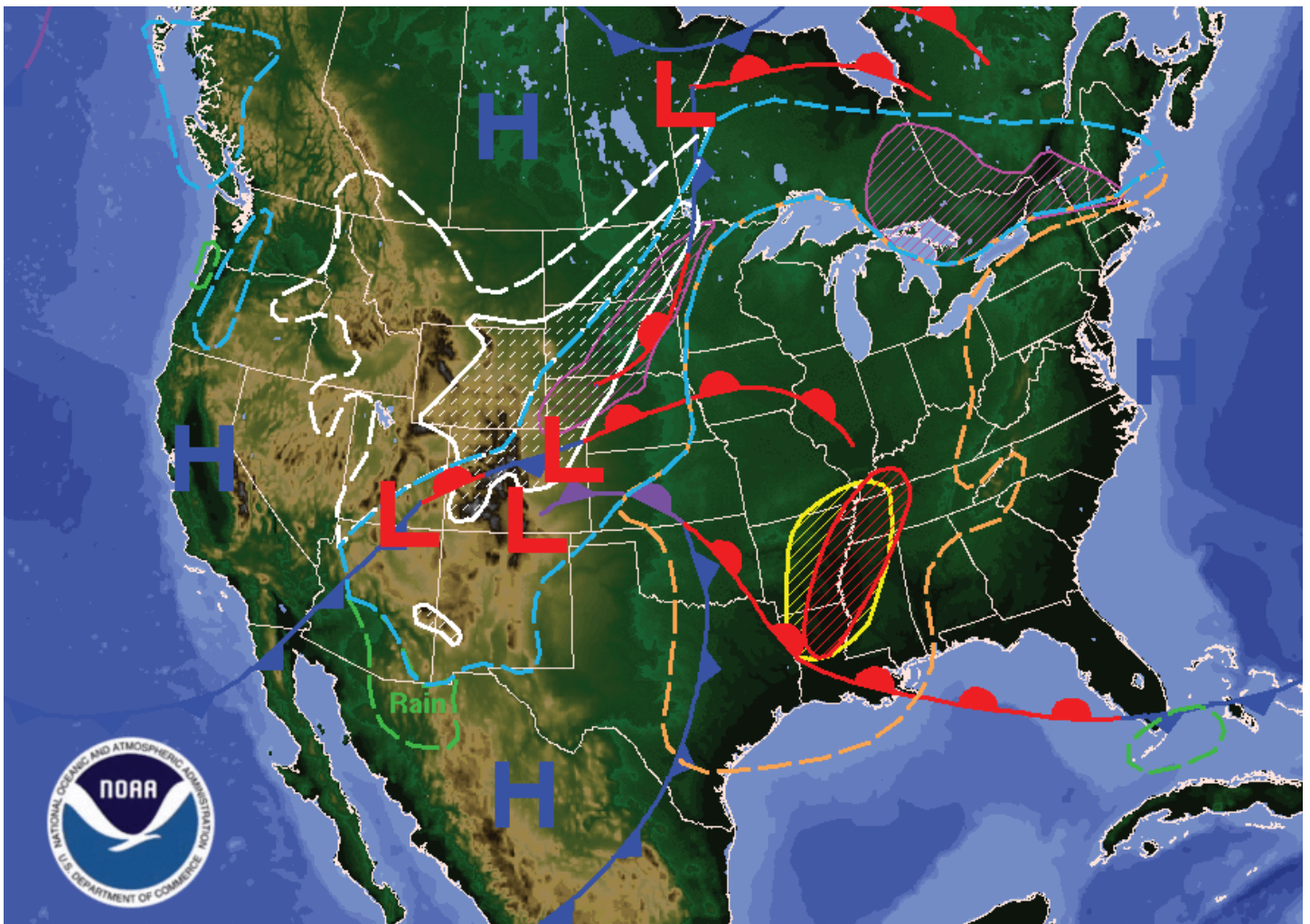
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 31 °F at 4:02 PM
Low Outside Temp: 22 °F at 4:05 AM
High Gust: 28 mph at 4:06 PM
Precip: about 4 inches of HEAVY snow

Today's Info

Record High: 71° in 1981
Record Low: -31° in 1897
Average High: 39°F
Average Low: 19°F
Average Precip in Mar.: 0.40
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 1.42
Precip Year to Date: 2.19
Sunset Tonight: 7:38 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:47 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Mar 13, 2019, issued 4:48 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

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

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MANY PARTS - ONE PERSON

Years ago my counseling practice was located in a building with a family physician and his staff. We had many productive discussions about how best we could work together to meet the needs of patients who were struggling with both physical and emotional issues of life.

Again and again, Dr. Howard Press would look me in the eye and say, Larry, dont look at the persons problem, look at the whole person. If you only look at the problem, you will only see a small part of the person. Every person has many parts, and you must be certain that all of the parts are working together properly or the person wont work properly. Then, he would give me his lecture on the person as a complex network of systems. If one of the systems didnt work properly, he would remind me, the other systems will eventually fail.

Think of the cardiovascular system, he would say. If the heart does not pump blood to the brain, the person will die. It must also pump blood to the stomach, or the digestive system will fail. What good is the brain or the stomach if the heart quits? It certainly made sense.

But, this idea did not begin with Howard. We read in Proverbs that Gods words of wisdom bring life...and health to a mans whole body. The benefits of walking in Gods wisdom can do two things: It can keep us from making foolish decisions that will erode our spiritual, mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. And, if we are not well, it can provide guidance that will bring us back to a state of wholeness through Christs forgiveness and healing power.

Prayer: Lord, the solution to each problem we have is in Your Word. May we read it, accept it, and follow Your ways! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 4:22 For they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body.

2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 03/17/2019 Groton American Legion Spring Fundraiser
- 04/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/27/2019 Fireman's Stag
- 05/04/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/27/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program
- 06/13/2019 Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- 06/14/2019 SDSU Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 06/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 06/21/2019 Best Ball Golf Tourney
- 07/04/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 07/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 08/22/2019 First Day of School
- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2019 Trunk or Treat/Halloween on Main
- 11/09/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course 2019 Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services

News from the Associated Press

Colorado's 'bomb cyclone' storm barrels toward Midwest

By DAN ELLIOTT and BOB MOEN Associated Press

LONGMONT, Colo. (AP) — National Guard troops were using specialized vehicles with tank-like treads to rescue stranded drivers in Colorado in the wake of a massive late-winter storm that was expected to unleash heavy rain and snow on the Midwest plains on Thursday.

Wednesday's blizzard caused widespread power outages, forced the cancellation of hundreds of flights and wreaked havoc on roadways as drivers became overwhelmed by blinding snow. A wind gust clocked in at 97 mph (156 kph) in Colorado Springs.

The storm also contributed to the death of Corporal Daniel Groves, a Colorado State Patrol officer who was hit and killed by a car as he helped another driver who had slid off Interstate 76 near Denver.

"It is a tragic reminder that people's lives are at stake," said Shoshana Lew, head of the Colorado Department of Transportation. "The best place to be is at home and off the roads."

Lew warned drivers that conditions would remain precarious at least through Thursday.

About 200 vehicles were disabled on Interstate 25 near Colorado Springs, and many more drivers were being rescued on secondary roads, said Kyle Lester with the transportation department's Division of Highway Maintenance.

One of the stranded drivers was Bria McKenzie, 22, who with her mother, brother and sister, was stuck in her car for more than two hours on a hilly road in Colorado Springs. She said the snow was so blinding and numbing, and the wind was whipping so hard, she didn't feel safe walking to a hospital that was just down the road.

"It was just like every second you were out there, it felt like parts of you were just freezing," she said.

McKenzie and her family were eventually rescued by her father in his pickup.

The window-rattling storm brought blizzards, floods and a tornado across more than 25 states Wednesday, stretching from the northern Rocky Mountains to Texas and beyond.

"This is a very epic cyclone," said Greg Carbin, chief of forecast operations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Prediction Center. "We're looking at something that will go down in the history books."

Scores of motorists took refuge at truck stops in eastern Wyoming while blowing snow forced portions of major highways to close in Colorado, Nebraska and South Dakota. Meanwhile, hundreds of flights were canceled at Denver International Airport, and nearly 40 were grounded in Colorado Springs.

The wind-whipped storm forced schools and government offices across the state to close for the day and cut power to several hundred thousand homes and businesses. Xcel Energy spokesman Mark Stutz said zero visibility made conditions difficult for repair workers, and it could take days to restore power to everyone.

The culprit was a sudden and severe drop in ground-level air pressure in Colorado, the most pronounced dive since 1950, Carbin said. It was caused by a combination of the jet stream and normal conditions in the wind shadow of the Rockies.

Air rushed into the low-pressure area and then rose into the atmosphere.

"It's like a vacuum cleaner, really," Carbin said. When that much air rushes higher into the atmosphere, it causes severe weather.

Meteorologists call the rapid change in pressure a "bomb cyclone" or "bombogenesis."

Parts of seven states were under blizzard warnings, and 20 states were under some level of high wind alert, Carbin said.

A tornado in New Mexico ripped roofs from buildings in the small town of Dexter, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) southwest of Albuquerque. Authorities said five people were hurt, but none of the injuries was life-threatening. A dairy euthanized about 150 cows injured by the tornado.

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Chaves County Sheriff Mike Herrington said the tornado "took out" about 10 homes on one street. High winds knocked 25 railroad freight cars off a bridge into a mostly dry riverbed near Logan in north-east New Mexico. No one was injured, New Mexico State Police said.

Moen reported from Cheyenne, Wyoming. Also contributing were James Anderson and Thomas Peipert in Denver, Jeff Baenen in Minneapolis, Margery Beck and Josh Funk in Omaha, Nebraska, Seth Borenstein in Washington, Paul Davenport in Phoenix and Matt Volz in Helena, Montana.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Wednesday:

Dakota Cash

05-12-27-28-35

(five, twelve, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, thirty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$165,000

Lotto America

18-42-44-48-52, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 3

(eighteen, forty-two, forty-four, forty-eight, fifty-two; Star Ball: eight; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$16.73 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

18-36-45-47-69, Powerball: 14, Power Play: 3

(eighteen, thirty-six, forty-five, forty-seven, sixty-nine; Powerball: fourteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$448 million

'Epic' storm brings blizzards, floods, tornado to mid-US

By BOB MOEN and DAN ELLIOTT Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — A window-rattling late winter storm brought blizzards, floods and a tornado across more than 25 states Wednesday, stretching from the northern Rocky Mountains to Texas and beyond.

"This is a very epic cyclone," said Greg Carbin, chief of forecast operations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Prediction Center. "We're looking at something that will go down in the history books."

In Colorado, a state patrol officer was hit and killed by a car as he was helping another driver who slid off Interstate 76 near Denver.

Corporal Daniel Groves, 52, was outside his patrol car when he was struck. He died at a hospital.

Hundreds of drivers were stranded on Colorado highways, including 500 in the Colorado Springs area alone. Gov. Jared Polis activated the National Guard to help find and rescue snowbound drivers.

Scores of motorists took refuge at truck stops in eastern Wyoming while blowing snow forced portions of major highways to close in Colorado, Nebraska and South Dakota.

Bria McKenzie, 22, said she and her mother, brother and sister were stuck in their car for more than two hours on a hilly road in Colorado Springs.

The snow was blinding and numbing, and the wind was whipping so hard she didn't feel safe walking to a hospital just down the road, she said.

"We thought about it, well maybe we'll run over to the hospital — at least we'll be warm," she said. "But we were soaking wet already just from trying to keep the windshield clear and from trying to push our car and help other people push their cars. It was just like every second you were out there, it felt like parts of you were just freezing."

McKenzie said they were eventually rescued by her father in his pickup truck.

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Hundreds of flights were canceled at Denver International Airport, and nearly 40 were grounded in Colorado Springs.

"It caught me completely off guard," said Sarah Brin of Santa Fe, New Mexico, who was stranded at the Denver airport.

It was supposed to be a brief layover on her flight home from the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas, but it turned into an overnight stay.

She booked a room in a downtown hotel and reserved a spot on a shuttle van, but some shuttle trips were canceled because of the weather.

"We'll see if they actually show up," she said.

Many schools and government offices closed for the day. Xcel Energy said high winds caused about 184,000 homes and businesses to lose electricity, mostly in the Denver area. Xcel spokesman Mark Stutz said zero visibility made conditions difficult for repair workers, and it could take days to restore power to everyone.

In North Texas, severe thunderstorms damaged buildings and flipped over small planes parked at an airport.

Flooding forced evacuations in northeast Nebraska and western Iowa, including a retirement home in Pierce, Nebraska. Residents of Avoca, Iowa, were filling sandbags to keep floodwaters from spreading, and the American Red Cross set up a shelter for anyone who was displaced.

Parts of seven states were under blizzard warnings, and 20 states were under some level of high wind alert, Carbin said.

A tornado in New Mexico ripped roofs from buildings in the small town of Dexter, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) southwest of Albuquerque. Authorities said five people were hurt, but none of the injuries were life-threatening. A dairy euthanized about 150 cows injured by the tornado.

Chaves County Sheriff Mike Herrington said the tornado "took out" about 10 homes on one street.

High winds knocked 25 railroad freight cars off a bridge into a mostly dry riverbed near Logan in north-east New Mexico. No one was injured, New Mexico State Police said.

A wind gust of 92 mph (148 kph) was recorded in the mountains northwest of Denver.

The storm was expected to drop up to 22 inches (56 centimeters) of snow in Wyoming, 14 inches (36 centimeters) in South Dakota and a foot (31 centimeters) in Colorado.

Forecasters said the winds would pile snow into deep drifts.

The culprit was a sudden and severe drop in ground-level air pressure in Colorado, the most pronounced dive since 1950, Carbin said. It was caused by a combination of the jet stream and normal conditions in the wind shadow of the Rockies.

Air rushed into the low-pressure area and then rose into the atmosphere.

"It's like a vacuum cleaner, really," Carbin said. When that much air rushes higher into the atmosphere, it causes severe weather.

Meteorologists call the rapid change in pressure a "bomb cyclone" or "bombogenesis."

Forecasters had warned about the storm for days, said meteorologist Ryan Maue of weathermodels.com.

"Everybody saw it coming. Some people underestimated it so they're stranded and that's unfortunate," he said.

Elliott reported from Longmont, Colorado. Also contributing were James Anderson in Denver, Jeff Baenen in Minneapolis, Margery Beck and Josh Funk in Omaha, Nebraska, Seth Borenstein in Washington, Paul Davenport in Phoenix and Matt Volz in Helena, Montana.

State budget: Funding for nursing homes, K-12, state workers

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A big boost for South Dakota nursing home funding was a major piece of the state budget the Legislature passed Wednesday, but lawmakers also granted spending hikes for education and state employees.

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The Legislature's vote for the roughly \$4.9 billion budget capped the main portion of the 2019 session. Here's a look at some of what they funded:

EDUCATION AND STATE WORKERS

The state spending plan for the 2020 budget year that begins July 1 includes 2.5 percent increases for education and state workers, matching the hikes Gov. Kristi Noem originally suggested in her January budget address. The measure also includes money to structurally balance the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan.

GOVERNOR'S PRIORITIES

Lawmakers approved the budget for the upcoming fiscal year and also reshaped the current year's spending to add funding for Noem's priorities, including \$5 million for expanding rural broadband and \$4.6 million for improving state radio infrastructure. They also approved the Republican governor's push for \$4.6 million to fight the methamphetamine epidemic, including more than \$1 million for a meth media campaign and \$2.1 million in ongoing funding for treatment.

BIG PICTURE

The budget for the next fiscal year includes roughly \$1.7 billion in general state spending, about \$59 million more than the current budget year. It also calls for spending roughly \$1.8 billion in federal funds and \$1.4 billion in other state money. Republican Rep. Chris Karr, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Appropriations, said the measure balances the state's budget for the 130th year.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. BETO O'ROURKE ANNOUNCES 2020 WHITE HOUSE BID

The former Texas congressman ends months of speculation over whether he'd try to translate his new-found political celebrity into a Democratic presidential bid.

2. WHO IS HANDLING ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES' BLACK BOX PROBE

The French air accident investigation authority, or BEA, says it will handle the analysis of the flight data and cockpit voice recorders retrieved from the crash site.

3. UK LAWMAKERS SET FOR ANOTHER BIG BREXIT VOTE

With "no deal" off the table, parliament will now decide whether to delay Britain's departure from the EU as Theresa May struggles to overcome further erosion of her authority.

4. CHARITY USED IN FRAUDULENT COLLEGE DONATIONS

Prosecutors and tax documents say the mastermind of a college admissions scandal set up a charity that funneled money from wealthy parents to bribe coaches and others to get their children into elite universities.

5. GOP SENATORS APPEAR READY TO BLOCK TRUMP BORDER DECLARATION

The breakdown of a compromise effort appears to be pushing the Senate toward a vote in favor of blocking the president's emergency declaration at the Mexican border.

6. US IMMIGRATION AGENTS FIND WAYS AROUND 'SANCTUARY' POLICIES

Despite laws that shield immigrants from deportation, federal authorities are still getting back-channel cooperation from some local law enforcement agencies.

7. MALAYSIA WON'T DROP CASE AGAINST VIETNAMESE IN KIM JONG NAM KILLING

The murder case will proceed against Doan Thi Huong, accused in the killing of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's estranged half brother.

8. CUBA PLANS GOVERNMENT OVERHAUL

Havana is about to launch a sweeping makeover of its communist system with dozens of new laws that could reshape everything from criminal justice to the market economy.

9. 'BOMB CYCLONE' STORM BARRELS TOWARD MIDWEST

National Guard troops are rescuing stranded drivers in Colorado in the wake of a massive late-winter storm that is expected to unleash heavy rain and snow on the Midwest plains.

10. R. KELLY'S SEX VIDEOS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR YEARS

Sex videos like those that have been integral to the criminal cases against the R&B star have been circulating across the nation since the 1990s.

Ethiopia crash black boxes arrive in France for analysis

By **ELIAS MESERET** and **YIDNEK KIRUBEL** Associated Press

HEJERE, Ethiopia (AP) — Flight data recorders from a doomed Ethiopian Airlines flight arrived in France for analysis Thursday as frustrated relatives of the 157 people killed stormed out of a meeting with airline officials in Addis Ababa.

Sunday's crash was the second fatal flight for a Boeing 737 Max 8 in less than six months. More than 40 countries, including the U.S., have now grounded the planes or refused to let them into their airspace.

After holding out for several days, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration issued an emergency order grounding the planes Wednesday, saying they had new satellite data and evidence that showed the movements of the Ethiopian Airlines plane were similar to those of Lion Air Flight 610. That flight crashed into the Java Sea off Indonesia in October, killing 189 people.

Officials at Lion Air have said sensors on their plane produced erroneous information on its last four flights, triggering an automatic nose-down command that the pilots were unable to overcome on its final voyage.

Ethiopian Airlines CEO Tewolde Gebremariam said its pilots had received special training on how to deal with that problem.

"In addition to the basic trainings given for 737 aircraft types, an additional training was given for the Max version," Tewolde said. "After the Lion Air crash, questions were raised, so Boeing sent further instructions that it said pilots should know."

Tewolde said he is confident the investigation will reveal that the crash is not related to the safety record of Ethiopian Airlines, widely seen as the best-managed in Africa.

Firm answers about what caused the crash could take months. The French air accident investigation authority, known by its French acronym BEA, said Thursday it will handle the analysis of the flight data recorders, often called black boxes, retrieved from the crash site.

The BEA has experience with global air crashes, and its expertise is often sought whenever an Airbus plane crashes because the manufacturer is based in France. A BEA official told The Associated Press that the recorders have already arrived in France but gave no time frame on how long the analysis could take.

In Addis Ababa, about 200 angry family members of crash victims left a briefing with Ethiopian Airlines officials, saying that the airline has not given them adequate information. Officials said they have opened a call-in center that is open 18 hours a day to respond to questions, but family members said they are not getting the answers they need. People from 35 countries died.

At the crash scene in Hejere, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Addis Ababa, growing numbers of family members arrived, some wailing or beating their chests as a bulldozer navigated piles of debris. Blue plastic sheeting covered the wreckage of the plane.

The 737 Max was supposed to boost Boeing's fortunes for years to come, but the groundings will have a far-reaching financial impact, at least in the short term, said John Cox, a veteran pilot and CEO of Safety Operating Systems. Boeing shares have dropped nearly 11 percent since the crash, but are still up 17 percent overall in 2019.

In addition to the planes that have been grounded, there are more than 4,600 Boeing 737 Max 8 planes on backlog that have not yet been delivered to airlines. There are about 370 Max jets in circulation.

"There are delivery dates that aren't being met, there's usage of the aircraft that's not being met, and all the supply chain things that Boeing so carefully crafted," Cox said. "If they can't deliver the airplanes, where do they put the extra engines and the extra fuselage and the extra electrical components?"

Impacted airlines also may come knocking on Boeing's door claiming damages. Norwegian Airlines said it would pursue reimbursement from Boeing for lost business and if other carriers follow suit, that could be costly. Whether airlines would be successful with such claims depends on the details of the contracts those carriers have with Boeing, said Dan Rose, partner at Kreindler & Kreindler, an aviation law firm.

"One way or another, whether there's a contractual provision that covers it or not, there are almost certainly going to be claims made against them," Rose said.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration was under intense pressure to ground the planes and resisted even after Canada relented on Wednesday and agreed to bar the Max from the air, leaving the U.S. almost alone.

The agency, which prides itself on making data-driven decisions, had maintained there was nothing to show the Boeing jets were unsafe, and flights continued.

But President Donald Trump, who announced the grounding, was briefed that same day on new developments by acting FAA administrator Daniel Elwell and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, and they determined the planes should be grounded, the White House said. Trump spoke afterward with Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenberg and Boeing signed on.

"At the end of the day, it is a decision that has the full support of the secretary, the president and the FAA as an agency," Elwell said.

Boeing issued a statement saying it supported the FAA's decision even though it "continues to have full confidence" in the planes' safety.

The company also said it had recommended the suspension of the Max fleet after consultations with the government.

U.S. airlines, mainly Southwest, American and United, should be able to swap out planes pretty quickly, and passengers shouldn't be terribly inconvenienced, said Paul Hudson, president of flyersrights.org, which represents passengers. The Max, he said, makes up only a small percentage of the U.S. passenger jet fleet.

"I think any disruptions will be very minor," he said.

Major disruptions have not been reported in other countries where the Max has been grounded.

Angela Charlton in Paris, Tom Krisher in Detroit, Rob Gillies in Toronto, Zeke Miller in Washington, Manuel Valdes in Seattle, and Cathy Bussewitz and Alexandra Olson in New York contributed to this story.

UK lawmakers gear up for vote on Brexit delay request

By DANICA KIRKA and RAF CASERT Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British lawmakers face another tumultuous day Thursday ahead of a vote on whether to request a delay to the country's scheduled departure from the European Union and Prime Minister Theresa May struggles to shore up her authority.

The vote comes a day after chaotic scenes in the House of Commons, when lawmakers voted to rule out leaving the EU without an agreement on future relations. Twelve government ministers abstained rather than support May's bid to preserve the no-deal option, while another voted against, prompting her resignation.

After Wednesday night's vote May said Parliament faced a "fundamental choice" — a "short, technical extension" if lawmakers approve a divorce deal with the EU in the next week, or a much longer delay if they don't.

Britain is currently scheduled to leave the EU on March 29 in line with the Article 50 process that governs a country's two-year process to leave the bloc.

The only deal currently available is the one May negotiated over the past two years but Parliament has twice overwhelmingly rejected it. British media reported Thursday that the prime minister is preparing for a third vote on her plan, seeking to win over opponents in her own party as well as the Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland.

Conservative lawmaker George Freeman suggested that May should promise to quit to get her deal

through.

"This chaos can't continue," Freeman said in a tweet. "Something has to give."

May warned Brexit supporters who oppose her deal that if no withdrawal agreement is passed in the coming days, the extension could then last a long time and could mean Brexit never actually happens.

Any delay in the Brexit process would require the unanimous approval of all 27 remaining EU member states, which in effects gives the bloc the power to dictate the terms of an extension.

EU officials have indicated they would approve an extension if there were a specific reason for one, but that they don't want to provide more time for political bickering in Britain.

Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, on Thursday raised the possibility of a long delay to allow Britain to change course.

Tusk said in a tweet that, in consultations ahead of next week's summit of EU leaders in Brussels, he will appeal to EU leaders "to be open to a long extension if the U.K. finds it necessary to rethink its Brexit strategy and build consensus about it."

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Beto O'Rourke announces 2020 Democratic presidential bid

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke formally announced Thursday that he'll seek the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, ending months of intense speculation over whether he'd try to translate his newfound political celebrity into a White House bid.

Until he challenged Republican Sen. Ted Cruz last year, O'Rourke was little known outside his hometown of El Paso. But the Spanish-speaking 46-year-old former punk rocker became a sensation during a campaign that used grassroots organizing and social media savvy to mobilize young voters and minorities. He got within 3 percentage points of upsetting Cruz in the nation's largest red state — and shattered national fundraising records in the process — immediately fueling chatter that he could have higher ambitions.

Now O'Rourke must prove whether the energy he brought to the Texas campaign will resonate on a much larger stage. For all the buzz associated with his candidacy, the former three-term congressman hasn't demonstrated much skill in domestic or foreign policy. And, as a white man, he's entering a field that has been celebrated for its diverse roster of women and people and color.

"This is going to be a positive campaign that seeks to bring out the very best from every single one of us, that seeks to unite a very divided country," O'Rourke said in a video announcement with his wife on a couch. "We saw the power of this in Texas."

O'Rourke promises in the video posted Thursday: "I'm going to travel this country and listen to those I seek to serve" and then will return to El Paso on March 30 for a campaign kickoff. He invites would-be supporters "to the greatest grassroots campaign this country has ever seen."

O'Rourke joins a large and unsettled 2020 field in which his fundraising prowess, bipartisan optimism, southwestern Texas charm and anti-establishment attitude could quickly make him a political force. His lack of governing experience could hurt, but President Donald Trump's rise suggests that the U.S. electorate might welcome a charismatic outsider.

The sports and entertainment world already had its eye on O'Rourke during the Senate campaign: NBA star LeBron James wore an O'Rourke hat after video of the Texan defending NFL players' right to protest during the national anthem went viral. Beyonce, a Houston native, endorsed O'Rourke.

And he was the only presidential prospect interviewed in February by Oprah Winfrey, who appeared genuinely excited about the prospect of an O'Rourke White House run.

Should he parlay a 2018 Senate defeat into a successful 2020 White House campaign, O'Rourke would be the first U.S. politician to do so since Abraham Lincoln lost his Senate bid to Stephen Douglas in Illinois in 1858, then was elected president two years later.

Democrats have long dreamed that a booming Hispanic population and droves of Americans moving to

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Texas from elsewhere could turn the nation's largest red state blue and transform the Electoral College by making the Republican path to the presidency all but impossible. It remains to be seen, though, whether O'Rourke's home-state appeal could truly make Texas competitive. Another Texan, former Obama administration housing chief Julian Castro, was already running.

Trump has repeatedly blasted the idea of an O'Rourke presidential try, calling him a "flake" and a "total lightweight" and joking, "I thought you were supposed to win before you run for president."

O'Rourke visited all 254 of Texas' counties while running for Senate and often drew larger-than-expected crowds, including in conservative areas that Democrats gave up on decades ago. It's a strategy that could serve him well in Iowa, which kicks off presidential voting and where Cruz campaigned in all 99 counties before winning its caucus during the 2016 GOP presidential primary.

O'Rourke is scheduled to visit Iowa later Thursday and has three full days of political events planned there.

The Texan's advisers have reached out to early-state Democratic officials seeking advice for potential hires and strategy. And, in New Hampshire, home to the nation's first primary, an O'Rourke adviser asked for guidance on how they might schedule a driving tour through the state should he arrive coming from the West — indicating that a cross-country trip of sorts might be part of a campaign rollout plan.

Although he isn't among the first wave of Democrats to jump into the race, O'Rourke enters with strong national name recognition. Democratic operatives in states with early presidential primaries, including South Carolina and Nevada, have formed Draft Beto groups that spent months fundraising, lining up potential O'Rourke endorsements and building campaign infrastructure until their candidate was ready.

A onetime guitarist for an El Paso punk band called Foss, O'Rourke boosted his already considerable non-political street cred in the Senate race with a viral video showing him skateboarding across a Whataburger restaurant parking lot. His trademark black-and-white "Beto for Senate" signs became hipster must-haves last year in some parts of Seattle, Los Angeles and Brooklyn.

O'Rourke refused support from outside political groups and shunned pollsters during his Senate campaign. But he harnessed growing nationwide popularity to rake in \$80-plus million in donations, including a staggering \$38 million from July to September 2018 alone.

While challenging Cruz, O'Rourke insisted that he had no interest in running for president, vowing to quietly return to El Paso should he lose. But during his election night concession speech, he let rip the kind of casual swearing that freckled an unorthodox campaign, declaring to supporters on national television: "All of you, showing the country how you do this, I'm so f---ing proud of you guys," before promising, "We'll see you down the road."

Other 2020 Democratic hopefuls have promoted their extensive legislative records. O'Rourke passed just three bills during his six years in Congress: two related to temporary health benefits and college tuition assistance to veterans and one renaming El Paso's federal courthouse.

While running for Senate, he offered an unapologetically liberal vision, supporting Trump's impeachment, universal health care, gun control, marijuana decriminalization, steep federal subsidies for prekindergarten education and relaxed immigration policies. But he's drawn criticism from supporters of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' 2016 Democratic presidential campaign who worry O'Rourke is too moderate to excite Democrats' liberal base.

O'Rourke has shrugged off such complaints, saying he doesn't know if he's liberal enough to be called a "progressive" and doesn't much care for party labels. But it's a question he may not be able to duck forever, especially with Sanders in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary fray.

GOP senators appear ready to block Trump border declaration

By ALAN FRAM and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican-led Senate is set to deal President Donald Trump a rebuke on his declaration of a national emergency at the Mexican border, with the only remaining question how many GOP senators will join Democrats in defying him.

Republicans are predicting that Thursday's showdown vote will result in Congress sending Trump a reso-

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lution blocking the border emergency he proclaimed last month to steer an extra \$3.6 billion to building border barriers.

Since the Democratic-controlled House approved the measure last month, the Senate vote would force Trump to use a veto to protect his presidential campaign's "Build the Wall" mantra over objections from his own party.

"It was called turn out the lights, the party's over," said Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., recalling a favorite refrain of "Monday Night Football" announcers when a game was out of reach. "Well, that's appropriate right now."

Senate passage of the resolution was all but ordained Wednesday after the collapse of efforts by the White House and GOP senators to reach compromise on separate legislation by Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, limiting presidents' powers to declare emergencies in the future.

Republican lawmakers had hoped a deal on that measure would have helped more of them to back Trump's border emergency in Thursday's vote. Instead, several Republicans are being boxed into a thorny dilemma: defy Trump and the conservative voters who back him passionately, or assent to what many lawmakers from both parties consider a dubious and dangerous expansion of presidential authority.

With Republicans controlling the Senate 53-47, just four GOP defections would be enough to approve the resolution canceling Trump's border emergency.

Lee became the fifth Republican to say they'd back the resolution after Trump called him during a private lunch of GOP senators to say he opposed Lee's compromise bill. The call was described by two officials who weren't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and described it on condition of anonymity.

Soon afterward, Lee issued a statement saying he'd support the resolution blocking the border emergency.

"Congress has been giving far too much legislative power to the executive branch," Lee said. He said he'd vote to block Trump's emergency because his own bill "does not have an immediate path forward."

The other GOP senators who have said they will vote to block Trump's border emergency are Thom Tillis of North Carolina, Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Kentucky's Rand Paul.

Tillis and Collins face potentially competitive re-election fights in 2020. Tillis said Wednesday that his vote was "still a work in progress" as talks with the White House continued. But perhaps 15 GOP senators might oppose Trump in Thursday's vote, said one Republican who offered the estimate only on condition of anonymity.

Within the White House there was concern that agreeing to a deal might only limit the number of defections, said a senior administration official who was not authorized to speak publicly.

Any Republican hopes of a turnabout rested largely on a familiar phenomenon of the Trump administration — an abrupt change in mind, as he's done in congressional battles over health care and immigration.

Trump told reporters that he has advised GOP senators to "vote any way you want" on the resolution blocking his emergency declaration — but he added a warning.

"Anybody going against border security, drug trafficking, human trafficking, that's a bad vote," he said. Framing Thursday's vote that way seemed to be a message all but aimed directly at undecided GOP senators facing re-election races next year, of whom there are several.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., tried making it even harder for uncertain Republicans to support Trump's border emergency. She said the House would never even consider the separate bill limiting future declarations by presidents, including Trump.

"Republican Senators are proposing new legislation to allow the president to violate the Constitution just this once in order to give themselves cover," Pelosi said in a statement. "The House will not take up this legislation to give President Trump a pass."

Under a four-decade-old law, presidents have wide leeway in declaring a national emergency. Congress can vote to block a declaration, but the two-thirds majorities required to overcome presidential vetoes make it hard for lawmakers to prevail. Presidents have never before declared an emergency after Congress voted to deny them money for the same purpose.

Lee's proposal says a presidential emergency would last 30 days unless Congress votes to extend it. It

would apply to future emergencies, but not Trump's current border emergency unless he seeks to renew it next year.

The strongest chance of blocking Trump's border emergency is likely several lawsuits filed by Democratic state attorneys general, environmental groups and others.

Associated Press writer Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

Charity used in fraudulent college donations, feds say

By SALLY HO Associated Press

The mastermind of a wide-ranging college admissions scandal set up a charity that wove a deep web of deception and fraud to mask bribes and payoffs, funneling millions of dollars through the tax-exempt organization under the nose of U.S. officials, according to prosecutors and tax documents reviewed by The Associated Press.

William "Rick" Singer registered Key Worldwide Foundation as a charity in 2013, gaining accredited 501(c)3 status with the federal government. Its tax filings reported revenue that doubled each year, from \$451,600 in its first year to \$3.7 million in 2016.

Singer, painted by prosecutors as the ringleader of the biggest school admissions scandal ever prosecuted by federal authorities, is accused of funneling money from wealthy parents through his foundation, then using it to bribe coaches and others to get their children into elite universities.

Prosecutors said he also accepted so-called donations from clients to help their kids get a coveted enrollment spot through cheating. The scheme allowed the parents to claim tax deductions for themselves.

By funneling millions of dollars with such apparent ease, nonprofit experts are renewing their criticism of the Internal Revenue Service's limited ability to police wrongdoing.

"There is not an enormous amount of resources at the IRS and in other parts of the government to provide oversight in real time. What we're seeing now is it took years for the government to break down this situation," said Larry Lieberman, former chief operating officer at Charity Navigator, a nonprofit watchdog.

Singer pleaded guilty to fraud and conspiracy charges in federal court Tuesday in Boston. Coaches and dozens of parents are among the 50 people charged in the scheme, including actresses Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin and high-achieving figures in such fields as law, finance and fashion.

The Internal Revenue Service has been investigating the criminal case jointly with the FBI, said Amy Hosney, special agent with the IRS' criminal investigation division, who called it a "very troubling scenario."

"With the alleged payments from the parents through the foundation as 'donations' and coming out on the other side as bribes, we're certainly looking at the transactions," Hosney said.

Much of the \$2.7 million that Singer funneled as grant donations appears to be part of an elaborate charity scheme to mask his reported bribes to university coaches, according to an AP analysis of the foundation's 990 tax records.

Singer then used the money to pay off his co-conspirators, prosecutors say, including administrators of college entrance exams who rigged the ACT and SAT testing process and university coaches who put students who didn't play sports on team recruitment lists to improve their chances of getting admitted to schools such as Yale, Stanford and Georgetown.

The charity claimed to give the most grants to the University of Southern California — nine in all that totaled \$550,000.

USC officials wouldn't comment on whether it ever received such donations, but the grant descriptions and amounts allude to the bribes that prosecutors noted, including \$175,000 to "USC Water Polo" and \$100,000 to "USC Soccer Programs."

Coaches in those programs have been indicted on criminal charges.

In 2013 with Singer as Key Worldwide's president and CEO, the charity gave out two grants: \$10,000 to "Georgetown Tennis" and \$100,000 to an organization called "Fullerton Futbol Academy Inc." with an address belonging to California State University, Fullerton.

Chi-Chung Keung, spokesman for Cal State Fullerton, said the university discovered through state records that the organization listed by Singer is actually tied to USC women's soccer coach Ali Khosroshahin, who was indicted in the sweeping criminal case this week.

Khosroshahin previously coached at Cal State Fullerton, which does have an affiliation with a different program that bears a similar name to the one Singer listed.

Cal State Fullerton, Georgetown, Yale and New York universities said they never received the donations that the foundation claimed to have dispersed to them.

Aside from grants, Singer also found other ways to pay a coach. Former Georgetown tennis coach Gordon Ernst was named a consultant and paid \$1.3 million by the foundation.

Georgetown said it had already fired Ernst for violating admissions rules before he was indicted.

Some of the foundation's other listed donations were fake, while Singer used some of them personally.

DePaul University confirmed it received three grants from Key Worldwide that Singer made as a parent, which the Chicago school solicited. His son graduated from the university in 2017. The grants were designated for study abroad programs, though Singer listed them in tax records as for the "religious studies department."

Some grants were listed as going to organizations whose connections couldn't be verified. They include "Community Donations," which shared an address with Singer's foundation, and philanthropic efforts such as the "Friends of Cambodia," a group that told the Palo Alto Weekly that it didn't know of and had never received money from Key Worldwide.

Follow Sally Ho on Twitter: https://twitter.com/_SallyHo

Rejected in 2016, Sanders hopes for a warmer reception in SC

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina gave Bernie Sanders the cold shoulder in 2016. Four years and several visits later, Sanders hopes the state is ready to warm to him.

The Vermont senator has spent months working to deepen his ties with the black community in South Carolina, where minority voters make up the majority of the Democratic primary electorate. He returns to South Carolina on Thursday for the first time as a 2020 candidate, eager to prove that those efforts put him in a more competitive position in a state he lost by a staggering 47 points.

"Bernie has kind of laid the groundwork. He's kept moving," said state Rep. Terry Alexander, a Sanders supporter. "He never stopped campaigning even after the election. He just kept moving and working, making sure his infrastructure was in place."

Sanders' 2016 loss in South Carolina to Hillary Clinton blunted the momentum he generated in the opening primary contests and exposed his weakness with black voters. Rather than skip South Carolina this time around, Sanders' advisers say they plan to make a serious bid in the first-in-the-South primary state.

Senior adviser Jeff Weaver told reporters this week that Sanders will be in South Carolina much more frequently than during his first campaign and is putting together a "much stronger team on the ground, much earlier in the process."

Some of that work has been done by Our Revolution, the organizing offshoot of Sanders' 2016 campaign. The South Carolina branch is among the group's strongest, holding regular meetings and conferences throughout the state. Sanders addressed the group last year.

But some of Sanders' top South Carolina staffers from 2016 aren't rejoining his team, including Cristale Spain, Sanders' 2016 political outreach director for South Carolina who is now working for Sen. Cory Booker's presidential campaign. Sanders has yet to announce any hires in South Carolina.

Sanders has been open about his challenges in the critical Southern state.

"I lost badly here in South Carolina," Sanders said during a meeting earlier this year with the Legislative Black Caucus.

Appealing to minority voters is an area Sanders' 2020 campaign has worked to address overall, focus-

ing pieces of his rollout on reminders of his civil rights past. One of his first official stops as a declared candidate was at the University of Chicago, where, as a student, he participated in the movement. Hours earlier, he was in Selma, Alabama, participating in ceremonies marking the anniversary of Bloody Sunday at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the site of one of the most galvanizing moments in support of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

In January, Sanders traveled to South Carolina for a Martin Luther King Jr. Day rally. He marched from a prayer service to a rally at the Statehouse, arms linked with NAACP leaders and other activists. In the afternoon, Sanders returned to the church for a roundtable discussion on race.

As part of that trip, Sanders also met with students at a historically black college in Columbia. He huddled with state lawmakers, attending a meeting of the Legislative Black Caucus.

Some Democrats say Sanders — a self-proclaimed democratic socialist who advocates for sweeping government-backed programs — still faces an uphill climb in conservative-leaning South Carolina. Boyd Brown, a former state lawmaker and Democratic National Committee member, characterized Sanders as too extreme for South Carolina and said he's doing "greater damage to the party overall."

Sanders pushed back against the notion, telling The Associated Press that he felt his campaign has helped broaden minds, even in conservative states like South Carolina.

"The day is going to come, sooner than people believe, that South Carolina is going to become a progressive state," Sanders said.

Associated Press writers Christina L. Myers in Columbia, S.C., and Juana Summers in Washington contributed to this report.

Meg Kinnard can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MegKinnardAP>

O'Rourke tells El Paso TV station he's in race for president

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Democrat Beto O'Rourke has told a Texas TV station that he's running for president in 2020.

The former Texas congressman sent a text message to KTSM Wednesday afternoon confirming the news that he will seek the Democratic presidential nomination.

He wrote: "I'm really proud of what El Paso did and what El Paso represents. It's a big part of why I'm running. This city is the best example of this country at its best."

O'Rourke was little-known outside his hometown of El Paso until he challenged Republican Sen. Ted Cruz last year. He got within 3 percentage points of upsetting Cruz in the nation's largest red state and shattered national fundraising records while using grassroots organizing and social media savvy to mobilize young voters and minorities.

Parents charged in admissions scheme roll through US courts

By MICHAEL MELIA and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Colleges and companies moved swiftly to distance themselves from employees swept up in a nationwide college admissions scheme, many of them coaches accused of taking bribes and others prominent parents accused of angling to get their children into top schools by portraying them as recruited athletes.

That celebrities were among the accused parents — actresses Lori Loughlin and Felicity Huffman headline the list — created much buzz, but other parents charged included people prominent in law, finance, fashion, manufacturing and other fields — people who could afford the steep price.

At least nine athletic coaches and 33 parents were among those charged. Some parents spent hundreds of thousands of dollars, as much as \$6.5 million, to guarantee their children's admission, officials said.

"Every student deserves to be considered on their individual merits when applying to college, and it's

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disgraceful to see anyone breaking the law to give their children an advantage over others," U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said in a statement Wednesday. "The department is looking closely at this issue and working to determine if any of our regulations have been violated."

At a brief court appearance Wednesday, a judge allowed Loughlin to be released on \$1 million bond and travel to the area around Vancouver, Canada, to work but otherwise imposed strict travel restrictions. Magistrate Judge Steven Kim said Loughlin must surrender her passport in December, inform the court of her travel plans and provide evidence of where she's been if asked.

Loughlin's lawyer Perry Viscounty declined comment outside the courtroom, where a day earlier her husband, fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, was freed on similar terms.

Prosecutors allege the couple paid \$500,000 to have their daughters labeled as crew-team recruits at the University of Southern California, even though neither is a rower.

Among the other parents charged was Gordon Caplan, of Greenwich, Connecticut, co-chairman of the law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher, based in New York. Caplan "will have no further firm management responsibilities," the firm said in a statement Wednesday.

Telephone messages seeking comment have been left with Caplan, who is accused of paying \$75,000 to get a test supervisor to correct the answers on his daughter's ACT exam after she took it.

Hercules Capital, a Palo Alto, California, hedge fund, announced Wednesday it was replacing its leader, Manuel Henriquez, who has been arrested in New York City and released on \$500,000 bail. Henriquez will still hold a seat on the board and serve as an adviser, Hercules said.

Henriquez and his wife, Elizabeth, of Atherton, California, were charged with participating in the scheme on four occasions for their two daughters. They were also charged with conspiring to bribe Gordon Ernst, former head tennis coach at Georgetown University, to designate their older daughter as a tennis recruit to facilitate her admission and with making a \$400,000 contribution to a charity to help her get accepted to the school.

Georgetown said he hadn't coached there since December 2017 after an investigation found he violated university admissions rules. The University of Rhode Island says Ernst, who was hired as head women's tennis coach in August, was placed on administrative leave.

At a court hearing Tuesday in Maryland, a federal magistrate freed Ernst on \$200,000 bond.

His lawyer, Michael CitaraManis, said his client isn't a flight risk. Ernst had planned to attend a job interview in Toronto soon, he said, "although I don't know the impact from these proceedings."

Also among the charged parents was Homayoun Zadeh, an associate professor of dentistry at the University of Southern California. His status at USC was unclear; his faculty profile has been removed from a website, and phone messages seeking comment were not returned.

Mark Riddell — an administrator for Bradenton, Florida's IMG Academy, which was founded by renowned tennis coach Nick Bollettieri and bills itself as the world's largest sports academy — was suspended late Tuesday after he was accused of taking college admissions tests. Riddell didn't return phone calls seeking comment.

Many of the coaches were quickly fired or suspended by the colleges. Prosecutors said the colleges themselves are not targets of the continuing investigation.

Stanford fired sailing coach John Vandemoer after he was charged with accepting \$270,000 in contributions to the program for agreeing to recommend two prospective students for admission. Neither student came to Stanford, the school said.

USC fired senior associate athletic director Donna Heinel and water polo coach Jovan Vavic. Court documents say Vavic was paid \$250,000 and designated two students as recruits for his team to facilitate their admission. He has been released on bond. A message was left with Vavic's lawyer seeking comment.

The University of Texas fired men's tennis coach Michael Center on Wednesday, a day after federal officials unveiled documents accusing Center of taking up to nearly \$100,000 to get a student into school by listing him as a tennis recruit. Once enrolled the student never played tennis. Center's attorney has said the coach denies the allegations.

At Wake Forest, President Nathan Hatch said volleyball coach Bill Ferguson, who was accused of taking a bribe, has been suspended. The university's outside counsel is conducting an internal review, Hatch said.

Federal prosecutors said parents paid admissions consultant William "Rick" Singer millions of dollars to bribe their children's way into college. Some of the payouts went to coaches and administrators to falsely make their children look like star athletes, and Singer also hired ringers to take college entrance exams for students and paid off insiders at testing centers to correct students' answers, authorities said.

Singer, founder of the Edge College & Career Network of Newport Beach, California, pleaded guilty Tuesday.

USC's interim President Wanda Austin said about a half-dozen current applicants affiliated with Singer's firm will be barred from admission, The Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday. She added that the university had identified at least \$1.3 million in donations from those alleged to have been involved in the scheme, and those funds will be redirected to scholarships for underprivileged students.

For current students and graduates, USC said in a statement Wednesday that it will conduct a case-by-case review for anyone that may be connected to the scheme alleged by the government.

"We will make informed, appropriate decisions once those reviews have been completed," the university said. It did not release information on what actions would be taken.

Melia reported from Hartford, Connecticut. Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Alanna Durkin Richer and Collin Binkley in Boston; Michael Balsamo in Washington; Jim Mustian in New York; and Michael Kunzelman in Greenbelt, Maryland.

This story has been updated to remove an incorrect reference to Henriquez previously working for PIMCO, and to correct that CitaraManis is Ernst's lawyer, not Ferguson's.

R. Kelly's sex videos have circulated nationwide for years

By MICHAEL TARM AP Legal Affairs Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — An acquaintance of R. Kelly's recalled how the singer once lugged a duffel bag everywhere — to recording studios, film sets and gyms. Stuffed inside, she said, was a collection of his homemade VHS sex tapes.

Despite Kelly's efforts in the 1990s to hold those recordings close, some leaked out. Untold numbers were copied and recopied and distributed nationwide through flea markets and street vendors. They have circulated for years and are still available on websites. A Pennsylvania man said he recently discovered one while cleaning his home.

Recordings have been integral to Kelly's criminal cases.

A sole video was at the heart of his 2008 child pornography trial that ended with Kelly's surprise acquittal. Video is behind some of the sexual abuse charges filed last month accusing the Grammy winner of violating three girls and woman.

A 45-minute video of Kelly having sex with a girl who says on camera that she's 14 helped convince Cook County prosecutors to bring the new case, said Michael Avenatti, who handed the tape to prosecutors just weeks before charges.

"That's the bombshell piece of evidence that led to the indictments," Avenatti, who previously represented porn star Stormy Daniels in a lawsuit against President Donald Trump, said Wednesday.

It's unclear how the first tapes got into the hands of someone other than Kelly. At the 2008 trial, prosecution witness Lisa Van Allen said Kelly was rarely seen without the duffel bag.

"Wherever he was at, the bag would follow him," she told jurors.

Van Allen, who had an on-and-off affair with Kelly starting in 1997, said the recordings included ones of him having sex simultaneously with her and the girl prosecutors alleged was in the 2008 trial video.

At trial, Kelly attorney Sam Adam Jr. scoffed at the idea of the superstar hauling around a bag of sex tapes as if he were "some kind of porno Santa Claus."

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In all, over half a dozen videos have been referred to in court testimony or filings, or by journalists and lawyers.

Avenatti, who represents two accusers, said he gave prosecutors two tapes never previously made public, both featuring the same girl spotlighted in the 2008 trial. The second tape — turned over after charges were filed — was a 55-minute video shot sometime between 1999 and 2000. He says he also has a possible third video.

Van Allen, who said she became disillusioned with Kelly, removed at least one tape with her on it from the bag while Kelly was distracted, court filings say.

The only video shown in its entirety in open court was the one entered as "People's Exhibit No. 1" at Kelly's trial. Kelly shot it in a log cabin-themed room at his North Side Chicago home between 1998 and 2000 when the girl was as young as 13, prosecutors said.

In the 27-minute video, a man has sex with a young female. He hands her money and she mouths, "Thank you." He speaks in a hushed voice, and she calls him "Daddy." At one point, he urinates on the girl. The man who leans in to adjust the camera appears to be Kelly or someone with a striking resemblance to him.

A reporter for the Chicago Sun-Times, Jim DeRogatis, received the tape anonymously in his mailbox in February 2002 and turned it over to law enforcement. Five months later, based on the video, Kelly was charged with child pornography.

Weeks before charges, bootleg copies of the video appeared on street corners across the U.S., the Sun-Times reported. A VHS copy sold for \$10. A DVD version went for \$15. Some had scenes from different recordings, including with Kelly having sex with an adult dancer. Some pornography websites advertise they have Kelly sex tapes available.

The tapes pose legal risks to anybody who possessed them.

When authorities announced the pornography charges, they issued a warning: Anyone who bought or copied the video could face similar charges. That raised concerns at news organizations that editors and reporters who viewed the tape outside court could be charged.

Kelly knew his tapes, unless he regained control of them, could continually land him in legal trouble.

As his 2008 trial approached, Kelly offered Van Allen \$250,000 to recover the tape she took, she said. Acquaintances of hers brought it to a Chicago hotel, where it was handed over to a Kelly associate for \$20,000 in cash, according to court documents.

The Pennsylvania man, Gary Dennis, told reporters he happened upon a video with Kelly's name on a label while cleaning out a box of old tapes. After slipping it into a VHS player, the nursing home employee said he was shocked to see the footage wasn't of a concert but of Kelly having sex with a girl.

Kelly's attorney, Steve Greenberg, said it's not Kelly. He said a news conference held Sunday with Dennis and attorney Gloria Allred illustrated that it's "open season on R. Kelly." Kelly denies ever sexually abusing anyone.

Avenatti would not say precisely how he located the Kelly tapes but that they were not black-market copies. He said he could show "a clear chain of custody" of the tapes from Kelly to prosecutors.

Video history will again be an issue at any future trial. VHS tapes do not have reliable time stamps, so pinpointing when and where they were produced is a challenge, said Edward Primeau, a video forensic expert in Michigan.

In 2008, Adam told jurors no one knew how many hands the video had passed through. It was, he said, "a copy of a copy of a copy," so it wasn't reliable.

Kelly's lawyers also sought to buttress Kelly's claim he wasn't in the video. The girl prosecutors said was in the video also denied it was her. The defense suggested the tape could have been computer-generated.

A prosecution analyst disputed that, saying the work needed to manipulate each eye blink, shadow and facial expression on the 100,000-frame video would take four decades. A forensic expert also testified that distinctive knots in the wood of Kelly's log-paneled room matched the knots in the background of the video.

If Kelly goes to trial again, the outcome then won't rest wholly on video evidence.

Jurors told reporters after acquitting Kelly in 2008 that the lone video could not dispel their doubts,

especially when neither the girl nor her parents testified. Said one juror: "What we had wasn't enough." This time prosecutors seem to have more. They have at least several accusers willing to testify. And they have potentially corroborating evidence, including what they say is Kelly's DNA found in semen on one of the accuser's shirts.

Follow Michael Tarm on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/mtarm>

Check out the AP's complete coverage of the investigations into R. Kelly.

Manafort faces state charges after drawing more federal time

By ERIC TUCKER and CHAD DAY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was sentenced to a total of seven and a half years in prison on federal charges, then was hit almost immediately with fresh state charges in New York that could put him outside the president's power to pardon.

In Washington on Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson brushed aside Manafort's pleas for leniency and rebuked him for misleading the U.S. government about his lucrative foreign lobbying work and for encouraging witnesses to lie on his behalf.

"It is hard to overstate the number of lies and the amount of fraud and the extraordinary amount of money involved" in the crimes, Jackson told Manafort, 69, who sat stone-faced in a wheelchair he has used because of gout. She added three-and-a-half years on top of the nearly four-year sentence Manafort received last week in a separate case in Virginia, though he'll get credit for nine months already served.

The sentencing hearing was a milestone in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia in the 2016 election campaign. Manafort was among the first people charged in the investigation, and though the allegations did not relate to his work for candidate Donald Trump, his foreign entanglements and business relationship with an associate the U.S. says has ties to Russian intelligence have made him a pivotal figure in the probe.

Prosecutors are updating judges this week on the cooperation provided by other key defendants in the case. Mueller is expected to soon conclude his investigation in a confidential report to the Justice Department.

Minutes after Manafort's federal sentence was imposed, New York prosecutors unsealed a 16-count indictment accusing him of giving false information on mortgage loan applications. The new case appeared designed at least in part to protect against the possibility that Trump could pardon Manafort, who led the celebrity businessman's 2016 White House bid for months. The president can pardon federal crimes but not state offenses.

New York's attorney general's office had looked into whether it could bring state-level crimes against Manafort but faced a possible roadblock because of the state's double jeopardy law. That statute goes beyond most other states by preventing state-level charges that mirror federal counts that have been resolved — and also prevents prosecutors from pursuing state-level charges when a person has been pardoned for the same federal crimes.

Still, Manhattan prosecutors, who brought the new indictment, contend their case is safe because mortgage fraud and falsifying business records are state but not federal crimes.

At the White House, Trump said he felt "very badly" for Manafort but hadn't given any thought to a pardon. "No collusion," the president added.

On Wednesday, Judge Jackson made clear the case against Manafort had nothing to do with Russian election interference and she scolded Manafort's lawyers for asserting that their client was charged only because prosecutors couldn't get him on crimes related to potential collusion with the Trump campaign.

"The no-collusion mantra is simply a non sequitur," she said, suggesting that those arguments were meant for an audience outside the courtroom — presumably the president.

The judge said conspiracy charges concerning Manafort's unregistered foreign lobbying work and witness

tampering were “not just some failure to comply with some pesky regulations” as his attorneys argued. Instead, she said they were evidence that Manafort had spent a considerable portion of his career “gaming the system.” He undermined the American political process by concealing from the public and Congress that he was working on behalf of Ukraine— and earning millions of dollars that he never reported to the IRS, she said.

“Court is one of those places where facts still matter,” she said.

Reading from a three-page statement, Manafort asked for mercy and said the criminal charges against him had “taken everything from me already.” He pleaded with the judge not to impose any additional time beyond the sentence he had received last week in a separate case in Virginia.

“I am sorry for what I have done and all the activities that have gotten us here today,” he said in a steady voice. “While I cannot undo the past, I will ensure that the future will be very different.”

Manafort said he was the primary caregiver for his wife and wanted the chance for them to resume their life together.

“She needs me and I need her. I ask you to think of this and our need for each other as you deliberate,” he said. “This case has taken everything from me already — my properties, my cash, my life insurance, my trust accounts for my children and my grandchildren, and more.”

His plea for leniency followed prosecutor Andrew Weissmann’s scathing characterization of crimes that the government said spanned more than a decade and continued even while Manafort was awaiting trial. The prosecutor said Manafort took steps to conceal his foreign lobbying work, laundered millions of dollars to fund a lavish lifestyle and then, while under house arrest, coached other witnesses to lie on his behalf.

“He engaged in crime again and again. He has not learned a harsh lesson. He has served to undermine, not promote American ideals of honesty ... and playing by the rules,” Weissmann said.

Defense lawyer Kevin Downing suggested Manafort was being unduly punished because of a “media frenzy” generated by the appointment of a special counsel.

After the hearing, Downing criticized Jackson’s sentencing as he competed with shouting protesters.

“I think the judge showed that she is incredibly hostile toward Mr. Manafort and exhibited a level of callousness that I’ve not seen in a white-collar case in over 15 years of prosecutions,” Downing said.

Associated Press writers Michael R. Sisak in New York and Michael Balsamo in Washington contributed to this report.

Read the new indictment: <http://apne.ws/QtPsRFx>

Cardinal Pell gets 6 years imprisonment for sexual assault

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — The most senior Catholic convicted of child sex abuse was sentenced Wednesday to six years in prison for molesting two choirboys in an Australian cathedral in a crime the judge said showed “staggering arrogance.”

Cardinal George Pell must serve a minimum of 3 years and 8 months before he is eligible for parole, according to the judge’s order. The five convictions against Pell carried a maximum possible sentence of 10 years each.

“In my view, your conduct was permeated by staggering arrogance,” Victoria state County Court Chief Judge Peter Kidd said in handing down the sentence.

Pope Francis’ former finance minister was convicted by a unanimous jury verdict in December of orally raping a 13-year-old choirboy and indecently dealing with the boy and the boy’s 13-year-old friend in the late 1990s, months after Pell became archbishop of Melbourne. A court order had suppressed media reporting the news until last month.

The 77-year-old denies the allegations and will appeal his convictions in the Victoria Court of Appeal on June 5. It was not immediately clear if he will also appeal the sentence.

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For the first time in Pell's many court appearances since he returned to Australia from the Vatican to face abuse charges, Pell wore an open-necked shirt without a cleric's collar. He was also not wearing a cardinal's gold ring, which might reflect strict rules on jewelry in the state penal system.

In explaining his sentencing decision, the judge said Pell had led an "otherwise blameless life." Kidd said he believed given Pell's age and lack of any other criminal record, the cardinal posed no risk of re-offending.

The judge also took pains to note that he was sentencing Pell for the offenses on which the cardinal had been convicted — and not for the sins of the Catholic Church.

"As I directed the jury who convicted you in this trial, you are not to be made a scapegoat for any failings or perceived failings of the Catholic Church," Kidd said.

But the judge also said that Pell had abused his position of power and had shown no remorse for his crimes. Kidd described the assaults as egregious, degrading and humiliating to the victims.

Pell showed no emotion during the hourlong hearing and barely moved throughout. He stood silently with his hands behind his back as the judge read his sentence. Pell signed documents that registered him for life as a serious sexual offender before he was led from the dock by four prison officers.

In a statement, one of Pell's victims called the judge's sentence "meticulous and considered."

"It is hard for me to allow myself to feel the gravity of this moment, the moment when the sentence is handed down, the moment when justice is done," the man said in a statement read outside court by one of his lawyers, Vivian Waller. "It is hard for me, for the time being, to take comfort in this outcome. I appreciate that the court has acknowledged what was inflicted upon me as a child. However, there is no rest for me. Everything is overshadowed by the forthcoming appeal."

The father of one of Pell's victims who died of a heroin overdose in 2014 at the age of 31 paid tribute to his son's childhood friend for speaking out.

"I commend the young fellow who has come forward," the father said. "He kept it in for a long time and that would've been hell for him. Absolute hell."

The father said he was "really appreciative and thankful that he did come forward."

"I want to give him a hug. He was a fabulous little kid. He's a fabulous man now," the father said.

The father also described the sentence as "a disappointment."

The father is considering suing Pell and the church over the abuse.

Australian law prohibits the publication of sex crime victims' identities, so the father also cannot be identified.

Abuse victims' groups also expressed disappointment that the punishment was not harsher.

The sentence "makes a mockery of the concept of true accountability and is not a sentence commensurate with the crimes committed and the harm reaped," Blue Knot Foundation president Cathy Kezelman said in a statement.

SNAP, a U.S. support group for victim of clergy abuse, described the sentences as "comparatively light."

"We hope that the sentence imposed on Cardinal George Pell will provide some measure of healing to the living survivor of his abuse and comfort and closure for the family of Pell's non-surviving victim," SNAP said in a statement.

The judge said Pell's age was a significant factor in determining his sentence.

Pell suffers from hypertension that is exacerbated by stress and has a dual-chamber pacemaker, the judge said.

Pell used a cane to leave the court, after having both knees surgically replaced in December.

Pell's sentencing comes on the sixth anniversary of Francis' election as pope. Pell was in the conclave that elected him and remains eligible for any potential future conclave until age 80 or unless he is removed.

Asked by a reporter outside court after the sentencing whether the case against Pell amounted to a witch hunt, his lawyer Robert Richter gave a rueful smile.

"No comment — you be the judge," Richter replied.

After centuries of impunity, cardinals from Australia to Chile and points in between are facing justice in both the Vatican and government courts for their own sexual misdeeds or for having shielded abusers under their watch.

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Last week, France's senior Catholic cleric, Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, was convicted of failing to report a known pedophile priest to police. Barbarin was given a six-month suspended sentence.

Pope Francis last month defrocked the onetime leader of the American church after an internal investigation determined Cardinal Theodore McCarrick sexually molested children and adult men. It was the first time a cardinal had been defrocked over the child abuse scandal.

The surviving victim made a statement against Pell in 2015 — a year after the other victim's death — to a police task force set up to investigate allegations that arose from a state parliamentary inquiry into handling of child abuse by religious and other nongovernment organizations. The task force also investigates allegations made to a similar national inquiry, called the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Pell gave evidence by video link from Rome to the royal commission, the nations' highest level of inquiry, in 2016 about his time as a church leader in Melbourne and in his hometown of Ballarat.

The four-year royal commission found in its 2017 report that the Melbourne Archdiocese had ignored or covered up allegations of child abuse by seven priests in a bid to protect the church's reputation and avoid scandal.

The royal commission was critical of Pell's predecessor in Melbourne, Archbishop Frank Little, who died in 2008. It made no findings against Pell, saying in a redacted report that it would not publish information that could "prejudice current or future criminal or civil proceedings."

Australian police interviewed Pell about the survivor's allegations in a Rome hotel in 2016. Pell described the allegations at the time as "vile and disgusting conduct" that went against everything he believed in.

Pell voluntarily returned to Australia in 2017 to face an array of child abuse charges, most of which have since been dropped. The full details of those allegations were suppressed by court orders.

Pell was once the highest-ranking Catholic in Australia's second-largest city, where he is now a prisoner held in protective security. Pedophiles such as Pell are typically separated from the main prison populations in Australia.

Pell was 55 years old and had recently established a compensation plan for Melbourne's victims of clergy abuse when he abused the two boys at St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1996. The survivor testified that Pell had walked in on the boys swigging altar wine in a back room after a Sunday Mass.

The judge rejected Richter's submission that no person thinking rationally would molest two 13-year-old boys in a cathedral sacristy after a Mass with the doors open.

"To offend in such a risky and brazen manner, I infer that, for whatever reason, you were in fact prepared to take on such risks. I conclude that your decision to offend was a reasoned, albeit perverted one," Kidd said.

More than a month later, Pell abused the survivor again, squeezing the boy's genitals as they passed in a cathedral corridor after a Mass.

The judge said the assault was committed with "a degree of physical aggression and venom."

Associated Press writer Kristen Gelineau in Sydney contributed to this report.

UK lawmakers vote against no-deal Brexit, now aim for delay

By JILL LAWLESS and RAF CASERT Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — In a tentative first step toward ending months of political deadlock, British lawmakers voted Wednesday to block the country from leaving the European Union without a divorce agreement, triggering an attempt to delay that departure, currently due to take place on March 29.

Parliament is scheduled to decide Thursday whether to put the brakes on Brexit, a vote set up after lawmakers dealt yet another defeat to Prime Minister Theresa May amid a crisis over Britain's departure from the EU.

The lawmakers' 321-278 vote has political but not legal force, and does not entirely rule out a chaotic no-deal departure for Britain. But it might ease jitters spreading across the EU after lawmakers resound-

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ingly rejected May's divorce deal on Tuesday. Exiting the EU without a deal could mean major disruptions for businesses and people in the U.K. and the 27 remaining EU countries.

In chaotic scenes that revealed how May's authority has been eroded by Brexit battles, more than a dozen pro-EU government ministers abstained rather than vote with her against ruling out no-deal.

Speaking with a raspy voice after weeks of relentless pressure, May hinted that she plans to make a third attempt to get lawmakers to support her Brexit deal, which they have already rejected twice.

She said Parliament faced a "fundamental choice" — a "short, technical extension" if lawmakers approve a divorce deal with the EU in the next week, or a much longer delay to Brexit if they don't.

The EU warned that voting against no-deal Brexit wasn't enough to stop it. By law, Britain will leave the EU on March 29, with or without a deal, unless it cancels Brexit or secures a delay.

"There are only two ways to leave the EU: with or without a deal," a European Commission official said. "The EU is prepared for both. To take no deal off the table, it is not enough to vote against no deal - you have to agree to a deal."

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the unresolved situation.

Earlier, chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier warned that "the risk of a no-deal has never been higher."

As Britain teeters ever closer to the edge of the Brexit cliff, lawmakers are trying to seize control from the divided and squabbling government, although it's far from clear if they can agree on a way forward. There are competing factions that support May's deal, a "softer" deal that would keep close ties with the EU, a no-deal Brexit, or even a new referendum on Britain's EU membership.

Parliament likely will agree to delay Brexit, but it would need EU approval. The bloc — openly exasperated by Britain's continuing Brexit crisis — warned that the U.K. would need to present a strong reason for any extension.

"I am against every extension — whether an extension of one day, one week, even 24 hours — if it's not based on a clear opinion of the House of Commons for something," said the European Parliament's chief Brexit official, Guy Verhofstadt. "Please make up your minds in London, because this uncertainty cannot continue."

The bloc is also reluctant to consider a delay that goes beyond elections to the European Parliament in late May, because it would mean Britain would have to participate in the polls even as it prepares to leave.

Both Britain and the EU have ramped up planning for a no-deal Brexit, which would rip up decades of rules for travel and trade between Britain and the bloc. Economists say it could cause huge upheaval, with customs checks causing gridlock at U.K. ports, new tariffs triggering sudden price increases and red tape for everyone from truckers to tourists.

The U.K. government announced its plans for the Irish border in the event of a no-deal Brexit, saying it wouldn't impose new checks, duties or controls on goods coming from EU member Ireland into Northern Ireland. It also said it wouldn't slap tariffs on 87 percent of goods coming into Britain from the EU — though there would be new levies on imports of some items including meat and cars.

The tariffs, intended to be temporary, wouldn't apply to goods crossing from Ireland to Northern Ireland, raising fears the plan would spark a rise in smuggling.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said under the proposals, "Northern Ireland will become a backdoor to the European single market and I think that in a matter of months that will lead to the need for checks at Northern Ireland's ports."

"I don't think the U.K.'s proposals will be workable for very long," he said during a visit to Washington.

In Irish border communities and U.K. ports, no-deal anxiety was mounting.

"Potentially it is going to be a nightmare," said Michael Eddy, a district councilor who lives in the aptly named town of Deal, a few miles from the major Channel port of Dover on England's south coast.

He says local authorities have modeled potential disruptions and believe that even "a two-minute delay for every truck going through the port of Dover" would lead to a 50-mile (80-kilometer) traffic jam.

"What then happens with local people wanting to go about their business, wanting to get to hospitals, wanting to get their kids to school, all of that kind of stuff?" he said.

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The European Parliament approved measures Wednesday to ameliorate the immediate hardships of a no-deal Brexit. It backed emergency plans to provide continuity for everything from air, port and road traffic to foreign students to the fishing industry.

The U.K. Parliament has twice rejected the withdrawal agreement that May spent two years negotiating with the EU, and the bloc insists there will be no more talks.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas warned British lawmakers that "whoever rejects the (Brexit) agreement plays with the welfare of their citizens and the economy in a reckless way."

Yet May has not given up on a third attempt to get her deal through Parliament again.

U.K. Treasury chief Philip Hammond said he was "confident that we will do a deal" in the next few weeks.

Many Britons wish they could share his optimism.

"I think that a bit of unity would be helpful now," said Katharine Beaugie, an artist in Dover. "It would be much better if we could have found some sort of decision."

Casert reported from Strasbourg, France. Renee Graham in Deal, England, Gregory Katz and Danica Kirka in London, Frank Jordans in Berlin and Angela Charlton in Paris contributed.

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

School rampage in Brazil leaves 8 dead, many wounded

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and ANNA JEAN KAISER Associated Press

SUZANO, Brazil (AP) — Two masked men armed with a gun, knives, axes and crossbows descended on a school in southern Brazil on Wednesday, killing five students and two adults before one killed the other and then himself, authorities said.

The men, identified as former students at the school in a suburb of Sao Paulo, also shot and killed the owner of a used car business nearby before launching the attack on the school, authorities said.

Besides the five students, the dead included a teacher and a school administrator, said Joao Camilo Pires de Campos, the state's public secretary. Nine others were wounded in the school attack and hospitalized, he said.

"This is the saddest day of my life," de Campos said, speaking to reporters outside the school in the Sao Paulo suburb of Suzano.

Authorities identified the attackers as 17-year-old Guilherme Tauci Monteiro and 25-year-old Henrique de Castro.

"The big question is: What was the motivation of these former students?" de Campos said.

Monteiro's mother, Tatiana Tauci, offered a possible answer, telling Band News while hiding her face from the camera that her son had been bullied at the school.

"Bullying, they call it. ... He stopped going to school ... because of this," she said.

She said she was surprised by his involvement and found out about the attack from the television like everyone else.

Minutes before the attack, Monteiro had posted 26 photos on his Facebook page, included several posing with a gun and one that showed him giving the middle finger as he looked into the camera.

In some of the photos, he wore a black scarf with a white imprint of a skull and cross bones. No text accompanied the posts.

By Wednesday afternoon, Facebook had taken down Monteiro's page.

During the attack, Monteiro opened fire with a .38 caliber handgun and de Castro used a crossbow, de Campos said, adding that forensics would determine how each of the victims died.

The attackers were also carrying Molotov cocktails, knives and small axes, authorities said.

"In 34 years as a policeman, it's the first time I see someone use a crossbow like that," police Col. Marcelo Salles said. "It is horrendous."

The assailants were trying to force their way inside a room at the back of the school where many stu-

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dents were hiding when police arrived. Instead of facing police, they took their own lives. Monteiro shot de Castro in the head and then shot himself, police said.

Students gathered outside the school recounted harrowing attacks and seeing several bodies lying in pools of blood.

Kelly Milene Guerra Cardoso, 16, said she and other students took refuge in the school's cafeteria, locked the door and lay on the floor.

"We stayed there until the door was opened. We thought it was the shooters coming to get us, but it was the police," she said. "They told us to start running."

Horacio Pereira Nunes, a retiree whose house is next to the school, said he heard shots around 10 a.m.

"Then a lot of kids started running out, all screaming," he said. "It didn't take long until police arrived."

The Raul Brasil Professor public school has more than 1,600 students from elementary to high school grades, teachers gathered outside said.

Latin America's most populous nation has the largest number of annual homicides in the world, but school shootings are rare.

In 2011, 12 students were killed by a gunman who roamed the halls of a school in Rio de Janeiro, shooting at them.

President Jair Bolsonaro ran on a platform that included promises to crack down on criminals, in part by expanding public access to guns. Soon after his Jan. 1 inauguration, Bolsonaro issued a decree making it easier to buy a gun.

"A monstrosity and cowardness without equal," Bolsonaro wrote in a tweet expressing his sympathies for the families of the victims of Wednesday's attacks.

Similar to arguments made by proponents of less gun regulation in the United States, Bolsonaro and his supporters argue that expanded access to guns will combat crime.

Sen. Major Olimpio, a member of Bolsonaro's party and a proponent of loosening gun legislation, again made that argument hours after Wednesday's rampage.

"We can't let those who take advantage of this tragedy speak about how disarmament is the solution," he tweeted, adding: "Weak and shameful 'disarmament farce,' which gave guns to criminals and prevented self-defense."

Associated Press writer Mauricio Savarese reported this story in Suzano and AP writer Anna Jean Kaiser reporter from Rio de Janeiro.

FAA relents, says it grounded 737 Max jets based on new data

By TOM KRISHER, ZEKE MILLER and ROB GILLIES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As country after country grounded Boeing's 737 Max jets after a deadly crash Sunday in Ethiopia, U.S. air safety regulators remained resolute in their refusal to do so — until Wednesday.

That's when the Federal Aviation Administration issued an emergency order keeping the planes on the tarmac. The agency said what made the difference was new, enhanced satellite tracking data and physical evidence on the ground that linked the Ethiopian jet's movements to those of an Indonesian Lion Air flight that plunged into the Java Sea in October and killed 189 people.

"That evidence aligns the Ethiopian flight closer to Lion Air, what we know happened to Lion Air," said Daniel Elwell, acting FAA administrator.

Officials at Lion Air have said sensors on their plane produced erroneous information on its last four flights, triggering an automatic nose-down command that the pilots were unable to overcome on its final voyage.

The FAA was under intense pressure to ground the planes and resisted even after Canada on Wednesday joined more than 40 countries, including the European Union and China, in barring the Max from the air, leaving the U.S. almost alone.

The agency, which prides itself on making data-driven decisions, had maintained there was nothing to show the Boeing jets were unsafe, and flights continued.

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But President Donald Trump, who announced the grounding, was briefed Wednesday on new developments by Elwell and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, and they determined the planes should be grounded, the White House said. Trump spoke afterward with Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenberg and Boeing signed on.

"At the end of the day, it is a decision that has the full support of the secretary, the president and the FAA as an agency," Elwell said.

While early satellite tracking data showed similarities between the Ethiopian jet's flight path and Lion Air, Elwell said the FAA was skeptical of the low-resolution images. The data showed movements that weren't consistent with how airplanes fly, Elwell said.

On Wednesday, global air traffic surveillance company Aireon, Boeing and the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board were able to enhance the initial data and make it more precise "to create a description of the flight that made it similar enough to Lion Air," Elwell said.

He wouldn't detail the evidence found on the ground, saying the FAA is a party to the ongoing investigation.

The U.S. also grounded a larger version of the plane, the Max 9.

The Ethiopian plane's flight data and voice recorders were to be sent to France Wednesday night for analysis, Elwell said. Some aviation experts have warned that finding answers in that crash, which killed 157 people, could take months.

Airlines, mainly Southwest, American and United, should be able to swap out planes pretty quickly, and passengers shouldn't be terribly inconvenienced, said Paul Hudson, president of flyersrights.org, which represents passengers. The Max, he said, makes up only a small percentage of the U.S. passenger jet fleet, he said.

"I think any disruptions will be very minor," he said.

Sharon Barnes, a passenger at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, said she agreed with grounding the planes. "I think it was the right decision given that the rest of the world is doing the same thing, and it's a prudent thing to be doing until we know more about what's going on," she said.

Michael Fortman, picking up wife at the Seattle airport, wondered why the planes could pass all tests to be flying, yet they now have been grounded.

"Did it really go through all the testing or not, or just stuff afterward that they're finding out about the plane?" Fortman asked.

Boeing issued a statement saying it supported the FAA's decision even though it "continues to have full confidence" in the planes' safety.

The company also said it had recommended the suspension of the Max fleet after consultations with the government.

The groundings will have a far-reaching financial impact on Boeing, at least in the short term, said John Cox, a veteran pilot and CEO of Safety Operating Systems.

In addition to those that have already been grounded, there are more than 4,600 Boeing 737 Max 8 planes on backlog that are not yet delivered to airlines.

"There are delivery dates that aren't being met, there's usage of the aircraft that's not being met, and all the supply chain things that Boeing so carefully crafted," Cox said.

Even so, Boeing will recover, because planes typically fly for up to 40 years, and any needed fix will be made quickly, he said.

Shares in Chicago-based Boeing ended up \$1.73 or about 0.5 percent, at \$377.14 Wednesday after they lost more than 11 percent in the first two days this week. The stock is still up 17 percent for the year.

In making the decision to ground the Max 8s in Canada, Transport Minister Marc Garneau said a comparison of vertical fluctuations found a "similar profile" between the Ethiopian Airlines crash and the Lion Air crash. Garneau, a former astronaut who flew in the space shuttle, emphasized that the data is not conclusive but crossed a threshold that prompted Canada to bar the Max 8.

"This is not the proof that it is the same root problem," he added. "It could be something else."

The growing number of countries joining the ban put the FAA in a difficult position, said Peter Goelz, a

former managing director of the NTSB who is now an aviation consultant. He said the FAA, which certified the 737 Max as airworthy and has been the lead regulatory body for the airplane.

Goelz said Trump likely was feeling pressure from Congress and the public to step in. "There's probably nobody in the administration who's got more of a sensitive ear to cable television," he said.

After Trump's announcement, American Airlines said its "teams will make every effort to rebook customers as quickly as possible."

United Airlines, which grounded its 14 Max planes, said the aircraft account for roughly 40 flights per day. Through a combination of spare aircraft and rebooking customers, the airline did not anticipate a significant operational impact.

Southwest Airlines said it immediately complied with the order and removed its 34 Max 8 from scheduled service. The airline said the Max 8 planes account for less than 5 percent of the airline's daily flights, adding that it remains confident in the airliner after completing more than 88,000 flight hours over 41,000 flights, but that it supports the FAA's decision.

Ethiopian Airlines CEO Tewolde Gebremariam said its pilots had received special training on how to deal with the Max's anti-stall software that could point the nose down.

"In addition to the basic trainings given for 737 aircraft types, an additional training was given for the Max version," Tewolde told state news reporters. "After the Lion Air crash, questions were raised, so Boeing sent further instructions that it said pilots should know."

Tewolde said he is confident the "investigation will reveal that the crash is not related to Ethiopian Airlines' safety record."

Krisher reported from Detroit, while Gillies reported from Toronto. AP video journalist Manuel Valdes and AP writers Elias Meseret and Yidnek Kirubel in Hejere, Ethiopia, and Cathy Bussewitz and Alexandra Olson in New York contributed to this story.

Q&A: A look the Ethiopian Airlines crash and investigation

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

The search is ongoing for answers in the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines plane shortly after takeoff for Nairobi on Sunday, killing all 157 people on board.

Ethiopian authorities said Wednesday that they will send the flight recorders recovered from the plane to an as-yet-unspecified European country for analysis.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration said "new information" indicated some similarities with a Lion Air crash in the Java Sea that killed 189 people in October. The agency grounded the jets while investigators determine whether there was a shared cause of the two crashes. The FAA had been criticized for allowing the planes to fly while dozens of countries suspended their use.

U.S.-based Boeing said it has "full confidence" in the 737 Max but supports the decision to temporarily ground all 371 of the planes.

Here are some questions and answers about the crash, the plane and the investigation:

WHAT PROMPTED THE FAA TO ACT?

The Federal Aviation Administration initially declined to ground the 737 Max, cautioning against comparing the Ethiopian Airlines crash with the October crash of a Lion Air 737 Max off of Indonesia or assuming that they are related.

Pressure on the FAA grew as more than 40 countries including the entire European Union and Canada suspended flights by the plane or barred it from their airspace.

On Wednesday, the agency ordered the grounding, saying that new information from the wreckage in Ethiopia, along with satellite-based tracking of the flight path, "indicates some similarities" between the Ethiopia and Indonesia crashes.

The agency said it was ordering the jets' grounding while investigators determine whether there was a

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shared cause of the two crashes.

Indonesian investigators have not stated a cause for the Lion Air crash, but are examining whether faulty readings from a sensor might have triggered an automatic nose-down command to the plane, which the Lion Air pilots fought unsuccessfully to overcome. The automated system kicks in if sensors indicate that a plane is about to lose lift, or go into an aerodynamic stall. Gaining speed by diving can prevent a stall.

The Lion Air plane's flight data recorder showed problems with an airspeed indicator on four flights, although the airline initially said the problem was fixed.

WHAT ARE FLIGHT RECORDERS AND WHY ARE THEY SO IMPORTANT?

The FAA requires every large commercial aircraft to have a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder, known as "black boxes." The recorders, which can withstand temperatures of 1,100 degrees Celsius and water depths of 20,000 feet, collect information about a flight.

Voice recordings pick up the flight crew's voices, as well as other sounds inside the cockpit. Information from the data recorder can generate a computer animated video reconstruction of the flight. Investigators can then visualize the airplane's altitude, instrument readings, power settings and other details of the flight to help with the investigation, according to the National Transportation Safety Board. Some experts have said the search for answers about what caused the crash could take months.

WHAT IS BOEING DOING IN RESPONSE TO THE CRASHES?

Boeing says it supports the temporary grounding of the entire fleet of Max planes, while reiterating it believes the planes are safe.

Prior to the grounding, Boeing had promised to upgrade some flight-control software "in the coming weeks."

Boeing began working on the changes shortly after the Lion Air crash. It is tweaking the system designed to prevent an aerodynamic stall if sensors detect that the plane's nose is pointed too high and its speed is too slow.

A Boeing spokesman said once updated software is installed, the system will rely on data from more than one sensor to trigger a nose-down command. Also, the system won't repeatedly push the nose down, and it will reduce the magnitude of the change, he said. There will also be more training for pilots.

HAVE THERE BEEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PLANES?

Airline pilots on at least two U.S. flights reported that an automated system seemed to cause their Boeing 737 Max planes to tilt down suddenly. The pilots said that soon after engaging the autopilot on Boeing 737 Max 8 planes, the nose tilted down sharply. In both cases, they recovered quickly after disconnecting the autopilot.

As described by the pilots, the problem did not appear related to a new automated anti-stall system that is suspected of contributing to the Lion Air crash in Indonesia.

The pilot reports were filed last year in a data base compiled by NASA. They are voluntary safety reports and do not publicly reveal the names of pilots, the airlines or the location of the incidents. It was unclear whether the accounts led to any actions by the FAA or the pilots' airlines.

WERE AIRLINE EMPLOYEES AND PASSENGERS WORRIED?

Patrick Smith, a Boeing 767 pilot who writes a column called "Ask the Pilot," says he's been telling passengers who ask that the 737 Max is safe. He also says he hasn't heard of any pilots who worry about flying the plane.

Others didn't want to take any chances. The Association of Professional Flight Attendants, which represents more than 26,000 flight attendants at American Airlines, called on CEO Doug Parker to "strongly consider grounding these planes until an investigation can be performed."

This story has been updated to correct the death toll in the Lion Air crash. It was 189, not 187.

Public regularly denied access to police officer videos

By RYAN J. FOLEY Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — The video is brief but disturbing: An officer is seen striking an unarmed suspect with his handgun as the man falls into the grass. An autopsy would later show he died from a gunshot to the back of the head.

After the death last July of 26-year-old Daniel Fuller in Devils Lake, North Dakota, investigators described the video to his grieving relatives. But for days, weeks and then months, they refused to release it to the family or the public. They did so only after a prosecutor announced in November that the officer did not intend to fire his gun and would not face criminal charges.

"It took forever for them to release the video because they kept saying it was an ongoing investigation," said Fuller's older sister, Allyson Bartlett. "I don't think they wanted pressure from the community."

Her experience is typical. An investigation by The Associated Press has found that police departments routinely withhold video taken by body-worn and dashboard-mounted cameras that show officer-involved shootings and other uses of force. They often do so by citing a broad exemption to state open records laws — claiming that releasing the video would undermine an ongoing investigation.

During the last five years, taxpayers have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to outfit officers' uniforms and vehicles with cameras and to store the footage they record as evidence. Body cameras, in particular, have been touted as a way to increase police transparency by allowing for a neutral view of whether an officer's actions were justified. In reality, the videos can be withheld for months, years or even indefinitely, the AP review found.

To be sure, some departments voluntarily release videos of high-profile incidents, sometimes within days or weeks. They also are forced to share them during civil rights lawsuits or air them when suspects face trial. Many also routinely release videos that show officers in a positive light, such as when they rescue people from accidents, fires and other dangers. But how requests are handled when they are requested by citizens, reporters and government watchdogs varies widely.

The AP tested the public's ability to access police video for Sunshine Week, an annual celebration of open government, by filing open records requests related to roughly 20 recent use-of-force incidents in a dozen states.

They were met with a series of denials and failed to unearth video of a single incident that had not already been released publicly. Some videos could be released in coming months or years once criminal and disciplinary investigations are concluded. By then, the public interest in knowing what happened may have waned significantly.

In rejecting or delaying the requests, most law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cited exemptions that allow them to keep records of pending investigations secret. One county claimed the exemption would allow it to keep the video of a motorist's fatal shooting secret forever — even though the investigation has concluded and cleared the deputy involved.

Critics say the exemption is often misapplied to keep from public view video that might shine an unfavorable light on the actions of officers. The exemption is intended to protect sensitive details about investigations that might tip off suspects that they are under scrutiny or alert them to what evidence police have obtained. But when officers shoot or otherwise use force on suspects, they know their actions are the focus of the investigation and often have access to the videos of the incidents.

"It is for that reason that the investigative records exemption literally makes no sense and should have no place when it comes to police body camera footage. It is a square peg in a round hole," said Chad Marlow, an expert on laws governing body cameras at the American Civil Liberties Union. "We didn't know that would end up being the get-out-of-FOIA free card for police departments, but it has certainly turned into that."

Authorities say they have good reason for withholding video during investigations, such as preventing the memories of witnesses from being tainted or sparking protests with an out-of-context snippet of a

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deadly encounter. But the problem, said former federal prosecutor Val Van Brocklin, is that "there is no national standard of when and how this stuff gets released."

"It's such a mish-mash, and that creates a problem with expectations," she said.

In West Virginia, a prosecutor withheld a video that led to the firing of two state troopers for allegedly beating a 16-year-old suspect. In Georgia, a county sheriff's office refused to release video of a 22-year-old man who allegedly shot himself to death while struggling with police, an explanation that has been questioned and sparked protests.

In Atlanta, where officers were recently criticized in an audit for failing to use their body cameras as intended, the department would not release video of an officer-involved shooting that happened last summer, saying the officer could potentially still face disciplinary action.

"I see it all over the nation that police departments use this catch-all of 'ongoing investigation' to basically throw up a stone wall in front of those that might like to find out the truth," said attorney Jonny Hibbert, who is representing the family of an 18-year-old Atlanta man who was shot and killed by an off-duty officer after allegedly stealing his car. His request for any video of that incident was recently denied.

The department in Sugar Land, Texas, which recently released dramatic video of officers rescuing a woman from a lake, refused to divulge footage of a 2016 struggle in which a man alleges he was beaten and severely injured by officers. In Seagoville, Texas, the department would not release video showing an officer using a stun gun to subdue a teenager brandishing a toy gun, even though it had publicized the incident as a textbook example of officers showing restraint. The department denied access because AP didn't know the name of the teen involved in the Oct. 4 incident. It said that piece of information must be provided to request police videos under Texas law.

In North Liberty, Iowa, a city lawyer responded to a request for video of a traffic stop by calling it a confidential investigative record — then demanded the AP not publish footage of the incident it had already obtained.

The city had fired a patrol supervisor for mishandling the stop, claiming he violated the rights of suspects in a road rage incident, failed to draw his weapon and made other procedural errors. The supervisor has filed a lawsuit contesting his firing, and his attorney provided the AP with footage that he says shows his client acted appropriately. The city released a redacted version of the video only after AP declined the city's request.

In the aftermath of the 2014 shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and similar deaths of unarmed black men, police departments around the country faced public pressure to begin using body cameras. Rather than resist, said Marlow, the ACLU expert, they embraced cameras — but often only released videos that showed police in a positive light.

"The decisions about whether footage is being released or not is being dominated by the group that is supposed to be watched," he said. "When that happens, police body cameras go from being a tool for transparency and accountability into a propaganda tool."

It's not that way everywhere.

California's state capital, Sacramento, has been roiled by protests over police shootings of unarmed black men — most recently, after the district attorney and state attorney general declined to bring charges against two officers in the fatal shooting of Stephon Clark, who was found to be holding a cellphone after he was killed. Police video of that shooting helped fuel the protests.

The department is among the most transparent in releasing officer videos; city policy that predates the Clark shooting requires the police department to release footage within 30 days of a major incident or justify why it won't. In some cases, the department has released footage within days.

"We hope to say that we're leading the way in releasing it and being transparent," said a department spokesman, Marcus Basquez. "That's a big priority for us, to build that trust with our community, and we feel releasing body-worn camera footage is one way."

A state law taking effect in July requires all state and local law enforcement agencies in California to make

audio and video recordings of critical incidents publicly available after 45 days, unless it would hinder an investigation. If it withheld recordings longer than a year, a department would have to show "clear and convincing evidence" of that assertion.

Police videos are considered public records in nearly every state, but vague laws and exemptions often give police chiefs and prosecutors wide discretion to determine when to release them.

A few states have limited the release of footage by exempting police videos from open records laws or requiring court orders to obtain their release. Others have carved out privacy exemptions for videos that show private homes, hospitals or juveniles.

The New York City Police Department, the nation's largest, stopped releasing body camera videos entirely last year after a police union successfully argued in court that they were confidential personnel records. But the department vowed last month to continue releasing video of officer-involved shootings after an appeals court ruled that the union's argument "would defeat the purpose of the body-worn-camera program."

Adam Marshall, a lawyer for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, in 2015 called police body camera videos the "Wild West of open records requests" because of the uncertainty surrounding how they would be handled. Today, he says a growing number of court cases and state laws have made for more certainty — that many requests will be denied or delayed.

"It's disappointing," he said. "Unfortunately, it does not reflect the type of transparency and openness that the public hoped would result from body cameras."

Associated Press writer Tom Verdin in Sacramento contributed to this report.

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Fate of Venezuelans in US has Trump priorities in conflict

By JILL COLVIN, DEB RIECHMANN and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two of the themes President Donald Trump is expected to hammer during his campaign for re-election are at odds as his administration considers whether to offer new deportation protections to tens of thousands of Venezuelans in the U.S. amid ongoing unrest in the South American country.

Officials are hoping the situation will improve enough in the coming weeks to avoid having to decide whether to grant Temporary Protected Status or other protections to more than 70,000 Venezuelans in the U.S., as many in Congress are demanding, according to seven people familiar with the discussions.

While officials are taking a wait-and-see approach for now, the issue has exposed divisions within the administration. The U.S. special envoy to Venezuela and some at the State Department and Department of Homeland Security are in favor of granting protected status, but others at DHS and the White House oppose such a move because it would conflict with the administration's hard-line immigration policies, according to some of the people familiar with the discussions.

The Trump administration has tried to eliminate deportation protections for thousands of people from countries in South America, Asia and Africa who had previously been eligible as part of a larger crackdown on illegal and legal immigration.

The discussion, which comes as Trump prepares for a tough re-election fight, puts at odds two themes expected to play starring roles in the 2020 race: Trump's tough-on-immigration stance and his desire to highlight the plight of Venezuelans under a socialist government as he tries to paint Democrats as radical leftists who will lead the U.S. down the same path.

Some administration officials have been looking for an alternative to TPS, arguing the statute is the wrong mechanism to use for Venezuela because it has typically been invoked for countries facing natural disasters or armed conflicts.

In the meantime, administration officials appear to be unified in holding off on a decision, hoping the

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situation in Venezuela will improve.

National security adviser John Bolton told CNN earlier this month that if opposition leader Juan Guaidó becomes interim president and new elections are held, "we wouldn't need to grant TPS status. So, I would rather focus on getting the transformation in Venezuela and getting them back on the road to stability."

Debate within the administration has been driven by officials on two sides: those who believe the U.S. must do something to assist Venezuelans in the United States who would face hardship, prosecution or violence should they be forced to return home now and those who insist the government must hold to the strict immigration standards that the president has imposed.

Elliott Abrams, the special envoy for Venezuela, has argued that conditions in the country are so bad that deportations should not occur at least until the situation improves, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to outline private conversations. But his calls for a way to help Venezuelans have stalled over objections from immigration foes who maintain that any concession would contradict the president's intention to tighten the rules, the officials said.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

The president and his aides have long believed immigration was a key motivating factor in the 2016 presidential race and intend to lean hard on the issue again in 2020. But the president has also offered Venezuela as a cautionary tale as he tries to paint Democrats as far-left socialists.

"They want to take away your good health care, and essentially use socialism to turn America into Venezuela," Trump told his crowds at rallies ahead of the midterm elections last year.

The issue is an especially charged one in the politically important state of Florida, where lawmakers like Republican Sen. Marco Rubio have been urging Trump to extend protected status. Rubio was among two dozen senators who sent a letter to Trump last week urging him to grant Venezuelans protections.

Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez of New Jersey, who has introduced legislation that would do the same, said Tuesday he remained optimistic even as he took note of the administration's attempts to strip TPS from citizens of countries including Honduras, El Salvador, Sudan, Haiti, Nicaragua and Nepal.

While some administration officials "may feel that it is contrary" to Trump's past decisions, Menendez said, Venezuela "falls directly in line with what TPS was meant for."

But Cynthia Arnson, director of the Latin America program in the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said that while there is broad bipartisan support in Congress for the move, it poses political risks for Trump by leaving him "open to accusations of applying a double standard that favors Venezuelans over, say, Central Americans."

Doris Meissner of the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute said the statute has been applied flexibly in the past and a case could be made to include Venezuelans, but that "would be quite a flip-flop" for Trump.

Around 437,000 immigrants from 10 countries have been granted temporary protected status, which was created in 1990. But many of the countries have stayed on the list for years, leading critics to complain that the program has turned into default amnesty.

A federal judge has blocked the administration's attempts to end the program for citizens of Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti and El Salvador. People from other countries have also sued; those cases are pending.

Associated Press writers Colleen Long and Susannah George contributed to this report.

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US health officials move to tighten sales of e-cigarettes

By **MATTHEW PERRONE** AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. health regulators are moving ahead with a plan designed to keep e-cigarettes out of the hands of teenagers by restricting sales of most flavored products in convenience stores, gas stations, pharmacies and other retail locations.

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The new guidelines, first proposed by the Food and Drug Administration in November, are the latest government effort to reverse what health officials call an epidemic of underage vaping.

E-cigarettes typically heat a flavored nicotine solution into an inhalable vapor. Federal law bans their sale to those under 18, but 1 in 5 high school students report using e-cigarettes, according to the latest survey published last year.

Under proposed FDA guidelines released Wednesday, e-cigarette makers would need to restrict sales of most flavored products to stores that verify the age of customers upon entry or include a separate, age-restricted area for vaping products. Companies would also be expected to use third-party, identity-verification technology for online sales.

The FDA will also prioritize removing vaping products that clearly appeal to kids, such as those with packaging that resembles juice boxes, candy or cookies. Companies that don't follow the new requirements risk having their products pulled from the market, the FDA said.

"The onus is now on the companies and the vaping industry to work with us to try and bring down these levels of youth use, which are simply intolerable," FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said in an interview. The restrictions won't apply to three flavors that the FDA says appeal more to adults than teenagers: tobacco, menthol and mint.

The rise in teen vaping has been driven mainly by new cartridge-based products like Juul, a heavily-marketed brand that has become a scourge in U.S. high schools. The rechargeable, odorless device can be used discreetly in bathrooms, hallways and even classrooms.

The Silicon Valley-based company voluntarily halted retail sales of its fruit and candy-flavored pods last year, ahead of the FDA announcement.

Anti-smoking activists have questioned whether the new FDA restrictions will be enough to stop the teen vaping surge. The FDA has little authority over how stores display and sell vaping products. Instead, critics say the agency is essentially telling companies to self-police.

"FDA continues to nibble around the edges and that will not end the epidemic," said Erika Sward, of the American Lung Association, which has called on the FDA to remove all flavored e-cigarettes from the market. She said FDA's decision to exempt menthol and mint flavors is a mistake, since survey data shows those flavors are used by roughly half of teens who vape.

Health experts say nicotine is harmful to developing brains, and some researchers worry that addicted teens will eventually switch from vaping to smoking.

Under regulations developed by the Obama administration, manufacturers were supposed to submit e-cigarettes for safety and health review by August 2018. But Gottlieb delayed the deadline until 2022, saying both the agency and industry needed more time to prepare. Under the FDA's update, the deadline will move to 2021.

Still, the American Lung Association and several other anti-smoking groups are suing the FDA to begin reviewing the safety and health effects of e-cigarettes immediately.

The new guidelines are expected to heavily impact gas stations and convenience stores, which have lobbied against the plan since it was floated last November.

"They are picking winners and losers in the marketplace while handing a government monopoly to other channels of trade," the National Association of Convenience Stores said in a message to members.

The restrictions are expected to have less impact on vape specialty shops, because many already require an ID to enter.

A separate proposal introduced Wednesday aims to ban flavored cigars that were launched after 2007 — the effective date for many of FDA's regulatory powers. Cigars come in flavors like blueberry, cherry and chocolate, and regulators fear teens could switch to those products as flavored e-cigarettes are restricted.

The FDA will accept comments on the guidelines for 30 days before finalizing them later this year.

Wednesday's announcement comes a week after Gottlieb revealed he would leave the FDA. His planned departure next month has raised questions about the future of several ambitious anti-tobacco initiatives that have barely progressed beyond the earliest stages. Those plans include banning menthol cigarette

flavoring and cutting nicotine levels in all cigarettes to make them less addictive.

"There has never been a federal official who made bolder proposals to reduce tobacco use — the question was always going to be would he stick it out to get them done?" said Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

Gottlieb said the Trump administration is "extremely supportive" of the new restrictions on e-cigarettes. He also said he was meeting with executives from Juul and its partner, cigarette maker Altria, on Wednesday. The meeting follows letters Gottlieb sent questioning Altria's purchase of a 35 percent stake in Juul and plans to begin distributing the company's products to thousands of U.S. retailers.

In a statement, Juul noted it has already taken steps to reduce youth use, including shuttering its Facebook and Instagram accounts.

"We support category-wide action including the responsible, restricted sale of flavored products and will review today's draft guidance as we continue to work with FDA," the company said.

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Countries and carriers around globe ground Boeing 737 Max

SINGAPORE (AP) — Airlines and countries around the world have grounded Boeing 737 Max jets or banned them from their airspace following the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines plane that killed 157 people on Sunday, five months after a similar Indonesian Lion Air jet plunged into the ocean, killing 189. A look at those countries and airlines:

AUSTRALIA

Australia has announced a temporary ban on flights by 737 Max aircraft, although none of its airlines currently operate them. The Civil Aviation Safety Authority said Tuesday that the ban will affect two foreign airlines — SilkAir and Fiji Airways — that use them for flights to Australia.

BRAZIL

Brazil's Gol Airlines has suspended the use of seven Max 8 jets. The airline said it hopes to return the aircraft to use as soon as possible. Gol said it has made nearly 3,000 flights with the Max 8.

CANADA

Canada on Wednesday closed its airspace to the Max 8. Canadian Transport Minister Marc Garneau said a comparison of vertical fluctuations found a "similar profile" to the Lion Air crash that killed 189 people in October. Canada lost 18 of its citizens in Sunday's crash, the second highest number after Kenya.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

Cayman Airways, a Caribbean carrier, has stopped using its two Max 8 jets. President and CEO Fabian Whorms said the move starting Monday will cause changes to flight schedules. Cayman is the flag carrier of Cayman Islands, a British overseas territory.

CHINA

China has 96 Max 8 jets in service, belonging to carriers such as Air China, China Eastern Airlines and China Southern Airlines. The civil aviation authority directed the planes to be grounded indefinitely on Monday. There were eight Chinese citizens on the Ethiopian Airlines flight that crashed shortly after taking off on Sunday.

ETHIOPIA

A spokesman for Ethiopian Airlines said it grounded its remaining four Max 8 jets as an "extra safety

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precaution" while it investigates Sunday's deadly crash. The airline is awaiting the delivery of 25 more Max 8 jets.

EUROPE

The European Aviation Safety Agency has issued a directive grounding all 737 Max 8 and Max 9 aircraft. EASA said in its emergency airworthiness directive Tuesday that "at this early stage" of the most recent investigation, "it cannot be excluded that similar causes may have contributed to both events." The grounding applies to all European Union airspace.

FIJI

Fiji has suspended all Max 8 flights in and out of the country. The decision only affects one operator, Fiji Airways.

HONG KONG

Hong Kong has banned the operation of all 737 Max aircraft "into, out of and over" the key Asian aviation hub beginning Wednesday evening. The announcement from the Civil Aviation Department said the ban would continue "until further notice." It said the department has been in close contact with the two airlines, SpiceJet of India and Russia's Globus Airlines, that use the aircraft to operate flights into and out of Hong Kong International Airport.

ICELAND

Icelandair Group has temporarily suspended operations of its three 737 Max aircraft until further notice. President and CEO Bogi Nels Bogason said Tuesday that the temporary suspension won't impact the company's operations, as it only affects three aircraft out of a fleet of 33.

INDIA

India has grounded all 737 Max 8 planes. A statement late Tuesday said the planes "will be grounded till appropriate modifications and safety measures are undertaken to ensure their safe operations." The statement did not say how many planes were affected.

INDONESIA

Indonesia has temporarily grounded Max 8 jets to inspect their airworthiness. Director General of Air Transportation Polana B. Pramesti said the move was made to ensure flight safety. A Lion Air model of the same plane crashed in Indonesia in October. Indonesian airlines operate 11 Max 8 jets. Lion Air, which owns 10 of them, said it will try to minimize the impact of the decision on operations. The other Max 8 jet belongs to national carrier Garuda.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand has suspended Max 8 flights in and out of the country. The decision only affects one operator, Fiji Airways. No New Zealand airlines use the Max 8 planes.

MALAYSIA

The Civil Aviation Authority said no Malaysian carriers operate the Max 8, but that foreign airlines are banned from flying the plane in Malaysia, and from transiting in the country, until further notice.

MEXICO

Mexico's civil aviation agency announced Wednesday night that it is suspending immediately all flights by Max 8 and 9 jets in its airspace.

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OMAN

Oman and the United Arab Emirates have barred flights by Max 8 and Max 9 aircraft. Oman's Public Authority for Civil Aviation made the sultanate's announcement, without elaborating on its reasoning. State-owned Oman Air operates five Max 8 aircraft and said it was rescheduling other planes for its flights.

PANAMA

Copa Airlines has temporarily suspend operations of its six MAX 9 planes until the cause of the Ethiopian crash is known.

SINGAPORE

Singapore has temporarily banned Max 8 jets — and other models in the Max range — from entering and leaving the country. SilkAir, a regional carrier owned by Singapore Airlines, has six Max 8 jets. It said the ban "will have an impact on some of the airline's flight schedules."

SOUTH AFRICA

Comair, the operator of British Airways and Kulula flights in South Africa, has grounded its Max 8 while it consults with Boeing, other operators and technical experts. Its statement did not say how many planes were affected. It said the decision was made without intervention from regulatory authorities.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korean airline Eastar Jet has suspended operations of its two Max 8 planes and replaced them with Boeing 737-800 planes starting Wednesday on routes to Japan and Thailand. The airline said it hasn't found any problems, but is voluntarily grounding the planes in response to customer concerns.

TURKEY

Turkish Airlines has suspended all Max flights. In a statement Tuesday on Twitter, CEO Bilal Eksi said the suspension would continue until the "uncertainty affecting safety is cleared."

UAE

The UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority has banned the aircraft from its airspace in what is said was "a precautionary measure." The Max is the workhorse of the Dubai government-owned budget carrier Fly-Dubai. It operates 11 Max 8 and 2 Max 9 jets. Its total fleet is around 60 aircraft, including other models of the 737.

UNITED STATES

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration grounded the MAX Wednesday, saying "new information" indicated some similarities with a Lion Air crash in the Java Sea that killed 189 people in October. The agency suspended the jets while investigators determine whether there was a shared cause of the two crashes. The FAA had been criticized for allowing the planes to fly while dozens of countries suspended their use.

VIETNAM

Vietnam has banned Max planes from flying into its airspace. The ban lasts until further notice. None of Vietnam's four airlines uses the Max model planes in their fleets, but Korea's Eastar Jet, Thai Lion Air and Malaysia's Malindor Air fly those planes to Vietnamese destinations.

This story has been corrected to fix references to the death toll in the Lion Air crash. It was 189, not 187

Asian stocks edge up on stimulus hopes after Chinese data
By ANNABELLE LIANG Associated Press

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SINGAPORE (AP) — Asian markets were mostly higher Thursday as slowing Chinese industrial output left traders hopeful of more assurances from Beijing.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 gained 0.7 percent to 21,431.28 and the Kospi in South Korea was up 0.1 percent at 2,149.48. Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 0.1 percent to 28,840.30. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.1 percent to 6,167.00.

The Shanghai Composite lost 0.6 percent to 3,010.06. Shares were flat in Taiwan but fell in Singapore and the Philippines.

China's industrial output grew 5.3 percent in the first two months of 2019 from the same period last year, official data showed Thursday. This was weaker than expected and the slowest pace of growth in 17 years.

But other numbers beat analyst's expectations. Retail sales climbed 8.2 percent and fixed asset investment rose 6.1 percent in the same period. The National Bureau of Statistics combines readings for January and February to account for the Lunar New Year holiday, where many factories and businesses are closed.

"The mixed bag of numbers featured the industrial production miss most prominently, at 5.3 percent year-on-year against the 5.6 percent consensus," Jingyi Pan of IG said in an interview.

"The focus would likely return to economic policies very soon and expectations for the raft of policies announced thus far to help shore up economic performance," she said.

On Wall Street, stocks secured their third straight gain on Wednesday after health care and technology companies rose. Boeing dipped briefly, but ultimately finished slightly higher, as the U.S. joined much of the world in grounding its 737 Max 8 aircraft after a fatal crash in Ethiopia on Sunday.

The broad S&P 500 index gained 0.7 percent to 2,810.92. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.6 percent to 25,702.89 and the Nasdaq composite climbed 0.7 percent to 7,643.41. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks was 0.4 percent higher at 1,555.88.

Oil prices advanced after a weekly U.S Energy Information Administration report showed that crude stockpiles fell by 3.9 million barrels from the previous week. This marked the second decline in three weeks.

Benchmark U.S. crude rose 10 cents to \$58.36 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It gained \$1.39 to settle at \$58.26 per barrel on Wednesday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, rose 17 cents to \$67.72 per barrel. It picked up 88 cents to close at \$67.55 per barrel in London.

The dollar strengthened to 111.59 yen from 111.17 yen late Wednesday. The euro eased to \$1.1325 from \$1.1326.

Today in History By the Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, March 14, the 73rd day of 2019. There are 292 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 14, 1964, a jury in Dallas found Jack Ruby guilty of murdering Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, and sentenced him to death. (Both the conviction and death sentence were overturned, but Ruby died before he could be retried.)

On this date:

In 1794, Eli Whitney received a patent for his cotton gin, an invention that revolutionized America's cotton industry.

In 1883, German political philosopher Karl Marx died in London at age 64.

In 1885, the Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera "The Mikado" premiered at the Savoy Theatre in London.

In 1900, Congress ratified the Gold Standard Act.

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an executive order designed to prevent Japanese laborers from immigrating to the United States as part of a "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan.

In 1962, Democrat Edward M. Kennedy officially launched in Boston his successful candidacy for the U.S. Senate seat from Massachusetts once held by his brother, President John F. Kennedy. (Edward Kennedy served in the Senate for nearly 47 years.)

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In 1965, Israel's cabinet formally approved establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany.
In 1967, the body of President John F. Kennedy was moved from a temporary grave to a permanent memorial site at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

In 1980, a LOT Polish Airlines jet crashed while attempting to land in Warsaw, killing all 87 people aboard, including 22 members of a U.S. amateur boxing team.

In 1990, the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies held a secret ballot that elected Mikhail S. Gorbachev to a new, powerful presidency.

In 1998, India's Congress party picked Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of assassinated prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, as its new president.

In 2008, Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama denounced inflammatory remarks from his pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who had railed against the United States and accused its leaders of bringing on the Sept. 11 attacks by spreading terrorism.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama met at the White House with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (loo-EEZ' ee-NAH'-see-oh LOO'-luh duh SEEL'-vuh); afterward, Obama downplayed divisions between the U.S. and Europe over how to tackle the world's financial crisis. Finance officials from rich and developing countries, meeting in Horsham, England, pledged to do "whatever is necessary" to fix the global economy. Altovise Joanne Gore Davis, a dancer and actress and the widow of Sammy Davis Jr., died in Los Angeles at age 65.

Five years ago: The West braced for a vote by the Crimean Peninsula to secede from Ukraine; calling the results all but a foregone conclusion, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry urged Russia's parliament against accepting any offer to claim Crimea as its own. Tony Benn, 88, a committed socialist who irritated and fascinated Britons through a political career spanning five decades, died in London.

One year ago: Tens of thousands of students across the country walked out of their classrooms to demand action on gun violence and school safety; the action came a month after the shooting that killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Stephen Hawking, the best-known theoretical physicist of his time, died at his home in Cambridge, England, at the age of 76; he had stunned doctors by living with the normally fatal illness ALS for more than 50 years. President Donald Trump chose Larry Kudlow, a longtime fixture on the CNBC business news network, to be his top economic aide.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Phil Phillips (Song: "Sea of Love") is 93. Former astronaut Frank Borman is 91. Actor Michael Caine is 86. Composer-conductor Quincy Jones is 86. Actor Raymond J. Barry is 80. Movie director Wolfgang Petersen is 78. Country singer Michael Martin Murphey is 74. Rock musician Walt Paraz-aider (payr-ah-ZAY'-der)(formerly with Chicago) is 74. Actor Steve Kanaly is 73. Comedian Billy Crystal is 71. Former Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., is 71. Actor-writer-comedian-radio personality Rick Dees is 68. Country singer Jann Browne is 65. Actor Adrian Zmed is 65. Prince Albert II, the ruler of Monaco, is 61. Actress Laila Robins is 60. Actress Tamara Tunie (tuh-MAH'-ruh TOO'-nee) is 60. Actress Penny Johnson Jerald is 59. Producer-director-writer Kevin Williamson is 54. Actress Elise Neal is 53. Actor Gary Anthony Williams is 53. Actress Megan Follows is 51. Rock musician Michael Bland is 50. Country singer Kristian Bush is 49. Rock musician Derrick is 47. Actress Betsy Brandt is 46. Actress Grace Park is 45. Actor Daniel Gillies is 43. Actor Corey Stoll is 43. Actor Jake Fogelnest is 40. Actor Chris Klein is 40. Actor Ryan Cartwright (TV: "Kevin Can Wait") is 38. Actress Kate Maberly is 37. Singer-musician Taylor Hanson (Hanson) is 36. Actor Jamie Bell is 33. Rock musician Este Haim (HY'-uhm) (Haim) is 33. Actor Ansel Elgort is 25. Olympic gold medal gymnast Simone Biles is 22. Actor James Freedson-Jackson (Film: "The Strange Ones") is 17.

Thought for Today: "Achieving life is not the equivalent of avoiding death." — Ayn Rand, American author (1905-1982).