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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

17 - Tuesday

- 10 a.m.: Boys Golf at Redfield
- 5 p.m.: JH FB hosts Redfield combined 7/8)
- 5 p.m.: Volleyball hosts Mobridge-Pollock (C/JV at 5:00)
- UMC: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
- Breakfast: Sausage and Cheese Frittata
- Lunch: Taco Salad
- Senior Menu: New England Ham Dinner, dinner roll, fruit cocktail cake and ice cream.
- Dress-up Day: Elementary School: Camo Day, MS/HS: Twins Day

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



18 - Wednesday

- St. John's: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.
- Emmanuel: Confirmation, 7 p.m.; Bible Study, 7 p.m.
- C&MA: Adult Bible Study, Youth Group, Kid's Club, 7 p.m.
- UMC: Coffee time, 9 a.m.; Ad Council, 7 p.m.; Confirmation Parent Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Breakfast: Cereal
- Lunch: Garlic Cheese Bread, Cooked Carrots
- Senior Menu: Hot turkey combos, mashed potatoes and gravy, 7 layer salad, peach sauce.
- Dress-up Day: MS/HS is Meme; Elementary is Sports Day

Service Notice: DeLoris Krueger-Knoll

Services for DeLoris Krueger-Knoll, 95, of Groton will be 11:00 a.m., Thursday, September 19th at the United Methodist Church, Groton. Rev. Brandon Dunham will officiate. Burial will follow in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be at the chapel on Wednesday from 4-6 p.m. with a prayer service at 6:00 p.m.

DeLoris passed away September 15, 2019 at Avantara Groton.

It's Volleyball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Mobridge-Pollock
Tigers**

VS



Groton Area Tigers

Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2019

6:15 p.m. at Groton

Broadcast Sponsored By

Allied Climate Professionals

Bahr Spray Foam

BaseKamp Lodge

DeHoet Trucking

Groton Auto Works

Hanlon Brothers

John Sieh Agency

Milbrandt Enterprises

Professional Management Services

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Visiting St. John's Pre-School Students

The GHS Homecoming candidates paid a visit to St. John's Lutheran Pre-School on Monday. The left photo features Austin Jones adjusting a helmet on Gauge Johnson. The right photo featured Brodyn DeHoet adjusting pads on Quinton Ronning. (Photos from Tricia Keith's Facebook Page)



Deer in town

A doe and her two fawns posed for the camera this morning along Fifth Street in Groton. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Retro Day Winners

Left to right are Raelee Lilly 6th grade, Emma Kutter 7th grade, Marlee Tollifson 9th grade, Megan Flihs 10th grade, Alexis Hanten 11th grade, and Brody DeHoet 12th grade. (Photo by

Tina Kosel)



GHS 2019 Homecoming Royalty

In back, left to right, are Peyton Johnson, son of Matt and Tanya Johnson; Indigo Rogers, daughter of Dirk and Jennifer Rogers; Brodyn DeHoet, son of Tyson and Lindsey DeHoet; Nicole Marzahn, daughter of Wade and Renee Marzahn; Jonathan Doeden, son of Toby and Liz Doeden; Payton Colestock, daughter of Craig and Michelle Muilenburg and Roger Colestock; Austin Jones, son of Jim and Mindy Jones; and Tadyn Glover, daughter of Burt and Angela Glover; in front flanking the royalty are the scroll carriers, Ayce Warrington and Lilly Davis; and the royalty are King Anthony Schinkel, son of Dan and Marjae Schinkel; and Queen Eliza Wanner, daughter of Shaun and Lynn Wanner. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Pictured are the king and queen with their parents. From left to right are Dan and Marjae Schinkel with King Anthony Schinkel; and Queen Eliza Wanner is with Lynn and Shaun Wanner. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Larry and Kathy Harry are the 2019 Parade Marshalls. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The burning of the "G" was held after the coronation ceremony. (Courtesy Photo)

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The 2019 Royalty are Queen Eliza Wanner and King Anthony Schinkel.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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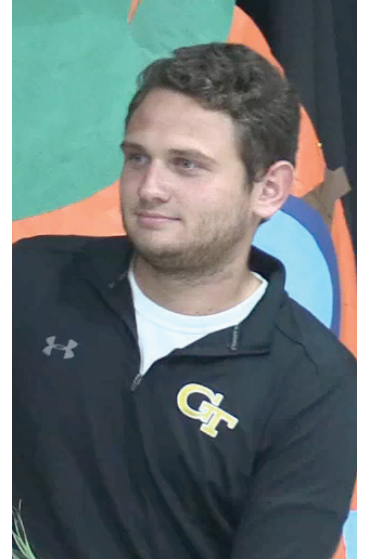
The GHS Band played for about half an hour before the start of the Homecoming Coronation. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



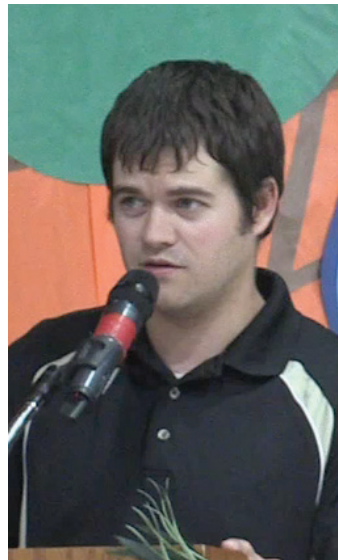
That's Trinity Smith being thrown in the air as the cheerleaders did a skit. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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The speakers at the Homecoming Coronation are pictured here. Above, left to right, are Shaun Wanner, football coach; Chelsea Hanson, volleyball coach; Adam Franken, cross country coach; Chance Strom, boys soccer coach; and below are Chris Kucker, girls soccer; and Austin Fordham, band. The master of ceremonies was Jordan Kjellsen. (Photos lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



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There was a junior class style show as the skit for the evening. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



The scroll carriers were Lilly Davis and Ayce Warrington. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



The 2018 Homecoming King Treyton Diegel puts the crown on the new King Anthony Schinkel. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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SDFBCA Coaches Poll Results - Week 3

11B

1. Winner (16) 140
2. Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan (13) 136
3. St. Thomas More (1) 54
4. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 44
5. McCook Central/Montrose 41

Others: Webster 31, Mobridge-Pollock 13, Beresford 12, Sioux Valley 8, Chamberlain 6, Roncalli, 3, Stanley Co 2, Wagner 2

11A

1. Tea Area (25) 151
2. Dell Rapids (2) 110
3. Dakota Valley (5) 89
4. Madison (1) 84
5. Tri-Valley 24

Others: SF Christian 18, Canton 11, West Central 5, Lennox 4, Custer 1, Milbank 1

11AA

1. Pierre (33) 165
2. Brookings 130
3. Huron 66
3. Mitchell 66
5. Yankton 48

Others: Sturgis 24, Spearfish 5, Douglas 3

11AAA

1. Brandon Valley (11) 118
1. SF Roosevelt (10) 118
3. SF O'Gorman (5) 110
4. Harrisburg (7) 91
5. SF Lincoln 41

Others: SF Washington 14, Aberdeen Central 3

9B

1. Colman-Egan (23) 135
2. DR St. Mary (4) 111
3. Wolsey-Wessington (2) 79
4. Faulkton Area 31
5. Herreid-Selby Area 28

Others: Harding Co. 15, Alcester-Hudson 13, Langford Area 11, Colome 7, Irene-Wakonda 4, Waverly/South Shore 1, Scotland 1

9A

1. Canistota/Freeman (15) 125
2. Sully Buttes (9) 104
3. Britton-Hecla (3) 80
4. Gregory (2) 67
5. Howard (1) 24

9AA

1. Bon Homme (21) 130
2. Viborg-Hurley (5) 107
3. Deuel 81
4. Parker (1) 46
5. Baltic (2) 30

Others: Hamlin 11, Lemmon-McIntosh 4, Platte-Geddes 3, Arlington/Lake Preston 3, Hanson 3, Florence-Henry 2, Menno-Marion 2

Groton Photography

will be doing photo sessions at the



No appointments are necessary, but if you want to set up a time, Call/Text Paul at 605/397-7460

e-mail paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Message on Facebook - theGDI

Sitting Fee: \$10

8x10 - \$8.00

5x7 - \$5.00

4x6 - \$4.00

Digital File E-mailed to you - \$10.00

Photo Button: \$5.00

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Roberts County Democratic Party

is hosting a

STEAK FRY DINNER

Friday, September 20, 2019 • 6:30 p.m.

Valley View Golf Course

Speaker will be Joel Heitkamp

KFGO morning show "News & Views"

TICKET PRICE: \$50

To purchase tickets call: Gary Hanson 268-0448

Jason Frerichs 605-949-2204, Dave Gleason 237-1923

Groton Class of '69 50th Year Reunion

Saturday, Sept 21st

Olive Grove Golf Course

The public is invited to attend after
6:30 to renew acquaintances
with OLD friends



2019 Groton Area Elementary Preschool Developmental Screening for 3 year olds September 24 and 25

Parents of children age 3 in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to either confirm their screening time or set up a time. Letters will be send out the week of September 16. If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school. If you are new to the district and have a child under the age of 5, we also ask you to contact the elementary school.

The Developmental Screening will take place at Groton Area Elementary School.



(0911.0918)

Langford Front Porch Help Wanted



Immediate opening for a FT General Manager at The Front Porch Bar & Grill, Langford SD. This person will ensure a profitable and efficiently run restaurant/bar operation through innovative

menus, events, staff management and business operations. Wage DOE. Must be 21 years old. Contact Paula Jensen at (605) 228-5963 or email resume by September 30, 2019 to langfordfrontporch@venturecomm.net.

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*Tribute to 100
years of the
American Legion*



*Coffee and
Birthday
Cake*

THE AMERICAN LEGION

1919

2019

100
Years

*Please help us celebrate a Century
of the American Legion*

VETERANS STILL SERVING AMERICA

Friday, Sept 20, 2019 ~ 3:30 p.m., Groton Legion Post #39

1 free drink to any Veteran

Program to include

Legion history

Local performers singing songs from the following periods

WW I ~ WW II ~ Korea ~ Vietnam to present time

MILITARY RITES AT THE CONCLUSION IN HONOR OF OUR DECEASED COMRADES PERFORMED BY GROTON POST #39

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Sunny and Breezy

High: 87 °F



Slight Chance T-storms

Low: 60 °F



Sunny

High: 78 °F



Night

Clear

Low: 55 °F



Slight Chance T-storms

High: 82 °F

Today	Tonight	Wednesday
Warm & Breezy	Isolated Showers & Storms during the evening and early overnight hours	Cooler, but still near normal for this time of year
Highs: 85 to 92°	Lows: 56 to 64° coolest over central SD	Highs: 75 to 79°

A few strong or potentially severe storms possible tonight over far eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota!

weather.gov/abr
Published on: 09/17/2019 at 12:13AM

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Graphic Created
9/17/2019 4:10 AM

Today will be another warm and breezy day across the region, with highs in the mid 80s to low 90s. Isolated showers and storms will be possible this evening through the early overnight hours. A few of these storms may become strong or severe over far eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Temperatures will return to near normal values for this time of year on Wednesday, in the mid to upper 70s.

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Today in Weather History

September 17, 1911: Pipestone, Minnesota is hit with baseball-sized hail that smashes numerous windows at the Calumet Hotel and high school. The local observer measured hail three inches deep.

September 17, 1969: In the late afternoon 16 miles east of Pierre in Hughes County, 60 mph wind-driven penny size hail damaged crops and buildings in the area. Unofficial amounts of 5 to 6 inches of rain also occurred with the storms.

September 17, 1975: Heavy rain and hail fell in the Pierre area during the night flooding streets and some basements. The high winds downed power lines. The damage estimate was more than 100,000 dollars.

September 17, 1975: Lightning started a grass fire in western Stanley County in the early morning hours of the 17th. With the arid and windy conditions, the fire quickly spread and consumed 25,000 acres of grassland before it was under control. Smoke from the fire was seen from 40 miles away. The fire also destroyed six outbuildings and an old unoccupied farmhouse. Some roads had to be closed due to the fire and smoke. Several electrical poles were also burned. Many residents were notified of possible evacuations. The fire was finally put out in the early morning hours of the 18th.

1829: A typhoon, Japan's most catastrophic storm, inflicts widespread damage over much of the country. On the southern island of Kyushu, the storm surge off the Ariake Sea kills over 10,000. The German physician Philipp Franz von Siebold was present during this storm and succeeded in taking barometric pressure readings around Nagasaki at the risk of drowning.

1923: A devastating fire threatens the University of California at Berkeley on this day. This fire killed two and caused \$10 million in damages. While the exact cause is unknown, the fire began in the dry forest northeast of Berkeley. Strong northeasterly winds blew cinders into the air which lead to the rapid-fire growth. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the History Channel.

1932 - Concord NH was drenched with 5.97 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a record for that location (16th- 17th). (The Weather Channel)

1963 - Nearly two and a half inches of rain fell at Yuma AZ in 24 hours. It was the most intense rain for Yuma during the period between 1950 and 1977. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - A storm produced a band of heavy snow across parts of Wyoming. Totals of 23 inches at Rawlins and 20.7 inches at Lander easily surpassed previous snowfall record totals for so early in the season. (15th-17th) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced large hail, damaging winds, and heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Heavy rain in southwestern Pennsylvania forced evacuation of twenty homes along Four Mile Run Creek, near Darlington. Harrisburg PA established a record for the date with 2.11 inches of rain. A cold front in the central U.S. brought freezing temperatures to parts of Montana and Wyoming. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Early in the morning a tornado hit Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX, injuring three persons and causing twenty-eight million dollars damage. A second tornado on the northwest side of San Antonio caused six million dollars damage, and a third tornado in Bexar County killed one person and injured another. Thunderstorms associated with Hurricane Gilbert spawned a total of forty-seven tornadoes in a two day period, with forty of those tornadoes in central and south central Texas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo hit the Virgin Islands, producing wind gusts to 97 mph at Saint Croix. Hurricane Hugo passed directly over the island of Saint Croix causing complete devastation and essentially cutting off the island from communications. A storm surge of five to seven feet occurred at Saint Croix. The only rain gauge left operating, at Caneel Bay, indicated 9.40 inches in 24 hours. Hurricane Hugo claimed the lives of three persons at Saint Croix, and caused more than 500 million dollars damage. A ship, Nightcap, in the harbor of Culebra, measured wind gusts as high as 170 mph. A cold front brought high winds to the Great Basin and the Rocky Mountain Region, and thunderstorms along the cold front produced wind gusts to 66 mph at Yellowstone Park WY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 86 °F at 4:56 PM

Low Temp: 71 °F at 6:53 AM

Wind: 23 mph at 11:25 AM

Day Rain: 0.04

Record High: 97° in 1955, 1920

Record Low: 28° in 1903

Average High: 72°F

Average Low: 45°F

Average Precip in Sept.: 1.20

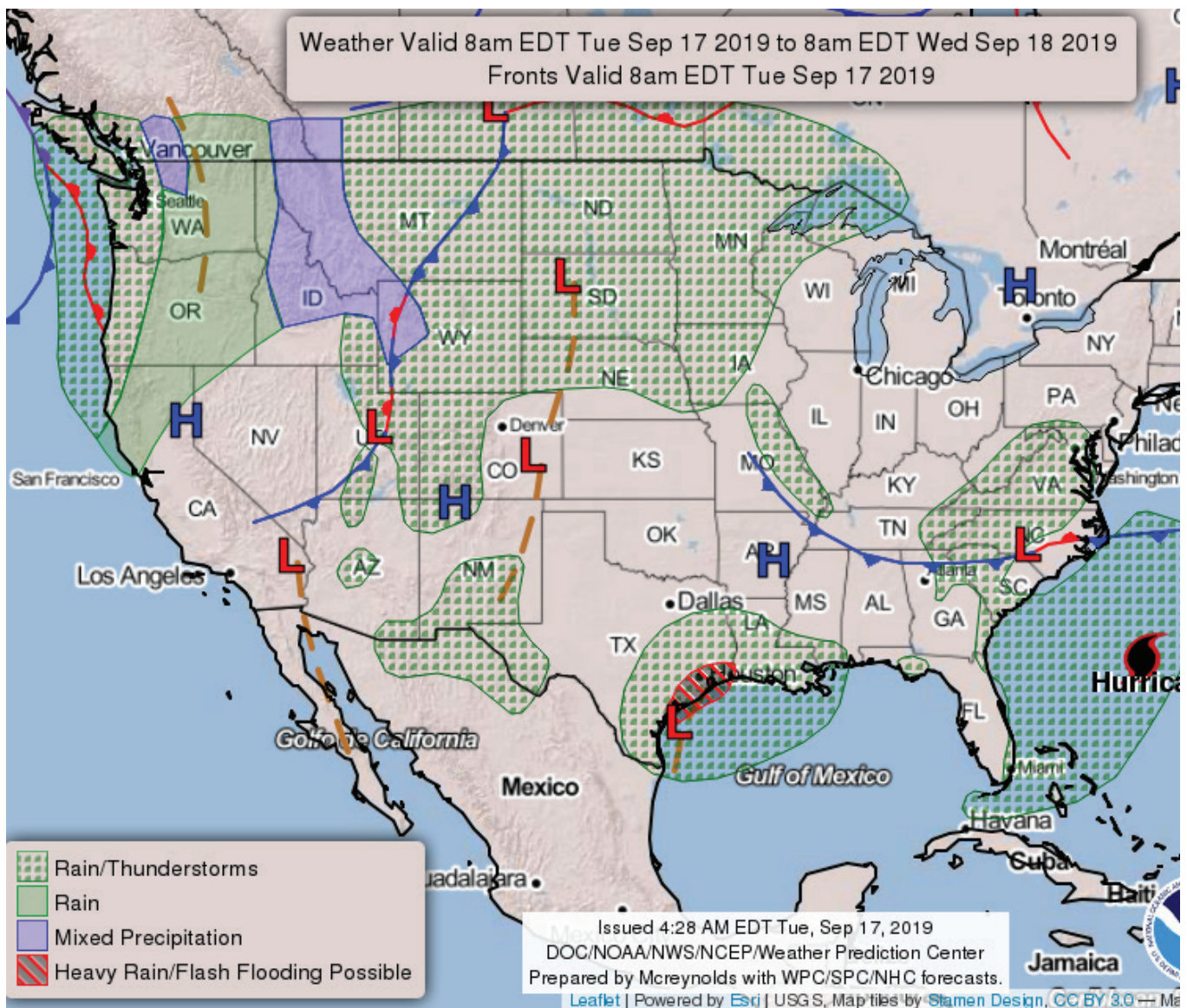
Precip to date in Sept.: 4.90

Average Precip to date: 17.49

Precip Year to Date: 24.66

Sunset Tonight: 7:41 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:16 a.m.



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FINANCES AND FRIENDSHIP

Is there a limit to friendship? It seems that there is.

"A man lacking in judgment strikes the hand of another in a pledge, and puts up security for his neighbor" is sound advice!

Only the hardest of hearts want to see anyone suffer from a lack of life's necessities. Most of us want to be thought of as having kind hearts and willing hands. Many have given more than their share of their goods and finances without thinking of the cost to them personally. There have been times that what once seemed wise, in the final analysis, was not wise, but stupid. So, we come to a verse that puts the idea of giving into the proper context for us.

It's foolish or a "man lacks judgment" for a person to place their name on a contract unless they know for certain the character and financial resources of the other person. So, there is indeed a limit to friendship.

Very often, and with good intentions and the desire to be "liked," we foolhardily shake hands or "make a pledge" for a person who cannot or will not honor their word. To enter into any agreement with any person for any reason must be given careful, prayerful thought. It is foolish to give our word and promise to fulfill any contract simply to be liked or considered a "friend."

This proverb addresses the idea of "certainty." If, for example, the person who is the primary individual on the contract becomes unable to fulfill his obligations, the burden of fulfilling the obligation falls on the "hand shaker." To do so may endanger the family of the co-signer as well as encourage the one wanting financial assistance to be extravagant and careless in spending. Being "nice" often results in being swindled. However, always be kind.

Prayer: We ask, Lord, that we may seek Your wisdom and guidance before making foolish choices to help others. May we be kind, cautious and prayerful. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 17:18 A man lacking in judgment strikes the hand of another in a pledge, and puts up security for his neighbor.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbyterian 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, 10 a.m. Sharp (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, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 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, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/14/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)

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News from the Associated Press

Monday's Scores By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL(equals)
Bon Homme 34, Parkston 6
Parker 12, Menno/Marion 0

Volleyball
Colome def. Marty Indian, 25-8, 25-8, 25-11
Estelline/Hendricks def. Great Plains Lutheran, 20-25, 25-21, 25-22, 16-25, 15-9
Platte-Geddes def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 3-1
Redfield def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-18, 21-25, 25-18, 25-19
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Mitchell Christian, 25-13, 25-21, 25-20
Sargent Central, N.D. def. Britton-Hecla, 25-17, 25-21, 21-25, 25-18
Waverly-South Shore def. Castlewood, 25-22, 25-14, 25-22

Aaron Jones does 'unbelievable job' in win over Vikings

By KEITH JENKINS AP Sports Writer

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) — What Aaron Jones did on Sunday is exactly what coach Matt LaFleur envisioned for the running game when he took over the reins of the Packers in January.

Jones had 116 yards and a touchdown on a career-high 23 carries in Green Bay's 21-16 win over the Minnesota Vikings.

"He did an unbelievable job," LaFleur said Monday of the third-year running back. "Matter of fact, he was our player of the game on offense. He did a great job. But I thought it really started up front, too. I thought our offensive line did a really nice job blocking for him."

After totaling just 39 yards rushing at Chicago in the season opener, Jones eclipsed the 100-yard mark on the ground for the fourth time in his career and the first time since Week 10 of last season.

While the spotlight will be on LaFleur and Aaron Rodgers this season, LaFleur has maintained that in order for the offense to be as efficient and effective as he wants, the run game has to be established early and often.

Jones also had four catches for 34 yards, including a 15-yard gain on a grab with the Green Bay offense backed up to its end zone.

"Wins aren't pretty in the NFL, but as long as you get that W in the win column, that's all that matters," Jones said.

WHAT'S WORKING

The secret is out: The Packers have a really good defense.

The defense, for the second straight week, carried the team to victory. Coordinator Mike Pettine's group forced four turnovers on Sunday and now has the NFL's No. 2 scoring defense, behind only the Patriots. Green Bay has allowed 19 points through the first two games, its fewest through the first two weeks since 2001.

"Shoot, I mean, it feels good," second-year cornerback Jaire Alexander said. "You got everybody bringing that swag, everybody bringing that juice and we see the results. Sacks, hurries and interceptions."

WHAT'S NOT WORKING

The offense (kind of). After scoring touchdowns on each of their first three possessions Sunday, the Packers failed to get points on their next 11 drives. The offense continued to look out of sync despite do-

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ing enough to keep Green Bay unbeaten.

"We haven't done as well as we'd like to on the offensive side of the ball, but I still have a lot of confidence in the players that we have out there," LaFleur said.

STOCK UP

Jones said before the season that he felt "slept on." Well, not anymore. After his performance Sunday, and a coach in LaFleur who is bound and determined to get Jones and the running game going, the 2017 fifth-round pick is primed to be the Packers' first 1,000-yard rusher since Eddie Lacy in 2014.

STOCK DOWN

Left guard Lane Taylor's snap numbers suggest the seventh-year veteran is losing his grip on the starting job. Green Bay drafted guard Elgton Jenkins in the second round in April and the rookie impressed throughout the summer. Jenkins stole some of Taylor's snaps on Sunday, and LaFleur said it's a "fluid competition" between the two.

INJURED

Safety Raven Greene (ankle) was placed on injured reserve on Monday. Greene was carted off the field on Sunday following the first play of the second half.

KEY NUMBER

343 — Sunday marked the 343rd consecutive regular-season sellout at Lambeau Field.

NEXT STEPS

Green Bay will host the Broncos on Sunday. The Packers are 6-7-1 against Denver, which is 0-2 following a loss to the Raiders in their season opener and a last-second defeat against Chicago in Week 2.

Follow Keith Jenkins on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MrKeithJenkins>

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Cousins, Vikes lament mistakes, opportunities lost vs. Pack

By DAVE CAMPBELL AP Pro Football Writer

EAGAN, Minn. (AP) — Near the end of an already flawed performance, Kirk Cousins and the Minnesota Vikings were in prime position to pull ahead of the Green Bay Packers and make all the cringe-worthy plays that came before moot.

Then Cousins made the mistake of all mistakes, a rookie-like decision to throw off balance toward Stefon Diggs in a crowd after rolling out on first-and-goal and facing pressure by the Packers. Kevin King made the leaping interception in the corner of the end zone, and the Vikings wound up with a most agonizing defeat after a game that was well within their grasp to win.

"It was just a gut-wrenching loss," Cousins said. "Proud of the way my teammates kept fighting, but very disappointed in my performance."

The pass was supposed to be beyond the reach of everyone except Diggs. There wasn't quite enough zip on it to keep it in the safe zone.

"Kind of an ours or nobody's thing, but it wasn't nobody's," Cousins said.

In his 75th regular-season start, Cousins posted his second-worst completion rate (43.8 percent) as a pro after connecting on only 14 of 32 passes against a spruced-up Packers defense. Two of them were picked off. He lost one of two fumbles that came on consecutive plays in the first quarter. There were also a handful of uncharacteristic overthrows by a ninth-year quarterback who was second in the league last season in completion rate (70.1 percent).

"He's got all the talent, and we just need to continue to coach him the way we want him to play," coach Mike Zimmer said after the 21-16 defeat.

The first interception was thrown into traffic, too, when Darnell Savage arrived at the ball as the same time as Diggs. Outside linebacker Preston Smith had dropped back in zone coverage and snagged the deflection. Perplexingly, that turnover immediately followed one of several smart throwaways Cousins did

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make on Sunday when he saw no openings.

"I just didn't feel like I did my part," Cousins said.

Here's a snapshot of the Vikings after two weeks:

WHAT'S WORKING

The direction of offensive coordinator Kevin Stefanski with significant input from offensive adviser Gary Kubiak has so far yielded superb results for the running attack behind the new zone blocking scheme. Dalvin Cook leads the NFL with 265 rushing yards.

Not only has Cook displayed the power, vision and explosiveness the Vikings lacked in the 19 games he's missed to injury over his first two years, but Stefanski has stayed committed to the run, even after falling behind 21-0 to the Packers. That was the main reason Zimmer fired offensive coordinator John DeFilippo last season.

WHAT NEEDS HELP

The Vikings have been a disciplined team in six years under Zimmer, but over their first two games they've compiled a league-high 200 penalty yards on 19 accepted infractions. Diggs had a touchdown negated by pass interference on Cook that was discovered during the mandatory replay review of all scores, forcing the Vikings to settle for a field goal, and Zimmer bluntly said on Monday he believes that was "a bad call."

He was less forgiving about the rest of the penalties, though, including unsportsmanlike conduct on Diggs for removing his helmet during the celebration of his third-quarter touchdown catch. That pushed the extra-point attempt back to 48 yards, and Dan Bailey, who earlier missed a 47-yard field goal, had his kick blocked.

"They've got to start playing within the rules," Zimmer said, "and they know the rules."

STOCK UP

The defense stiffened up after a rough start and had Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers out of rhythm for the last three quarters. Everson Griffen was credited with three hits on Rodgers and applied persistent pressure opposite All-Pro left tackle David Bakhtiari.

"Bakhtiari's one of the best, and Everson's also one of the best," safety Harrison Smith said. "He plays with a lot of energy and passion and violence."

STOCK DOWN

Cornerback Xavier Rhodes was mostly assigned to two-time Pro Bowl pick Davante Adams, who had four receptions for 81 yards on four targets in the first quarter alone to help the Packers build their three-touchdown lead. Rhodes also had a 25-yard pass interference penalty.

INJURED

Cornerback Mackensie Alexander (elbow) was missed. Rodgers went after rookie Nate Meadors for his second touchdown pass, when Meadors was in slot coverage on Geronimo Allison on second-and-goal from the 12 late in the first quarter. Backup safety Jayron Kearse again saw frequent action in the nickel role.

The other significant absence was left guard Pat Elflein (knee), who was replaced in the lineup by Dakota Dozier. Interior pass protection has been an issue for the Vikings since last year, and the fumble Cousins lost was caused in part by heavy pressure by Packers nose tackle Kenny Clark over Dozier and Bradbury.

KEY NUMBER

165 — Total yards for the Packers over the final 44:16 of game time, a period over which the Vikings outscored them 16-0.

NEXT STEPS

Minimizing penalties and a return to accuracy for Cousins will be top priorities when the Vikings host the Oakland Raiders next. Restoring cornerback depth will be critical, too, with Alexander sidelined and Holton Hill suspended. Mike Hughes is close to clearance in his recovery from a torn ACL suffered last season.

More AP NFL coverage: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Third round of flooding in 2019 likely along Missouri River

By JOSH FUNK Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The amount of water flowing down the lower Missouri River this year is approaching the record set during the historic 2011 flood, and another round of flooding is expected this week after unusually heavy rains upstream, federal officials said.

Heavy rains dumped more than four times what is normal in parts of Montana, North and South Dakota and Nebraska last week — triggering flood warnings and forcing the forecast for how much water will flow down the Missouri River to jump by 4 million acre feet (1.22 million meters) to 58.8 million acre feet (17.92 million meters).

That will be second only to 2011's 61 million acre feet (18.59 million meters), and it means the river has stayed high all year long. Previously, the second highest runoff year was 1997 when 49 million acre feet (14.94 million meters) of water flowed down the river and caused major flooding.

"2019 continues to be a very wet year throughout the basin," said John Remus with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that operates the dams along the Missouri River.

This week's third round of flooding along the Missouri River will likely be less severe than the first two but still significant, said National Weather Service hydrologist Dave Pearson. When the river crests near Omaha, Nebraska, on Friday and Saturday, parts of Interstates 29 and 680 could again be under water.

At Omaha, this week's crest is projected to be 30.5 feet (9.3 meters). In March the river hit 34 feet (10.36 meters), and it registered 32 feet (9.75 meters) in the June flooding.

The Corps of Engineers doesn't expect major problems or threats to cities with this week's latest flooding — provided all the temporary repairs that have been made to levees since the spring hold up. But communities along the river are bracing for more problems in an exceptionally wet year.

Residents of Dakota Dunes, South Dakota, have been encouraged to evacuate their homes as a precaution because the river is already threatening that city. The river will peak there on Tuesday.

"When people call me and ask me what to do, I tell them, 'Hey I relocated my family,'" Dakota Dunes Community Improvement District Manager Jeff Dooley told the Sioux City Journal. "If you wait until you know for sure, it's too late."

Downstream, residents of Hamburg, Iowa, will be keeping a close eye on the repaired levees around their town that was inundated in the spring to be sure the patches will hold up. Completely repairing the levees damaged in the spring is likely to take several years and cost more than \$1 billion.

"Anybody I talk to I tell them to be prepared," said Mike Crecelius, the emergency manager in the southwest Iowa county that's home to Hamburg. "There's been no relief at all this year."

In March, massive flooding caused more than \$3 billion in damage in Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. In June, flooding returned and inundated many of the same places because most damaged levees remained broken.

The river will remain high throughout the fall because the Corps of Engineers plans to continue releasing large amounts of water into the river to clear out space in the reservoirs ahead of winter.

The amount of water flowing into the lower Missouri was temporarily cut to 60,000 cubic feet (1699 cubic meters) per second this weekend, but it will increase to 80,000 cubic feet (2265.6 cubic meters) per second later this week.

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South Dakota Volleyball Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - Here is the South Dakota Media volleyball poll for the week of Sept. 16, 2019. Teams are listed with first place votes in parenthesis, record, points and previous ranking.<

Class AA

1. Watertown (10) 8-1 80 t1
2. O'Gorman (6) 8-1 75 t1
3. S.F. Washington (2) 6-2 53 3
4. Aberdeen Central 5-0 39 4
5. Brandon Valley 7-2 21 5

Receiving Votes: R.C. Stevens (6-3) 2

Class A

1. S.F. Christian (14) 7-6 81 1
2. Miller (4) 4-0 74 2
3. Dakota Valley 7-1 56 4
4. McCook Central-Montrose 9-2 36 5
5. Hill City 8-0 9 RV

Receiving Votes: Parker (5-2) 7, Elk Point-Jefferson (4-1) 5, Groton (5-0) 1, Wagner (5-2) 1

Class B

1. Northwestern (18) 10-0 90 1
2. Faulkton Area 9-1 59 3
3. Chester Area 5-2 49 4
4. Burke 9-1 36 RV
5. Warner 4-5 12 2

Receiving Votes: Kadoka Area (8-0) 11, Faith (7-2) 10, Ipswich (8-1) 3

South Dakota Prep Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - The South Dakota Prep Media football polls for the week of Sept. 16 are listed below, ranking the top-five teams in each class. First-place votes received are indicated in parentheses.<

Class 11AAA

1. Brandon Valley (15) 2-1 117 2
2. SF O'Gorman (7) 2-1 106 3
3. SF Roosevelt 2-1 77 1
4. Harrisburg (5) 3-0 68 4
5. SF Lincoln 2-1 31 RV

Receiving votes: Sioux Falls Washington 4, Rapid City Stevens 2

Class 11AA

1. Pierre (27) 3-0 135 1
2. Brookings 3-0 108 2
3. Mitchell 2-1 68 4
4. Huron 2-1 54 5
5. Yankton 1-2 33 3

Receiving votes: Sturgis 7.

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Class 11A

1. Tea Area (27) 3-0 135 1
 2. Dell Rapids 3-0 94 5
 3. Dakota Valley 2-1 77 4
 4. Madison 2-1 65 2
 5. SF Christian 2-1 17 3
- Receiving votes: Tri-Valley 16, Canton 1.

Class 11B

1. Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan (24) 4-0 132 1
 2. Winner (3) 4-0 110 2
 3. Webster Area 3-0 56 4
 4. Mount Vernon/Plankinton 2-1 53 3
 5. St. Thomas More 3-1 43 5
- Receiving votes: McCook Central-Montrose 11.

Class 9AA

1. Bon Homme (24) 3-0 131 1
 2. Viborg-Hurley (3) 3-0 111 2
 3. Parker 3-0 72 4
 4. Deuel 3-0 55 5
 5. Baltic 2-1 31 3
- Receiving votes: Lemmon-McIntosh 5.

Class 9A

1. Sully Buttes (15) 4-0 120 1
 2. Canistota-Freeman (10) 4-0 116 2
 3. Britton-Hecla (2) 3-0 85 3
 4. Kimball-White Lake 3-0 40 5
 5. Gregory 4-0 34 RV
- Receiving votes: Howard 8, Timber Lake 2.

Class 9B

1. Colman-Egan (25) 4-0 133 1
 2. Dell Rapids St. Mary (2) 4-0 110 2
 3. Faulkton Area 2-1 61 5
 4. Wolsey-Wessington 2-2 44 3
 5. Alcester-Hudson 3-1 33 4
- Receiving votes: Harding County 12, Herreid-Selby Area 12.

Federal settlements in South Dakota wildfire exceed \$700K

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Landowners in South Dakota have received over \$700,000 in a lawsuit accusing a federal agency of burning their properties in an April 2013 prescribed fire that blazed out of control, destroying more than 10,000 acres.

The U.S. Forest Service aimed to eliminate grass, weeds and dead vegetation from about 200 acres (80 hectares) of federally owned land on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in the state's northwest. But court documents show the fire blew out of its intended area and destroyed more than 7,000 acres (2,800 hectares) of private land and over 3,000 acres (1,200 hectares) of federal land, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Affected landowners filed several lawsuits in 2015 that were eventually consolidated into one. The lawsuit alleges the government failed to execute the fire properly and made mistakes in its preparations.

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The latest settlement approved in August awarded \$45,000 to Duane and Dawn Harris and Albert Keller. Added to six other settlements that have been agreed since June, the awards so far total \$721,000.

The government has not admitted fault in any of the seven settlement agreements.

A motion filed last week by the government awaits a judge's consideration to dismiss claims by the Grand River Cooperative Grazing Association. The government's motion says the association's grazing agreement with the U.S. Forest Service doesn't hold the government responsible for losses, expenses or liability arising from any accident causing injuries or property damage.

A settlement conference is planned for Nov. 15 to address the remaining cases, though the order does not say which plaintiffs will participate in the conference.

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

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press undefined

Rapid City Journal, Sept. 13

Brood counts blow holes in predator bounty rationale

Initial results from the state's Nest Predator Bounty Program appear less than promising.

The state spent nearly \$1 million to distribute 16,000 live traps and an additional \$500,000 on bounties to incentivize the killing of 54,000 pheasant predators — foxes, skunks, raccoons and others. Mostly raccoons. The state rewarded \$10 for each of the first 50,000 tails submitted.

The outcome for pheasants? You decide.

South Dakota's annual pheasant brood survey showed a 17% decrease in total pheasants from last year, due mainly to an abundance of snow and rain.

In Minnesota, which sponsored no bounty but endured the same snow and rain, pheasant numbers also declined 17% from 2018.

In North Dakota, which sponsored no bounty but is recovering from a serious drought that devastated broods, pheasant numbers increased 10 percent.

In South Dakota, only three of 13 local areas saw increased pheasant numbers over last year. Four areas saw minor declines and seven had double-digit drop-offs.

So what did \$1.5 million buy? Apparently, nothing but a lot of tails, which is what wildlife experts predicted. Predators like foxes, skunks and raccoons have an innate ability to replenish their numbers against all but the most Herculean and expensive human interventions.

The three biggest factors affecting pheasant numbers are habitat, habitat and habitat, followed by weather and more weather.

South Dakota habitat trends demonstrate the connection. Over the past 20 years statewide nesting habitat available to pheasants has declined by roughly half. Meanwhile, total pheasant numbers statewide have fallen to a third of what they were a decade ago.

It's likely impossible to scientifically judge the effectiveness of Gov. Kristi Noem's predator control experiment. The state itself predicted as much: "In my opinion it's going to be very difficult to ascertain the benefit of the program," state wildlife damage specialist Keith Fisk said in March.

A multitude of variables can affect pheasant numbers over such broad areas. The means of collecting data are crude at best. The timeframe necessary to fully assess results complicates matters.

You can bet, however, that had results from the latest pheasant counts been positive, they would have been used to justify the expense. That didn't happen.

The Game Fish & Parks Commission ramrodded approval of Noem's predator control program last spring despite the questions raised about its effectiveness. The rationale quickly changed from increasing pheasant numbers to encouraging families to get outdoors.

Here again, program results raise concerns.

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Trappers in urban Minnehaha County submitted the greatest number of tails out of South Dakota's 66 counties, followed by Beadle, Yankton, Turner and Grant counties. A glance at the GF&P predator control website confirms the program largely benefited East River. Meanwhile, Pennington, Custer, Lawrence and Meade counties altogether accounted for just 1.3 percent of submitted tails.

If the intent is to get kids and families outdoors, GF&P should entertain something that benefits both halves of the state.

It's unclear whether Noem and GF&P will push for a bounty program next year. If they do, they will not need legislative approval because of recent administrative rule changes.

Based on program results, it would seem a bad idea to throw good money after bad. Unless further study demonstrates a benefit to pheasant numbers from the Nest Predator Bounty Program, the money would be better spent on habitat.

The statewide pheasant season begins Oct. 19 and runs through Jan. 5. The three-day resident only season is Oct. 12-14. The limit is three rooster pheasants per day with a possession limit of 15.

Good luck.

Madison Daily Leader, Sept. 12

Latest flood proves more needs to be done

Madison and the surrounding area is battling another flood, an occurrence that seems to be more frequent.

Whether it's an anomaly, a global warming phenomenon or some other trend, we believe more needs to be done to minimize risk to people and to reduce risk of damage to property.

To be clear, a lot has been done in recent decades to improve the storm water drainage system. Creek bridges have been replaced, shorelines along both creeks and lakes have been stabilized with rock, and houses and businesses along creeks have been purchased and either moved or torn down.

While some observers think this flood event was caused by a rare wet summer followed by rare September deluge, we also thought the same thing about flooding across Highway 81 eighteen miles north of Madison in the twin lakes area. The high water there has have not subsided, but actually risen steadily over recent decades, causing that roadway to be raised substantially (more than 10 feet) twice.

So what more can be done in Lake County?

We believe further mitigation would include several things, but the whole watershed needs to be considered. Water flowing through Madison comes essentially from the entire northwest part of our county, through Lake Herman and other creeks, then through the city to Lake Madison, Round Lake and Brant Lake. We probably need to make improvements at all places in the watershed.

Flood buyout properties might be a potential solution. While the green spaces have been partially effective in gathering rainwater, we think many of those properties can be engineered to help even more. If they were shaped into detention ponds, the properties could perhaps reduce the flow through the city at peak times.

More bridges in Madison are scheduled to be replaced, which would prevent the blockage that often causes the worst problems. And more buildings may need to be removed from the flood plain.

We are grateful for the extraordinary response of all those who are helping those in need. We'd like to reduce the number of times those responders are needed in the future.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, Sept. 12

Noem draws the line on hemp

It's only September, but we already have a major showdown lined up for this winter's South Dakota legislative session.

The question is, why?

Why has Gov. Kristi Noem already announced that she intends to shoot down any industrial hemp legislation that makes it to her desk next session?

Frankly, it's a big gamble on her part.

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Noem successfully thwarted the passage of hemp legislation last session after a lot of support was displayed in Pierre for this potential new cash crop. The governor vetoed the bill that came from lawmakers, who then fell just short of overriding her veto.

Supporters of industrial hemp immediately set a goal of developing a new package for the 2020 session. There was also a summer study legislative group formed that is examining the issue to determine the best way forward. One member of the group noted that Noem recently sent 315 questions to them to be answered.

But now, the governor has already given HER answer. In a Wall Street Journal op-ed piece this week, she declared she will veto any hemp measure.

This sets up what will likely be one of the most intensely watched and fiercely waged legislative battles this winter.

It also creates an inexplicable war of political wills.

Industrial hemp was illegal in this country for decades after it was caught up in the anti-marijuana crusades of the 1930s. Hemp's biggest crime is that it looks like the marijuana that is consumed to get high; hemp lacks enough tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) for that to happen.

But industrial hemp finally got the green light for production in the 2018 Farm Bill — which Noem, then a representative in Congress, supported.

Now, as governor, she wants nothing to do with hemp because, she asserts, it could compromise law enforcement's fight against marijuana. She pointed to problems in telling hemp apart from pot, as well as determining the THC levels in suspect substances. In fact, she and her office are tying hemp and marijuana together at most every opportunity, which reflects the unfortunate mindset that handcuffed hemp production in this country for decades — and which, while in Congress, she voted to undo.

Meanwhile, 47 states have now embraced industrial hemp production, either through full-scale cultivation or limited testing. South Dakota, Montana and Idaho are the only holdouts. Which means they are behind the curve already in hemp development

Are there legitimate concerns? Probably.

But should they be deal breakers?

Forty-seven states don't think so. In all likelihood, they know there are some gray areas of overlap, but those issues can be dealt with as those states work to develop a crop that could boost their agricultural economies and help this nation catch up with other hemp-growing countries, who are years ahead of us already.

Noem argues that hemp isn't an economic "savior" for farmers, but even pro-hemp advocates aren't saying it is. Instead, it's a new possibility for revenue and for diversification at a time when the farming economy could really use a boost.

But again, the real intrigue may be why the governor has picked this issue to flex her political muscle.

She was able to scuttle the hemp drive last winter when it looked like the issue was going to roll through the statehouse, but the executive resistance came with some odd mechanics. In particular, there was a vote taken in the Senate which lawmakers supporting hemp thought they had won handily, only to learn that the motion had failed because it had been discreetly reclassified as revenue legislation that required a two-thirds super-majority to pass. Lesson learned, these lawmakers won't let their guard down again this winter on such housekeeping matters.

So, Noem is picking a fight with a large majority of lawmakers who are regrouping and recruiting after last winter's tough legislative loss to push the issue home.

And she's picking it awfully early, even while an industrial hemp task force is still researching the matter.

House Majority Leader Lee Qualm, a Republican from Platte who is a staunch supporter of hemp, responded to Noem's Journal declaration by saying he was "surprised she drew the line in the sand this early on."

But he's not backing down. "I don't think we should wait any longer," he said. "I think we need to get this on the books."

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Noem's early opposition does indeed draw a line, but make no mistake, hemp advocates are going to be better prepared for the next round.

This will be a fascinating war to watch, with a lot at stake.

1 of 6 bridges over James River open in Yankton County

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Only one of six bridges across the James River in Yankton County is open because of flooding in the area.

County emergency manager Paul Scherschligt says only the Highway 50 bridge remains open to traffic Monday. The river rose to its highest level in recorded history this past weekend and is now beginning to fall.

Yankton County chairman Dan Klimisch tells the Press and Dakotan he's worried about the condition of the county's four bridges over the James River because they weren't in very good shape to begin with and they may have sustained significant damage. The other two are state crossings.

He says there are probably 50 homes that are surrounded by water or impacted by flooding that resulted from heavy rain in the Mitchell area last week.

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Arrest made in death of Yankton woman

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Sheriff's officials say they've made an arrest in the death of a Yankton woman.

The 21-year-old Yankton man was arrested Saturday in the death of 61-year-old Deborah Lynn Schock. Family members found her body in a mobile home in rural Yankton County on Sept. 7. Authorities say she had been dead for several days and that her death was suspicious.

The Press and Dakotan says the suspect is in the Yankton County Jail on \$1 million bond.

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Teen killed, man injured in crash near Aberdeen

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — One person has died and another has been injured in a two-vehicle crash west of Aberdeen.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol a 17-year-old boy was killed when he pulled onto Highway 12 in front of a pickup truck in heavy fog, causing a collision.

The teen had to be extricated from his car and died later as a result of his injuries. The 58-year-old pickup driver suffered serious, but non-life threatening injuries.

The Highway Patrol continues to investigate the crash.

One person dead in rollover crash near Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — One person has died in a rollover crash west of Sioux Falls.

Authorities say the single-vehicle crash happened about 3:30 p.m. Sunday. The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office says the driver, the lone occupant, was thrown from the vehicle and was pronounced dead at the scene.

The victim has not been identified.

Purdue Pharma begins Chapter 11 bankruptcy journey

By TOM MURPHY and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Purdue Pharma gets its day in court Tuesday after the OxyContin maker filed for bankruptcy and negotiated a potential multi-billion dollar settlement to resolve thousands of lawsuits.

An initial hearing will be held in federal court in White Plains, New York, for the Chapter 11 bankruptcy

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case. Purdue filed for bankruptcy protection late Sunday, the first step in a plan it says would provide \$10 billion to \$12 billion to help reimburse state and local governments and clean up the damage done by powerful prescription painkillers and illegal opioids, including heroin.

These drugs have been blamed for more than 400,000 deaths in the U.S. in the past two decades.

Two dozen states have signed on to the settlement plan along with key lawyers who represent many of the 2,000-plus local governments suing Stamford, Connecticut-based Purdue Pharma. But other states have come out strongly against it.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THIS INITIAL COURT APPEARANCE?

These generally focus on housekeeping and ensuring that the company can keep paying the bills as an ongoing operation during its Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

According to the court docket, Judge Robert Drain will hear motions on authorizing payments of wages to employees, critical vendors, utilities and other key parties.

Fordham Law Professor Richard Squire said Drain will likely hear from lawyers objecting to the filing and describing it as a "bad faith claim." Drain may table those arguments for another day.

WHAT KEY ISSUES WILL THE JUDGE DECIDE?

Drain will eventually decide whether to approve or reject the settlement or seek modifications.

This is hardly a standard bankruptcy case. Because so many states objected to the settlement, it could complicate the process. Members of the Sackler family, which owns Purdue, are still trying to get more states to sign on.

Drain will preside over whether the suits against the Sacklers in state courts will be able to move forward, and what will happen to the company itself. Under the tentative settlement deal, it would continue to operate, but with profits used to pay for the settlement. Another alternative? Drain could order the company to be sold.

A single large settlement often is seen as the best way to resolve cases like these, bankruptcy attorney Jerry Reisman said. He noted that it would essentially put money in a giant pot to be divided fairly, and it would cut the costs of bringing separate cases through different courts.

"Everybody shares in some orderly manner," he said.

Without a big settlement, all the claimants could wind up in a race to litigate in the other courts and get a judgment before the company runs out of money.

WHO IS JUDGE DRAIN?

Drain is a former bankruptcy attorney with a Columbia University law degree. He serves as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Southern District of New York.

He has presided over some high-profile Chapter 11 cases involving companies like Hostess Brands and Sears. In the latter, Drain earlier this year gave hedge fund mogul Eddie Lampert a second chance to revive the iconic brand and save 45,000 jobs.

HOW LONG WILL THE BANKRUPTCY PROCESS TAKE?

A complicated case like this could take up to a year but legal experts believe the parties involved want a fast settlement.

The longer a company remains in bankruptcy, the more is spent attorney fees and other costs. But a modification to the initial settlement to satisfy more cases could delay the case.

Purdue has said that finalizing the settlement could take at least six months.

Murphy reported from Indianapolis.

AP Reporter Geoff Mulvihill in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, contributed to this report.

House Judiciary Committee to hold 1st impeachment hearing

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As they investigate President Donald Trump, Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee will hold their first official hearing in what they are calling an impeachment investigation.

Corey Lewandowski, Trump's outspoken former campaign manager, is scheduled to appear Tuesday to discuss the report by former special counsel Robert Mueller.

But it's unlikely that Democrats will get much new information. A devoted friend and supporter of the Republican president, Lewandowski isn't expected to elaborate much beyond what he told Mueller's investigators last year. Mueller himself testified this summer, with no bombshells. Two other witnesses who were subpoenaed alongside Lewandowski — former White House aides Rick Dearborn and Rob Porter — won't show up at all, on orders from the White House.

The hearing underscores what has been a central dilemma for House Democrats all year — they have promised to investigate Trump, aggressively, and many of their base supporters want them to move quickly to try to remove him from office. But the White House has blocked their oversight requests at most every turn, declining to provide new documents or allow former aides to testify. The Republican Senate is certain to rebuff any House efforts to bring charges against the president. And moderate Democrats in their own caucus have expressed nervousness that the impeachment push could crowd out their other accomplishments.

Still, the Judiciary panel is moving ahead, approving rules for impeachment hearings last week. Among those guidelines is allowing staff to question witnesses, as will happen for the first time with Lewandowski.

Lewandowski was a central figure in Mueller's report, which said Trump could not be exonerated on obstruction of justice charges. Mueller's investigators detailed two episodes in which Trump asked Lewandowski to direct then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions to limit Mueller's investigation. Trump said that if Sessions would not meet with Lewandowski, then Lewandowski should tell Sessions he was fired.

Lewandowski never delivered the message but asked Dearborn, a former Sessions aide, to do it. Dearborn said he was uncomfortable with the request and declined to deliver it, according to the report.

Porter, a former staff secretary in the White House, took frequent notes during his time there that were detailed throughout the report. He resigned last year after public allegations of domestic violence by his two ex-wives.

In letters to the committee on Monday, the White House said that Dearborn and Porter were "absolutely immune" from testifying. White House counsel Pat Cipollone wrote that the Justice Department had advised, and Trump had directed, them not to attend "because of the constitutional immunity that protects senior advisers to the president from compelled congressional testimony."

In a separate letter, Cipollone said that Lewandowski, who never worked in the White House, should not reveal private conversations with Trump beyond what is in Mueller's report. He wrote that his conversations with Trump "are protected from disclosure by long-settled principles protecting executive branch confidentiality interests."

Democrats say the White House's rationale isn't legally sound. In a statement, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler said the White House's position is "a shocking and dangerous assertion of executive privilege and absolute immunity."

He added: "The President would have us believe that he can willfully engage in criminal activity and prevent witnesses from testifying before Congress — even if they did not actually work for him or his administration."

In an effort to try and pry documents and testimony from the Trump administration, the Judiciary panel has filed two lawsuits — one against former White House counsel Donald McGahn, who also defied a subpoena earlier this year on Trump's orders. But the lawsuits could take months to resolve and Nadler has said he wants to make a decision by the end of the year on whether to recommend articles of impeachment against Trump.

Nadler, D-N.Y., made his own views clear in an interview Monday with a New York radio station, saying

that in his personal opinion "impeachment is imperative" in order to "vindicate the Constitution."

But he also acknowledged that it won't be easy, echoing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi by saying they will have to have greater consensus than they do now in order to vote on impeachment. He said the hearings will decide whether American people get there or not.

"No. 1, you don't want to tear the country apart," if the public sentiment isn't there, Nadler said. "No. 2, you need 218 votes on the House floor."

One of the main reasons that the votes aren't there yet is because moderates in the caucus — many of whom are freshmen who handed Democrats the majority in the 2018 election — are worried it will distract from other accomplishments. A group of those freshmen met with Nadler last week to express concerns.

"There's far too much work left to be done and we are in danger of losing the trust of the American people if we choose partisan warfare over improving the lives of hardworking families," wrote New York Rep. Max Rose, a Democratic freshman, in a Friday op-ed in the Staten Island Advance newspaper.

Taliban kill 24 at Afghan president's rally; Ghani unhurt

By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A Taliban suicide bomber on a motorcycle targeted a campaign rally by President Ashraf Ghani in northern Afghanistan on Tuesday, killing at least 24 people and wounding 31. Ghani was present at the venue but was unharmed, according to his campaign chief.

Just hours later, an explosion struck near the U.S. Embassy in Kabul but details on that blast were not immediately known. The Taliban claimed both attacks.

The violence comes as Afghanistan faces presidential elections on Sept. 28 — a vote the Taliban vehemently oppose. The insurgent group has warned Afghans not to vote in the election, and said their fighters would target election campaigns as well as polling stations.

In Tuesday's attack in northern Parwan province, the bomber rammed his motorcycle packed with explosives into the entrance of the venue where Ghani was campaigning on the outskirts of the city of Charakar.

There were many women and children among the casualties, said Dr. Qasim Sangin, a local official.

Wahida Shahkar, spokeswoman for Parwan's governor, said the rally had just begun when the explosion occurred.

Local television footage of the attack showed twisted wreckage and charred remains of military and police vehicles that were apparently positioned near where the powerful blast

Firdaus Faramarz, spokesman for the Kabul police chief, said there was no immediate information about any casualties in the Kabul blast, which took place near Massood Square, a deeply congested intersection in the center of Kabul. NATO and U.S. compounds are located nearby as are several Afghan government ministries.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, released a statement to the media saying Taliban suicide bombers were behind both attacks.

In Parwan, Mujahid said the bomber targeted presidential guards who were protecting Ghani and the rally, along with other members of the security forces. It wasn't immediately known if any of Ghani's guards were among the casualties.

Mujahid claimed the suicide bomber in Kabul targeted an Afghan army base.

Campaigning for the Afghan elections resumed last week after President Donald Trump declared that the U.S.-Taliban talks which have been going on for months in the Gulf Arab state of Qatar are over.

Most presidential candidates had suspended their campaigns while negotiations were taking place and as the U.S. peace envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad, said a deal was all but signed.

Trump's tweets at the beginning of September declaring the deal and the talks were "dead" launched the war-battered nation on an election campaign.

Ghani, who had been sidelined during much of the talks between Khalilzad and the Taliban, resumed campaigning immediately and had been steadfast in his demand that presidential polls should take place.

Khalilzad and some of Ghani's rivals, however had talked of establishing an interim administration to run

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the country while a peace deal was implemented.

In the aftermath of the scrapped talks, Afghans braced for what many expected to be an increase in violence. The Taliban have refused to discuss a cease-fire and have stepped up attacks across Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Afghan forces, backed by their U.S. allies, have intensified raids on militant hideouts in recent weeks.

The Taliban have also refused to meet with representatives of Ghani's government for talks but it was two attacks in Kabul in recent weeks that caused Trump to halt the negotiations with the Taliban, including one that killed two NATO soldiers, one of whom was an American. Another U.S. soldier died in combat in Afghanistan on Monday.

Monday's death was the 17th U.S. combat death in Afghanistan this year, according to the Pentagon's count. There also have been three non-combat deaths this year. More than 2,400 Americans have died in the nearly 18-year war.

Even as the bombs went off in Afghanistan, the Taliban were on the move looking for support.

On Tuesday, the Afghan Taliban were in Iran visiting officials in Tehran, while last week they were in the Russian capital holding consultations with Zamir Kabulov, President Vladimir Putin's envoy for Afghanistan.

Iran's semi-official Borna news agency on Tuesday quoted spokesman of the foreign ministry there, Abbas Mousavi, as saying the Afghan delegation discussed "the latest" developments with Iranian officials.

Associated Press writers Kathy Gannon in Islamabad and Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER RULES OUT TALKS WITH AMERICA

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei says that "there will be no talks with the U.S. at any level" — ending speculation about a possible U.S.-Iran meeting at the U.N. later this month.

2. ISRAELIS VOTE IN REPEAT ELECTION CENTERED ON NETANYAHU

Israelis will decide whether the longtime prime minister stays in power despite a looming indictment on corruption charges.

3. HOUSE PANEL TO HOLD FIRST IMPEACHMENT HEARING

Corey Lewandowski, Trump's outspoken former campaign manager, is scheduled to appear before the House Judiciary Committee to discuss former special counsel Robert Mueller's report.

4. DEADLY BOMBING AT AFGHAN LEADER'S CAMPAIGN RALLY

A suicide bomber attacks the entrance to a rally of President Ashraf Ghani in a northern province, killing at least 24 people. An aide says Ghani was present but unharmed.

5. PURDUE PHARMA GETS ITS DAY IN COURT

The OxyContin maker filed for bankruptcy and negotiated a potential multi-billion dollar settlement to resolve thousands of lawsuits.

6. WHERE TRUMP IS HEADED

The president is making a rare visit to California, a Democratic stronghold where he is expected to rake in millions of fundraising dollars.

7. HOW NATURE CAN HEAL

A dedicated band of Jamaicans are nurturing fresh coral pieces on undersea clotheslines and then tying them to reefs where they regenerate, AP reports.

8. FAKE VAPE GEAR SELLS ON LA STREETS

The packaging and hardware to produce authentic-looking copies of popular name brands of marijuana vape are on sale in downtown Los Angeles, AP learns.

9. NEW KAVANAUGH ALLEGATION UNLIKELY TO PROMPT IMPEACHMENT

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is standing by Brett Kavanaugh as some Democrats seize on a new allegation of sexual impropriety against the Supreme Court justice.

10. WHO PUT ON A SHOW IN METLIFE RETURN

Odell Beckham Jr. had an 89-yard touchdown catch in his return to New York and Baker Mayfield and the Browns did just enough to beat the banged-up Jets 23-3.

Israelis vote in repeat election centered on PM Netanyahu

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israelis vote Tuesday in an unprecedented repeat election that will decide whether longtime Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stays in power despite a looming indictment on corruption charges.

Netanyahu, the longest serving leader in Israeli history, is seeking a fourth consecutive term in office, and fifth overall. But he faces a stiff challenge from retired military chief Benny Gantz, whose centrist Blue and White party is running even with Netanyahu's Likud. Both parties could struggle to form a majority coalition with smaller allies, though, forcing them into a potential unity government.

Netanyahu has tried to portray himself as a seasoned statesman who is uniquely qualified to lead the country through challenging times. Gantz has tried to paint Netanyahu as divisive and scandal-plagued, offering himself as a calming influence and an honest alternative.

Tuesday's vote marks their second showdown of the year after drawing even in the previous election in April.

Netanyahu appeared poised to remain in office at the time, with his traditional allies of nationalist and ultra-religious Jewish parties controlling a parliamentary majority.

But Avigdor Lieberman, his mercurial ally-turned-rival, refused to join the new coalition, citing excessive influence it granted the ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties. Without a parliamentary majority, Netanyahu dissolved parliament and called a new election.

Opinion polls have forecast similar results this time around, potentially putting Lieberman once again in the role of kingmaker.

After voting Tuesday, Lieberman reiterated his promise to force a unity government between Likud and Blue and White. He vowed there won't be a third round of elections and said the parties will have to deal with the "constellation" that emerges from this vote.

The performance by the Soviet-born politician's Yisrael Beitenu party is just one of the factors that could determine Netanyahu's future. Several small parties are fighting to squeak past the minimum 3.25% threshold for entering parliament. The performances of these parties could make or break Netanyahu's ability to form a coalition.

The longtime Israeli leader is desperate to secure a narrow 61-seat majority in parliament with his hard-line religious and nationalist allies who are expected to approve legislation that would grant Netanyahu immunity from prosecution.

Israel's attorney general has recommended pressing criminal charges against Netanyahu in three separate corruption cases, pending a long delayed pre-trial hearing scheduled next month.

With his career on the line, Netanyahu has campaigned furiously and taken a late hard turn to the right in hopes of rallying his nationalist base.

He's staged a flurry of media appearances to beseech supporters to vote in large numbers to stave off the prospect of a left-wing government he says will endanger the country's security. He also has accused his opponents of conspiring with Arab politicians to "steal" the election, a message that has drawn accusations of racism and incitement.

Heavier turnout by Arab voters, many of whom stayed home in April, could hurt Netanyahu. After casting his ballot, the leader of the main Arab faction in parliament, Ayman Odeh, said Netanyahu was "obsessive" in his incitement toward Arabs. He said the answer was for that his constituents "must be first-class voters on the way to becoming first-class citizens."

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Voter turnout has emerged as a key element of this election day, which is a national holiday aimed at encouraging participation. In April's election, turnout was about 69%, slightly below the 72% figure in the previous election in 2015.

As of 10 a.m., Israel's central election committee said some 15% of Israelis had already cast their ballots. It marked more than a 2% increase over the figure at the same time in April.

Aron Shaviv, who managed Netanyahu's 2015 re-election campaign, said Netanyahu believed "there's no such thing as bad coverage." But he thought his former boss may be making a mistake by appealing so heavily to hard-liners and giving up on moderate voters.

"He's turned people off, playing the right-left polarization as far as he possibly can," he said.

A centerpiece of his eleventh-hour agenda has been the pledge to extend Israeli sovereignty over parts of the West Bank and to annex all the Jewish settlements there, something Netanyahu has refrained from doing during his decade-plus in power because of the far-reaching diplomatic repercussions.

His proposal sparked a cascade of international condemnation, including from Europe and Saudi Arabia, an influential Arab country that has quiet, unofficial ties with Israel. The U.S., however, had a muted reaction, suggesting Netanyahu coordinated his plan with the Americans ahead of time.

Netanyahu has also been flaunting his close ties to President Donald Trump, and the prospect of a defense pact between their countries shortly after the election, as part of his frantic push get out the vote and dictate the election's agenda on his terms.

Trump chimed in his prediction, telling reporters at the White House on Monday that it "will be a very interesting outcome. It's gonna be close."

After casting his ballot in Jerusalem, Netanyahu said he could confirm the vote would be "very close."

Voting in his hometown of Rosh Haayin in central Israel, Gantz urged all Israelis to hope. "We will bring hope, we will bring change, without corruption, without extremism," he said.

In his attacks on Arabs, Netanyahu has made unfounded claims of fraud in Arab voting areas and unsuccessfully pushed for legislation to place cameras in polling stations on election day.

He also claimed to have located a previously unknown Iranian nuclear weapons facility and said another war against Gaza militants is probably inevitable. In some of his TV interviews, the typically reserved Netanyahu has raised his voice and gestured wildly as he warned of his imminent demise.

Yohanan Plesner, president of the non-partisan Israel Democracy Institute think tank and a former lawmaker, said he didn't think it reflected genuine panic.

"I think you're observing Israel's most seasoned and competent politician who knows exactly how to fire up his base and is now using all his tools at his disposal in order to ensure victory," he said.

Polling stations opened at 7 a.m. Tuesday with exit polls expected at the end of the voting day at 10 p.m. Official results are projected to come in overnight.

That's when the real jockeying may get under way, with attention shifting to President Reuven Rivlin who is responsible for choosing a candidate for prime minister. He is supposed to select the leader who he believes has the best chance of putting together a stable coalition. The honor usually goes to the head of the largest party, but not necessarily. Just as important is the number of lawmakers outside his own party who recommend him to the president.

Rivlin's selection will then have up to six weeks to form a coalition. If he fails, the president can appoint an alternative candidate and give him up to four weeks for the task.

In an overnight video, Rivlin said he will do everything in his power to "get an elected government in Israel as soon as possible and to avoid another election campaign.

Follow Heller at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap

Protest likely to greet Trump fundraising trip in California

By BRIAN SLODYSKO and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

RIO RANCHO, N.M. (AP) — President Donald Trump is making a rare visit to California, a Democratic stronghold where he is expected to rake in millions of dollars during a series of fundraisers for his reelection effort that are almost certain to be met with jeering protests.

Trump has routinely mocked California over its liberal culture, policies and politics. His visit Tuesday and Wednesday signals that despite the state's decidedly leftward swing in recent years there are still plenty of wealthy Republicans who support him.

"There's not been a president in living history that is as unpopular in the state of California as Trump," said Mike Madrid, a GOP political consultant who is an outspoken Trump critic. "But our money spends the same as everyone else's."

Trump continues to rake in gobs of cash more than a year out from the November 2020 contest, with his campaign and the Republican National Committee pulling in more than \$210 million since the start of 2019, Federal Election Commission records show. That's more than all the current Democrats seeking to replace him raised combined during that period.

The California events, which will be spread across two days in the Bay Area, Los Angeles and San Diego, are expected to bring in an additional \$15 million, according to a Republican official familiar with the plans who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal matters.

California was an incubator for the modern conservative movement that swept the state's former Gov. Ronald Reagan into the White House in 1980. But demographic changes and an influx of new residents have helped drastically rework the political contours of the country's most populated state, with the former GOP stronghold of Orange County now home to more registered Democrats than Republicans. For Republicans, who have been resigned to political irrelevance at the state level, a donation to Trump can amount to its own form of protest.

"By showing up to a fundraiser deep in the belly of the beast, one is saying: 'I don't care what the liberal politicians are saying and I want to show my support for him publicly,'" said California's Republican National Committeewoman Harmeet Dhillon, who is an ardent Trump supporter. She added: "I sold \$100,000 worth of (tickets), and I could have sold another \$100,000 more."

California has long been a key fundraising hotbed for politicians of both parties, which have relied on the entertainment industry and wealthy industry heads to finance their political ambitions. But under Trump, the run-of-the-mill fundraising trip has taken on a complicating dimension due to his harsh criticism of everything from the state's immigration laws to its forest management practices, which he blamed for fatal wildfires.

Earlier this month Trump lashed out at "Will and Grace" TV star Debra Messing after she tweeted that attendees of the Trump's California fundraisers should be outed publicly.

"I have not forgotten that when it was announced that I was going to do The Apprentice, and when it then became a big hit, helping NBC's failed lineup greatly, @DebraMessing came up to me at an Upfront & profusely thanked me, even calling me "Sir." How times have changed!" Trump tweeted.

In August, he took aim at the state's massive film industry, calling Hollywood "very dangerous for our country."

"Hollywood is really terrible. You talk about racist — Hollywood is racist," he said.

That's contributed to heightened security concerns surrounding the trip.

Trump has also complained about the extent of homelessness in California. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson is expected to follow Trump to California, if one day behind him, on visits to San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego. A senior HUD official said Carson will speak on a range of issues, including increasing the supply of affordable housing and incentivizing investment in distressed communities while protecting vulnerable neighbors.

Already, the Backbone Campaign, a Washington state-based progressive group, said on Facebook that it planned to fly a large "Baby Trump" balloon in the Bay Area when Trump is scheduled to be there on

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Tuesday.

In an unusual move, Trump campaign officials — not his top donors — have been listed as sponsors of the event.

Dhillon said there were concerns that Antifa, an anti-fascist group, could stir violent protests.

“For every person coming to this event, there would probably be 10 more,” she said.

Trump began his three-day trip to the West at a rally in New Mexico, which he hopes to win next year despite losing by about 8 percentage points in 2016.

Trump referred to California a couple of times in his speech, and not in a good way.

The president noted that his administration is at odds with the state over fuel efficiency standards for automobiles. He long has made clear he wants to end California’s clout in setting mileage standards, and Monday night he said he wants heavier cars because they’re safer and cheaper, even if they are less fuel efficient.

“California wants you to do the other cars and we don’t,” Trump said. “We will end up in big litigation and I am fighting for you,” he told the crowd.

He also joked about moving part of the border wall in San Diego to where it would be more appreciated.

“I would love to take that sucker down and move it right now to New Mexico,” he said to rousing cheers.

Slodysko reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

Facing US ban, Huawei emerging as stronger tech competitor

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

SHENZHEN, China (AP) — Long before President Donald Trump threatened to cut off Huawei’s access to U.S. technology, the Chinese telecom equipment maker was pouring money into research that reduces its need for American suppliers.

Huawei’s founder says instead of crippling the company, the export curbs are making it a tougher competitor by forcing managers to focus resources on their most important products.

Little-known to Americans, Huawei Technologies Ltd. is the No. 2 smartphone brand worldwide and the biggest maker of switching gear at the heart of phone networks. Its equipment is used by 45 of the 50 biggest global phone carriers.

Huawei is a pioneer in the emerging field of next-generation, or 5G, telecoms. It promises not just faster internet but support for self-driving cars and other futuristic applications. That fuels Western security concerns and makes 5G politically sensitive. The U.S. claims the company might aid Chinese spying, though Huawei denies that and American officials have provided no evidence.

Huawei needs some American innovations, especially Google services used on Android phones, but industry experts say the company is increasingly self-sufficient after spending 485 billion yuan (\$65 billion) on research and development over the past decade.

“They have a strategy to become completely independent from U.S. technology. And in many areas they have become independent,” said Bengt Nordstrom of North Stream, a research firm in Stockholm.

Ren Zhengfei, who founded the company in 1987, acknowledged in an interview that phone sales will suffer if access to technology, including Google services for smartphones, is disrupted by the addition of Huawei to a U.S. Commerce Department “entity list” that requires it to get government permission to buy American technology. Phone sales could be \$20 to \$30 billion less than forecast over the next two years, Ren and other executives said, but the company will survive.

“When the entity list came out, they hoped Huawei would die,” Ren said. “Not only did Huawei not die, it is doing even better.”

The company was added to the entity list on May 16 but already has been granted two 90-day extensions after American suppliers of processor chips and other technology warned they stand to lose billions. Intel Corp. and other vendors that industry analysts say were paid a total of some \$12 billion last year by

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Huawei have asked the Trump administration for permission to continue sales.

The biggest potential American blow to Huawei would be the loss of Google services that are standard features on Android-based phones. Huawei could use Android, which is open-source, but would lose Google's music, maps and other applications, making it harder to compete with Samsung, the No. 1 smartphone brand.

"Nobody is going to spend money to buy a premium Huawei phone if it doesn't have maps, YouTube, Google Play," said Samm Sacks, an expert in Chinese digital policy at the New America think tank.

Ren said he wants to keep using Android and working with American suppliers. But as a fallback, the company unveiled its HarmonyOS operating system in August and said Android phones can be switched to the new system in days if necessary.

Huawei, with \$107 billion in 2018 sales, spent 100 billion yuan (\$15 billion) on research and development last year, more than Apple or Microsoft. It has 76,000 engineers and other researchers at its sprawling, leafy headquarters campus in southern China and in Silicon Valley, Russia, India's Bangalore and other industry centers.

Huawei is "rapidly building up strength" in R&D, Forrester analyst Charlie Dai said.

In the AP interview, Ren made a sales pitch to Washington: To ease security fears, Huawei will license 5G technology to American developers.

"I am open to the possibility of a paid transfer of 5G technology and production techniques to U.S. companies," Ren said.

That is a long shot, given Washington's pressure on phone carriers to shun Huawei. But it would increase the company's presence in 5G and generate license fees and demand for its products.

Huawei is on a global charm offensive, trying to convince European and other governments there is no truth to U.S. claims it is a security risk.

Washington has been lobbying European governments to exclude Huawei from 5G networks but Germany, France and Ireland say they have no plans to ban any supplier.

Early on, Huawei faced complaints it copied technology from industry leaders. It temporarily pulled out of the United States in 2003 after Cisco accused the company of copying software in routers.

But the company is catching up with Western developers, industry experts say. Huawei says it has collected \$1.4 billion since 2015 in license fees from other companies that use its technology.

Huawei is, along with Ericsson and Nokia, a leader in developing network equipment to support 5G. The company says it has invested \$4 billion in that since 2009, produces its own equipment and uses no U.S. technology.

"It's almost all our own components," Ren said.

Huawei also is among hundreds of companies that are creating 5G phones and other devices, making it the only competitor to straddle the two markets.

"They are very well positioned to develop 5G — at least the same level as their competitors," Nordstrom said.

5G is meant to vastly expand telecom networks to support self-driving cars, factory robots, nuclear power plants, medical equipment and other applications.

That, plus growing use of networks to link fighter planes and other military hardware, raises the potential cost of security failures and the political sensitivity of 5G.

Huawei bills its Mate 20 X smartphone, which went on sale in China in August, as the first with 5G capability.

It uses Kirin 980 and Balong 5000 chips from Huawei's HiSilicon subsidiary instead of chips from Qualcomm or Intel. HiSilicon also makes Kirin chips for lower-end phones and Kunpeng chips for servers.

Huawei launched its Ascend line of processor chips in October for artificial intelligence. The 310 for self-driving cars and the more powerful 910 are based on architecture from British chip designer Arm Ltd.

Arm said in July it might be forced to cut ties with Huawei because it does some research in the United States. That highlighted the challenge of finding suppliers with no U.S. links.

Arm said in an email it is "actively communicating" with the U.S. Commerce Department about the relationship.

As illnesses spread, fake vape gear sells on LA streets

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A short walk from police headquarters in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, a cluster of bustling shops are openly selling packaging and hardware that can be used to produce counterfeit marijuana vapes that have infected California's cannabis market.

Bootleggers eager to profit off unsuspecting consumers are mimicking popular, legal vape brands, pairing replica packaging churned out in Chinese factories with untested, possibly dangerous cannabis oil produced in the state's vast underground market.

The result: Authentic-looking vape cartridges sold by unlicensed dispensaries and delivery services, along with rogue websites.

The deceptive rip-offs on the street could be linked to an emerging public health crisis. Hundreds of people across the U.S. have been sickened, mainly by vaping cannabis oil, and six deaths have been reported. Public health officials aren't sure what's causing the lung issues, vomiting and other symptoms, but in California they say most patients reported purchasing vapes from pop-up shops or other illegal sellers that are a pipeline for counterfeit products.

The problem has gotten so pervasive that a major legal brand, Kingpen, is investing millions of dollars to redesign its packaging and product security, The Associated Press has learned.

The distributor for another major brand, Heavy Hitters, devotes a section of its website to report phony and has hired a former federal prosecutor, Priya Sopori, to help the company deal with counterfeiting.

"The danger presented by counterfeit products is just a natural result of not having the money, the resources or the people power to enforce licensing," Sopori said. "Someone is buying this packaging, buying these cartridges and filling them with whatever. It's being sold as our brand."

VAPES: A HEALTHIER OPTION?

As marijuana has gone mainstream, versions of e-cigarettes that vaporize high-inducing cannabis oil are one of the hottest-selling items, popular for those who don't want the smoke that comes from lighting up a joint. In addition to quickly delivering a high, there's a perception not supported by science that vaping is a healthier alternative to smoking.

In California's legal market, the world's largest, the state requires cannabis oil to be tested before being placed on the shelf for sale. For example, safety checks are made for the presence of 66 pesticides, mercury, lead and other heavy metals, and 21 solvents that could be used in the extraction process, when oil is pulled from cannabis.

But it can be hard for consumers to tell whether a product they're buying is made by a legitimate company. The phony packaging is convincing to the untrained eye, some even carrying bogus labels that appear to carry state-required test results. Most consumers probably wouldn't know the difference — until they vape it. The taste and THC level could be significantly different from the authentic product.

To add to the confusion, consumers can have trouble distinguishing legal dispensaries from unlicensed shops, which in Los Angeles sometimes operate in the same neighborhoods and appear indistinguishable.

"My biggest fear of counterfeiting is people are getting an unsafe product, and illegal product, and think it's coming from our company, a legal company," says Bryce Berryessa, a board member of the California Cannabis Manufacturers Association whose company, Skunk Feather, produces concentrates and vape cartridges.

In another warning of consumer risk related to vaping, an Associated Press investigation Monday found that some operators are substituting illegal synthetic marijuana in vapes marketed as natural CBD, a chemical in cannabis that doesn't cause a high and promises mainly unproven health claims.

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A SOPHISTICATED EFFORT

In storefronts along Los Angeles' Boyd Street, a narrow commercial strip that has become a de facto bazaar for all things cannabis, there are displays of fake packaging and ready-to-fill vape cartridges for sale for popular brands including Heavy Hitters and Kingpen.

At one shop, the knock-off Heavy Hitter packages were selling for \$225 for 100 empty cartridges and boxes; the Kingpen sets sell for \$200. Counterfeit packaging and vape cartridges can also be easily found with a few mouse clicks on Alibaba, China's largest online commerce company, and other websites. Once purchased, a counterfeiter would add cannabis oil that is widely available in the illicit market — one recent online ad was selling oil for \$6 a gram when purchased by the liter.

It's not clear who's behind all the different sales, and California law enforcement agencies have been overmatched by the widespread illegal market. In LA, the police department's chief focus is shuttering an estimated 200 illegal dispensaries across the city, not pursuing the source of fake vapes that might be for sale inside them, Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Josh Rubenstein said.

Thus far, the state's illegal market has been operating largely unchecked, providing a ready market for fakes.

One recent study estimated that consumers are spending roughly \$3 in the state's underground pot economy for every \$1 in the legal one. Last week, state regulators raided two unlicensed shops selling bogus marijuana vapes in Southern California, seizing nearly \$3 million in products. And in Wisconsin, authorities uncovered a 10-man operation that manufactured thousands of counterfeit vaping cartridges every day for almost two years loaded with oil containing THC, the high-producing ingredient in marijuana.

A likely link between copycat vapes and the stores that sell them was illustrated on Aug. 28. An illegal shop padlocked by police in Los Angeles had a display case prominently displaying Kingpen vapes. The company said it had no relationship with the shop, which was selling vapes at bargain-basement prices, meaning they were almost certainly fakes.

Kingpen has taken matters into its own hands, suing Chinese companies that produce fake packaging, sending scores of cease-and-desist letters to businesses that sell them and filing complaints with the state, only to see nothing change.

"There is no feedback. There is no action," said Danny Corral, Kingpen manufacturer Loudpack's vice president of sales.

Others have gone so far as to hire private investigators to locate illicit suppliers, but find dead ends. That's led many in the industry to believe the counterfeit operations are an organized, sophisticated practice.

"We have every reason to believe that the same criminal gangs and cartels that dominate the global pharmaceutical counterfeit drug trade will similarly wrestle control of California's cannabis counterfeit drug trade," says a report compiled by Mammoth Distribution and submitted to state regulators. The company distributes Heavy Hitters.

TAKING MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS

With counterfeits leaching into California's illegal vape market, the threat for licensed companies is not just millions in lost revenue. They worry their highly valued brands could be forever tainted if people get a mouthful of foul-tasting vapor, or even become sick, from a bogus product carrying their name.

To fight off rampant counterfeiting, the parent company of Kingpen is preparing to shelve millions of dollars in packaging and hardware, then spend millions more launching a redesigned product.

Loudpack is partnering with a technology company and this month plans to roll out an anti-counterfeiting program that will allow customers to verify the authenticity of Kingpen products purchased from licensed dispensaries in the state.

The rectangular paper box will be gone, replaced with a square, metal container. The company's logo remains, a rendering of a bearded, bloodshot-eyed king, but his face is partially obscured, like he is peering around a corner. There is also a unique code so consumers can validate the product.

In a statement, the company said it hopes the makeover will give consumers "peace of mind in knowing that any Kingpen product purchased legally is in fact authentic."

Talks set to carry on but no deal yet in UAW strike vs GM

By TOM KRISHER and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Talks are set to resume Tuesday after a pause overnight, but there was no end to the strike against General Motors.

The walkout by upward of 49,000 United Auto Workers members has brought to a standstill more than 50 factories and parts warehouses in the union's first strike against the No. 1 U.S. automaker in over a decade.

Workers left factories and formed picket lines shortly after midnight Monday in the dispute over a new four-year contract. The union's top negotiator said in a letter to the company that the strike could have been averted had the company made its latest offer sooner.

The letter dated Sunday suggests that the company and union are not as far apart as the rhetoric leading up to the strike had indicated. Negotiations continued Monday in Detroit after breaking off during the weekend.

But union spokesman Brian Rothenberg said the two sides have come to terms on only 2% of the contract.

"We've got 98% to go," he said Monday.

Asked about the possibility of federal mediation, President Donald Trump, said it's possible if the company and union want it.

"Hopefully they'll be able to work out the GM strike quickly," Trump said before leaving the White House for New Mexico. "Hopefully, they're going to work it out quickly and solidly."

Wall Street did not like seeing the union picketers. GM shares closed Monday down 4.2 percent to \$37.21.

On the picket line Monday at GM's transmission plant in Toledo, Ohio, workers who said they have been with the company for more than 30 years were concerned for younger colleagues who are making less money under GM's two-tier wage scale and have fewer benefits.

Paul Kane, from South Lyon, Michigan, a 42-year GM employee, said much of what the union is fighting for will not affect him.

"It's not right when you're working next to someone, doing the same job and they're making a lot more money," he said. "They should be the making the same as me. They've got families to support."

Kane said GM workers gave up pay raises and made other concessions to keep GM afloat during its 2009 trip through bankruptcy protection.

"Now it's their turn to pay us back," he said. "That was the promise they gave."

UAW Vice President Terry Dittes told GM that the company's latest offer might have made it possible to reach an agreement if it had come earlier.

"We are disappointed that the company waited until just two hours before the contract expired to make what we regard as its first serious offer," Dittes wrote in the letter to Scott Sandefur, GM's vice president of labor relations.

There are many important items left in the talks, including wage increases, pay for new hires, job security, profit sharing and treatment of temporary workers, Dittes wrote.

"We are willing to meet as frequently, and for as long as it takes, to reach an agreement that treats our members fairly," the letter said.

GM issued a statement saying it wants to reach a deal that builds a strong future for workers and the business.

The automaker said Sunday that it offered pay raises and \$7 billion worth of U.S. factory investments resulting in 5,400 new positions, a minority of which would be filled by existing employees. GM would not give a precise number. The company also said it offered higher profit sharing, "nationally leading" health benefits and an \$8,000 payment to each worker upon ratification.

Before the talks broke off, GM offered new products to replace work at two of four U.S. factories that it intends to close.

The company pledged to build a new all-electric pickup truck at a factory in Detroit, according to a person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. The person was not authorized to

disclose details of the negotiations.

The automaker also offered to open an electric vehicle battery plant in Lordstown, Ohio, where it has a huge factory that has already stopped making cars and will be closed. The new factory would be in addition to a proposal to make electric vehicles for a company called Workhorse, the person said.

It's unclear how many workers the two plants would employ. The closures, especially of the Ohio plant, have become issues in the 2020 presidential campaign. President Donald Trump has consistently criticized the company and demanded that Lordstown be reopened.

Kristin Dziczek, vice president of labor and industry for the Center for Automotive Research, an industry think tank, said the letter and resumption of contract talks are encouraging signs. "It makes me think that both sides are probably closer than it might have seemed before," she said.

But both Dziczek and Art Wheaton, an auto industry expert at the Worker Institute at Cornell University, say GM left out key details when it made part of its offer public, and working out those details could make the strike last longer.

"I think GM kind of sabotaged some of the negotiations by going immediately to the public," Wheaton said. "It really distorts the offer."

The strike shut down 33 manufacturing plants in nine states across the U.S., as well as 22 parts-distribution warehouses. It's the first national strike by the union since a two-day walkout in 2007 that had little impact on the company.

Workers at Fiat Chrysler and Ford continued working under contract extensions. Any agreement reached with GM will serve as a template for talks with the other two companies.

Associated Press Writer John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, contributed to this report.

Iran's supreme leader: No talks with the US at any level

By NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's supreme leader announced on Tuesday that "there will be no talks with the U.S. at any level" — remarks apparently meant to end all speculation about a possible U.S.-Iran meeting between the two countries' presidents at the U.N. later this month.

Iranian state TV quoted Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as saying this is the position of the entire leadership of the country and that "all officials in the Islamic Republic unanimously believe" this.

"There will be no talks with the U.S. at any level," he said.

Khamenei said the U.S. wants to prove its "maximum pressure policy" against Iran is successful.

"In return, we have to prove that the policy is not worth a penny for the Iranian nation," Khamenei said. "That's why all Iranian officials, from the president and the foreign minister to all others have announced that we do not negotiate (with the U.S.) either bilaterally or multilaterally."

There had been reports about a possible meeting between President Donald Trump and his Iranian counterpart, Hassan Rouhani, during the upcoming U.N. General Assembly this month in New York.

But tensions roiling the Persian Gulf have escalated following a weekend attack on major oil sites in Saudi Arabia that the U.S. alleged Iran was responsible for — a charge Iran denies.

The crisis between Washington and Tehran stems from Trump's pullout last year from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. He also re-imposed and escalated sanctions on Iran that sent the country's economy into freefall.

The attack on Saudi Arabia, which set ablaze a crucial Saudi oil processing plant and a key oil field, was claimed by Yemen's Iranian-allied Houthi rebels, who are at war with a Saudi-led coalition that is trying to restore Yemen's internationally recognized government to power.

Trump declared Monday it "looks" like Iran was behind the explosive attack on the Saudi oil facilities. But he stressed that military retaliation was not yet on the table in response to the strike against a key U.S. Mideast ally.

Oil prices soared worldwide amid the damage in Saudi Arabia and fresh Middle East war concerns. But

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Trump put the brakes on any talk of quick military action — earlier he had said the U.S. was “locked and loaded” — and he said the oil impact would not be significant on the U.S., which is a net energy exporter.

The Saudi government called the attack an “unprecedented act of aggression and sabotage” but stopped short of directly pinning blame on Iran.

One U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said the U.S. was considering dispatching additional military resources to the Gulf but that no decisions had been made. The U.S. already has the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier battle group in the area, as well as fighter jets, bombers, reconnaissance aircraft and air defenses.

Trump, alternating between aggressive and nonviolent reactions, said the U.S. could respond “with an attack many, many times larger” but also “I’m not looking at options right now.”

American officials released satellite images of the damage at the heart of the kingdom’s Abqaiq processing plant and a key oil field, and two U.S. officials said the attackers used multiple cruise missiles and drone aircraft.

Private experts said the satellite images show the attackers had detailed knowledge of which tanks and machinery to hit within the sprawling Saudi oil processing facility at Abqaiq to cripple production. But “satellite imagery can’t show you where the attack originated from,” said Joe Bermudez, an expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies who examined the images.

The U.S. alleges the pattern of destruction suggested Saturday’s attack did not come from neighboring Yemen, as claimed by the Houthis there. A Saudi military alleged “Iranian weapons” had been used.

The Saudis invited the U.N. and other international experts to help investigate, suggesting there was no rush to retaliate.

For his part, Khamenei on Tuesday also reiterated Iran’s stance that if the U.S. returns to the nuclear deal, Tehran would consider negotiations.

“Otherwise, no talks will happen ... with the Americans,” he said. “Neither in New York nor anywhere” else.

Associated Press writer Robert Burns in Washington contributed to this report.

At rally, Warren decries Trump as ‘corruption in the flesh’

By **STEVE PEOPLES** and **WILL WEISSERT** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Facing thousands of cheering supporters in the nation’s largest city, Democratic presidential contender Elizabeth Warren on Monday decried President Donald Trump as “corruption in the flesh” and outlined her plans to root out corruption in the White House, Congress and courts.

“Corruption has put our planet at risk. Corruption has broken our economy. And corruption is breaking our democracy,” said Warren, a Massachusetts senator who has emerged as a leading presidential contender.

While aggressive, the message was a familiar one. Warren has embraced corruption as a central campaign theme from the beginning of her 2020 presidential bid. But rarely has Warren addressed such a crowd with such a symbolic backdrop.

The crowd — which exceeded 20,000 people, according to the Warren campaign — filled almost the entirety of the 10-acre (4-hectare) Washington Square Park, wrapping around a massive fountain and clogging the pathways that connect the street chess games to the classrooms of New York University to the giant marble arch the downtown park is best known for.

It was a younger audience, racially diverse and packed with women. One of the biggest applause lines of the night: “We’re not here tonight because of famous arches or famous men. In fact, we’re not here because of men at all.”

The event was set close to the site of the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. fire, which killed more than 140 workers in 1911.

She framed those deaths as the direct result of corruption. Many women died because factory owners neglected safety features to save money, with the implicit support of local elected officials who declined to intervene.

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Warren charged that the same thing is happening today.

"Giant corporations have bought off our government," she said.

Specifically, her anti-corruption plan would "end lobbying as we know it" by instituting a lifetime ban on members of Congress and White House Cabinet secretaries from ever becoming lobbyists. At the same time, corporate lobbyists would be blocked from working for the federal government.

Both practices are common today.

She also would prohibit federal judges from avoiding misconduct investigations by leaving their posts, prevent courts from sealing settlements in public health and safety cases and ban class-action waivers for all cases involving employment, consumer protection, antitrust and civil rights.

And taking direct aim at issues involving the Trump administration, Warren would require candidates for public office to post their tax returns online. Presidents, Cabinet secretaries and members of Congress would also be prohibited from owning businesses on the side.

Trump, of course, has refused to release his tax returns years after promising to do so, and the Trump organization continues to do business around the world.

"Donald Trump is corruption in the flesh," Warren said. "He is sworn to serve the people of the United States, but he serves only himself and his partners in corruption." Warren noted, however, that Trump is only a symptom of the corruption that has infected the U.S. political and economic systems.

Warren has long argued that the nation's modern government only works for "the wealthy and the well-connected" like big energy, health care and insurance companies that employ lobbyists to advance their priorities over the best interests of ordinary citizens.

She wrote that popular policies championed by the Democratic Party's progressive wing — and many in its crowded field of presidential hopefuls — like universal child care, an overhaul of the federal criminal justice system, gun reform and plans to promote affordable housing have been "stymied because giant corporations and billionaires who don't want to pay taxes or follow any rules use their money and influence to stand in the way."

Warren's campaign noted that she already proposed a series of anti-corruption measures in Congress last year, but it says the proposal released Monday goes further.

Warren has emerged as a central player in the broader fight for the direction of the Democratic Party in the age of Trump.

Like her Democratic rival Bernie Sanders, Warren is demanding transformational change that Trump and his allies deride as socialism. Warren and Sanders are up against Democratic front-runner Joe Biden, a favorite of the party's establishment wing.

Warren didn't identify any of her Democratic opponents by name.

She noted, however, that "too many politicians in both parties have convinced themselves that playing the money-for-influence game is the only way to get things done."

Warren doesn't participate in high-dollar fundraising events as a 2020 candidate, though she did before launching her presidential campaign.

On Monday, looking out at the swelling crowd, Warren noted that she typically takes selfies with everyone who wants one at her events.

"Tonight is a little something different," Warren said.

Trump rallies backers in New Mexico in bid to turn state red

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

RIO RANCHO, N.M. (AP) — President Donald Trump made a pocketbook appeal for reelection in the Democratic-leaning state of New Mexico on Monday, telling voters that his energy policies have made the state wealthier and warning that the gains could disappear if the proposal known as the Green New Deal takes effect.

"The Democrats want to completely annihilate New Mexico's economy," claimed Trump, who boasted that an oil and gas boom during his administration has helped increase the state's revenues. "The Democrats

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will never get the chance because New Mexico will never give them that chance.”

Trump went to New Mexico, which has not backed a Republican for president since 2004, to try to turn the state red and expand his grip on the Electoral College in next year’s presidential election.

“It’s been quite a while since a Republican won this state,” Trump told supporters, who greeted him with chants of “USA, USA.” “I think we’re going to do great here. We’re here because we really think we’re going to turn this state and make it a Republican state.”

Trump’s rally in Rio Rancho, in suburban Albuquerque, is the first stop on a three-day swing that will also take him to California for fundraisers expected to raise more than \$15 million.

Trump has generally held his rallies in Republican-friendly terrain. Monday’s rally represents a striking departure from that practice and demonstrates a campaign with the resources to try to turn a few Democratic-leaning states his way, similar to what happened in 2016 with Michigan and Wisconsin.

Trump captured just 40% of the state vote in 2016, as compared to the 48% that went for Hillary Clinton. She did not visit the state during the 2016 campaign.

Still, campaign officials say a Trump rally in nearby El Paso, Texas, last February was well attended by female and Hispanic voters and travelers from New Mexico, indicating to them that New Mexico is in play. Hundreds of people showed up early Monday to claim a place in line ahead of the evening event in Rio Rancho.

Dianna Arvizu, an El Paso, Texas-native who now lives in Albuquerque, was among those in the crowd. She said Trump has a strong chance at capturing New Mexico.

She called his visit “big,” saying “He’s coming for us in New Mexico because he cares.”

Near downtown Albuquerque, a few hundred Democrats gathered to hold their own rally. Some elected leaders, including U.S. Rep. Deb Haaland, spoke.

She described the president as misogynistic and ego-driven, saying Democrats will fight to make sure New Mexico stays blue. “We can roll back Trump, and we can roll back his policies, and we can win New Mexico in 2020,” Haaland said.

Trump’s efforts in New Mexico will provide a test of how well his often-harsh rhetoric about immigrants will play with Hispanic voters, who comprise nearly 40% of New Mexico’s electorate. Trump also touted his efforts to build the U.S.-Mexico border wall, saying Monday that his administration plans to have almost 500 miles (800 kilometers) of it built by the end of 2020.

“You’re gonna have to really want to get over that wall to do it,” Trump bragged.

New Mexico is in the midst of an oil production boom that has boosted employment and spurred a state government spending spree from first-year Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on public education, roadway projects and tax rebates for film productions.

The Green New Deal calls for virtual elimination by 2030 of greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global warming and meeting 100% of U.S. power demand through renewable and zero-emission energy sources, including nuclear power. The proposal has broad support among Democratic activists and 2020 presidential contenders, putting it at the forefront of the party’s sprawling presidential primary.

Lujan Grisham took aim at Trump ahead of his visit, describing the president as being demeaning to Hispanics and immigrants since being elected. She also said Trump’s policies had resulted in increased taxes for some New Mexicans.

Trump will follow up his rally by flying to the San Francisco Bay area on Tuesday for a luncheon fundraiser. He’ll then attend a fundraising dinner that evening in Beverly Hills at the home of real estate developer Geoffrey Palmer. He has two more fundraisers planned in Los Angeles and San Diego on Wednesday.

The fundraisers will benefit Trump Victory, the joint entity that funds Trump’s reelection campaign and the Republican National Committee.

Associated Press writers Russell Contreras, Susan Montoya Bryan and Morgan Lee contributed to this report from New Mexico.

Surprise rescue of Jamaica coral reefs shows nature can heal

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

OCHO RIOS, Jamaica (AP) — Everton Simpson squints at the Caribbean from his motorboat, scanning the dazzling bands of color for hints of what lies beneath. Emerald green indicates sandy bottoms. Sapphire blue lies above seagrass meadows. And deep indigo marks coral reefs. That's where he's headed.

He steers the boat to an unmarked spot that he knows as the "coral nursery." "It's like a forest under the sea," he says, strapping on blue flippers and fastening his oxygen tank before tipping backward into the azure waters. He swims down 25 feet (7.6 meters) carrying a pair of metal shears, fishing line and a plastic crate.

On the ocean floor, small coral fragments dangle from suspended ropes, like socks hung on a laundry line. Simpson and other divers tend to this underwater nursery as gardeners mind a flower bed — slowly and painstakingly plucking off snails and fireworms that feast on immature coral.

When each stub grows to about the size of a human hand, Simpson collects them in his crate to individually "transplant" onto a reef, a process akin to planting each blade of grass in a lawn separately.

Even fast-growing coral species add just a few inches a year. And it's not possible to simply scatter seeds.

A few hours later, at a site called Dickie's Reef, Simpson dives again and uses bits of fishing line to tie clusters of staghorn coral onto rocky outcroppings — a temporary binding until the coral's limestone skeleton grows and fixes itself onto the rock. The goal is to jumpstart the natural growth of a coral reef. And so far, it's working.

Almost everyone in Jamaica depends on the sea, including Simpson, who lives in a modest house he built himself near the island's northern coast. The energetic 68-year-old has reinvented himself several times, but always made a living from the ocean.

Once a spear fisherman and later a scuba-diving instructor, Simpson started working as a "coral gardener" two years ago — part of grassroots efforts to bring Jamaica's coral reefs back from the brink.

Coral reefs are often called "rainforests of the sea" for the astonishing diversity of life they shelter.

Just 2% of the ocean floor is filled with coral, but the branching structures — shaped like everything from reindeer antlers to human brains — sustain a quarter of all marine species. Clown fish, parrotfish, groupers and snappers lay eggs and hide from predators in the reef's nooks and crannies, and their presence draws eels, sea snakes, octopuses and even sharks. In healthy reefs, jellyfish and sea turtles are regular visitors.

With fish and coral, it's a codependent relationship — the fish rely upon the reef structure to evade danger and lay eggs, and they also eat up the coral's rivals.

Life on the ocean floor is like a slow-motion competition for space, or an underwater game of musical chairs. Tropical fish and other marine animals, like black sea urchins, munch on fast-growing algae and seaweed that may otherwise outcompete the slow-growing coral for space. When too many fish disappear, the coral suffers — and vice-versa.

After a series of natural and man-made disasters in the 1980s and 1990s, Jamaica lost 85% of its once-bountiful coral reefs. Meanwhile, fish catches declined to a sixth of what they had been in the 1950s, pushing families that depend on seafood closer to poverty. Many scientists thought that most of Jamaica's coral reef had been permanently replaced by seaweed, like jungle overtaking a ruined cathedral.

But today, the corals and tropical fish are slowly reappearing, thanks in part to a series of careful interventions.

The delicate labor of the coral gardener is only one part of restoring a reef — and for all its intricacy, it's actually the most straightforward part. Convincing lifelong fishermen to curtail when and where they fish and controlling the surging waste dumped into the ocean are trickier endeavors.

Still, slowly, the comeback effort is gaining momentum.

"The coral are coming back; the fish are coming back," says Stuart Sandin, a marine biologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California. "It's probably some of the most vibrant coral reefs we've seen in Jamaica since the 1970s."

"When you give nature a chance, she can repair herself," he adds. "It's not too late."

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Sandin is studying the health of coral reefs around the world as part of a research project called the "100 Island Challenge." His starting assumption was that the most populated islands would have the most degraded habitats, but what he found instead is that humans can be either a blessing or a curse, depending on how they manage resources.

In Jamaica, more than a dozen grassroots-run coral nurseries and fish sanctuaries have sprung up in the past decade, supported by small grants from foundations, local businesses such as hotels and scuba clinics, and the Jamaican government.

At White River Fish Sanctuary, which is only about 2 years old and where Simpson works, the clearest proof of early success is the return of tropical fish that inhabit the reefs — as well as hungry pelicans, skimming the surface of the water to feed on them.

Jamaica's coral reefs were once among the world's most celebrated, with their golden branching structures and resident bright-colored fish drawing the attention of travelers from Christopher Columbus to Ian Fleming, who wrote most of his James Bond novels on the island nation's northern coast in the 1950s and '60s.

In 1965, the country became the site of the first global research hub for coral reefs, the Discovery Bay Marine Lab, now associated with the University of the West Indies. The pathbreaking marine biologist couple Thomas and Nora Goreau completed fundamental research here, including describing the symbiotic relationship between coral and algae and pioneering the use of scuba equipment for marine studies.

The same lab also provided a vantage point as the coral disappeared.

Peter Gayle has been a marine biologist at Discovery Bay since 1985. From the yard outside his office, he points toward the reef crest about 300 meters away — a thin brown line splashed with white waves. "Before 1980, Jamaica had healthy coral," he notes. Then several disasters struck.

The first calamity was 1980's Hurricane Allen, one of the most powerful cyclones in recorded history. "Its 40-foot waves crashed against the shore and basically chewed up the reef," Gayle says. Coral can grow back after natural disasters, but only when given a chance to recover — which it never got.

That same decade, a mysterious epidemic killed more than 95% of the black sea urchins in the Caribbean, while overfishing ravaged fish populations. And surging waste from the island's growing human population, which nearly doubled between 1960 and 2010, released chemicals and nutrients into the water that spur faster algae growth. The result: Seaweed and algae took over.

"There was a tipping point in the 1980s, when it switched from being a coral-dominated system to being an algae-dominated system," Gayle says. "Scientists call it a 'phase shift.'"

That seemed like the end of the story, until an unlikely alliance started to tip the ecosystem back in the other direction — with help from residents like Everton Simpson and his fellow fisherman Lipton Bailey.

The fishing community of White River revolves around a small boat-docking area about a quarter-mile from where the river flows into the Caribbean Sea. One early morning, as purple dawn light filters into the sky, Simpson and Bailey step onto a 28-foot motorboat called the Interceptor.

Both men have lived and fished their whole lives in the community. Recently, they have come to believe that they need to protect the coral reefs that attract tropical fish, while setting limits on fishing to ensure the sea isn't emptied too quickly.

In the White River area, the solution was to create a protected area — a "fish sanctuary" — for immature fish to grow and reach reproductive age before they are caught.

Two years ago, the fishermen joined with local businesses, including hotel owners, to form a marine association and negotiate the boundaries for a no-fishing zone stretching two miles along the coast. A simple line in the water is hardly a deterrent, however — to make the boundary meaningful, it must be enforced. Today, the local fishermen, including Simpson and Bailey, take turns patrolling the boundary in the Interceptor.

On this morning, the men steer the boat just outside a row of orange buoys marked "No Fishing." "We are looking for violators," Bailey says, his eyes trained on the rocky coast. "Sometimes you find spearmen. They think they're smart. We try to beat them at their game."

Most of the older and more established fishermen, who own boats and set out lines and wire cages,

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have come to accept the no-fishing zone. Besides, the risk of having their equipment confiscated is too great. But not everyone is on board. Some younger men hunt with lightweight spearguns, swimming out to sea and firing at close-range. These men — some of them poor and with few options — are the most likely trespassers.

The patrols carry no weapons, so they must master the art of persuasion. "Let them understand this — it's not a you thing or a me thing. This isn't personal," Bailey says of past encounters with violators.

These are sometimes risky efforts. Two years ago, Jerlene Layne, a manager at nearby Boscobel Fish Sanctuary, landed in the hospital with a bruised leg after being attacked by a man she had reprimanded for fishing illegally in the sanctuary. "He used a stick to hit my leg because I was doing my job — telling him he cannot fish in the protected area," she says.

Layne believes her work would be safer with more formal support from the police, but she isn't going to stop.

"Public mindsets can change," she says. "If I back down on this, what kind of message does that send? You have to stand for something."

She has pressed charges in court against repeat trespassers, typically resulting in a fine and equipment confiscation.

One such violator is Damian Brown, 33, who lives in a coastal neighborhood called Stewart Town. Sitting outside on a concrete staircase near his modest home, Brown says fishing is his only option for work — and he believes the sanctuary boundaries extend too far.

But others who once were skeptical say they've come to see limits as a good thing.

Back at the White River docking area, Rick Walker, a 35-year-old spearfisherman, is cleaning his motorboat. He remembers the early opposition to the fish sanctuary, with many people saying, "No, they're trying to stop our livelihood."

Two years later, Walker, who is not involved in running the sanctuary but supports its boundary, says he can see the benefits. "It's easier to catch snapper and barracuda," he says. "At least my great grandkids will get to see some fish."

When Columbus landed in Jamaica, he sailed into Oracabessa Bay — today a 20-minute drive from the mouth of the White River.

Oracabessa Bay Fish Sanctuary was the first of the grassroots-led efforts to revive Jamaica's coral reefs. Its sanctuary was legally incorporated in 2010, and its approach of enlisting local fishermen as patrols became a model for other regions.

"The fishermen are mostly on board and happy — that's the distinction. That's why it's working," sanctuary manager Inilek Wilmot says.

David Murray, head of the Oracabessa Fishers' Association, notes that Jamaica's 60,000 fishermen operate without a safety net. "Fishing is like gambling, it's a game. Sometimes you catch something, sometimes you don't," he says.

When fish populations began to collapse two decades ago, something had to change.

Murray now works as a warden in the Oracabessa sanctuary, while continuing to fish outside its boundary. He also spends time explaining the concept to neighbors.

"It's people work — it's a process to get people to agree on a sanctuary boundary," he says. "It's a tough job to tell a man who's been fishing all his life that he can't fish here."

But once it became clear that a no-fishing zone actually helped nearby fish populations rebound, it became easier to build support. The number of fish in the sanctuary has doubled between 2011 and 2017, and the individual fish have grown larger — nearly tripling in length on average — according to annual surveys by Jamaica's National Environment and Planning Agency. And that boosts catches in surrounding areas.

After word got out about Oracabessa, other regions wanted advice.

"We have the data to show success, but even more important than data is word of mouth," says Wilmot, who oversaw training to help start the fish sanctuary at White River.

Belinda Morrow, a lifelong water-sports enthusiast often seen paddle-boarding with her dog Shadow, runs

the White River Marine Association. She attends fishers' meetings and raises small grants from the Jamaican government and other foundations to support equipment purchases and coral replanting campaigns.

"We all depend on the ocean," Morrow says, sitting in a small office decorated with nautical maps in the iconic 70-year-old Jamaica Inn. "If we don't have a good healthy reef and a good healthy marine environment, we will lose too much. Too much of the country relies on the sea."

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The New York Times faces questions over Kavanaugh story

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Between an offensive tweet and a significant revision, The New York Times' handling of a new sexual misconduct allegation against Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh attracted almost as much attention as the accusation itself.

The story also gave President Donald Trump and his allies fresh ammunition in his campaign against the media, where the Times was already a favorite target.

The revelation that led several Democratic presidential contenders to call for Kavanaugh's impeachment came in the 11th paragraph of a story labeled "news analysis" that ran in the Sunday opinion section. The story is based on an upcoming book by Times reporters Robin Pogrebin and Kate Kelly, "The Education of Brett Kavanaugh: An Investigation," about the junior justice's brutal confirmation battle last year.

Headlined "Brett Kavanaugh Fit In With the Privileged Kids. She Did Not," the story was primarily about Deborah Ramirez, a Connecticut woman who alleged that Kavanaugh, as a freshman at Yale in 1983, had pulled down his pants and thrust his penis at her. Kavanaugh has denied those claims.

Yet the authors said they'd uncovered a similar story involving Kavanaugh at another freshman-year party, where he allegedly exposed himself and friends pushed his penis into the hands of a female student. The story said former classmate Max Stier reported the incident to the FBI and senators as Kavanaugh's nomination was being discussed, but the story said Stier would not discuss it with the authors. Kavanaugh would not comment on the story, a court spokeswoman said Monday.

After the story was posted online but before it was in the print edition, the Times revised the story to add that the book reported that the woman supposedly involved in the incident declined to be interviewed, and that her friends say she doesn't recall the incident. While an editor's note pointed out the revision, it did not say why those facts had been left out in the first place. A Times spokeswoman said no one was available for an interview on Monday.

The Times' deputy editorial page editor, James Dao, posted answers to readers' question on the newspaper's website Monday evening but did not address this issue.

The failure to initially report that the woman did not remember the alleged incident "is one of the worst cases of journalistic malpractice in recent memory," John McCormack wrote in the conservative magazine National Review.

The Washington Post, detailing its own decision on the story, called into question the Times' decision to run with the accusation in the first place.

The Post said that last year it had independently confirmed that lawmakers and authorities knew of the second accusation against Kavanaugh, but did not write about it because the woman involved would not comment and the alleged witnesses were not identified.

The book's authors wrote that they had corroborated the second misconduct allegation with two officials who said they had communicated with Stier. The newspaper did not identify them.

"Based on the corroboration, we felt mentioning the claim as one part of a broader essay was warranted," Dao wrote.

Placement of the accusation in the midst of an opinion-section piece struck many in the journalism community as odd.

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"How is this not a front-page story?" wrote Tom Jones of the journalism think tank the Poynter Institute. In a statement, the Times said the opinion section frequently runs excerpts of books produced by the newspaper's reporters. The new accusations were uncovered during the authors' reporting process for the book, which is why they had not appeared in the newspaper before.

Still, this doesn't explain why the new accusations weren't pointed out to editors and given more prominence in news pages. Todd Gitlin, a Columbia University journalism professor, suggested bureaucratic inertia might partly explain it - since it had been determined that the piece would run in the opinion section, no one stepped forward to question that.

"There have been a number of decisions on this that strike me as dubious," Gitlin said in an interview.

Dao said opinion section pieces have made news in the past, citing a Maureen Dowd interview with actress Uma Thurman with accusations against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein. He noted that the Times' news section did write about it — after reactions came in from presidential candidates.

Trump, not unexpectedly, was harsh in his assessment. He said his Supreme Court appointee was "the one who is actually being assaulted ... by lies and fake news." The White House also distributed a copy of a New York Post editorial headlined "The latest Times hit on Brett Kavanaugh is a clear miss."

"How many stories are wrong? Almost all of the stories the New York Times has done are inaccurate and wrong," Trump wrote in a tweet Monday.

Trump said Kavanaugh should start suing people for libel or the Justice Department should come to his rescue. Yet Roy Guterman, a journalism professor at Syracuse University and director of the Tully Center for Free Speech, said the Justice Department has nothing to do with the case, and a libel case would be tough.

"Given the developing nature of the allegations and the sourcing of the story, coupled with the correction, it still does not appear to rise to anything that would be actionable under libel law," Guterman said.

The Times also apologized for an offensive tweet sent out by the opinion section advertising its initial story. The tweet said: "Having a penis thrust in your face at a drunken dorm party may seem like harmless fun. But when Brett Kavanaugh did it to her, Deborah Ramirez says, it confirmed that she didn't belong at Yale University in the first place."

The Times deleted the tweet and said it was "clearly inappropriate and offensive" and was looking into how it was sent.

Back to basics: Congress tries to keep government lights on

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The good news is that it doesn't look like a bitterly polarized Washington will stumble into another government shutdown.

But as Democrats controlling the House unveil a stopgap, government-wide spending bill to keep the lights on and pay the troops, there's scant evidence that power sharing in the Capitol will produce further legislative accomplishments anytime soon.

The measure that is set for a vote this week would keep the government running through Nov. 21 and buy time for action and negotiations on \$1.4 trillion in annual appropriations bills. Some items can't wait and will be included, like accelerated funding for the 2020 census and \$20 million to combat Ebola in Africa. President Donald Trump also appears likely to win authority to continue bailout payments to farmers harmed by his aggressive trade policies against China.

Since the temporary spending bill is the only must-do legislation on the immediate horizon, lawmakers are using it as a locomotive to haul other priorities into law. That bundle of provisions, negotiated behind closed doors, offers plenty of evidence of Capitol Hill's chronic dysfunction.

It's not just that the Democratic-controlled House and GOP-held Senate can't agree on big issues like infrastructure, guns and health care. They also can't agree on lower-tier items that typically pass by wide margins, such as short-term extensions of the federal flood insurance program and the Export-Import Bank, which helps finance export deals important to large manufacturers such as The Boeing Co.

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The House and Senate banking committees are responsible for legislation to reauthorize both the Export-Import Bank and the flood insurance program, which is particularly important to the real estate sector in coastal areas, but there's been no progress.

Meanwhile, a bundle of health care-related provisions, such as Medicaid payment rates for hospitals that serve mainly lower-income communities, is catching a ride on the temporary spending bill, according to a spokesman for House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y.

Democrats aren't trying to use the bill as a way to take on Trump controversies like cutting military base projects to pay for his U.S.-Mexico border wall. But they're not granting Trump any favors, either, denying provisions as the flexibility to build new border wall segments.

An early draft of the stopgap measure, circulated by Lowey, did not include Trump's request for maintain funding for the farm bailout, but talks Monday appeared headed toward a bipartisan compromise that would allow the Agriculture Department to keep issuing checks to farmers.

The bailout started last year after China retaliated against Trump's tariffs on Chinese exports by reducing purchases of U.S. crops. The developments have caused widespread discontent in farm country that's already beset by lower crop prices and vanishing profits.

The House is slated to pass the stopgap spending measure this week and the Senate is expected to follow in time to meet the Sept. 30 deadline to avert a government shutdown. The effort comes nine months after Trump started a 35-day partial government shutdown when lawmakers rebuffed his border wall demands.

The \$1.4 trillion in annual appropriations bills are off to a late and not particularly promising start despite a bipartisan budget and debt deal passed in July. The House has passed 10 of the 12 annual bills, but at spending levels higher than permitted under the budget deal.

The Senate is roiled by battles over Trump's \$5 billion border wall request and his moves to tap military base construction projects to pay for it. Democrats complained that Senate Republicans are giving too much funding to Trump's cherished wall project at the expense of health and education projects.

Senate Democrats are threatening to filibuster an upcoming vote on a huge, almost \$700 billion defense funding bill to protest preliminary funding decisions of Trump's GOP allies in the Senate.

"Our Democratic colleagues would rather provoke a partisan feud with the president," said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "They'd rather have a fight with the president than stick to the agreement that we all made."

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer responded that Trump's wall funding plan "is what Democrats oppose. That's what Leader McConnell calls staging a political fight."

Governors struggle under new rules in 2020 presidential race

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

As his 10 top competitors were in Houston prepping for a big night on national television last week, Democratic presidential candidate and Montana Gov. Steve Bullock was 900 miles (1,450 kilometers) north in a suburban Des Moines brewpub.

The governor wasn't drowning his sorrows over failing to qualify for the primary debate, but he wasn't exactly hiding his disappointment from the crowd that gathered to hear his pitch on a Thursday afternoon. "There may be one place I'd rather be than in Clive tonight," he acknowledged.

The governor's failure to break into the top 10 — getting beat out by a tech entrepreneur and the mayor of South Bend, Indiana — may have marked a moment for presidential politics. Being a governor who promised bipartisan appeal and executive experience used to be a profile for primary success. Thanks to Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, the can-do, outsider governor has been a storied character in presidential politics. Today, that model is looking increasingly outdated.

All three governors who launched bids this year struggled to build national profiles and donor bases needed to thrive. They found themselves immediately competing against multiple candidates with celebrity status, name recognition and well-known positions on national issues. Their campaigns in Iowa and New

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Hampshire haven't caused a ripple.

Bullock is the last governor standing. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee bailed last month to run for reelection. Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper retreated to a Senate race. Bullock is also under pressure to run for Senate, but he says he's not interested.

"Just about every governor in the country thinks that they can be the next Jimmy Carter or Bill Clinton, but presidential politics has changed a lot since then," said Alex Conant, who served as communications director for Minnesota Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty's failed 2012 presidential campaign. "It's really hard for governors to raise the resources and build the sort of national name ID that is required to build a successful presidential campaign in the modern era. ... Governors bring executive experience and a track record of getting things done, but there's not a lot of evidence that voters are looking for that."

Democratic voters maintain one of their top priorities is to defeat President Donald Trump, but there's a deep divide over the best way to do it. Bullock, an amiable, cowboy-booted former state attorney general, is making his pitch to primary voters who think the best path is to win over moderates. He touts his record of winning in a state that voted for Trump by double digits. He argues he can work with Republicans.

"The core of the word progressive is progress," Bullock said in an interview. "I haven't been able to just give speeches. I've actually had to get stuff done."

His problem is that he's not the only one carrying that message, said Joe Trippi, a Democratic strategist who managed former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean's 2004 presidential campaign. Bullock's biggest challenge is former Vice President Joe Biden, a well-known candidate who can also show he's pragmatic, can work across party lines and has administrative experience running a government, Trippi said.

"There's a bigger player in the race that's sort of dominating that area," he said.

The large primary field and Trump's ability to commandeer national attention for days are making it hard for any candidate to sustain attention. That's complicated by the Democratic National Committee requiring candidates to have 130,000 unique donors and at least 2% in four approved polls to qualify for the September and October debate stage.

Bullock has been critical of the rules, saying they create a "Hunger Games"-style competition and force candidates to spend \$60 on social media ads in order to earn a \$1 donation. After he failed to qualify for the September debate, his campaign released a memo to donors reminding them that it's early and that polls in past years eventually changed.

What's clear is the DNC's debate rules have forced candidates to spend time and money fundraising and introducing themselves around the country instead of hunkering down in Iowa, the first state to weigh in on the primary field.

Jimmy Carter, a former Georgia governor, staked his fortunes on Iowa before the 1976 Democratic presidential caucuses, camping out in the state to sell himself as a proud Washington outsider. His second-place showing, behind uncommitted, transformed him from a longshot — worthy of a "Jimmy who?" headline — to top tier and set him on a path to the White House. In 1992, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton lost Iowa to native son Tom Harkin but used a second-place showing in New Hampshire to come back and build momentum behind his bid.

That model isn't necessarily dead, "but it's very hard" to win if a candidate can't make the debate and is banking only on grassroots campaigning in early states, said former Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, who considered a 2020 presidential run but decided against it.

McAuliffe said because governors hold an executive office, it's harder for them to skip on their day job and spend time in Iowa, whereas a missed vote or two in a log-jammed Congress isn't as problematic for senators.

"A sitting governor has to be in their state. You are actually running a state," McAuliffe said. "You've got to deal with natural emergencies. You've got to deal with your legislature. ... You can't be out of your state that much."

McAuliffe said governors might have more luck in future years, but Democrats' overwhelming concern about defeating the president and the crowded field has scrambled the game.

To try to hang on, Bullock has been making more frequent appearances on cable news, and his campaign has also dabbled with viral, buzzy content to lure in small donors. After Trump proposed that the U.S. buy Greenland, Bullock's campaign quickly released a website mocking the idea and urging people to donate a dollar.

Bullock said that even if he doesn't make the debate stage, he's planning to hang on until the Iowa caucuses in February.

"We still have to recognize we're still six months before the first voters express their preference, so we've got a long way to go," he said.

Associated Press writers Alexandra Jaffe in Des Moines, Iowa, and Scott McFetridge in Clive, Iowa, contributed to this report.

White House orders 2 former aides to defy House subpoenas

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House has instructed two former aides to President Donald Trump not to appear at a House Judiciary Committee hearing Tuesday, saying Rick Dearborn and Rob Porter are "absolutely immune" from testifying at what the panel is calling its first impeachment hearing.

In a letter sent to the panel and obtained by The Associated Press, White House counsel Pat Cipollone wrote that the Justice Department has advised — and Trump has directed — Dearborn and Porter to defy subpoenas because of "constitutional immunity." Lawyers for both men said they would follow Trump's orders.

Former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, who never worked for the White House, is expected to attend the hearing as its sole witness on Tuesday. In a separate letter, Cipollone said Lewandowski should not reveal private conversations with Trump beyond what is already public in special counsel Robert Mueller's report.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler invited the three men to testify at the hearing as part of the panel's probe into Mueller's report and what Nadler is calling an "aggressive series of hearings" this fall to determine whether Trump should be impeached. But the committee has so far been hobbled by the White House's blockade of witness testimony and document requests, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said she wants to wait to see what happens in court before making a decision on impeachment.

Cipollone wrote that Dearborn and Porter were advised not to attend "because of the constitutional immunity that protects senior advisers to the president from compelled congressional testimony, and in order to protect the prerogatives of the Office of President."

Democrats are challenging such claims of "absolute immunity" in a lawsuit against former White House counsel Don McGahn, who defied a subpoena earlier this year on Trump's orders. They say that such a claim does not legally exist.

In the letter regarding Lewandowski, Cipollone wrote Nadler that his conversations with Trump "are protected from disclosure by long-settled principles protecting executive branch confidentiality interests."

In a statement, Nadler said the White House's position is "a shocking and dangerous assertion."

He added: "The President would have us believe that he can willfully engage in criminal activity and prevent witnesses from testifying before Congress — even if they did not actually work for him or his administration."

Brant W. Bishop, Porter's lawyer, said in another letter to Nadler that his client was trapped between "competing and incompatible demands from coordinate and coequal branches" and would, for now, defy the subpoena. He indicated that Porter would testify if he was instructed to by the courts.

"Such conflicting demands must be resolved through an accommodation between the executive and legislative branches, or by the Judiciary," Bishop wrote. "In the meantime, because the inquiry at issue relates to his service as a senior official at the White House, Mr. Porter must respect the White House's instruction."

At the hearing on Tuesday, Lewandowski would be free to discuss Trump's campaign, which he worked on until he was fired in the summer of 2016. But the Judiciary panel is most interested in Mueller's report, and whether Trump obstructed justice. The report said the president could not be exonerated on that point.

According to the report, Trump asked Lewandowski twice to ask Attorney General Jeff Sessions to limit Mueller's investigation. Trump said that if Sessions would not meet with Lewandowski, then Lewandowski should tell Sessions he was fired.

Lewandowski never delivered the message but asked Dearborn — a former Sessions aide — to do it. Dearborn said he was uncomfortable with the request and also declined to deliver it, according to the report.

Porter, a former staff secretary in the White House, took frequent notes during his time there that were detailed throughout the report. He resigned last year after public allegations of domestic violence by his two ex-wives.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Jill Colvin and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Some CBD vapes contain street drug instead of the real thing

By HOLBROOK MOHR Associated Press

Jay Jenkins says he hesitated when a buddy suggested they vape CBD.

"It'll relax you," the friend assured.

The vapor that Jenkins inhaled didn't relax him. After two puffs, he ended up in a coma.

That's because what he was vaping didn't have any CBD, the suddenly popular compound extracted from the cannabis plant that marketers say can treat a range of ailments without getting users high. Instead, the oil was spiked with a powerful street drug.

Some operators are cashing in on the CBD craze by substituting cheap and illegal synthetic marijuana for natural CBD in vapes and edibles such as gummy bears, an Associated Press investigation has found.

The practice has sent dozens of people like Jenkins to emergency rooms over the last two years. Yet people behind spiked products have operated with impunity, in part because the business has boomed so fast that regulators haven't caught up while drug enforcement agents have higher priorities.

AP commissioned laboratory testing of the vape oil Jenkins used plus 29 other vape products sold as CBD around the country, with a focus on brands that authorities or users flagged as suspect. Ten of the 30 contained types of synthetic marijuana — drugs commonly known as K2 or spice that have no known medical benefits — while others had no CBD at all.

Among them was Green Machine, a pod compatible with Juul electronic cigarettes that reporters bought in California, Florida and Maryland. Four of those seven pods contained illegal synthetic marijuana, but which chemical varied by flavor and even location of purchase.

"It's Russian roulette," said James Neal-Kababick, director of Flora Research Laboratories, which tested the products.

Vaping in general has come under increased scrutiny in recent weeks because hundreds of users have developed mysterious lung illnesses, and several have died. The AP's investigation focused on yet another set of cases, in which psychoactive chemicals are added to products presented as CBD.

The results of AP's lab testing echo what authorities have found, according to a survey of law enforcement agencies in all 50 states. At least 128 samples out of more than 350 tested by government labs in nine states, nearly all in the South, had synthetic marijuana in products marketed as CBD. Gummy bears and other edibles accounted for 36 of the hits, while nearly all others were vape products. Mississippi authorities also found fentanyl, the powerful opioid involved in about 30,000 overdose deaths last year.

Reporters then bought brands that law enforcement testing or online discussions identified as spiked. Because testing by both authorities and AP focused on suspect products, the results are not representative of the overall market, which includes hundreds of products.

"People have started to see the market grow and there are some fly-by-night companies trying to make a quick buck," said Marielle Weintraub, president of the U.S. Hemp Authority, an industry group that certi-

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fies CBD cosmetics and dietary supplements.

Synthetic marijuana is a concern, according to Weintraub, but she said the industry has many reputable companies. When products turn up spiked, the people or companies behind them often blame counterfeiting or contamination in the supply and distribution chain.

CBD, short for cannabidiol, is one of many chemicals found in cannabis, a plant known more commonly as marijuana. Most CBD is made from hemp, a cannabis variety cultivated for fiber or other uses. Unlike its more famous cousin THC, cannabidiol doesn't get users high. Sales of CBD have been driven in part by unproven claims that it can reduce pain, calm anxiety, increase focus and even prevent disease.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved one CBD-based medicine for treating seizures associated with two rare and severe forms of epilepsy, but says it cannot be added to food, drinks or dietary supplements. The agency is now clarifying its regulations, but aside from warning manufacturers against making unproven health claims, it has done little to stop the sale of spiked products. That's the job of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, but its agents are focused on opioids and other narcotics.

Now there are CBD candies and beverages, lotions and creams, and even treats for pets. Suburban yoga studios, big-name pharmacies and Neiman Marcus department stores carry beauty products. Kim Kardashian West had a CBD-themed baby shower.

But it's hard for consumers to know how much CBD they are really getting, if any at all. As with many products, federal and state regulators rarely test what's inside — for the most part, quality control is left to manufacturers.

And there's a financial incentive to cut corners. One website advertises synthetic marijuana for as little as \$25 per pound — the same amount of natural CBD costs hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

'YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE'

Jay Jenkins had just wrapped up his freshman year at The Citadel, a South Carolina military college, when boredom led him to try what he thought was CBD.

It was May 2018 and he said his friend bought a cartridge of blueberry flavored CBD vape oil called Yolo! — the acronym for "you only live once" — from the 7 to 11 Market, an austere, white board-and-batten building in Lexington, South Carolina.

Back in the car, Jenkins tried it first. Things "got hazy," then terrifying.

Jenkins said the nerves in his mouth felt like they were "multiplied by 10." Vivid images including a circle engulfed by darkness and filled with colorful triangles filled his mind. Before he drifted out of consciousness, he realized he couldn't move.

"I thought that I actually was already dead," Jenkins said.

His friend raced to the hospital where Jenkins suffered acute respiratory failure and drifted into a coma, his medical records show.

Jenkins came out of the coma and was released the next day. Hospital staff sealed the Yolo cartridge in a biohazard bag and handed it back.

Lab testing AP commissioned this summer found a type of synthetic marijuana that has been blamed for at least 11 deaths in Europe.

State and federal authorities never identified who made Yolo, which sickened not just Jenkins but also at least 33 people in Utah.

According to documents filed in a California court by a former company bookkeeper, a business called Mathco Health Corporation sold Yolo products to a distributor with the same address as the 7 to 11 Market where Jenkins stopped. Two other former employees told AP that Yolo was a Mathco product.

Mathco CEO Katarina Maloney said in an interview at company headquarters in Carlsbad, California, that Yolo was handled by her former business partner and she did not want to discuss it.

Maloney also said Mathco does not "engage in the manufacture, distribution or sale of any illegal products." She said the Yolo products in Utah "were not purchased from us" and the company can't control what happens to products once they are shipped. AP-commissioned testing of two CBD vape cartridges marketed under Maloney's Hemp Hookahzz brand found no synthetic marijuana.

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As part of an employment complaint filed in court records, the former bookkeeper said Maloney's former business partner, Janell Thompson, was the "exclusive salesperson" of Yolo. Reached by phone and asked about Yolo, Thompson hung up.

"If you want to speak with somebody you can talk to my attorney," Thompson later texted without providing a name or contact information.

When a reporter visited the 7 to 11 Market in May, Yolo was no longer for sale. Asked for something similar, the clerk suggested a cartridge labeled Funky Monkey and then turned to a cabinet behind the counter and offered two unlabeled vials

"These are better. These are the owner's. This is our top seller," she said, referring to them as 7 to 11 CBD. "These here, you can only get here."

Testing showed that all three contained synthetic marijuana. The store owner did not respond to messages seeking comment.

WHAT'S IN 'JUNGLE JUICE'?

The people behind spiked vapes leave few clues about who makes them or what's inside.

Packaging doesn't identify the companies and their brands have little online presence. Newcomers can simply design a label and outsource production to a wholesaler that deals in bulk.

The opaque system of manufacturing and distribution hampers criminal investigations and leaves victims of spiked products with little recourse.

The AP bought and tested Green Machine pods in flavors including mint, mango, blueberry and jungle juice. Four of the seven pods were spiked and only two had CBD higher than a trace level.

Mint and mango pods bought in downtown Los Angeles contained one type of synthetic marijuana. But while mint and mango pods sold by a vape shop in Maryland were not spiked, a "jungle juice" flavored pod was. It had yet a different synthetic marijuana compound — one health authorities blame for poisoning people in the U.S. and New Zealand. A blueberry flavored pod sold in Florida also was spiked.

Green Machine's packaging says it's made with industrial hemp, but there's no information about who is behind it.

When a reporter returned to CBD Supply MD in a Baltimore suburb to discuss testing results, co-owner Keith Manley said he was aware of online chatter that Green Machine might be spiked. He then had an employee pull all remaining Green Machine pods from store shelves.

Through interviews and documents, AP tracked Green Machine pods that reporters bought to a warehouse in Philadelphia and then a Manhattan smoke shop and the entrepreneur behind the counter, Rajinder Singh, who said he is Green Machine's first distributor.

Singh, who is currently on probation for a federal synthetic marijuana conviction, said he purchased Green Machine pods with cash or in exchange for merchandise such as hookah pipes from a man he knew as "Bob" who drove a van down from Massachusetts. To substantiate his account, he provided a phone number associated with a man who died in July.

Singh pleaded guilty in 2017 to federal charges he sold a smokable "potpourri" that he knew contained synthetic marijuana. He said that experience taught him a lesson and blamed counterfeit products for the synthetic marijuana detected in Green Machine.

"100 percent, what you tested is a duplicated product," he said.

'EMERGING HAZARD'

The American Association of Poison Control Centers considers CBD an "emerging hazard" due to the potential for mislabeling and contamination.

One case last year involved an 8-year-old boy from Washington who was hospitalized after taking CBD oil his parents ordered online in hopes it would help his seizures, according to a case study in the journal *Clinical Toxicology* published in May. Instead, synthetic marijuana sent him to the hospital with symptoms including delirium and a rapid heart rate.

Other clusters of illnesses happened in Mississippi and around military bases in North Carolina.

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Labeling of many CBD products has been documented as inaccurate. A 2017 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found 70% of CBD products were mislabeled. Researchers used an independent lab to test 84 products from 31 companies.

Fake or spiked CBD is enough of a concern that leaders of the U.S. Hemp Authority industry group developed a certification program for CBD skin and health products. Vapes are not covered.

But local and state authorities have limited ability to pursue problem products to their roots.

After several Georgia high school students passed out from vaping last year, authorities began scrutinizing local tobacco shops. One of the CBD vape brands they targeted was called Magic Puff.

The drug enforcement team in Savannah and surrounding Chatham County arrested a shop owner and two employees. But they couldn't follow the investigation further because it appeared the products were being manufactured elsewhere, possibly overseas. The team's assistant deputy director, Gene Harley, said they provided a report to federal drug agents who handle such cases.

Magic Puff was still on shelves at a Florida store this summer, and AP testing showed blueberry and strawberry cartridges contained synthetic marijuana. Preliminary results also suggested the presence of a toxin produced by a fungus.

Because CBD is the active ingredient in an FDA-approved drug, the FDA is responsible for regulating its sale in the U.S. But if CBD products are found to contain narcotics, the agency considers the investigation a job for the DEA, an FDA spokesman said.

The DEA says it is focused on drugs responsible for killing thousands of Americans like fentanyl and methamphetamines.

"These are going to be bigger priorities on enforcement," DEA spokeswoman Mary Brandenberger said.

Experts such as Michelle Peace, a forensic scientist at Virginia Commonwealth University who has found synthetic marijuana in her own testing of CBD vapes, said the federal government should act quickly to protect the public.

"As long as it remains unregulated like it currently is," Peace said, "you just give a really wide space for nefarious activity to continue."

Contact AP's investigative team at Investigative@ap.org.

Mohr reported from Carlsbad, California; Panama City, Florida; and Jackson, Mississippi. Contributing to this report were Allen Breed in Lexington and Ninety Six, South Carolina; Juliet Linderman in New York, Philadelphia and Towson, Maryland; Reese Dunklin in Dallas; Krysta Fauria in Carlsbad and Los Angeles; Carla K. Johnson in Seattle; Justin Pritchard in Washington and Los Angeles; Rhonda Shafner in New York; Ted Warren in Grants Pass, Oregon; and Mitch Weiss in Lexington, South Carolina.

People experiencing problems with a product labeled as CBD can reach a local poison control center by calling 1-800-222-1222.

New Kavanaugh allegation unlikely to prompt impeachment

By LISA MASCARO, MARY CLARE JALONICK and LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As several Democratic presidential candidates called for the impeachment of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, newly disclosed allegations are reviving questions about the rush to confirm President Donald Trump's nominee at the height of the #MeToo movement.

The Senate confirmed Kavanaugh last October after emotional, widely watched hearings over an allegation of a sexual assault from his high school years. The vote provided a signature achievement for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, fulfilling a long-held Republican desire to pack the Supreme Court and much of the federal judiciary with conservatives.

The New York Times reported over the weekend that Kavanaugh faced a separate allegation from his time at Yale University and that the FBI did not investigate the claim. Still, many Democrats are reluctant

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to reprise the controversy that likely cost the party Senate seats in the midterm elections.

McConnell opened the Senate on Monday saying the new round of allegations against Kavanaugh "felt a little like Groundhog Day." He called the Times report "yet another poorly sourced, thinly reported unsubstantiated allegation."

While impeachment proceedings against Kavanaugh are extremely unlikely, the revelations raise fresh questions about the GOP rush to push Kavanaugh's confirmation.

The latest claim in the Times is similar to one offered during Kavanaugh's confirmation process by Deborah Ramirez, a Yale classmate who claimed Kavanaugh exposed himself to her during a drunken party. Kavanaugh declined to comment Monday through the court's press office, but in Senate testimony last year, he flatly denied all allegations of misconduct.

On Monday, The Associated Press learned that one Democratic senator had raised concerns to the FBI as agents were investigating.

Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., asked the FBI on Oct. 2 to speak with "one individual I would like to specifically refer you to for appropriate follow up," according to a letter obtained by the AP.

The senator's letter does not spell out the allegations, and the person's name is redacted in the letter. But a person familiar with the letter confirmed Coons was referring to Max Stier, a Yale classmate of Kavanaugh's who is the person cited in the newspaper story.

The senator's letter to the FBI said the person had "information relevant to Ramirez's allegations."

The Times said that the female student in the latest claim declined to be interviewed and that friends said she doesn't recall the episode. The newspaper said Sunday in an editor's note that an earlier version of its story didn't include that information.

But several Democratic presidential candidates were quick to call for Kavanaugh's impeachment. Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., said Kavanaugh "lied" to the Senate and "most importantly to the American people." She tweeted: "He must be impeached." Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, tweeted, "Like the man who appointed him, Kavanaugh should be impeached." Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke asserted in a tweet: "We know he lied under oath. He should be impeached."

Their calls were highly unlikely to be taken up by the House Judiciary Committee, where impeachment proceedings would begin. The chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., said Monday that his panel is focused on impeaching Trump.

"We have the head of the FBI coming before our committee next month, and we're certainly going to ask him about this, and we're going to see where it goes from there," Nadler said on WNYC's "The Brian Lehrer Show."

Republicans affirmed their support for Kavanaugh. Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina tweeted, "As Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I promise you Justice Kavanaugh will not be impeached over these scurrilous accusations."

At the forefront of the claims against Kavanaugh last fall were allegations from Christine Blasey Ford, a college professor in California, who testified that Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her when they were teens at a high school party near Washington, D.C.

As voting neared, three key Republican senators whose votes McConnell needed remained undecided, and the GOP leader drew them and other Republicans to his office to decide the next steps.

They resolved to ask the FBI to take an additional week to investigate the claims of Ford and Ramirez.

Days later, Coons sent his letter to the FBI. A copy — with Stier's name redacted — was sent to the Judiciary Committee and its chairman, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa. The letter did not contain any specific details of the allegation.

McConnell would later tell the AP and others that the senators determined the "scope" of the FBI's investigation.

On Monday, Grassley said his office "never received anything from Mr. Stier" or anything with the special allegation against Kavanaugh "like the one referenced."

Grassley stood by the process and scoffed at impeachment, saying, "There weren't any allegations in

the letter. They just said you ought to talk to so-and-so."

One of those three Republicans whose vote McConnell needed was Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who ultimately voted to confirm Kavanaugh. Her spokeswoman said Monday that the new allegation is an "accusation that lacks an accuser."

Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Juana Summers and Mark Sherman contributed to this report.

Trump: It looks like Iran hit Saudis, no military option yet

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump declared Monday it "looks" like Iran was behind the explosive attack on Saudi Arabian oil facilities. But he stressed that military retaliation was not yet on the table in response to the strike against a key U.S. Mideast ally.

Oil prices soared worldwide amid the damage in Saudi Arabia and fresh Middle East war concerns. But Trump put the brakes on any talk of quick military action — earlier he had said the U.S. was "locked and loaded" — and he said the oil impact would not be significant on the U.S., which is a net energy exporter.

The Saudi government called the attack an "unprecedented act of aggression and sabotage" but stopped short of directly pinning blame on Iran.

Iran denied involvement.

Trump, who has repeatedly stressed avoiding new Middle East wars, seemed intent on preserving room to maneuver in a crisis that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had immediately called Iran's fault. Pompeo said Saturday, "Iran has now launched an unprecedented attack on the world's energy supply."

Trump, too, had talked more harshly at first. But by Monday afternoon he seemed intent on consultations with allies.

"That was an attack on Saudi Arabia," he said.

"It wasn't an attack on us, but we would certainly help them," he said, noting a decades-long alliance linked to U.S. oil dependence that has lessened in recent years. The U.S. has no treaty obligation to defend Saudi Arabia.

Trump said he was sending Pompeo to Saudi Arabia "to discuss what they feel" about the attack and an appropriate response.

One U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said the U.S. was considering dispatching additional military resources to the Gulf but that no decisions had been made. The U.S. already has the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier battle group in the area, as well as fighter jets, bombers, reconnaissance aircraft and air defenses.

Trump, alternating between aggressive and nonviolent reactions, said the U.S. could respond "with an attack many, many times larger" but also "I'm not looking at options right now."

American officials released satellite images of the damage at the heart of the kingdom's crucial Abqaiq oil processing plant and a key oil field, and two U.S. officials said the attackers used multiple cruise missiles and drone aircraft.

Private experts said the satellite images show the attackers had detailed knowledge of which tanks and machinery to hit within the sprawling Saudi oil processing facility at Abqaiq to cripple production. But "satellite imagery can't show you where the attack originated from," said Joe Bermudez, an expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies who examined the images.

"What the photos indicate is that someone planned a sophisticated, coordinated attack that really impacted the production of oil at this facility," he said.

The U.S. alleges the pattern of destruction suggested Saturday's attack did not come from neighboring Yemen, as claimed by Iranian-backed Houthi rebels there. A Saudi military alleged "Iranian weapons" had been used.

The Saudis invited United Nations and other international experts to help investigate, suggesting there was no rush to retaliate.

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Jon Alterman, the chief Middle East expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the Saudi caution reflects the kingdom's wariness of taking on Iran.

"I don't think there's a great independent Saudi capability to respond," he said. "You don't want to start a war with Iran that you don't have an idea how you're going to end."

In New York, the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Kelly Craft, condemned the attack and said that "emerging information indicates that responsibility lies with Iran."

At the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Mark Esper suggested Iranian involvement, too. In a series of tweets after meeting with Trump and other senior national security officials, Esper said the administration was working with partner nations "to address this unprecedented attack and defend the international rules-based order that is being undermined by Iran."

Iran rejected the allegations, and a government spokesman said there now is "absolutely no chance" of a hoped-for meeting between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Trump at the U.N. General Assembly next week.

"Currently we don't see any sign from the Americans which has honesty in it, and if the current state continues there will be absolutely no chance of a meeting between the two presidents," spokesman Ali Rabiei said.

Downplaying any talk of imminent U.S. military action, Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Marc Short, told reporters at the White House that Trump's "locked and loaded" was "a broad term that talks about the realities that" the U.S. is "safer and more secure domestically from energy independence."

The new violence has led to fears that further action on any side could rapidly escalate a confrontation that's been raging just below the surface in the wider Persian Gulf in recent months. There already have been mysterious attacks on oil tankers that Washington blames on Tehran, at least one suspected Israeli strike on Shiite forces in Iraq, and the downing of a U.S. military surveillance drone by Iran.

Those tensions have increased ever since Trump pulled the U.S. out of Iran's 2015 agreement with world powers that curtailed Iranian nuclear activities and the U.S. re-imposed sanctions that sent Iran's economy into freefall.

The weekend attack halted production of 5.7 million barrels of crude a day, more than half of Saudi Arabia's global daily exports and more than 5% of the world's daily crude oil production.

The U.S. and international benchmarks for crude each vaulted more than 14%, comparable to the 14.5% spike in oil on Aug. 6, 1990, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

U.S. stocks were down but only modestly. Major stock indexes in Europe also fell. Markets in Asia finished mixed.

At a news conference, Saudi military spokesman Col. Turki al-Maliki said, "All the indications and operational evidence, and the weapons that were used in the terrorist attack, whether in Buqayq or Khurais, indicate with initial evidence that these weapons are Iranian weapons."

Russia's Foreign Ministry, while expressing "grave concern" about the attack, warned against putting the blame on Iran, saying that plans of military retaliation against Iran would be unacceptable.

AP Writers Jon Gambrell and Aya Batrawy contributed from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. AP writers Zeke Miller and Michael Biesecker contributed from Washington, Tali Arbel from New York, Elaine Kurtenbach from Bangkok, Nasser Karimi from Tehran, Dave Rising from Berlin, Samy Magdy from Cairo and Qassim Abdul-Zahra from Baghdad.

Noise but no breakthrough as Johnson, Juncker talk Brexit

By LORNE COOK and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LUXEMBOURG (AP) — Boris Johnson was booed by protesters and berated by Luxembourg's leader on a visit to the tiny nation Monday for his first face-to-face talks with the European Union chief about securing an elusive Brexit deal.

On a day of commotion and conflicting signals, Johnson pulled out of a news conference because of

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noisy anti-Brexit demonstrators, leaving Luxembourg's prime minister standing alone next to an empty lectern as he addressed the media.

Still, Johnson insisted there was a strong possibility of securing a divorce agreement before Britain is due to leave the 28-nation bloc in just over six weeks.

"Yes there is a good chance of a deal. Yes, I can see the shape of it," Johnson asserted at a separate appearance before reporters at the British ambassador's residence.

EU leaders were far more skeptical.

With the Brexit deadline just 45 days away, the European Commission said the first in-person meeting between Johnson and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker ended with no breakthrough in the impasse over how Britain can leave the EU with a plan in place to manage the divorce.

Britain had yet to offer any "legally operational" solutions to the problem of keeping goods and people flowing freely across the Irish border, the main roadblock to a deal, it said in a statement.

"Such proposals have not yet been made," the Commission said, adding that officials "will remain available to work 24/7."

Johnson insists the U.K. will leave the EU on the scheduled date of Oct. 31 with or without a Brexit deal. He hopes to strike a revised agreement with the bloc at an EU summit on Oct. 17-18, in time for an orderly departure. The agreement made by his predecessor, Theresa May, was rejected three times by Britain's Parliament, prompting her to resign.

Opponents fear Johnson — who helped lead the 2016 referendum campaign that ended in a vote to leave the EU — is heading full-speed toward a disruptive no-deal Brexit.

Many EU leaders suspect the same thing, and mistrust the brash British leader's populist rhetoric. Johnson has vowed to complete Brexit "do or die," and has compared himself and the U.K. to angry green superhero the Incredible Hulk, telling the Mail on Sunday newspaper: "The madder Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets, and he always escapes ... and that is the case for this country."

Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel, who also met Johnson on Monday, said the British leader needed to "stop speaking and act."

"We need more than just words," he said. "We need a legally operable text to work on as soon as possible."

The key sticking point to a Brexit deal is the so-called "backstop," an insurance policy in May's agreement intended to guarantee an open border between EU member Ireland and the U.K.'s Northern Ireland. That is vital both to the local economy and to Northern Ireland's peace process.

British Brexit supporters oppose the backstop because it keeps the U.K. bound to EU trade rules, limiting its ability to forge new free trade agreements around the world after Brexit.

Britain has suggested the backstop could be replaced by "alternative arrangements" — a mix of technology to replace border checks and a common area for agricultural products and animals covering the whole island of Ireland.

A small but noisy crowd of anti-Brexit protesters booed and shouted "shame on Boris!" as Johnson arrived after lunch for a meeting with Luxembourg prime minister Bettel.

Johnson pulled out of a planned outdoor news conference, saying later that the pair would have been drowned out. Instead Bettel addressed reporters alone, next to an empty lectern, while Johnson issued his statement outside the British ambassador's nearby residence.

The visibly frustrated Luxembourg leader said Brexit had become a "nightmare," and U.K. and European citizens face huge uncertainty.

"You can't hold their future hostage for party political gains," Bettel said.

"Now it's on Mr. Johnson," he added, gesturing at the empty lectern in front of a Union Jack.

Despite the EU's frustration at the lack of detail, Juncker and Johnson agreed to ramp up the pace of talks, with EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier and U.K. Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay getting involved.

"Over the last couple of weeks there's been a lot of work — papers have been shared — but we are now in the stage where we have to start really accelerating the work," Johnson said. "That was the agreement today."

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Monday's meeting kicked off a tumultuous week for Johnson.

On Tuesday, Britain's Supreme Court will consider whether Johnson's decision to suspend the British Parliament for five weeks was lawful, after conflicting judgments in lower courts.

Johnson sent British lawmakers home until Oct. 14, a drastic move that gives him a respite from rebellious lawmakers determined to thwart his Brexit plan.

Last week, Scotland's highest civil court ruled the move illegal because it had the intention of stymieing Parliament. The High Court in London, however, said it was not a matter for the courts.

If the Supreme Court overturns the suspension, lawmakers could be called back to Parliament as early as next week.

Many lawmakers fear a no-deal Brexit would be economically devastating, and are determined to stop the U.K. from crashing out of the bloc on Oct. 31.

Just before the suspension, Parliament passed a law ordering the government to seek a three-month delay to Brexit if no agreement has been reached by late October.

Johnson reiterated Monday that he will not seek a delay under any circumstances, though it's not clear how he can avoid it.

"I will uphold the constitution, I will obey the law but we will come out on October 31st," Johnson told the BBC.

EU leaders, meanwhile, are reluctant to delay Brexit any longer unless Britain radically changes course.

"An extension is only an option if it serves a purpose," Bettel said. "We will not grant another extension just for the sake of granting another extension."

Lawless reported from London. Associated Press Writer Samuel Petrequin in Brussels contributed to this report.

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

A previous version of this story was corrected to show that Johnson sent lawmakers home until Oct. 14, not Oct. 31.

GM walkout brings factories and warehouses to a standstill

By TOM KRISHER and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — More than 49,000 members of the United Auto Workers went on strike Monday against General Motors, bringing more than 50 factories and parts warehouses to a standstill in the union's first walkout against the No. 1 U.S. automaker in over a decade.

Workers left factories and formed picket lines shortly after midnight in the dispute over a new four-year contract. The union's top negotiator said in a letter to the company that the strike could have been averted had the company made its latest offer sooner.

The letter dated Sunday suggests that the company and union are not as far apart as the rhetoric leading up to the strike had indicated. Negotiations continued Monday in Detroit after breaking off during the weekend.

But union spokesman Brian Rothenberg said the two sides have come to terms on only 2% of the contract. "We've got 98% to go," he said Monday.

Asked about the possibility of federal mediation, President Donald Trump, said it's possible if the company and union want it.

"Hopefully they'll be able to work out the GM strike quickly," Trump said before leaving the White House for New Mexico. "Hopefully, they're going to work it out quickly and solidly."

Wall Street did not like seeing the union picketers. GM shares closed Monday down 4.2 percent to \$37.21.

On the picket line Monday at GM's transmission plant in Toledo, Ohio, workers who said they have been with the company for more than 30 years were concerned for younger colleagues who are making less

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money under GM's two-tier wage scale and have fewer benefits.

Paul Kane, from South Lyon, Michigan, a 42-year GM employee, said much of what the union is fighting for will not affect him.

"It's not right when you're working next to someone, doing the same job and they're making a lot more money," he said. "They should be the making the same as me. They've got families to support."

Kane said GM workers gave up pay raises and made other concessions to keep GM afloat during its 2009 trip through bankruptcy protection.

"Now it's their turn to pay us back," he said. "That was the promise they gave."

UAW Vice President Terry Dittes told GM that the company's latest offer might have made it possible to reach an agreement if it had come earlier.

"We are disappointed that the company waited until just two hours before the contract expired to make what we regard as its first serious offer," Dittes wrote in the letter to Scott Sandefur, GM's vice president of labor relations.

There are many important items left in the talks, including wage increases, pay for new hires, job security, profit sharing and treatment of temporary workers, Dittes wrote. "We are willing to meet as frequently, and for as long as it takes, to reach an agreement that treats our members fairly," the letter said.

GM issued a statement saying it wants to reach a deal that builds a strong future for workers and the business.

The automaker said Sunday that it offered pay raises and \$7 billion worth of U.S. factory investments resulting in 5,400 new positions, a minority of which would be filled by existing employees. GM would not give a precise number. The company also said it offered higher profit sharing, "nationally leading" health benefits and an \$8,000 payment to each worker upon ratification.

Before the talks broke off, GM offered new products to replace work at two of four U.S. factories that it intends to close.

The company pledged to build a new all-electric pickup truck at a factory in Detroit, according to a person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. The person was not authorized to disclose details of the negotiations.

The automaker also offered to open an electric vehicle battery plant in Lordstown, Ohio, where it has a huge factory that has already stopped making cars and will be closed. The new factory would be in addition to a proposal to make electric vehicles for a company called Workhorse, the person said.

It's unclear how many workers the two plants would employ. The closures, especially of the Ohio plant, have become issues in the 2020 presidential campaign. President Donald Trump has consistently criticized the company and demanded that Lordstown be reopened.

Kristin Dzikczek, vice president of labor and industry for the Center for Automotive Research, an industry think tank, said the letter and resumption of contract talks are encouraging signs. "It makes me think that both sides are probably closer than it might have seemed before," she said.

But both Dzikczek and Art Wheaton, an auto industry expert at the Worker Institute at Cornell University, say GM left out key details when it made part of its offer public, and working out those details could make the strike last longer.

"I think GM kind of sabotaged some of the negotiations by going immediately to the public," Wheaton said. "It really distorts the offer."

The strike shut down 33 manufacturing plants in nine states across the U.S., as well as 22 parts-distribution warehouses. It's the first national strike by the union since a two-day walkout in 2007 that had little impact on the company.

Workers at Fiat Chrysler and Ford continued working under contract extensions. Any agreement reached with GM will serve as a template for talks with the other two companies.

Associated Press Writer John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, contributed to this report.

Propane blast kills firefighter, injures his brother, others

By **ROBERT F. BUKATY** and **DAVID SHARP** Associated Press

FARMINGTON, Maine (AP) — A fierce propane explosion leveled a newly constructed building after fire crews arrived to investigate the smell of gas Monday, killing one firefighter and injuring at least eight other people, including fellow firefighters, officials said.

The blast was so powerful it blew a vehicle across an intersection and damaged nearby buildings. Paper, insulation and building debris rained on the area.

The explosion shattered the two-story building that housed LEAP Inc., a nonprofit that serves people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities, just a couple of months after it was finished.

"It's a war zone. It's just a mess," said Scott Landry, a member of the Farmington Town Select Board. "The building is gone."

The blast killed 68-year-old Fire Capt. Michael Bell and injured his brother, Fire Chief Terry Bell; five other firefighters; a maintenance worker for LEAP; and an ambulance worker, officials said.

Four of the firefighters were in the intensive care unit at Maine Medical Center in Portland, while the maintenance worker was being treated at a hospital in Boston, officials said. One firefighter and the ambulance worker were treated and released.

The blast hit around 8:30 a.m. in this town in western Maine, about 70 miles north of Portland.

Neighbors heard a thunderous boom that rattled homes and knocked pictures off walls. Flying paper and dust made it look as if a snowstorm had hit.

LEAP worker Lisa Charles, who lives down the street from the explosion site, was home with her kids when the blast startled the family.

She stepped outside to see debris falling from the sky and feared the worst for her colleagues.

"I know everybody in there. I thought for sure everybody was gone," she said. "They got a warning from the maintenance guy who was a hero for telling them to evacuate."

Kim Hilton, who works in the admissions department at the nearby University of Maine at Farmington, said she was frightened when her building shook.

"It felt like someone hit our building with a vehicle," she said.

Gov. Janet Mills — who is from Farmington and whose office said she knew the firefighter who died — ordered flags lowered to half-staff across the state. Mills also visited the scene and promised the state fire marshal's office will investigate.

"We're going to get to the bottom of as much as we possibly can to protect this community, to protect all other communities and make sure this doesn't happen again," she told reporters.

The 40-by-60-foot (12-by-18-meter) building, which served as the administrative offices for LEAP, opened eight to 10 weeks ago and wasn't yet fully staffed, Landry said.

The smell of gas was detected when the first workers arrived and the building evacuated before most workers had arrived for the day, he said.

Sharp reported from Portland.

On vote eve, Netanyahu vows total West Bank settlement annex

By **TIA GOLDENBERG** Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Monday to annex "all the settlements" in the West Bank, including an enclave deep in the heart of the largest Palestinian city, in a last-ditch move that appeared aimed at shoring up nationalist support the day before a do-over election.

Locked in a razor tight race and with legal woes hanging over him, Netanyahu is fighting for his political survival. In the final weeks of his campaign he has been doling out hard-line promises meant to draw more voters to his Likud party and re-elect him in Tuesday's unprecedented repeat vote.

"I intend to extend sovereignty on all the settlements and the (settlement) blocs," including "sites that have security importance or are important to Israel's heritage," Netanyahu said in an interview with Israeli

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Army Radio, part of an eleventh-hour media blitz.

Asked if that included the hundreds of Jews who live under heavy military guard amid tens of thousands of Palestinians in the volatile city of Hebron, Netanyahu responded "of course."

Israelis head to the polls Tuesday in the second election this year, after Netanyahu failed to cobble together a coalition following April's vote, sparking the dissolution of parliament.

Netanyahu has made a series of ambitious pledges in a bid to whip up support, including a promise to annex the Jordan Valley, an area even moderate Israelis view as strategic but which the Palestinians consider the breadbasket of any future state.

To protest that announcement, the Palestinian Authority held a Cabinet meeting in the Jordan Valley village of Fasayil on Monday, a day after Israel's Cabinet met elsewhere in the valley.

"The Jordan Valley is part of Palestinian lands and any settlement or annexation is illegal," Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh said at the start of the meeting. "We will sue Israel in international courts for exploiting our land and we will continue our struggle against the occupation on the ground and in international forums."

Critics contend that Netanyahu's pledges, if carried out, would enflame the Middle East and eliminate any remaining Palestinian hope of establishing a separate state. His political rivals have dismissed his talk of annexation as an election ploy noting that he has refrained from annexing any territory during his more than a decade in power.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Sufian al-Qudah condemned Netanyahu's statement, saying such a move would "eliminate the remaining chances for peace" and fuel conflict.

Israel captured the West Bank and east Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 war.

Over 2.5 million Palestinians now live in occupied territories, in addition to nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers. Israel already has annexed east Jerusalem in a move that is not internationally recognized. The international community, along with the Palestinians, overwhelmingly considers Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem illegal.

Late Monday, Netanyahu visited Jerusalem's Western Wall, the holiest place where Jews can worship, in a last-ditch appeal to religious nationalist supporters. In a Facebook video, he said the site "gives us the strength to continue and make a glorious country."

Tuesday's vote will largely be a referendum on Netanyahu, who this year surpassed Israel's founding prime minister as the country's longest-serving leader.

He has cast himself as the only candidate capable of facing Israel's myriad challenges. But his opponents say his legal troubles — including a recommendation by the attorney general to indict him on bribery, fraud and breach of trust charges — loom too large for him to carry on.

Associated Press writer Mohammed Daraghmeah in Ramallah, West Bank, contributed to this report.

Tent courtrooms open to process migrants waiting in Mexico

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tent courtrooms opened Monday in two Texas border cities to help process thousands of migrants who are being forced by the Trump administration to wait in Mexico while their requests for asylum wind through clogged immigration courts.

The court in Laredo opened with a judge who appeared by videoconference. Critics have denounced the proceedings because they are closed to the public and difficult for attorneys to access to provide legal representation.

One by one, the migrants stood up inside the tent and said they were afraid to be sent back to Mexico. The group included a woman from Honduras cradling her 4-year-old daughter, a Salvadoran man who said he was fleeing death threats and another man who said he was in hiding while he awaited a chance to enter the U.S.

The immigrants are part of a Trump administration policy officially called the Migrant Protection Protocols,

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but often known as the "Remain in Mexico" program. They spoke by video with the judge in San Antonio, where observers who wanted to watch the hearings had to go.

Judge Yvonne Gonzalez had 52 cases on her docket. On the other side of the screen, 26 people were in court in Laredo. Gonzalez could see them on a TV in her courtroom. After about 20 minutes, Gonzalez was close to ending the hearing when one man raised his hand and asked to speak. She told him to go ahead.

"I'm not under any condition to demand anything," he said through a translator. "But I would like to ask you. My family is accompanying me, and we're fearful of being in Mexico."

Gonzalez said she would address him afterward. Then a second person asked to speak and also said he was afraid. Eventually, eight people spoke.

One woman said she had to pay someone to bring her back for her hearing. Another person said she had been kidnapped and mugged.

The Associated Press is not identifying the migrants who spoke out of concern for their safety.

Gonzalez looked to the attorneys from the U.S. government present in the courtroom and asked about Mexico's role. "Are they helping with a place to stay?"

One of the attorneys, Kevin Terrill, replied that he did not know.

The judge conferred with U.S. government attorneys, then resumed court. She had each person who feared going back to Mexico approach the front of the room so they would be close on her television screen, then told them a security guard would take them to another room in the tent so they could be screened by a different agency to determine whether they would have to go back.

Hours earlier, around 200 migrants were told to report to the bridge crossing in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, at 4:30 a.m. so they could be taken across the bridge and directly into the tent court on the other side.

A second tent court is in Brownsville. Journalists are barred from the tents, even though immigration court hearings are generally open to the public. Unlike in criminal proceedings, public defenders are not provided in immigration cases. Few migrants can afford a lawyer.

The Remain in Mexico program has become one of the U.S. government's biggest tools to prevent migrants from crossing the southern border. Mexico has been cooperating with the program under pressure from President Donald Trump.

At least 42,000 migrants have been forced back into Mexico this year after crossing the border. Many of them say they fled violence or threats in their home countries with hopes of getting asylum.

A key development was the program's expansion in July to the eastern edge of the U.S.-Mexico border. On one side is South Texas' Rio Grande Valley, the busiest corridor for unauthorized border crossings. On the other is Mexico's Tamaulipas state, known for its rampant violence and gangs that kidnap and attack migrants.

Immigrants and advocates trying to help in Mexican border cities have reported families sleeping in overcrowded shelters, boarding houses or outdoor camps. Many have been bused south by Mexico to cities considered safer, though there was no guarantee that they would be able to return.

The U.S. government has warned Americans not to travel to Tamaulipas, citing safety concerns. Meanwhile, the U.S. Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley chief recently testified that the agency was sending more than 1,000 migrants a week to Tamaulipas under the "Remain in Mexico" program.

The Department of Homeland Security said it planned to spend \$155 million to build and operate the tent courts but expects the costs to be less than that.

Four people who appeared before Gonzalez had attorneys and brief hearings in which she told them they would be due back in court in one month.

She then called the remaining 22 people to stand at the front of the room and explained to them the immigration court process. She set their next hearings for Oct. 16 and told them it was important that they attend or face a removal order in absentia, which would prevent them from re-entering the U.S. for 10 years.

That's when the migrants described their fears of returning to Mexico.

Once everyone had been escorted out, all that was left was to issue absentia orders to the more than 20 people who had missed their hearing. Gonzalez told the security guards in Laredo that they could turn

off the video.

"You all are very efficient," she said. "Thank you very much."

Associated Press writers Cedar Attanasio in El Paso, Texas, and Juan Antonio Calderon in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, contributed to this report.

Asian shares weaker after spike in crude oil rattles market

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Shares were mostly lower in Asia on Tuesday after an attack on Saudi Arabia's biggest oil processing plant caused crude prices to soar, prompting selling of airlines and other fuel-dependent industries.

The U.S. and international benchmarks for crude fell back slightly after vaulting more than 14% overnight, that's comparable to the 14.5% spike in oil on Aug. 6, 1990, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index lost 0.4% to 22,007.01 and the Shanghai Composite index skidded 1.0% to 2,999.84. South Korea's Kospi edged 0.1% higher to 2,064.51, while the S&P ASX/200 in Sydney also added 0.1% to 6,679.00.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 1.0% after the credit ratings agency Moody's downgraded the city. Fitch Rating did so earlier. Hong Kong's chief executive, Carrie Lam, said the downgrade was "disappointing."

Moody's said in a statement that the change in its outlook to "negative reflects the rising risk that the ongoing protests reveal an erosion in the strength of Hong Kong's institutions, with lower government and policy effectiveness than Moody's had previously assessed."

The turmoil was "damaging its attractiveness as a trade and financial hub," it said.

Elsewhere in Asia, shares fell in India, Taiwan and Singapore but rose in Indonesia and Thailand.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.5% to 27,076.82, breaking a streak of eight consecutive gains. The S&P 500 lost 0.3%, to 2,997.96, its biggest decline in two weeks. American Airlines was the biggest decliner in the index.

The Nasdaq lost 0.3% to 8,153.54, while the Russell 2000 picked up 0.4%, to 1,584.60.

Shares of oil producers jumped, while prices for Treasuries, gold and other investments seen as less risky rose.

The weekend attack on the Saudi Aramco plant halted production of 5.7 million barrels of crude a day, more than half of Saudi Arabia's global daily exports and more than 5% of the world's daily crude oil production.

The attack raised worries about the risk of more disruptions in the supply of oil at a time when the global economic outlook is clouded by uncertainty.

Still, analysts expressed doubts that the disruption in Saudi Arabia's oil production would have much of an impact on the U.S. economy, at least in the short term.

The bigger concern is over whether there might be more attacks.

"At a time when oil markets have been in the shadows of a weak global macroeconomic backdrop, the attack on critical Saudi oil infrastructure calls into question the reliability of supplies from not just one of the largest net exporters of crude oil and petroleum products but also the country that holds most of the world's spare production capacity," Barclays analyst Amarpreet Singh wrote in a report.

Benchmark U.S. crude oil shed 90 cents to \$62.00 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Monday, it soared \$8.05 to settle at \$62.90 a barrel. Brent crude oil, the international standard, declined 77 cents to \$68.25 per barrel. It jumped \$8.80 to close at \$69.02 a barrel in London.

That helped energy stocks in the S&P 500 surge 3.3%. Marathon Oil gained 11.6%, Devon Energy jumped 12.2% and oilfield services provider Halliburton climbed 11%.

The spike in oil prices weighed on shares in airlines, whose operations can be hurt by any rise in the price of fuel.

American Airlines Group, which spent \$3.7 billion on fuel and taxes in the first half of the year, dropped

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7.3%. United Airlines slid 2.8%, and Delta Air Lines dropped 1.6%.

Cruise ships also burn lots of fuel, making them vulnerable to oil price swings. Carnival fell 3.2%.

Prices for U.S. government bonds rose as investors moved into safer investments. Yields for bonds fall when their prices rise, and the yield on the 10-year Treasury dropped to 1.85% from 1.90% late Friday.

Gold, another investment seen as a safe haven, rose \$12.20 to \$1,503.10 per ounce.

Meanwhile, General Motors slumped 4.3% after more than 49,000 members of the United Auto Workers went on strike. It wasn't clear how long the walkout would last.

The week's headline event is the Federal Reserve's meeting on interest rates. Investors are confident the central bank will cut short-term rates by a quarter of a percentage point to a range of 1.75% to 2%. It would be the second such cut in two months, as the Fed tries to protect the economy from a global slowdown and the effects of the U.S.-China trade war.

In currency trading, the dollar rose to 108.20 Japanese yen from 108.15 yen on Monday. The euro gained to \$1.1011 from \$1.1001.

AP Business writers Stan Choe and Alex Veiga contributed.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 17, the 260th day of 2019. There are 105 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 17, 1987, the city of Philadelphia, birthplace of the U.S. Constitution, threw a big party to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the historic document; in a speech at Independence Hall, President Ronald Reagan acclaimed the framing of the Constitution as a milestone "that would profoundly and forever alter not just these United States but the world."

On this date:

In 1787, the Constitution of the United States was completed and signed by a majority of delegates attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1862, more than 3,600 men were killed in the Civil War Battle of Antietam (an-TEE'-tum) in Maryland.

In 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Poland during World War II, more than two weeks after Nazi Germany had launched its assault.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied paratroopers launched Operation Market Garden, landing behind German lines in the Netherlands. (After initial success, the Allies were beaten back by the Germans.)

In 1947, James V. Forrestal was sworn in as the first U.S. Secretary of Defense.

In 1971, citing health reasons, Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, 85, retired. (Black, who was succeeded by Lewis F. Powell Jr., died eight days after making his announcement.)

In 1978, after meeting at Camp David, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (men-AH'-kem BAY'-gihn) and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat signed a framework for a peace treaty.

In 1994, Heather Whitestone of Alabama was crowned the first deaf Miss America.

In 1996, former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew died in Berlin, Maryland, at age 77.

In 2001, six days after 9/11, stock prices nosedived but stopped short of collapse in an emotional, flag-waving reopening of Wall Street; the Dow Jones industrial average ended the day down 684.81 at 8,920.70.

In 2004, San Francisco's Barry Bonds hit the 700th home run of his career, joining Babe Ruth (714) and Hank Aaron (755) as the only players to reach the milestone (San Francisco beat San Diego, 4-1).

In 2011, a demonstration calling itself Occupy Wall Street began in New York, prompting similar protests around the U.S. and the world.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama abruptly canceled a long-planned missile shield for Eastern Europe, replacing a Bush-era project that was bitterly opposed by Russia with a plan he contended would better defend against a growing threat of Iranian missiles. An 18-year-old man armed with an ax, knives

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and Molotov cocktails attacked his high school in Ansbach, Germany, injuring nine students and a teacher before being shot and arrested. Police in New Haven, Connecticut, charged Raymond Clark III, a Yale animal lab technician, with murdering graduate student Annie Le (lay). (Clark later pleaded guilty to the killing, and was sentenced to 44 years in prison.)

Five years ago: The Republican-controlled House voted grudgingly to give the administration authority to train and arm Syrian rebels as President Barack Obama emphasized anew that American forces “do not and will not have a combat mission” in the struggle against Islamic State militants in either Iraq or Syria.

One year ago: Senate leaders, under pressure from fellow Republicans, scheduled a public hearing for the following week at which Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh and the woman accusing him of sexual assault decades ago would testify; the move forced Republicans to put off a committee vote on the nomination. President Donald Trump defended Kavanaugh as an “outstanding judge” but said there might need to be a “little delay” in the confirmation process. Emergency crews brought food and water to Wilmington, N.C., after the city of 120,000 people was cut off by flooding from Hurricane Florence; the death toll from the storm rose to at least 32. “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” from Amazon, became the first streaming series to win the Emmy as the top comedy series. A trade war between the U.S. and China escalated further, as President Donald Trump announced tariffs on \$200 billion more in Chinese goods starting the following week.

Today’s Birthdays: Sen. Charles E. Grassley, R-Iowa, is 86. Retired Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter is 80. Singer LaMonte McLemore (The Fifth Dimension) is 84. Retired U.S. Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni is 76. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Phil Jackson is 74. Singer Fee Waybill is 71. Actress Cassandra Peterson (“Elvira, Mistress of the Dark”) is 68. Comedian Rita Rudner is 66. Muppeteer Kevin Clash (former voice of Elmo on “Sesame Street”) is 59. Director-actor Paul Feig is 57. Movie director Baz Luhrmann is 57. Singer BeBe Winans is 57. TV personality/businessman Robert Herjavec (TV: “Shark Tank”) is 56. Actor Kyle Chandler is 54. Director-producer Bryan Singer is 54. Rapper Doug E. Fresh is 53. Actor Malik Yoba is 52. Rock singer Anastacia is 51. Actor Matthew Settle is 50. Rapper Vinnie (Naughty By Nature) is 49. Actor-comedian Bobby Lee is 48. Actor Felix Solis is 48. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marcus Sanders (Hi-Five) is 46. Actress-singer Nona Gaye is 45. Singer-actor Constantine Maroulis is 44. NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson is 44. Pop singer Maile (MY’-lee) Misajon (Eden’s Crush) is 43. Country singer-songwriter Stephen Cochran is 40. Rock musician Chuck Comeau (Simple Plan) is 40. Actor Billy Miller is 40. Country singer Desi Wasdin (3 of Hearts) is 36. Rock musician Jon Walker is 34. NHL forward Alex Ovechkin (oh-VECH’-kin) is 34. Actress Danielle Brooks is 30. Gospel singer Jonathan McReynolds is 30. Actress-singer Denyse Tontz is 25. NHL center Auston Matthews is 22.

Thought for Today: “We must not say every mistake is a foolish one.” — Cicero, Roman scholar (106-43 B.C.).

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