

# Groton Daily Independent

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Chicken Soup  
for the Soul.

The power of finding  
**BEAUTY** in the humblest  
things makes home  
happy and life **LOVELY.**

-Louisa May Alcott

## ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR WANTED

**We are looking for someone with a creative mind and a passion for the elderly. If that is you, here is a great opportunity for YOU!**

➤ Interview and assess all residents prior to the initial Care Plan Conference; document this information in the medical record, develop an individual recreation plan based on the assessment and participate in Interdisciplinary Care Plan meetings

➤ Update assessments and plans as needed and required by state or federal regulations

➤ Develop monthly recreation program calendars that reflect and meet the needs of facility residents

➤ Communicate facility programs to residents, staff, family and volunteers

➤ Manage facility Volunteer Program

➤ Maintain departmental documentation that reflects services provided and resident progress towards goals

➤ In coordination with social services facilitate the residents in the organization and continued development of a Resident's Council

➤ Make job assignments and set priorities

➤ Serve as member of QAA committee

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



Duane Kavanaugh, formerly of Groton, has earned the 2019 Howard B. Smith Award presented by the South Dakota Mental Health Counselors Association. The award is given by SDMHCA and is presented to a professional who exemplifies excellence and leadership in mental health. Kavanaugh is also the current president of SDMHCA.

(Photo from Kavanaugh FB)

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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## Cub Cadet

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## Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Thursday, May 9, 2019

7:00pm- 9:00pm: All-School Play at GHS Gymnasium

### Friday, May 10, 2019

11:00am: Northeast Conference Varsity Track Meet @ Hamlin High School

### Saturday, May 11, 2019

7:00pm- 9:00pm: All-School Play at GHS Gymnasium

### Monday, May 13, 2019

10:00am: Girls Varsity Northeast Conference Golf Meet at the Olive Grove Golf Course, Groton. (Aberdeen Roncalli, Milbank, Redfield-Doland, Sisseton)

10:00am: Northeast Conference Junior High Track Meet at Webster

7:00pm- 10:00pm: School Board Meeting at Groton Area High School

### Thursday, May 16, 2019

10:00am: Golf: Girls Varsity Meet@ Sisseton Golf Course

12:00pm: Track: Varsity Regions @ Redfield High School

### Friday, May 17, 2019

12:30pm- 3:00pm: Elementary Track and Field Day at Doney Field

### Sunday, May 19, 2019

2:00pm: Graduation at Groton Area High School

### Tuesday, May 21, 2019

2:00pm: DARE Graduation at GHS Gymnasium

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting at the Groton Community Center

### Wednesday, May 22, 2019

End of 4th Quarter - Final Day of School  
12:00pm: Golf: Girls Varsity Meet @ Milbank Golf Course

### Thursday, May 23, 2019

Faculty Inservice  
10:00am: Golf: Girls Varsity Regions @ Milbank Golf Course

## Johnson hired as new lineman

London Johnson was hired as the new electric lineman at the council meeting Tuesday evening. His starting wage is \$17.50 per hour.

New council members were given the oath of office. Shirley Wells, David McGannon, Karyn Babcock (via phone) and Scott Hanlon were given the oath of office by President David Blackmun. McGannon was appointed for a one-year term since no one took out a petition in his ward. The mayor will also appoint Jay Peterson for a one-year term in Ward I, but since he was not at the meeting, he will be given the oath of office when he returns. The councilmen at the meeting were McGannon, Wells, Blackmun, Mayor Hanlon and Babcock via phone.

Drew Johnson was appointed as the city's attorney. David Blackmun was elected as council president and Shirley Wells was elected as Vice President.

The committee members are as follows: Electric, transit, insect and weed control, airport: Chairman David McGannon, Co-Chairman Shirley Wells; Water, swimming pool, skating, economic development: Chairman Karyn Babcock, Co-Chairman Burt Glover; Streets, baseball, storm drainage, other rec: Chairman David Blackmun, Co-Chairman David McGannon; Wastewater, Cemetery, Civil Defense, Community Center: Chairman Shirley Wells, Co-Chairman Ward I Vacancy; Finance Officer, legal, library, insurance, general administration, elections, code enforcement: Chairman Ward I Vacancy, Co-Chairman Karyn Babcock.; Solid Waste, Rubble Site, Parks, Forestry, Liquor: Chairman Burt Glover, Co-Chairman Ward I Vacancy; Police: Chairman David Blackmun, Co-Chairman Burt Glover; NECOG Representative: Vacant Ward I; Planning and Zoning Representative: David Blackmun

Police Chief Stacy Mayou reported that there are 46 students enrolled in the D.A.R.E. Program with the graduation to be held May 21 at 2 p.m. He also noted that the portable speed zone signs are in place by the schools.

Dwight Zerr reported that the new sweeper should be coming within the next seven days.

Dan Sunne gave an electrical report. A regulator in the south substation had to be replaced and two street lights need to be installed. He also said repairs were done at the baseball field. Two sets of nets were ripped down from the last blizzard that had hit. The net at Locke-Karst Field is fully repaired. A pole needs to be replaced on Nelson Field.

The council authorized that \$11.50 per user's water bill will be used for the water tower project. This is not an increase in the water bill. The rate is set aside out of the current rate. The council will further look into water rate increase at a later time.

The solid waste fee will increase to \$13.50 to cover the rate increase of the garbage rates.

Nicole Kotzer was hired for the 8 and under softball coach.



Landon Johnson, a 2016 GHS graduate, was hired Tuesday night as Groton's new electric lineman. Johnson is the son of Alan Johnson and Kristi Eckrich.

After graduating from GHS, Johnson went on to Mitchell Tech where he received a degree in powerline maintenance and construction in 2017. From there, he worked in the VT Hanlon substation at Montrose, poured foundations for the BSSE transmission line and built two substations for northwestern energy.

When asked why he decided to come back to Groton, he said, "Going from Groton to Minneapolis, which has just under a zillion people, flared me. Too big for me!"

In his off-work hours, Johnson likes to hunt and fish, which he said is a typical small community thing.

# NOW HIRING!

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## Today in Weather History

May 8, 1934: Pierre recorded its' earliest 100 degrees when the high temperature reached 103 degrees. Mobridge also reached 103 degrees, which is the earliest yearly date for the city Mobridge.

May 8, 1965: The strongest tornado recorded in South Dakota tracked across eastern Tripp County. It was part of a larger tornado outbreak in Nebraska and South Dakota during the afternoon through late evening hours.

May 8, 1986: Thunderstorms produced torrential rainfall of two to four inches over much of central and eastern South Dakota. The very heavy rains caused extensive flooding with Walworth and Potter Counties reporting the most damage. In those counties, most roads were under water. Several bridges and roads were also washed out in that area. The heavy rain washed out the dam at Lake Byre in Lyman County, which produced water waist deep in Kennebec. The city of Kennebec lost their sole source of water when the dam broke. Cow Creek in Lyman County also flooded and broke a part of a dam, causing minor property damage. Rain continued to fall into the morning hours on the 9th. Some two-day rainfall totals include; 4.33 inches in Kennebec; 4.21 in Shelby; 3.91 at 4 miles west of Mellette; 3.30 in Gettysburg; 3.06 in Blunt; 2.99 in Eureka; 2.75 at 2 NNW of Mobridge; 2.70 inches 2 miles south of Ashton and in Britton.

May 8, 1995: Flooding caused by snowmelt from two significant snowstorms in April continued throughout May. The flooding was aggravated by widespread torrential rains, especially from the early morning of the 8th through the early morning of the 9th. Rainfall amounts ranged from one to four inches. Some higher rainfall amounts include; 5.50 inches at Wakpala, 4.50 at Chelsea and Leola, 4.20 at Ipswich, 4.10 inches 12 north of McLaughlin, and 3.91 inches at Aberdeen. A worker was injured near Claremont when the train derailed due to the weakening of the rail-bed caused by high water. The extensive flooding continued to cause road damage and many road closures.

1784: Deadly hailstorm in South Carolina hits the town of Winnsborough. The hailstones, measuring as much as nine inches in circumference, killed several persons, and a great number of sheep, lambs, and birds.

1902: On May 7th, Martinique's Mount Pelee began the deadliest volcanic eruption in the 20th century. On this day, the city of Saint Pierre, which some called the Paris of the Caribbean, was virtually wiped off the map. The volcano killed an estimated 30,000 people.


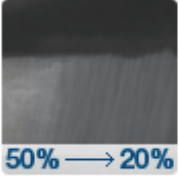



1979: Widespread damage occurred in the Tampa Bay area. The 19 tornadoes reported are the most in one day in Florida history. Three people drowned in Pinellas County where flooding was most severe. Rainfall amounts of 18 inches in 24 hours were reported with 12.73 inches falling at Tampa, FL; with 7.84 inches of that in just six hours. Worst hit was the Polk County community of Auburndale where a tornado made a direct hit on the Auburndale School. Flying debris hurt only eight students. An 83-year-old woman was killed as she hid in an unreinforced concrete block storage shed. 98 trailers were damaged or destroyed, and 40 people were injured.

2003: This was the second of three consecutive days with strong to violent tornadoes around Oklahoma City. A violent F4 tornado that affected Moore, Oklahoma City, Midwest City and Choctaw took on a path very similar to the 5/3/1999 devastating tornado. This particular storm back in 2003 affected areas from Newcastle and Moore to Del City and Choctaw. Although over 130 people were injured, there were no fatalities. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the NWS Office in Norman, Oklahoma.

2009: A deadly derecho squall line crosses far southern Illinois at midday devastating the Carbondale area on its way across a 1,200-mile swath of terrain covering sections of nine states. Hundreds of homes and businesses are damaged or destroyed in Kansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri. The wind gusts to 106 mph in the Carbondale area with sustained winds measured at up to 90 mph. In southern Illinois, the storm system peels siding and roofs off homes and other buildings, blowing out car windows and tearing up trailer parks.




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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
 80%	 50% → 20%			
Showers and Breezy	Chance Showers then Slight Chance Showers	Decreasing Clouds	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 49 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 55 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 67 °F

## Rainy and Chilly Today

<b>Today</b> Light rain	<b>Tonight</b> Light rain showers, possibly mixed with snow on the Coteau	<b>Thursday</b> Partly Cloudy
<b>HIGHS: 40s</b>	<b>LOWS: 30s</b>	<b>HIGHS: 50s</b>

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
Aberdeen, SD 5/8/2019 4:50 AM  

Published on: 05/08/2019 at 5:53AM

Rain will continue today before the low responsible exits late tonight. Expect drier conditions on Thursday. Cool temperatures will persist with highs only in the 40s today.

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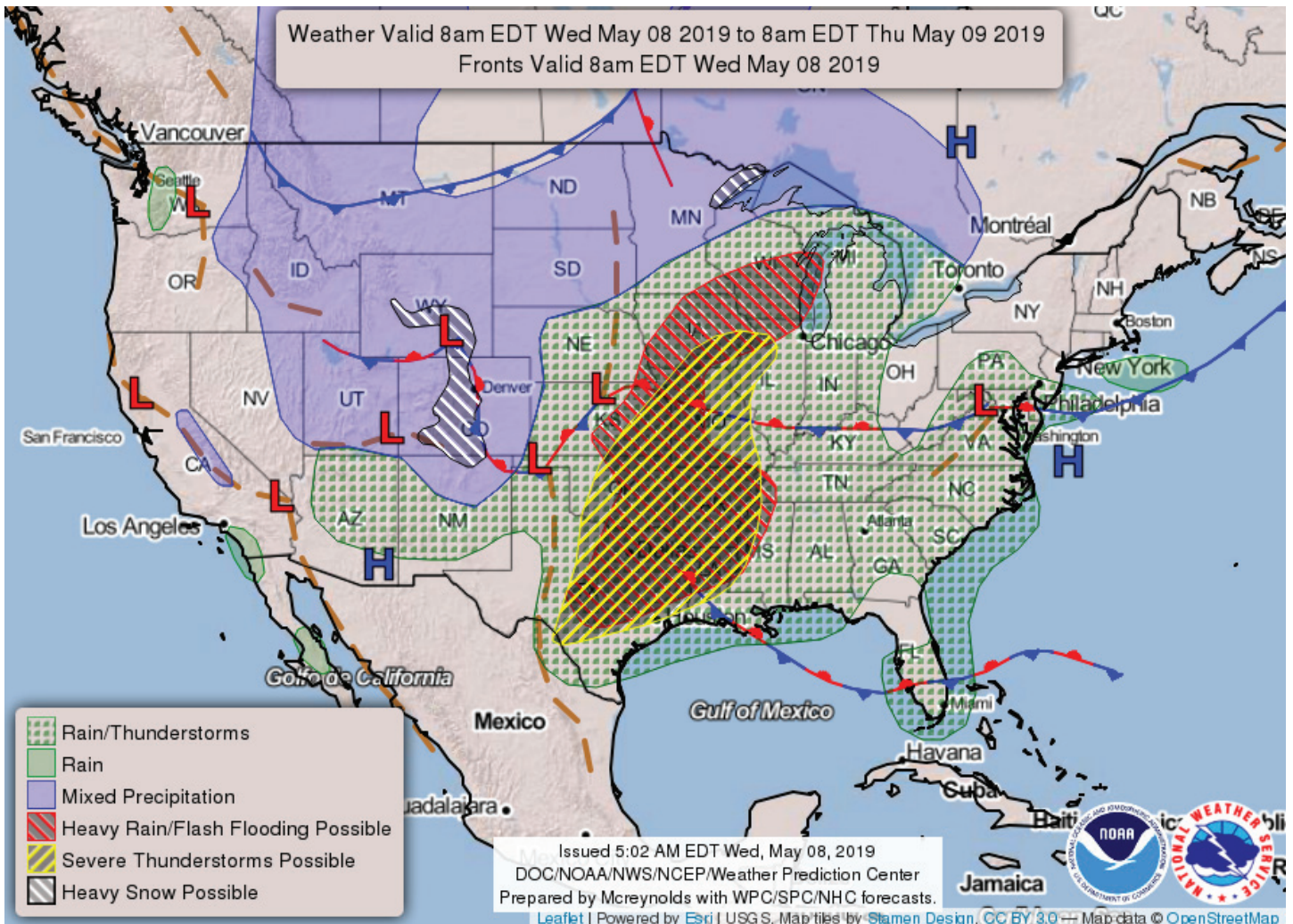
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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 58 °F at 4:29 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: 31 °F at 6:26 AM**  
**High Gust: 17 mph at 3:47 PM**  
**Precip: 0.24**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 105° in 1934**  
**Record Low: 22° in 1945**  
**Average High: 67°F**  
**Average Low: 41°F**  
**Average Precip in May.: 0.71**  
**Precip to date in May.: 0.28**  
**Average Precip to date: 4.74**  
**Precip Year to Date: 4.97**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:49 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:11 a.m.**





## WORDS THAT HARM WORDS THAT HEAL

We often hear of damage done by those who speak before they think. Their damage is harmful, piercing like a sword, leaving broken hearts, troubled minds and sleepless nights as a result. I know of no one who has not been damaged, in one way or another, by careless words from calloused hearts. Unfortunately, for some, speaking harshly is a way of life. Kindness does not reside within them.

People who destroy others with their words are not new. Solomon recognized the pain they caused others when he wrote, Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Reckless words are words that come from resentful hearts and minds filled with evil thoughts. For whatever is in our hearts is there because we gave it a home. Out of the abundance... If its in there, we allow it to be there because we do not realize the damage it does to ourselves and others. And, it will remain there until we ask God, in humility and sincerity, to remove the rage.

And when He does, we can do great things for those hurt by the reckless words of others: we can bring them His healing. Imagine this wonderful opportunity that is available to us to take the healing grace of God to those who have been harmed by hatred and wounded by words.

The tongue of the wise brings healing! How? Heed what Paul said: Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs Gods love through us.

Prayer: From our own experience, Father, we know the pain of reckless words. Help us to realize the power of our words and use them to help and heal others. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.



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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 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

### **Fiery crash in Pennington County kills 26-year-old woman**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A fiery two-vehicle crash south of Rapid City killed a 26-year-old woman. The Highway Patrol says the sport utility vehicle the woman was driving pulled in front of a minivan as she was turning onto state Highway 79 from a rural road about 8:15 a.m. Tuesday. The two vehicles collided and the SUV was engulfed by fire. The woman was unable to get out and died at the scene. Her name wasn't immediately released. The minivan driver suffered serious injuries that the patrol says are not considered life-threatening.

### **SD Lottery**

**By The Associated Press**

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

Mega Millions

03-06-34-54-63, Mega Ball: 19, Megaplier: 3

(three, six, thirty-four, fifty-four, sixty-three; Mega Ball: nineteen; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$273 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$215 million

### **South Dakota governor, Oglala Sioux in protests standoff**

**By BLAKE NICHOLSON Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Oglala Sioux and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem are each waiting for the other side to make a move to resolve a disagreement over anti-protest legislation that led to the tribe banning the governor from one of the largest reservations in the country.

The legislation aims to prevent costly and disruptive protests against the proposed Keystone XL pipeline similar to those that plagued construction of the Dakota Access pipeline in North Dakota. The Tribal Council on May 1 voted 17-0 to tell Noem she's no longer welcome on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and President Julian Bear Runner informed her by letter the following day "that you are not welcome to visit our homelands."

"I'm going to respect tribal sovereignty. I'm not going to go where I'm not welcomed," Noem told reporters Tuesday.

Noem said she wants to resolve the situation quickly and that she's having "ongoing discussions" with council members who reached out to her. But she hadn't yet spoken with Bear Runner, who she said would be welcome to visit her any time.

"I'm hoping that the president will change his mind and be willing to work with me to help face some of the challenges that the tribe has — dealing with economic development, the meth epidemic, some of the resources that they've asked me for," she said.

Bear Runner's spokesman Chase Iron Eyes said the president would be willing to meet with Noem, though "who will make the first move, that remains to be seen."

The two bills that Noem and GOP leaders pushed through toward the end of the legislative session in March allow officials to pursue money from demonstrators who engage in "riot boosting" or encouraging violence during a protest.

Activists and American Indian tribes have been planning on-the-ground protests against the Keystone XL pipeline if it's built, similar to Dakota Access pipeline demonstrations in North Dakota in 2016 and 2017 that resulted in 761 arrests over six months and cost the state \$38 million to police.

"I gave my team the direction to build a plan that would protect our counties and local governments

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from expenses that come with pipeline construction and to protect our people from the costs and dangers that accompany violent riots," Noem said of the legislation.

The American Civil Liberties Union and tribes contend the anti-riot law stifles free speech, and the ACLU is suing Noem, Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg and a county sheriff in federal court on behalf of activists.

The Oglala Sioux is not a plaintiff but it opposes the pipeline that TC Energy wants to build to move Canadian crude through Montana and South Dakota to Nebraska, where it would connect with lines to Gulf Coast refineries. The \$8 billion project has the backing of President Donald Trump but is being fought by opponents in the courts.

Iron Eyes said Oglala Sioux members believe the pipeline threatens the environment.

"They want a better way," he said. "They don't want a government that isn't thinking intelligently about impending ecological and existential crises."

Noem said she has talked to people on the reservation who want to continue working with the state.

"What I hear from community members and other local leaders is very different than the agenda that the president has put out there," she said.

Iron Eyes disputed that.

"We are obviously taking issue with the idea that the elected leadership of the Oglala people don't reflect the will of the Oglala people," he said.

Bear Runner's letter told Noem that if she ignores the tribal edict "we will have no choice but to banish you" from the reservation, which is roughly the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. Banishment is a formal tribal process in which a person can be barred permanently from the reservation after being given due process. Violations can result in fines or even jail time, but Iron Eyes said the tribe's goal is to show its unhappiness with Noem, not banish her.

"Talks have not been cut off with the governor," he said. "She is more than welcome to contact anyone."

Separately Tuesday, U.S. government attorneys said the Trump administration will finish a new environmental review of the pipeline ordered by a federal judge, even though the construction permit issued by the president last month is not subject to the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

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

## US says it will complete Keystone environmental review

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — U.S. government attorneys say the Trump administration plans to finish a new environmental review of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada even if a federal appeals court throws out a lawsuit that blocked the project.

President Donald Trump issued a new permit for the \$8 billion pipeline last month.

In court filings on Tuesday, government attorneys said it is "undisputed" that Trump's permit is not subject to two major environmental laws — the National Environmental Policy Act and Endangered Species Act.

Nevertheless, the attorneys say the State Department will complete an environmental study ordered by a federal judge in Montana in November.

The long-delayed line would carry up to 830,000 barrels (35 million gallons) of crude daily from Canada to Nebraska.

## Man officers subdued with stun gun, pepper spray dies

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police in South Dakota say a man died after allegedly trying to assault multiple people and being subdued by officers with pepper spray and a stun gun.

Authorities say 38-year-old Jeremiah Janis of Rapid City was in an "excited delirium." The Rapid City Journal reports the U.S. National Library of Medicine says the term typically is associated with drug use, but police say they don't yet know the cause.

Authorities say Janis on Monday damaged vehicles, tried to fight with people in a vehicle, and broke a

window at a motel and entered a room, where the occupant hit him several times with a baseball bat. After Janis was subdued by Rapid City officers he was taken to a hospital, where he died. An autopsy was completed but authorities are waiting for more tests to determine the cause of death.

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

## Longtime Aberdeen Fire Marshal retires after 29 years

By SHANNON MARVEL Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — After 29 years with the Aberdeen Fire & Rescue, Michael Thompson is ready for retirement.

As the Aberdeen fire marshal, Thompson investigates fires, deals with the handling of hazardous materials and administration of burn permits for the city of Aberdeen.

Thompson's last day was April 26, where he said the thing he'll miss most is the big family he'll leave behind at the fire department, the Aberdeen American News reported.

Thompson worked with up to 49 others at Aberdeen Fire & Rescue's three fire stations.

"Usually when guys retire, they always say they'll come visit, but they rarely do. So I'm going to try to make sure to come back and visit these guys," Thompson said during his farewell celebration.

Thompson is looking forward to the time off and uninterrupted nights of sleep.

Of all the fire calls that stood out in his memory the most, Thompson recalled an incident in the early morning hours of March 17, 1998, when three fires broke out in town — at a warehouse on Railroad Avenue Southeast, a storage building on North Penn Street and an unoccupied duplex on South Rock Street. Authorities concluded that Richard Henke, who owned all three properties, set the fires.

The next day, Thompson said, Henke was found dead. Henke was a half-mile east of the Bath corner in his car. Authorities determined he died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the chest.

A Jamestown, N.D., native, Thompson has a bachelor's degree in engineering technology/fire protection and safety from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla. He worked as a sprinkler designer in private industry and in loss prevention for an insurance company before becoming Aberdeen's fire marshal.

Battalion Chief Joel Weig said Thompson will be missed.

Weig noted Thompson's plethora of knowledge, saying that if he didn't know the answer to a question it wouldn't be long before he'd get back to you with an answer.

Chad Nilson will take over the job as fire marshal May 13. He currently works for the city of Aberdeen as a building inspector.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

## A Sioux Falls recycler flourishes amid struggling industry

By PATRICK ANDERSON Sioux Falls Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Jake Anderson kept the house he owned in the Twin Cities when he moved away to start his own recycling business.

After working in the industry for a Minnesota-based company, Anderson bought a small recycling company in Sioux Falls that had fallen on hard times and moved into a triplex in the center of the city.

He took on a shop with eight employees, uncertain of the future and hoping to make a mark.

Millennium Recycling Inc. is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, having become a local leader in an industry filled with fluctuation and uncertainty, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

As recycling processors across the United States face ongoing problems in the global market, Millennium has built a solid foundation thanks to Anderson's prudence, the company's willingness to embrace new technology and lessons learned during the lean years.

"Too often, people have too short of a memory in this industry," the 47-year-old said.

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The Sioux Falls-based recycler — known as a materials recovery facility in the industry — is still pulled by those market forces. The 20-year mark represents what Anderson called a “down time” in a business that ebbs and flows with market demands for papers, plastics and metals. But he and other company leaders have weathered worse storms and have built a business model designed for long-term success.

Millennium is using 2019 to instead celebrate its success and growth over the years, including being an innovator in South Dakota’s recycling industry, being the first in the state to recycle consumer electronics, going on a trade mission to China with former Gov. Dennis Daugaard and launching the nonprofit Ecomaniacs, which provides recycling services to summer events.

Anderson was born into an entrepreneurial family. His father owned a liquor store, health clubs and other businesses during his childhood in Owatonna, Minnesota.

After working for years for a recycling company in the Minneapolis area, he was interested when he heard there was a small processor in Sioux Falls that was looking at either closing up shop or selling to a new owner.

He was 27 when bought Python’s Recycling in 1999.

He came with experience and expertise in a larger market, bringing ideas that were new to Sioux Falls. A lot of the work he did in his first year was focused on getting to know the community, its people and businesses.

Millennium’s growth over the years is a testament to those relationships, Anderson said.

“We spent the first — probably — year trying to refine the operation,” he said.

The company’s northern Sioux Falls facility handles 3,500 to 4,000 tons per month compared to 150 to 300 tons per month it handled when Anderson bought the company. It employs about 30 people, not including the dozen staff members at Secure Enterprise Asset Management, a spin-off company that specializes in electronics recycling.

Relationships with the people and companies in the Sioux Falls area remain a strong focus for Millennium, which doesn’t do residential hauling but still actively tries to educate the community about up-to-date best practices in recycling, Millennium President Shannon Dwire said.

Dwire worked for Python before Anderson bought the company and has been with Millennium ever since. Connection to the community has been a common thread since Anderson bought the company she said.

“We always have some level of support out there,” she said.

Millennium’s single-stream recyclable sorter runs like a backbone through its plant. It’s also a backbone of the business itself.

The decision to buy and install the sorter was a defining moment for Millennium.

The equipment changed the company as much as it changed how hundreds of thousands of people in the Sioux Falls area recycle, allowing them to combine papers, plastics, glass bottles and cans in one bag and not worry about the logistics of separating everything out again.

That all happens at Millennium now. Recyclables running through the sorter are separated and belted off to different parts of the plant, where they are bailed and packed with like materials. Only about 3.5% of the stuff that comes in can’t be recycled.

Anderson spent years researching the game-changing technology before deciding to invest, but was pressured by conversations with Waste Management, which had already altered the industry landscape by allowing consumers to mix recyclables.

But the national chain didn’t have the technology in smaller secondary markets such as Sioux Falls to sort recyclables and was losing money by having an ancillary operation in the city.

But it was clear the industry was going in a new direction. If Millennium didn’t move to single-stream sorting, there was a chance another company would one day take its place, Anderson said.

“It was the equivalent of an all-in play for us,” he said. “We spent a painstaking amount of time just trying to pencil this out.”

Millennium bought and went through the first phase of installing the technology in 2007.

And then the Great Recession hit.

The fallout of the economic downturn left Millennium floundering with an oversupply of recycled materials and minimal demand from buyers such as the paper mills who rely on processors for product.

Millennium had gone into debt as much as the bank would allow, and Anderson started meeting with attorneys about bankruptcy.

And then, at the wire, business started to rebound, Anderson said.

"All of a sudden, we started to get orders," he said.

It took about two years for Millennium to catch up to where it was before the recession, but company leadership left the experience having learned a number of important lessons.

Perhaps the most important was clarity on the realities of the industry. There will be good times and bad times, and Millennium doesn't take anything for granted.

"You use your good markets wisely," Dwire said. "Even when things are running well, you look for efficiencies."

Global market forces have continued to squeeze the industry, starting with tighter limits China's government approved in 2013 for imported recycled material.

China sparked incredible growth in the U.S. recycling industry in 1999 when it opened massive paper mills subsidized by the government. The buoying of the industry was felt all the way in Sioux Falls, where Anderson was just starting to build Millennium into a bigger, more commercially-focused recycler.

China dominated the market, becoming the biggest buyer of America's recycled goods. While recycling processors benefited from Chinese demand, paper mills in the U.S. started a process of acquisition and consolidation to compete, eventually closing plants across the country, especially in the coastal states.

The, with domestic demand for recycled goods weakened, China started limiting waste imports. China's new policy, dubbed "Green Fence," was a solution to the country's increasing problems with pollution, but Anderson believes the restrictions on imported recycling products were painting with too big of a brush.

Then, in 2018, China upped the ante with an even stricter policy called "National Sword." It was basically a list of outright bans on materials, including imported recyclables.

But the loss of North American paper mills during the boom years of Chinese demand has now left the entire industry scrambling for solutions, Anderson said. That includes Chinese investment in some of the closed U.S.-based paper mills.

Millennium, with its strong ties to the region, isn't directly affected by China's policies. About 90% of its recycled material is sold to buyers in the Midwest.

None of the current stress caused by the global market compares to what Millennium has already survived.

"Recycling is not going to go away," Anderson said. "It's going to do what it's always done. It's going to evolve."

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

## **Bella Pregnancy Center director reflects on 30-year career**

**By KAIJA SWISHER Black Hills Pioneer**

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — During her tenure, the organization has been housed at four different locations and changed its name three times. The work, however, remains just as rewarding for Roxie Johnson, executive director of Bella Pregnancy Resource Center in Spearfish, as when she started more than 30 years ago.

"I love working with the women here at Bella, with my co-workers and the staff and volunteers, but the clients are really what keep me here. Everyone's unique; everyone has their own story," she told the Black Hills Pioneer, describing that it was the compassion of the organization that drew her to become a volunteer client advocate in 1988, before becoming the executive director of the organization the next year. "They (clients) have great value, they have great worth, that's how we view them when they come in: We just want to be loving and compassionate when they come in and educate them and give them tools so that they can be good moms and dads if that's what they choose to do."

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Johnson, who grew up in Wyoming, moved with her family to the Black Hills during her senior year of high school, and after getting married, she and her husband, John, moved to Spearfish in 1979. The couple has four grown children and nine grandchildren, and Johnson said that her connection to Bella began when she was babysitting for the former director of the organization who encouraged her to get involved. She took the volunteer training and said she was "hooked" from the first night. After serving as a volunteer for a year, she became the executive director in 1989.

"Women have unplanned pregnancies all the time. Thirty years ago, it was more of a stigma," Johnson said.

The faith-based organization's mission is "Empowering women in unplanned pregnancies to make informed decisions." Originally, the organization was called Northern Hills Crisis Pregnancy Center, but those involved wanted women to know the organization serves anyone who has a pregnancy need — not just people in crisis — so the name was changed to Northern Hills Pregnancy Care Center, Johnson said, and eventually to Bella, which means "beautiful" in Italian. The organization's website states, "At Bella, we believe that every woman is a woman of beauty and great worth. No matter what your circumstances are, we believe you are a woman of value who is capable of making your own decisions. Bella exists to be a resource for women and men with pregnancy related needs."

Johnson said that initially, the name was to be just the one word, Bella, but they found that when answering the telephone with, "Hello, this is Bella," people on the other end would assume that was the name of the person answering and would say "Hi, Bella!" so "pregnancy resource center" was added to the name.

Over 30 years, the organization's crisis intervention services have basically stayed the same, Johnson said. What has changed is that since 2008, Bella is now an early pregnancy medical facility, which means it offers pregnancy testing and ultrasound confirmation. Johnson explained that the organization does not take the place of a family physician or OB-GYN, who provide prenatal care; Bella is a place to start.

All services at Bella are free of charge, and in addition to crisis intervention and early pregnancy medical services, Bella offers "Earn While You Learn," a comprehensive parenting program that teaches about everything from pregnancy/pregnancy care, labor and delivery, how to care for the baby, etc., with lessons for parenting children up to age 12. Johnson said that not only do clients learn how to bathe a baby, they are also learning how to meet the needs — spiritual, emotional, and physical — of their children.

"It's an excellent program," she said.

As they work through the program, clients earn credit that they can redeem for the things that they need, such as clothing, diapers, wipes, cribs, strollers, car seats — almost anything baby-related.

The organization is staffed by five part-time employees and 12-15 volunteers at any one time, and clients come from around the area to find resources that can include medical providers to financial aid and beyond.

"We're a resource center, so this is a good place to start," Johnson said. "Bella's a good place to start for anyone who thinks they might be pregnant, whether they're in crisis or not. We serve all."

She added that the organization is locally supported; all of its funding comes from local sources, and its services are free of charge. Johnson said that Bella accepts donations and is always in need of things baby and maternity related. While they do accept some used items, they should be in like-new condition, and because of government regulations/etc., they are not able to take used cribs or car seats. Johnson said that diapers and wipes are the number-one item the organization goes through, and she added that while all diaper sizes are accepted, it is generally the larger sizes — size 3 and up — that they most often run out of.

Johnson offered the following advice to future parents: "Relax. Take it a day at a time," she said.

"We're here. We love serving the women of our community," she added, encouraging anyone in need of pregnancy services to check out Bella Pregnancy Center. "It's a place to start."

## Security forces at Ellsworth take on challenges at the base

By ARIELLE ZIONTS Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Service members are trained to follow strict rules and act with honor. But like civilians, they too can make mistakes.

"You're going to have people that do unfortunately break the law," federal officer Robert Rybak told the Rapid City Journal as he recently drove his patrol car around Ellsworth Air Force Base.

When crimes happen at Ellsworth, people are cited or arrested by officers like Rybak who are specifically assigned to the base. About 160 military police (MPs) and civilian federal officers — jointly called security forces — have jurisdiction not just over airmen, but all of the approximately 7,500 people who live and work at Ellsworth and any visitors.

MPs can serve on U.S. bases or overseas ones while federal officers can only work in the U.S., said Rybak, a 47-year-old Rapid City resident. Having both kinds of police ensures "there's never a gap or a lapse, if you will, in the protection of Ellsworth Air Force Base."

Security forces on the base do "the same exact thing" a police officer in Rapid City might do, such as conducting traffic stops, dealing with loud noise complaints, and responding to crimes such as shoplifting and domestic violence, Rybak said. "There's no boundaries here, we get subjected to the same kinds of things that off-base does."

Some crimes are unique to military bases, such as unauthorized people entering, damaging or taking items from secure areas, Rybak said. People also sometimes steal military-related items such as an airplane part. If someone steals a computer in Rapid City, Rybak said, it's treated as a theft, but on base, it's also treated as a security threat since it could contain classified information.

Security forces also have access to different technology than other police officers. When officers or deputies in Rapid city chase after a suspect, they have to rely on cornering the suspect, hitting them or laying down spikes in the direction the car is traveling in. On base, people fleeing in cars are confined by fences and can be stopped by guards deploying yellow metal barriers at the entrances.

A major difference between policing on and off base is that federal rather than state law is the primary law on base, Rybak said. Civilians arrested on base are tried at the federal court while airmen go through the military court on base. The airmen are provided a defense lawyer by the base or can hire a private attorney. They can be detained at the base's jail before trial and serve their sentence there if it's less than a year. Those with longer punishments are sent to a federal prison. Airmen convicted of crimes are usually not allowed to return to work.

The security forces headquarters at Ellsworth looks much like any other public safety complex with a dispatch center, offices, technology for fingerprinting and conducting background checks, interview rooms, lockers, arms and ammunition storage and the jail.

Three men — one in pre-trial detention and others serving sentences for drug possession and stealing military property — sat in the small jail watching TV. The jail, which Rybak said is never at its maximum capacity of eight people, also has cards and workout equipment for the inmates.

A unique part of the headquarters is its supply room, which has gear for officers and MPs serving on base, but also special protective equipment for MPs deploying overseas. Some MPs from Ellsworth are currently serving six-month deployments in the Middle East, said Jordan Giliam, an airman who oversees equipment and vehicles.

To become an MP, service members complete basic training and attend security forces school for eight weeks, Rybak said. There, they learn how to police on U.S. bases but also how to prepare for policing in overseas combat zones. Civilian officers must pass a background check and physical test before attending a federal police academy, also for eight weeks. Once security forces are assigned to a base, they receive local training and undergo yearly drills and evaluations.

Most of the training is similar to off-base police training, Rybak said, but security forces also study scenarios that are more likely to occur on a military base, such as car bombs like the one that targeted Travis Air Force Base in California last year.



Rybak has experience as a federal officer, MP and off-base officer. After joining the Air Force in 1989, he served three years as an MP canine handler at Ellsworth before serving 10 more years in other states and South Korea. After leaving the military, he was an officer with the Las Vegas Police Department and then a trooper with South Dakota Highway Patrol. He became a federal officer two years ago after retiring from Highway Patrol.

"The biggest thrill is that in a way, I'm kind of back in the Air Force serving my country," Rybak said. "I mean to me that's kind of cool. I may not be active duty, but I'm basically back on Ellsworth assisting my previous brothers."

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

## Montana solar project in disrepair but still producing power

REED POINT, Mont. (AP) — A Montana solar project has fallen into disrepair but is still generating power. The Billings Gazette reports that the River Bend Solar project's motors designed to tilt the panels sunward malfunctioned in recent months.

The 16-acre (six-hectare) project in Reed Point owned by Enerparc Inc. of Oakland, California, went online in 2017 with more than 8,000 solar panels.

One section has collapsed and several banks of panels no longer face the sun at the array in the town 60 miles (97 kilometers) west of Billings.

A company official says Enerparc is working with a contractor to fix the array.

The project is one of three Enerparc facilities in Montana that qualify for a fixed priced and contract with South Dakota-based NorthWestern Energy, the state's largest monopoly utility.

Information from: The Billings Gazette, <http://www.billingsgazette.com>

## Fireworks return to Mount Rushmore National Memorial in 2020

KEYSTONE, S.D. (AP) — Fireworks will return to Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota for the Fourth of July celebration in 2020.

Mount Rushmore's fireworks were discontinued after 2009 due to concerns related to the pine beetle infestation that increased fire concerns in the Black Hills National Forest. The forest has since rebounded, and there have been advances in pyrotechnic safety.

Gov. Kristi Noem, federal Interior Secretary David Bernhardt and National Park Service Deputy Director P. Daniel Smith on Tuesday announced the resumption of fireworks. Noem said the agreement came after several months of meetings and discussions.

## Authorities identify Brown County Jail inmate who died

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Brown County authorities have identified an inmate who was found unresponsive at the jail in Aberdeen and died three days later at a Sioux Falls hospital.

Chief Deputy Dave Lunzman tells the American News that 28-year-old Mitchell Morrison was found with a noose around his neck Thursday night. Authorities are awaiting results of an autopsy. No foul play is suspected in the death.

Morrison pleaded guilty in Day County in April to a felony drug crime and was sentenced to serve two months in jail. The state Division of Criminal Investigation is looking into his death.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

## South Africa votes with corruption, unemployment big issues

By **ANDREW MELDRUM** Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — South Africans voted Wednesday in presidential and parliamentary elections, with early signs of a relatively low turnout, as voters say they are disillusioned by widespread corruption and unemployment.

It is 25 years since the end of apartheid, but despite the demise of the harsh system of racial discrimination, South Africa remains divided by economic inequality .

The African National Congress, the party of Nelson Mandela that has been in power since 1994, is likely to win a majority but it will face a difficult challenge to retain the 62% of the vote it got five years ago.

The party has been tarnished by widespread corruption scandals and a national unemployment rate of 27% that has discouraged many voters. The ANC's leader, President Cyril Ramaphosa, has campaigned on promises to clean up his party, an acknowledgment of the problems that forced his predecessor to resign last year.

"Corruption got into the way," said Ramaphosa after voting, saying that graft prevented his party from serving the people.

Selina Molapo, a 38-year-old resident of Tembisa township in eastern Johannesburg, agreed with the president, saying that corruption is a problem and complaining that the ANC did not deliver on its promise of jobs in the previous election campaign.

"In 2014 we voted for the ANC but our situation has not changed," said Molapo. "I am voting for a different party."

Firebrand opposition leader Julius Malema voted in his home area of Polokwane in northern Limpopo province. After casting his ballot, Malema said he expects a good turnout for his party, the populist, leftist Economic Freedom Fighters.

"If the people want to continue unemployed, if the people want to continue landless, then they can continue voting for the same party," said Malema, referring to the ruling ANC. "But if you need change, the EFF is the way to go!"

The country's young voters, who make up about 20% of the electorate, largely support Malema, who broke from the ANC six years ago. However, registration of voters under 30 years old was relatively low.

Mmusi Maimane, leader of the largest opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, was one of the first voters at the Dobsonville polling station in Soweto, Johannesburg's largest black township.

"Soweto represents to me the home of the struggle against apartheid and it is where we are now struggling against corruption and for a new government," Maimane said after casting his ballot. Black support for Maimane's party is limited because it is generally perceived to be run by whites.

The ANC has vowed to embark on a program of seizing white-owned land without compensation, for which it needs a 67% majority to change South Africa's constitution.

In the most likely scenario, the ANC will need to form a coalition government with another party to get the votes needed. That is likely to be the EFF, which supports land seizures.

If the ANC's share of the vote slips below 60%, Ramaphosa could be vulnerable and his party could oust him and choose a new leader.

More than 40 smaller parties also are vying for power in the balloting.

Neither the president nor the parliament is elected directly. Voters cast ballots for a national party and the number of votes won by each party determines how many representatives are sent to the legislature. The president is the leader of the party that gets the most votes.

Some 26 million people of the country's population of 57 million are eligible to vote. Most of the 22,900 polling stations opened at 7 a.m. local time and were to close at 9 p.m. (0500 to 1900 GMT).

The day is a national holiday to encourage turnout.

South Africa was famous for its long lines of voters in the first post-apartheid election 25 years ago. But a sense of national apathy this year could be an ominous sign for the ANC.

Preliminary results will be announced from the electoral commission in the capital, Pretoria, and final

results are not expected for 48 hours.

Associated Press writer Mogomotsi Magome in Johannesburg contributed.

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## Waters teaches how to be a 'first' and succeed in Congress

By LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — She's been called "Kerosene Maxine" and gavelled off the House floor for accusing Republican men of badgering women. She dismissed President Donald Trump and his allies as thugs and predicted his impeachment before he was sworn into office.

No one, Maxine Waters once observed, should be surprised by her. But after nearly three decades in Congress, the 80-year-old California lawmaker is in an eye-opening role as the highest-ranking African American woman in the country. She's wielding the gavel of the bank-regulating Financial Services Committee with the power to investigate Trump where some say it counts most: his business dealings.

The role makes Waters a model for many, but notably for the outspoken freshmen Democrats who have drawn as much scrutiny — and as many threats — for what they've said as for the barriers they are breaking. Waters, known by some of them as "Auntie Maxine," has been there. And her unique ascent offers lessons in how to balance activism with work and prudence.

"@RepMaxineWaters always tells it like it is like our favorite auntie," tweeted Michigan Rep. Rashida Tlaib, one of the first Muslim women in Congress. She, like Waters, called for Trump's impeachment, though in more profane terms.

Waters has minced no words on her drive to see Trump formally charged by the House. She is leading one of six House committee investigations of Trump's world, specifically into Deutsche Bank, the German asset management firm that has lent Trump's real estate organization millions of dollars over the years. She said earlier this year that the bank is cooperating with requests for documents. But Trump last week launched a legal fight to block the banks from doing so, opening a new front in his battle against Congress.

Waters, the only woman and the only African American to hold that chairmanship, has offered instruction by example of how to survive as a "first" in the most diverse House in U.S. history.

"Her preparedness and her concentration on getting something done, and her ability to get along with us, allows her to get the policy done, too," said House Oversight and Reform Committee Elijah Cummings, D-Md., whose panel is also investigating Trump. "She can fire folks up, but she also does her homework. She also has a game plan in the end."

Tlaib and a dozen other Democratic freshmen on the panel had front row seats for what became a class in what House Speaker Nancy Pelosi calls "knowing your power." When Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin complained about how long Waters was questioning him, she glared down from the dais.

"This is a new way and it's a new day and it's a new chair and I have the gavel at this point," Waters said levelly.

Mnuchin suggested she drop the "gravel" and dismiss him. She did not. "Please do not instruct me as to how I'm to conduct this committee," she said. Mnuchin departed when Waters was ready. He promised to come back if called.

That power moment happened, congressional veterans said, chiefly because Waters has earned clout up the leadership ladder and across the partisan aisle. So when Democrats took control of the House after the November 2018 elections, she had been in line for nearly five years for the top spot — and there was no quarrel over the promotion, Democrats said. That, despite Waters' long feud with Trump, in which he branded her "low IQ" and she urged people to publicly shame members of his administration over its family detention policy at the U.S. border. He warned last July, "Be careful what you wish for Max!"

Chairmanship granted, Waters' portfolio includes overseeing the government's banking, housing and consumer protection agencies, as well as investigating Trump. On policy, she's got the background, in-

cluding helping write the Dodd-Frank Act, which imposed new oversight on the banking industry. Even on impeachment, she's got experience, should the House ever proceed in that direction against Trump. Waters was one of President Bill Clinton's staunchest supporters on the House Judiciary Committee when it anchored proceedings against him.

Waters also has been through the grinder of public scrutiny. In 2012, a House committee cleared her of wrongdoing following allegations she steered a \$12 million federal bailout to a bank where her husband owned stock.

Throughout, Waters developed an approach that Republicans and Democrats describe as a balance between ferocious public advocacy for her constituencies and a down-to-business approach to deal making. And yes, compromise, including on a law she helped negotiate with House Republicans providing flood insurance to millions of Americans.

"People understand that she is fighting for them," said Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, who served with Waters in the California State Assembly. Waters was in the State Assembly for 14 years before being elected to the House in 1990. "They feel confident that she has done everything in her power to get the best possible deal," Roybal-Allard said.

A sense of humor inside Congress' ivory tower helps, too.

"I have a picture of her hanging on my wall," said Rep. Steve Chabot, a Republican from Ohio who sparred with Waters on the Clinton impeachment committee. It immortalizes a moment in which he told Waters that even though she's not a lawyer, he'd call her to advocate for him if ever he got in trouble. "She laughed," he recalled.

Rep. Peter King, a New York Republican and a member of Waters' committee, said her calls for Trump's impeachment make it unlikely she'll get any Republican cooperation on that. But policy is something else.

"There's different levels of Maxine. She really is a tough fighter," King said, recalling a skirmish he had with her in 1994 in which she told him to "shut up" in a committee hearing and the fight spilled out onto the House floor. She was gaveled down for her "demeanor" and her words stricken from the record.

"On the other hand," King added, "there's the Maxine Waters who knows how to get things done, who knows how to make alliances, who can work with people in (banking) industry if she has to."

No longer does anyone ask the leaders to answer for Waters' words, as happens with some of the freshmen — Rep. Ilhan Omar, for example, for her remarks on Israel.

"She doesn't care who she might offend," said House Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., one of the other chairmen on the call who's served alongside Waters in the House since she arrived. "She cares more about the policy and getting from A to B."

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Associated Press Researchers Rhonda Shafner and Jennifer Farrar contributed to this report.

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Follow Kellman on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/APLaurieKellman>

## Doctors eye deep brain stimulation to treat opioid addiction

By ERIKA KINETZ Associated Press

SHANGHAI (AP) — Patient Number One is a thin man, with a scabby face and bouncy knees. His head, shaved in preparation for surgery, is wrapped in a clean, white cloth.

Years of drug use cost him his wife, his money and his self-respect, before landing him in this drab yellow room at a Shanghai hospital, facing the surgeon who in 72 hours will drill two small holes in his skull and feed electrodes deep into his brain.

The hope is that technology will extinguish his addiction, quite literally, with the flip of a switch.

The treatment — deep brain stimulation — has long been used for movement disorders like Parkinson's. Now, the first clinical trial of DBS for methamphetamine addiction is being conducted at Shanghai's Ruijin Hospital, along with parallel trials for opioid addiction. And this troubled man is the very first patient.

The surgery involves implanting a device that acts as a kind of pacemaker for the brain, electrically

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stimulating targeted areas. While Western attempts to push forward with human trials of DBS for addiction have foundered, China is emerging as a hub for this research.

Scientists in Europe have struggled to recruit patients for their DBS addiction studies, and complex ethical, social and scientific questions have made it hard to push forward with this kind of work in the United States, where the devices can cost \$100,000 to implant.

China has a long, if troubled, history of brain surgery for drug addiction. Even today, China's punitive anti-drug laws can force people into years of compulsory treatment, including "rehabilitation" through labor. It has a large patient population, government funding and ambitious medical device companies ready to pay for DBS research.

There are eight registered DBS clinical trials for drug addiction being conducted in the world, according to a U.S. National Institutes of Health database. Six are in China.

But the suffering wrought by the opioid epidemic may be changing the risk-reward calculus for doctors and regulators in the United States. Now, the experimental surgery Patient Number One is about to undergo is coming to America. In February, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration greenlighted a clinical trial in West Virginia of DBS for opioid addiction.

## HUMAN EXPERIMENTS

Patient Number One insisted that only his surname, Yan, be published; he fears losing his job if he is identified.

He said doctors told him the surgery wasn't risky. "But I still get nervous," he said. "It's my first time to go on the operating table."

Three of Yan's friends introduced him to meth in a hotel room shortly after the birth of his son in 2011. They told him: Just do it once, you've had your kid, you won't have problems.

Smoking made Yan feel faint and slightly unhinged. Later, he found meth brought crystalline focus to his mind, which he directed at one thing: Cards. Every time Yan smoked, he gambled. And every time he gambled, he lost — all told, around \$150,000 since he started using drugs, he estimated.

His wife divorced him. He rarely saw his son.

Yan checked into a hospital for detox, moved to another town to get away from bad influences, took Chinese traditional medicine. But he relapsed every time. "My willpower is weak," he said.

Last year his father, who had a friend who had undergone DBS surgery at Ruijin, gave him an ultimatum: Back to rehab or brain surgery. "Of course, I chose surgery," Yan said. "With surgery, I definitely have the chance to get my life back."

Before there were brain implants in China there was brain lesioning. Desperate families of heroin users paid thousands of dollars for unproven and risky surgeries in which doctors destroyed small clumps of brain tissue. Brain lesioning quickly became a profit center at some hospitals, but it also left a trail of patients with mood disorders, lost memories and altered sex drives.

In 2004, China's Ministry of Health ordered a halt to brain lesioning for addiction at most hospitals. Nine years later, doctors at a military hospital in Xi'an reported that roughly half of the 1,167 patients who had their brains lesioned stayed off drugs for at least five years.

DBS builds on that history. But unlike lesioning, which irreversibly kills brain cells, the devices allow brain interventions that are — in theory — reversible. The technology has opened a fresh field of human experimentation globally.

"As doctors we always need to think about the patients," said Dr. Sun Bomin, director of Ruijin Hospital's functional neurosurgery department. "They are human beings. You cannot say, 'Oh, we do not have any help, any treatment for you guys.'"

Sun said he has served as a consultant for two Chinese companies that make deep brain stimulators — SceneRay Corp. and Beijing PINS Medical Co. He has tried to turn Ruijin into a center of DBS research, not just for addiction, but also Tourette syndrome, depression and anorexia.

In China, DBS devices can cost less than \$25,000. Many patients pay cash.

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"You can rest assured for the safety of this operation," Yan's surgeon, Dr. Li Dianyou, told him. "It is no problem. When it comes to effectiveness, you are not the first one, nor the last one. You can take it easy because we have done this a lot."

In fact, there are risks. There is a small chance Yan could die of a brain hemorrhage. He could emerge with changes to his personality, seizures, or an infection. And in the end, he may go right back on drugs.

## A BUZZING DRILL

Some critics believe this surgery should not be allowed.

They argue that such human experiments are premature, and will not address the complex biological, social and psychological factors that drive addiction. Scientists don't fully understand how DBS works and there is still debate about where electrodes should be placed to treat addiction. There is also skepticism in the global scientific community about the general quality and ethical rigor — particularly around issues like informed consent — of clinical trials done in China.

"It would be fantastic if there were something where we could flip a switch, but it's probably fanciful at this stage," said Adrian Carter, who heads the neuroscience and society group at Monash University in Melbourne. "There's a lot of risks that go with promoting that idea."

The failure of two large-scale, U.S. clinical trials on DBS for depression around five years ago prompted soul-searching about what threshold of scientific understanding must be met in order to design effective, ethical experiments.

"We've had a reset in the field," said Dr. Nader Pouratian, a neurosurgeon at UCLA who is investigating the use of DBS for chronic pain. He said it's "a perfectly appropriate time" to research DBS for drug addiction, but only "if we can move forward in ethical, well-informed, well-designed studies."

In China, meanwhile, scientists are charging ahead.

At 9 a.m. on a grey October Friday in Shanghai, Dr. Li drilled through Yan's skull and threaded two electrodes down to his nucleus accumbens, a small structure near the base of the forebrain that has been implicated in addiction.

Yan was awake during the surgery. The buzzing of the drill made him tremble.

At 4 p.m. the same day, Yan went under general anesthesia for a second surgery to implant a battery pack in his chest to power the electrodes in his skull.

Three hours later, Yan still hadn't woken from the anesthesia. His father began weeping. His doctors wondered if drug abuse had somehow altered his sensitivity to anesthesia.

Finally, after 10 hours, Yan opened his eyes.

## BODY COUNT

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 500,000 Americans died of drug overdoses in the decade ending in 2017 — increasingly, from synthetic opioids that come mainly from China, U.S. officials say. That's more than the number of U.S. soldiers who died in World War II and Vietnam combined.

The body count has added urgency to efforts to find new, more effective treatments for addiction. While doctors in the U.S. are interested in using DBS for addiction, work funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health is still focused on experiments in animals, not people.

At least two U.S. laboratories dropped clinical trials of DBS for treating alcoholism over concerns about study design and preliminary results that didn't seem to justify the risks, investigators who led the studies told The Associated Press.

"The lack of scientific clarity, the important but strict regulatory regime, along with the high cost and risk of surgery make clinical trials of DBS for addiction in the U.S. difficult at the present time," said Dr. Emad Eskandar, the chairman of neurological surgery at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

China's studies have offered mixed results. Sun and his colleagues have published one case study, describing a patient who used heroin and fatally overdosed three months after getting DBS. But a separate

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pilot study published in January by doctors at a military hospital in Xi'an showed that five of eight heroin users stayed off drugs for two years after DBS surgery.

Based on those results, SceneRay is seeking Chinese regulatory approval of its DBS device for opioid addiction, and funding a multi-site clinical trial targeting 60 participants. SceneRay chairman Ning Yihua said his application for a clinical trial in the U.S. was blocked by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

But in February, the FDA greenlighted a small, separate trial of DBS for opioid use disorder, said Dr. Ali Rezai, who is leading the study at the West Virginia University Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute. They hope to launch the trial in June, with funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The FDA declined comment.

"People are dying," Rezai said. "Their lives are devastated. It's a brain issue. We need to explore all options."

## 'YOU CAME TOO LATE'

Two unsteady days after Yan's surgery, doctors switched on his DBS device. As the electrodes activated, he felt a surge of excitement. The current running through his body kept him awake; he said he spent the whole night thinking about drugs.

The next day, he sat across from Dr. Li, who used a tablet computer to remotely adjust the machine thrumming inside Yan's head.

"Cheerful?" Li asked as she touched the controls on the tablet.

"Yes," Yan answered.

Li changed the settings. "Now?"

"Agitated," Yan said. He felt heat in his chest, then a beating sensation, numbness and fatigue. Yan began to sweat.

Li made a few more modifications. "Any feelings now?"

"Pretty happy now," Yan said.

He was in high spirits. "This machine is pretty magical. He adjusts it to make you happy and you're happy, to make you nervous and you're nervous," Yan said. "It controls your happiness, anger, grief and joy."

Yan left the hospital the next morning.

More than six months later, he said he's still off drugs. With sobriety, his skin cleared and he put on 20 pounds. When his friends got back in touch, he refused their drugs. He tried to rekindle his relationship with his ex-wife, but she was pregnant with her new husband's child.

"The only shame is that you came too late," she told him.

Sometimes, in his new life, he touches the hard cable in his neck that leads from the battery pack to the electrodes in his brain. And he wonders: What is the machine doing inside his head?

Associated Press researcher Chen Si contributed to this report.

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## Iran threatens more enrichment if no new nuclear deal

By AMIR VAHDAT and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran threatened Wednesday to resume higher enrichment of uranium in 60 days if world powers fail to negotiate new terms for its 2015 nuclear deal a year after President Donald Trump withdrew from the accord, raising tensions as a U.S. aircraft carrier and a bomber wing deploy to confront unspecified threats from Tehran.

In a televised address, President Hassan Rouhani also said that Iran would stop exporting excess uranium and heavy water from its nuclear program, two requirements of the deal. He did not elaborate on the degree to which Iran was prepared to enrich uranium, which at high levels of enrichment can be used in nuclear weapons.

Rouhani said Iran wanted to negotiate new terms with remaining partners in the deal, but acknowledged

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that the situation was dire.

"We felt that the nuclear deal needs a surgery and the painkiller pills of the last year have been ineffective," Rouhani said. "This surgery is for saving the deal, not destroying it."

Iran notified Britain, Russia, China, the European Union, France and Germany of its decision earlier Wednesday. All were signatories to the nuclear deal and continue to support it. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was to meet Wednesday in Moscow with his Russian counterpart.

"If the five countries join negotiations and help Iran to reach its benefits in the field of oil and banking, Iran will return to its commitments according to the nuclear deal," Rouhani said.

However, Rouhani warned of a "strong reaction" if European leaders instead sought to impose more sanctions on Iran via the U.N. Security Council. He did not elaborate.

Rouhani also said Wednesday that if the 60 days pass without action, Iran will halt a Chinese-led effort to redesign its Arak heavy water nuclear reactor. Such reactors produce plutonium that can be used in nuclear weapons.

Zarif separately issued his own warning from Moscow.

"After a year of patience, Iran stops measures that (the) US has made impossible to continue," he tweeted. World powers have "a narrowing window to reverse this."

Reaction came swiftly from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a staunch critic of Iran and the nuclear deal.

"I heard that Iran intends to continue its nuclear program. We will not allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons," Netanyahu said. "We will continue to fight those who seek to take our lives, and we will thrust our roots even deeper into the soil of our homeland."

There was no immediate response from the U.S. However, the White House said Sunday it would dispatch the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and B-52 bombers to the Persian Gulf over what it described as a new threat from Iran.

Apparently responding to that, the general staff of Iran's armed forces issued a statement Wednesday applauding Rouhani's decision and warning its enemies.

"Any possible movement by them will face a regrettable response by the Iranian nation and its armed forces," the statement said, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

The 2015 deal lifted sanctions on Iran in exchange for limits on its nuclear program. Iran reached the deal after years of negotiations, including secret talks between Iran and President Barack Obama's administration in Oman. Western governments had long feared Iran's atomic program could allow it to build nuclear weapons. Iran has always maintained its program is for peaceful purposes.

The U.S. withdrew from the deal after Trump campaigned on a pledge to tear up the document. His administration contends the deal should have included limits to Iran's ballistic missile program and what it describes as Tehran's malign regional influence.

However, the U.N.'s atomic watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, repeatedly has verified Iran stuck to terms of the deal. The agency did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

After the U.S. withdrew from the accord it restored crippling sanctions on Iran, exacerbating a severe economic crisis. The Iranian rial, which traded at 32,000 to \$1 at the time of the accord, traded Wednesday at 153,500.

That Iran chose to keep its excess uranium and heavy water first, rather than abandon the accord in its entirety, indicates it still hopes to secure a deal. In years of negotiations over its nuclear program, Iran had similarly gone step-by-step in ramping up its activities while holding talks. The latest move also protects Rouhani, a relative moderate within Iran's Shiite theocracy, from criticism from hard-liners who have long maintained that Iran gave up too much in the nuclear deal.

Under the 2015 deal, Iran can keep a stockpile of no more than 300 kilograms (660 pounds) of low-enriched uranium and 130 tons of heavy water, a coolant used in nuclear reactors. That's compared to the 10,000 kilograms (22,046 pounds) of higher-enriched uranium it once had.

The U.S. last week ended deals allowing Iran to exchange its enriched uranium for unrefined yellowcake



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uranium with Russia, and to sell its heavy water, which is used as a coolant in nuclear reactors, to Oman. The U.S. also has ended waivers for nations buying Iranian crude oil, a key source of revenue for Iran's government.

Currently, the accord limits Iran to enriching uranium to 3.67%, which can fuel a commercial nuclear power plant. Weapons-grade uranium needs to be enriched to around 90%. However, once a country enriches uranium to around 20%, scientists say the time needed to reach 90% is halved. Iran has previously enriched to 20%.

"Whenever our demands are met, we will resume the same amount of suspended commitments, but otherwise, the Islamic Republic of Iran will suspend the implementation of other obligations step by step," a statement from Iran's Supreme National Security Council said Wednesday.

It added: "The window that is now open to diplomacy will not remain open for a long time."

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writer Ilan Ben Zion in Jerusalem contributed.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

### 1. IRAN INCHES AWAY FROM NUCLEAR DEAL

Tehran threatens to resume higher enrichment of uranium in 60 days if world powers fail to negotiate new terms for its 2015 nuclear deal.

### 2. STUDENTS KILL CLASSMATE, INJURE 8 AT COLORADO SCHOOL

Two high school students shot and killed a classmate and injured eight others at a charter school that is just miles from Columbine.

### 3. TRUMP PUTS DEAL-MAKING CREDENTIALS TO TEST

The president raises the already-high stakes of trade talks with China as he seeks to seal an agreement he can brandish on the campaign trail.

### 4. BARR FACING CONTEMPT VOTE IN CONGRESS

A House panel is moving ahead with a vote to hold the attorney general in contempt of Congress as negotiations stalled over the full, unredacted version of Mueller's report.

### 5. SOUTH AFRICA VOTING AMID ISSUE OF CORRUPTION, UNEMPLOYMENT

The balloting comes 25 years after the end of apartheid, but despite the end of racial discrimination the country remains divided by economic inequality.

### 6. UBER, LYFT DRIVERS PLAN STRIKE

Drivers for the ride-hailing giants are planning to turn off their apps in major U.S. cities to protest what they say are declining wages.

### 7. ELECTRONIC IMPLANTS STUDIED FOR DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT

Doctors in China are testing deep brain stimulation devices to treat drug addiction and a clinical trial for opioid addicts has just been approved in West Virginia, AP learns.

### 8. WHERE CALIFORNIA POT MARKET IS LACKING

The multimillion-dollar computer system designed to monitor the state's legal marijuana market is falling short of its intended goal, AP finds.

### 9. FTC UNDER SCRUTINY AS THEY LOOK TO PUNISH FACEBOOK

Federal privacy regulators are negotiating a record fine with the social network to punish it for alleged violations of users' privacy.

### 10. CUBS INVESTIGATING FAN'S 'OFFENSIVE' HAND GESTURE

The team says the fan used what appeared to be an offensive hand gesture associated with racism behind an on-air black TV reporter, former major leaguer Doug Glanville.

## Uber, Lyft drivers plan to strike in cities across the US

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Drivers for ride-hailing giants Uber and Lyft are turning off their apps to protest what they say are declining wages at a time when both companies are raking in billions of dollars from investors.

Organizers are planning demonstrations in 10 U.S. cities Wednesday, including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Washington, as well as some European locations like London.

The protests arrive just ahead of Uber's initial public stock offering, which is planned for Friday. Uber hopes to raise \$9 billion and is expected to be valued at up to \$91.5 billion.

It's not the first time drivers for ride-hailing apps have staged protests. Strikes were planned in several cities ahead of Lyft's IPO last month, although the disruption to riders appeared to be minimal. More cities are participating in Wednesday's protest, however.

"Drivers built these billion dollar companies and it is just plain wrong that so many continue to be paid poverty wages while Silicon Valley investors get rich off their labor," said Brendan Sexton, executive director of the Independent Drivers Guild, in a statement. "All drivers deserve fair pay."

In New York, striking drivers shut down their services at 7 a.m. and planned to remain inactive until 9 a.m., though it was still easy to locate a driver during rush hour near Wall Street in lower Manhattan on Wednesday.

Drivers in Los Angeles are planning a 24-hour strike and picket line at Los Angeles International Airport.

Uber, in a prepared statement Wednesday, said it is constantly working to improve the working environment for drivers.

"Drivers are at the heart of our service ? we can't succeed without them ? and thousands of people come into work at Uber every day focused on how to make their experience better, on and off the road."

Lyft said its drivers' hourly earnings have increased over the last two years, that 75% of its drivers work less than 10 hours per week to supplement existing jobs and that on average the company's drivers earn over \$20 an hour.

"We know that access to flexible, extra income makes a big difference for millions of people, and we're constantly working to improve how we can best serve our driver community," Lyft said.

In New York, striking drivers are planning to proceed in a caravan across the Brooklyn Bridge and then hold a rally outside Uber and Lyft offices in Queens.

Strikes are also planned in Atlanta, Boston, Philadelphia, San Diego and Stamford, Connecticut.

## Trump puts deal-making credentials to test with China talks

By KEVIN FREKING and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As he cranks up the pressure on China in pursuit of a new trade accord, President Donald Trump is putting his deal-making persona on the line and injecting new risk into his bid for another four years in the White House.

Trump has raised the already high stakes of this week's talks between U.S. and Chinese negotiators as he seeks to seal an agreement he can brandish on the campaign trail. The push to bring the talks with China to a conclusion comes as his administration gears up for a difficult fight in Congress over its new North American trade deal. Progress or failure on the twin agenda items stands to be a key selling point for his reelection or a sobering verdict on his unpredictable stylings.

Already, the risks are mounting. Trade fears sent U.S. markets sharply downward Tuesday amid rising concerns about the China talks resuming Thursday. On Monday, U.S. Trade Representative Bob Lighthizer said the Trump administration was prepared to raise import taxes on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods early Friday.

Trump made protecting American manufacturers and farmers central planks of his 2016 candidacy, and his pledge to reverse the tide of globalization helped him win over voters in Democratic-leaning states like Michigan and Wisconsin. Now those groups Trump vowed to help are sounding the alarm about the impact of Trump's protectionist measures on imports from China and other trading partners.

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Despite Trump's rhetoric to the contrary, tariffs are paid by U.S. importers of foreign goods. Manufacturers dependent on foreign material, retailers and other importers have been charged more than \$15 billion in the last year, according to federal data, though the impact directly felt by consumers has been relatively minimal.

Dave Salmonsens, a senior director at the American Farm Bureau Federation, said the group is hopeful that the president's threat of increased tariffs on Friday "is just part of the negotiating process." He said that agriculture exports to China fell by more than half last year from \$21 billion in 2017. "They've retaliated on almost everything we send," he said.

Throw in retaliatory tariffs from Canada, Mexico and other nations, and the trade war contributed to a projected 16 percent decrease in farm income last year, according to a recent study from the Agriculture Department. The Trump administration ended up providing up to \$12 billion in aid to farmers affected by the trade skirmishes.

Some Republican senators voiced concerns about the state of trade negotiations during a private lunch Tuesday with Vice President Mike Pence.

"We're not in a good way at all," said Sen. Pat Roberts of Kansas, chairman of the Agriculture Committee.

"There's a lot of feeling in ag country that we're being used as pawns in this whole business," Roberts said, but added: "We will benefit tremendously if we get a good deal, so we're hanging in there with the president."

The vice president encouraged the senators to stick with Trump as he pushes China for a better deal.

Despite the political fallout back home, senators seemed intent on not breaking ranks with the White House at this crucial moment in the trade talks.

"Even though there's some real issues in Wisconsin, there's a great deal of support for what he's trying to accomplish," said Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis. "I don't think anybody wants to undermine his negotiating position right now, and we're all keeping our fingers crossed."

Current and former Trump administration officials believe the U.S. still has the most leverage in the talks, saying China needs access to the U.S. market more than the reverse. And even if the talks don't succeed for Trump, their hope is that voters are more likely to blame any pain on China, rather than the president.

Former Trump strategist Stephen Bannon wrote in *The Washington Post* that the president's best political option is "not to surrender, but rather to double down on the tariffs — they have been highly effective in pressuring the Chinese without harming the U.S. economy."

"Certain Trump advisers inside and outside the White House are playing on the president's well-earned pride in a rising stock market and a fear he might lose the Farm Belt to try to box him into a weak deal. But it is a decidedly false narrative that any failure to reach a deal will lead to a market meltdown and economic implosion," Bannon wrote.

And there are indications that at least some Trump supporters are all for the president's confrontation.

"Right now, because we have a strong economy and China has some issues with its aging population and a slowing economy, we're in a position of strength to negotiate a better deal," said Jeff Schulmeister, 52, a resident of the Detroit suburb of Macomb Township. "I think what he's doing is the right thing to do, and I think it's going to benefit the country."

Trump will be traveling to Japan later this month after raising hopes for a new trade deal with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Meanwhile, his trade team is working to address concerns from Democratic lawmakers about a new trade agreement with Canada and Mexico. Democrats have said they want to make changes to the agreement before holding a vote to approve it. They want to take on protections for pharmaceutical companies, enhance labor protections and address concerns over enforcement.

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Associated Press writers Jeff Karoub in Detroit and Lisa Mascaro in Washington contributed to this report.

## Talks don't stop committee's plan for contempt vote for Barr

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee is moving ahead with a vote to hold Attorney General William Barr in contempt of Congress after last-minute negotiations stalled with the Justice Department over access to the full, unredacted version of special counsel Robert Mueller's report .

Barr released a redacted version of Mueller's report to the public last month, but Democrats said they want to see the full document, along with underlying evidence, and subpoenaed for the full report . The department has rejected that demand, while allowing a handful of lawmakers to view a version of Mueller's report with fewer redactions. Democrats have said they won't view that version until they get broader access.

With the contempt vote looming Wednesday, staff members from the House Judiciary Committee met with Justice Department officials on Tuesday afternoon. Negotiations went into the evening as the two sides traded offers on how many lawmakers would be able to view the report, how many staff members and whether the department would work with the committee to gain access to secret grand jury material. But they stalled late Tuesday evening when the two sides couldn't agree on any of those terms.

In a letter sent late Tuesday to House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd wrote that in the face of the committee's contempt vote, Barr would be "compelled to request that the president invoke executive privilege with respect to the materials subject to the subpoena."

It was not immediately clear how such a claim of privilege would work with respect to Mueller's report, which has already been released to the public in redacted form. Executive privilege is the president's power to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of the Oval Office decision-making process.

Nadler dismissed the idea, saying in a statement in response to Boyd's letter to the committee that "this is, of course, not how executive privilege works."

"The White House waived these privileges long ago, and the Department seemed open to sharing these materials with us earlier today. The Department's legal arguments are without credibility, merit, or legal or factual basis," Nadler said.

The top Republican on the panel, Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia, sharply criticized the Democrats' plan to go ahead with the vote.

"I can't imagine a more illogical hill for a legislator to die on," Collins said in a statement.

If the committee holds Barr in contempt, it would be the first step in what could be a protracted, multipronged court battle between Congress and the Trump administration.

President Donald Trump has defied requests from House Democrats since the release of Mueller's report last month, and Democrats are fighting the White House on several fronts as they attempt to learn more about the report, call witnesses and obtain Trump's personal and financial documents.

In a related move, Nadler also threatened to hold former White House counsel Don McGahn in contempt of Congress if he doesn't testify before the Judiciary committee later this month. Nadler rejected a White House claim that documents McGahn refused to provide despite a subpoena are controlled by the White House and thus McGahn has no legal right to them.

The Justice Department did not respond to a request for comment on Tuesday's negotiations with Nadler's committee.

On Monday, when the Judiciary panel scheduled the vote, Justice spokeswoman Kerri Kupec said the department has "taken extraordinary steps to accommodate the House Judiciary Committee's requests for information" regarding Mueller's report, but that Nadler had not reciprocated. She noted that Democrats have refused to read the version of Mueller's report with fewer redactions that has been provided to Congress.

If the committee approves the contempt resolution against Barr, it would head to the full House for a vote. If the House were to pass the resolution, it would send a criminal referral to the U.S. attorney for

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the District of Columbia, a Justice Department official who is likely to defend the attorney general.

Democratic House leaders could also file a lawsuit against the Justice Department to obtain the Mueller report, though the case could take months or even years to resolve. Some committee members have suggested they also could fine Barr as he withholds the information.

Republicans have largely united behind the president, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Tuesday declaring "case closed" on Mueller's Russia probe and potential obstruction by Trump. McConnell said Democrats are "grieving" the result.

Mueller said he could not establish a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia, but he did not reach a conclusion on whether Trump obstructed justice. Mueller didn't charge Trump but wrote that he couldn't exonerate him, either.

McConnell said on the Senate floor that the investigation is "finally over" and called Mueller's findings "bad news for the outrage industrial complex but good news for the rest of the country."

The Kentucky Republican's speech drew swift rebuttals from Democrats. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer issued a joint statement calling it "a stunning act of political cynicism and a brazen violation of the oath we all take."

After McConnell's speech, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democratic presidential candidate, made her own trip to the Senate floor to say the House should begin impeachment proceedings — a step that Pelosi has so far resisted. Yet Pelosi also said Trump seems to be "making the case" for his impeachment by brazenly obstructing investigations.

"He's just trying to goad us into impeachment," Pelosi said in a talk at Cornell's Institute of Politics and Global Affairs.

Report: Trump in 1985-94 claimed \$1.17 billion business loss

WASHINGTON (AP) — The New York Times reported Tuesday that Donald Trump's businesses lost more than \$1 billion from 1985 to 1994, based on tax information the newspaper acquired.

The Times said it has acquired printouts from the future president's official IRS tax transcripts, including figures from his federal tax form.

The newspaper said Trump reported business losses of \$46.1 million in 1985, and a total of \$1.17 billion in losses for the 10-year period.

After comparing Trump's information with that of other "high-income earners," the Times concluded that Trump "appears to have lost more money than nearly any other individual American taxpayer." Because of his business losses, the newspaper reported, Trump did not pay income taxes for eight of the 10 years.

The House Ways and Means Committee has asked the IRS to provide Trump's personal and business returns for 2013 through 2018. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Monday refused to do so, saying the panel's request "lacks a legitimate legislative purpose."

Mnuchin's move, which had been expected, is likely to set a legal battle into motion. The chief options available to Democrats are to subpoena the IRS for the returns or to file a lawsuit.

Trump is the first president since Watergate to decline to make his tax returns public.

## No-no! A's Fiers throws 2nd career no-hitter, beats Reds

By JOSH DUBOW AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — A light malfunction almost stopped Mike Fiers' night from getting started. A high pitch count nearly prevented him from finishing it.

Good thing Fiers was allowed to take the mound and stay there all game because he made history doing it.

Fiers overcame the early delay and managed the high workload to pitch his second no-hitter of his career, getting help from two spectacular defensive plays from his Oakland Athletics teammates to shut down the Cincinnati Reds 2-0 Tuesday night.

"Amazing. That's really all I can really say," Fiers said. "Things like this just happen."

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This one almost didn't.

A bank of lights in left field was only partially lit before the scheduled start of the game, leading to a delay of more than 90 minutes before the teams and umpires determined there was enough light to play a full game.

Then after getting through seven innings with 109 pitches, Fiers was told by manager Bob Melvin that one more baserunner would end his night even if he still hadn't allowed a hit. He then breezed through the final two innings, following up his 2015 gem for Houston against the Dodgers with a 131-pitch masterpiece to become the 35th pitcher with multiple no-hitters in his career.

"I'm just really thankful for him leaving me in and trusting me," Fiers said. "I told him I felt great. I felt like everything was working. It wasn't a matter of being tired. I had adrenaline at that point."

He walked two, struck out six and ended the 300th no-hitter ever in the majors by fanning Eugenio Suarez with a big curveball.

The A's poured out of the dugout to mob Fiers in celebration after the final out in front of a few thousand fans remaining after the lengthy delay. Fiers tipped his hat to the crowd and raised his arms in triumph as he walked off.

"It was a great night obviously for him, for our fans, everyone wants to see a no-hitter," Melvin said. "It was no fun for me once he got past 120 pitches, I promise you that. But he deserved it.

The 33-year-old Fiers (3-3) raised his lifetime record to 57-58. The right-hander began the night with a 6.81 ERA this season, and has been a journeyman for much of his career.

A journeyman with a special place in the record book, that is.

"It's pretty cool," Fiers said. "I saw a little bit of the list. I'm just grateful to be here and get the opportunity to play. I remember when I was getting drafted I wasn't too high on the charts. I was a guy throwing 88 to 90 (mph) down in South Florida. I'm one in a million down there. ... I'm just blessed to be here."

The first no-hitter of the 2019 season didn't come without tense moments as Fiers was bailed out by back-to-back great defensive plays in the sixth inning. Second baseman Jurickson Profar ran a long way to making a diving catch on Kyle Farmer's popup into short right field for the second out, prompting Fiers to throw up his arms in celebration.

Joey Votto followed that with a deep drive, but flashy center fielder Ramon Laureano reached above the fence to pull the ball back and rob the Reds star of a home run.

"Ramon's catch he's done that once or twice. That's a normal play for him," Fiers said. "Profar, another amazing play."

This was the 13th no-hitter in the history of the Athletics franchise, which started in Philadelphia, moved to Kansas City and shifted to Oakland. Sean Manaea pitched the previous no-hitter for the A's on April 21, 2018, at home against Boston.

Manaea, fittingly, gave Fiers an ice bath on the field when this one ended.

"It was way more nerve-wracking than I was doing it," Manaea said. "I was shaking on the bench. I don't know, it was crazy seeing him do it. It was awesome."

The Reds were no-hit for the 10th time, most recently by Jake Arrieta of the Cubs in 2016.

Fiers became the seventh pitcher to throw no-hitters for multiple teams — Nolan Ryan, Randy Johnson and Cy Young are among the others. Ryan pitched a record seven no-hitters overall.

Max Scherzer, Justin Verlander, Homer Bailey and Arrieta are the other active big leaguers with two no-hitters. Fiers clearly was aware of what was at stake in the later innings.

"I knew. I don't like when guys are like they don't know," Fiers said.

The no-hitter came almost exactly a year after the past one in the majors, by James Paxton for Seattle at Toronto last May 8.

Fiers issued his only two walks in the seventh, but also got Jesse Winker to hit into a double play. Fiers needed only nine pitches to get through the eighth and zipped through the ninth, retiring rookie Josh VanMeter on a popup, getting Votto on a routine grounder and striking out Suarez.

A's catcher Josh Phegley neatly blocked the last pitch and tagged Suarez to make it official.

"I felt like he was hitting with all his pitches where he wanted it and when he wanted it," Phegley said.

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Fiers' other no-hitter came on Aug. 21, 2015, in Houston, three weeks after being traded from Milwaukee to the Astros. He threw a career-high 134 pitches in that game.

The only other Reds batter to reach was Winker, who got aboard on an error by Gold Glove third baseman Matt Chapman in the fourth. Chapman was near second base on a defensive shift and the grounder hit off his glove and landed in the outfield.

The game started after a 98-minute delay because of a lighting problem at the Coliseum. A bank of lights above the upper deck in left field had been only partially lit, causing the delay. Those lights began to flicker on as the game started.

Fiers, however, turned them out on the Reds.

"It was impressive to watch but tough to watch for us," manager David Bell said. "It's one game but you have to give him a lot of credit. You don't see this very often, especially anymore. To do it against our lineup is very impressive."

It was the second straight day the Reds have had a game delayed at the start because of unusual circumstances. Their game against the San Francisco Giants on Monday in Cincinnati was briefly halted due to a swarm of bees.

The A's scored in the second against Tyler Mahle (1-6) when Stephen Piscotty raced home on Profar's double into the right field corner. Profar added a solo homer in the seventh.

## TRAINERS ROOM

Reds: LHP Alex Wood will not throw for two weeks after getting a second opinion on his back injury.

Athletics: 1B Matt Olson went 0 for 3 in his first game back since undergoing surgery on his right hand. DH Khris Davis was a late scratch because of a left hip contusion. The slugger bruised his hip when he ran into the railing near left field at Pittsburgh on Sunday. . Manaea threw all fastballs during a 20-pitch bullpen session, his first since shoulder surgery last September.

## UP NEXT

RHP Sonny Gray (0-4, 3.89 ERA) starts for the Reds on Wednesday in his first appearance at the Coliseum for the first time since 2017. The former A's ace won 44 games during 4 ½ seasons in the majors with Oakland before being traded to the New York Yankees. Gray allowed five runs in five innings in his only appearance against the A's on May 11, 2018. Oakland counters with LHP Brett Anderson (4-2, 3.89).

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## No-no! A's Fiers throws 2nd career no-hitter, beats Reds

By JOSH DUBOW AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — A light malfunction almost stopped Mike Fiers' night from getting started. A high pitch count nearly prevented him from finishing it.

Good thing Fiers was allowed to take the mound and stay there all game because he made history doing it.

Fiers overcame the early delay and managed the high workload to pitch his second no-hitter of his career, getting help from two spectacular defensive plays from his Oakland Athletics teammates to shut down the Cincinnati Reds 2-0 Tuesday night.

"Amazing. That's really all I can really say," Fiers said. "Things like this just happen."

This one almost didn't.

A bank of lights in left field was only partially lit before the scheduled start of the game, leading to a delay of more than 90 minutes before the teams and umpires determined there was enough light to play a full game.

Then after getting through seven innings with 109 pitches, Fiers was told by manager Bob Melvin that one more baserunner would end his night even if he still hadn't allowed a hit. He then breezed through the final two innings, following up his 2015 gem for Houston against the Dodgers with a 131-pitch masterpiece to become the 35th pitcher with multiple no-hitters in his career.

"I'm just really thankful for him leaving me in and trusting me," Fiers said. "I told him I felt great. I felt

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like everything was working. It wasn't a matter of being tired. I had adrenaline at that point."

He walked two, struck out six and ended the 300th no-hitter ever in the majors by fanning Eugenio Suarez with a big curveball.

The A's poured out of the dugout to mob Fiers in celebration after the final out in front of a few thousand fans remaining after the lengthy delay. Fiers tipped his hat to the crowd and raised his arms in triumph as he walked off.

"It was a great night obviously for him, for our fans, everyone wants to see a no-hitter," Melvin said. "It was no fun for me once he got past 120 pitches, I promise you that. But he deserved it.

The 33-year-old Fiers (3-3) raised his lifetime record to 57-58. The right-hander began the night with a 6.81 ERA this season, and has been a journeyman for much of his career.

A journeyman with a special place in the record book, that is.

"It's pretty cool," Fiers said. "I saw a little bit of the list. I'm just grateful to be here and get the opportunity to play. I remember when I was getting drafted I wasn't too high on the charts. I was a guy throwing 88 to 90 (mph) down in South Florida. I'm one in a million down there. ... I'm just blessed to be here."

The first no-hitter of the 2019 season didn't come without tense moments as Fiers was bailed out by back-to-back great defensive plays in the sixth inning. Second baseman Jurickson Profar ran a long way to making a diving catch on Kyle Farmer's popup into short right field for the second out, prompting Fiers to throw up his arms in celebration.

Joey Votto followed that with a deep drive, but flashy center fielder Ramon Laureano reached above the fence to pull the ball back and rob the Reds star of a home run.

"Ramon's catch he's done that once or twice. That's a normal play for him," Fiers said. "Profar, another amazing play."

This was the 13th no-hitter in the history of the Athletics franchise, which started in Philadelphia, moved to Kansas City and shifted to Oakland. Sean Manaea pitched the previous no-hitter for the A's on April 21, 2018, at home against Boston.

Manaea, fittingly, gave Fiers an ice bath on the field when this one ended.

"It was way more nerve-wracking than I was doing it," Manaea said. "I was shaking on the bench. I don't know, it was crazy seeing him do it. It was awesome."

The Reds were no-hit for the 10th time, most recently by Jake Arrieta of the Cubs in 2016.

Fiers became the seventh pitcher to throw no-hitters for multiple teams — Nolan Ryan, Randy Johnson and Cy Young are among the others. Ryan pitched a record seven no-hitters overall.

Max Scherzer, Justin Verlander, Homer Bailey and Arrieta are the other active big leaguers with two no-hitters. Fiers clearly was aware of what was at stake in the later innings.

"I knew. I don't like when guys are like they don't know," Fiers said.

The no-hitter came almost exactly a year after the past one in the majors, by James Paxton for Seattle at Toronto last May 8.

Fiers issued his only two walks in the seventh, but also got Jesse Winker to hit into a double play. Fiers needed only nine pitches to get through the eighth and zipped through the ninth, retiring rookie Josh VanMeter on a popup, getting Votto on a routine grounder and striking out Suarez.

A's catcher Josh Phegley neatly blocked the last pitch and tagged Suarez to make it official.

"I felt like he was hitting with all his pitches where he wanted it and when he wanted it," Phegley said.

Fiers' other no-hitter came on Aug. 21, 2015, in Houston, three weeks after being traded from Milwaukee to the Astros. He threw a career-high 134 pitches in that game.

The only other Reds batter to reach was Winker, who got aboard on an error by Gold Glove third baseman Matt Chapman in the fourth. Chapman was near second base on a defensive shift and the grounder hit off his glove and landed in the outfield.

The game started after a 98-minute delay because of a lighting problem at the Coliseum. A bank of lights above the upper deck in left field had been only partially lit, causing the delay. Those lights began to flicker on as the game started.



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Fiers, however, turned them out on the Reds.

"It was impressive to watch but tough to watch for us," manager David Bell said. "It's one game but you have to give him a lot of credit. You don't see this very often, especially anymore. To do it against our lineup is very impressive."

It was the second straight day the Reds have had a game delayed at the start because of unusual circumstances. Their game against the San Francisco Giants on Monday in Cincinnati was briefly halted due to a swarm of bees.

The A's scored in the second against Tyler Mahle (1-6) when Stephen Piscotty raced home on Profar's double into the right field corner. Profar added a solo homer in the seventh.

## TRAINERS ROOM

Reds: LHP Alex Wood will not throw for two weeks after getting a second opinion on his back injury.

Athletics: 1B Matt Olson went 0 for 3 in his first game back since undergoing surgery on his right hand. . DH Khris Davis was a late scratch because of a left hip contusion. The slugger bruised his hip when he ran into the railing near left field at Pittsburgh on Sunday. . Manaea threw all fastballs during a 20-pitch bullpen session, his first since shoulder surgery last September.

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## Students kill classmate, injure 8 at school near Columbine

By **KATHLEEN FOODY and P. SOLOMON BANDA** Associated Press

HIGHLANDS RANCH, Colo. (AP) — Two high school students shot and killed a classmate and injured eight others at a charter school in a Colorado community that marked the 20th anniversary of one of the nation's worst school shootings just weeks ago.

Douglas County sheriff's officials said Devon Erickson, 18, and a younger student walked into the STEM School Highlands Ranch Tuesday afternoon and opened fire on students in two classrooms, prompting students to run shouting through the halls or to hide out of sight as gunfire echoed through school.

"At the moment no one really knew what was going on so I didn't know they were bullets," said seventh-grader Sophia Marks. "I just kind of saw like flashes and we heard bangs."

Within minutes, deputies at a nearby sheriff's department substation entered the school and arrested the two suspects after a struggle. Both were students at the school and they were not previously known to authorities, Sheriff Tony Spurlock said.

Josh Dutton, 18, told The Associated Press that he was close friends with Devon Erickson in middle school but hadn't seen him for four years as he went to a different high school. On Sunday, he spotted Erickson at a local light rail station and said he was shocked at how much his friend had changed.

Erickson wore all black, a hat and sunglasses, was significantly skinnier and didn't seem interested in talking. "He said he'd just turned 18 and he owned rifles," Dutton said.

A message left at a phone number listed for Erickson's home was not immediately returned.

The shooting took place exactly a week after a gunman killed two students and wounded four at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. It also comes nearly three weeks after neighboring Littleton marked the grim 20th anniversary of the Columbine school massacre that killed 13 people. The two schools are separated by about 7 miles (11 kilometers) in adjacent communities south of Denver.

"Tragically, this community and those surrounding it know all too well these hateful and horrible acts of violence," White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement. President Donald Trump had been briefed on the shooting and was in touch with state and local officials, Deere said.

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"The heart of all Colorado is with the victims and their families," Gov. Jared Polis said in a statement. STEM is a public charter school with a focus on science, technology, engineering and math. It has more than 1,850 students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

As the gunfire rang out, students ran through the halls shouting "School shooter!" Some wondered at first if it was a joke or a drill.

Chris Elledge, 15, said his teacher told the class to hide behind weight equipment in the room, where they stayed until police arrived.

"They busted in the room, and they were asking if there was any suspects in the room, if we were OK, and they escorted us out to go out to the front of the building," Elledge said.

Frantic parents used their cellphones to find their children as news of the shooting spread. Sophia Marks' mother, Sara Marks, said she has two other children who also go to the school.

"When you have no idea what's going on and the children are texting you that they're hiding under a desk and bullets are hitting their window, or things are hitting their window, it's a horrible feeling," she said.

Three hospitals reported treating eight people in connection with the attack, including two who were listed in serious condition. At least four others were released by Tuesday night.

Fernando Montoya told television station KMGH that his 17-year-old son was shot three times but was expected to make a full recovery.

"Thank God he is fine," Montoya said. "Even though he got shot, he's OK. He's going to walk out on his feet, so I'm glad. We're so lucky."

AP writer Nicholas Riccardi contributed to this report.

## AP EXPLAINS: Iran's nuclear program as 2015 deal unravels

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran has set a 60-day deadline for world powers to renegotiate the terms of its 2015 nuclear deal, a year to the day after President Donald Trump pulled America from the landmark accord.

President Hassan Rouhani says Iran will stop exporting its excess uranium and heavy water from its nuclear program, as stipulated by the agreement. If the 60-day deadline passes without action, Rouhani says Iran will resume higher uranium enrichment as well.

Here's where Iran's nuclear program and the unravelling accord now stand.

### THE NUCLEAR DEAL

Iran struck the nuclear deal in 2015 with the United States, the European Union, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Russia and China. The deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, grew out of secret talks President Barack Obama's administration held with Iran after Rouhani, a relative moderate, took office.

Iran agreed to limit its enrichment of uranium under the watch of U.N. inspectors in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. International businesses rushed to do deals with Iran, most notably the billion-dollar sales by Airbus and Boeing Co.

Trump, who campaigned for the White House on a promise of tearing up the deal as it didn't address Iran's ballistic missile program or its involvement in regional conflicts, withdrew America from the accord on May 8, 2018. That halted the promised international business deals and dealt a heavy blow to Iran's already anemic economy. In the time since, the Trump administration has said any country that imports Iranian crude oil will face U.S. sanctions.

### IRAN'S NUCLEAR FACILITIES

Natanz, in Iran's central Isfahan province, hosts the country's main uranium enrichment facility, which is located underground. Iran has one operating nuclear power plant in Bushehr, which it opened with the

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help of Russia in 2011. Under the accord, Iran reconfigured a heavy-water reactor so it couldn't produce plutonium and agreed to convert its Fordo enrichment site — dug deep into a mountainside — into a research center. It also operates an over 50-year-old research reactor in Tehran.

## IRAN'S URANIUM STOCKPILE

Under terms of the nuclear deal, Iran can keep a stockpile of no more than 300 kilograms (660 pounds) of low-enriched uranium. That's compared to the 10,000 kilograms (22,046 pounds) of higher-enriched uranium it once had. Currently, the accord limits Iran to enriching uranium to 3.67%, which can fuel a commercial nuclear power plant. Weapons-grade uranium needs to be enriched to around 90%. However, once a country enriches uranium to around 20%, scientists say the time needed to reach 90% is halved. Iran has previously enriched to 20%.

## IRAN'S CENTRIFUGES

A centrifuge is a device that enriches uranium by rapidly spinning uranium hexafluoride gas. Under the atomic accord, Iran has been limited to operating 5,060 older-model IR-1 centrifuges. The IR-1 is based on a 1970s Dutch design that Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan used to build Islamabad's nuclear weapons program and later sold to Iran, Libya and North Korea.

Iran has the technical ability to build and operate advanced versions called the IR-2M, IR-4 and IR-6 at a facility in Natanz, but is barred from doing so under the nuclear deal. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of Iran's nuclear program, told The Associated Press in September that the IR-2M and the IR-4 can enrich uranium five times faster than an IR-1, while the IR-6 can do it 10 times faster. Western experts have suggested these centrifuges produce three to five times more enriched uranium in a year than the IR-1s.

Iran also mothballed many already-built centrifuges as part of the deal.

## FROM 'ATOMS FOR PEACE' TO STUXNET

Iran's nuclear program actually began with the help of the United States. Under its "Atoms for Peace" program, America supplied a test reactor that came online in Tehran in 1967 under the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. That help ended once Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution overthrew the shah.

In the 1990s, Iran expanded its program, including buying equipment from A.Q. Khan. Among its activities, Iran "may have received design information" for a bomb and researched explosive detonators, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

By August 2002, Western intelligence services and an Iranian opposition group revealed a covert nuclear site at Natanz. Iran to this day denies its nuclear program had a military dimension. Iran suspended enrichment in 2003 but resumed it three years later under hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. World powers imposed crippling U.N. sanctions in response. The Stuxnet computer virus, widely believed to be a joint U.S.-Israeli creation, soon disrupted thousands of Iranian centrifuges.

A string of bombings, blamed on Israel, targeted a number of scientists beginning in 2010 at the height of Western concerns over Iran's program. Israel never claimed responsibility for the attacks, though Israeli officials have boasted in the past about the reach of the country's intelligence services. Israel last year said it seized records from a "secret atomic archive" in Iran.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/jongambrellap](http://www.twitter.com/jongambrellap) .

## Proposed tobacco ban sparks fiery debate in Beverly Hills

By JOHN ROGERS Associated Press

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — A fiery debate is breaking out across Beverly Hills as people at tony hair salons, gas stations and stores weigh in on whether the city of the rich and famous should become the first in the U.S. to outlaw the sale of tobacco products everywhere except a few cigar lounges.

The City Council decided Tuesday night to make some changes to the proposal, such as allowing guests

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in the city's luxury hotels to acquire cigarettes through their concierge or room service. Members indicated they plan to pass the amended measure May 21.

Abstainers have said yes to the idea, and the sooner the better, while smokers protested, no way.

"It's a ridiculous idea," hair stylist Giuseppe Franco shouted soon after lighting up a Marlboro Light on a breezeway just outside the upscale hair salon that bears his name.

"First off, let's be honest. Smoking is bad. I don't let my daughter smoke," he said during a sometimes profane tirade delivered between puffs.

"But it's going to hurt my friends," he said, pointing out that a 24-hour Rite Aid pharmacy down the street does big business in cigarettes that go for about \$8 a pack.

So does the Union 76 gas station a couple blocks away, where the cashier says they sell about 50 packs a day at \$12 apiece.

California is among at least 25 states that outlaw smoking in workplaces, restaurants and bars. It also has one of the highest cigarette taxes in the country — nearly \$3 a pack.

Beverly Hills already restricts the sale of menthol cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products.

But the proposed ordinance would go much further, banning all tobacco products from grocery stores, pharmacies, hotels and gas stations in the city of 34,000 people between West Hollywood and Los Angeles.

"My celebrity clients smoke," Franco fumed.

Like most Beverly Hills business people, he won't name them, but he did pull out a copy of the hotel magazine Concierge featuring a photo of him with his buddy Arnold Schwarzenegger, a cigar aficionado.

Cigar smokers most likely won't have to sacrifice if the ordinance is adopted. A city staff report recommends exempting three tony cigar lounges in Beverly Hills.

Still, the folks at one of them, Nazareth's Fine Cigars, weren't happy.

"They're going to chase the tourists out of here," said retired businessman John Davis as he relaxed in a comfortable lounge chair, cigar in hand.

The decision came after the five-member council heard two hours of sometimes emotional but always polite testimony from scores of people on both sides of the issue.

Owners of gas stations and other small businesses said the ban could force them to lay-off people. Health advocates said while they regretted that possibility people's health was more important.

Scott McGuff, a regional manager for Rite Aide said the Beverly Hills pharmacy draws many customers from nearby luxury hotels who pick up both cigarettes and other items and it will lose them without the cigarettes.

"It's going to affect layoffs, that's how big of a deal it is for me," he said.

While council members sympathized they said that the public's health is too important for Beverly Hills not to take action.

"We are charged with providing for the public health and that's really what this conversation is about," said Councilman Julian Gold.

These days, many people visit Beverly Hills from Asia and Europe, where smoking is commonplace, Davis said earlier from the cigar lounge. Sure, if the ordinance is passed, they'll still stroll Rodeo Drive with its high-end stores like Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Cartier, and try to pick out Larry King and other celebrities making their way to Nate 'N Al's deli for breakfast.

But they'll head to West Hollywood to buy their smokes because cigarette sales would even be banned in famous places like the Beverly Wilshire, the hotel where Julia Roberts' character stayed in "Pretty Woman," the movie that made her a star.

Not everyone in Beverly Hills is a wealthy celebrity, of course. While the median price of a home is more than \$2 million and the median annual income is more than \$103,000, about 9 percent of the population actually falls below the poverty line, according to the U.S. Census.

The gas stations, pharmacies and other places offering modest jobs and cigarettes are tucked into corners just off Rodeo Drive and other fashionable streets. Only 28 sell tobacco products, according to the city staff report.

The city report cites the hazards of smoking and the desire of Beverly Hills to be a healthy city as reasons for the ban on tobacco sales.

For non-smokers Oscar Melendez and Cezar Diaz, that's reason enough to support it.

"I can pick up cigarette smoke from 30 feet away," Melendez said, noting that secondhand smoke is bad for everyone and that it drifts from the sidewalk by his valet parking stand into nearby restaurants.

At the fashionable Sarah Pacini clothing store, it gets so bad that Diaz, the manager, says he sometimes has to close the door and ask smokers not to stand on the sidewalk out front.

Most, he said, respond politely.

This story has been corrected to remove an erroneous reference to the hotel where Julia Roberts' character stayed in "Pretty Woman"; and to fix the spelling of Vuitton.

## Kushner oversees immigration proposals with eye on Congress

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hastily written executive orders. Declarations by tweet.

President Donald Trump's White House hasn't been known for its careful crafting of policy.

But Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law and senior adviser, has spent months drawing up a long-awaited immigration overhaul plan that the White House began to roll out Tuesday.

Frustrated by congressional inaction and stinging Republican defeats, Kushner has been meeting with GOP groups and speaking with lawmakers to try to fashion a plan that the president and his party might be able to unite behind. He's been assisted by a team that includes experts in drafting legislation so that he can be less reliant on Capitol Hill, according to people familiar with the efforts.

It's a new approach for an administration with few legislative achievements and facing the challenges of navigating a hostile Democratic House, where many legislators are more intent on investigating the president than working with him, especially in an area as contentious as immigration.

"The fact is this president is taking the lead. He's not waiting on Congress," White House spokesman Hogan Gidley told Fox News on Tuesday.

Officials stressed that the plan could evolve in response to feedback. But so far it includes two prongs: A border security bill that would focus, in part, on modernizing ports of entry, and a package of revisions to legal immigration that aims to create a more "merit-based" system giving preference to those with job skills rather than relatives of immigrants already in the country. A senior administration official told reporters that the total number of immigrants allowed into the country would not change under the plan — only the types of immigrants admitted.

The White House is also working with Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., on additional legislation that would address the nation's asylum system, in an effort to stem the flow of migrants across the border, according to the official, who outlined the plan on condition of anonymity because public discussion was not authorized.

It's not the first time the White House has tried to sell Congress on Trump's immigration priorities and it's unclear whether Republicans — let alone Democrats — will be on board. There is deep doubt in Washington that there is any appetite on Capitol Hill for a wide-ranging agreement.

Trump and Kushner met Tuesday afternoon with a dozen Republican senators who seemed largely receptive to the effort. But several said they were awaiting more details.

Kushner's team began meeting in January with conservative, business and other groups, soliciting input on a subject Congress has struggled for decades to address. Though he had no previous background on the contentious subject, Kushner has tried to replicate the playbook he used to help push bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation across the finish line last year.

Unlike that effort, however, this time the White House has made no outreach to Democrats, with Kushner instead looking to draft a plan that Republicans can rally around to make clear what the party is "for" as Trump heads into what is expected to be a brutal re-election campaign.

Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates for

lower rates of immigration and has provided input on the plan, said that, as part of the effort, Kushner's team was working to craft legislation in-house instead of leaving it to Congress. Several weeks ago, the team added staff with experience in legislation-writing, including George Fishman, deputy general counsel at the Department of Homeland Security.

"It's not just talking points or goals at this point," Vaughan said.

It's unclear, however, how members of Congress might respond to that approach. A big legislative package coming from the White House could be panned by lawmakers unless they had a role to play in the sausage making.

Trump's signature legislative achievement — the Republican tax cut bill — was the product of careful collaboration between the White House, Treasury and Republican leaders in Congress, who agreed on a broad framework and then left the details to the Senate Ways and Means and Finance committees.

One person briefed on the immigration plan, who spoke on condition of anonymity to reveal internal discussions, said White House officials had made clear that they had grown tired of waiting on Congress and did not want a repeat of their last, much-hyped immigration push — a "four pillars" plan rolled out in early 2018 that failed to gain traction.

But some Republican members question Kushner's broad-ranging approach.

Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, a member of GOP leadership, said Kushner had been "vetting ideas with the president, making progress there, and also with members of the Senate. I've been encouraging him to do that." But he suggested more narrowly tailored bills might be more successful.

"Having seen our experience, going big and ending up nowhere," he said, "I think we're better off trying to address this in a targeted sort of way."

Vaughan, whose group is concerned that Kushner's proposal will be too accommodating to business groups that want more immigrant workers, urged Trump to prioritize the southern border, where a surge in Central American migrant families has been overwhelming federal resources. She also cautioned against a top-down approach, saying that "it's very unlikely that members of Congress are going to just accept something that comes over from the White House."

AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaró contributed to this report.

## As Sudan uprising grew, Arab states worked to shape its fate

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — As the popular uprising against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir gained strength earlier this year, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia began reaching out to the military through secret channels to encourage his removal from power, according to Egyptian and Sudanese officials.

The three Arab states are ruled by autocrats who have clamped down on calls for democratic change in their own countries. But they had long viewed al-Bashir as a problem because of his close ties to Islamists, and had grown weary of his shifting loyalties and outreach to their rivals, Turkey and Qatar.

In the chaotic weeks leading up to the April 11 military overthrow of al-Bashir, they found themselves on the same side as the pro-democracy protesters massed outside the military headquarters in the capital, Khartoum. But with the military and the protesters now locked in tense talks over the path forward, they likely see the generals as allies who can restore stability and keep the Islamists out of power.

Four Egyptian security officials described their government's quiet outreach and support for Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, a rare non-Islamist among Sudan's top brass who now leads the ruling military council. The officials were involved in arranging the talks and in some cases were present at them. They spoke on condition of anonymity because of the secretive nature of the outreach.

Spokesmen for Egypt's Foreign Ministry and the transitional military council now ruling Sudan did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Since the military coup, Egypt has successfully pressed the African Union not to suspend Sudan. The UAE and Saudi Arabia have provided \$3 billion in aid to shore up the military council, and the UAE has hosted

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Sudanese opposition and rebel groups for talks with the military on joining a transitional government.

The three countries' main concern is sidelining the Islamists who orchestrated al-Bashir's 1989 military coup and populated the upper echelons of his regime.

Egypt has waged an unprecedented crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood group since the 2013 military overthrow of Mohammed Morsi, an Islamist who became the country's first freely elected president after the Arab Spring uprising in 2011 but whose rule ignited mass protests.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates view the Brotherhood and its regional affiliates and offshoots as a threat to their monarchical rule and as proxies of Turkey and Qatar. The Saudis and Emiratis strongly supported Morsi's overthrow, and along with Egypt they now consider the Brotherhood a terrorist group.

"Egypt's main concern is the Islamists," said Attia Essawi, an Egyptian expert on African affairs at Cairo's al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies. The protesters were "sick and tired of Islamic rule, and this was in Egypt's interests."

Sudan's protests began in December in response to price hikes and shortages, but quickly escalated into calls for an end to al-Bashir's 30-year reign.

Egypt initially supported al-Bashir, with President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi welcoming him to Cairo in January. Egyptian police prevented demonstrations by the country's large Sudanese community and detained a number of Sudanese activists, whom it handed over to Khartoum, according to international rights groups.

The Gulf countries also remained largely neutral at first, fearing another Arab Spring uprising like those that convulsed the region and threatened their own stability in 2011. But they offered little if any aid to al-Bashir as he struggled to contain the economic crisis fueling the demonstrations.

The Egyptian officials say that all changed in late February, when the protesters defied an emergency declaration and ban on unauthorized gatherings. The three countries realized at that point that "al-Bashir's days in power might be numbered," one official said.

By early April, the officials said, it became clear that al-Bashir had failed to crush the uprising. On April 2, Algeria's long-ruling President Abdelaziz Bouteflika stepped down in the face of similar protests, injecting a fresh burst of momentum into Sudan's demonstrations. On April 6, the protesters set up a sit-in outside the military headquarters.

The following day, a delegation of three Sudanese military and intelligence officials arrived in Cairo, where they met with senior Egyptian intelligence officials, according to two Egyptian officials. Lt. Gen. Jalal el-Din el-Sheikh, deputy head of Sudan's infamous National Intelligence and Security Services, headed the delegation, they said.

An official who attended the meeting said the Sudanese inquired as to how Egypt would respond if the military removed al-Bashir, and whether the Saudis and the Emiratis would provide financial aid.

"They wanted to be reassured," the official said.

The officials said the three Arab countries then reached out to Burhan and to Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as "Hemedti," the commander of Sudan's Rapid Support Forces. Both had helped coordinate the deployment of Sudanese troops to Yemen as part of the Saudi-led coalition battling the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels. The UAE is a leading member of the coalition.

Both the army and the Rapid Support Forces had refused orders from al-Bashir to violently disperse the sit-in outside the military headquarters, and the two generals had each met with the protesters to discuss their demands.

Dagalo would later tell local media that when he met with al-Bashir in early April, the 75-year-old president cited an Islamic legal ruling that says a ruler can kill up to a third of his people. "I said, 'God forbid,'" Dagalo said. "That was our last interaction."

Tensions rose in the following days as security forces close to al-Bashir attacked the sit-in and soldiers intervened to protect the protesters. Two soldiers were killed.

The generals "feared divisions inside the armed forces as low-ranking officers sided with the protesters," an Egyptian official said. "We advised them to try to find a safe exit for al-Bashir."

Egypt proposed that al-Bashir resign and leave for Saudi Arabia, the official said. A senior Sudanese of-

ficial in al-Bashir's government confirmed the offer, which he said was presented to the defense minister, Gen. Awad ibn Ouf, and Ahmed Harun, the acting head of the ruling National Congress Party, on April 9.

The Sudanese official said al-Bashir "furiously" refused.

On the following morning, the military changed out al-Bashir's presidential guard and cut his phone lines, signaling that a coup was underway. Al-Bashir "was shocked and kept yelling," according to a Sudanese military official. The Sudanese officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

Burhan and two other generals met with al-Bashir shortly before the public announcement of the coup. They told him he would not be extradited to the International Criminal Court to face charges of genocide and war crimes during the Darfur conflict in the early 2000s, and that he could remain in the presidential residence under house arrest, the military official said.

On April 11, the military announced the end of al-Bashir's 30-year rule.

But the protesters have remained in the streets, fearing that the military intends to keep much of al-Bashir's regime intact. Ibn Ouf, who announced al-Bashir's overthrow, stepped down as head of the transitional military council a day later, to be replaced by Burhan. His deputy, military chief of staff Kamal Abdel-Marouf al-Mahi, also resigned.

Three other members of the council, including el-Sheikh, who had led the delegation to Cairo, resigned in late April after the protesters refused to meet with them. All five were seen as Islamist allies of al-Bashir.

Days after the coup, the military apparently broke its promise to al-Bashir, dispatching him to a Khartoum prison where his opponents were once jailed and tortured. A number of other top officials have also been arrested.

But the protesters say their revolution is far from over, and have vowed to remain camped out in front of the military headquarters until power is handed over to a civilian administration. On Thursday, they led a massive march through Khartoum.

Ahmed Rabie, one of the protest organizers, said the rally was "a message to the military council, as well as regional and international players, that the Sudanese people will not give up on their demand for a civilian government."

## Maroon's OT goal lifts Blues past Stars in Game 7

BY STEVE OVERBEY Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Pat Maroon always imagined becoming a hometown hero.

The 31-year-old St. Louis native got to live out that fantasy Tuesday night.

Maroon scored 5:50 into the second overtime, Jordan Binnington made 29 saves and the St. Louis Blues outlasted the Dallas Stars 2-1 in Game 7 of their Western Conference semifinal playoff series.

St. Louis will face the winner of the San Jose-Colorado series in the conference final.

Maroon slammed in a loose puck after Robert Thomas hit the goal post on a rush down the right wing. The puck then bounced off Dallas goalie Ben Bishop and dropped in the crease.

It was the second game-winning goal of the series for Maroon, who savored the moment in front of dozens of family and friends.

"As a kid, playing in a basement, on the street, you always think about doing this," Maroon said. "It's unreal. It means the world."

Maroon deflected credit for the tally to Thomas, whose rush helped create the winner.

"I saw an opening and I shot it," Thomas said. "He was there to bang it in."

Maroon struggled at times during the regular season, going 23 games without a goal. But he has scored three goals in the postseason.

"I got to my game and I got my confidence back where it needs to be," Maroon said. "It's been a heck of a journey."

St. Louis captain Alex Pietrangelo felt Maroon deserved a little puck luck.

"He's been working so hard," Pietrangelo said. "What a cool moment for him."



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Binnington, a Calder Trophy finalist, improved to 8-5 in postseason play. He stopped Radek Faksa on a breakaway in the opening period and also made some key stops in the second extra period.

"It was fun for the first three or four periods," Binnington said. "Then I started to get a little tired. We fought until the end. We found a way. It's been working for us."

Vince Dunn also scored for St. Louis.

"It was a pretty good effort from the get-go, they battled and stayed in it," St. Louis interim coach Craig Berube said. "Their goalie had a great game, but our guys never quit and stayed with it."

Bishop made 52 saves and Mats Zuccarello scored for Dallas, which dropped to 5-8 in Game 7s in franchise history.

It marked the first time in NHL history that three playoff series were decided in overtime in Game 7 in the same year. San Jose eliminated Vegas and Carolina beat Washington in the first round.

St. Louis, which improved to 9-8 in Game 7s, outshot Dallas 54-30, including 41-16 in regulation. But Bishop was terrific against his first NHL team, keeping the Stars in the game with a handful of big-time stops in regulation and the overtimes.

The Blues jumped in front when Dunn converted a shot from the point 13:30 into the first period. It was his first career playoff goal.

Zuccarello then jumped on a fortunate deflection for Dallas, tying it at 1 at 15:55. A clearing attempt by St. Louis forward David Perron hit referee Marc Joannette and bounced into the slot. Binnington was looking in the other direction and never saw Zuccarello's shot.

Bishop came into the contest with two shutouts in his only two Game 7 appearances, both with the Tampa Bay Lightning.

He made several key saves during a 34-minute stretch when the Blues outshot Dallas 27-2 from the start of the second period.

But he was unable to stop what Maroon called, a "greasy goal."

"I think it went off the post and hit me in the back of the head," Bishop said. "It just laid there."

Bishop, a Vezina Trophy finalist, made 46 successive saves before Maroon's tally.

"The first word that comes is frustrated," Bishop said. "It's tough to end your season in an overtime game."

NOTES: It was the 176th Game 7 in NHL history. ... Dallas killed off 35 of 37 penalties in the postseason, including all 15 in the first round against Nashville. ... Thomas became the first teenager (19 years, 309 days) to record a point in a Game 7 for the Blues when he assisted on Dunn's goal. ... Actor Jon Hamm, a St. Louis native, was in attendance. It was the fourth double overtime game already this postseason. ... Dallas D Esa Lindell played a game-high 37:45.

UP NEXT

St. Louis plays either San Jose or Colorado in the Western Conference final, which will be decided with Game 7 on Wednesday.

## Appeals court: Trump can make asylum seekers wait in Mexico

By BRIAN MELLEY and ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A federal appeals court ruled Tuesday that the Trump administration can make asylum seekers wait in Mexico for immigration court hearings while the policy is challenged in court, handing the president a major victory, even if it only proves temporary.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals — a frequent target of the president's complaints — reversed a decision by a San Francisco judge that would have prevented asylum seekers from being returned to Mexico during the legal challenge.

The case must still be considered on its merits and could end up at the Supreme Court. But allowing the policy to remain in effect in the meantime lets the administration carry out an unprecedented change to U.S. asylum practices.

The administration has said it plans to rapidly expand the policy across the border, which would have far-reaching consequences for asylum seekers and Mexican border cities that host them while their cases

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wind through clogged U.S. immigration courts. Cases can take several years to decide.

The policy was challenged by 11 Central Americans and advocacy groups that argued it jeopardized asylum seekers by forcing them to stay in Mexico, where crime and drug violence are prevalent.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Seeborg agreed April 8 and said the policy should be halted because it failed to evaluate the dangers migrants faced in Mexico.

The administration introduced its "Migrant Protection Protocols" policy on Jan. 29 in San Diego and later expanded it to Calexico, California, and El Paso, Texas. Under the policy, asylum seekers report to a border crossing in the morning. The U.S. government provides transportation to immigration court and returns them to the border after the hearing.

The U.S. has returned 3,267 Central American asylum seekers through three border cities, Mexico's immigration agency said Monday.

The administration briefly halted the policy after Seeborg's ruling but resumed on April 16, sending 673 people to Tijuana from San Diego since then, 298 to Mexicali from Calexico and 967 to Ciudad Juarez from El Paso.

The policy was introduced to deal with a growing number of asylum-seeking families from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador arriving at the U.S. border with Mexico. Under a court order, children generally cannot be detained more than 20 days, which has led to widespread releases of families almost immediately after they are stopped by authorities.

The January launch followed months of delicate talks between senior U.S. and Mexican officials that culminated in dual announcements after a meeting in November in Houston. Both sides characterized it as a unilateral move by the Trump administration and Mexican officials have made clear that they do not endorse the policy.

The three-judge appeals court panel cited Mexico's position to reject the argument that asylum seekers were at risk.

The judges said the "likelihood of harm is reduced somewhat by the Mexican government's commitment to honor its international law obligations and to grant humanitarian status and work permits to individuals returned under the (Migrant Protection Protocols)." In fact, Mexico said Dec. 20 that it would allow foreigners to apply for a work permit, not necessarily get one.

Judge Diarmuid O'Scannlain, who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan, offered the strongest backing for the administration's position. Judges William Fletcher, an appointee of Bill Clinton, and Paul Watford, who was named by Barack Obama, were more critical.

The American Civil Liberties Union, Southern Poverty Law Center and Center for Gender & Refugee Studies sued over the policy.

Omar Jadwat, director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, said remarks by two of the three judges give reason to believe that the policy will eventually be halted but also raised concern about the impact of Tuesday's decision.

"Asylum seekers are being put at serious risk of harm every day that the forced return policy continues," he said.

Justice and Homeland Security Department officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment late Tuesday, and neither did Mexico's Foreign Relations Secretary officials.

Mexicans and children who travel alone are exempt from the policy.

## Opponents of Georgia abortion ban promise court challenge

By BEN NADLER Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Opponents of a Georgia law banning abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected vow to take their fight from the state Capitol to the courthouse.

Signed Tuesday by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, the measure is one of the nation's most restrictive abortion laws and would effectively ban the procedure around six weeks of pregnancy, before many women know they are pregnant.

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Staci Fox, the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Southeast, said at a news conference that she had one message for Kemp: "We will see you, sir, in court."

The organization also planned to campaign to unseat lawmakers who supported it, saying they would "be held accountable for playing politics with women's health."

The legal director of the ACLU of Georgia, Sean Young, has said the measure is unconstitutional, and the group plans to challenge it in court.

"Under 50 years of Supreme Court precedent, this abortion ban is clearly unconstitutional," Young said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "Every federal court that has heard a challenge to a similar ban has ruled that it's unconstitutional."

Kemp said he approved the bill "to ensure that all Georgians have the opportunity to live, grow, learn and prosper in our great state."

The signing caps weeks of tension and protests at the state Capitol and begins what could be a lengthy and costly legal battle.

"We will not back down," Kemp said, acknowledging the likelihood of a legal challenge. "We will always continue to fight for life."

Anti-abortion activists and lawmakers across the country have been energized by the new conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court that includes President Donald Trump appointees Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. They are pushing abortion bans in an attack on the high court's 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling, which legalized abortion nationwide until a fetus is developed enough to live outside a woman's uterus.

Current law allows women in Georgia to seek an abortion during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. If it's not blocked in court, the new ban would take effect Jan. 1.

The measure makes exceptions in the case of rape and incest — if the woman files a police report first — and to save the life of the mother. It also would allow for abortions when a fetus is determined not to be viable because of serious medical issues.

In addition, the bill includes provisions for alimony, child support and even income tax deductions for fetuses, declaring that "the full value of a child begins at the point when a detectable human heartbeat exists."

The legislation will result in \$10 million to \$20 million in lost tax revenue for the state each year, according to its author, Republican Rep. Ed Setzler.

Setzler called the bill a "common sense" measure that seeks to "balance the difficult circumstances women find themselves in with the basic right to life of a child."

But Democratic Sen. Jen Jordan said "there's nothing balanced about it: It's an all-out abortion ban."

Jordan said she is particularly worried that the new law will push obstetricians away from practicing in Georgia, worsening health care outcomes for women in a state that already has one of the nation's worst maternal mortality rates.

"It's about the unintended consequences," Jordan said. "They're making policy choices that are going to end up causing women to die, and they're preventable deaths."

Georgia has at least 11 abortion providers, according to the National Abortion Federation, a group that advocates for access to abortion.

Some providers have already faced negative effects from the bill, according to Wula Dawson, director of development and communications for the Feminist Women's Health Center, an abortion clinic in Georgia.

Dawson said anti-abortion protesters outside their clinic have become "bolder and more aggressive" toward patients.

In the first few months of 2019, "heartbeat" abortion bans have been signed into law in four states: Mississippi, Kentucky, Ohio, and now Georgia.

Lawmakers in other states including Tennessee, Missouri, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, Louisiana and West Virginia, are considering similar proposals. A bill that recently passed the Alabama House would outlaw abortions at any stage of pregnancy, with a few narrow exceptions.

Kentucky's law was immediately challenged by the ACLU after it was signed in March, and a federal judge temporarily blocked it.

Earlier versions of the law passed in North Dakota and Iowa have also been struck down in court. According to the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights, about 33,000 abortions were provided in Georgia in 2014.

Associated Press Writer Sanya Mansoor in Atlanta contributed to this report.

## California pot market not traced or tracked as promised

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When California voters broadly legalized marijuana, they were promised that a vast computer platform would closely monitor products moving through the new market. But 16 months after sales kicked in, the system known as track-and-trace isn't doing much of either.

As of last month, just nine retail outlets were entering data into the network established under an estimated \$60 million state contract, even though 627 shops are licensed to sell pot in California.

The rate of participation is similarly slim for other sectors in the emerging industry.

Only 93 of more than 1,000 licensed manufacturing companies producing extracts, oils and other products were documenting their activities in the network in April. And of the nearly 4,000 licensed growers, only about 7 percent, or 254, are using the high-tech system, according to a review of state data.

How are state officials watching over the nation's largest legal pot market? For now, it's essentially a paper trail.

Most California companies are required to document their business on paper sales invoices and shipping manifests. But experts say that can be a doorway for criminal traffic.

With paper records, regulators are relying on an honor system, said Patrick Vo, CEO of BioTrackTHC, which provides seed-to-sale cannabis tracking in eight states, including New York and Illinois.

Without a digital crumb trail in place, "there are so many areas where things can go wrong," Vo said. "Things can be intentionally altered."

Track-and-trace sometimes is referred to as seed-to-sale to reflect the goal of tracking marijuana plants every step, from the time they are planted until products are purchased by consumers. The goal is to keep illegal cannabis from store shelves while making sure legally produced products don't drift into the underground market.

According to state law, the tracking system is required to provide "data points for the different stages of commercial activity, including, but not limited to, cultivation, harvest, processing, distribution, inventory and sale." It's also intended to help the state keep track of taxes.

But for now, California's electronic monitoring system is seeing just fragments of the legal market — not the rigorous seed-to-sale oversight envisioned when voters approved Proposition 64, the law that opened the way for broad legal sales. A spokesman for the state Bureau of Cannabis Control said he was unaware of any enforcement cases triggered by fraudulent or altered paper records; it wasn't immediately clear how often regulators review those records that document tens of thousands of industry transactions.

According to the state, the California tracking network created by Florida-based Franwell Inc. has been functional since Jan. 2, 2018, the day after broad legal sales began.

So why are so few licensees using it? In short, time and bureaucracy.

It goes back to state regulators' decision to first issue only temporary cannabis licenses, as California faced a tight legal deadline to begin sales on Jan. 1, 2018.

It wasn't possible to train thousands of temporary license holders to use the tracking system "without causing significant disruption" to the new, regulated marijuana market, said Rebecca Foree, spokeswoman for the state Department of Food and Agriculture.

Instead, the state decided only annual license-holders would use the track-and-trace system. But the first annual license wasn't issued until November 2018, and only a relatively small number have been issued since.

Meanwhile, scores of temporary licenses have expired, leaving companies in a kind of legal limbo, tech-

nically unable to do business in the state market.

Even when the tracking system comes into widespread use, it will provide only a partial look into state-wide growing and sales since California's illegal pot industry continues to thrive.

Other states also have had problems instituting their seed-to-sale systems.

New tracking software in Washington state was delayed in 2017 after regulators switched vendors. Last year, a Franwell-designed system temporarily bogged down in Maryland, in some cases preventing sales, after a new feature was added. Pennsylvania's software has caused problems for cultivators trying to record shipments.

Green Bits, which provides business software for pot shops that can sync with state tracking systems, has over 100 clients in California. So far, only one is using the state tracking system, though two others are expected to start soon.

Charlie Wilson, the company's chief revenue officer, said the slow rollout could be attributed in part to the daunting size of the job.

With the coming of legal sales in 2018, California began attempting to transform its longstanding illegal and medicinal marijuana markets into a unified, multibillion-dollar industry. Several agencies are involved in licensing and regulation.

For an industry that operated for decades with scant regulation, it's a big transition.

"It's not just tracking an edible brownie — but the specific plant that went into the creation of that brownie," Wilson said.

Even for the relatively small number of California companies that are using the tracking system, it provides less than blanket coverage. Take the case of Moxie, which holds an annual license for manufacturing.

When the marijuana-extract company produces a fresh batch at its plant just outside Los Angeles, vice president Josh Haddox opens his laptop and types details about the product into the track-and-trace database.

Once it's in the platform, regulators can eyeball the same information.

But when the time comes to send a sample of extract to a testing company to check for purity and potency, it drops out of the state computer system. That's because Moxie, a brand of parent Pure CA, holds only a temporary license for its distribution arm and so doesn't have access to the system.

Haddox likes the system and is eager to see it in wide use. But with the piecemeal practices now in place, the state "has no way to tell how many products (a company) made or where it's going," he said.

With the explosion of cannabis sales, seed-to-sale tracking has emerged as a fiercely competitive business, with rival companies battling over lucrative government contracts.

In 2015, lawyers for Franwell, which has a two-year contract with California, said BioTrackTHC was using misleading publicity material and other tactics to undercut its business, charges denied by the rival company. BioTrackTHC in April filed a protest to void Missouri regulators' decision to award a medical cannabis licensing and seed-to-sale tracking contract to Franwell.

"Track-and-trace was definitely supposed to be one of those tools to define who is operating in the legal market and who is not," said Josh Drayton of the California Cannabis Industry Association. "We clearly are not getting the results we were hoping for."

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Blood is a member of AP's marijuana beat team. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/MichaelR-BloodAP> . Follow AP's complete marijuana coverage: <https://apnews.com/Marijuana> .

## Denver 'magic mushroom' measure appears headed for defeat

By KATHLEEN FOODY Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Voters on Tuesday appeared to reject an attempt to make Denver the first U.S. city to decriminalize psilocybin — the psychoactive substance in "magic mushrooms" — and add a new chapter to the city's role in shaping wider drug policy.

The citizen initiative on the ballot followed the same tack taken by marijuana activists to decriminalize

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pot possession in 2005 in the city. That move was followed by statewide legalization in 2012. A number of other states have since broadly allowed marijuana sales and use by adults.

With all precincts reporting late Tuesday night, the "no" votes for the initiative held a substantial lead over the "yes" votes, according to unofficial returns.

Psilocybin decriminalization campaign organizers have said their only goal is to keep people out of jail in Denver for using or possessing the drug to cope with depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress and other conditions.

The initiative would effectively decriminalize use or possession of psilocybin by people 21 and older, making it the lowest enforcement priority for police and prosecutors. The measure does not legalize psilocybin or permit its sale by cannabis businesses.

Kevin Matthews, director of the Decriminalize Denver campaign, said psilocybin has helped him with depression for years.

"This is not something you have to take every day," the 33-year-old Denver native said. "It provides a lot of lasting benefits, weeks and months after one experience."

Psilocybin has been outlawed in the U.S. since the 1960s, and some researchers warn that it should only be used under medical supervision and can prompt paranoia and anxiety.

The federal government classifies psilocybin as a Schedule I drug, with no medical purpose and a high potential for abuse.

For decades, that status has stymied research into medical uses of psilocybin, but small, closely supervised studies in recent years have found that it can help treat anxiety and depression in cancer patients. Users have described seeing vivid colors and geometric patterns, and experiencing powerful spiritual connections and emotions.

Magic mushrooms have been used in religious practices for decades because of their powerful effect on perceptions and spiritual experiences. Those same effects have appealed to recreational users dating back to the 1960s counterculture movement.

A California effort to decriminalize psilocybin failed to qualify for the statewide ballot in 2018. Organizers in Oregon are trying to gather enough support to put an initiative to a statewide vote next year.

It took the pro-psilocybin organizers in Denver three tries to develop language approved by city officials for the ballot. They collected more than 8,000 signatures to qualify for Tuesday's election.

Tyler Williams, a financial planner, enlisted a friend to take his photo outside a Denver polling place before he voted 'yes.' Williams worked on the campaign's initial attempts to get on the ballot, motivated by what he called a positive experience using psilocybin to manage severe depression.

"That option should be available to everyone, without fear," said Williams, 29. "Just being able to vote for this is a huge victory."

Jeremiah Whitehead, a 44-year-old small business owner, voted no — saying he wants city officials to focus on lingering issues surrounding marijuana in the city, including a lack of businesses licensed for "social consumption" where people can legally use cannabis products and disputes over how marijuana tax money is used.

"We're still getting used to pot," he said. "Let's get that figured out before we add something else."

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock opposes the initiative along with District Attorney Beth McCann, but there has been no organized campaign against decriminalization. The city's election has largely focused on a six-way race for mayor and a heated effort to end Denver's "urban camping" ban that affects people without housing.

The proposed ordinance would also prevent city funds from being used to pursue criminal penalties on possession or use and create a panel to study the effects of the change.

"Nobody should be penalized for this substance," Matthews said. "One arrest is too many. No person deserves this kind of treatment for a substance this safe."

## Ex-White House lawyer defies House subpoena for Mueller docs

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former White House lawyer defied a congressional subpoena Tuesday, setting the Trump administration on course for another collision with the Democratic-led House over its pursuit of documents related to the Russia investigation.

Don McGahn's refusal to provide the documents to the House Judiciary Committee came at the instruction of the White House, which suggested the documents could be subject to executive privilege. Such a claim can shield some presidential material from disclosure.

President Donald Trump has defied requests from House Democrats since the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report last month. Republicans have largely united behind the president, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Tuesday declaring "case closed" on Mueller's Russia probe and potential obstruction by Trump. McConnell said Democrats are "grieving" the result.

Mueller said he could not establish a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia, but he did not reach a conclusion on whether Trump obstructed justice. Mueller didn't charge Trump but wrote that he couldn't exonerate him, either.

Democrats say the case is anything but closed and are conducting their own review of Mueller's investigation of Russian election interference. The Judiciary panel wants to speak to McGahn and review certain documents, in part because he was a vital witness for Mueller, recounting the president's outrage over the investigation and his efforts to curtail it.

White House counsel Pat Cipollone said McGahn does not have any "legal right" to the materials because they are controlled by the White House. Cipollone did not invoke executive privilege in a letter to House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., but strongly signaled the option is on the table. He said the records Democrats are seeking "remain legally protected from disclosure under longstanding constitutional principles."

In a letter to McGahn's lawyer Tuesday evening, Nadler rejected the argument that McGahn has no right to turn over documents to the committee. He said the "blanket suggestion of potential privilege is entirely insufficient."

Executive privilege is the president's power to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of the Oval Office decision-making process. There is no reference to executive privilege in the Constitution, but the Supreme Court has held that it derives from the president's ability to carry out the duties the commander in chief holds under the Constitution.

Nadler also threatened to hold McGahn in contempt of Congress if he doesn't testify before the committee later this month. Trump has signaled he will try to block McGahn from appearing, despite a committee subpoena. McGahn's lawyer said that he will "maintain the status quo" and wait for the White House and the committee to reach an agreement.

"As you will appreciate, Mr. McGahn, as a former assistant to the president and the most senior attorney for the president in his official capacity, continues to owe certain duties and obligations to the President which he is not free to disregard," wrote attorney William Burck.

The struggle over McGahn's testimony is playing out against the backdrop of a larger debate on Capitol Hill about what action — if any — to take following the conclusion of Mueller's investigation.

McConnell, in his most significant public comments yet on the investigation, opened the Senate on Tuesday with a speech discussing how Mueller's "exhaustive" probe is now complete.

"It's finally over," the Kentucky Republican said. He called Mueller's findings "bad news for the outrage industrial complex but good news for the rest of the country."

The speech drew swift rebuttals from Democrats. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer issued a joint statement calling it "a stunning act of political cynicism and a brazen violation of the oath we all take."

After McConnell's speech, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democratic presidential candidate, made her own trip to the Senate floor to say the House should begin impeachment proceedings — a step

that Pelosi has so far resisted. Yet Pelosi also said Trump seems to be “making the case” for his impeachment by brazenly obstructing investigations.

“He’s just trying to goad us into impeachment,” Pelosi said in a talk at Cornell’s Institute of Politics and Global Affairs.

The dispute with the White House over McGahn is among several requests being resisted by the administration. The Judiciary Committee is also negotiating with the Justice Department over obtaining a full, unredacted version of Mueller’s report. Attorney General William Barr released a redacted version to the public last month, but Democrats want to see the full document, plus underlying documents, and have scheduled a committee vote Wednesday to hold Barr in contempt for not providing it.

With the contempt vote looming Wednesday, staff members from the House Judiciary Committee met with Justice Department officials on Tuesday afternoon. Negotiations went into the evening as the two sides traded offers on how many lawmakers would be able to view the report, how many staff, and whether the department would work with the committee to gain access to secret grand jury material. But talks stalled late Tuesday evening when the two sides couldn’t agree on any of those terms.

In another development, Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd told the committee in a letter late Tuesday that, in the face of a contempt vote, Barr would be compelled to request that the president invoke executive privilege with respect to the materials subject to the subpoena. It was not immediately clear how a claim of executive privilege would work given that Mueller’s report has already been released to the public in redacted form.

Nadler dismissed the idea, saying in a statement in response to Boyd’s letter to the committee that “this is, of course, not how executive privilege works.”

“The White House waived these privileges long ago, and the Department seemed open to sharing these materials with us earlier today. The Department’s legal arguments are without credibility, merit, or legal or factual basis,” Nadler said.

If the committee approves a contempt resolution against Barr, it would head to the full House for final approval. But that step is unlikely to lead to criminal charges. A House vote would send a criminal referral to the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, a Justice Department official who is likely to defend the attorney general.

Democratic House leaders could also file a lawsuit against the Justice Department to obtain the Mueller report, an option that could take months or even years to resolve. Some committee members have suggested they also could fine Barr as he withholds the information.

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Associated Press writer Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

## White House launches new uphill bid to overhaul immigration

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Reviving a deeply contentious issue that has stymied both Congress and the administration, the White House launched a new bid Tuesday to overhaul a legal immigration system that President Donald Trump has long railed against.

Though similar efforts have failed to garner anywhere near the support necessary, Trump hopefully invited a dozen Republican senators to the White House to preview the plan, which was spearheaded by senior adviser and presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner.

It’s the result of an unusually methodical approach for an administration known for hastily written executive orders and Trump’s declarations by tweet. Kushner’s team has pulled in officials with experience in legislation-writing from outside the White House, including the Department of Homeland Security, to help with the drafting.

Still, the road to passage remains uphill. Democrats are likely to strongly disapprove of parts of the plan without significant concessions.

Kushner outlined two major ideas:



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— A border security bill that would focus, in part, on modernizing ports of entry to make sure all people, vehicles and packages are scanned.

— A second package of immigration proposals that would create a more “merit-based” system to give preference to those with job skills rather than relatives of immigrants already in the country.

Under the plan, which does not address temporary visa categories, including for laborers, the same number of immigrants would be permitted to enter the country, but their composition would change.

The White House is also working with Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina on additional legislation that would address the nation’s asylum system, in an effort to stem the flow of migrants across the border, according to a senior administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to outline the plan.

It’s just the latest effort by the Trump White House to push Congress to overhaul immigration laws that he has long complained compromise national security and depress American workers’ wages by allowing too many immigrants to compete for jobs. But Trump has also said the country needs more workers thanks to economic gains and has said that educated, skilled workers — especially those who graduate from American colleges — should be able to stay and work.

While Trump had previously rejected an earlier version of Kushner’s proposal, asking him to incorporate more border security measures, the senior official told reporters after the meeting Tuesday that Trump had signed off on the effort last week and it should now be considered “the President Trump plan.”

The White House is now seeking feedback and pressing for support from Republican lawmakers.

The official declined to say when more details would be unveiled or how the White House intended to get Democrats — who have yet to be briefed on the plan — on board.

Several GOP senators who attended the meeting did compliment the effort.

David Perdue of Georgia said Trump was “developing a platform for immigration that he can be for — and I was impressed.”

“The conversation was about border security and the immigration side — how to become much more effective at allowing the right kind,” he said.

Tom Cotton of Arkansas said he “heard large areas of agreement from everyone in the room.” He said he still needs to see details, but things are “moving in the right direction.”

Kevin Cramer of North Dakota called it a “good starting point” that could be appealing to Democrats in the right situation.

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And former Vice President Joe Biden, who is running for the Democratic nomination to challenge Trump, accused the president Tuesday of using immigration “to demonize people.”

“It isn’t who we are. We’re better than that,” Biden said as he kicked off a rally.

Any immigration plan is sure to face a challenge on Capitol Hill where lawmakers have struggled for decades to pass comprehensive immigration legislation. Conservative Republicans are likely to oppose a plan that does not cut rates of legal immigration, while Democrats have made clear they will not accept changes without new protections for “Dreamer” immigrants. Some Republicans, especially those from election swing states, would like to see protections for Dreamers as well, but that issue does not appear to be included in Kushner’s plan.

There has also been skepticism about Kushner’s involvement, given he has no previous background on the complex and controversial subject. But Kushner has spent months meeting with various Republican groups, hoping to put together a proposal that can unite party members, following the playbook he used to help pass bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation last year.

A previous attempt by Trump to reach a comprehensive immigration deal with Congress collapsed last

year, and there is deep doubt in Washington that there is any appetite on Capitol Hill for a wide-ranging agreement.

Trump put immigration at the center of his presidential campaign, including a promise to build a wall along the U.S-Mexico border. He is expected to continue to hammer the issue in his re-election campaign as he tries to energize his base of supporters.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro, Alan Fram and Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Follow Colvin and Superville on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

## White House launches new uphill bid to overhaul immigration

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Reviving a deeply contentious issue that has stymied both Congress and the administration, the White House launched a new bid Tuesday to overhaul a legal immigration system that President Donald Trump has long railed against.

Though similar efforts have failed to garner anywhere near the support necessary, Trump hopefully invited a dozen Republican senators to the White House to preview the plan, which was spearheaded by senior adviser and presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner.

It's the result of an unusually methodical approach for an administration known for hastily written executive orders and Trump's declarations by tweet. Kushner's team has pulled in officials with experience in legislation-writing from outside the White House, including the Department of Homeland Security, to help with the drafting.

Still, the road to passage remains uphill. Democrats are likely to strongly disapprove of parts of the plan without significant concessions.

Kushner outlined two major ideas:

— A border security bill that would focus, in part, on modernizing ports of entry to make sure all people, vehicles and packages are scanned.

— A second package of immigration proposals that would create a more "merit-based" system to give preference to those with job skills rather than relatives of immigrants already in the country.

Under the plan, which does not address temporary visa categories, including for laborers, the same number of immigrants would be permitted to enter the country, but their composition would change.

The White House is also working with Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina on additional legislation that would address the nation's asylum system, in an effort to stem the flow of migrants across the border, according to a senior administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to outline the plan.

It's just the latest effort by the Trump White House to push Congress to overhaul immigration laws that he has long complained compromise national security and depress American workers' wages by allowing too many immigrants to compete for jobs. But Trump has also said the country needs more workers thanks to economic gains and has said that educated, skilled workers — especially those who graduate from American colleges — should be able to stay and work.

While Trump had previously rejected an earlier version of Kushner's proposal, asking him to incorporate more border security measures, the senior official told reporters after the meeting Tuesday that Trump had signed off on the effort last week and it should now be considered "the President Trump plan."

The White House is now seeking feedback and pressing for support from Republican lawmakers.

The official declined to say when more details would be unveiled or how the White House intended to get Democrats — who have yet to be briefed on the plan — on board.

Several GOP senators who attended the meeting did compliment the effort.

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effective at allowing the right kind," he said.

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## US pregnancy deaths are up, especially among minorities

By MIKE STOBBE and MARILYNN MARCHIONE Associated Press

Pregnancy-related deaths are rising in the United States and the main risk factor is being black, according to new reports that highlight racial disparities in care during and after childbirth.

Black women, along with Native Americans and Alaska natives, are three times more likely to die before, during or after having a baby, and more than half of these deaths are preventable, Tuesday's report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concludes.

Although these deaths are rare — about 700 a year — they have been rising for decades.

"An American mom today is 50% more likely to die in childbirth than her own mother was," said Dr. Neel Shah, a Harvard Medical School obstetrician.

Separately, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists released new guidelines saying being black is the greatest risk factor for these deaths. The guidelines say women should have a comprehensive heart-risk evaluation 12 weeks after delivery, but up to 40% of women don't return for that visit and pay-

ment issues may be one reason.

Bleeding and infections used to cause most pregnancy-related deaths, but heart-related problems do now. "Pregnancy is really a stress test" because of the extra blood the heart is moving for mom and child, said the head of the guidelines panel, Dr. James Martin. That can reveal previously unknown problems or lead to new ones.

The CDC report found that about one third of maternal deaths happened during pregnancy, a third were during or within a week of birth, and the rest were up to a year later.

Globally, maternal mortality fell about 44% between 1990 and 2015, according to the World Health Organization. But the U.S. is out of step: Moms die in about 17 out of every 100,000 U.S. births each year, up from 12 per 100,000 a quarter century ago.

Possible factors include the high C-section rates in the U.S. and soaring rates of obesity, which raises the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other complications.

Black women in the U.S. are about three times as likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause as others, partly because of racial bias they may experience in getting care and doctors not recognizing risk factors such as high blood pressure, said Dr. Lisa Hollier, the obstetrician group's president.

Stacy Ann Walker may be an example. She was 29, healthy and excited to be expecting her first child eight years ago "when the unimaginable happened and left both of us fighting for our life."

The Hartford, Connecticut, woman said her doctor brushed off her complaints of shortness of breath, exhaustion and swelling in her legs as normal aches and pains of pregnancy. Her baby developed life-threatening complications requiring an emergency cesarean section, and weighed less than 3 pounds at delivery.

But her ordeal wasn't over. After the birth, she developed heart valve problems and heart failure, requiring surgery.

"Never did I think my life would be in danger," said Walker, who is black. She spoke at a news conference the obstetricians group held on the guidelines.

The CDC looked at about 3,000 pregnancy-related deaths from 2011 through 2015, using death certificates. Researchers also looked at more intensive investigations of about 250 deaths done in 13 states.

The latter review determined that 60% of deaths were preventable. Often, three or four problems contributed to a death, ranging from doctors' mistakes to the difficulty some women had getting housing and healthy food.

The report shows the need to educate doctors and patients about risks for new moms, and to expand Medicaid health coverage in all states so that postpartum care is available for all moms up to a year after giving birth, said Dr. Alison Stuebe of the University of North Carolina.

"We as a society do a terrible job of taking care of mothers after the baby comes out," she said.

"It's like the baby is the candy and the mama is the wrapper," she added. "Once the baby is out of the wrapper, the wrapper is tossed aside."

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## Top US diplomat makes secret Iraq trip amid Iran tensions

BY MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made a lightning visit Tuesday to Baghdad aimed at showing support for the Iraqi government as the United States has been picking up intelligence that Iran is threatening American interests in the Middle East.

The top American diplomat's unannounced trip to the Iraqi capital began and ended after nightfall under heavy security following the abrupt cancellation of a visit to Germany.

Journalists from The Associated Press and other organizations accompanying Pompeo were not told of his new destination until his plane left for Baghdad and were not allowed to report on his whereabouts.

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until after his plane had taken off for London.

The secretary told reporters on the flight that his meetings with Iraq's president and prime minister were intended to demonstrate U.S. support for "a sovereign, independent" Iraq, free from the influence of neighboring Iran.

Pompeo also said he wanted to underscore Iraq's need to protect Americans in their country.

"We wanted to let them know about the increased threat stream that we had seen and give them a little bit more background on that so they could ensure that they were doing all they could to provide protection for our team," he said. "They understood, too, it's important for their country."

Pompeo's visit came as the Trump administration intensified its pressure campaign against Iran. The U.S. said this week that it was rushing an aircraft carrier group to the Middle East to deter or respond to any Iranian attack.

U.S. officials have said there were indications Iran was planning to retaliate for the Trump administration's stepped-up sanctions on the country, although the threat information remains vague.

Pompeo would not be specific about the more recent threat information involving Iran except that they involved "imminent" plans for attacks. "We're taking every action to deter them," he said. "Other than that, I just can't say any more."

Before landing in Baghdad he said that that he would make clear in his meetings that any attack by Iran or its proxies on American forces in Iraq would affect the Iraqi government too.

The "campaign to continue to prevent ISIS terror inside of Iraq itself is something that's very central ... to the Iraqi government," Pompeo said.

In Washington, an American official said the decision to deploy the carrier group and a group of Air Force bombers to the Middle East was based in part on intelligence indications that Iran had moved short-range ballistic missiles by boat in waters off its shores.

Iran, meanwhile, was expected to announced Wednesday that it would partially withdraw from the nuclear deal it struck with world powers in 2015.

As tensions rise between Washington and Tehran, Baghdad in some ways is caught in the middle. Iraq has a close relationship with the U.S., which is leading the international coalition in the war against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. More than 5,000 U.S. troops are stationed on Iraqi soil.

But Iraq is also tightly enmeshed with Iran in trade, security and political matters, and it has been loath to antagonize its larger neighbor. Iran won the ear of many top Iraqi politicians after it stepped in to fill the political vacuum following the 2003 U.S. invasion. It also can count on the loyalty of several powerful Iraqi militias, which have fought previously against U.S. forces in the country and on the side of Iran's allies in Syria in that country's civil war.

Responding to a question about whether Iraq could protect U.S. interests from attacks by Iran and its proxy forces, Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi said Tuesday that Iraq takes its responsibilities seriously. "This is an obligation that Iraq honors," he said.

The Trump administration has made several recent moves to squeeze Iran. Last month, President Donald Trump announced the U.S. would no longer exempt any countries from U.S. sanctions if they continue to buy Iranian oil. The U.S. also designated Iran's Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist group, the first time it has ever taken such a step for an entire division of another government.

Trump withdrew from the Obama administration's landmark nuclear deal with Iran in May 2018 and, in the months that followed, reinstated punishing sanctions, including those targeting Iran's oil, shipping and banking sectors.

While Trump has sought to dismantle much of President Barack Obama's policies, he particularly criticized the Iran nuclear deal for failing to address Tehran's ballistic missile program and what he described as its malign influence across the rest of the Mideast.

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Associated Press writer Philip Issa in Baghdad contributed to this report.

## Can US, China salvage their talks and end trade war?

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Heightened trade tensions between the United States and China are spooking financial markets and putting a chill on prospects for the global economy.

Chinese officials are heading to Washington to try to salvage negotiations aimed at breaking an impasse between the world's two biggest economies over Beijing's aggressive push to challenge American technological dominance. The 11th round of talks is set for Thursday and Friday in Washington.

But their arrival is unlikely to stop the United States from going ahead with plans to raise import taxes on \$200 billion in Chinese goods at 12:01 a.m. Friday, Eastern time, in a dramatic escalation of a yearlong trade war.

The dispute is upsetting investors. The Dow Jones industrial average was down more than 500 points Tuesday afternoon after slipping modestly on Monday.

Here's a look at what's happening:

### WHAT WENT WRONG?

For weeks, the Trump administration had suggested that talks were making steady progress, and financial markets seemed to have priced in a peaceful resolution to the trade dispute. But on Sunday, President Donald Trump unexpectedly expressed frustration at the pace of talks and vowed to raise tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese products from 10% to 25%. The higher duties would cover thousands of Chinese imports, ranging from baseball gloves to burglar alarms.

"The Trade Deal with China continues, but too slowly, as they attempt to renegotiate. No!" Trump tweeted.

A day later, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and the top U.S. trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, said that China was reneging on commitments it made in earlier rounds of negotiations. U.S. officials say they got an inkling of China's second thoughts in talks last week in Beijing, but that the backsliding became even more apparent in exchanges over the weekend. They wouldn't identify the specific issues involved.

### WHAT ARE THE U.S. AND CHINA FIGHTING ABOUT?

The United States accuses China of resorting to predatory tactics in a drive to give Chinese companies an edge in advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and electric vehicles. These, the U.S. contends, include hacking into U.S. companies' computers to steal trade secrets, forcing foreign companies to hand over sensitive technology in exchange for access to Chinese markets and unfairly subsidizing Chinese tech firms.

Trump has also complained repeatedly about America's massive trade deficit with China — a record \$379 billion last year — which he blames on weak and naive negotiating by previous U.S. administrations.

Last July, Trump began gradually slapping tariffs on Chinese imports. The United States now is imposing 10% taxes on \$200 billion in Chinese products and 25% on another \$50 billion. Beijing has counterpunched by targeting \$110 billion worth of American imports, focusing on farm products such as soybeans in a deliberate effort to inflict pain on Trump supporters in the U.S. heartland.

### WEREN'T THE TWO SIDES MAKING PROGRESS?

Yes. Last week, Myron Brilliant, head of international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, who has been briefed on the negotiations, told reporters that "94.5%" of the issues had been resolved and that talks had reached the "end game." China was expected to beef up protection for trade secrets and offer foreign firms wider access to the Chinese market.

But stumbling blocks remained — even before Trump accused China of backsliding on what it had already agreed to.

U.S. officials are insisting that any deal be strictly enforced so that China lives up to its promises — something they say Beijing has repeatedly failed to do in the past. Also unclear is what would happen to the U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports. China wants them lifted; the U.S. wants to keep tariffs as leverage to pressure the Chinese to comply with any agreement.

## WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR A RESOLUTION?

Both countries have an incentive to reach a deal. China's economy is decelerating; the International Monetary Fund expects Chinese economic growth to slip from 6.6% last year to 6.3% in 2019 and 6.1% in 2020. The trade war with the United States has hurt Chinese exporters and eroded business and consumer confidence.

The trade tensions have also rattled financial markets, jeopardizing a U.S. stock market rally that Trump sees as a vote of confidence in his economic policies. And China's retaliatory tariffs are inflicting pain on farmers, a key part of Trump's political base.

Still, business groups and congressional Democrats are insisting that Trump, having taken U.S.-China relations to the brink, hold out for a deal that requires the Chinese to genuinely change their behavior, reform their economy and open up to foreign companies.

Chinese President Xi Jinping runs a one-party state and doesn't have to answer directly to voters. But he, too, faces pressure not to cave in to American demands. "They have their internal politics, too," said Michael Pillsbury, director of the Hudson Institute's Center on Chinese Strategy and an adviser to the Trump White House.

## WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC FALLOUT?

Forecasters at the IMF and World Bank have already downgraded the outlook for the global economy. The U.S.-China standoff is reducing global trade and creating uncertainty for companies deciding where to buy supplies, build plants and make investments.

Friday's scheduled increase in tariffs could intensify the economic pain. Steven Cochrane, chief Asia-Pacific economist at Moody's Analytics, said that fallout from Friday's planned tariff increase could reduce U.S. economic growth — 2.9% last year — by 1.8 percentage points. And it could shave Chinese growth to around 5%. "If Trump's threat becomes reality," Cochrane said, "it will be a game changer for the global economy."

Follow Paul Wiseman on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/PaulWisemanAP>

## **FBI chief: No evidence of illegal spying on Trump campaign**

**By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Director Chris Wray said Tuesday that he does not consider court-approved FBI surveillance to be "spying" and said he has no evidence the FBI illegally monitored President Donald Trump's campaign during the 2016 election.

His comments at a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing broke from Attorney General William Barr, who has described as "spying" FBI surveillance during its investigation into potential collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia. Barr has not said such surveillance was necessarily improper, but Trump nonetheless seized on those comments to suggest his campaign was spied on in an illegal and unprecedented act.

Asked by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., if he would say that the FBI is "spying" when it investigates suspected terrorists and mobsters while following "investigative policies and procedures," Wray replied, "Well, that's not the term I would use."

He added: "I believe that the FBI is engaged in investigative activity, and part of investigative activity includes surveillance activity of different shapes and sizes. And to me, the key question is making sure that it's done by the book, consistent with our lawful authorities. That's the key question. Different people use different colloquial phrases."

Wray declined to discuss in detail the FBI's investigation into the Trump campaign because of an ongoing Justice Department inspector general probe into the origins of the Russia inquiry. Barr has said he expects the watchdog report to be done in May or June.

But asked whether he was aware of evidence that the FBI had illegally spied on the Trump campaign, Wray said, "I don't think I personally have any evidence of that sort."

Barr is investigating whether there was a proper basis for the FBI to open a counterintelligence investigation into ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. The recently concluded investigation from special counsel Robert Mueller did not find a criminal conspiracy between the campaign and the Kremlin to tip the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.

"The attorney general is seeking to understand better the circumstances at the department and the FBI relating to how this investigation started, and we're working to help him get that understanding," Wray said about the Justice Department's review. "I think that's part of his job and part of mine."

Barr didn't specify what he meant when he said he believed there had been spying on the Trump campaign, though he also said that he did not mean the word in a negative way. At a hearing last week, he described "spying" as a "good English word" encompassing "all forms of covert intelligence operations" and said he wouldn't back away from using it.

The FBI obtained a secret surveillance warrant in the fall of 2016 to monitor the communications of former Trump campaign aide Carter Page, whose interactions with Russians several years earlier had raised law enforcement suspicions even before he joined the campaign.

The New York Times reported last week that the FBI sent a female government investigator posing as a research assistant to speak with ex-Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos, who was told by a Maltese professor in the spring of 2016 that Russia had "dirt" on Democrat Hillary Clinton in the form of stolen emails.

In his book about his entanglement in the Russia probe, "Deep State Target," Papadopoulos wrote that the woman, who identified herself as Azra Turk, asked him about his work with the Trump campaign.

"She wants to know: Are we working with Russia?" he wrote. He described her question as "creepy" and said he told her he had "nothing to do with Russia."

Papadopoulos later pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his interactions with the professor, Joseph Mifsud, and was sentenced to 14 days in prison.

## Georgia governor signs restrictive 'heartbeat' abortion ban

By BEN NADLER and SANYA MANSOOR Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp on Tuesday signed into law one of the nation's most restrictive abortion laws, a measure that bans the procedure once a fetal heartbeat is detected, which can be as early as six weeks, before many women know they are pregnant.

Kemp, a Republican, said he approved the bill "to ensure that all Georgians have the opportunity to live, grow, learn and prosper in our great state."

The signing caps weeks of tension and protests at the state Capitol and begins what could be a lengthy and costly legal battle over the law's constitutionality. But a legal showdown is exactly what supporters want.

"We will not back down," Kemp said. "We will always continue to fight for life."

Anti-abortion activists and lawmakers across the country have been energized by the new conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court that includes President Donald Trump appointees Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. They are pushing abortion bans in an attack on the high court's 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling, which legalized abortion nationwide until a fetus is developed enough to live outside a woman's uterus.

Staci Fox, the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Southeast, said she had one message for Kemp: "We will see you, sir, in court."

At a news conference on the Capitol steps, she said the new law criminalizes doctors for providing lifesaving care. The organization vowed to campaign to unseat lawmakers who supported it, saying they would "be held accountable for playing politics with women's health."

The legal director of the ACLU of Georgia, Sean Young, has said the group will challenge the measure in court.

"Under 50 years of Supreme Court precedent, this abortion ban is clearly unconstitutional," Young said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "Every federal court that has heard a challenge to a similar



ban has ruled that it's unconstitutional."

Current law allows women in Georgia to seek an abortion during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. If it's not blocked in court, the new ban would take effect Jan. 1.

The measure makes exceptions in the case of rape and incest — if the woman files a police report first — and to save the life of the mother. It also would allow for abortions when a fetus is determined not to be viable because of serious medical issues.

In addition, the bill includes provisions for alimony, child support and even income tax deductions for fetuses, declaring that "the full value of a child begins at the point when a detectable human heartbeat exists."

The legislation would result in \$10 million to \$20 million in lost tax revenue for the state each year, according to its author, Republican Rep. Ed Setzler, who offered the estimate during a committee hearing in March.

Setzler called the bill a "common sense" measure that seeks to "balance the difficult circumstances women find themselves in with the basic right to life of a child."

But Democratic Sen. Jen Jordan said "there's nothing balanced about it: It's an all-out abortion ban."

Jordan said she is particularly worried that the new law will push obstetricians away from practicing in Georgia, worsening health care outcomes for women in a state that already has one of the nation's worst maternal mortality rates.

"It's about the unintended consequences," Jordan said. "They're making policy choices that are going to end up causing women to die, and they're preventable deaths."

Georgia has at least 11 abortion providers, according to the National Abortion Federation, a group that advocates for access to abortion.

Some abortion providers have already faced negative effects from the bill, according to Wula Dawson, director of development and communications for the Feminist Women's Health Center, an abortion clinic in Georgia.

Dawson said anti-abortion protesters outside their clinic have become "bolder and more aggressive" toward patients.

In the first few months of 2019, "heartbeat" abortion bans have been signed into law in four states: Mississippi, Kentucky, Ohio, and now Georgia.

Lawmakers in other states including Tennessee, Missouri, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, Louisiana and West Virginia, are considering similar proposals. A bill that recently passed the Alabama House would outlaw abortions at any stage of pregnancy, with a few narrow exceptions.

Kentucky's law was immediately challenged by the ACLU after it was signed in March, and a federal judge temporarily blocked it.

Earlier versions of the law passed in North Dakota and Iowa have also been struck down in court.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights, about 33,000 abortions were provided in Georgia in 2014.

## China's April exports fall ahead of US tariff talks

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China's exports fell unexpectedly in April, adding to pressure on Beijing ahead of negotiations on ending a tariff war with Washington over Chinese technology ambitions.

Wednesday's announcement of trade data came after President Donald Trump sent global financial markets plunging with a surprise threat of more penalties on Chinese imports.

April exports sank 2.7% from a year ago to \$193.5 billion, a reverse from March's 14.2% growth, customs data showed. That was well below private sector forecasts of growth in low single digits.

Imports rose 4% to \$179.6 billion, rebounding from the previous month's 7.6% decline. That added to signs government efforts to reverse an economic downturn might be gaining traction.

Imports of American goods fell 26% from a year earlier to \$10.3 billion. Exports to the United States,

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China's biggest foreign market, were down 13% at \$31.4 billion.

Talks in Washington are due to go ahead Thursday despite earlier fears Beijing might pull out due to Trump's threat. China said Tuesday its economy czar will participate as scheduled.

Weak trade figures might "add more pressure to leaders from both sides to get a deal done," Macquarie Bank said in a report. It said the decision to send Vice Premier Liu He to Washington suggests "China doesn't want the talks to break."

Exports to the U.S. market are down 9.7% for the first four months of the year following Trump's tariff hikes in response to complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology.

In the same four-month period, imports of American goods plunged 30.4% following Chinese retaliatory duties and orders to buyers to find other suppliers.

Washington is pressing Beijing to roll back plans for government-led creation of Chinese global competitors in robotics, electric cars and other technologies. The United States also wants other changes including cuts in subsidies to Chinese industry.

Chinese leaders have expressed confidence their economy can survive the tariff fight. But while American exporters have been hit hardest, Chinese industries including electronics that Beijing sees its economic future also have suffered double-digit declines in U.S. sales.

Both governments have said negotiations are making progress, but Trump expressed frustration Sunday at what he called their slow pace. U.S. officials accused Beijing of trying to renege on commitments made in earlier talks.

Asked about news reports that China backtracked on commitments about intellectual property and other sensitive areas, a foreign ministry spokesman said disagreements were a normal part of negotiations.

"We do not sidestep contradictions and are sincere in continuing consultations," said Geng Shuang.

Trump has approved 25% percent tariffs on \$50 billion of Chinese goods and 10% on \$200 billion.

Beijing responded with penalty duties on \$110 billion of American imports. It also has retaliated by slowing customs clearance for U.S. companies in China and delaying issuing licenses in insurance and other industries.

On Sunday, Trump said on Twitter he would raise the 10% charge to 25% percent, effective Friday. He said he was considering imposing penalties on the rest of Chinese goods shipped to the United States.

Economists say even if a settlement is reached, China's exports this year will be lackluster due to weak global demand, putting pressure on manufacturers that support millions of jobs.

## Amazon opens first Go store that accepts cash

By JOSEPH PISANI AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon launched its high-tech Go convenience store a year ago, where shoppers can pull items off the shelf and walk out.

Now it's adding a decidedly low-tech feature: accepting cash.

Its new store that opened in New York City Tuesday is the first Amazon Go store to do so. At its other shops, customers can only enter with an app that links to a credit card or an Amazon account.

The company, facing a backlash from those who believe cashless stores discriminate against the poor, confirmed last month that it was working on a way to accept dollar bills and coins.

In the new store, employees will swipe those who want to pay by cash through the turnstile entrance. After shoppers grab what they want off the shelves, an employee will scan each item with a mobile device, take the cash, give customers their change from a cash drawer and hand them a receipt.

Cameron Janes, who oversees Amazon's stores, says the way it accepts cash could change in the future, but declined to give details.

"This is how we're starting," he says. "We're going to learn from customers on what works and what doesn't work and then iterate and improve it over time."

A small but growing number of stores around the country have gone cash-free. But some activists and politicians say that discriminates against people who don't have a bank account.

Philadelphia became the first city to ban cashless stores earlier this year, and New Jersey passed a statewide ban soon after. San Francisco will soon require brick-and-mortar retailers to take cash as payment, and a similar law is being considered in New York City.

It's not clear how many shoppers will skip the app and want to pay by cash at Amazon Go. The New York store, the first in the city, is in Brookfield Place, a high-end shopping mall and office complex that houses a Gucci store and office workers from banks and credit card companies. Amazon expects many of its customers to be workers looking to pick up a lunchtime salad or sandwich, people who live in the area or tourists visiting the nearby World Trade Center.

A line quickly formed outside of the store Tuesday and Amazon employees were allowing shoppers and the curious inside only when others left.

Amazon didn't say when its 11 other Go stores will start accepting cash.

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## **Burn victims sue Conagra after cans of cooking spray explode**

**By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer**

DETROIT (AP) — Eight burn victims sued the maker of Pam cooking spray Tuesday, saying they were severely injured when cans of the spray exploded in their kitchens.

The plaintiffs' attorney, J. Craig Smith, says larger cans of Pam and similar cooking sprays made by Conagra Brands have a faulty, U-shaped vent system in the bottom that makes them prone to explosion. In one case, a victim said the fire was so intense that it burned her contact lens onto her right eye, causing near-blindness.

Vented cans are 10 ounces or larger, not the 6-ounce variety usually sold at groceries. The bigger cans may be found at warehouse stores like Costco as well as Walmart and Amazon. One of the lawsuits was filed by a cook who was using Sysco-brand cooking spray at a restaurant in Texas.

Chicago-based Conagra says the vent system was used on a "limited" number of cans but was eliminated during a product redesign earlier this year. The redesign was not related to the lawsuits and was part of an effort to standardize the company's cans, Conagra said.

Conagra says Pam and other cooking sprays have clear warning labels on the front and back telling consumers the product is flammable and should not be left on or near a stove or heat source. Cooking spray shouldn't be stored above 120 degrees or sprayed near an open flame, the company said.

"When Pam is used correctly, as instructed, it is a 100% safe and effective product," Conagra said in a statement. The company noted that it has been selling Pam for more than 50 years.

Jon Harris, Conagra's senior vice president and head of corporate communications, said he couldn't comment on the specifics of the lawsuits.

"We're looking forward to our day in court," Harris said.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission said Tuesday it's aware of the lawsuits and is looking into the issue.

Smith filed six separate lawsuits Tuesday in Cook County Circuit Court in Illinois. Two of the lawsuits represent couples who were injured while cooking together.

Smith has filed three previous lawsuits against Conagra on behalf of burn victims. Two are still in litigation. One was dismissed in January; a spokesman for Smith said he couldn't comment on that case.

Several other cases have been filed against Conagra by burn victims, including one in Louisiana in 2017 and another in Ohio last year.

## **Worsening US-China trade tensions rattle financial markets**

**By ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writer**

The Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbled more than 470 points Tuesday amid a broad sell-off on Wall Street as the U.S. and China moved closer to an escalation of their already costly trade war.

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The U.S. was set to impose higher tariffs on China on Friday, a day after representatives from both nations are scheduled to resume trade talks in Washington. Trump administration officials accused China of renegeing on commitments made during weeks of negotiations.

Both sides had signaled progress was being made toward a resolution in recent weeks. Buoyed by those signs, as well as a more dovish stance on interest rates by the Federal Reserve and better signs on the economy, investors had furiously bought stocks and pushed the S&P 500 and Nasdaq to all-time highs last week. All major indexes still have double-digit gains for the year.

Analysts said the market was vulnerable to any reversals in the trade talks. This week investors have dumped shares of companies that bring in significant revenue from China, such as those in the technology and industrial sectors. Banks have also taken heavy losses.

"This is a game of poker and the U.S. is playing their hand," said Doug Cote, chief market strategist at Voya Investment Management. "Let's say the worst happens and they raise tariffs on Friday, well you're going to get another buying opportunity."

Every sector fell. Utilities, normally safe-play holdings for investors, fared better than the rest of the market. Bond prices also rose as investors sought out other ways to reduce risk.

The S&P 500 index slumped 48.42 points, or 1.7%, to 2,884.05. The Dow lost 473.39 points, or 1.8%, to 25,965.09. The index had been down 648. The Nasdaq composite, which is heavily weighted with technology stocks, fell 159.53 points, or 2%, to 7,963.76.

The Russell 2000 index of small company stocks gave up 32.66 points, or 2%, to \$1,582.31. Major indexes in Europe also finished lower.

The rout is the first big jolt for stocks since the turn of the year, when fear began draining out of the market and the S&P 500 started its march back to record heights.

The U.S. and China have raised tariffs on tens of billions of dollars of each other's goods in their dispute over U.S. complaints about Chinese technology ambitions.

Washington has accused Beijing of renegeing on its commitments and is preparing to raise import taxes on \$200 billion of Chinese goods to 25% from 10%, and to impose tariffs on another \$325 billion in imports, covering everything the country ships annually to the United States.

The possibility that the trade dispute could escalate represents a marked shift from just a few weeks ago, when talks between the U.S. and China appeared to be on track for an agreement.

The big rise in stocks since the beginning of the year partly reflects complacency among investors, said Mark Hackett, chief of investment research for Nationwide Investment Management.

"We've basically flipped from being too pessimistic to perhaps being too optimistic," he said.

The trade dispute between China and the United States is nothing new, and it had been hanging over the market even as the S&P 500 made its run to a record this year. But investors had been willing to push stocks higher despite it because they largely assumed a deal would eventually get done. That showed in share prices of U.S. companies that get big portions of their sales from China, which had done better than the rest of the market, according to analysts at Jefferies.

Trump's threat of additional tariffs is forcing investors to reassess those expectations. One measure of fear in the market, which tracks how much traders are paying to buy protection from price swings in the S&P 500, had its biggest jump Tuesday in nearly seven months. It remains low by historical standards, though, after earlier in the year dropping by more than half since the end of 2018.

It's yet to be determined whether the brinkmanship tactics from the Trump administration will help or hurt the prospects of a deal getting done quickly, something that investors want.

"This is such a short period of time that it's hard to speculate whether this will cause something to get done quickly or whether it will drag on for months," said Scott Wren, senior global equity strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

Energy futures closed mostly lower. Benchmark U.S. crude fell 1.4% to settle at \$61.40 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 1.9% to close at \$69.88.

Wholesale gasoline fell 2.4% to \$1.95 per gallon. Heating oil lost 1.5% to \$2.04 per gallon. Natural gas

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rose 0.5% to \$2.54 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold gained 0.1% to \$1,285.60 per ounce, silver was little changed at \$14.93 per ounce and copper fell 1.6% to \$2.79 per pound.

The dollar fell to 110.27 Japanese yen from 111.90 yen. The euro weakened to \$1.1183 from \$1.1203.

AP Business Writers Stan Choe and Damian J. Troise contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, May 8, the 128th day of 2019. There are 237 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 8, 1996, South Africa took another step from apartheid to democracy by adopting a constitution that guaranteed equal rights for blacks and whites.

On this date:

In 1429, the Siege of Orleans (ohr-lay-AHN') during the Hundred Years' War ended as English troops withdrew after being defeated by French forces under Joan of Arc.

In 1541, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto reached the Mississippi River.

In 1794, Antoine Lavoisier (lah-vwahz-YAY'), the father of modern chemistry, was executed on the guillotine during France's Reign of Terror.

In 1921, Sweden's Parliament voted to abolish the death penalty.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman announced on radio that Nazi Germany's forces had surrendered, and that "the flags of freedom fly all over Europe."

In 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon was shoved, stoned, booed and spat upon by anti-American protesters in Lima, Peru.

In 1970, anti-war protests took place across the United States and around the world; in New York, construction workers broke up a demonstration on Wall Street.

In 1973, militant American Indians who had held the South Dakota hamlet of Wounded Knee for 10 weeks surrendered.

In 1978, David R. Berkowitz pleaded guilty in a Brooklyn courtroom to murder, attempted murder and assault in connection with the "Son of Sam" shootings that claimed six lives and terrified New Yorkers. (Berkowitz was sentenced to six consecutive life prison terms.)

In 1984, the Soviet Union announced it would boycott the upcoming Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

In 1987, Gary Hart, dogged by questions about his personal life, including his relationship with Miami model Donna Rice, withdrew from the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

In 2003, the Senate unanimously endorsed adding to NATO seven former communist nations: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Ten years ago: White House aide Louis Caldera resigned for his role in a \$328,835 photo-op flyover by an Air Force One jet above New York City that sparked panic and flashbacks to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Dominic DiMaggio, the Boston Red Sox center fielder and brother of Joe, died in Marion, Massachusetts, at age 92.

Five years ago: Syrian rebels leveled a historic hotel being used as an army base in the northern city of Aleppo by detonating bomb-packed tunnels beneath it, killing a still-undetermined number of soldiers. House Republicans jumped into a new election-season investigation of the deadly Benghazi assault, naming majority members of a special House committee.

One year ago: President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the nuclear accord with Iran and restored harsh sanctions; Trump had been a severe critic of the deal negotiated by the Obama administration in which Iran agreed to restrictions on its nuclear program. Gina Haspel, nominated to be CIA director, said

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that if confirmed, she would not undertake a detention and harsh interrogation program like the controversial one used after 9/11. (Haspel would be confirmed by a Senate vote of 54-45.) James Paxton of the Seattle Mariners pitched a no-hitter against the Blue Jays in Toronto, becoming the first Canadian to achieve that feat in his home country. Former coal executive Don Blankenship, who had served a year in prison for his role in a mine explosion that killed 29 men, lost a Republican U.S. Senate primary in West Virginia, finishing a distant third to state Attorney General Patrick Morrisey.

Today's Birthdays: Naturalist Sir David Attenborough is 93. Singer Toni Tennille is 79. Actor James Mitchum is 78. Country singer Jack Blanchard is 77. Jazz musician Keith Jarrett is 74. Actor Mark Blankfield is 71. Singer Philip Bailey (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 68. Rock musician Chris Frantz (Talking Heads) is 68. Rockabilly singer Billy Burnette is 66. Rock musician Alex Van Halen is 66. Actor David Keith is 65. Actor Raoul Max Trujillo is 64. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio is 58. Actress Melissa Gilbert is 55. Rock musician Dave Rowntree (Blur) is 55. Country musician Del Gray is 51. Rock singer Darren Hayes is 47. Singer Enrique Iglesias is 44. Blues singer-musician Joe Bonamassa is 42. Actor Matt Davis is 41. Singer Ana Maria Lombo (Eden's Crush) is 41. Actor Elyes Gabel is 36. Actor Domhnall Gleeson is 36. Neo-soul drummer Patrick Meese (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 36. Actress Julia Whelan (WAY'lan) is 35. Actress Nora Anezeder is 30.

Thought for Today: "A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with his hands and his brain is a craftsman; but a man who works with his hands and his brain and his heart is an artist." — Louis Nizer, American lawyer (1902-1994).