

Groton Daily Independent

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Today is the last day to sign up on-line. Click on ad to register!

OPEN: Re-cycling Trailer in Groton

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



Greenhouse Raffle

Prizes are:

- Greenhouse (12'x7.5', 2 shelves, 2 outlets, light)**
- Hunting Blind (Hexigon with 6 shooting windows)**
- Free delivery within 20 miles**
- 2 Dairy Queen \$50 Gift Cards**

Need not be present to win. \$10 Donation
Drawing to be held April 15th

Contact any Robotics member for a ticket or
call Jim Lane at 605/397-7013.



Come Help us Celebrate Dick's 80th Birthday



Spread the word!
Groton American Legion
Friday, April 19th, 3-7 p.m.
Coffee and Cupcakes at 3 p.m.
Beef / Fish Taco Bar at 5 p.m.

NOW HIRING!

Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

Looking for assemblers - both shifts

* New Starting Wage - \$15/hr day shift and
\$16/hr night shift
Overtime Available

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health, Dental & Vision insurance
- Life Insurance
- Short-term Disability and Long-term Disability
- 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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Sunday, April 14

Easter Cantata at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 4 p.m. Free-will offering to benefit Becky Diegel and Hunter Schaller.

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church will present a Cantata, 7 p.m., at the church, 706 N Main. The presentation will be, "We are witnesses: Encounter with Savior," created by Kenna Turner West and orchestrated and arranged by Daniel Semsen.

Monday, April 15

The Girls Golf Meet at Milbank scheduled for Monday is cancelled.

Tuesday, April 16

7:00pm: Elementary Spring Concert at Groton Area High School

Varsity track meets scheduled for Tuesday at Webster and Deuel are cancelled.

3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.: Elementary PAC Cookie Dough Pickup

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

9:00am- 2:00pm: NSU Math Contest at Northern State University (66th Annual Northern State University Mathematics Contest)

Thursday, April 18, 2019

3:30pm: Track: 7th/8th Meet at Groton Area High School

6:30 p.m.: Tuff Tigers Wrestling Awards at Groton Area Elementary Commons Area

Come and go Bridal shower for Emily Kern, bride to be of Nathan Skadsen, Sunday, April 28 2019 2-5 pm at

Upcoming
**COMMUNITY
EVENTS**



hm HARR
Motors

4255 6th

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!!!

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Groton Area's

KG

Roundup

**has been rescheduled to
April 30th**

All scheduled times will stay the same. Please contact Heidi Krueger at the elementary school to confirm this new date.

605/397-2317

Groton City Notice

**Sump Pumps must
be discharged
OUTSIDE!**

Failure to comply will result in fines.

Hiring High Schoolers!

If you are 16 or older and need a summer job, the Groton Rehabilitation Center has the job for you!

During the summer, you can work inside and get some experience for a CNA career in the future!

We are an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.



1106 N 2nd Street ~ Groton, SD ~ 605-397-2365

Community Good Friday Service

Friday, April 19, 2019
7 p.m.
United Methodist Church
906 N 1st St., Groton



Special Music

Each person coming will be given a nail which they can pound into a cross at the end of the service.

Service Leaders:

Pastor Brandon Dunham, United Methodist Church of Groton and Conde
Pastor Josh Jetto, Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church
Paul Kosel, Heaven Bound Ministries, Pierpont/Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden
There will be other participants as well who will be doing readings.



At the end of the service, when each person has pounded in their nail, they may either remain in the sanctuary or leave in silence in order to continue contemplating the sacrifice of Jesus.

**There will be an offering received for the
Groton Family Crisis Fund.**

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Emmanuel Cantata

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 1106 N. 2nd St., will celebrate "The Body of Christ: Glorified, Anointed, and Sacrificed." It's an Easter Cantata that will be held Palm Sunday, April 14, 4 p.m., at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. There will be a free will offering with proceeds directed to Becky Diegel and Hunter Schaller.

C&MA Cantata

Members of the Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church will also put on a Cantata on Palm Sunday, April 14, at 7 p.m., at the church, 706 N. Main St., across from the city park. The presentation will be, "We are witnesses: Encounter with Savior," created by Kenna Turner West and orchestrated and arranged by Daniel Semsen. The Palm Sunday service will be carried live on GDILIVE.COM. The choir will also present the Cantata on Wednesday evening, April 17th at 7 p.m. at the Rosewood Court, 705 N. 6th St. in Groton, and Maundy Thursday evening, April 18th, at 7 p.m. in the Northwestern United Methodist Church in Mellette. The 25 members of the choir Carrie Olson, Director, Logan Harms, sound technician, Sopranos Linda Bahr, Kim Edmunds, JoAnne Ehresmann, Deb Jacobs, Julianna Kosel, Darinda Tundy, Sierra Tunby, Altos Nancy Culter, Jana Duncan, Joyce Grenz, Ryley Harms, Kara Jetto, Glenna Remington, Tenors Rick Buhler, Bill Duncan, Adam Franken, and Bass Mike Ehresmann, Dale Grenz, Lowell Harms, Scott Krueger, Paul Perkins, Larry Remington, and Lars Tunby, Soloist will be Deb Jacobs, and Narrators are Lowell Harms, Bill Duncan, Sierra Tunby, Dale Grenz, and Deb Jacobs.

SEAS Living Stations of the Cross

The Living Stations of the Cross will be held Wednesday, April 17, 7 p.m., at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. The directors are Alexis Simon and Wyatt Locke. The members of the SEAS Youth put on an impressive performance. There will be refreshments after the event. The event will be carried live on GDILIVE.COM.

Community Good Friday Service

The Community Good Friday Service will be held at 7 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, Groton. There will be an offering received for the Groton Family Crisis Fund.

Each person coming to the service will be given a nail which they will pound into a cross at the end of the service. Pastor Brandon Dunham from the United Methodist Church of Groton and Conde, Pastor Josh Jetto from the Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church, and Paul Kosel from Heaven Bound Ministries of Pierpont/Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church of rural Eden, will be leading the service. There will be other participants as well who will be doing readings and special music will be provided. At the end of the service, when each person has pounded in their nail, they may either remain in the sanctuary or leave in silence in order to continue contemplating the sacrifice of Jesus.

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EARTHTALK ™

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Earth Day

Dear EarthTalk: Earth Day (April 22) is coming around again soon. What is the theme for this year's festivities? How can I find events or celebrations near me? -- J. P., Columbus, OH

Each year upwards of 500 million people in 174 countries celebrate Earth Day, the largest secular holiday in the world. Earth Day is a great reminder for everyone otherwise just going about their daily lives that we should all be doing more to protect ecosystems, fight climate change and live greener lifestyles.

According to Earth Day Network (EDN), the non-profit that has been organizing and overseeing Earth Day every year since its inception in 1970, this year's focus is on species protection. The group reports that we're losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the normal rate. "Many species will disappear before we learn about them or the benefits they bring to our ecosystems and our planet," says EDN. "The loss is so great that the welfare and future of the human species are threatened."

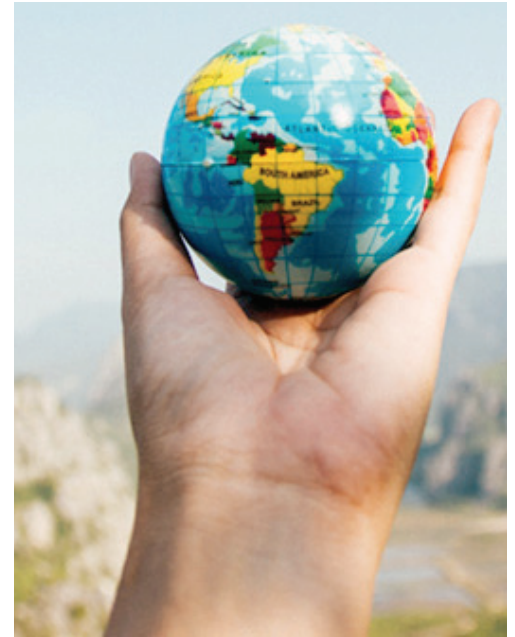
EDN is using the platform of Earth Day to raise awareness about the accelerating rate of extinction of countless numbers of species and why this speed-up is happening now. They hope to activate a global movement that values nature in and of itself, and to encourage individual actions that help fight climate change, one of the most serious threats not only to humans but also animal and plant species.

The group has also enlisted the help of thousands of partner organizations around the world to advance and protect laws, policies, regulations and international agreements to prevent species loss and preserve as much biodiversity on the planet as possible. Here in the U.S., EDN is focusing on saving the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act from the deregulatory sword of the Trump administration.

"The good news is that the rate of extinctions can still be slowed, and many of our declining, threatened and endangered species can still recover if we work together now to build a united global movement of consumers, voters, educators, faith leaders and scientists to demand immediate action," says EDN president Kathleen Rogers.

You can show your support for the cause by showing up at an Earth Day event near you. Chiff.com provides links to Earth Day events in various major cities across North America including Boston, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Jacksonville, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Seattle, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Diego, San Francisco, Ottawa and Quebec. If you live elsewhere, check out Everfest's Earth Day page which lists events in 40 different metro regions across the U.S. Or if you can't get to an event, just do something good for the planet: plant a tree, bike to work, go meatless. Even better, check out U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ideas for community service projects, from watershed restoration of local waterways to waste reduction at school.

With so many options, you can easily be a part of the solution to our environmental woes in 2019. And if you're not already respecting the Earth on a daily basis, Earth Day is a great time to start.

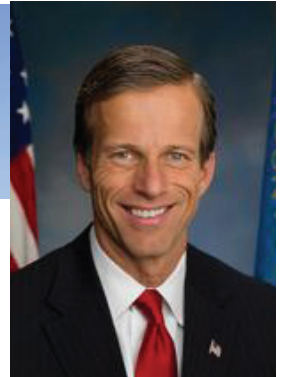


The focus of Earth Day 2019 is saving endangered species, according to organizer Earth Day Network. Credit: Porapak Apichodilok, Pexels.

CONTACTS: EDN, earthday.org; Chiff.com, chiff.com/home_life/holiday/earth-day.htm; Everfest, everfest.com/lists/seasonal-earth-day; EPA, epa.gov/students/community-service-environmental-project-ideas-students-and-educators.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. To read more, check out <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Tax Reform is Working

Find me one person who enjoys paying taxes, and I'll find 10 million other people who'd rather not. While few taxpayers, if any, are doing cartwheels over giving Uncle Sam part of their hard-earned paycheck, almost everyone recognizes that it's important to pay a share of our nation's tax burden. It's what helps fund the military, pay for our nation's roads and bridges, and support numerous federal programs on which many Americans depend.

Yes, taxes are necessary, but I strongly believe that the federal government shouldn't spend one penny more than what's required to meet our obligations. There's a ton of waste, fraud, and abuse in federal spending, and correcting that problem has long been a mission of mine. We've made progress in certain areas, but there's a long way to go toward fully restoring fiscal responsibility in Washington.

I think one of the best ways to force the government to spend taxpayers' money more efficiently is by simply taking less of it in the first place. Fulfilling that goal – allowing people to keep more of their own money – is exactly why I helped write the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which became law in December 2017, and this year's tax season is the first in which Americans will file their taxes under the new system.

This year, filers will notice several positive changes, all of which mean more money in the family budget. First, lower rates, which has resulted in 90 percent of middle-income Americans seeing a tax cut of their own. Ninety percent. Second, doubling the child tax credit, which, again, helps support middle-income Americans. And third, nearly doubling the standard deduction – a fancy way of saying the government will tax less of what you earn.

As with most tax seasons, many Americans are accustomed to receiving refunds this time of year. And they should, especially if they overpaid the government during the previous year. While a lot has been made recently about the fact that some tax refunds are slightly lower than they were last year at this time, people probably aren't hearing why that could actually be a good thing, because at the end of the day, a tax refund doesn't reflect a person's tax burden.

Getting a tax refund essentially means you gave the government an interest-free loan during the year. It's your money, and you only owe what you owe, so anything you pay above that, the government will graciously hold on your behalf (money it can use until they have to return it to you later). In a perfect world, though, no one would receive a tax refund because everyone would pay exactly what they need to during the year. So, thanks to tax reform, since rates are lower and the government took less of your money on the front end, a smaller refund means you made a smaller loan to Uncle Sam, not necessarily that you paid more in taxes.

In a post-tax reform world, job creation and wages are up. So is economic growth, personal income, and business investment. Importantly, unemployment is down. So far down that in 2018, for the first time ever, the number of job openings outnumbered the number of job seekers, which means there's less competition among those who are looking for work. More than 3 million jobs have been created since tax reform became law, and a typical family of four received a tax break of more than \$2,000. All good news.

Like I said, there aren't many people who enjoy tax season, but with all of the positive changes we've seen through tax reform, hopefully this year was a little less painful. There's more to do, though, and Republicans in Congress are committed to building off of this success as we pursue additional pro-growth policies that will continue to put you in the driver's seat of your own economic future.



Flooding Remains a Concern for South Dakota Communities

South Dakota residents continue to share with me their concerns about flooding and high water levels in many of our rivers and lakes. My team and I are keeping a close watch on the Corps' management of the Missouri River, and the rivers that feed into the Missouri including the James and the Big Sioux.

This is especially important as major rain and snow events continue to wreak havoc in South Dakota and across the plains, causing significant flooding throughout the region.

I am speaking regularly with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about their management of the river system. I recently held a meeting with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, R.D. James, and with Brigadier General Peter Helmlinger, commander of the Northwestern Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to discuss my concerns about high water levels throughout the state that are swelling the Missouri River system.

Based on the Corps' own published reports and forecasts, I remain very concerned about continued flooding in 2019. In part due to the recent blizzard and the "bomb cyclone" that hit the Midwest in March, flooding is occurring in communities along the James River and the Big Sioux River. Following the Army Corps' recent public meeting in Sioux City, a Missouri Basin River Forecast Center hydrologist said low-lying areas along the James River, Big Sioux River and Little Sioux River should expect periodic moderate flooding as temperatures rise and snow begins to melt. Already, the James River from the Aberdeen area to Yankton is experiencing major flooding that is expected to last through mid-to-late April, at a minimum. The Big Sioux River is around three feet over flood stage in Brookings, one foot over flood stage in Watertown and around four feet over flood stage in the Sioux Falls area. These rivers flow into the Missouri just south of Gavins Point Dam, and the Corps must take into account these levels when determining flows upstream.

When I've been talking to the Corps, my message has been that the best chance we have of minimizing flooding along the entire river system is to maintain moderate flows out of Gavins Point Dam. Moderate increases out of Gavins Point would minimize damage now that the water has receded south of us in Nebraska and Iowa, and would allow us to start draining water out of the upstream dams, including Fort Randall and Oahe. This will make room in those dams for the inevitable snowmelt and any rain events in the coming months, as there remains a large amount of plains and mountain snowpack north and west of us that hasn't melted yet, with snow in the forecast for Montana for the foreseeable future.

Since coming to the Senate, I've pushed the Corps to implement the snowpack monitoring system that was recommended after the 2011 flood and included in a 2014 water resources bill. Last year, I was able to include a provision in the Energy and Water Appropriations bill that authorized the Corps to access its existing unused funds to implement a mountain snowpack monitoring system. This system still has not been installed, but the Corps has confirmed to me they have authorized funding for Phase I of the installation of this system. I will continue to push for installation of Phase I this year and for full completion—which includes over 240 monitoring sites—next year, so South Dakotans and our downstream neighbors can finally have a system that accurately forecasts snowmelt effects on the Missouri River basin.

South Dakotans are all too familiar with the devastating impact flooding can have when the Corps does not properly manage the river system. I will continue to hold the Corps accountable to make sure they are managing releases based on flood control and being fully transparent with their release forecasts. I'll continue to keep South Dakotans updated on any new information we receive from the Corps as the spring and summer seasons continue.

Volunteers are the heart of community arts councils

By Jim Speirs, Executive Director, Arts South Dakota

One of the most vital forces celebrating the creative spirit in South Dakota is the network of community arts councils that spans our state. From Leola to Sioux Falls and from Highmore to Rapid City, community arts councils initiate cultural activities, sponsor hometown performances and are often instrumental in bringing professional artists to town through the Artists In Schools & Communities program of the South Dakota Arts Council.

All of the community arts councils in our state—over 30 of them at last count—have one thing in common: they all rely on the passion, commitment and participation of community volunteers. While serving on the local arts council board is a visible form of volunteerism, there are so many other ways local residents can get in on the fun and the accomplishment of enhancing the arts in each hometown. From taking tickets to posting news about upcoming events to sponsoring an artist, neighbors and businesses in each community have a role to play in strengthening local culture.

Arts South Dakota is working hard to encourage community arts councils and to help them build capacity. Community Development Director Andrew Reinartz travels the state, meeting with local arts leaders and helping to assess their needs. During the next couple of months, we'll be conducting a survey of these groups, partly to get a more nuanced picture of our community arts councils and also to listen to what they have to say about South Dakota's cultural scene.

One thing we know we'll hear loud and clear—dedicated volunteers who care about local arts opportunities are the ones who are making it happen in communities of all sizes, in every corner of the state. The enthusiasm you'll experience talking to the officers of the newest community arts council in Leola is shared by leaders of the Rapid City Arts Council, who celebrated their 50th anniversary last November. We congratulate everyone who lends a hand to a local arts council—YOU are the heart of the arts in South Dakota.

Whether you are a community arts council volunteer, an artist or want to learn more about the arts in South Dakota, visit www.ArtsSouthDakota.org.



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CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Building the Road to Recovery

Over the last several weeks, South Dakota and our surrounding states have endured record level flooding. This has been a dire situation for the families and communities across the Midwest. Our state has barely begun to recover from dramatic flooding, and now we are seeing blizzard conditions in mid-April. More than a foot of snow on already saturated ground may only make matters worse for families already suffering from flood damage.

During my March work week in the state, I joined local officials to survey damaged areas in Sioux Falls and Yankton. Water levels were chest-deep at the YMCA Camp Leif Ericson office in Sioux Falls. In Yankton, miles of bike trail were destroyed. It will take years to repair some of this damage.

Commerce has been interrupted and livelihoods have been devastated. We've seen cattle killed and even worse, we have seen human life lost in the Midwest. A number of South Dakota communities have been tragically impacted, although perhaps none more dramatically than Indian Country.

Over the last few weeks I have been in continuous contact with President Bear Runner of Pine Ridge, President Bordeaux of Rosebud and Chairman Frazier of Cheyenne River. Their texts, phone calls and face-to-face meetings are heavy with frustration. Our tribal leaders are concerned about what's going on and how it's continued to impact people.

Earlier this week, I met with Chairman Harold Frazier. He showed me picture after picture of the devastation in Cheyenne River. Cemeteries underwater. Roads underwater. Cars underwater. Although it's never easy to ask for a helping hand, South Dakota is in desperate need of one.

And we're not alone. I've spoken with several of my colleagues in Washington who have shown me photos of similar, and in some cases, more dramatic damage to homes and infrastructure to what we've witnessed in our home state. In Nebraska, entire homes were underwater.

These stories I've pointed out are not meant to be discouraging. However, disaster aid discussions have been put on hold for another two weeks because of disagreements between political parties. I would ask my colleagues in the House, and in the Senate, to do everything they can to put politics aside and pass a disaster relief bill that can do much needed work for our country. Political theater will only cause further damage to the communities in need of our help. The time to act is now.

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Today in Weather History

April 14, 1991: Thawing ice on top of a television tower fell onto buildings below in Garden City, Clark County. The ice had accrued during a freezing rain event on the 11th and 12th. No one was injured, but damage estimates ranged from \$35,000-\$40,000.

April 14, 2005: A dust devil developed on the west side of Bison as a dry cold front passed through the area. As it moved east across town, it blew out windows on several automobiles, damaged a 160 square foot section of roof from a house, and tore shingles off several buildings. The dust devil also pulled a flagpole out of the ground. No one was injured. The dust devil was approximately 20 feet wide, and the path length was one and a half miles.

1886: The deadliest tornado in Minnesota history razed parts of St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids, leaving 72 dead and 213 injured. 11 members of a wedding party were killed including the bride and groom. The bottom of the Mississippi River was seen during the tornado's crossing.

1912: On her maiden voyage, the RMS Titanic rammed into an iceberg just before midnight. The "unsinkable ship" sank two hours and forty minutes later into the icy water of the Atlantic Ocean near Newfoundland, Canada. Tragically, 1,517 passengers including the crew were lost. A nearby ship, the Carpathia, rushed to the Titanic and was able to save 706 people.

1922: The Mississippi River reached a record height of 21.3 feet at New Orleans, Louisiana, and the river was still rising, with the crest still a week away. Understandably, the City of New Orleans was nervous as reports of levees failing upriver reached the city. A crevasse below New Orleans would relieve the pressure on the town's strained levees on the 27th, spared the city from disaster.

1935: Black Sunday refers to a particularly severe dust storm that occurred on April 14, 1935, as part of the Dust Bowl. During the afternoon, the residents of the Plains States were forced to take cover as a dust storm, or "black blizzard," blew through the region. The storm hit the Oklahoma Panhandle and Northwestern Oklahoma first and moved south for the remainder of the day. It hit Beaver around 4:00 p.m., Boise City around 5:15 p.m., and Amarillo, Texas, at 7:20 p.m. The conditions were the most severe in the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles, but the storm's effects were felt in other surrounding areas.

1999: In Sydney, Australia, a hailstorm causes \$1.6 billion in damage, making it the costliest hailstorm to strike a populated city in the country. The hail damaged some 22,000 homes and more than 60,000 vehicles. Also, aircraft damage at Sydney Airport was extensive.

1873 - A famous Easter blizzard raged across Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota. Gale force winds blew the wet snow into massive drifts, however there were few deaths due to the sparse population and due to the gradual increase of the storm. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm system moving slowly northeastward across the Middle Mississippi Valley produced severe thunderstorms which spawned three tornadoes around Ottumwa IA, and produced up to four inches of rain in southeastern Nebraska, flooding rivers and streams. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)






1988 - A weather disturbance off the southern coast of California brought parts of southern California their first rain in six weeks. Rain-slickened roads resulted in numerous accidents in southern California, including a ten car pile-up at Riverside. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Late afternoon thunderstorms in northern Florida soaked the town of Golden Gate with 4.37 inches of rain in about two hours, resulting in local flooding. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in southeastern Texas during the mid morning hours. Thunderstorms produced dime size hail at Galveston, and wind gusts to 59 mph at Port Arthur. Afternoon thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana spawned tornadoes south of Bogalusa and at Rio. (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 42 °F	Low: 29 °F	High: 50 °F	Low: 31 °F	High: 56 °F

A Little Cool to Start the Week

Today • Increasing Clouds. Some morning fog. Highs in the 40s

Tonight • Slight Chance Snow Northeast. Lows Around 30°

Monday • Highs 44° to 59°

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 4/14/2019 3:18 AM Central

Published on: 04/14/2019 at 4:19AM

Snow cover will continue to affect temperatures through early this week, with below normal readings expected.

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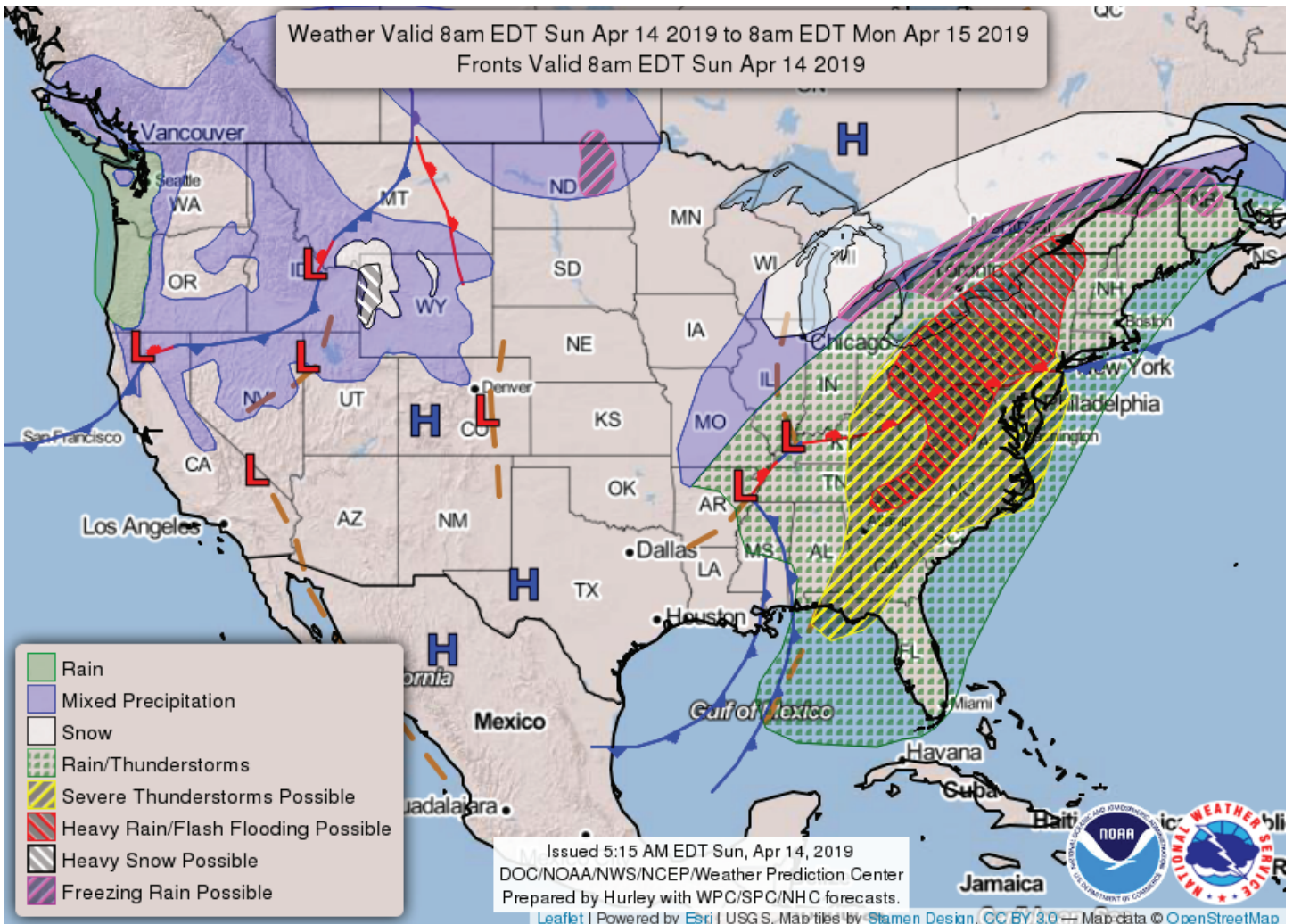
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 44 °F at 3:17 PM
Low Outside Temp: 26 °F at 6:09 AM
High Gust: 13 mph at 8:33 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 89° in 1908
Record Low: 9° in 1928
Average High: 57°F
Average Low: 31°F
Average Precip in April.: 0.63
Precip to date in April.: 1.07
Average Precip to date: 2.81
Precip Year to Date: 4.04
Sunset Tonight: 8:18 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:49 a.m.



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RICHES AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

I need to come to talk with you, he said nervously. I have everything anyone could ask for, but I'm miserable. I think you are the only hope I have. As soon as I get back from this trip I'm taking, I'll be in to see you.

Well, I said, I don't have any answers for your problems, but I believe strongly that God does. And, if you seek Him sincerely and honestly, He'll give you the right answer for any problem. We have His Word on that.

The trip is over. He returned safely and had a good time, but has found no time to look for God's answers to his miserable condition. Perhaps the trip was so enjoyable that it has relieved him, temporarily, of his distress. It may also have been a gentle forewarning from God that, when his misery returns, he will not escape His wrath the next time.

God does everything He can to bring people to a place while they still have time to make things right with Him. Our God is not only gracious; He is patient and inviting. But, as Solomon wrote, Wealth is worthless in the day of God's wrath.

When that day of wrath arrives, no amount of this world's wealth will make any difference. To support this fact, David wrote a warning to the wealthy who have no time for God: The foolish and the senseless also perish. People, despite their wealth, do not endure.

Righteousness and right living have their rewards: a life with God's presence, power and protection now, and a life with Him in eternity. He promised us that He would deliver us from death and destruction, and grant us eternal life with Him in the future. Trust Him today!

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your salvation, the assurance of Your presence and protection now, the gift of hope, and the promise of eternal life with You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 11:4 Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 03/17/2019 Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
- 04/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/27/2019 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/04/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/27/2019 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program (Memorial Day)
- 06/13/2019 Transit Fundraiser (Thursday Mid-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
- 06/22-23/2019 Groton Junior Legion Tournament
- 06/29/2019 Groton U10/U12 Round Robin Tournament
- 07/04/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 07/14/2019 Summer Fest/Car Show (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/18/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Tournament
- 07/21/2019 Granary Ice Cream Social & Family Music Fest
- 08/02/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Wine on Nine
- 08/09-11/2019 State Junior Legion Tournament in Groton
- 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
- 09/08/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 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 (Halloween)
- 11/09/2019 Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- Bingo: every Wednesday, Labor Day-Memorial Day, 6:30pm at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 4/4/2020 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 4/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 5/2/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

03-06-10-14-27

(three, six, ten, fourteen, twenty-seven)

Estimated jackpot: \$263,000

Lotto America

21-23-27-31-37, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 2

(twenty-one, twenty-three, twenty-seven, thirty-one, thirty-seven; Star Ball: nine; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$18.06 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$157 million

Powerball

04-17-26-32-49, Powerball: 10, Power Play: 2

(four, seventeen, twenty-six, thirty-two, forty-nine; Powerball: ten; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$101 million

Man serving 175-year sentence for rape dies in prison

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota corrections officials say a state prison inmate serving 175 years for raping a girl has died.

Officials say 63-year-old Ralph Buchhold, of Rapid City, died Friday in the prison after an illness. He was 63.

Buchhold was sentenced in 2005 on 11 counts. Authorities say the sexual assaults took place from the time the girl was 11 until she was 15.

Man sentenced to 4-plus years in prison on firearms charge

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man has been sentenced to more than four years in federal prison on a firearms charge.

Forty-five-year-old Richard Long Jr. pleaded guilty in January to possession of firearms by a prohibited person.

Authorities say Long broke into his father's home and stole firearms, after which he was caught trying to sell one of the guns to a pawnshop.

Long was prohibited from possessing any guns because he had been previously convicted of a felony.

U.S. District Judge Karen Schreier sentenced Long to 54 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release.

94-year-old blind veteran goes downhill skiing in Colorado

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A 94-year-old World War II veteran who's legally blind is not one to back away from a challenge.

Warren Heyer, a Navy veteran from Sioux Falls, recently went downhill skiing at a special winter sports clinic in Colorado.

"I'm the type of guy who's inquisitive about everything," Heyer said.

Heyer was among about 400 veterans with disabilities who participated in the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic on April 2, the Argus Leader reported.

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Heyer, who is fully blind in his right eye and has poor vision in his left, said cruising down Snowmass Mountain in a guided sled-type vehicle was "a little scary, but a lot of fun."

He said he loved the adrenaline and the wind in his face while being guided down the mountain, as well as being able to "do something that all the young people do."

Heyer had a similar experience at the Terry Peak ski resort in the Northern Black Hills of South Dakota, but that at 10,000 feet, the Colorado challenge was from a higher altitude and with a much steeper descent.

He remains very active for his age and has participated in most of the adaptive sports clinics offered by the Sioux Falls Veterans Affairs, according to Cameron Will, who's a recreation therapist with the agency.

"It's very rewarding to see Warren do the things he does — the barriers and challenges he overcomes," Will said. "He's an inspiration for everybody out there."

Heyer's next challenge will be competing at the National Veterans Golden Age Games in Alaska in June.

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

Rapid City business owners differ on parking meter plan

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A plan to install parking meters in downtown Rapid City is getting mixed reviews from business owners.

The Rapid City Journal reports that 620 meters are expected to be ready for operation in early June, with a charge of 25 cents for 15 minutes. The machines will accept payments by coin and by mobile app, or by card for a \$1 minimum.

Firehouse Brewing Company owner Bob Fuchs says he believes the rate is too high and believes a charge of 50 cents per hour would be more reasonable.

The city previously allowed free parking for three hours. Proponents of the plan say it will stop downtown workers from moving their cars to different spaces during the business day, which could be obstructive to customers.

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

Seychelles president's underwater speech: Protect our oceans

By DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

DESROCHES ISLAND, Seychelles (AP) — In a striking speech delivered from deep below the ocean's surface, the Seychelles president on Sunday made a global plea for stronger protection of the "beating blue heart of our planet."

President Danny Faure's call for action, the first-ever live speech from an underwater submersible, came from one of the many island nations threatened by global warming.

He spoke during a visit to an ambitious British-led science expedition exploring the Indian Ocean depths. Oceans cover over two-thirds of the world's surface but remain, for the most part, uncharted. We have better maps of Mars than we do of the ocean floor, Faure said.

"This issue is bigger than all of us, and we cannot wait for the next generation to solve it. We are running out of excuses to not take action, and running out of time," the president said from a manned submersible 400 feet (121 meters) below the waves, on the seabed off the outer islands of the African nation.

Wearing a Seychelles T-shirt and shorts, the president told The Associated Press after his speech that the experience was "so, so cool. What biodiversity." It made him more determined than ever to speak out for marine protection, he said. "We just need to do what needs to be done. The scientists have spoken."

The oceans' role in regulating climate and the threats they face are underestimated by many, even though as Faure pointed out they generate "half of the oxygen we breathe." Scientific missions are crucial in taking stock of underwater ecosystems' health.

Small island nations are among the most vulnerable to sea level rise caused by climate change, and some have found creative ways to express their concerns. Faure's speech came a decade after members

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of the Maldives' Cabinet donned scuba gear and used hand signals at an underwater meeting highlighting global warming's threat to the lowest-lying nation on earth.

Land erosion, dying coral reefs and the increased frequency of extreme weather events threaten such countries' existence.

During the expedition, marine scientists from the University of Oxford have surveyed underwater life, mapped large areas of the sea floor and gone deep with manned submersibles and underwater drones.

Little is known about the watery world below depths of 30 meters, the limit to which a normal scuba diver can go. Operating down to 500 meters, the scientists were the first to explore areas of great diversity where sunlight weakens and the deep ocean begins.

By the end of the mission, researchers expect to have conducted over 300 deployments, collected around 1,400 samples and 16 terabytes of data and surveyed about 30 square kilometers (11.5 sq. miles) of seabed using high-resolution multi-beam sonar equipment.

The data will be used to help the Seychelles expand its policy of protecting almost a third of its national waters by 2020. The initiative is important for the country's "blue economy," an attempt to balance development needs with those of the environment.

"From this depth, I can see the incredible wildlife that needs our protection, and the consequences of damaging this huge ecosystem that has existed for millennia," Faure said in his speech. "Over the years, we have created these problems. We can solve them."

Currently, only about 5% of the world's oceans are protected. Countries have agreed to increase the area to 10% by 2020. But experts and environmental campaigners say between 30% and 50% of the oceans outside nations' territorial waters should get protected status to ensure marine biodiversity.

Researchers hope their findings also will inform ongoing United Nations talks aimed at forging the first high seas conservation treaty, scheduled to conclude this year.

Environmental groups argue an international treaty is urgently needed because climate change, overfishing and efforts to mine the seabed for precious minerals are putting unsustainable pressure on marine life that could have devastating consequences for creatures on land as well.

Oceans will be one of the seven main themes of this year's U.N. climate summit in Chile in December.

While scientists are nearing the end of their expedition, much of their work is just beginning. In the next few months, researchers at Oxford will analyze the samples and video surveys and put them together with environmental data.

"When we pull them together we can understand not just what we see in the areas that we've visited but what we might expect in other regions in the Seychelles," said Lucy Woodall, the mission's chief scientist.

This is the first of a half-dozen regions the mission plans to explore before the end of 2022, when scientists will present their research at a summit on the state of the Indian Ocean. Billions of people live along the ocean's shores in Africa and Asia.

Associated Press writer Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed.

Follow the mission at <https://apnews.com/SeychellesOceanMission>

Follow Africa news at https://twitter.com/AP_Africa

US-Russia chill stirs worry about stumbling into conflict

By **ROBERT BURNS** AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — It has the makings of a new Cold War, or worse.

The deep chill in U.S.-Russian relations is stirring concern in some quarters that Washington and Moscow are in danger of stumbling into an armed confrontation that, by mistake or miscalculation, could lead to nuclear war.

American and European analysts and current and former U.S. military officers say the nuclear superpowers

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need to talk more. A foundational arms control agreement is being abandoned and the last major limitation on strategic nuclear weapons could go away in less than two years. Unlike during the Cold War, when generations lived under threat of a nuclear Armageddon, the two militaries are barely on speaking terms.

"During the Cold War, we understood each other's signals. We talked," says the top NATO commander in Europe, U.S. Army Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, who is about to retire. "I'm concerned that we don't know them as well today."

Scaparrotti, in his role as Supreme Allied Commander Europe, has met only twice with Gen. Valery Gerasimov, the chief of the Russian general staff, but has spoken to him by phone a number of other times.

"I personally think communication is a very important part of deterrence," Scaparrotti said, referring to the idea that adversaries who know each other's capabilities and intentions are less likely to fall into conflict. "So, I think we should have more communication with Russia. It would ensure that we understand each other and why we are doing what we're doing."

He added: "It doesn't have to be a lot."

The United States and Russia, which together control more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons, say that in August they will leave the 1987 treaty that banned an entire class of nuclear weapons. And there appears to be little prospect of extending the 2010 New Start treaty that limits each side's strategic nuclear weapons.

After a period of post-Cold War cooperation on nuclear security and other defense issues, the relationship between Washington and Moscow took a nosedive, particularly after Russian forces entered the former Soviet republic of Georgia in 2008. Tensions spiked with Russia's annexation of the Crimea in 2014 and its military intervention in eastern Ukraine. In response, Congress in 2016 severely limited military cooperation with Russia.

The law prohibits "military-to-military cooperation" until the secretary of defense certifies that Russia "has ceased its occupation of Ukrainian territory" and "aggressive activities." The law was amended last year to state that it does not limit military talks aimed at "reducing the risk of conflict."

Relations frayed even further amid U.S. allegations that Russia interfered in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, although President Donald Trump has doubted Russian complicity in what U.S. intelligence agencies assert was an effort by Moscow to boost Trump's chances of winning the White House. After a Helsinki summit with Putin in July, Trump publicly accepted the Kremlin leader's denial of interference.

Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in an interview Friday that Russian behavior is to blame for the strained relationship.

"It's very difficult for us to have normal relationships with a country that has not behaved normally over the last few years," Dunford said. "There are major issues that affect our bilateral relationship that have to be addressed, to include where Russia has violated international laws, norms and standards."

Dunford said he speaks regularly with Gerasimov, his Russian counterpart, and the two sides talk on other levels.

"I'm satisfied right now with our military-to-military communication to maintain a degree of transparency that mitigates the risk of miscalculation," he said. "I think we have a framework within to manage a crisis, should one occur, at the senior military-to-military level."

James Stavridis, a retired Navy admiral who was the top NATO commander in Europe from 2009 to 2013, says the West must confront Russia where necessary, including on its interventions in Ukraine and Syria. But he believes there room for cooperation on multiple fronts, including the Arctic and arms control.

"We are in danger of stumbling backward into a Cold War that is to no one's advantage," he said in an email exchange. "Without steady, political-level engagement between the defense establishments, the risk of a true new Cold War rises steadily."

No one is predicting a deliberate Russian act of war in Europe, but the decline in regular talks is a worry to many.

Moscow says it is ready to talk.

"Russia remains open for interaction aimed at de-escalating tension, restoring mutual trust, prevent-

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ing any misinterpretations of one another's intentions, and reducing the risk of dangerous incidents," the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement last week in response to NATO's 70th anniversary celebration.

Sam Nunn, who served in the Senate as a Democrat from Georgia from 1972 to 1997, argues that dialogue with Russia is too important to set aside, even if it carries domestic political risk.

"You can't call time out," he said in an interview. "The nuclear issues go on, and they're getting more dangerous."

Nunn co-wrote an opinion piece with former Secretary of State George Shultz and former Defense Secretary William Perry arguing that the U.S. and its allies and Russia are caught in a "policy paralysis" that could lead to a military confrontation and potentially the first use of nuclear weapons since the U.S. bombed Japan in August 1945.

"A bold policy shift is needed," they wrote in the Wall Street Journal on Thursday, "to support a strategic re-engagement with Russia and walk back from this perilous precipice. Otherwise, our nations may soon be entrenched in a nuclear standoff more precarious, disorienting and economically costly than the Cold War."

A group of U.S., Canadian, European and Russian security experts and former officials in February issued a call for talks with Russia on crisis management.

"The risks of mutual misunderstanding and unintended signals that stem from an absence of dialogue relating to crisis management ... are real," the Euro-Atlantic Security Leadership Group said in a statement.

It said this could lead to conventional war with Russia or, in a worst case scenario, "the potential for nuclear threats, or even nuclear use, where millions could be killed in minutes."

Powerful, deadly storms continue to move across South

By The Associated Press undefined

Powerful storms that killed at least two people continued to move across the South on Sunday after spawning suspected tornadoes that left several people injured and multiple homes and businesses damaged or without power.

National Weather Service meteorologist John Moore said a possible twister touched down Saturday in the Vicksburg, Mississippi, area. No injuries have been reported, but officials said several businesses and vehicles were damaged. Trees were down throughout the hilly city on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi.

Heavy rains and storms continued to rake the Magnolia State into the night, moving into Alabama. Multiple people were injured and several homes were damaged in Hamilton, Mississippi, said Monroe County Coroner Alan Gurley. A tornado was reported in the area 140 miles (225 kilometers) southwest of Memphis, Tennessee, at the time. At least one mobile home was destroyed, throwing a man from the mobile home. No fatalities were reported.

The roof of a hotel in New Albany, Mississippi, was damaged, although the cause was unclear. Mississippi State University's 21,000 students huddled in basements and hallways as a tornado came near the school's campus in Starkville. University spokesman Sid Salter said some debris, possibly carried by the tornado, was found on campus, but no injuries were reported and no buildings were damaged. Trees were down and at least some minor structural damage was reported in residential areas east of the campus.

Suspected tornadoes also were reported overnight in various parts of Alabama, including Highland Lakes, Greystone and American Village in Shelby County and lake Purdy at Grants in Jefferson County. Trees were reported down in each location but there were no immediate reports of damage, injuries or fatalities.

In East Texas, the Angelina County Sheriff's Office said an 8-year-old and a 3-year-old died when strong winds toppled a tree onto the back of their family's car in Lufkin while it was in motion. Capt. Alton Lenderman said the parents, who were in the front seats, were not injured.

The large storm system also knocked out power to thousands and caused some flash flooding. The weather service said the system is expected to shift to the Ohio Valley and the Southeast on Sunday. More than 140,000 customers remained without power in Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas late Saturday.

Robertson County Sheriff Gerald Yezak told The Associated Press a tornado hit the small Central Texas

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city of Franklin, overturning mobile homes and damaging other residences. Franklin is located about 125 miles (200 kilometers) south of Dallas.

The weather service said preliminary information showed an EF-3 tornado touched down with winds of 140 mph (225.3 kph). Crews will continue to survey the damage over the next few days.

Two people were hospitalized for injuries not thought to be life-threatening, while others were treated at the scene for minor injuries, Yezak said. Some people had to be extricated from their homes.

Meteorologist Monique Sellers said they've received reports of downed trees, as well as damage to buildings and a transmission tower.

Winds of up to 60 mph (96.56 kph) were reported in Cherokee County, Texas, damaging two homes in Alto but not injuring anyone. Alto is situated about 140 miles (225 kilometers) north of Houston.

This story has been corrected to show Hamilton, Mississippi is about 140 miles southwest of Memphis, Tennessee, not 60 miles.

Trump sanctuary city idea could help migrants stay in US

By **ASTRID GALVAN** and **MORGAN LEE** Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — An idea floated by President Donald Trump to send immigrants from the border to "sanctuary cities" to exact revenge on Democratic foes could end up doing the migrants a favor by placing them in locations that make it easier to put down roots and stay in the country.

The plan would put thousands of immigrants in cities that are not only welcoming to them, but also more likely to rebuff federal officials carrying out deportation orders. Many of these locations have more resources to help immigrants make their legal cases to stay in the United States than smaller cities, with some of the nation's biggest immigration advocacy groups based in places like San Francisco, New York City and Chicago. The downside for the immigrants would be a high cost of living in the cities.

The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University announced this week that an analysis found that immigrants in sanctuary cities such as New York and Los Angeles are 20% less likely to be arrested out in the community than in cities without such policies.

"With immigrants being less likely to commit crimes than the U.S.-born population, and with sanctuary jurisdictions being safer and more productive than non-sanctuary jurisdictions, the data damns this proposal as a politically motivated stunt that seeks to play politics with peoples' lives," said George Gascon, district attorney for San Francisco.

Trump has grown increasingly frustrated over the situation at the border, where tens of thousands of immigrant families are crossing each month, many to claim asylum. His administration has attempted several efforts to stop the flow, and he recently shook up the top ranks of the Department of Homeland Security.

The idea to ship immigrants to Democratic strongholds was considered twice in recent months, but the White House and Department of Homeland Security said the plan had been rejected. But Trump said Friday he was still considering the idea.

"Due to the fact that Democrats are unwilling to change our very dangerous immigration laws, we are indeed, as reported, giving strong considerations to placing Illegal Immigrants in Sanctuary Cities only," Trump tweeted. He added that, "The Radical Left always seems to have an Open Borders, Open Arms policy - so this should make them very happy!"

Wilson Romero is an immigrant from Honduras who chose to settle in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Romero, 27, was separated from his daughter, now 7, by federal authorities at the U.S. border at El Paso, Texas, last year and jailed for three months before being released and making his way to live with his mother in San Jose, California. There he was reunited with his daughter, who attends public kindergarten.

Romero says he goes about daily errands in public without worry of discrimination. His daughter has made friends and has playdates with the children of Mexican American families. It's a far cry from his hometown in the violence-plagued outskirts of San Pedro Sula, Honduras, that he fled after his brother-in-law was killed.

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To him, the biggest problem with being in the Bay Area is the high cost of living. The former textile factory worker relies on his mother's income from waitressing for food and clothing, and he's started thinking about asking legal permission to move to North Carolina, where an uncle resides and says it's cheaper to live and work.

"To tell the truth, it's a little tight now, financially speaking," said Romero, a former textile factory worker, who said he doesn't know of any charities that may be willing to help.

The plan discussed by Trump would also have financial, logistical and legal issues.

The transportation of immigrants who are arrested at the border to large and faraway cities would be burdensome and costly at a time when Immigration and Customs Enforcement is already stretched thin, having released over 125,000 immigrants into the country pending their immigration court since Dec. 21. They are currently being released mainly in border states.

Flights chartered by ICE cost about \$7,785 per flight hour, according to the agency, and require multiple staffers, including an in-flight medical professional. The agency also uses commercial flights. Doing longer transports would increase liability for the agency, especially considering that many of the immigrants in its care are families with young children.

And despite the consideration given to releasing the immigrants on the streets to sanctuary cities, the Trump administration actually has plenty of jail space to detain families. As of April 11, the nation's three facilities to detain immigrant families were nowhere near capacity, including a Pennsylvania facility housing only nine immigrants.

It's also unclear how long the immigrants would stay in these cities because they are required to provide an address to federal authorities - typically of a family member - as a condition of their release.

"It's illogical," said Angela Chan, policy director and senior attorney with the San Francisco-based Asian Law Caucus. "It's just alarming that they are spending so much effort and so much time to engage in political theater."

The Trump administration has long pushed back against cities with sanctuary policies, which generally prohibit local authorities to cooperate with federal immigration police, often by refusing to hold people arrested on local charges past their release date at the request of immigration officers. Over 100 local governments around the country have adopted a variety of these policies.

"New York City will always be the ultimate city of immigrants - the President's empty threats won't change that," New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio said in a statement.

But Trump seemed ready to step up his fight with the cities, vowing to "give them an unlimited supply" of immigrants from the border.

Associated Press writer Karen Matthews contributed to this report.

Ivanka Trump in Africa to promote women at work program

By CATHERINE LUCEY Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP) — Leaving behind the White House battles over border walls and tax returns, Ivanka Trump is visiting Ethiopia and Ivory Coast in pursuit of a very different goal — advancing a global women's program she hopes will outlast an administration better known for "America First" isolationism.

The president's daughter and senior adviser arrived in Africa on Sunday on a commercial flight, opening a four-day swing to advocate for an initiative that aims to boost 50 million women in developing countries by 2025. Her plans include visiting with women working in the coffee industry and touring a female-run textile facility, as well as meeting with dignitaries and appearing at a World Bank policy summit.

But even thousands of miles from Washington, Trump is sure to be shadowed by her father's efforts to cut international aid, as well as his past disparaging comments about the continent. While she has drawn praise for taking on this project — and for making this trip — the contrast between her priorities and those of many others in the White House was evident.

On the continent, reactions to the visit reflected the contradictions of her role.

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Activist Marakie Tesfaye, who founded a group in Ethiopia for women, welcomed the attention, saying: "I think she's coming genuinely to empower women and it's good that she's coming because she will push forward our agenda."

Ethiopian journalist Sisay Woubshet was more skeptical, citing President Donald Trump's past comments and adding: "I don't think people will have a good feeling about his daughter's visit this time around to promote her global initiative towards women."

For Ivanka Trump, those challenges come with the territory.

She has spent two years promoting a family-friendly agenda in an administration focused on hardline immigration tactics and protectionist trade policies. To questions about international aid spending, she has previously said the administration strives to be generous in a "fiscally responsible way," and has argued that investing in her project — which builds on previous White House efforts — is a way to promote security in developing countries.

During her travels, Ivanka Trump will be accompanied by Mark Green, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The textile facility they are to visit got started with funding from USAID and Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which provides loans, loan guarantees and political risk insurance, funding projects that stretch across continents and industries.

While in Ethiopia, they will be joined by OPIC Acting President David Bohigian. OPIC is set to announce a new initiative in Africa.

Ivanka Trump was also expected to announce additional support for businesses. And she was to meet with Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

From Ethiopia, Ivanka Trump was headed to Ivory Coast, where she was to visit to a cocoa farm, as well as participate in a meeting on economic opportunities for women in West Africa. The gathering is part of the World Bank's Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative — a program Ivanka Trump pushed the bank to introduce. The first daughter will be joined in the Ivory Coast by a congressional delegation that will include Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a close ally of the White House.

Ivanka Trump's trip comes not long after first lady Melania Trump did a solo tour of the continent with a focus on child well-being. Like her stepdaughter, Mrs. Trump faced many of the same questions about the priorities of the president, who was roundly criticized last year after his private comment about "s---hole countries" in Africa became public.

The Trump administration put out an Africa policy late last year that largely sought to counter what it called the "predatory" practices of China and Russia in the region. It was viewed with skepticism by some critics, coming two years into his administration and following his disparaging comments about the continent. So far, the president has made no plans to travel there himself.

The new global women's initiative involves the State Department, the National Security Council and other U.S. agencies. It aims to assist women in developing countries with job training, financial support and legal or regulatory reforms. Money for the effort will come through USAID, which initially set up a \$50 million fund using dollars already budgeted. The president's 2020 budget proposal requests another \$100 million for the initiative, which will also be supported by programs across the government as well as private investment.

Experts praised the governmentwide approach, which will incorporate new and existing programs, though some stressed that it was still early in the process. The investment comes as the president is proposing cuts to foreign aid, and as the administration is expanding a ban on U.S. aid to groups that promote or provide abortions.

"The part of the proposal which is around looking at laws — that is a good thing to focus on," said Charles Kenny, a senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, referencing the initiative's support for changing laws, regulations and customs that create barriers preventing women from fully participating in the workforce. But he said the abortion-related ban could have a negative economic impact, saying that "I think one of the most powerful tools for women's economic empowerment is the ability to choose when and how many children they have."

Daniel Runde, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Ivanka Trump was strategically

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building on the work of past administrations, calling her an effective “goodwill ambassador” for the issues, and a smart emissary to send to Africa.

“Secretary (of State Hillary) Clinton provided high-level attention to these issues,” said Runde, who previously worked for the USAID and is an informal adviser to the administration on development policy. “Ivanka Trump is playing a similar role to the role that Secretary Clinton played.”

Associated Press writers Elias Meseret in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Alexis Adele from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, contributed to this report.

Debate over climate change dominates Finnish vote

By JARI TANNER and DOROTHEE THIESING Associated Press

HELSINKI (AP) — Voters in Finland are casting ballots in a parliamentary election after fierce debates over how best to tackle climate change dominated the campaign, even overshadowing topics like reforming the nation’s generous welfare model.

Sunday’s vote in the European Union member of 5.5 million people is taking place in a Nordic country that has one-third of its territory above the Arctic Circle.

Across Europe, populist, anti-immigrant, euroskeptic parties have gained ground in recent elections at the expense of traditional political parties. The vote in Finland is expected to reflect that development yet add a new twist: populists here rail against climate change sacrifices instead of focusing on immigration like their counterparts in southern Europe.

“For everybody, it’s about the climate. It’s kind of a climate election, everybody’s feeling some kind of a depression about it,” voter Sofia Frantsi, 27, an interior architect from Helsinki, told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Over a third of those eligible voted in advance, choosing between 2,500 candidates from 19 political parties and movements for the Eduskunta legislature’s 200 seats. Preliminary results are expected later Sunday night.

Greenpeace Finland has called Sunday’s vote the “climate election,” saying that “never before has climate and the limits of planet Earth been discussed with such seriousness in Finland.” It cited to a recent nationwide poll where a whopping 70% of the respondents said tackling climate change and reducing carbon footprints should be one of the new government’s key priorities.

According to opinion polls, no party in Finland is close to having enough support to govern alone and would have to find coalition partners to form the next government. A broad-based Cabinet with members from different political parties is a long-time tradition in Finland.

The center-left opposition Social Democratic Party, which has traditionally attracted working-class voters, led a recent poll with 19% support under the leadership of Antti Rinne, a former finance minister and union leader.

Rinne plans to raise taxes and increase spending to overhaul a costly Nordic social and health care system that is under strain as the nation’s population rapidly ages.

The Social Democrats also back the pro-European Union policies of Finland, which uses the shared euro currency but is not a NATO member. Finland shares a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia.

The populist, euroskeptic Finns Party, which has been polling in second place with 16% support, has been gaining momentum among rural voters and others who find the climate change proposals of other political parties too daunting.

“We want a more moderate and sensible climate policy that does not chase industries away from Finland to countries like China,” Jussi Halla-aho, leader of the Finns Party, told reporters at a Helsinki polling station, adding that immigration remains a key question too.

Other parties include the conservative, pro-business National Coalition Party, the centrist Center Party and the Greens, who enjoy strong popularity in Helsinki, the capital.

"It's clear a vast majority of Finns is hoping that the new parliament takes climate action," Emma Kari, a Greens lawmaker, told the AP as she campaigned a day before the vote. "Politicians need to take responsibility."

Many parties back actions to fight global warming.

Finland is boosting its nuclear energy production by launching a new plant next year and lawmakers last month voted to completely phase out burning coal by 2029. Other proposals include boosting the number of electric vehicles, cutting meat consumption through taxes or switching to more vegetarian food in public places like schools.

"Everybody more or less agrees that the climate thing is very important. But then there are other things, like immigration ... and also the big reform of the social and health care," said Sari Hanhinen, a 49-year-old civil servant voting in a Helsinki polling station.

Finland's outgoing center-right coalition government, led by Prime Minister Juha Sipilä of the Center Party, pushed through an austerity package that helped Finland return to growth after a three-year recession but failed to pass a major social and health reform package.

"The negotiations will be very difficult, that's very clear, before they can create a government," said Jukka Vakkila, a 57-year-old doctor from Helsinki. "But I think that they will find some kind of consensus ... Finland could be a good example for other countries in this way."

Olli Kangas contributed.

Diana? Alice? Elizabeth? Britons bet on new royal baby name

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, may be keeping plans about their impending baby under wraps, but that hasn't stopped everyone in Britain from trying to guess the gender and the name of their first child.

If Britain's bookmakers are to be believed, it's definitely a girl — and Diana may well be one of her many names.

The William Hill agency closed the betting on the baby's gender a few days ago after an "avalanche" of bets poured in from people convinced the royal couple is having a girl.

"The secret's out, as far as we're concerned," firm spokesman Rupert Adams said. "It could be because someone somewhere has seen the scan, or someone has heard something."

While Adams acknowledged there's always a chance the surge was based on nothing, he said average betting patterns over the years suggest there's usually some truth in rumors.

So far, Diana is topping the bookmakers' list as a front-running name — William Hill has put the odds at 4/1. Victoria, Alice, Grace and Elizabeth are close behind, while Albert, Arthur and James are popular guesses for a boy.

"A ridiculous number — 80% of bets taken — are for the name Diana," Adams said. He said he personally doubts Harry would choose a name that so directly evokes his iconic mother's tragic death in 1997 but added: "There's every chance of it being a middle name."

Carolyn Harris, a royal historian who teaches at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies, agrees that Diana could be a middle name. That's what Harry's brother, Prince William, and his wife Kate did for their daughter, Princess Charlotte (the 3-year-old's full name is Charlotte Elizabeth Diana).

"The choice of Diana as a first name would place a lot of pressure on the royal baby, as the press would constantly compare her to her famous grandmother," she said.

Harris believes Harry and Meghan may adopt a similar approach to the naming of other recently born royal children lower down the line of succession: Choosing a moniker that's traditional, but one that doesn't frequently appear within the royal family.

She also thinks a possible middle name could be Ruth — after one of Meghan's great-grandmothers, as well as Diana's maternal grandmother, Lady Ruth Fermoy.

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Some observers speculate that Meghan, who has long spoken out about women's rights, could go for a name that evokes strong women in history — a theory Harris thinks has substance.

"A name associated with prominent female historical figures in Britain and/or the United States is certainly a possibility," she said. Eleanor, for one, could honor both Eleanor Roosevelt and Eleanor of Aquitaine, queen of England in the 12th century.

Harry and Meghan haven't announced the baby's gender or the due date, which is widely believed to be sometime in late April.

The pair declared Thursday they are keeping the birth private and won't be sharing news about the baby's arrival until they've told family and friends. That has led many to jump to the conclusion that they are planning a home birth at their new residence, Frogmore Cottage, close to Windsor Castle outside of London.

Home birth or not, the scenario will be quite different from the media circus that lasted for days outside the London hospital where their sister-in-law Kate's three children were born. That will significantly dampen the name and gender betting frenzy, according to William Hill, which reported taking "hundreds of bets a minute" every time palace officials announced that Kate had gone into labor.

Whatever name they choose, the new baby will not automatically have the official title of prince or princess. Those titles were given to all three children of William, the eldest son of Prince Charles, heir to the British throne.

Instead, Harry and Meghan's baby is expected to be styled the Earl of Dumbarton if a boy and Lady Mountbatten-Windsor if a girl. That said, the child's great-grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, could change that if she wants the baby to be a prince or princess.

Harry's first child will be seventh in line for the throne, bumping down Harry's uncle, Prince Andrew.

Some punters have been having a laugh with their royal baby bets. Ladbrokes reported that 2 pounds (\$2.60) have been staked on the name Brexit — with odds of 500/1. The name Donald is at 250/1. Meghan, as any reader of British tabloids knows, is no fan of the current U.S. president.

One thing British betting agencies are not seeing: lots of money being placed on quirky, New Age or celebrity-driven, unique monikers.

"Harry is a traditional guy at heart, we think he would like a relatively traditional but not absolutely turgid royal name," Adams said.

"(Meghan) would like to convey herself as regal — we feel she would not go with a weird name like 'Sunshine,'" he added.

Finance officials pledge cooperation, but tensions persist

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER and PAUL WISEMAN AP Economic Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Global finance officials are pledging closer cooperation in efforts to lift the world economy out of its current slowdown, but tensions persist between the United States and other nations over trade and other issues.

Officials wrapped up the spring meetings of the 189-nation International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on Saturday, expressing hope the slowdown that began last year will be followed by stronger growth in the second half of this year and into 2020.

The IMF's steering committee said all members, in order to protect the current economic expansion, would "act promptly to shore up growth for the benefit of all."

At a closing news conference, the committee chairman, Lesetja Kganyago, head of the central bank of South Africa, said every country needs to be ready to address issues involving financial stability "with all available tools."

Many nations were jolted last year when stock markets went into a nosedive, reversed only when major central banks, including the Federal Reserve, halted efforts to tighten credit policies.

Separately, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told reporters that both the United States and China were moving closer to an agreement on trade. The trade war between the world's two biggest economies and

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the punitive tariffs each nation has imposed on the other raised widespread concerns during the talks.

But Chen Yulu, deputy governor of People's Bank of China, struck a less positive stance in his remarks to the IMF policy committee, contending that rising trade protectionism in the form of punitive tariffs had already begun to disrupt global supply changes.

"The protectionism of some countries has harmed mutual trust among countries, limited the scope for multilateral cooperation and impeded the willingness to achieve it," he said.

The U.S. and China have imposed tariffs on \$350 billion worth of each other's goods. They are battling over U.S. allegations that China deploys predatory tactics — including cybertheft and forcing foreign firms to hand over trade secrets — in a sharp-elbowed effort to challenge American technological dominance.

In his meeting with reporters, Mnuchin said he had told the other finance officials that the US-China negotiations were making progress but he would not disclose a timeframe for when they might be wrapped up. He said both sides had conducted phone discussions over the past week, but he wasn't certain whether more face-to-face meetings would be needed.

"If we are able to conclude this, it will be the most significant change in 20 years" in the economic relations between the two nations, Mnuchin said.

He said that the proposed agreement the two sides are working on has seven chapters and includes language that will allow both countries to set up enforcement offices to make sure the deal is followed.

In remarks to the World Bank's steering committee on Saturday, Mnuchin said the U.S. was encouraged that the bank's private sector lending operation wanted to step up support for nations "affected by fragility, conflict and violence." But he said World Bank officials must ensure such support is aimed at boosting effective private investments in poor countries.

David Malpass, a longtime World Bank critic, took over as president of the bank on Tuesday with the backing of the administration. Reviewing the meetings this week, Malpass said that the challenges facing the World Bank were more urgent than ever with over 700 million people around the globe still living in extreme poverty.

"It is critically important that we work tirelessly to foster broad-based growth, raise median incomes, create jobs and fully incorporate women and young people in economies," Malpass said in a statement.

President Donald Trump said in a newly published interview that he had considered his daughter Ivanka, a White House adviser, for the job of World Bank president.

"She would have been great at that because she's very good with numbers. She's got a great calmness. ... I've seen her under tremendous stress and pressure," he was quoted as telling The Atlantic.

When Jim Yong Kim resigned suddenly as bank president earlier this year, reports said that Ivanka Trump along with Malpass were being considered for the job, which has always gone to an American.

Before the meetings of the policy-setting panels of the IMF and World Bank, finance ministers and central bank presidents of the Group of 20 major economies held discussions Thursday and Friday.

G-20 officials agreed with a downgraded IMF forecast released this week. It predicted global growth would be 3.3% this year, the slowest since the Great Recession ended in 2009, but would regain momentum and advance to growth of 3.6% in 2020.

On Twitter, follow Paul Wiseman at <https://twitter.com/PaulWisemanAP> and Martin Crutsinger at <https://twitter.com/mcrutsinger>

This story corrects spelling of last name of South Africa's central bank chief to Kganyago, not Kganyuago.

2 children dead, many homes damaged as storms pummel South

DALLAS (AP) — Powerful storms that rolled across the South on Saturday spawned at least two suspected tornadoes, damaged homes and killed two children in Texas, authorities said.

The Angelina County Sheriff's Office said an 8-year-old and a 3-year-old died when strong winds toppled a tree onto the back of their family's car in Lufkin while it was in motion. Capt. Alton Lenderman said the

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parents, who were in the front seats, were not injured.

Lufkin is about 115 miles (185 kilometers) northeast of Houston. Additional information was not immediately available.

In Central Texas, Robertson County Sheriff Gerald Yezak told The Associated Press a tornado hit the small city of Franklin, overturning mobile homes and damaging other residences. Franklin is located about 125 miles (200 kilometers) south of Dallas.

The National Weather Service said preliminary information showed an EF-3 tornado touched down with winds of 140 mph (225.3 kph). Crews will continue to survey the damage over the next few days.

Two people were hospitalized for injuries not thought to be life-threatening, while others were treated at the scene for minor injuries, Yezak said. Some people had to be extricated from their homes.

Weather service meteorologist Monique Sellers said they've received reports of downed trees, as well as damage to buildings and a transmission tower.

The storms are part of a large system moving through the southern United States, knocking out power to thousands and causing some flash flooding. The weather service said the system is expected to shift to the Ohio Valley and the Southeast on Sunday. More than 140,000 customers remained without power in Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas late Saturday.

Meteorologist John Moore said a possible twister touched down Saturday in the Vicksburg, Mississippi, area. No injuries have been reported, but officials said several businesses and vehicles were damaged. Trees were down throughout the hilly city on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi.

Heavy rains and storms continued to rake the Magnolia State into the night, with Mississippi State University's 21,000 students huddling in basements and hallways as a tornado came near the school's campus in Starkville. University spokesman Sid Salter said some debris, possibly carried by the tornado, was found on campus, but no injuries were reported and no buildings were damaged. Trees were down and at least some minor structural damage was reported in residential areas east of the campus.

Winds of up to 60 mph (96.56 kph) were reported in Cherokee County, Texas, damaging two homes in Alto but not injuring anyone. Alto is situated about 140 miles (225 kilometers) north of Houston.

Pace of Bering Sea changes startles scientists

By DAN JOLING Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The Yupik Eskimo village of Kotlik on Alaska's northwest coast relies on a cold, hard blanket of sea ice to protect homes from vicious winter Bering Sea storms.

Frigid north winds blow down from the Arctic Ocean, freeze saltwater and push sea ice south. The ice normally prevents waves from forming and locks onto beaches, walling off villages. But not this year.

In February, southwest winds brought warm air and turned thin sea ice into "snow cone ice" that melted or blew off. When a storm pounded Norton Sound, water on Feb. 12 surged up the Yukon River and into Kotlik, flooding low-lying homes. Lifelong resident Philomena Keyes, 37, awoke to knee-deep water outside her house.

"This is the first I experienced in my life, a flood that happened in the winter, in February," Keyes said in a phone interview.

Winter storm surge flooding is the latest indication that something's off-kilter around the Bering Strait, the gateway from the Pacific Ocean to the Arctic Ocean. Rapid, profound changes tied to high atmospheric temperatures, a direct result of climate change, may be reordering the region's physical makeup. Ocean researchers are asking themselves if they're witnessing the transformation of an ecosystem.

The Bering Sea last winter saw record-low sea ice. Climate models predicted less ice, but not this soon, said Seth Danielson, a physical oceanographer at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

"The projections were saying we would've hit situations similar to what we saw last year, but not for another 40 or 50 years," Danielson said.

Walrus and seals use sea ice to rest and give birth. Villagers use sea ice to hunt them. Sea ice is the primary habitat of polar bears. Algae that clings to the bottom of sea ice blooms in spring, dies and sinks,

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sending an infusion of food to clams, snails and sea worms on the ocean floor — the prey of gray whales, walrus and bearded seals.

Sea ice also affects commercially valuable fish. Sea ice historically has created a Bering Sea “cold pool,” an east-west barrier of extremely cold, salty water at the bottom of the wide, shallow continental shelf. The wall of cold water historically has concentrated Pacific cod and walleye pollock in the southeastern Bering Sea.

“It tends to extend from the Russian side to the northwest,” said Lyle Britt, a fisheries biologist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. “It kind of comes down almost like a little hockey stick shape ... through the center of the southeast Bering Sea.”

However, when Britt and other NOAA researchers last year conducted annual fish and ocean condition surveys, they got a big surprise: For the first time in 37 years, they found no cold pool.

Researchers found high concentrations of Pacific cod and walleye pollock in the northern Bering Sea. But the species that was supposed to be there, Arctic cod, was hardly found.

More than half the fish landed in U.S. waters come from the North Pacific, and most are caught in the Bering Sea. Chad See, executive director of the Freezer Longline Coalition, a trade association of vessels that target Pacific cod using baited lines, said members caught their quota last year but had to travel farther north.

“Does that mean that the stock is declining, is suffering because of the warming temperatures? Or is it that they’ve moved north and it’s still a vibrant fishery?” See said.

It’s too soon to conclude that atmosphere and ocean changes are due simply to climate change, said NOAA physical oceanographer Phyllis Stabeno, who has studied the Bering Sea for more than 30 years. The southern Bering Sea since 2000 has undergone multi-year stanzas of low and extensive ice, she said.

When sea ice in November began forming as usual, she expected a bounce-back this winter. Instead, warm winds in February mostly cleared the northern Bering Sea of sea ice through the Bering Strait into the Chukchi Sea.

“We’re in winter,” she said. “This is all supposed to be frozen.”

Formation of the cold pool is again in doubt. It could return in the future, but temperatures are trending upward with the rate of greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere.

Scientists say figuring out the ocean physics is far less of a challenge than projecting the biological ramifications.

“We sort of opened up this whole Pandora’s box of not really knowing how the ecosystem as a whole is going to adjust to that,” Danielson said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service early last summer detected trouble. Resident called with reports of emaciated and dead seabirds.

Common murre, which can use up fat reserves and starve after three days without eating, fly hundreds miles to find fish schools or krill but were washing up dead on shore. Forktail storm petrels, fulmars, shearwaters, kittiwakes, auklets and puffins also died.

No one can say why. Seabird experts wonder whether the presence of more pollock and Pacific cod, which have voracious appetites and are far more efficient hunters of forage fish than seabirds, was a factor.

Dean Stockwell, a research associate professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks with a specialty in phytoplankton, said the ocean changes have the potential to affect plant life at the bottom of the food web but it’s too soon to know.

Of immediate concern is whether warmer water will allow harmful algae containing toxins to stay viable long enough for shellfish to eat them and pass toxins to marine mammals and people. Toxins are being carried to the Arctic, Stockwell said.

“The question with global warming types of things is, ‘Can it get a foothold? Can they do damage?’” he said.

Seabird experts wonder if toxins played a role in recent seabird deaths by affecting their ability to forage. No one has connected the dots, said Britt, the NOAA fisheries biologist.

“At the moment, nobody’s sitting with in-hand a comprehensive research study that covers the birds

and the mammals and the fish and the zooplankton all in one synthesized report," he said, adding that it will take researchers more time to figure out what's going on.

Meantime, Kotlik resident Keyes is researching climate change effects in her coastal village of 650 as project coordinator for a team working under a Bureau of Indian Affairs program.

The absence of sea ice since mid-February meant taking land routes to visit nearby villages, she said. And seal hunters this spring found bearded seals to harvest but not near the village.

Like the cod fishermen, "They had to go farther north," Keyes said.

House Democrat, treasury chief bicker over Trump tax returns

By **ANDREW TAYLOR** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A top House Democrat on Saturday ratcheted up his demand for access to President Donald Trump's tax returns, telling the IRS that the law clearly gives Congress a right to them. The government's failure to respond by an April 23 deadline could send the dispute into federal court.

Trump's treasury chief, who oversees the IRS, cited "complicated legal issues" and bemoaned "an arbitrary deadline" set by Congress, while saying he would answer in that time frame.

A new letter by Rep. Richard Neal, the House Ways and Means Committee chairman, comes after the Trump administration asked for more time to consider his initial request last week. Neal had requested six years of Trump's personal and business tax returns.

Neal, D-Mass., argues that a 1920-era law saying the IRS "shall furnish" any tax return requested by Congress "is unambiguous and raises no complicated legal issues" and that the Treasury Department's objections lack merit.

The letter to IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig is the latest exchange in a tug of war over Trump's returns, which would give lawmakers far greater insight into the president's business dealings and potential conflicts of interest as it exercises its oversight role.

Asked about the letter Saturday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said he would respond to within the new deadline set by Neal but he did not promise to produce Trump's tax returns by that time. Mnuchin is the Cabinet secretary that oversees the IRS.

Mnuchin took issue with Neal's characterization of the dispute as a straightforward issue in light of the law governing the matter.

"These are complicated legal issues and I think it is more important to the American taxpayers that we get this right than we hit an arbitrary deadline," Mnuchin told reporters. "I would just emphasize this is a decision that has enormous precedence in terms of potentially weaponizing the IRS."

Mnuchin said that Treasury Department lawyers have been working "diligently" to research the issues involved and have been in contact with Justice Department attorneys. But he said he has not personally discussed the issue with Attorney General William Barr.

Mnuchin said he thought Neal was just picking arbitrary deadline and he refused to speculate how the administration would proceed if the issue goes to court.

Trump declined to provide his tax information as a candidate in 2016 and as president, something party nominees have traditionally done in the name of the transparency. By withholding his tax returns, Trump has not followed the standard followed by presidents since Richard Nixon started the practice in 1969.

During the campaign, Trump said he wanted to release his returns but said because he was under a routine audit, "I can't." Being under audit is no legal bar to anyone releasing his or her returns. And after the November midterm elections, Trump claimed at a news conference that the filings were too complex for people to understand.

Asked repeatedly at a House hearing Tuesday whether any regulation prohibited a taxpayer from disclosing returns when under audit, Rettig responded "no."

The issue appears sure to end up in federal court. With an eye to a legal challenge, Neal told Rettig that he has two weeks to respond — by 5 p.m. on April 23. If Rettig fails to do so, Neal said he will interpret as denying the request, which could pave the way for a court battle. Neal also could seek the returns

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through a subpoena.

Mnuchin had told Neal this past week that he needs more time to consider the unprecedented demand for Trump's returns and needs to consult with the Justice Department about it.

At congressional hearings, Mnuchin accused lawmakers of seeking Trump's returns for political reasons. But he also acknowledged his "statutory responsibilities" and that he respects congressional oversight. Some Treasury-watchers observe that Mnuchin's decision to consult with the Justice Department could suggest that Treasury lawyers believe Neal has a legal right to Trump's returns.

Neal said Saturday that the administration has no right "to question or second guess" his motivations.

Trump's acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, has said Democrats will "never" see the returns, "nor should they," and "they know it." Mulvaney has tried to frame the issue of the president's taxes as old news, saying it was "already litigated during the election" and the American people "elected him anyway."

William Consovoy, whose firm was retained by Trump to represent him on the matter, has written the Treasury's general counsel and said the congressional request "would set a dangerous precedent" if granted and that the IRS cannot legally divulge the information.

AP Economics Writer Martin Crutsinger contributed to this report.

Large, flightless bird attacks and kills its fallen owner

ALACHUA, Fla. (AP) — A large, flightless bird native to Australia and New Guinea attacked and killed its owner when the man fell on his farm in Florida, authorities said Saturday.

The Alachua County Fire Rescue Department told the Gainesville Sun that a cassowary killed the man Friday on the property near Gainesville, likely using its long claws. The victim was apparently breeding the birds, state wildlife officials said.

"My understanding is that the gentleman was in the vicinity of the bird and at some point fell. When he fell, he was attacked," Deputy Chief Jeff Taylor told the newspaper. He said first responders got a call at 10 a.m. Friday and rushed the man to a hospital for trauma care but he died.

The county sheriff's office identified the victim as Marvin Hajos, 75, and said a death investigation has been opened.

"Initial information indicates that this was a tragic accident for Mr. Hajos," said Lt. Brett Rhodenizer, a sheriff's office spokesman, in an email to the paper. "The cassowary involved remains secured on private property at this time."

Cassowaries are similar to emus and stand up to 6 feet (1.8 meters) tall and weigh up to 130 pounds (60 kilograms), with black body feathers and distinctive, bright blue heads and necks.

The San Diego Zoo's website calls the cassowary the world's most dangerous bird with a four-inch (10-centimeter), dagger-like claw on each foot. "The cassowary can slice open any predator or potential threat with a single swift kick. Powerful legs help the cassowary run up to 31 miles per hour (50 kph) through the dense forest underbrush," the website says.

Cassowaries are eaten in parts of New Guinea. The birds are not raised for food in the U.S., but are sought after by collectors of exotic birds, according to authorities.

To obtain a mandatory permit, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission requires cassowary owners to have "substantial experience" and meet specific cage requirements, spokeswoman Karen Parker told the newspaper. She said the commission lists the cassowary as a type of wildlife that can "pose a danger to people."

Wildlife officials did not answer phone calls late Saturday from The Associated Press and it wasn't immediately known what would happen with the bird.

Workers' rights are a 2020 campaign focus this weekend

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

DENMARK, S.C. (AP) — The issue of workers' rights is a focus this weekend for some of the Democrats running for president.

At a rally in Warren, Michigan, where General Motors is closing a plant, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders called on President Donald Trump to "go back to the drawing board" on the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the tentative pact that would replace NAFTA. Sanders said the newly negotiated deal, which has yet to clear Congress, would still let companies such as GM continue to send U.S. jobs to Mexico.

"I challenge Donald Trump: For once in your life, keep your campaign promises," he told a rally of 1,300 gathered in a community college parking lot in suburban Detroit. "Go back to the drawing board on NAFTA. Do not send this treaty to Congress unless it includes strong and swift enforcement mechanisms to raise the wages of workers and to prevent corporations from outsourcing American jobs to Mexico."

Sanders, who spoke earlier in the day at a West Michigan plumbers and pipe fitters union local, narrowly won Michigan's 2016 Democratic primary over Hillary Clinton. She subsequently lost the state to Trump.

Sanders said when Trump ran the first time, his "biggest lie" was that he would "stay with the working class of our country, that he was on their side." Sanders criticized Trump's tax cuts and his attempt to repeal the Obama health care law, adding that the trade deficit has gone up by \$180 billion and 185,000 jobs have been moved overseas during Trump's presidency.

Other highlights from the campaigns:

BETO O'ROURKE

Beto O'Rourke is campaigning in rural South Carolina, saying he wants to show up for communities that are often overlooked by politicians or "left for last."

O'Rourke spoke to about 50 people at Voorhees College, a historically black college in Denmark, a city of 3,000 people. Addressing the infrastructure needs of rural areas, he said politicians need to demonstrate that every community, no matter how big or small, "is worthy of investment."

O'Rourke spoke specifically about using federal infrastructure spending to address issues like the water crisis in Denmark, where residents have been dealing with brown-tinted drinking water that smells foul and is filled with sediment. The city for years used a pool disinfectant not approved by the EPA in a drinking water well, which was taken offline last summer.

ELIZABETH WARREN

Sen. Elizabeth Warren said the United States is a world leader on the climate issue. It's just that the nation is leading in the wrong direction.

At a house party in New Hampshire on Saturday, the Massachusetts Democrat said the reason the country is headed in the wrong direction is because of corruption.

"This is not ignorance," Warren said. "This is not that people just don't get it. The people in Washington, oh, they get it. But they are on the take. They are influenced by the money."

But it's so much more than campaign contributions, she said. It's also the lobbyists, lawyers, the think tanks and "bought and paid for experts" that has created a sense of deniability around climate change, she said.

"The key that we've got to play into, unlock, fixing the problems we need to fix, starts with, we have got to push back on the influence of money in Washington," Warren said.

CORY BOOKER

New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker returned his Newark home on Saturday to kick off a two-week, nationwide "Justice For All" tour that will focus on issues that include gun control and criminal justice reform.

Booker, who served as the mayor of Newark before joining the Senate, has sought to showcase the city's economic progress as an example of the kind of priorities he would set as president. In his remarks on Saturday, he emphasized issues including ending mass incarceration and gun control.

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Booker formally announced his presidential campaign more than two months ago but has been mired in the middle of a crowded field of candidates. His campaign is hoping the new tour — which will include stops in Iowa, Georgia and Nevada — gives him a burst of momentum this spring.

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper said on Saturday Democrats can't beat President Donald Trump with anger. Instead they should make fun of him.

Speaking to a crowd of about a dozen voters at a diner in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Hickenlooper said Trump was a "bully," and "most bullies are narcissistic and insecure...they want to be respected, and they want to be seen as a powerful person."

"The way I dealt with bullies as a kid is...you don't take them head-on, you take what they're saying, you twist it a little bit so you expose the ridiculousness of what they're saying," he said.

"The only way you can beat Trump is to set him up for the absurd figure, the comic book figure that he is," he said.

Hickenlooper advised Democrats to avoid getting angry at Trump because, "especially in elections...it pushes people in the middle a little farther out to the edges."

Associated Press writers Hunter Woodall in Lebanon, New Hampshire, and David Eggert in Warren, Michigan, contributed to this report.

Molinari builds 2-shot lead over Woods, Finau in Masters

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Record scores on the white boards at Augusta National. Ground-shaking roars for Tiger Woods along the back nine.

Francesco Molinari blocked out the buzz on a delirious day of nine players sharing space atop the leaderboard Saturday. He emerged with another rock-solid round that looked spectacular only on his scorecard.

Molinari ran off four straight birdies on the back nine for a 6-under 66 that kept Woods and everyone else at a short arm's length going into a Sunday unlike any other at the Masters — an early start because of storms forecast for Sunday afternoon, with threesomes going off the first and 10th tees. The leaders were to tee off at 9:20 a.m.

That puts Woods in the final group at the Masters for the first time in 12 years, two shots behind.

Molinari played with Woods on the final day at Carnoustie last summer and outplayed the 14-time major champion amid a crowded leaderboard to win the British Open.

This is different.

This is Augusta National, where the gallery that cheered louder with each birdie by Woods made it clear they were aching to see the four-time champion slip a green jacket over a red shirt for the first time since 2005.

"He obviously loves this place, and he's playing great golf," Molinari said. "So I'm aware that it's not going to be easy tomorrow and, like I said, I can just do my best."

Woods has not played in the final group at a major since he gave up a two-shot lead to Y.E. Yang at Hazeltine in the 2009 PGA Championship

He got there Saturday with three straight birdies on the front and finished with three birdies over his last six holes for a 67, his best score at the Masters since the final round in 2011.

Joining them will be Tony Finau, playing this year on two good ankles after a self-inflicted injury a year ago. He was part of a history-making Saturday as one of three players to shoot 64.

Molinari was at 13-under 203.

The Italian doesn't get excited easily, whether he's cradling a claret jug or going 5-0 in the Ryder Cup. His strategy doesn't change in any environment — try to hit the ball squarely, play smart, avoid bogeys. It's working so well that Molinari goes into the final round having gone 43 consecutive holes without a bogey.

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"A lot of guys are playing great. I wish I only had to worry about him," Molinari said of Woods.

Another shot behind was Brooks Koepka, who has won three of the last six majors and had a 69 despite four bogeys.

Woods has won all 14 of his majors when he had at least a share of the lead going into the final round. He brings momentum to this major, having contended in the last two.

"It's been a while since I've been in contention here," Woods said. "But then again, the last two majors count for something. I've been in the mix with a chance to win major championships in the last two years, and so that helps."

Molinari knows what kind of atmosphere Woods brings to a major. Woods briefly took the lead at Carnoustie last year, but the Italian never flinched, playing bogey-free to capture his first major.

Augusta National might sound different than a tough links along the North Sea of Scotland.

This is where Woods first captured the attention of the sporting public when he set 20 records in winning the first of his four green jackets. This is the gallery that has longed to see him recapture the past, especially after four back surgeries that only two years ago left him hobbling up the stairs, wondering if he would play again.

Woods looked good as new this week, even for a 43-year-old who hasn't won a major in nearly 11 years.

"I'm just thankful to be able to come back here and play again," Woods said.

He joined the chasing pack on a day when going neutral meant losing ground. The 65 players combined to go 80-under par, at 70.77 the second-lowest scoring average in Masters history.

When he rolled in a 7-foot birdie putt on the par-3 16th, and the massive gallery rose to their feet with yet another ear-splitting roar, Woods became the ninth player who had at least a share of the lead Saturday. Molinari, playing in the final group, kept right on rolling.

"I hit the ball a little less well than yesterday," Molinari said. "But I holed some really good putts at 4 and 5 to save par. I can only be happy about today. It will be an exciting day tomorrow."

No one figures to be as excited as Finau, who turned his ankle celebrating a hole-in-one in the par 3 contest last year. He still managed to tie for 10th in his first Masters.

He nearly holed a 4-iron on the par-5 eighth Saturday on his way to a record-tying 30 on the front nine.

Because of the change in starting times, Finau gets to play alongside Woods — his golfing hero.

"As a kid, I always wanted to compete against him and have the opportunity to ... you know, I've dreamed of playing in the final group with him in a major championship."

Webb Simpson, who also shot 64, joined Ian Poulter (68) at 9-under 207, four shots behind and very much in the picture. The group another shot back included Dustin Johnson, who only made birdies on the par 5s and bogeyed his last hole for a 70.

The crowd favors Woods. The performance over the last year favors Molinari, whose British Open title is among four big tournaments he has won since last year's Masters. Molinari sees it another way.

"The favorite is probably the golf course out there waiting for us," he said.

For more AP golf coverage: <https://apnews.com/apf-Golf> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Booker returns to Newark to recharge his 2020 campaign

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Mired in the 2020 pack, Democratic presidential candidate Cory Booker returned on Saturday to the city where he earned his political chops, hoping for a surge as he undertakes a two-week tour around the country and expressing confidence to supporters that he, like the country he wants to lead, "will rise."

The New Jersey senator joined the race more than two months ago, capped by an appearance before reporters outside his Newark home and with a call for the country to unite in a time of sharp division. He emphasized that theme in Saturday's rally, billed as a campaign kickoff, with the goal of gaining political momentum and distinguishing himself from among his dozen-plus rivals.

"Critics will tell us that a campaign powered by grace and love and a deep faith in each other" cannot

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prevail, Booker said. "But I say it's the only way we win. The president wants a race to the gutter and to fight us in the gutter. To win, we have to fight from higher ground in order to bring this country to higher ground."

Booker has made early voting states a priority during his 10 weeks in the race, yet he remains bunched among the contenders, with poll numbers in the single digits. Nonetheless, his campaign is projecting confidence that he doesn't have to lead early to succeed with a strategy built more on grassroots enthusiasm than national buzz.

"We're trying to win the election — we're not trying to win a news cycle," campaign manager Addisu Demissie told reporters this past week, describing the approach as "organize and get hot at the end."

And to win, Booker said he would work to "make justice real for all."

The former Newark mayor and his team know that building a higher profile requires some bigger swings for attention that spotlight his oratory skills. Saturday's rally before a friendly crowd was intended to give the campaign a chance "to keep Cory front and center with the voters, which is how you break out here," as Demissie put it. "You need to be visible."

The first stops on Booker's national tour are in Iowa, Georgia and Nevada. The themes he pressed at the rally included ending "mass incarcerations" and "the school to prison pipeline," passing gun control measures such as universal background checks and an assault weapons ban and advancing "Medicare for All." He wants to enact "comprehensive immigration reform" that also provides a path to citizenship for young immigrants who are in the country illegally and end "the sabotage" of the Obama-era health care law. He pledged to appoint Supreme Court justices who will defend the landmark ruling that legalized abortion.

"Together, we will fulfill our pledge to be a nation of liberty and justice for all. Together, we will win. And together, America, we will rise," Booker said.

His campaign announcement in February emphasized the importance of "common purpose" in politics, a message he's since expanded on to trumpet his successful work on bipartisan measures, such as the criminal justice reform bill that President Donald Trump signed last year.

"There are some folks that want to criticize you for getting into the sausage-making, for making compromises and horse-trading, but when I walk around my neighborhood now, folk come out and tell me, 'Thank you for doing that bill,'" Booker told New York-based radio show "Ebro in the Morning" on Friday.

Booker, 49, raised more than \$5 million in the first quarter of the year, his campaign said, which is less than higher-polling candidates Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke reported raising in their first 24 hours in the race. That sum ranks Booker behind at least six contenders, including South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who raked in \$7 million.

Associated Press writer Hunter Woodall in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

Dems defend Omar after Trump retweets video against her

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top Democrats on Saturday rushed to defend Rep. Ilhan Omar after President Donald Trump retweeted video that was edited to suggest she was being dismissive of the significance of the worst terrorist assault on U.S. soil.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi scolded Trump for using the "painful images of 9/11 for a political attack" against the first-term Minnesota Democrat.

And presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, campaigning in New Hampshire, accused Trump of "trying to incite violence and to divide us, and every political leader should speak out against that."

The video Trump retweeted Friday pulls a snippet of Omar's recent speech to the Council on American-Islamic Relations in which she described the 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center as "some people did something," and includes news footage of the hijacked planes hitting the Twin Towers. Trump also tweeted, "WE WILL NEVER FORGET!"

Omar's remark has drawn criticism largely from political opponents and conservatives who say the law-

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maker, one of the first Muslim women to serve in Congress, offered a flippant description of the assailants and the attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people.

Neither Trump's tweet nor the video included her full quote or the context of her comments.

Omar told CAIR in Los Angeles that many Muslims saw their civil liberties eroded after the attacks, and she advocated for activism.

"For far too long we have lived with the discomfort of being a second-class citizen and, frankly, I'm tired of it, and every single Muslim in this country should be tired of it," she said in the March 23 speech, according to video posted online. "CAIR was founded after 9/11 because they recognized that some people did something and that all of us were starting to lose access to our civil liberties."

CAIR was founded in 1994, according to its website, but its membership skyrocketed after the attacks.

Many Republicans and conservative outlets expressed outrage at Omar's remarks. Fellow Democrats, including some who have disagreed with Omar in the past, defended her.

"First Member of Congress to ever describe terrorists who killed thousands of Americans on 9/11 as 'some people who did something,'" tweeted Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas. The retired Navy SEAL lost his right eye in 2012 in an explosion in Afghanistan.

"Here's your something," the New York Post blared on its cover beneath a photograph of the flaming towers.

Pelosi, who was in Germany visiting U.S. troops Saturday, said in a statement that "the memory of 9/11 is sacred ground" and should always be discussed "with reverence." The California Democrat said it is wrong for Trump to "fan the flames to make anyone less safe."

Omar didn't appear to be backing down.

She tweeted a quote from President George W. Bush, who said days after the attacks: "The people — and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!"

"Was Bush downplaying the terrorist attack?" Omar tweeted. "What if he was a Muslim."

Several of the 2020 Democratic presidential candidates condemned Trump's tweet.

Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke, said the Republican president's tweet was an "incitement to violence" against Omar, who is Muslim-American, and others like her. O'Rourke, campaigning in South Carolina, likened the tweet to Trump's rhetoric about Mexicans, described in the past by Trump as murderers and rapists. O'Rourke said "there is a cost and there is a consequence" to Trump's comments.

Warren, a Massachusetts senator, said Republican leaders in Congress "cannot take a pass on this, cannot look the other way and pretend it isn't happening. It is happening. And those who don't speak out in the Republican leadership are complicit in what he is doing. It's wrong."

Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar noted that a New York man recently was charged with threatening Omar's life.

"The video the president chose to send out today will only incite more hate," Klobuchar said. "You can disagree with her words — as I have done before — but this video is wrong. Enough."

Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont said Omar "won't back down to Trump's racism and hate, and neither will we."

Omar repeatedly has pushed fellow Democrats into uncomfortable territory over Israel and the strength of the Jewish state's influence in Washington. She apologized for suggesting that lawmakers support Israel for pay and said she isn't criticizing Jews. But she refused to take back a tweet in which she suggested American supporters of Israel "pledge allegiance" to a foreign country.

Her comments sparked an ugly episode among House Democrats after they responded with a resolution condemning anti-Semitism and the measure became a broader declaration against all forms of bigotry.

Fashion brand 'FUCT' seeks trademark help from Supreme Court

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Erik Brunetti's four-letter fashion brand starts with an "F" and rhymes with "duct." The federal government calls it "scandalous" and "immoral" and has refused to register the trademark.

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Brunetti has a different word for his brand and designs: "thought-provoking."

"We wanted the viewer to question it: Like, is that pronounced the way I think it's pronounced?" he said of his streetwear brand "FUCT," which began selling clothing in 1991.

On Monday, the Supreme Court will hear Brunetti's challenge to a part of federal law that says officials should refuse to register trademarks that are "scandalous" or "immoral." Brunetti says it should be struck down as an unconstitutional restriction on speech.

The government is defending the century-old provision. The Trump administration says in court papers that the law encourages trademarks that are appropriate for all audiences. It argues it isn't restricting speech but rather declining to promote it.

Brunetti and others like him who are denied trademark registration under the "scandalous" provision can still use the words they wanted to register for their business, nonprofit or brand. They just don't get the benefits that come with registering a trademark. For Brunetti, that would largely mean a better ability to go after counterfeiters who knock off his designs.

Brunetti would seem to have a strong argument. Two years ago, the justices unanimously invalidated a related provision of federal law that told officials not to register disparaging trademarks. In that case, an Asian-American rock band sued after the government refused to register its band name, "The Slants," because it was seen as offensive to Asians.

In court, the justices had no trouble saying the band's name, but Brunetti's brand may be different. His lawyer, John R. Sommer, says he plans to say the individual letters of the name, "F-U-C-T," which Brunetti sometimes does too. Another possible workaround: explaining the brand is something of an acronym for "Friends U Can't Trust."

Part of Sommer's argument is what he sees as the arbitrary nature of the United States Patent and Trademark Office's decisions about what gets tagged as scandalous or immoral. A lawyer working for the office who is from the South might find something "not nice" that wouldn't faze a lawyer from the Bronx, Sommer said. That means "you can register profanity if you're lucky" and you get assigned a lawyer who allows it, Sommer said.

Two New York University professors gave that argument substantial support in a brief they filed in the case. They showed that the office routinely refuses to register trademarks both by saying something is scandalous and, ironically, too confusingly similar to something that is already registered. For example, the office refused to register "FUK!T" for being scandalous and immoral but also confusingly similar to the already-registered "PHUKIT." "MIDDLEFINGER" was denied after "JONNY MIDDLEFINGER" was registered, and "Ko Kane" was rejected after "Kokanee" was registered. And those are just some printable examples.

Brunetti said the trademark office has registered trademarks "far more offensive than my mark."

The trademark office declined to comment on the case.

If Brunetti wins, the public is unlikely to notice a whole lot of change, his lawyer said. Retailers will decide what products are appropriate for their customers, and Target and Walmart aren't going to carry Brunetti's brand, Sommer said.

Brunetti hopes a victory at the high court will help him pursue counterfeiters. In the nearly 30 years since he began his company from his bedroom in Venice, California, he's produced thousands of clothing designs. Some of the best known are parodies involving the Ford logo and "Planet of the Apes."

These days, he directs a staff of four from a downtown Los Angeles office. They release new clothing on their website about once a month. Some items have sold out in less than a minute, and new collections are always sold out in under three days, Brunetti said. Because of the items' scarcity, some are resold on eBay for a profit, with a T-shirt that cost \$40 sometimes fetching more than \$100.

Brunetti said he's never met anyone truly offended by his brand.

"Most people find it clever," he said.

Follow Jessica Gresko on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jessicagresko>

UK pressured not to overlook Swedish claims to Assange

By GREGORY KATZ Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British lawmakers are heaping pressure on the government to make sure that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange faces Swedish justice if prosecutors there reopen a rape investigation against him.

There is mounting concern that Assange should not be allowed to sidestep the Swedish investigation stemming from his 2010 visit to Sweden. The complaints from two women eventually led him to seek refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London rather than return to Sweden for questioning.

Some are calling for the British government to extradite Assange to Sweden, if it makes an official request, rather than to the U.S., which seeks him on conspiracy charges.

More than 70 British lawmakers signed a letter late Friday urging Home Secretary Sajid Javid to “do everything you can to champion action that will ensure Julian Assange can be extradited to Sweden in the event Sweden makes an extradition request.”

Prominent Conservative Party lawmaker Alistair Burt, a former Foreign Office minister, said Saturday that it’s “quite disturbing” to see the sexual allegations minimized.

He said the testimony of the two women makes it “essential” that Assange face justice, to either be cleared in a Swedish court or be convicted.

Assange, 47, has denied the sexual misconduct allegations, which he claims are politically motivated. He claims the sex was consensual.

Sweden suspended its investigation into possible sexual misconduct against Assange two years ago because he was beyond their reach while he was living in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London with political asylum status. Prosecutors said the investigation could be revived if his situation changed.

Assange was arrested Thursday after Ecuador withdrew his asylum. He is now in Belmarsh Prison in southeast London, waiting to be sentenced for jumping bail in Britain and facing an extradition request from the United States on charges of conspiring to break into a Pentagon computer.

WikiLeaks says Assange will fight the U.S. extradition request and has been meeting with his legal team to plan his defense.

He has not had a chance to enter a plea in response to the U.S. charge, but he says all of his WikiLeaks actions are those of a legitimate journalist.

If Britain receives competing extradition requests, lawyers say the Home Secretary would have some leeway in deciding which takes priority. Considerations usually include which request came first and which alleged crime is more serious.

Most of the lawmakers who signed the letter are from the opposition Labour Party, whose leader, Jeremy Corbyn, wants Britain to refuse to send Assange to the U.S. After Assange’s arrest, Corbyn praised him for exposing U.S. atrocities committed in Iraq and Afghanistan when WikiLeaks released tens of thousands of confidential U.S. documents in 2010.

British politicians are free to lobby the government for a certain course of action, but it’s up to the courts to decide whether the U.S. request for Assange’s extradition — and a possible future request from Sweden — should be honored.

The Home Secretary, a senior Cabinet official, can block extradition under certain circumstances, including cases where a person might face capital punishment or torture in the country seeking their extradition.

Swedish prosecutors opened an investigation into Assange after two women accused him of sexual offenses during a 2010 visit to Sweden. Some of the sexual misconduct accusations are no longer viable because their time ran out. But Swedish prosecutors have said a rape case could be reactivated since the statute of limitations for that runs until August 2020.

After Assange’s arrest this week, Swedish prosecutor Eva-Marie Persson was tapped to look into a request from a lawyer for one of the accusers, to find out whether the case can be pursued.

Elisabeth Massi Fritz, the lawyer for the woman who reported being raped by Assange, told The Associated Press that she would “do everything” to have the Swedish case reopened so Assange can be extradited to Sweden and prosecuted.

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The extradition process is not swift, and Assange could appeal several times if decisions go against him. It's expected it would take a year or longer for him to be sent to the United States or possibly to Sweden even if he ultimately loses in court.

Associated Press writer Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark contributed.

Shame, sadness in UK as Brexit reveals Parliament's flaws

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — As a symbol of the woes of Britain's Brexit-era democracy, it could hardly be bettered. Lawmakers had to be sent home in mid-debate last week when water from a burst pipe began gushing into the House of Commons chamber.

The image perfectly illustrates Parliament's problem as it tries to solve the puzzle that is Brexit. On the outside, the U.K. institution is resplendent, a world-famous symbol of democracy sitting majestically on the River Thames. On the inside, it's decrepit and increasingly unfit for use.

The hidden flaws in Britain's political system have been laid bare — and televised worldwide — since voters chose, almost three years ago, to leave the European Union.

Decision-making has ground to a standstill, even as business leaders and residents alike cry out for certainty. Many Britons feel a mix of frustration, fascination and shame at the ongoing political chaos. So do politicians on both sides of the Brexit divide.

"I am ashamed to be a member of this Parliament," said pro-EU Liberal Democrat lawmaker Norman Lamb after lawmakers once again failed to find a way forward on Brexit.

Bill Cash, a pro-Brexit Conservative, said this week that Britain had been "humiliated" by failing to leave the EU on time.

The last few months in Parliament, as lawmakers repeatedly tried and failed to agree on a roadmap for Britain's departure, have produced close votes, late nights and high drama. It's a political soap opera that has sent the viewership of Parliament's live-streaming website soaring and made an international celebrity of House of Commons Speaker John Bercow, with his bellowing cries of "Orderrrr" and "The ayes have it!"

But all the sound and fury signifies — not much. Britain is no further out the EU door or clearer about its post-Brexit direction than it was at the start of the year.

A divorce agreement struck between Prime Minister Theresa May's government and EU late in 2018 lays out the terms of an orderly U.K. departure and promising close future ties. Since January, Parliament has rejected it three times. Pro-Brexit lawmakers won't vote for it because they favor a more definitive break with the bloc. Pro-EU politicians reject it because they think it's a poor substitute for EU membership.

Parliament has also voted on other options including leaving without a deal and holding a new referendum on Britain's EU membership. And twice lawmakers have rejected them all.

To avoid a chaotic no-deal departure that could devastate an economy already weighed down by Brexit uncertainty, May has twice gone to the EU asking for more time. Despite the bloc's increasing exasperation at Britain, it has twice agreed, delaying Brexit Day first from March 29 to April 12 and then again until Oct. 31.

British businesses breathed a sigh of relief, but feared the respite would be temporary unless politicians can resolve a political crisis that been building since the surprise result of the 2016 Brexit referendum. Amid widespread mistrust in politicians, a feeling that had been growing for years, voters opted to leave the EU against the advice of the government, most economists and major business groups.

Britain's political system has proven itself ill-equipped to implement the demand.

May's Conservative minority government does not have a majority of seats in Parliament — a rare occurrence in Britain — and struggles to deliver its policies. The country's two main parties, Conservatives and the opposition Labour Party, are both internally divided over Brexit and have begun to fray, with more than a dozen lawmakers quitting in recent months to sit as independents.

Pro-EU backbench lawmakers have gone to war with the government, seizing control of the parliamentary

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timetable to hold debates and votes on Brexit. Pro-Brexit Conservatives have demanded that May resign for failing to take Britain out of the EU.

In this environment, Parliament's stressed, exhausted politicians and their staff are frankly relieved at the 10-day Easter break that began on Friday. The prime minister has implored them to relax, reflect and come back ready to strike a Brexit compromise. In the meantime, May's government is still holding talks with Labour in hopes of finding common ground.

But there are few signs of any emerging consensus. Brexiteers in the Conservative Party are still plotting to remove May and replace her with a more strongly pro-Brexit leader, such as former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson. Pro-EU politicians are still hoping to secure a new referendum on Brexit that could deliver a mandate for Britain to stay in the bloc. Labour craves a national election, despite the risk that voters could decide to punish all politicians amid exasperation over the Brexit debacle.

There is no end in sight to the Brexit drama, which has left observers around the world scratching their heads — and sometimes chuckling — at Britain's plight.

Richard Ashworth, a British member of the European parliament, told EU colleagues that Brexit had produced "a sad nation, divided like never before, and a House of Commons in crisis."

"Let Brexit stand as a cautionary tale to the people of Europe," he warned.

But some observers feel sympathy as Britain so publicly struggles with deep, divisive questions about its values and place in the world — questions that are not confined to the U.K.

"Parliament is representing the divisions in our country," said Anand Menon, director of the U.K. in a Changing Europe think-tank. "It's brutal. It's horrible. It's inconclusive. It's democratic politics at its most visceral.

"Among international observers I speak to, there is a sense of, 'There but for the grace of God go I.'"

This story corrects the original date for Brexit to March 29.

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

Trump campaign eyes chances to vie for states lost in 2016

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump loves to recount how his 2016 campaign defied expectations to pierce the vaunted Democratic "blue wall." For 2020, he's looking to do one better.

As his re-election campaign kicks into high gear, it's exploring opportunities to contest states he lost in 2016, aiming to keep divided Democrats on the defensive.

Trump on Monday visits one of those states, Minnesota, where he lost to Hillary Clinton by fewer than 45,000 votes in 2016. The campaign also is targeting New Mexico, Nevada, and New Hampshire, all states where Trump fell short by under 100,000 votes.

The tax day visit to Minnesota is meant to highlight the effect of Trump's signature legislative accomplishment, the 2017 tax overhaul, in a historically Democratic-leaning state that appears to offering Republicans hope.

"We see trends in the state that we like," said senior campaign adviser Bill Stepien. "We like what we see on the ground. We like the energy we're seeing."

In 1984, Minnesota was the only state carried by Democratic nominee Walter Mondale, a former Minnesota senator, against President Ronald Reagan. Over the past several presidential elections Minnesota has grown increasingly competitive, particularly as Trump's rise coincided with a realignment of many white-working class voters to the GOP. And in an otherwise bleak 2018 for the GOP, Trump helped flip two congressional seats to Republicans.

With record fundraising for this stage in a presidential cycle, both the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee are largely unrestrained financially, allowing them to make riskier investments in states won by Clinton. All the target states, except for Nevada, also have Senate races in 2020, a factor

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that the party believes will provide extra return.

Any early spending could pay dividends for the GOP in 2020, even if those efforts aren't successful, forcing Democrats opponents to expend precious resources later in the campaign cycle to defend what should be safer Democratic states.

The Minnesota visit marks Trump's third to the state since taking office. His first two were political trips to help put two Republican congressional candidates, Jim Hagedorn and Pete Stauber, over the top in 2018.

The focus on Minnesota and Trump's other near-misses come as there is mounting concern within the Democratic Party that its heavily contested primary is providing Trump with an opportunity to reinforce his political position with little in the way of organized opposition.

"Trump and the RNC are hell-bent on expanding on the list of states Trump won in 2016 by targeting states like Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Nevada, and they're counting on early money to build a formidable ground game to make it happen," said a recent Democratic National Committee fundraising email.

Stephen Stepanek, chairman of the New Hampshire GOP, silenced the room at the party's recent spring fundraiser, keynoted by the president's daughter-in-law Lara Trump, when he said the Democrats have "out-organized us. Outraised us. And quite frankly, we have to do a better job."

"We are in a war right now," he said. Trump lost the state by fewer than 3,000 votes and the GOP recently placed five staffers in the state ahead of 2020.

To date, early Democratic investments have been focused on shoring up the "blue wall" of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan. Until 2016, they had been solidly Democratic for two decades. All three states saw Democratic gains in 2018 that the party believes indicate they are ripe for returning to the fold in 2020.

The Trump campaign is also eyeing the fallout of a political scandal among Democratic leaders in Virginia to determine whether there's an opening in the state. But it acknowledges that the heavy concentration of federal workers in the northern part of the state makes it a more challenging opportunity.

The Democratic super PAC Priorities USA has announced a \$100 million campaign in Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida, all states that Trump carried. Its publicly announced "phase two" plans include a focus on Trump's narrow-loss states of Nevada and New Hampshire.

Trump's team still believes his likeliest path to the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency means re-running the 2016 map. But it is exploring other permutations.

"We're casting a wide net and looking for opportunities to grow the map," said Stepien.

Associated Press writer Hunter Woodall in Manchester, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

As census approaches, many Arab Americans feel left out

By JOSEPH GEDEON Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Yousuf Abdelfatah already knows the answer he'll give about his race on the 2020 census questionnaire will be wrong.

He's an Arab American, but the only race options on the census are white, black, Asian and categories for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander. Reluctantly, Abdelfatah will mark white.

"If you look at me, my skin is darker, I'm visibly not white," said the 22-year-old research assistant. "I've lived my life as a person of color, but I'm categorized as white."

With the census going to printing presses later this year, Arab Americans are again feeling left out of a process that helps draw the nation's political map and provide an accurate population count, which in turn can determine how much federal funding minority groups get for government programs and medical research.

Organizations have long been pushing for a separate Middle Eastern or North African category but realize it's probably too late for 2020 with questionnaires ready to be printed.

"The census is in our Constitution and it's meant to count everyone," said Maya Berry, the executive director of the Arab American Institution.

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According to census estimates, the Arab American population is measured at just over 2 million people. The Arab American Institute, however, says that number is closer to 3.6 million.

Underreporting from the census has come amid a rapid growth of the community, which advocates say has increased by more than 72% between 2000 and 2010.

Population data is a key factor in political redistricting, researching human rights, monitoring government programs and antidiscrimination laws, meaning Arab Americans are subject to a lack of representation and health and social services.

"Right now we have that 'white' designation on paper but we don't benefit from it," said 24-year-old activist and organizer Naia Al-Anbar. "The truth is we aren't ever going to be white in their eyes and we will still be discriminated against."

Al-Anbar, who generally supports the idea of a new category, has a Saudi Arabian father and would mark "other" on the census if a more precise category isn't offered.

The Arab American Institute considers 22 countries to consist of Arabs, spanning Africa and Asia, meaning Arab Americans can fall into several categories provided in the survey.

This creates an odd decision during the census for Arab Americans. Does someone from Egypt, for example, check the African American box because their home country is in Africa? Would someone from Iraq be expected to mark that they are Asian?

"As an Egyptian, I considered marking 'African American' but I'm not black," 24-year-old Nashville resident Dina El-Rifai said. "However, marking 'white' doesn't reflect who I am or the diversity I bring."

In another complicating factor, the Trump administration wants to ask people whether they are American citizens on the census — an issue that is supposed to be resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court this summer before the forms are printed. Some fear that will stifle participation among various immigrant groups, especially in the aftermath of the administration's travel ban from Muslim countries that spread fear among Arab Americans.

This question would discourage 30% of Arab Americans from taking the survey, a study by the American-Arab Anti-Defamation Committee found.

The Arab American Institute and other groups have worked on getting an Arab category introduced in the census for decades but have always been met with opposition. That was until 2009, when the Census Bureau concluded that it would introduce a Middle Eastern and North African category for the next cycle after years of trials and tests. Test results found that the vast majority of Arab Americans supported the issue and would mark the new option on the census.

But the momentum came to a halt when a new executive government was voted in to power.

"After all that work, and all the millions spent, the Trump administration came in for what we believe are political reasons to put an end to it," said Samer Khalaf, president of the American-Arab Anti-Defamation Committee. "Their reasoning was that additional testing would be required."

The Census Bureau did not comment about the Middle Eastern category, but pointed to previous news conferences where policy leaders discussed how more research was needed to include a Middle Eastern/North African category not as a race, but as an ethnicity.

"We do feel that more research and testing is needed before we can proceed to implement or propose to implement a separate Middle Eastern or North African category," Census Bureau chief of Population Karen Battle said at a program review in January 2018.

That would be a step in the right direction for many Arab Americans, as it could lead to a better count and more research and federal funding to benefit their communities.

"The most important thing is that we are on the cusp of getting the Census Bureau to finally get the category that would help identify our community," Khalaf said. "If we were able to get data, we can work on civil rights, and maybe they'll know whether or not we have a higher rate of diabetes or heart disease."

Quebec proposes ban on religious clothing for public workers

By TRACEY LINDEMAN Associated Press

MONTREAL (AP) — A proposal to ban many public employees from wearing religious clothing is creating a fiery debate in the Canadian province of Quebec, where people are fighting to freely practice their religion — or to be free of it.

The measure introduced late last month would prohibit civil servants, teachers, nurses, bus drivers, lawyers and other people who interact with the public from wearing symbols of religion while at work.

It would apply to Sikh turbans, Christian jewelry and Jewish yarmulkes, but the focus of the controversy has been over hijabs worn by many Muslim women in Quebec.

"The proposed legislation will affect Muslims more than other groups as they are the fastest growing religious group," said Nelson Wiseman, a political science professor at the University of Toronto. Muslims represent about 3% of Quebec's 8.3 million people.

Thousands of demonstrators attended a recent march in Montreal to protest the measure, with some holding signs saying, "No one tells women what they can wear" and "It's what's in my head, not on my head, that matters."

Even Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who is from Montreal, has spoken ill of Bill 21: "It's unthinkable to me that in a free society we would legitimize discrimination against citizens based on their religion," he said.

Christian, Jewish, Muslim and even secular groups across the province have denounced the measure, as have school boards, political parties and some municipal leaders.

However, on Friday Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante said that while she personally opposes the bill, Montreal would not disobey it if it is passed.

That said, next week city councilors will vote on a bipartisan declaration that argues Quebec is already secular and doesn't require additional legislation.

Earlier this month, Quebec Premier Francois Legault told reporters that the bill would reinforce gender equality in the province. The new measure would also help him make good on an electoral promise.

"I think at this point in Quebec in 2019, people who are in an authority position, which includes teachers (shouldn't wear religious symbols), I think it's reasonable. It's fair," he said. "We have to think about what's best for our children."

The history behind the measure is rooted in Quebec's "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960s, a movement that weaned the province away from political and cultural domination by the Catholic Church. But critics also say it's motivated by more recent growing anti-Muslim sentiment.

The debate also pits two ideas of secularism against one another: A stricter European interpretation and a North American version that embraces the idea of religious freedom.

Quebec is torn because it shares a long history and language with France — which along with Denmark, Belgium and Austria has banned face-covering garments — but it's also heavily influenced by North American culture, said Bertrand Lavoie, a researcher at the University of Sherbrooke who in 2018 published a book on the relationship between Islam, religious freedom and public institutions in Quebec.

"What's unique to Quebec is that these two concepts of secularism are facing off in the public sphere, among politicians, academics, lawyers and even judges," Lavoie told The Associated Press.

Many who support Bill 21 say that even if women choose to wear the hijab, the garment is rooted in the idea of women's inferiority. Prohibiting it, they say, would help promote gender equality.

"The hijab is a symbol of oppression. It's an invention by Islamists to control women," said Ameni Ben Ammar, an accountant in Montreal who immigrated from Tunisia, a majority-Muslim country, in 2013.

"They convinced women it would protect them from sexual assault. For me, it's an insult to both men and women," she said, referring to the hijab's resurgence in the 1970s.

The debate has tangled issues of gender, race and religion, with Muslim women caught in the crosshairs, said Saaz Taher, a doctoral candidate at the University of Montreal who is studying ethnicity and citizenship.

"Racialized women's bodies are constantly a topic of public discourse. We feel (authorized) to judge the best way for women to be free and emancipated," said Taher, who added that Muslim women should be

allowed to wear the hijab by choice.

Lavoie said anti-minority sentiment in the province has grown since 2001, when a Sikh boy brought a kirpan — a ceremonial dagger — to school. The incident caused a debate over how far the province should go to accommodate religion.

In 2007, a provincial commission studied the issue and suggested that only people yielding coercive power, such as judges, police officers and prison guards, should abstain from wearing religious symbols.

Bill 21 is Quebec's fourth legislative attempt since 2011 to regulate the wearing of religious symbols for people working in the public sphere, and for the first time it invokes a constitutional clause allowing local governments to override some constitutional rights.

Lavoie said that's a clear sign backers know the measure is discriminatory.

"The public's perception is that there's a problem (with Islam), and if there's a problem, we have to fix it," Lavoie said.

The province was stunned in 2017 when a gunman opened fire in a Quebec City mosque, killing six and wounding 19, and racist groups appear to still be growing.

"I've never seen it like this," said Salam Elmenyawy, president of the Montreal Council of Muslims, who immigrated to Quebec from Egypt in 1972 and believes Bill 21 is an outcropping of anti-Muslim sentiment.

"This hate was manufactured. This hate did not come by accident," he said.

Trump wields presidential power on pipeline, energy projects

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Eager to jump-start the stalled Keystone XL oil pipeline and other energy projects, President Donald Trump has acted to assert executive power over pipelines and such infrastructure.

He issued a new permit for Keystone XL and insisted this exercise of presidential authority was not subject to judicial review. Then he signed an executive order clarifying that the president alone has the power to grant permits for cross-border projects such as pipelines. A separate order makes it harder for states to block pipelines and other energy projects on the basis of environmental concerns.

Taken together, the actions amount to a broad assertion of power that reverses more than 50 years of precedent that delegated decision-making on energy projects to individual agencies.

Trump has shown a willingness to override his own agencies to accomplish his aims. His actions, if upheld by the courts, could consolidate power over energy projects at the White House, increasing the influence of the president's political advisers and potentially cutting out experts and career officials throughout the government.

"Too often badly needed energy infrastructure is being held back by special interest groups, entrenched bureaucracies and radical activists," Trump said Wednesday before signing the executive orders at an event in Texas.

Pipeline opponents say Trump acted illegally. They have asked a federal court to block the new Keystone permit, arguing that it is an effort to get around an earlier court ruling.

But one legal expert said Trump's approach might succeed.

"He has now created a whole new decision-making structure" for cross-border pipelines, said Richard Pierce, a law professor at George Washington University.

If the courts follow a 1992 Supreme Court ruling, they may find that action taken by the State Department in approving or rejecting the pipeline "is nonreviewable, because it doesn't qualify as final agency action," Pierce said. Further, Trump's decision would not be subject to review because of a separate law that declares the president is not an agency and therefore is not bound by rules that apply to agency actions.

"That's a very clever approach that might well work," Pierce said.

Trump's actions are "typical of this presidency," said Holly Doremus, an environmental law professor at the University of California, Berkeley. She said Trump frequently seeks to stretch the limits of his power, and she cited Trump's declaration of an emergency that he says allows him to shift more money to construction of a promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

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In the case of Keystone, Trump appears to be arguing that the new presidential permit, issued March 29, gets around restrictions under the National Environmental Policy Act or other laws, because the statutes apply to executive-branch agencies but not to the president, Doremus said.

"If the president is the only discretionary decision maker, NEPA simply does not apply," she said.

While Trump's theory is plausible, it is unclear who is the ultimate decision-maker on Keystone XL, Doremus said. The pipeline would ship crude oil from the tar sands of western Canada to U.S. refineries along the Gulf of Mexico.

Both a 2015 rejection of the project by the Obama administration and a 2017 approval by Trump were issued by the State Department under terms of a 2004 executive order that delegated presidential authority for cross-border projects to that agency.

Trump's executive order revokes the 2004 order, issued by President George W. Bush. Bush's action extended an executive order first issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968.

"It's surprising that the president would come in and single-handedly try to circumvent 50 years of precedent for these types of projects by just issuing a permit himself," said Doug Hayes, a Sierra Club attorney who has sued to block the Keystone project in court.

In November, U.S. District Judge Brian Morris in Montana ruled that the Trump administration did not fully consider potential oil spills and other impacts when it approved the pipeline in 2017. Morris ordered a new environmental review of the pipeline.

The White House said the new permit issued by Trump "dispels any uncertainty" about the long-delayed project, which was first proposed a decade ago by Calgary-based TransCanada.

Trump's move on Keystone XL reinforces the idea that "the presidential permit is indeed an exercise of presidential authority that is not subject to judicial review," according to the White House.

Under the new order, federal officials still would conduct environmental reviews of the project, but they would be carried out by agencies other than the State Department, the White House said.

TransCanada spokesman Matthew John said the administration's action "clearly demonstrates to the courts that the permit is (the) product of presidential decision-making and should not be subject to additional environmental review."

Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond, said it was "strange" that Trump issued the executive order after granting the new permit.

"The White House is making the argument supposedly that he has untrammelled authority and doesn't have to obey the laws of Congress" in approving a cross-border pipeline, Tobias said. "I'm dubious and I think a number of other people are, too."

Kathryn Watts, a law professor at the University of Washington, said it's unclear what happens next. Trump's permit wades into "uncharted, unsettled" legal territory, she said.

Associated Press writer Matthew Brown in Billings, Montana, contributed to this report.

Trump 'strongly looking' at releasing migrants in Dem cities

By JILL COLVIN and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Friday he is strongly considering releasing "Illegal Immigrants" into Democratic strongholds to punish congressional foes for inaction on the border— just hours after White House and Homeland Security officials insisted the idea had been rejected as fast as it had been proposed.

"Due to the fact that Democrats are unwilling to change our very dangerous immigration laws, we are indeed, as reported, giving strong considerations to placing Illegal Immigrants in Sanctuary Cities only," Trump tweeted. He added that, "The Radical Left always seems to have an Open Borders, Open Arms policy - so this should make them very happy!"

The reversal, which appeared to catch officials at the Department of Homeland Security off guard, came as critics were blasting Trump for the supposedly-rejected idea, accusing him of turning migrants into

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pawns to go after his political opponents. It comes as Trump has grown increasingly exasperated by a surge of Central American migrant families crossing the southern border and is looking for new ways to pressure congressional Democrats to change laws that he insists are making the problem worse.

Indeed, last week Trump urged his soon-to-be acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan to seal the southern border and told McAleenan he would pardon him if he were to find himself in trouble for blocking legal asylum-seekers, according to two people familiar with the conversation who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe a private exchange.

It was not clear whether the president was joking, and a Homeland Security spokesman said in a statement: "At no time has the president indicated, asked, directed or pressured the acting secretary to do anything illegal." The reported conversation came during the president's trip last week to Calexico, California, a day after he announced he was delaying his threat to close the border because Mexico appeared to be stepping up its enforcement efforts.

Before Trump's tweets on Friday, both the Department of Homeland Security and a White House official had released nearly identical statements saying the sanctuary-cities plan had been floated but then flatly rejected.

But not, apparently, by the president, who emphatically revived the idea.

Asked about it by reporters, he said he was "strongly looking at" releasing migrant families into those communities.

"They're always saying they have open arms. Let's see if they have open arms," he said.

There were no indications, however, that officials were taking any steps to move forward with the idea or considered the president's words anything more than bluster.

"Sanctuary cities" are places where local authorities do not cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, denying information or resources that would help ICE round up for deportation people living in the country illegally.

They include New York City and San Francisco, home city of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who on Friday called the idea "unworthy of the presidency of the United States and disrespectful of the challenges that we face as a country, as a people, to address who we are — a nation of immigrants."

Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, who chairs the House Homeland Security committee, said it "serves as a reminder that the Trump administration's reckless immigration agenda is not about keeping the country safe, but about partisan politics and wantonly inflicting cruelty."

The idea of pressing immigration authorities to embrace the plan was discussed in November and then again in February as the Trump administration struggled with a surge of migrants at the border, according to three people who spoke on condition of anonymity to outline private conversations. Homeland Security and ICE lawyers quickly rejected the proposal, according to the people, on the grounds that it was complicated, too expensive and a misuse of funds, two of the people said.

The plan, which was first reported by The Washington Post, is one of a litany of ideas being tossed around by an increasingly anxious White House in recent months. Officials say they are running out of options, and have proposed and recycled numerous ideas that have never come to fruition. Trump in recent weeks, for instance, has discussed the idea of renewing his administration's controversial family separation policy — even as he's publicly declared he won't do that — and has threatened to completely seal the border despite opposition from many in his administration.

There have been at least two versions of the sanctuary city plan discussed: One to move people who have already been detained to places with Democratic opponents of the president, the other to transport migrants apprehended at the border directly to San Francisco, New York City, Chicago and other spots.

ICE arrests people in the U.S. illegally and also manages migrants who present themselves at border crossings and ask for asylum.

The surge of migrant families at the border has been taxing the system, and ICE says it no longer has the resources to handle immigrants processed by the Border Patrol. As a result, more than 125,000 people have been released as they await court hearings — a practice Trump has derided as "catch and release."

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With immigrant processing and holding centers overwhelmed, the administration has already been bus-ing people hundreds of miles inland and releasing them at Greyhound stations and churches in cities such as Albuquerque, San Antonio and Phoenix.

Transporting large groups of immigrants to distant cities would be even more expensive for an agency already strapped for cash. Flights chartered by ICE cost about \$7,785 per flight hour, according to the agency, and require multiple staffers, including an in-flight medical professional. The agency also uses commercial flights but requires that migrants to pay for those.

At the same time, many "sanctuary" communities would likely welcome the immigrants in question. Some of these cities have robust networks of nonprofit legal groups that could help them strengthen their legal cases to stay.

The Department of Health and Human Services said this week it had started scouting vacant properties that could be turned into facilities for holding migrant children in several cities, including Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Phoenix, and San Antonio.

Those facilities would be licensed by each state and likely take several months to be approved and opened, separating them from the rapidly expanding emergency shelter at Homestead, Florida, and the now-closed tent facility at Tornillo, Texas.

The Defense Department has also been reviewing a number of military bases to find a location that can house up to 5,000 unaccompanied migrant children as the U.S. braces for a surge of people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border this spring.

Under the Trump administration, ICE has significantly stepped up arrests, including of people who have no U.S. criminal records. In response, some cities have banished ICE from jails where agents could easily pick up immigration violators. Police in New York, Baltimore and Seattle rarely, if ever, disclose information about when suspected criminals in the U.S. illegally will be released from custody.

Democrats have said they will tackle immigration bills, possibly as soon as they return from their spring recess, and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has indicated an interest.

Associated Press writers Nomaan Merchant in Houston, Astrid Galvan in Phoenix and Lisa Mascaro and Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

Kim open to another summit with Trump, with conditions

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said he is open to a third summit with President Donald Trump, but set the year's end as a deadline for Washington to offer mutually acceptable terms for an agreement to salvage the high-stakes nuclear diplomacy, the North's state-run media said Saturday.

Kim made the comments during a speech Friday at a session of North Korea's rubber stamp parliament, which made a slew of personnel changes that bolstered his diplomatic lineup amid stalemated negotiations with the United States. His speech came hours after Trump and visiting South Korean President Moon Jae-in met in Washington and agreed on the importance of nuclear talks with North Korea.

"We of course place importance on resolving problems through dialogue and negotiations. But U.S.-style dialogue of unilaterally pushing its demands doesn't fit us, and we have no interest in it," Kim said during the speech.

According to the Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, Kim blamed the collapse of his summit with Trump in February on what he described as unilateral demands by the United States, which he said raised questions over whether Washington has genuine willingness to improve relations. But Kim said his personal relationship with Trump remains good and that they could exchange letters at "any time."

Trump responded to the remarks by saying he agreed with Kim about their relationship, and also expressed a desire for another summit.

"I agree with Kim Jong Un of North Korea that our personal relationship remains very good, perhaps the term excellent would be even more accurate, and that a third Summit would be good in that we fully

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understand where we each stand," Trump wrote on Twitter.

"North Korea has tremendous potential for ... extraordinary growth, economic success and riches under the leadership of Chairman Kim. I look forward to the day, which could be soon, when Nuclear Weapons and Sanctions can be removed, and then watching North Korea become one of the most successful nations of the World!" he tweeted.

In his speech, Kim repeated earlier claims that North Korea's crippled economy would persevere through heavy international sanctions imposed over its nuclear weapons program and that he wouldn't "obsess over summitry with the United States out of thirst for sanctions relief."

The United States has said the summit in Vietnam broke down because of the North's excessive demands for sanctions relief in return for limited disarmament measures. In their first summit last June in Singapore, Trump and Kim issued a vague statement calling for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing when or how it would occur.

Kim said the United States has been refusing to withdraw what the North perceives as "hostile policies" while sticking to "mistaken judgment that we would succumb to maximum pressure." He said the North would not compromise on the "fundamental interests of our country and people, even by a speck," and blamed the United States for arriving in Hanoi with "completely unrealizable plans."

"If the United States approaches us with the right manner and offers to hold a third North Korea-U.S. leaders' summit on the condition of finding solutions we could mutually accept, then we do have a willingness to give it one more try," Kim added. "We will wait with patience until the end of the year for the United States to come up with a courageous decision. But it will clearly be difficult for a good opportunity like last time to come up."

Kim also during the speech made a nationalistic call for South Korea to support the North's positions more strongly and criticized Seoul for acting like an "overstepping mediator" between Washington and Pyongyang. Kim held three summits last year with Moon, who lobbied hard to revive the nuclear talks between the United States and North Korea. Following the collapse of the Trump-Kim summit, the North had been urging the South to break away from Washington and proceed with inter-Korean economic projects that are currently held back by U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

"The South should not act as an 'overstepping mediator' or a 'facilitator' and should rather get its mind straight as a member of the (Korean) nation and boldly speak up for the interest of the nation," Kim said.

When asked about Kim's comments, South Korea's presidential office said Seoul is committed toward keeping the atmosphere of dialogue alive and helping negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang resume at an early date.

On Friday, KCNA reported that Kim was reelected as chairman of the State Affairs Commission, the nation's most important decision-making body, during a session of the Supreme People's Assembly that praised his "outstanding ideological and theoretical wisdom and experienced and seasoned leadership."

Experts say the new appointments may be a sign of Kim's desire to keep recent months of up-and-down nuclear diplomacy alive rather than returning to the threats and weapons tests that characterized 2017, when many feared war on the Korean Peninsula.

But the lack of substantial disarmament commitments from the North and the deepening impasse in nuclear negotiations have fueled doubts over whether Kim would ever voluntarily relinquish an arsenal he may see as his strongest guarantee of survival.

Some experts say it's becoming clear the North intends to turn the talks with the United States into a bilateral arms reduction negotiation between two nuclear states, rather than a unilateral process of surrendering its arsenal.

Kim has signed vague statements calling for the "complete denuclearization" of the peninsula in his meetings with Trump and Moon. But North Korea for decades has been pushing a concept of denuclearization that bears no resemblance to the American definition, with Pyongyang vowing to pursue nuclear development until the United States removes its troops and the nuclear umbrella defending South Korea and Japan.

Associated Press writer Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, South Korea, contributed to this report.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump knew WikiLeaks until he didn't

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump knew WikiLeaks until he didn't.

With his government seeking to prosecute WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, Trump is drawing a blank on a hacking organization he praised to the rafters during the 2016 campaign because of the discomfort it caused his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

It was among a number of factual faux pas and flips in his rhetoric over the past week.

A few months after asserting a need for legal immigrants, Trump declared the country "full" and he also seemed to change the grounds upon which he is refusing to release his taxes: It's not because he can't, but because he doesn't want to.

And with the release of more of the special counsel's report imminent, Trump kept up his refrain that Robert Mueller exonerated him despite Mueller's explicit statement that he did not.

A review:

WIKILEAKS

TRUMP, asked if he still "loves" WikiLeaks: "I know nothing about WikiLeaks. It's not my thing." — remarks Thursday with South Korea's president.

THE FACTS: WikiLeaks was very much Trump's thing in the final weeks of the 2016 campaign, when candidate Trump showered praise on the anti-secrecy organization night after night.

On the same October day that the "Access Hollywood" tape emerged, revealing that Trump had bragged in 2005 about groping women, WikiLeaks began releasing damaging emails from Clinton's campaign manager, John Podesta. Trump and his allies seized on the dumps and weaponized them.

"WikiLeaks, I love WikiLeaks," Trump said in Pennsylvania.

"This WikiLeaks is like a treasure trove," Trump said in Michigan.

"Boy, I love reading WikiLeaks," Trump said in Ohio.

All told, Trump extolled WikiLeaks more than 100 times, and a poster of Assange hung backstage at the Republican's debate war room. At no point from a rally stage did Trump express any misgivings about how WikiLeaks obtained the emails from the Clinton campaign or about the accusations of stealing sensitive U.S. government information, which led to the charges against Assange on Thursday. The U.S. is seeking Assange's extradition from Britain.

TAX RETURNS

TRUMP: "As you know, I got elected last time with this same issue. ... I would love to give them, but I'm not going to do it while I'm under audit." — remarks Wednesday to reporters at the White House.

THE FACTS: Nothing's preventing Trump from releasing his tax returns.

Being under audit is no legal bar to anyone releasing his or her returns.

Asked repeatedly at a House hearing Tuesday whether any regulation prohibited a taxpayer from disclosing returns when under audit, IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig responded "no."

Trump declined to provide his tax information as a candidate in 2016 and as president, something party nominees have traditionally done in the name of the transparency. By withholding his tax returns, Trump has not followed the standard followed by presidents since Richard Nixon started the practice in 1969. During the campaign, Trump said he wanted to release his returns but because he was under a routine audit, "I can't."

After the November midterm elections, Trump claimed at a news conference that the filings are too complex for people to understand.

JOB APPROVAL

TRUMP, tweeting a Fox Business Network graphic showing his "soaring approval" at 55% overall: "Great

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news! #MAGA" — tweet Thursday.

THE FACTS: The graphic on the Georgetown University poll was incorrect: The poll found 55% disapproval of Trump's performance, not approval. Fox Business issued an on-air correction but Trump's tweet remains.

CLIMATE CHANGE

TRUMP: "We withdrew the United States from the one-sided Paris climate accord, where you don't do any more drilling for oil and gas. That was going to cost us a lot of money. No more oil and gas with the Paris accord. That's good for Paris, but that's not good for us. Right?" — remarks Wednesday at a ceremony for the signing of executive orders meant to accelerate pipeline construction.

THE FACTS: Wrong. The Paris accord does not ban any form of energy development. It does not impose emission caps on signatory countries. The accord is a set of voluntary targets determined by individual nations.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

TRUMP: "I've been totally exonerated. No collusion. No obstruction." — remarks Wednesday at the White House.

TRUMP: "I'm not concerned about anything, because frankly there was no collusion and there was no obstruction." — remarks Thursday with South Korea's president.

THE FACTS: Attorney General William Barr's four-page summary of Mueller's nearly 400-page report did not "totally" exonerate Trump. Mueller specifically states in the report, as quoted by Barr: "While this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him."

The summary of principal conclusions by Barr notes Mueller did not "draw a conclusion — one way or the other — as to whether the examined conduct constituted obstruction," but rather set out evidence for both sides, leaving the question unanswered of whether Trump obstructed justice. Barr said ultimately he decided as attorney general that the evidence developed by Mueller was "not sufficient" to establish, for the purposes of prosecution, that Trump committed obstruction.

In Senate testimony Wednesday, Barr acknowledged that Mueller did not ask him to draw a conclusion on the obstruction question, nor did he know whether Mueller agreed with him. Barr said he would be able to explain more fully after releasing a public version of Mueller's report in coming days.

IMMIGRATION

TRUMP: "Mexico must apprehend all illegals and not let them make the long march up to the United States, or we will have no other choice than to Close the Border and/or institute Tariffs. Our Country is FULL!" — tweet Sunday.

THE FACTS: Despite the overwhelmed southern border, there's plenty of room in the United States. Dozens of countries have greater population density. It's only full in terms of the people Trump doesn't want.

His claim of a U.S. with no vacancies for more immigrants is at odds with his own statement two months ago that encouraged "the largest" influx of legal immigrants ever. It also belies a U.S. reality of aging baby boomers and falling birth rates, which make immigrants increasingly important to sustain a level of population growth for the U.S. economy to keep expanding.

The nation's population growth is at its lowest since 1937, with the 18-and-under population declining both nationally and in 29 states, according to William H. Frey of the Brookings Institution. Economists say that restricting immigration would probably weaken economic growth. A shrinking labor force could also harm the health and stability of safety net programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

Trump himself seemed to acknowledge the realities during his State of the Union address in February, declaring, "I want people to come into our country, in the largest numbers ever, but they have to come in legally." He's now describing a U.S. bursting at the seams, unable to take any immigrants, including those seeking legal asylum.

Immigrants as a whole make up a greater percentage of the total U.S. population than they did back in

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1970, having grown from less than 5 percent of the population to more than 13 percent now. In 2030, it's projected that immigrants will become the primary driver for U.S. population growth, overtaking U.S. births.

TRUMP on separating migrant children from their parents when caught crossing into the U.S. illegally: "I'm the one that stopped it. President Obama had child separation." — remarks to reporters Tuesday.

THE FACTS: No, he's the one who started it on a broad scale. He instituted a "zero tolerance" policy aimed at criminally prosecuting all adults caught crossing into the U.S. illegally. That meant detention for adults and the removal of their children while their parents were in custody. During the Obama administration and the early Trump administration, such family separations were the exception. They became the rule under his policy. He suspended the practice in June because of a public uproar.

TRUMP on the family separations: "President Obama had the law. We changed the law, and I think the press should accurately report it but of course they won't." — remarks to reporters Tuesday.

THE FACTS: This is false. Trump did not achieve any change in the law.

Trump's zero-tolerance policy was of his own making. His administration is operating under the same immigration laws as Obama's.

During the Obama administration and before Trump's zero-tolerance policy was introduced, migrant families caught illegally entering the U.S. were usually referred for civil deportation proceedings, not requiring separation, unless they were known to have a criminal record. Then and now, immigration officials may take a child from a parent in certain cases, such as serious criminal charges against a parent, concerns over the health and welfare of a child or medical concerns.

ENERGY and ENVIRONMENT

TRUMP: "We have the cleanest air and water, they say, in the world. We are the best."— remarks Wednesday at the signing of orders on pipelines.

THE FACTS: Not true about air.

U.S. drinking water is among the best by one leading measure.

Trump's own Environmental Protection Agency data show that in 2017, among 35 major U.S. cities, there were 729 cases of "unhealthy days for ozone and fine particle pollution." That's up 22 percent from 2014 and the worst year since 2012. Findings for 2018 are incomplete.

The State of Global Air 2019 report by the Health Effects Institute rated the U.S. as having the eighth cleanest air for particle pollution — which kills 85,000 Americans each year — behind Canada, Scandinavian countries and others.

The U.S. ranks poorly on smog pollution, which kills 24,000 Americans per year. On a scale from the cleanest to the dirtiest, the U.S. is at 123 out of 195 countries measured.

On water, Yale University's global Environmental Performance Index finds 10 countries tied for the cleanest drinking water, the U.S. among them. On environmental quality overall, the U.S. was 27th, behind a variety of European countries, Canada, Japan, Australia and more. Switzerland was No. 1.

TRUMP: "With the help of the incredible workers in this room, the United States is now the No. 1 producer of oil and natural gas anywhere in the world, anywhere on the planet. Not even close. Made a lot of progress in the last two and a half years, haven't we? Huh? Took down a lot of barriers." — signing ceremony.

THE FACTS: As he's done many times before, Trump is crediting himself with things that happened under Obama.

Here's what the government's U.S. Energy Information Administration says: "The United States has been the world's top producer of natural gas since 2009, when U.S. natural gas production surpassed that of Russia, and the world's top producer of petroleum hydrocarbons since 2013, when U.S. production exceeded Saudi Arabia's."

As for crude oil specifically, the information agency says the U.S. became the world's top crude oil producer last year. That is largely attributed to the shale oil boom that began during the Obama administra-

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tion, which has sent production from the Permian Basin in the southwest surging.

TRUMP: "Under this administration, we have ended the war on American energy like never before." — signing ceremony.

THE FACTS: It wasn't much of a war. U.S. petroleum and natural gas production has increased by nearly 60% since 2008, according to the Energy Information Administration, achieving pre-eminence during the Obama administration. That said, the Trump administration is more closely aligned with fossil fuel interests as it works to restrain environmental obstacles and the power of states to stand in the way of pipelines and other energy development.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire, Ellen Knickmeyer, Seth Borenstein and Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington and Nomaan Merchant in Houston contributed to this report.

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Migrants break border gate, force their way into Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican authorities said a group of about 350 migrants broke the locks on a gate at the Guatemalan border Friday and forced their way into southern Mexico to join a larger group of migrants trying to make their way toward the United States.

The National Immigration Institute did not identify the nationalities of the migrants, but they are usually from Central America.

A similar confrontation occurred on the same border bridge between Mexico and Guatemala last year.

The institute said the migrants were acting in a "hostile" and "aggressive" way, and accused them of also attacking local police in Metapa, a Mexican village that lies between the border and the nearby city of Tapachula.

The group of 350 pushed past police guarding the bridge and joined a larger group of about 2,000 migrants who are walking toward Tapachula in the latest caravan to enter Mexico.

Claudia Jaqueline Sandoval, 43, from El Progreso, Honduras, was walking toward Tapachula with her 6-year-old daughter. Another son and a daughter are already in the United States.

"I have been HIV positive for 16 years," said Sandoval, but her reason for going north was not just medical treatment. "It has been two years since I heard from my son" in the United States, and money is scarce, she said.

There are already several groups of migrants in the southern border state of Chiapas who have expressed frustration at Mexico's policy of slowing or stopping the process of handing out humanitarian and exit visas at the border.

A group of several hundred Cuban, African and Central American migrants have been waiting at the immigration offices in Tapachula for documents that would allow them to travel to the U.S. border, where most plan to request asylum.

Some members of that group have scuffled with immigration authorities and broken windows at the offices in recent days, accusing officials of making them wait too long for papers.

And another group of an estimated 2,500 Central American and Cuban migrants have been stuck for at least a week further west in the Chiapas town of Mapastepec, also waiting for papers.

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, April 14, the 104th day of 2019. There are 261 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 14, 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic collided with an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. ship's time and began sinking. (The ship went under two hours and 40 minutes later with the loss of 1,514 lives.)

On this date:

In 1775, the first American society for the abolition of slavery was formed in Philadelphia.

In 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater in Washington.

In 1902, James Cash Penney opened his first store, The Golden Rule, in Kemmerer, Wyo.

In 1935, the "Black Sunday" dust storm descended upon the central Plains, turning a sunny afternoon into total darkness.

In 1939, the John Steinbeck novel "The Grapes of Wrath" was first published by Viking Press.

In 1956, Ampex Corp. demonstrated the first practical videotape recorder at the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters Convention in Chicago.

In 1960, the musical "Bye Bye Birdie" opened on Broadway.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon nominated Harry Blackmun to the U.S. Supreme Court. (The choice of Blackmun, who was unanimously confirmed by the Senate a month later, followed the failed nominations of Clement Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell.)

In 1981, the first test flight of America's first operational space shuttle, the Columbia, ended successfully with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1986, Americans got word of a U.S. air raid on Libya (because of the time difference, it was the early morning of April 15 where the attack occurred.) French feminist author Simone de Beauvoir died in Paris at age 78.

In 1994, two U.S. Air Force F-15 warplanes mistakenly shot down two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters over northern Iraq, killing 26 people, including 15 Americans. Turner Classic Movies made its cable debut; the first film it aired was Ted Turner's personal favorite, "Gone with the Wind."

In 2004, in a historic policy shift, President George W. Bush endorsed Israel's plan to hold on to part of the West Bank in any final peace settlement with the Palestinians; he also ruled out Palestinian refugees returning to Israel, bringing strong criticism from the Palestinians.

Ten years ago: Somali pirates seized four ships with 60 hostages. North Korea said it was restarting its rogue nuclear program, booting U.N. inspectors and pulling out of disarmament talks in an angry reaction to the U.N. Security Council's condemnation of its April 5 rocket launch.

Five years ago: Speaking for the first time in more than two weeks, President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin showed little sign of agreement during a telephone call initiated by Putin, with Obama urging pro-Russian forces to de-escalate the situation in eastern Ukraine and Putin denying that Moscow was interfering in the region. Suspected Islamic militants struck in the heart of Nigeria with a massive rush-hour bomb blast that killed 75 people in Abuja, the capital. The Washington Post and The Guardian won the Pulitzer Prize in public service for revealing the U.S. government's sweeping surveillance efforts.

One year ago: President Donald Trump declared "Mission Accomplished" for a U.S.-led allied missile attack on Syria's chemical weapons program, but the Pentagon said the Assad government was still capable of using chemical weapons against civilians if it chose to do so. Gun rights supporters gathered at state capitols across the country to push back against efforts to pass stricter gun control laws. Czech filmmaker Milos Forman, whose American movies "Amadeus" and "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" won a deluge of Academy Awards including Oscars for best director, died at a Connecticut hospital at the age of 86.

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Today's Birthdays: Country singer Loretta Lynn is 87. Actress Julie Christie is 79. Retired MLB All-Star Pete Rose is 78. Rock musician Ritchie Blackmore is 74. Actor John Shea is 70. Actor Peter Capaldi is 61. Actor-turned-race car driver Brian Forster is 59. Actor Brad Garrett is 59. Actor Robert Carlyle is 58. Rock singer-musician John Bell (Widespread Panic) is 57. Actor Robert Clendenin is 55. Actress Catherine Dent is 54. Actor Lloyd Owen is 53. Baseball Hall of Famer Greg Maddux is 53. Rock musician Barrett Martin is 52. Actor Anthony Michael Hall is 51. Actor Adrien Brody is 46. Classical singer David Miller (Il Divo) is 46. Rapper DaBrat is 45. Actor Antwon Tanner is 44. Actress Sarah Michelle Gellar is 42. Actor-producer Rob McElhenney is 42. Roots singer JD McPherson is 42. Rock singer Win Butler (Arcade Fire) is 39. Actress Claire Coffee is 39. Actor Christian Alexander is 29. Actor Nick Krause is 27. Actress Vivien Cardone is 26. Actor Graham Phillips is 26. Actress Skyler Samuels is 25. Actress Abigail Breslin is 23.

Thought for Today: "Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future, act now, without delay." — Simone de Beauvoir, French author (born 1908; died this date in 1986).