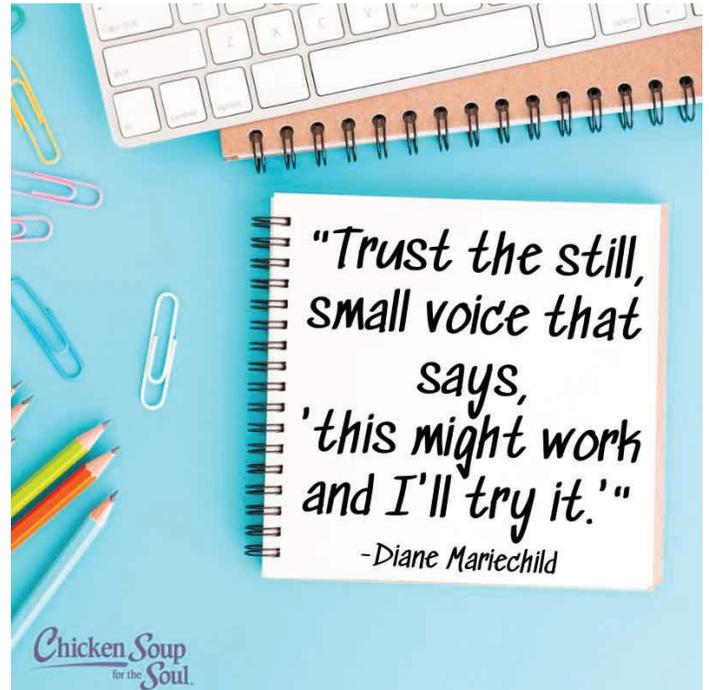


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CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Swimming Pool Hours

Open Swim Daily: 1 p.m. to 4:50 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Fun Night is every Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Adult Water Aerobics: Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 pm

Adult Lap Swim: Monday through Friday: 7 a.m. to 8 a.m.; Monday through Thursday: 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.; Friday-Sunday: 4:50 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

July 30 - Aug. 2

Amateur Districts in Groton

Thursday, Aug. 1

6:00 p.m.: Junior Legion hosts Northville, (DH)

August 5-18

State "B" Amateur Tournament at Mitchell

August 9-11

State Junior Legion Tourney in Groton

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



Progress Report

I'm back in South Dakota for the August work period. While I don't believe Congress should be adjourning with so many critical issues facing our country, I wanted to give you an update on my work so far, seven months into my first term. I was sworn in when the government was partially shut down, so my term didn't exactly start off smoothly. The shutdown lasted far too long, but ultimately, I was proud to vote for a bill President Trump supported that reopened the government and secured some needed funding for border security.

Even though the government was shutdown, our team hit the ground running. South Dakota's congressional office was fully staffed in D.C. and in the state by January 3, and we didn't waste any time getting started. We worked hard to get a seat on the House Agriculture Committee and eventually, we got that seat. Much to my surprise, I was also named Ranking Member of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition and Oversight. As Ranking Member, I've participated in subcommittee hearings on food stamp work requirements and asset testing eligibility. Not long after that hearing on asset testing and the abuses that are taking place, USDA issued a rule to reform this process. That was a big win for increased accountability.

When spring flooding hit South Dakota, my team knew there would be repercussions on the ag industry. I visited farms, toured damage zones, and hosted roundtables with producers to get their feedback. After hearing from producers, I introduced the FEEDD Act, which allowed USDA to move up the November 1 harvest date for cover crops on prevent plant acres. My team and I worked with USDA for weeks and I was thrilled when Secretary Perdue adjusted the November 1 harvest date to September 1. This decision was a win for South Dakota, and for all farm states.

I ran for office to work for South Dakotans and I always have our state's best interest in mind – that's why my first trip as a Congressman was to the southern border. I saw the problems first-hand and agree with President Trump – our border is in crisis. Our efforts have already secured more than \$5 billion for the wall and \$4.5 billion to address other issues, like humanitarian assistance, at our southern border. The president has asked for \$8 billion more starting October 1, and I support him. I voted against amnesty legislation and stood by the president when he asked Speaker Pelosi to include funding for the border in appropriations packages.

Many of the bills I've supported have passed the U.S. House of Representatives. Just this week, the House passed the Autism CARES Act, the Stopping Bad Robocalls Act, and the Emergency Medical Services for Children Act. I am a cosponsor of each bill and hope to see them signed into law. Earlier in my term, I introduced the Tribal School Federal Insurance Parity Act. I was pleasantly surprised when I learned I would have the opportunity to testify in favor of my legislation. I look forward to seeing this legislation move through committee and bring a much-needed fix to tribal schools.

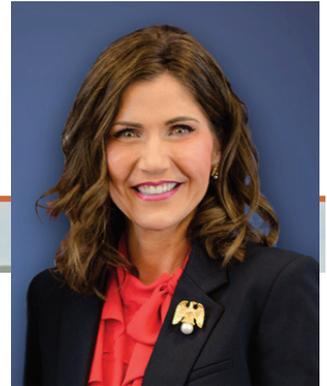
It has been an eventful and productive time in office so far, but there is obviously more to be done. At our six-month mark, I had my team fill out a survey to see what I can improve on as an individual and what we can work on as a team. I'd love to hear that same feedback from you! If you have suggestions or think we can do better, please give us a call, message me on Facebook, or write in at dustyjohnson.house.gov. I am ready to get to work while I'm home in South Dakota and look forward to seeing many of you!

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR **KRISTI NOEM**



Dealing with Disaster

This year has been tough for South Dakotans. The storms this spring brought destruction to homes, businesses, roads, and communities throughout the state. Unprecedented flooding made it difficult for farmers and ranchers to get into fields. When you add it all up, it's become the largest federally declared disaster our state has ever seen.

It's incredibly important for the state to take a front seat in dealing with disaster. And we have.

After assessing damages, we submitted the largest disaster declaration request in South Dakota history. Since President Trump approved our disaster request on June 7, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided \$1,178,357 for home repairs or replacement and rental expenses. The U.S. Small Business Administration has also approved more than \$2.4 million in low-interest disaster loans for businesses and residents. I'm grateful for the federal government's partnership as we work to get folks back on their feet as quickly as possible.

But many areas continue to face the significant impact of this spring's storms. At the beginning of July, I visited the Lake Andes area. Some roads were still six feet under water – homes uninhabitable. I'm working closely with FEMA, counties, and townships to make sure we're bringing in the proper resources so families are equipped with what they need to recover.

Other areas continue to face the aftermath of the flooding, too. Earlier this month, I visited Lake Thompson and Lake Poinsett – two of the lake regions that have seen long-standing damage because of high water levels. For many folks there, four wheelers are the only way to get around. Homes are underwater. Even in recent weeks, the lakes have continued to rise, and there's no certainty when they will start subsiding.

There are no quick or easy solutions to these problems, but I'm committed to partnering with communities, counties, and FEMA on long-term recovery efforts. As we've navigated these rising water levels, I've had Game, Fish and Parks and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources looking at drainage issues and seeing what can be done. We've also been meeting with county and township officials across the state to help them through the FEMA process and discuss specific short-term needs and projects. In those cases where permission from state government agencies or boards is required by law before beginning projects, I'm also committed to expediting the hearing process to make sure the public gets a fair and timely decision. If this means scheduling emergency board meetings, that's just what we'll do.

I've said it before, but it's worth saying again: The storms were strong, but South Dakotans are stronger. This year has been tough, but we'll get through it. I'll continue working with community leaders across the state to make sure we stay on track and come back from this even better than before.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Keeping Up With an Ever-Changing World

Prior to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act becoming law in December 2017, the last time any kind of comprehensive tax reform legislation made it to a president's desk was the same year "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and "Platoon" hit the big screen. Cult classics get better with age, but the same can't always be said about our tax code. The economy and consumer demands are constantly evolving, and I believe the tax code should, too, which means we can't relegate ourselves to addressing this important issue every third of a century.

Saying we should always be updating and modernizing our tax code is one thing, but as a lawmaker, in order to create any meaningful change, you need to go from talking about it to actually doing something about it. Not only did I help write the historic 2017 tax reform law, which has been helping American families and business since its enactment, but I've continued to roll out additional proposals that I believe would further strengthen the tax code and help provide additional relief to taxpayers.

The idea of reforming the tax code can often push policymakers into partisan corners, but I'm here to say that it can be a bipartisan exercise, and I've proven it. For example, I recently introduced the S Corporation Modernization Act with Sen. Ben Cardin, a Democrat from Maryland. An S corporation is the most common business structure in America, and there are nearly 5 million of them throughout the United States, including many throughout South Dakota. Simply put, our bill would reform the S corporation tax structure to make it easier for these businesses to grow and create jobs.

I already mentioned that the economy is always evolving, but the businesses and employees who help support it are changing and adapting, too. Today, many employees have jobs that require them to cross state lines, sometimes for just a short period of time. Earlier this year, I introduced the Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act with Sen. Sherrod Brown, a Democrat from Ohio. It would create an across-the-board standard for mobile employees who enter multiple tax jurisdictions during the year and help ensure that states receive fair tax payments along the way.

Technology is obviously a driving force for what consumers want and how businesses respond. I've introduced the Digital Goods and Services Tax Fairness Act with Sen. Ron Wyden, a Democrat from Oregon, and the New Economy Works to Guarantee Independence and Growth Act – or NEW GIG Act – which are both aimed at bringing the tax code further into the 21st century by responding to these evolving consumer and business needs.

In all, I've introduced six standalone tax bills this year alone that recognize the reality of the ever-changing economic landscape and that our tax code should be seen as a living document – not something that sits on the shelf and collects dust. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was a generation in the making, and, again, it's helped boost paychecks and create more opportunities for the American people. The results speak for themselves, and I'm glad it's the law of the land – I just want to keep our foot on the gas and not wait for another three decades before we act again.

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Time for Congress to Pass the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement

When President Trump was elected, he promised to fight for American workers by putting into place strong, fair trade deals. He has worked hard to deliver on that promise. Like many South Dakotans, I support the president's goal of strengthening our trade deals to make certain we are on a level playing field. South Dakota's producers and manufacturers can compete with anyone in the world given a fair opportunity.

Trade has become such a hot topic in our state because of our large agriculture industry, which has suffered due to the ongoing trade disputes. We also have a manufacturing industry that has been hit hard by trade instability. Our manufacturers, farmers and ranchers continue to be at the tip of the spear in trade negotiations, and we must work quickly to finalize these deals.

One important deal that is ready for action is the U.S.-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) trade agreement, which the president signed last year to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement. The Mexican government ratified the agreement this year, and Canada has repeatedly shown support for it. Now it's time for Congress to vote to ratify the agreement, but it is currently awaiting action in the House of Representatives. I urge Speaker Pelosi to take a vote on the USMCA, which is supported by a majority of Americans. Supporting farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, small businesses and other industries in every state across the country is not a partisan issue. We should all want these businesses to succeed.

Canada and Mexico are South Dakota's top two trading partners. Trade with the two countries supports 37,700 jobs in South Dakota and we exported \$1.1 billion in goods to Canada and Mexico in 2017. Increasing trade with our North American neighbors and other global allies is extremely important, especially at a time of economic downturn in the agricultural sector and trade uncertainty in markets around the world. Once implemented, it is estimated the USMCA will boost the U.S. economy by \$68 billion and add nearly 200,000 new jobs. It is time for Congress to take action and at the same time urge the administration to quickly finalize other trade deals for our ag community.

To help alleviate some of the pain producers are feeling due to ongoing trade disputes, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently released a new round of financial assistance for farmers called the Market Facilitation Program (MFP). Details of the MFP were just announced. \$16 billion has been authorized to provide support to American ag producers who have been disproportionately impacted while the administration works to finalize free and fair trade deals. More information on the MFP, including how to apply for assistance, can be found on my website, www.rounds.senate.gov.

While trade assistance helps, what South Dakotans really want is access to markets to sell their products. The USMCA is a step toward improving trade for our producers. We must act to ratify the USMCA so South Dakota producers and manufacturers can have access to lucrative markets in our neighboring countries and our economy can continue to soar.

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District 2B Amateur Baseball Tourney at Groton, SD

Winner's Bracket

This year fans will be able to bring in their own beer & wine and we are doing a gun raffle, with two winners to be chosen during the championship game August 2nd.



\$1 foul balls

**Loser of Game #5 = Representative #2

**Loser of Game #6 = Representative #1

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Today



Showers then
Chance
T-storms

High: 80 °F

Tonight



Slight Chance
T-storms then
Mostly Clear

Low: 58 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 76 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 53 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 78 °F

SHOWERS & THUNDERSTORMS

across Eastern South Dakota and Western Minnesota Today

East of the Missouri River: Showers & Thunderstorms.

Pockets of Heavy Rain. 1" or more rain possible in a few locations.

HIGHS: mid 70s to low 80s

West of the Missouri River: Mainly Dry.

HIGHS: mid 80s



Published on: 07/27/2019 at 11:22PM

While conditions west of the Missouri River will be mainly dry, showers and storms will continue for eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota through much of the day. Pockets of heavy rain will be possible, with a few locations getting 1" or more of rain. High temperatures will range from the mid 70s to mid 80s, with the higher temperatures west of the Missouri River.

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Today in Weather History

July 28, 1986: Very intense thunderstorms developed in South Dakota and Nebraska and moved into Iowa. The first of these storms produced a tornado that crossed into Iowa south of Sioux City and slammed into a coal-burning power plant. This storm caused between 25 and 50 million dollars damage to the plant. The tornado continued across farmland, then damaged a store and flattened a motel in Sloan before lifting up.

1898: A severe thunderstorm produced considerable hail (some stones to 11 ounces) in Chicago, Illinois business district. Some people were hurt, not by hail, but by several hundred runaway horses spooked by the hailstones.

1976: At 3:42 AM, an earthquake measuring between 7.8 and 8.2 magnitudes on the Richter scale flattens Tangshan, a Chinese industrial city with a population of about one million people. An estimated 242,000 people in Tangshan and surrounding areas were killed, making the earthquake one of the deadliest in recorded history, surpassed only by the 300,000 who died in the Calcutta earthquake in 1737, and the 830,000 thought to have perished in China's Shaanxi province in 1556.

1819 - A small but intense hurricane passed over Bay Saint Louis, MS. The hurricane was considered the worst in fifty years. Few houses were left standing either at Bay Saint Louis or at Pass Christian, and much of the Mississippi coast was desolate following the storm. A U.S. cutter was lost along with its thirty-nine crew members. The storm struck the same area that was hit 150 years later by Hurricane Camille. (David Ludlum)

1930 - The temperature at Greensburg, KY, soared to 114 degrees to set a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1934 - The temperature at Grofino, ID, climbed to 118 degrees to establish a record for Idaho. (The Weather Channel)

1952 - A severe storm with hail up to an inch and a half in diameter broke windows, ruined roofs, and stripped trees of leaves near Benson, AZ. The temperature dropped to 37 degrees, as hail was three to four inches deep, with drifts 46 inches high. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Severe thunderstorms moving out of South Dakota across Iowa produce high winds which derailed eighteen piggyback trailer cars of a westbound freight train near Boone, IA. Sixteen of the cars fell 187 feet into the Des Moines River. The thunderstorms also spawned a number of tornadoes, including one which caused twenty-five to fifty million dollars damage at Sloan, near Sioux City, IA. (Storm Data)

1987 - Thunderstorms in Nevada produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Searchlight, reducing visibilities to near zero in blowing dust and sand. Thunderstorms in Montana drenched Lonesome Lake with 3.78 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms drenched Wilmington, NC, with 3.33 inches of rain, bringing their monthly total 14.46 inches. Seven cities in Michigan and Minnesota reported record high temperatures for the date. Marquette, MI, hit 99 degrees, and the record high of 94 degrees at Flint MI was their tenth of the month. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Afternoon thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in Massachusetts. Early evening thunderstorms over Florida produced wind gusts to 68 mph at Fort Myers, and evening thunderstorms in South Dakota produced nearly two inches of rain in twenty minutes at Pierpoint. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

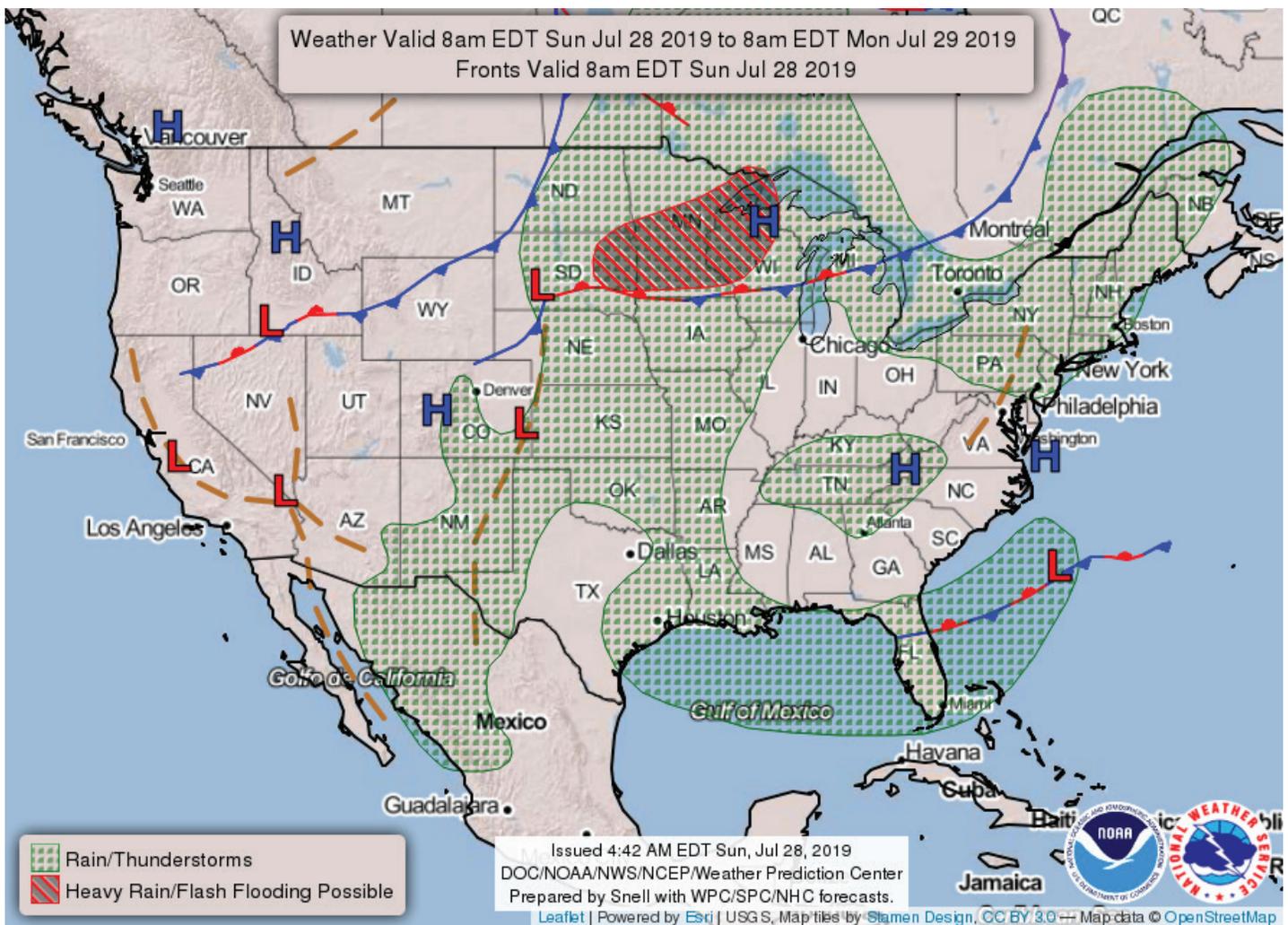
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 88 °F at 6:55 PM
Low Temp: 59 °F at 6:11 AM
Wind: 8 mph at 1:40 PM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 109° in 1975
Record Low: 44° in 2013
Average High: 84°F
Average Low: 59°F
Average Precip in July.: 2.68
Precip to date in July.: 2.87
Average Precip to date: 13.52
Precip Year to Date: 15.59
Sunset Tonight: 9:07 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:14 a.m.



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WHAT GOD PROMISES TO REWARD

Most individuals want to be recognized and rewarded for doing good. Some dedicate their entire lives to work with the sick and oppressed. Others, who are wealthy, establish trusts or foundations, and donate money to what they consider worthy causes. Many give generously to charitable organizations that serve the less fortunate or those overwhelmed by a disaster. Everyone seems to have a touch point in their heart that will trigger an urge to give or share.

But, there is no guarantee that our giving will bring us a reward, or in fact, benefit others. However, as sure as we are that our God is a faithful God and will keep His Word, Solomon, on behalf of God promises us that Humility and fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life. Certainly, this verse will get the attention of reward seekers!

Yet, seeking a reward for the sake of a reward is not what this verse is all about. Notice the first word - humility is followed by the familiar theme throughout Proverbs: and fear of the Lord. One can be humble and not fear the Lord. Humility without fearing the Lord is self-serving and an end in itself. To be humble because we fear the Lord is rather different. This fear grows in the heart of a believer because God is recognized as being sovereign and worthy of worship and reverence, honor and praise. Its understanding fear through the lens of awe and respect.

Perhaps it is difficult to understand that humility and fear of the Lord will bring us wealth and honor and life. So, can we really expect them as rewards? If we view God as He is and ourselves as we are, we have Gods guarantee that He will bless us materially, socially and personally. How can this be? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom! Have you tried it?

Prayer: Its easy, Lord, to live life with grand schemes and false motives. Cleanse us from vanity and fill us with humility. Though we fear You, we know we need not be afraid of You. Amen!

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 22:4 Humility and fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 08/07/2019 Storybook Land Theatre Performace at Granary Rural Cultural Center
- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/19/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbygerian Luncheon
- 09/28/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 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

- 01/26/2020 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
Groton Hosting State B American Legion Baseball Tournament
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

11-13-21-27-35

(eleven, thirteen, twenty-one, twenty-seven, thirty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$41,000

Lotto America

11-12-32-41-47, Star Ball: 5, ASB: 3

(eleven, twelve, thirty-two, forty-one, forty-seven; Star Ball: five; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.2 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$45 million

Powerball

01-19-31-48-61, Powerball: 6, Power Play: 2

(one, nineteen, thirty-one, forty-eight, sixty-one; Powerball: six; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$75 million

Man sentenced, ordered to pay restitution for defrauding IRS

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man who defrauded the IRS and targeted people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has been sentenced to 6 ½ years in prison.

The Rapid City Journal reports Manaen Dean Matthews was sentenced Thursday after pleading guilty to wire fraud, conspiracy to defraud the government and making a false claim, court records show.

He also was ordered to pay \$523,250 in restitution.

Authorities say Matthews filed 1,201 fraudulent federal income tax returns for more than \$3.6 million in false claims in South Dakota and other states between 2015 to 2018.

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

Despite calls to start over, US health system covers 90%

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's much-maligned health care system is covering 9 out of 10 people, a fact that hasn't stopped the 2020 presidential candidates from refighting battles about how to provide coverage, from Bernie Sanders' call for replacing private insurance with a government plan to President Donald Trump's pledge to erase the Affordable Care Act and start over.

The politicians are depicting a system in meltdown. The numbers point to a different story, not as dire and more nuanced.

Government surveys show that about 90% of the population has coverage, largely preserving gains from President Barack Obama's years. Independent experts estimate that more than one-half of the roughly 30 million uninsured people in the country are eligible for health insurance through existing programs.

Lack of coverage was a growing problem in 2010 when Democrats under Obama passed his health law. Now the bigger issue seems to be that many people with insurance are struggling to pay their deductibles and copays.

"We need to have a debate about coverage and cost, and we have seen less focus on cost than we have on coverage," said Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet. He is among the Democratic presidential candidates

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who favor building on the current system, not replacing it entirely, as does Sanders. "The cost issue is a huge issue for the country and for families," Bennet said.

A report this year by the Commonwealth Fund think tank in New York found fewer uninsured Americans than in 2010 but more who are "underinsured," a term that describes policyholders exposed to high out-of-pocket costs, when compared with their individual incomes. The report estimated 44 million Americans were underinsured in 2018, compared with 29 million in 2010 when the law was passed. That's about a 50% increase, with the greatest jump among people with employer coverage.

"When you have 90 percent of the American people covered and they are drowning in their health care bills, what they want to hear from politicians are plans that will address their health care costs, more than plans that will cover the remaining 10 percent," said Drew Altman, president of the Kaiser Family Foundation, a non-partisan research organization that tracks the health care system. "When Democrats talk about universal coverage more than health care costs, they are playing to the dreams of activists and progressives ... much less to the actual concerns of the 90 percent who have coverage today."

Sanders' office responds that the Vermont senator's "Medicare for All" plan would solve both the coverage and cost problems for individual Americans. Medical care would be provided with no deductibles or copays. No one would be uninsured or underinsured.

"The simple answer is that our health care system becomes more unmanageable for more and more Americans every year," Sanders spokesman Keane Bhatt said in a statement. "This is not a system that needs a few tweaks. This is a system that needs a complete overhaul."

But other countries that provide coverage for all and are held up by Sanders as models for the U.S. don't offer benefits as generous as he's proposing. If he is elected president, there's no way of telling how his plan would emerge from Congress, or even whether something like it could pass.

Four other 2020 Democrats are co-sponsors of Sanders' bill: Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Kamala Harris of California, and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts.

On the other side of the political spectrum, Trump is talking about big changes. His administration is seeking to have federal courts declare the entire Obama-era health care law unconstitutional, jeopardizing coverage for 20 million people, jettisoning protections for patients with preexisting conditions, and upending the rest of the 970-page statute, now nearly 10 years old.

The president says there's nothing to worry about. Earlier this summer Trump told ABC News that he was working on a plan that would provide "phenomenal health care," protect people with preexisting conditions, and would be "less expensive than 'Obamacare' by a lot."



FILE - In this June 20, 2019, file photo, the Capitol is seen from the roof of the Canadian Embassy in Washington. America's much-maligned health care system is covering more people than ever, a fact lost on many of the 2020 presidential candidates, who keep debating polarizing ideas about how to set up coverage, from Sen. Bernie Sanders' call for replacing private insurance with a government plan, to President Donald Trump's determination to erase "Obamacare." (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement that the Obama law was “sold and passed on a litany of broken promises” and now “Democrats are proposing even more radical government takeovers of our health care system.”

As president-elect, Trump promised a health plan but never offered one upon taking office. Instead he backed bills from congressional Republicans, including one he called “mean” during a private meeting.

Trump says he might come out with his new plan within months, but that passing it would hinge on his getting reelected and Republicans winning back the House in 2020 while keeping control of the Senate.

That’s a bit of political *deja vu*.

Republicans controlled Washington back in 2017 when Trump, then-Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., tried for months to repeal and replace the Obama law, only to fail. The repeal effort was widely seen as contributing to Republicans losing the House in 2018.

Since then, many GOP lawmakers have tried to avoid the issue altogether.

Economist Sara Collins of the Commonwealth Fund, who led the study about underinsured Americans, says cost and coverage problems are intertwined. Citing the Democrats’ debate over Medicare for All, she says what’s missing from that discussion is that “one doesn’t have to go that far in order to improve the financial situation for millions of people — you can do that with much more targeted, incremental policies.”

Police fire tear gas as Hong Kong protesters block roads

By KATIE TAM and CHANWOO BANG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Police fired tear gas at protesters in Hong Kong on Sunday for the second night in a row in another escalation of weeks-long pro-democracy protests in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Protesters occupied two areas at opposite ends of central Hong Kong following a mid-afternoon rally against police use of tear gas the previous Sunday.

As night fell, one group that had blocked a road near the Chinese government’s liaison office began to move forward. The police issued warnings, and protesters were seen throwing eggs at them. Officers fired tear gas to halt the advance.

Protesters had rallied earlier at a park in Hong Kong’s financial district before marching out in several directions despite not winning police approval for a public procession. It was the second straight day that protesters took to the streets without official permission.

A sea of black-shirted protesters, some with bright yellow helmets and masks but many with just backpacks, streamed out of Chater Garden park. Chanting “Add oil,” a phrase that roughly means “Keep up the fight,” a huge crowd marched east down a wide thoroughfare in what has become a summer of protest in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.



Protesters use umbrellas and barricades as they prepare to face with policemen on a street in Hong Kong, Sunday, July 28, 2019. A sea of black-shirted protesters, some with bright yellow helmets and masks but many with just backpacks, marched down a major street in central Hong Kong on Sunday in the latest rally in what has become a summer of protest. (AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

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They stopped near the Sogo department store and set up barricades to block off the area and defend it against police.

Another group headed west toward mainland China's liaison office. Protesters egged the office last weekend and splattered black ink on the national emblem, eliciting an angry reaction from the Chinese government.

They stopped about two blocks short of the office and used orange and white construction barricades to build a wall spanning a major road. They massed behind the barriers as night fell, with umbrellas pointed forward to shield their identities and ward off any police move to clear them.

Some nearby stores shuttered early as police in riot gear gathered nearby ahead of the all but inevitable clearing operation.

Hong Kong has been wracked by protests for seven weeks, as opposition to an extradition bill has morphed into demands for the resignation of the city's leader and an investigation into whether police have used excessive force in quelling the protests.

Underlying the movement is a broader push for full democracy in the territory. The city's leader is chosen by a committee dominated by a pro-Beijing establishment, rather than by direct elections.

The rally in Chater Garden was called to protest the police use of tear gas, rubber bullets and other force to break up a protest the previous Sunday.

"We need to have a protest to show that we are strongly against this kind of brutality and we need them to respond to our demands," said rally organizer Ventus Lau.

Police had denied Lau's request to march west to the Sheung Wan district, where the tear gas was used the previous weekend, citing escalating violence in clashes with protesters that have broken out after past marches and rallies.

"The police must prevent aggressive protesters from exploiting a peaceful procession to cause troubles and violent clashes," said Superintendent Louis Lau of the police public relations branch.

On Saturday, clashes between protesters and police led to 11 arrests and left at least two dozen injured in an outlying district toward the border with mainland China.

The police had also denied permission for that march in Yuen Long, where a mob apparently targeting demonstrators had beaten people brutally in a train station the previous weekend.

Protesters and police faced off in the streets well into the night, as they've done repeatedly during the summer's pro-democracy protests.

Police said protesters removed fences from roads to make their own roadblocks and charged police lines with metal poles. One group surrounded and vandalized a police vehicle, causing danger to officers on board, a police statement said.

Officers fired tear gas and rubber bullets as demonstrators threw bricks and other objects and ducked behind makeshift shields.

Later, police wearing helmets charged into the train station, where a few hundred protesters had taken refuge from the tear gas. Some officers swung their batons at demonstrators, while others appeared to be urging their colleagues to hang back. For the second week in a row, blood was splattered on the station floor.

Police arrested 13 people, including march organizer Max Chung, for offenses including unlawful assembly, possession of offensive weapon and assault, according to police and Hong Kong media. At least four officers were injured.

The Hospital Authority said 24 people were taken to five hospitals. As of Sunday morning, eight remained hospitalized, two in serious condition.

Amnesty International, the human rights group, called the police response heavy-handed and unacceptable.

"While police must be able to defend themselves, there were repeated instances today where police officers were the aggressors," Man-kei Tam, the director of Amnesty International Hong Kong, said in a statement.

Police said they had to use what they termed "appropriate force" because of the bricks and other objects thrown at them, including glass bottles with a suspected corrosive fluid inside.

Associated Press writer Ken Moritsugu in Beijing contributed to this report.

Putin leads Russian naval parade after crackdown in Moscow

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin led Russia's first major naval parade in years on Sunday, the day after a violent police crackdown on anti-government protesters in Moscow.

Putin on Sunday morning went aboard one of the vessels in the Navy Day parade in St. Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland. The parade, the biggest in years, included 43 ships and submarines and 4,000 troops.

Putin was spending the weekend away from Moscow, the Russian capital, where nearly 1,400 people were detained Saturday in a violent police crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. A Russian group that monitors police arrests gave the figure Sunday, saying it was the largest number of detentions at a rally in the Russian capital this decade.

Police wielded batons and wrestled with protesters around the Moscow City Hall after thousands thronged nearby streets, rallying against a move by election authorities to bar opposition candidates from the Sept. 8 ballot for the Moscow city council.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, centre, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, right, and Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Nikolai Yevmenov, left, arrive to attend the military parade during the Navy Day celebration in St. Petersburg, Russia, Sunday, July 28, 2019. (AP Photo/Dmitri Lovetsky, Pool)

(AP Photo/Dmitri Lovetsky, Pool)

1 dead, 11 others shot at community event in Brooklyn park

By MALLIKA SEN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Gunfire at a large, outdoor event in Brooklyn killed one man and injured at least 11 others late Saturday night, police said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted early Sunday that the shooting in east Brooklyn's Brownsville neighborhood "shattered a peaceful neighborhood event." Twelve people were shot, including a 38-year-old man who was dead on arrival at a local hospital, a New York City police spokesman said around 3:30 a.m. Sunday.

The police spokesman said he did not know the identity of the man, who was shot once in the head.

No arrests have been made, and police did not offer details about a possible suspect or whether there was more than one gunman at the park where the event took place. As of 6:30 a.m., police said they did not have details about the conditions of the other 11 people wounded and that the investigation was ongoing.

At least six people had been transported to local hospitals by just after midnight, with some in serious condition, a New York City fire department spokesman said earlier. He described the scene at the time as "fluid."

De Blasio's tweet didn't include details about the community event referenced, but a notice on the NYC Parks website said other programming at the Brownsville Recreation Center by the playground was canceled over the weekend because of the annual Old Timers Event.

A 2010 newsletter from the parks department described it as a celebration of "former members of the center who went on to success and fame in sports and other endeavors" that's grown to include concerts and other events. A flyer for the dayslong celebration said Saturday's event was to begin at 6 p.m. on

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Hegeman Avenue, in the vicinity of the site of the shooting.

Calls and emails to the offices of council members organizing the celebration were not immediately returned, but Council Member Alicka Amprey-Samuel shared de Blasio's tweet and added comments of her own.

"One of the worst experiences of my life," the council member for the 41st District tweeted. "How does such a beautiful and peaceful event become overshadowed by tragedy in seconds?"

A man who answered a phone number listed online for one of Saturday's scheduled performers, The Legendary Intruders, identified himself as band member Khalil Shabazz. He told The Associated Press that his band had already performed and departed the venue by the time of the shooting.

Videos posted on social media showed police clearing large groups of people out of the area around the recreation center following the shooting. Photos from local news outlets showed several people taken from the scene on stretchers, including some with what appeared to be minor wounds.

Brownsville is a neighborhood that's continued to struggle with gun violence, even as New York streets become safer than they have been in decades.

"We will do everything in our power to keep this community safe and get guns off our streets," de Blasio tweeted.

State Sen. Roxanne J. Persaud echoed de Blasio, adding the hashtags "#StopTheViolence" and "#Put-DownTheGuns" to her tweets expressing frustration with the shooting, which she called "unacceptable" and "cowardly."

"Our community mourns again. We should be able to have fun in open spaces without fear of violence," tweeted Persaud, whose district includes Brownsville. "Respect your community. We are better than the violence."

Nearly 1,400 detained in Moscow protest; largest in decade

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Nearly 1,400 people were detained in a violent police crackdown on an opposition protest in Moscow, a Russian group that monitors police arrests said Sunday, adding that that was the largest number of detentions at a rally in the Russian capital this decade.

OVD-Info, which has monitored the arrests since 2011, said the number of the detentions it logged for Saturday's protest reached 1,373 by early Sunday. The overwhelming majority of people were soon released but 150 remain in custody, OVD-Info and a lawyers' association providing legal aid to the detainees said Sunday.

Russian police violently dispersed thousands of people who thronged the streets of Moscow on Saturday to protest election authorities for disqualifying independent candidates from the Sept. 8 vote for the Moscow



Police officers detain a woman during an unsanctioned rally in the center of Moscow, Russia, Saturday, July 27, 2019. Russian police are wrestling with demonstrators and have arrested hundreds in central Moscow during a protest demanding that opposition candidates be allowed to run for the Moscow city council. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko)

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city council.

Several protesters reported broken limbs and head injuries. Police justified their response by saying the rally was not sanctioned by authorities.

Along with the arrests of the mostly young demonstrators, several opposition activists who wanted to run for the Moscow City Duma were arrested throughout the city before the protest. They were released later in the day only to be re-arrested again in the evening.

Police eventually cordoned off the City Hall and dispersed protesters from the area, but thousands of demonstrators reassembled in several different locations nearby where new arrests began. Russian police beat some of them to the ground with wide truncheon swings while other demonstrators tried to push police away.

Police said the protester numbered about 3,500 people but aerial footage from several locations where people were rallying simultaneously suggests at least 8,000 protesters.

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow on Sunday decried the violent crackdown as "use of disproportionate police force." The Russian presidential human rights council said Sunday it was concerned about the police brutality.

Opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who was sentenced Wednesday to 30 days in jail for calling Saturday's unsanctioned protest, was hospitalized Sunday with a severe allergy attack, his spokeswoman said.

Kira Yarmysh said Sunday that Navalny, who did not have any allergies beforehand, was taken from the Moscow detention facility to a hospital in the morning, arriving with severe facial swelling and red rashes on his skin. He is considered the most well-known opposition figure in Russia.

Russian President Vladimir Putin made sure to be away from Moscow this weekend. On Sunday, he led Russia's first major naval parade in years, going aboard one of the vessels in the Navy Day parade in St. Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland. The parade included 43 ships and submarines and 4,000 troops.

Trump attacks majority-black district represented by critic

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Saturday denigrated a majority-black district represented by a congressional nemesis as a "disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess," broadening a campaign against prominent critics of his administration that has exacerbated racial tensions.

Trump lashed out in tweets against Rep. Elijah Cummings, the powerful House Oversight Committee chairman, claiming his Baltimore-area district is "considered the worst run and most dangerous anywhere in the United States." It was the president's latest assault on a prominent lawmaker, and the people he represents, two weeks after he sparked nationwide controversy with racist tweets directed at four congresswomen of color.

His comments against Cummings, who leads multiple investigations of the president's governmental dealings, drew swift condemnation from Democrats, including would-be presidential rivals. Statements from a spokesman for the state's Republican governor and from the lieutenant governor defended Cummings' district and its people.

Trump called Cummings a "brutal bully" after his public tongue-lashing of top Homeland Security officials over conditions for migrants detained along the southern border.

"As proven last week during a Congressional tour, the Border is clean, efficient & well run, just very crowded," Trump tweeted. "Cumming District is a disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess."

Cummings replied directly to Trump on Twitter, saying, "Mr. President, I go home to my district daily. Each morning, I wake up, and I go and fight for my neighbors. It is my constitutional duty to conduct oversight of the Executive Branch. But, it is my moral duty to fight for my constituents."

Cummings has also drawn the president's ire for investigations touching on his family members serving in the White House. On Thursday his committee voted along party lines to authorize subpoenas for personal emails and texts used for official business by top White House aides, including Ivanka Trump and her husband, Jared Kushner.

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After spending several hours on his private golf course in Virginia, Trump repeated the attack on Cummings, despite broad criticism from Democrats.

"Elijah Cummings spends all of his time trying to hurt innocent people through 'Oversight,'" Trump tweeted. "He does NOTHING for his very poor, very dangerous and very badly run district!"

The latest comments come as Trump has placed racial animus at the center of his reelection campaign, as he believes his inflammatory rhetoric will strengthen his support among the white working class and attract a new group of disaffected voters who fear cultural changes across America.

Cummings' district is about 55% black and includes a large portion of Baltimore. It is home to the national headquarters of the NAACP and Johns Hopkins University and Johns Hopkins Hospital.

The city has struggled with violent crime, with more than 300 homicides for four years in a row. It has crumbling infrastructure and a police department under federal oversight.

Cummings' district also extends into Maryland's Baltimore and Howard counties.

Trump's attack on Cummings was reminiscent of one he launched a week before his inauguration on civil rights legend John Lewis, a Democratic congressman from Georgia who questioned the legitimacy of his 2016 election.

Trump tweeted in January 2017 that Lewis "should spend more time on fixing and helping his district, which is in horrible shape and falling apart (not to mention crime infested) rather than falsely complaining about the election results."

And earlier this month, the president drew bipartisan condemnation following his call for four Democratic congresswomen of color to get out of the U.S. "right now," saying if the lawmakers "hate our country," they can go back to their "broken and crime-infested" countries.

His comments were directed at Reps. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan. All are American citizens and three of the four were born in the U.S. The Democratic-led U.S. House voted largely along party lines to condemn his "racist comments."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi defended Cummings on Saturday as "a champion in the Congress and the country for civil rights and economic justice, a beloved leader in Baltimore, and deeply valued colleague." She added. "We all reject racist attacks against him and support his steadfast leadership."

Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young fired back at Trump after his attacks, saying he is a "disap-



FILE - In this Tuesday, April 2, 2019 file photo, House Oversight and Reform Committee Chair Elijah Cummings, D-Md., leads a meeting to call for subpoenas after a career official in the White House security office says dozens of people in President Donald Trump's administration were granted security clearances despite "disqualifying issues" in their backgrounds, on Capitol Hill in Washington. Trump on Saturday, July 27, denigrated Cummings' congressional district as a "disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess," broadening a campaign against prominent critics of his administration that has exacerbated racial tensions. Trump lashed out in tweets against the powerful House oversight committee chairman, claiming his Baltimore-area district is "considered the worst run and most dangerous anywhere in the United States." (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

pointment to the people of Baltimore, our country, and to the world.”

“It’s completely unacceptable for the political leader of our country to denigrate a vibrant American City like Baltimore, and to viciously attack U.S. Representative Elijah Cummings a patriot and a hero,” Young said in a statement.

Democratic presidential contender Kamala Harris, a California senator, said she is “proud” her campaign is headquartered in Cummings’ district. “Baltimore has become home to my team and it’s disgraceful the president has chosen to start his morning disparaging this great American city,” she said.

A spokesman for Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican, defended the area and its residents. In an email, Michael Ricci wrote, “Baltimore City is truly the very heart of our state, and more attacks between politicians aren’t going to get us anywhere.”

Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford, also a Republican, tweeted: “Mr. President, @realDonaldTrump, I have substantial policy differences with Congressman @RepCummings. However, I hope your criticism is not directed at the many good and hard working people who live in the district.”

Associated Press writer Brian Witte in Annapolis, Maryland, contributed to this report.

Trump proposal seeks to crack down on food stamp ‘loophole’

By DAVID A. LIEB

Associated Press

Residents signing up for food stamps in Minnesota are provided a brochure about domestic violence, but it doesn’t matter if they even read the pamphlet. The mere fact it was made available could allow them to qualify for government food aid if their earnings or savings exceed federal limits.

As odd as that might sound, it’s not actually unusual.

Thirty-eight other states also have gotten around federal income or asset limits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by using federal welfare grants to produce materials informing food stamp applicants about other available social services. Illinois, for example, produced a flyer briefly listing 21 services, a website and email address and a telephone number for more information.

The tactic was encouraged by former President Barack Obama’s administration as a way for states to route federal food aid to households

that might not otherwise qualify under a strict enforcement of federal guidelines. Now President Donald Trump’s administration is proposing to end the practice — potentially eliminating food stamps for more than 3 million of the nation’s 36 million recipients.

The proposed rule change, outlined this past week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has highlighted



FILE - In this Friday, March 17, 2017, file photo, a sign advertises a program that allows food stamp recipients to use their EBT cards to shop at a farmer’s market in Topsham, Maine. President Donald Trump’s administration is proposing to end an option that has allowed states to exceed federal eligibility thresholds for food stamps. (AP

Photo/Robert F. Bukaty, File)

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the ideological clash between Trump's attempts to tighten government entitlement programs and efforts in some states to widen the social safety net.

It's also stirred outrage and uncertainty among some who stand to be affected.

"I think it's pretty rotten," said Lisa Vega, a single mother of two teenage boys in suburban Chicago who applied for food stamps last month after losing her job. Because she receives regular support payments from her ex-husband, Vega said her eligibility for food stamps likely hinges on the income eligibility exceptions that Trump's administration is trying to end.

"A lot of these politicians don't realize that us Americans out here are living paycheck to paycheck, one crisis away from being homeless," Vega said. "You're just going to take this kind of stuff away from us when we need it the most?"

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said the proposed rule change is intended to close a "loophole" that states have misused to "effectively bypass important eligibility guidelines."

Current federal guidelines forbid people who make more than 130 percent of the poverty level from getting food stamps. But many states believe the cap is too restrictive, especially in cities with a high cost of living, prompting them to bypass the limits.

At issue is a federal policy that allows people who receive benefits through other government programs, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, to automatically qualify for the food aid program known as SNAP. The practice, called categorical eligibility, is intended partly to reduce duplicative paperwork. It has also allowed states to grant food stamps to more people.

In 2009, Obama's Agriculture Department sent a memo to its regional directors encouraging states to adopt what it termed as "broad-based categorical eligibility" for food stamps by providing applicants with a minimal TANF-funded benefit such as an informational pamphlet or telephone hotline. Among other things, Obama's administration said the expanded eligibility could help families stung by a weak economy and promote savings among low-income households.

Most states adopted the strategy. Thirty states and the District of Columbia are using income limits higher than the federal standard of \$1,316 monthly for an individual or \$2,252 for a family of three. Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia have either waived asset limits entirely or set them above federal thresholds, according to the Agriculture Department.

The department's inspector general has raised concerns about the tactic. It also came under public scrutiny last year after self-described millionaire Rob Undersander testified before the Minnesota legislature that he and his wife had legally received about \$6,000 in food stamps over 19 months because his considerable assets and Individual Retirement Account withdrawals didn't count against his eligibility.

Undersander, who is a Trump supporter, told The Associated Press this week that he had been trying to make a point — not game the system — and praised Trump's administration for proposing to tighten eligibility standards.

"I think that states just found this loophole, and then I think they've been abusing a loophole," Undersander said.

Although Undersander failed to persuade Minnesota to change its policy, critics were more successful in Mississippi. On July 1, Mississippi implemented a state law prohibiting its Department of Human Services from using noncash benefits in other programs to trigger food stamp eligibility.

Under the Trump administration's proposed rule change, residents in all states would need to be authorized to receive at least \$50 a month in TANF benefits for a minimum of six months in order to automatically qualify for food stamps. Subsidies for childcare, employment and work-related transportation would still count. But the proposal would stop states from linking eligibility to the receipt of an informational brochure.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services has estimated that 12,000 of its roughly 400,000 food stamp recipients could be cut off if the federal government eliminates its ability to use a brochure as justification for offering food stamps to those earning up to 165% of the federal poverty level instead of the federal threshold of 130% of the poverty mark.

Similar estimates aren't available for all states.

Advocates for the poor say states' exceptions to federal guidelines have helped people gradually transi-

tion off food stamps when they get modest raises at work and have enabled seniors and the disabled to save money without going hungry. Advocates also say the eligibility exceptions have helped people such as Vega, whose income may be slightly above the federal threshold yet have little money left over after paying high housing and utility bills.

"I think the Trump administration is trying to make a lot of hay out of how this policy option functions in practice to draw a lot of skepticism about it," said Nolan Downey, an attorney at the Shriver Center on Poverty Law in Chicago who helped Vega apply for food stamps. "But I think if people have an understanding of what the outcome really was meant to be, it's something that seems a lot less dubious."

Follow David A. Lieb at: <http://twitter.com/DavidALieb>

2 US teens jailed in Italy in policeman's killing

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Two American teenagers who were classmates at a California high school spent a second night in a Rome jail Saturday after they were interrogated for hours about their alleged roles in the murder of an Italian policeman.

Investigators contended in written statements Saturday that the pair had confessed to their roles in the grisly slaying. Vice Brigadier Mario Cerciello Rega, a member of the storied Carabinieri paramilitary corps, was stabbed eight times, allegedly by one of the teens, leaving him bleeding on a street close to the teens' upscale hotel near Rome's Tiber River.

Italian authorities identified the two as Gabriel Christian Natale-Hjorth, 18, and Finnegan Lee Elder, 19, and said they were born in San Francisco.

Police said they were apparently vacationing in the Italian capital without family members.

In the detention order, Elder is described as repeatedly stabbing the 35-year-old officer, who had just returned to duty a few days earlier from his honeymoon.

Investigators said Cerciello Rega, along with another Carabinieri officer, were both in plainclothes when they confronted the Americans about 3 a.m. Friday in the wake of a drug deal gone wrong.

Natale-Hjorth was described in the document as having repeatedly punched Cerciello Rega's partner.

Under Italian law, persons participating in a killing, but who didn't actually carry out the slaying itself, risk being charged with murder.

Both suspects are also being investigated for attempted extortion.



In this combo photo released by Italian Carabinieri, Gabriel Christian Natale Hjorth, right, and Finnegan Lee Elder, sit in their hotel room in Rome. Two American teenagers were jailed in Rome on Saturday as authorities carry out a murder investigation in the killing of Italian police officer Mario Cerciello Rega, 35. A detention order issued by prosecutors was shown on Italian state broadcaster RAI, naming the suspects as Gabriel Christian Natale Hjorth and Finnegan Lee Elder. (Italian Carabinieri via AP)

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Cerciello Rega, beloved for his charity work with the homeless and the ailing, was praised as a hero for trying to help keep Rome's streets safe.

Photos of the officer, wearing his uniform for his wedding and showing off his wedding band as he sat next to his beaming bride, dominated the front pages of many Italian newspapers Saturday.

Parents with their children left bouquets of flowers at the bloodstained site.

Authorities vowed that justice would be done.

"Hoping that the killer of our poor Carabinieri never gets out of prison, I remind do-gooders that in the United States, whoever kills risks the death penalty," tweeted Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, who is also in charge of state police, another national Italian police corps. "I'm not saying we'll get to that, but yes to a life in prison (in labor, obviously)."

Like all European Union countries, Italy doesn't have the death penalty.

Elder's lawyer, Francesco Codini, said his client had exercised his right not to respond to questions during a hearing before a judge at the jail Saturday to determine whether the suspects remain locked up.

Italian state radio reported Sunday the judge ruled that the Americans stay in jail while the investigation goes forward.

Suspects deemed a flight risk are often denied release. Italian police had said the two teens were preparing to leave Italy later on Friday.

Codini declined to say anything more out of "respect for the family" of the slain officer. Asked how Elder was doing psychologically, he replied: "worn out."

Natale-Hjorth's lawyer didn't speak to reporters waiting outside the jail after the hearing.

The young men were high school classmates in Mill Valley, a wealthy suburb 10 miles (16 kilometers) north of San Francisco en route to the towering redwood trees in Muir Woods National Park. The town of 14,000 is a desirable destination for families who are drawn to its safe, leafy neighborhoods and reputable public schools.

"We are shocked and dismayed at the events that have been reported, but we have very little independent information about these events," Elder's family said in a statement. "We have not been able to have any communication with our son."

The family expressed condolences to the policeman's family and "all of those who have been impacted by this tragedy."

At a house listed for the mother of Natale-Hjorth, a young man who answered the door yelled "No!" when an Associated Press reporter asked to speak to her.

An Italian investigator said the pair had snatched the bag of a drug dealer in Rome after the man apparently gave them a different substance instead of the cocaine they were seeking. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the probe is continuing.

In a statement, the Carabinieri contended that the Americans demanded cash and cocaine to return the knapsack. They said the bag, with a phone inside, was snatched from an Italian man. The Americans, police said, "threatened to not give it back to him without payment of 100 euros and a gram of cocaine."

The bag's owner reported the theft, and the plainclothes officers were sent to the site of the rendezvous to allegedly turn over the bag for ransom, the statement said.

The Americans, "even though the officers identified themselves as being Carabinieri, didn't hesitate to engage in a struggle, culminating in the mortal wounding" of the policeman, the statement said.

Italian police officers carry guns, but it was unclear why they weren't used.

The Carabinieri said surveillance cameras and witnesses helped them identify and find the Americans. While searching their hotel room, police said, investigators found a long knife hidden inside the room's dropped ceiling. Also found were clothes worn during the attack, police said.

The Carabinieri statement said the Americans during their interrogation and confronted with "hard evidence," had "confessed to their blame."

This case could spark comparisons to another spectacular slaying investigation involving a young American in Italy.

Amanda Knox was an American university student in Perugia when she was initially accused in the 2007 stabbing death of her British roommate Meredith Kercher. She was convicted but ultimately acquitted.

Italian media focused on Knox, largely ignoring the fate of the Briton. In contrast, a decade later, the murder victim is an Italian policeman at a time when Salvini's law-and-order right-wing party is soaring in popularity.

"Hero of the Fatherland, justice for Mario," read a note, signed by the "neighborhood citizens" and left near the scene of his death.

Giada Zampano, Dolores Hinckley and Associated Press writer Daisy Nguyen contributed to this report.

Hong Kong police tear gas protest against mob violence

By ALICE FUNG and KATIE TAM Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong police on Saturday fired tear gas, swung batons and forcefully cleared out protesters who defied warnings not to march in a neighborhood where last weekend a mob apparently targeting demonstrators brutally attacked people in a train station.

Protesters wearing all black streamed through the Yuen Long area, even though police refused to grant permission for the march, citing risks of confrontations between demonstrators and local residents.

By nightfall, protesters and police were once again facing off in the streets, as they've done previously during the summer-long pro-democracy protests that are fueled by fears over the steady erosion of civil rights in the Chinese territory. Demonstrators threw objects and ducked behind makeshift shields, and police officers shot plumes of tear gas into the air.

Later, police wearing heavy-duty helmets and wielding batons suddenly charged into the train station where a few hundred protesters had taken refuge from the tear gas. Some officers swung their batons directly at demonstrators, while others appeared to be urging their colleagues to hang back. For the second week in a row, blood was splattered on the station floor.

Police said in a statement they arrested 11 men, aged between 18 and 68, for offences including unlawful assembly, possession of offensive weapon and assault. At least four officers were injured.

The Hospital Authority said 24 people were taken to five hospitals. As of Sunday morning, eight remained hospitalized, two in serious condition.

For the protesters, it was a show of defiance against both the police and the white-clad assailants who beat dozens of people July 21, including some demonstrators heading home after a mass protest.

Police said some of the attackers at the train station were connected to triad gangs and others were



Riot police block a road into the Yuen Long district in Hong Kong on Saturday, July 27, 2019. Hong Kong police on Saturday fired tear gas and swung batons at protesters who defied authorities' warnings not to march in a neighborhood where six days earlier a mob apparently targeting demonstrators brutally attacked people in a train station.

(AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

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villagers who live in the area. Demonstrators accused law enforcement of not acting quickly enough to protect the victims and even colluding with the mob, an allegation that police have firmly denied.

Another protest is scheduled for Sunday.

Massive demonstrations began in Hong Kong early last month against an extradition bill that would have allowed suspects to face trial in mainland China, where critics say their rights would be compromised. The bill was eventually suspended, but protesters' demands have grown to include direct elections, the dissolution of the current legislature and an investigation into alleged police brutality.

A former British colony, Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under the framework of "one country, two systems." The arrangement promises the city certain democratic freedoms that are not afforded mainland citizens, but some residents say these liberties are now under threat.

A distrust of China's Communist Party-led central government in Beijing has undergirded the protests. After the march last weekend, a group of protesters vandalized Hong Kong's Liaison Office, which represents the mainland government. They spray-painted the building's surveillance cameras and threw eggs and black ink at the Chinese national emblem, an act that Beijing has vehemently condemned.

On Saturday, the streets of Yuen Long became a sea of umbrellas. A symbol going back to the Occupy Central protests that shook Hong Kong in 2014, umbrellas have become tools to help protesters conceal their identities from police cameras as well as shields against tear gas and pepper spray. Some also wore masks.

"Hong Kong police know the law and break the law," protesters chanted as they made their way through the streets.

Max Chung Kin-ping, one of the rally's organizers, said there were 288,000 participants. The police had yet to release their turnout figure, which is generally lower than organizers' estimates.

Less than three hours after the start of the march, police fired tear gas to try to disperse crowds. Police said in a statement that they were clearing out the protesters, who were "holding iron poles, self-made shields and even removing fences from roads."

Some protesters also endangered police officers' lives by surrounding and vandalizing an occupied police vehicle, the statement added.

As the demonstration rolled into the evening, officers in riot gear faced off with protesters using pieces of wood as shields. Live footage from broadcaster RTHK showed protesters on one street forcing back riot police by throwing umbrellas and waving rods at them. On another street, officers repeatedly raised warnings and fired tear gas at masked demonstrators who were standing their ground.

Soon afterward, many of the protesters dispersed, but others stayed put. A group of officers appeared with batons and held up banners that read, "Stop charging or we use force." At least one woman was knocked down when police used the rods.

Later in the evening, protesters encircled a smashed-up car. The windows of the car were shattered and its body was covered with posters denouncing the police. It was not immediately clear who owned the vehicle or who destroyed it.

Some Yuen Long residents participated in Saturday's march, while others stood outside with signs warning protesters not to enter. For their part, demonstrators pasted calls for democracy on sticky notes around the area.

"After the violence (last Sunday), as a resident of Yuen Long, I think I have the responsibility to come out," said a 24-year-old man surnamed Man. "After all these protests in past months, the government still hasn't responded to us."

Associated Press writer Yanan Wang in Beijing and news assistants Nadia Lam, Phoebe Lai and Chanwoo Bang in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

Judge weighs ordering switch to paper ballots in Georgia

By KATE BRUMBACK
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia allowed its election system to grow “way too old and archaic” and now has a deep hole to dig out of to ensure that the constitutional right to vote is protected, according to U.S. District Judge Amy Totenberg.

Now Totenberg is in the difficult position of having to decide whether the state, which plans to implement a new voting system statewide next year, must immediately abandon its outdated voting machines in favor of an interim solution for special and municipal elections to be held this fall.

Election integrity advocates and individual voters sued Georgia election officials in 2017 alleging that the touchscreen voting machines the state has used since 2002 are unsecure and vulnerable to hacking.

They’ve asked Totenberg to order the state to immediately switch to hand-marked paper ballots.

But lawyers for state election officials and for Fulton County, the state’s most populous county that includes most of Atlanta, argued that the state is in the process of implementing a new system, and it would be too costly, burdensome and chaotic to use an interim system for elections this fall and then switch to the new permanent system next year.

A law passed this year and signed by Gov. Brian Kemp provides specifications for a new system in which voters make their selections on electronic machines that print out a paper record that is read and tallied by scanners. State officials have said it will be in place for the 2020 presidential election.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs argued Friday that the current system is so unsecure and vulnerable to manipulation that it cannot be relied upon, jeopardizing voters’ constitutional rights.

“We can’t sacrifice people’s right to vote just because Georgia has left this system in place for 20 years and it’s so far behind,” said lawyer Bruce Brown, who represents the Coalition for Good Governance and a group of voters.

Addressing concerns about an interim system being burdensome to implement, plaintiffs’ lawyers countered that the state put itself in this situation by neglecting the system for so long and ignoring warnings. Lawyer David Cross, who represents another group of voters, urged the judge to force the state to take responsibility.

“You are the last resort,” he told her.

Georgia’s voting system drew national scrutiny during the closely watched contest for governor last November in which Kemp, a Republican who was the state’s top election official at the time, narrowly defeated Democrat Stacey Abrams.

The plaintiffs had asked Totenberg in August to order Georgia to use hand-marked paper ballots for



FILE - In this Saturday, Oct. 27, 2018, file photo, people cast their ballots ahead of the Tuesday, Nov. 6, general election at Jim Miller Park, in Marietta, Ga. A federal judge is set to hear arguments, Thursday, July 25, 2019, in a lawsuit challenging Georgia’s outdated voting machines and seeking statewide use of hand-marked paper ballots. The hearing will focus on requests for the judge to order the state to immediately stop using the current voting machines. (AP Photo/Mike Stewart, File)

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that election. While Totenberg expressed grave concerns about vulnerabilities in the voting system and scolded state officials for being slow to respond to evidence of those problems, she said a switch to paper ballots so close to the midterm election would be too chaotic. She warned state officials that further delay would be unacceptable.

But she seemed conflicted Friday at the conclusion of a two-day hearing.

"These are very difficult issues," she said. "I'm going to wrestle with them the best that I can, but these are not simple issues."

She recognized that the state had taken concrete steps since her warning last year, with lawmakers providing specifications for a new system, appropriating funds and beginning the procurement process. But she also said she wished the state had not let the situation become so dire and wondered what would happen if the state can't meet its aggressive schedule for implementing the new system.

The request for proposals specifies that vendors must be able to distribute all voting machine equipment before March 31, which is a week after the state's presidential primary election is set to be held on March 24. Bryan Tyson, a lawyer representing state election officials, told the judge the state plans to announce the new system it's selected in "a matter of days."

Alex Halderman, a University of Michigan computer science and engineering professor, testified Friday that the state election system has major vulnerabilities and that the safest, most secure system would be hand-marked paper ballots with optical scanners at each precinct.

Four county election officials, three of whom will oversee elections this fall, testified that it would be hard to switch to hand-marked paper ballots in time for those elections. They cited difficulties getting enough equipment, as well as challenges training poll workers and educating voters. They also said they'd have trouble paying for the switch unless the state helps.

The two groups of plaintiffs agree that the whole system is flawed and has to go. They also believe the ballot-marking devices the state plans to implement have many of the same problems, and they've said they plan to challenge those once the state announces which vendor has won the contract. But they disagree about what the interim solution should be.

The plaintiffs represented by Brown are asking the state to use hand-marked paper ballots along with its existing election management system and to use the ballot scanners it currently uses for paper absentee and provisional ballots for all ballots.

The plaintiffs represented by Cross want the state to implement its new election management system in time for the fall elections and to use ballot scanners along with hand-marked paper ballots.

Totenberg did not say when she would rule.

Trump's 'maximum pressure' campaign on Iran faces key test

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran is at a crossroads.

His administration is trying to decide whether to risk stoking international tensions even more by ending one of the last remaining components of the 2015 nuclear deal. The U.S. faces a Thursday deadline to decide whether to extend or cancel sanctions waivers to foreign companies working on Iran's civilian nuclear program as permitted under the deal.

Ending the waivers would be the next logical step in the campaign and it's a move favored by Trump's allies in Congress who endorse a tough approach to Iran. But it also would escalate tensions with Iran and with some European allies, and two officials say a divided administration is likely to keep the waivers afloat with temporary extensions. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The mere fact that the administration is divided on the issue — it's already postponed an announcement twice, according to the officials — is the latest in a series of confusing signals that Trump has sent over Iran, causing confusion among supporters and critics of the president about just what he hopes to achieve in the standoff with the Islamic Republic.

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Some fear the mixed messages could trigger open conflict amid a buildup of U.S. military forces in the Persian Gulf region.

"It's always a problem when you don't have a coherent policy because you are vulnerable to manipulation and the mixed messages have created the environment for dangerous miscalculation," said Karim Sadjadpour, an Iran expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Trump has simultaneously provoked an escalatory cycle with Iran while also making clear to Iran that he is averse to conflict."

The public face of the pressure campaign is Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and he rejects suggestions the strategy is less than clear cut.

"America has a strategy which we are convinced will work," he said this past week. "We will deny Iran the wealth to foment terror around the world and build out their nuclear program."

Yet the administration's recent actions — which included an unusual mediation effort by Kentucky's anti-interventionist Sen. Rand Paul — have frustrated some of Trump's closest allies on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. Those actions also have led to unease in Europe and Asia, where the administration's attempt to rally support for a coalition to protect ships transiting the Gulf has drawn only lukewarm responses.

Trump withdrew last year from the 2015 deal that Iran signed with the U.S., France, Britain, Germany, Russia and China. The agreement lifted punishing economic sanctions in exchange for limits on the Iranian nuclear program. Critics in the United States believed it didn't do enough to thwart Iranian efforts to develop nuclear weapons and enabled Iran to rebuild its economy and continue funding militants throughout the Middle East.

Trump, who called it "the worst deal in history," began reinstating sanctions, and they have hobbled an already weak Iranian economy.

Iran responded by blowing through limits on its low-enriched uranium stockpiles and announcing plans to enrich uranium beyond levels permitted under the deal. Iran has taken increasingly provocative actions against ships in the Gulf, including the seizure of a British vessel, and the downing of a U.S. drone.

Sometime before Thursday, the administration will have to either cancel or extend waivers that allow European, Russian and Chinese companies to work in Iran's civilian nuclear facilities. The officials familiar with the "civil nuclear cooperation waivers" say a decision in principle has been made to let them expire but that they are likely to be extended for 90 more days to allow companies time to wind down their operations.

At the same time, Trump gave his blessing to Paul to meet last week with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who was in New York to attend a U.N. meeting. Officials familiar with the development said Paul raised the idea with Trump at a golf outing and the president nodded his assent.



FILE - In this July 10, 2019, file photo, Iran's Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, Gharib Abadi speaks to the media after the IAEA board of governors meeting at the International Center in Vienna, Austria. President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran is at a crossroads as his administration wrestles with whether to risk stoking international tensions even more by ending one of the last remaining components of the 2015 nuclear deal. (AP

Photo/Ronald Zak, File)

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Deal critics, including Republican Sens. Ted Cruz of Texas and Tom Cotton of Arkansas, say the waivers should be revoked because they give Iran access to technology that could be used for weapons. In particular, they have targeted a waiver that allows conversion work at the once-secret Fordow site. The other facilities are the Bushehr nuclear power station, the Arak heavy water plant and the Tehran Research Reactor.

Deal supporters say the waivers give international experts a valuable window into Iran's atomic program that might otherwise not exist. They also say some of the work, particularly on nuclear isotopes that can be used in medicine at the Tehran reactor, is humanitarian in nature.

Trump has been coy about his plans. He said this past week that "it could go either way very easily. Very easily. And I'm OK either way it goes."

That vacillation has left administration hawks such as Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton in a quandary.

Bolton has long advocated military action against Iran with the goal of changing the Tehran government and, while Pompeo may agree, he is more sensitive to Trump's reluctance to military intervention, according to the officials.

"Pompeo is trying to reconcile contradictory impulses by focusing on the means rather than ends, which is sanctions," said Sadjadpour. "But rather than bringing clarity, Trump has brought further confusion by promoting the idea of Rand Paul as an envoy."

This has given Iran an opening that it is trying to exploit, he said.

"For years, the U.S. has tried to create fissures between hard-liners and moderates in Tehran and now Iran is trying to do the exact same thing in Washington."

Police arrest Scottish rape suspect who may have faked death

SALINAS, Calif. (AP) — A Scottish man who authorities say faked his death off California's Carmel coast to avoid rape charges back home has been arrested, authorities announced Friday.

Kim Vincent Avis, 55, also known as Ken Gordon-Avis, was arrested in Colorado Springs, Colorado, last week and is being held by the U.S. Marshals Service, Cmdr. Kathy Pallozolo with the Monterey County Sheriff's Office said. The Associated Press has identified him as Kim Gordon.

Gordon's 17-year-old son reported that his father vanished Feb. 25 after going for a nighttime swim in treacherous waters in Monterey. Searchers found no trace of Gordon at Monastery Beach, sometimes dubbed "Mortuary Beach" for its deadly reputation.

After three days of intense searching,



This photo provided by the Monterey County Sheriff's Office shows Kim Vincent Avis, also known as Ken Gordon-Avis, on Friday, July 26, 2019. The Scottish man who authorities say faked his death off California's Carmel coast to avoid rape charges back home was arrested in Colorado Springs, Colo., a week earlier, authorities announced Friday. He is being held by the U.S. Marshals Service, Cmdr. Kathy Pallozolo with the Monterey County Sheriff's Office said. The Associated Press has identified him as Kim Gordon. (Monterey County

Sheriff's Office via AP)

detectives began to suspect a hoax.

They say the son's account lacked crucial details, and he couldn't explain how the two got to California's central coast after traveling by air from Scotland to Los Angeles.

"There was a lack of detail," sheriff's Capt. John Thornburg said at the time. "The son, who reported it, couldn't even tell us where he went in under the water."

Gordon's son was returned to Scotland with the help of Monterey County Child Protective Services. He did not face charges for filing a false report.

Gordon, who is from the Edinburgh area, is wanted on 24 counts of rape in Scotland.

"When that came up, we start to wonder if this is a hoax, and he's trying to escape these charges out of Scotland," Thornburg said.

A spokesperson for Police Scotland told the BBC: "Police Scotland is aware of reports from the USA regarding Kim Gordon or Avis and is liaising with the relevant authorities."

AP Explains: How big a threat is an electromagnetic attack?

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — When much of Venezuela was plunged into darkness after a massive blackout this week, President Nicolás Maduro blamed the power outage on an "electromagnetic attack" carried out by the U.S.

The claim was met with skepticism. Blackouts are a regrettably frequent part of life in Venezuela, where the electric grid has fallen into serious disrepair. And Maduro's administration provided no evidence of an electromagnetic attack.

"In Venezuela, it's a lot easier for him to say we did something to him than he did it to himself," said Sharon Burke, senior adviser at New America, a nonpartisan think tank, and former assistant secretary of defense for operational energy at the Department of Defense. "Their grid, it's decrepit. It's been in very poor shape. They've been starving their infrastructure for years."

Nevertheless, Maduro's claim has raised questions over what exactly is an electromagnetic attack, how likely is it to occur and what impact could it have.

WHAT IS AN ELECTROMAGNETIC ATTACK?

The phrase "electromagnetic attack" can refer to different things, but in this context most likely refers to a high-altitude electromagnetic pulse generated when a nuclear weapon is detonated in space, about 30 kilometers above the Earth's surface. Once the weapon is detonated, an electromagnetic pulse can travel to the Earth's surface and disrupt a wide variety of technology systems from appliances to a nation's electric grid. Some characteristics of an electromagnetic pulse are similar to disturbances caused by solar flares.

There are also smaller electromagnetic pulse weapons that are being developed, but they would be



FILE - In this Monday, July 22, 2019, file photo, people walk on a street during a blackout in Caracas, Venezuela. When much of Venezuela was plunged into darkness after a massive blackout earlier in the week, Maduro blamed the power outage on an "electromagnetic attack" carried out by the United States. (AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos, File)

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unlikely to cause a power outage as large as the one Venezuela experienced, experts said.

The term electromagnetic attack also can refer cryptography, or an attack where the perpetrator is seeking secret keys or passwords, but that's more likely to be directed at portable electronic devices, not electric grids, said Shucheng Yu, an associate professor of electrical & computer engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology.

HAS ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE TECHNOLOGY EVER BEEN USED?

In the 1962, during the Cold War, the U.S. detonated a nuclear weapon above the atmosphere over the Pacific Ocean, and the experiment — known as Starfish Prime — knocked out power to traffic lights and telecommunications in parts of Honolulu, illuminating the sky and even leading hotels to host viewing parties, according to news reports.

Russia conducted a series of "high-altitude nuclear bursts" in 1961 and 1962 to test electromagnetic pulse impacts over Kazakhstan and destroyed that country's electrical grid, according to testimony to Congress from the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack.

COULD VENEZUELA HAVE SUFFERED FROM AN ELECTROMAGNETIC ATTACK?

While several countries have capabilities to detonate a nuclear weapon and cause an electromagnetic pulse, it's unlikely that such a maneuver would escape the world's attention.

"If he's suggesting that the U.S. detonated a nuclear weapon above the atmosphere, you think that would happen without anyone noticing? I don't think so," Burke said of Maduro's claim. "You can't secretly detonate a nuclear weapon."

A senior U.S. administration official said Maduro is to blame for the latest blackout because his government has mismanaged the economy and is responsible for the destruction of his country's infrastructure. The official was not authorized to respond to questions about the blackout and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

Unlike a cyberattack, which can be carried out by a hacker in a basement, generating an electromagnetic pulse requires a state-sponsored weapon.

"It's hard to imagine that actor being incentivized to pull off and conduct such an attack. It would be pretty aggressive to do that," said David Weinstein, chief security officer at Claroty, a security company that specializes in protecting infrastructure. "Also, the power fails easily in Venezuela anyway, so it's almost like a waste of the capability."

HOW MUCH OF A THREAT DOES AN ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE ATTACK POSE?

It depends on who you ask. While the technology to launch an electromagnetic attack exists, and the impacts could cause widespread damage to electronics, some security experts believe the likelihood of such an attack is low and the threat is overstated.

"If they want to knock out the grid, I was trying to think of 12 ways to do it, this wouldn't be high on the list," said Bill Hogan, professor of global energy policy at Harvard University. "The (U.S.) system is run very conservatively, there's a lot of redundancy, and you'd have to be pretty sophisticated to knock out a lot of it."

Others are convinced that an electromagnetic attack could wipe out vast swaths of the U.S. power grid for prolonged periods, potentially killing most Americans.

The Electric Power Research Institute, a think tank funded primarily by utilities, found in an April study that an electromagnetic pulse could trigger regional service interruptions but would not likely trigger a nationwide grid failure in the U.S.

But the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack, which has been sounding the alarm on the possibility of this type of attack for years, said in 2017 Congressional testimony that a nuclear electromagnetic pulse attack would inflict massive widespread damage to the electric grid. An attack on the U.S., it warned, would inevitably lead to a widespread protracted blackout and thousands of electronic systems could be destroyed, risking millions of lives.

President Donald Trump called on the Secretary of Defense to conduct research to understand the effects of EMPs in an executive order in March, and called on the Secretary of State to work with allies to

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boost resilience to potential impacts to EMPs.

"I think it's a good thing that awareness has grown, and the potential risks and consequences have captured people's attention, but at the same time, the much more practical and frankly the threat that we're facing on a day-to-day basis is the cyber threat," Weinstein said.

Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, July 28, the 209th day of 2019. There are 156 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 28, 1976, an earthquake devastated northern China, killing at least 242,000 people, according to an official estimate.

On this date:

In 1609, the English ship *Sea Venture*, commanded by Adm. Sir George Somers, ran ashore on Bermuda, where the passengers and crew founded a colony.

In 1794, Maximilien Robespierre, a leading figure of the French Revolution, was sent to the guillotine.

In 1914, World War I began as Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

In 1915, more than 300 American sailors and Marines arrived in Haiti to restore order following the killing of Haitian President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam by rebels, beginning a 19-year U.S. occupation.

In 1932, federal troops forcibly dispersed the so-called "Bonus Army" of World War I veterans who had gathered in Washington to demand payments they weren't scheduled to receive until 1945.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced the end of coffee rationing, which had limited people to one pound of coffee every five weeks since it began in Nov. 1942.

In 1945, the U.S. Senate ratified the United Nations Charter by a vote of 89-2. A U.S. Army bomber crashed into the 79th floor of New York's Empire State Building, killing 14 people.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced he was increasing the number of American troops in South Vietnam from 75,000 to 125,000 "almost immediately."

In 1984, the Los Angeles Summer Olympics opened.

In 1989, Israeli commandos abducted a pro-Iranian Shiite (SHEE'-eyet) Muslim cleric, Sheik Abdul-Karim Obeid (AHB'-dool kah-REEM' oh-BAYD'), from his home in south Lebanon. (He was released in January 2004 as part of a prisoner swap.)

In 2006, Actor-director Mel Gibson went into an anti-Semitic tirade as he was being arrested on the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California, on suspicion of driving while drunk; Gibson later apologized and was sentenced to probation and alcohol treatment.

In 2017, the Senate voted 51-49 to reject Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's last-ditch effort to dismantle President Barack Obama's health care overhaul with a trimmed-down bill. John McCain, who was about to begin treatments for a brain tumor, joined two other GOP senators in voting against the repeal effort. President Donald Trump announced he was appointing Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly to be his chief of staff. British baby Charlie Gard died, a week shy of his first birthday; his parents had fought for the right to take him to the United States for an experimental treatment for a rare genetic disease that left him brain-damaged.

Ten years ago: The Senate Judiciary Committee approved Judge Sonia Sotomayor to be the U.S. Supreme Court's first Hispanic justice, over nearly solid Republican opposition. Anti-abortion activist Scott Roeder (ROH'-dur) pleaded not guilty in Wichita, Kansas, to killing late-term abortion provider George Tiller. (Roeder was later convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.) The Rev. Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II, better known as "Reverend Ike," who preached the gospel of material prosperity to millions nationwide, died in Los Angeles at age 74.

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Five years ago: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Israelis to be ready for a "prolonged" conflict with Hamas in Gaza as both sides held out for bigger gains and a cease-fire in the three-week conflict remained elusive. Theodore "Dutch" VanKirk, 93, the last surviving member of the Enola Gay crew that dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, died in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

One year ago: Pope Francis accepted the resignation of U.S. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the emeritus archbishop of Washington, D.C., following allegations of sexual abuse, including one involving an 11-year-old boy.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Darryl Hickman is 88. Ballet dancer-choreographer Jacques d'Amboise is 85. Musical conductor Riccardo Muti is 78. Former Senator and NBA Hall of Famer Bill Bradley is 76. "Garfield" creator Jim Davis is 74. Singer Jonathan Edwards is 73. Actress Linda Kelsey is 73. TV producer Dick Ebersol is 72. Actress Sally Struthers is 72. Rock musician Simon Kirke (Bad Company) is 70. Rock musician Steve Morse (Deep Purple) is 65. Former CBS anchorman Scott Pelley is 62. Alt-country-rock musician Marc Perlman is 58. Actor Michael Hayden is 56. Actress Lori Loughlin is 55. Jazz musician-producer Delfeayo Marsalis is 54. Former hockey player turned general manager Garth Snow is 50. Actress Elizabeth Berkley is 47. Singer Afroman is 45. Country musician Todd Anderson (Heartland) is 44. Rock singer Jacoby Shaddix (Papa Roach) is 43. Country singer Carly Goodwin is 38. Actor John David Washington is 35. Actor Jon Michael Hill is 34. Actor Dustin Milligan is 34. Actor Nolan Gerard Funk is 33. Rapper Soulja Boy is 29. Pop/rock singer Cher Lloyd (TV: "The X Factor") is 26.

Thought for Today: "Beware of monotony; it's the mother of all the deadly sins." — Edith Wharton, American author (1862-1937).